

THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL

or

Harmony of the Four Gospels

**J.W. McGarvey
and
P.Y. Pendleton**

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James E. Smith
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Editor's Preface

The Fourfold Gospel by J. W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton, was published in book form in 1914 by Standard Publishing, Cincinnati; it was first issued quarterly in 1905 as Standard Bible Commentary. The expanded electronic version has been transcribed from a copy of the 1914 edition. The electronic text was released into the public domain in 1993 as note files for the Online Bible. This version corrected typographical mistakes of the original and updated the reference system. The editor has continued the editorial process in this edition.

The Fourfold Gospel is an incomparable tool for the study of the life of Christ. The texts of the four Gospels have been woven together. The reader is alerted to the change from one Gospel narrative to another by parenthetical (a) (b) (c) or (d), representing Matthew, Mark, Luke and John respectively. The editor has updated to some extent the grammar and spellings of the original work. Superfluous comments or outdated notes have been eliminated. Occasionally the editor has inserted his own comment on a verse and so indicated by the parenthetical insertion of (JES). The Scripture version is a modernized American Standard Version, i.e., the old English has been modernized. The reader should be aware that no two scholars are in total agreement as to the chronological order of certain incidents in the life of Christ. The lengthy discourses of Jesus have been eliminated from this student version because class assignments will require students to research these discourses on their own.

PART ONE PREPARATION PHASE c. 6 B.C.-A.D. 26

Section 1 LUKE'S PREFACE Lk 1:1-4

(c) 1 Inasmuch as many [of whom we know nothing and have even no tradition] **have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters that have been fulfilled** [completed, or accomplished according to the divine will] **among us, 2 even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses** [the apostles were necessarily such and there were some few others--*Ac 1:21-23*] **and ministers of the word** [the apostles were ministers, and not ecclesiastical dignitaries], **3 it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first** [and being therefore thoroughly fitted to write the gospel], **to write unto you in order** [not in chronological, but in topical order], **most excellent Theophilus** [Luke also dedicated the Book of Acts to this man. Nothing is known of Theophilus, but he is supposed to have been a Greek of high official rank]; **4 that you might know the certainty** [might have a [1] fixed written record, and not trust to a floating, variable tradition or a treacherous memory] **concerning the things** [the gospel facts] **in which you were instructed.**

Section 2 JOHN'S PREFACE Jn 1:1-18

(d) In the beginning was the Word [a title for Jesus peculiar to the apostle John], **and the Word was with God** [not going before nor coming after God, but with Him at the beginning], **and the Word was God.** [Not more, not less.] **2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him** [the New Testament often speaks of Christ as the Creator--see *Jn 1:10 1Co 8:6 Col 1:13,17 Heb 1:2*]; **and without him was not anything made that has been made.** [This shows that Jesus himself is not a creature.] **4 In him was life** [As in the Father (*Jn 5:26*). As

this life animates the living, so can it reanimate the dead--*Jn 11:25*]; **and the life was the light of men.** [The life of Jesus is the light of men, because from that life we get our intellect and understanding, and because that life formed and governs the creation around us by which we become enlightened as to the existence and power of God--*Ro 1:18-21 Ac 14:16,17.*] **5 And the light shined in the darkness** [an ignorant, benighted world]; **and the darkness comprehended it not.** [Did not receive or admit it. Jesus, the Light of the world, was despised and rejected by men.] **6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.** **7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light.** [that he might tell men that Jesus was the Messiah], **that all** [who heard his testimony] **might believe** [in Jesus] **through him.** **8 He was not the light** [He was the lamp that burns and shines (*Jn 5:35*); but not the Sun of righteousness--*[2] Mal 4:2*], **but came that he might bear witness of the light.** **9 There was the true light** [as opposed to the imperfect, incomplete, and transitory lights], **even the light that lights every man** [all men are enlightened in some degree and enlightened of Christ: some by nature, some by conscience, and some by Bible revelation], **coming into the world.** **10 He was in the world.** [invisibly present, renewing and sustaining his creation], **and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not.** [Though it might and should have known him--*Ro 1:18-21 Ac 14:16,17.*] **11 He came** [visibly in the flesh] **unto his own** [his own land or possessions--*Ho 9:3 Jer 2:7 Zec 2:12*], **and they that were his own** [the children of Israel--*Ex 19:5 Dt 7:6 14:2*] **received him not.** **12 But as many as received him** [whether Jew or Gentile], **to them gave he the right to become children of God** [compare *Ro 3:14-17 Ga 3:26 4:6,7 1Jn 3:1,2*], **even to them that believe on his name:** **13 who were born, not of blood** [descent from Abraham, David or any other godly person does not make a man a child of God--*Lk 3:8 Mt 3:9 Jn 8:39,40 Ga 3:6,7,29*], **nor of the will of the flesh** [the efforts and exertions of our own human hearts and natures may reform, but can not regenerate, the life--*Jn 3:6*], **nor of the will of man** [we are not begotten of God by the acts and deeds of our fellow-men, however much they may aid us in leading right lives], **but of God.** [*Jn 3:5 1Jn 4:7 5:1.*] **14 And the Word became flesh** [by being born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary], **and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory** [in his miracles, and especially in his transfiguration--*Jn 2:11 2Pe 1:16-18*], **glory as of the only begotten from the Father)** [such glory as was suitable to the Son of God], **full of grace and truth.** [The glory of Christ was not in pomp and worldly grandeur, but in the holiness, grace, and truth of his daily life.] **15 John** [the Baptist] **bore witness of him** [the words of John the Baptist still witness to unbelieving Jews and Gentiles], **and cried, [3] saying, This was he of whom I said** [John had preached about Jesus before Jesus appeared; he now points to Jesus as the one about whom he had preached], **He that comes after me** [He for whom I as a forerunner have prepared the way--*Mt 3:3*] **is become before me** [is worthy of more honor and reverence than am I]: **for he was before me.** [Though born into the world six months later than John, Jesus, as the Word, had existed from eternity. (In *Jn 1:16* the words are the apostle John's, and not John the Baptist's.)] **16 For of his fullness** [Jesus was full of grace and truth--and all the attributes of God--*Eph 1:23 3:19 4:13 Col 1:19 2:9*] **we all received** [by union with him all his perfection and righteousness became ours--*Php 1:10,11 3:8,9 1Co 1:30*], **and grace for grace.** [This may mean that we receive a grace kindred to or like each several grace that is in Christ (*Ro 8:29 12:2 Eph 4:11-13*). But it more probably means fullness of grace, or fresh grace daily added to the grace already bestowed.] **17 For the law** [the Old Dispensation with its condemnation (*Ro 3:20 Ga 2:21*) and its types and shadows--*Col 2:16,17 Heb 8:4,5 10:1*] **was given through Moses** [by angels at Mt. Sinai--*Heb 2:2*]; **grace and truth** [the New Dispensation with its justification (*Ro 3:21-26*) and its realities--*Heb 9:1-15*] **came through Jesus Christ.** [*Heb 1:1,2 2:3.*] **18 No man has seen God at any time** [*1Jn 4:12,20 Jn 1:18 1Ti 6:16*]; **the only begotten Son** [the word "only begotten" indicates that none other bears with Christ a like relationship to God], **who is in the bosom of the Father** [who bears the closest relationship and fellowship as to the Father], **he has declared him.** [*Jn 3:2 15:9 Col 1:15.*] [4]

Section 3

MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY

Mt 1:1-17

A. First Division: From Abraham to David (Mt 1:1-6a).

(a) **The book of the generation** [or genealogy] **of Jesus Christ, the son of David** [the Messiah was promised to David--2Sa 7:16 Jn 7:42], **the son of Abraham**. [Messiah was also promised to Abraham--Gn 22:18 Ga 3:16.] **2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren** [mentioned here because they were the heads of the tribes for whom especially Matthew wrote his Gospel]; **3 and Judah begat Perez and Zerah** [these two were twins] **of Tamar** [she was the incestuous daughter-in-law of Judah]; **and Perez begat Hezron; and Hezron begat Ram; 4 and Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon; and Nahshon begat Salmon; 5 and Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab** [she had been a heathen and a harlot of Jericho]; **and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth** [she was a heathen Moabitess]; **and Obed begat Jesse; 6 and Jesse begat David the king**. [These fourteen were patriarchs.]

B. Second Division: From David to the Exile (Mt 1:6b-11).

The second fourteen were all kings.] **And David** [we may count David twice, first as a patriarch, second as one of the kings; and thus make up the full number of the second fourteen] **begat Solomon of her that had been the wife** [the adulteress Bathsheba] **of Uriah; 7 and Solomon** [a wise but sinful king] **begat Rehoboam** [a foolish king, from whose kingdom of twelve tribes God cut off ten tribes]; **and Rehoboam begat Abijah** [a sinful king, like his father Rehoboam]; **and Abijah begat Asa** [a godly king who reformed his kingdom of Judah]; **8 and Asa begat Jehoshaphat** [a good king, much like his father Asa; but he displeased God somewhat by being too friendly with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel]; **and Jehoshaphat begat Joram** [5] [Joram married Athaliah, the wicked daughter of Ahab, and followed Ahab in all his ungodly practices]; **and Joram** [Joram begat Ahaziah, and Ahaziah begat Joash, and Joash begat Amaziah; and Amaziah begat Uzziah. The names of Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah were probably omitted for the sake of symmetry, but may have been dropped because they were wicked descendants of Ahab unto the fourth generation--Ex 20:4,5] **begat Uzziah** [he was a good king, but smitten with leprosy for presumptuously entering the temple]; **9 and Uzziah begat Jotham** [a good king like Uzziah, his father]; **and Jotham begat Ahaz** [one of Judah's worst kings]; **and Ahaz begat Hezekiah** [a royal, godly king, like David]; **10 and Hezekiah begat Manasseh** [an evil king, like Ahaz, but, being punished of God, he repented]; **and Manasseh begat Amon** [an evil king like his father Manasseh; who waxed worse and worse till his people conspired against him and slew him]; **and Amon begat Josiah** [a good king, much like Hezekiah]; **11 and Josiah begat** [Jehoiakim, and Jehoiakim begat] **Jechoniah and his brethren** [So far as is known, Jechoniah had no literal brothers. We may, therefore, take the word "brethren" as meaning his royal kindred; namely: his father Jehoiakim, and his uncles, Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, the three sons of Josiah], **at the time** [probably about B.C. 599] **of the carrying away** [into captivity] **to Babylon**.

C. Third Division: From the Exile to Christ (Mt 1:12-17).

(a) **12 And after the carrying away to Babylon Jechoniah** [If we do not count David twice, as above indicated (as a patriarch and a king), we must count Jechoniah twice (as a king who became a citizen). But if we count Jehoiakim as properly included in the phrase "his brethren" at Mt 1:11, we need count no one twice] **begat Shealtiel** [Luke calls Shealtiel the son of Neri (Lk 3:27). Jechoniah may have been the natural, and Neri the legal, father of Shealtiel--Dt 25:5-10 Mt 22:24. Or Luke's Shealtiel and Zerubbabel may have been different persons from the Shealtiel and Zerubbabel of Matthew]; **and Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel** [the governor of Jerusalem, who rebuilt the temple, as told by Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah]; **13 and [6] Zerubbabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; 14 and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; 15 and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; 16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus** [the name Jesus means Savior], **who is called Christ**. [The word "Christ" is a title. It means the anointed One. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed; Jesus was all three.] **17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David unto the carrying away to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the carrying away to Babylon unto the Christ fourteen generations**. [The Jews, to whom Matthew wrote his Gospel, were extremely fond of such groupings and divisions as this.]

Section 4 LUKE'S GENEALOGY Lk 3:23-38

(c) **23 And Jesus himself** [Luke has been speaking about John the Baptist, he now turns to speak of Jesus himself], **when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age** [the age when a Levite entered upon God's service--*Nm 4:46,47*; also see on Lk 3:23], **being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son** [this may mean that Jesus was grandson of Heli, or that Joseph was counted as a son of Heli because he was his son-in-law] **of Heli, 24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, 25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, 26 the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, 27 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri** [Matthew calls Shealtiel the son of Jechoniah (*Mt 1:12*). [7] Jechoniah may have been the natural, and Neri the legal, father of Shealtiel--*Dt 25:5-10 Mt 22:24*], **28 the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosan, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, 29 the son of Jesus, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, 30 the son of Symeon, the son of Judas, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, 31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, 32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon** [he was probably one of the two spies who were sent to Jericho by Joshua--*Josh 2:1-24*], **the son of Nahshon** [he was prince of the tribe of Judah during the wanderings in the wilderness--*Nm 1:4-7 10:14*], **33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, 34 the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, 35 the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber** [it is thought that the name "Hebrew" comes from this man--*Gn 10:21 40:15 Ex 2:6*], **the son of Shelah, 36 the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah** [the hero of the flood--*Gn 7:6*], **the son of Lamech, 37 the son of Methuselah** [who lived to be the oldest man on record, dying when 969 years old--*Gn 5:27*], **the son of Enoch** [whom God translated--*Gn 5:24 Heb 11:5*], **the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, 38 the son of Enos, the son of Seth** [the third son of Adam--*Gn 4:25*], **the son of Adam, the son of God** [Adam was the son of God, being not merely a creature, but a creature made in God's image and likeness--*Gn 1:26,27*.] [8]

Section 5 ANNUNCIATION TO ZECHARIAH (Jerusalem ca. 6 B.C.) Lk 1:5-25

(c) **There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea** [a Jewish proselyte, an Idumean or Edomite by birth, founder of the Herodian family, king of Judea from 40 B.C. to A.D. 4, made such by the Roman Senate on the recommendation of Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar--see on Mt 2:1], **a certain priest named Zachariah, of the course** [David divided the priests into twenty-four bodies or courses, each course serving in rotation one week in the temple (*1Ch 24:3-19*). Of these courses that of Abijah was the eighth] **of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron** [The Baptist was of the priestly race by both parents, a family distinction much esteemed among the Jews. He who was thus doubly a priest proclaimed Him who changed the priesthood], **and her name was Elizabeth.** [She was named after her ancestress Elisheba, the wife of Aaron.] **6 And they were both righteous before God** [that is, truly righteous, or righteous in God's judgment, and not in mere appearance--*Gn 7:1*], **walking in all the commandments and ordinances** [Strictly construed, commandments would refer to moral, and ordinances to ceremonial laws. The two words include all the positive and negative precepts] **of the Lord**

blameless. 7 And they had no child [this fact was a reproach and shame to her, barrenness being considered even a punishment for sin by many], **because that Elizabeth was barren** [the births of Isaac (*Gn 17:17 21:2*), Samson (*Jud 13:2,24*), Samuel (*1Sa 1:2,5,20*) and the Baptist were all contrary to nature, and were faint foreshadowings of the greater miracle that took place in the birth of our Lord], **and they both were now well stricken in years.** (c) **8 And it came to pass, [9] that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course** [that is, when it came the turn of his course to minister in the temple], **9 according to the custom** [there were many duties in the temple service, and the priests in each course daily drew lots for these duties] **of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the temple** [not that group of buildings, courts, and enclosures that was all called the temple; but the real sanctuary itself, the small but holy building that took the place of the tabernacle of the wilderness] **of the Lord and burn incense.** [Made of a mixture of sweet spices. The temple incense was made of stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense, in equal parts, beaten very small--*Ex 30:7,8,34-38.*] **10 The whole multitude** [the presence of the multitude indicates that it was a Sabbath or a feast day] **of the people were praying** [Incense is a symbol of prayer (*Ps 141:1,2 Re 8:3*). Each of the multitude prayed in silence] **without** [outside the sanctuary, in the temple courts, particularly the court of the women] **at the time of incense.** [Incense was offered evening and morning (*Ex 30:1-8*). Probably at 9 A.M. and at 3 P.M. Compare *Ac 3:1*. The text favors the idea that Zachariah's vision came in the morning.] (c) **11 And there appeared unto him** [one of God's invisible messengers who came visibly--*2Ki 6:17 Ps 34:7*] **an angel of the Lord** [Luke frequently tells of the ministrations of angels (*Lk 1:26 2:9,13,21 12:8 15:10 16:22 22:43 24:4,23*). They are also often mentioned in the Book of Acts (*Ac 5:19 8:26 10:3,7,22 11:13 12:7,8,9 12:10,11,15,23 27:23*). There had been no appearance of an angel for about four hundred years] **standing on the right side** [the place of honor and dignity--*Ac 7:56*] **of the altar of incense.** [The altar on which Zachariah was burning incense. It stood in the Holy Place in front of the veil that hung between the holy and the most holy places. It was a small table twenty-two inches in breadth and length and forty-four inches in height. It was made of acacia wood, and overlaid with gold--*Ex 37:25.*] **12 And Zachariah was troubled** [as men always are at the sight of heavenly beings [10] --*Gn 3:9,10 Da 10:7-12 Re 1:17,18*] **when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.** (c) **13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not** [These are the first words of the gospel that began at that hour to unfold itself--see on *Lk 1:30*], **Zachariah: because your supplication is heard, and your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.** [This name means "the Lord is gracious," or "the Lord is merciful."] **14 And you shall have joy and gladness** [you shall feel as Abraham did when he named his new-born son Isaac (*Gn 21:3*); that is, "Laughter"]; **and many** [but not all] **shall rejoice at his birth.** **15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord** [compare *Lk 1:6*], **and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink.** [Strong drink is any other fermented liquor. As to the temperance of the Baptist, compare the history of Samson (*Jud 13:3-5*) and the law of the Nazarite--*Nm 6:2-4*]; **and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit** [the stimulation of the Spirit is elsewhere thus contrasted with alcoholic stimulants--*Ac 2:15-18 Eph 5:18*], **even from his mother's womb.** [See *Lk 1:41.*] **16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God.** [These words were quoted from *Mal 4:6*, and resumed the thread of prophecy that had been broken nearly four centuries before. Roman rule had brought in the vices and profligacy of Italy and Greece, and the nation needed to turn back to its former godly life.] **17 And he shall go before his face** [the face of Messiah, who is also the Lord God--*Mal 3:1*] **in the spirit and power of Elijah** [And thus in fulfillment of the prophecy that Elijah should come again (*Mal 4:6 Mt 17:9-13*). The Jews still expect Elijah as the forerunner of Messiah. John showed the spirit of Elijah in his ascetic dress and life (*2Ki 1:8 Mt 3:4*) and in his message of repentance--*1Ki 18:21-40*], **to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.** [These are the last words of the Old [11] Testament, there used by a prophet; here expounded by an angel; there concluding the law; here beginning the gospel. The phrase may mean: 1. John will restore unity to the families of Israel, now divided into political factions, as Herodians or friends of Rome, and zealots or patriots; and into religious factions, as Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, etc.; or more likely it may mean, 2. That John would restore the broken relationship between the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their degenerate descendants--*Isa 29:22,23 63:16 Jn 8:37-40*], **and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him.** [As in the East the "friend," or go-between,

prepares the bride to understand and appreciate her bridegroom--*Jn 3:28,29.*] **(c) 18 And Zachariah said unto the angel, How shall I know this?** [In asking for a sign Zachariah showed his unbelief (*Mt 12:38,39*). His question in the original is in four words. Four faithless words cost him forty weeks of silence.] **for I am an old man** [So said Abraham (*Gn 17:17*). The law that retired Levites from service at the age of fifty years (*Nm 8:25,26*) did not apply to priests. They served to extreme old age], **and my wife well stricken in years.** **19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel** [This name means "hero, or mighty one, of God." Gabriel announced to Daniel the time of Christ's birth and death (*Da 9:21,25,26*). He also announced the birth of Jesus to Mary (*Lk 1:26*). The Bible gives the name of but one other angel; namely: Michael (*Da 10:13,21 12:1 Jude 1:9 Re 12:7*), meaning "Who is like God?", **that stands in the presence of God** [Seven angels are [12] spoken of as standing in the presence of God (*Re 8:2*) and may probably be called angels of the presence (*Isa 63:9*). But to see the face of God is no doubt accorded to all angels (*Mt 18:10*). One who stands in the presence of God should be believed by men without approving signs]; **and I was sent to speak unto you, and to bring you these good tidings.** [Our word "gospel" means good tidings.] **20 And, behold, you shall be silent** [it was a sign; and also a punishment for having sought a sign] **and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because you did not believe my words, that shall be fulfilled in their season.** **21 And the people were waiting for Zachariah, and they marveled while he tarried** [The Jews considered slow service as irreverent and displeasing to God. The punishment attached to displeasing service made them fearful--*Lv 16:13*] **in the temple.** **22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them** [Could not dismiss them with the usual blessing (*Nm 6:23-26*).]; **and they perceived** [probably by his excited manner] **that he had seen a vision** [the most vivid and objective of all spiritual phenomena--*Lk 24:23 Ac 26:19 2Co 12:1 Da 9:23*] **in the temple: and he continued making signs unto them, and remained dumb.** **(c) 23 And it came to pass, when the days of his ministration** [They are said to have lasted from the evening of one Sabbath (Friday at sundown) to the morning of the next. Though doubtless chagrined at the punishment that had come upon him, the old priest remained at his post, and dwelt in the temple until his week was finished] **were fulfilled, he departed unto his house.** [Exact location unknown.] **24 And after these days Elizabeth his wife conceived; and she hid herself** [probably through mingled feelings of modesty, humility, devotion, and joy] **five months** [at the end of which time her seclusion was interrupted by the visit [13] of Mary], **saying, 25 Thus** [graciously and mercifully] **has the Lord done unto me in the days in which he looked upon me, to take away my reproach** [the reproach of being childless--*Gn 30:23*] **among men.**

Section 6

ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

(Nazareth ca. 5 B.C.)

Lk 1:26-38

(c) 26 Now in the sixth month [this is the passage from which we learn that John was six months older than Jesus] **the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth** [Luke alone tells us where Mary lived before the birth of Jesus. That Nazareth was an unimportant town is shown by the fact that it is mentioned nowhere in the Old Testament, nor in the Talmud, nor in Josephus, who mentions two hundred four towns and cities of Galilee. The way in which Luke introduces Galilee and Nazareth shows that he wrote to those unfamiliar with Palestine. Galilee comprised the lands of Zebulun, Naphtali, Issachar and Asher. It was rich in trees and pastures. Its people were hardy and warlike], **27 to a virgin betrothed to a man** [In the East, the betrothal or engagement was entered into with much ceremony, and usually took place a year before the marriage. It was so sacred that the parties entering into it could not be separated except by a bill of divorcement--*Mt 1:19*] **to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David** [that is, Joseph was of the house of David]; **and the virgin's name was Mary.** [The same as Miriam--*Ex 15:20.*] **(c) 28 And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, you who are highly favored, the Lord is with you.** **29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and**

cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be. [Whether it meant a present sorrow or joy, for God's salutations all [14] mean joy, but usually is in the distant future--*Heb 12:11 2Co 4:17,18.*] **30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not** [the gospel is full of "Fear nots" (*Mt 1:20 10:28,31 14:27 17:7 28:5,10 Mk 5:36 6:50 Lk 1:13,30 2:10 5:10 8:50 12:4,7,32 Jn 6:20 12:15 Ac 18:9,19 27:24 1Pe 3:14 Re 1:17 2:10*); it teaches us that perfect love that casts out fear--*1Jo 4:18*], **for you have found favor with God. (c) 31 And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS.** [The same as Hoshea (*Nm 13:8*), Joshua, and Jeshua (*Zec 3:1*). It means the "salvation of Jehovah." It was one of the most common Jewish names, but was given to Jesus by divine direction because of its fitness--*Mt 1:21.*] **32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High** [A common Hebrew way of saying "He shall be." Even the evil spirits called Jesus by this name--*Mk 5:7*]: **and the Lord God shall give unto him** [he shall not receive his kingdom as a bribe from Satan (*Mt 4:9*), nor win it by force of arms (*Jn 18:10,11,36 Mt 26:53*), but as the gift of God--*Ac 2:32-36 Php 2:9-11 Mt 28:18*] **the throne** [see *Ps 132:11*] **of his father David** [this must refer to Mary's descent from David, for she is expressly told in *Lk 1:35* that her son would have no earthly father]: **33 and he shall reign over the house of Jacob** [That is, over the family or descendants of Jacob; but the expression includes his spiritual, rather than his carnal, descendants (*Ga 3:7,28,29*). This name therefore includes the Gentiles as the name of a river includes the rivers that flow into it] **forever** [*Da 2:44 7:13,14,27 Mic 4:7 Ps 45:6 Heb 1:8 Re 11:15*]; **and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** [*Isa 7:9*. Christ shall resign his mediatorial kingdom to the Father at the close of this dispensation (*1Co 15:24-28*); but as being one with his Father he shall rule forever.] **(c) 34 And Mary unto the angel, How shall this be** [Her question indicates surprise, not disbelief. Unlike Zachariah (*Lk 1:18*), she asked no sign. The youthful village maiden, amid her humble daily duties, shows a more ready faith in the far more startling message than the aged priest in the holy place of the temple in the atmosphere [15] of the sacred incense], **seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow** [the Spirit of God is thus spoken of as "brooding over" or overshadowing creation to develop it--*Gn 1:2*] **you** [This indicates that the Holy Spirit himself created the body of Christ (*Heb 10:5*). The spirit, or divine nature, of Christ was from the beginning, and was unbegotten--that is, in the sense of being created]: **wherefore also the holy thing.** [the body of Jesus--*Heb 7:26 1Pe 2:22*] **that is begotten** [*Ga 4:4*] **shall be called the Son of God.** [As the Evangelist is here talking about the bodily and human nature of Jesus, it is possible that he may here speak of Jesus as the Son of God in the same sense in which he called Adam the son of God (*Lk 3:38*); that is, his body and human nature were the direct and miraculous production of the divine power. If so, we find Jesus called the Son of God in three senses: 1. Here, because he was born into the world in a supernatural manner. 2. Elsewhere, because by his resurrection he was begotten from the dead (*Ro 1:4 Ac 13:33 Ps 2:7*). 3. Also elsewhere, because of the eternal, immutable, and unparalleled relationship that he sustains to the Father--*Jn 1:1,14,18.*] **(c) 36 And behold, Elizabeth your kinswoman, she also has conceived a son in her old age.** [The angel tells of Elizabeth's condition, that it may encourage the faith of Mary, and lead her to trust in Him with whom nothing is impossible--*Jer 32:17,27 Gn 18:14 Mt 19:26.*] **37 For no word from God shall be void of power.** [*Isa 55:11.*] **38 And Mary said, Behold, the handmaid** [Literally, "slave" or "bondservant." It is the feminine form of the word that Paul so often applies to himself (*Ro 1:1 Tit 1:1*). Mary uses it to indicate her submissive and obedient spirit] **of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word.** [In great faith she not only believes the promise, but prays for its fulfillment. She bowed to the will of God like [16] Eli (*1Sa 3:18*), and became the mother of Him who prayed, "Not my will, but your, be done"--*Lk 22:42.*] **And the angel departed from her.**

Section 7
MARY VISITS ELIZABETH
(Hill Country of Judea ca. 5 B.C.)
Lk 1:39-56

A. Elizabeth's Praise for Mary (Lk 1:39-45).

(c) **39 And Mary arose in these days** [within a week or two after the angel appeared to her] **and went into the hill country** [the district of Judah lying south of Jerusalem, of which the city of Hebron was the center] **with haste** [she fled to those whom God had inspired, so that they could understand her condition and know her innocence--to those who were inspired as Joseph needed to be inspired, that he might understand--*Mt 1:18-25*], **into a city of Judah** [where Zachariah dwelt--see *Lk 1:23*]; **40 and entered into the house of Zachariah and saluted Elizabeth. 41 And it came to pass, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb** [see *Lk 1:15*]; **and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit** [sufficiently to have a supernatural knowledge of things and to utter prophecy]; (c) **42 And she lifted up her voice with a loud cry** [Indicating intense, ecstatic joy. What joy must have filled the hearts of these two women as they realized that one was to be the mother of the long-expected Messiah, and the other of his Elijah-like forerunner!], **and said, Blessed** [see *Lk 1:28*] **are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43 And what is this to me** [why am I thus honored?--*Mt 8:7,8*], **that the mother of my Lord** [This word imported sometimes divinity, and sometimes mere superiority. The Jews employed this term in connection with the Messiah; but in which sense cannot [17] now be determined. Inspired writers employ it in the higher sense when applying it to Jesus (*Mt 22:41-45*), and in that sense it is no doubt used here] **should come unto me? 44 For behold, when the voice of your salutation came into my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy 45 And blessed is she that believed** [Elizabeth may have here remembered how her own husband failed to believe]; **for there shall be a fulfillment of the things that have been spoken to her from the Lord.**

B. Mary's Praise for God (Lk 1:46-56).

(c) **46 And Mary said** [She speaks in poetic strain. Her song closely resembles that of Hannah--*1Sa 2:1-10*], **My soul magnifies** [Mary's song is called "The Magnificat" from this word] **the Lord, 47 and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 For he has looked upon the low estate** [this refers to the contrast between her present condition and that of the former glories of David's house, from which she sprang] **of his handmaid: For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.** [Here ends the first section of her song. In it she speaks of herself, and her adoration toward God for his condescending blessing. Mary was blessed in her motherhood, Abraham in his covenant and promises, Paul in his apostleship, etc., but none of these human beings are to be worshiped because of the blessings that they received. Rather should we bestow the more worship on God, from whom these their blessings flow--*Jas 1:17*.] **49 For he that is mighty has done to me great things; And holy is his name. [Ex 20:7.] 50 And his mercy is unto generations and generations.** [that is, it is unceasing--*Ex 20:6*] **on them that fear him.** [Here ends the second division of her song. In it Mary glorifies God for his power, holiness and mercy.] **51 He has showed strength with his arm.** [God's efficacy is represented by his finger (*Ex 8:19*); his great power by his hand (*Ex 3:20*); and his omnipotence by his arm--*Ex 15:16*]; **He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart. 52 He has put down princes from their thrones, And has exalted them of low degree. [18] 53 The hungry he has filled with good things; And the rich he has sent empty away.** [These expressions are hyperboles for the disappointment of the proud, the princely, and the rich, in whose families the Messiah was expected. God has passed these by, and exalted a lowly one. Here ends the third section or verse of the hymn. It speaks of the changes that the Messiah would work as if he had already worked them.] **54 He has given help to Israel his servant, That he might remember mercy; 55 (As he spoke unto our fathers) Toward Abraham [Mic 7:20 Ga 3:16] and his seed forever.** [The hymn closes with an expression of gratitude to God for his faithfulness in keeping his covenants.] **56 And Mary abode with her about three months** [or until John was born], **and returned** [a favorite word with Luke, used twenty-one times in his Gospel--*Lk 1:56 2:39,43,45 4:1,14 7:10 8:37,39,40 9:10 10:17 11:24 17:15,18 19:12 23:48,56 24:9,33,52*] **unto her house.**

Section 8 BIRTH & EARLY MINISTRY OF JOHN

**(Hill Country of Judea ca. 5 B.C.)
Lk 1:57-80**

(c) 57 Now Elizabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. **58** And her neighbors and her kinfolk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her [mercy in granting a child; great mercy in granting so illustrious a child]; and they rejoiced with her. **59** And it came to pass on the eighth day [See *Gn 17:12 Lv 12:3 Php 3:5*. Male children were named at their circumcision, probably because at that time the names of Abram and Sarai had been changed (*Gn 17:5,15*). Females were named when they were weaned], they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zachariah, after the name of his father. **60** And his mother answered and said, **Not so** [Zachariah had [19] evidently written, and thus communicated to his wife all that the angel had told him, and how the child was to be named John]; but he shall be called John. **61** And they said unto her, **There is none of your kindred** [Family names were even more thought of, and honored, among the Jews than among us. They had no taste for romantic and eccentric names] **that is called by this name.** **62** And they made signs [this seems to indicate that Zachariah was deaf as well as dumb] to his father, what he would have him called. **63** And he asked for a writing tablet [tablets were sometimes made of lead, but were usually small wooden boards, either smeared with wax, or having sand sprinkled over them, on which words were written with an iron stylus or pencil], and wrote, saying, **His name is John.** And they marveled all. [Being surprised that both parents should thus unite upon an unexpected name.] **(c) 64** And his mouth was opened immediately [See *Lk 1:20*. The angel's words were now completely fulfilled, therefore the punishment for disbelief was removed], and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. [Probably the words recorded in *Lk 1:68-79*.] **65** And fear came [The miraculous phenomena attending the birth of John made the people so conscious of the presence of God as to fill them with awe. The influence of this fear spread far and wide until the chills and tremors of expected changes and revolutions were felt even by the citizens of Rome, as their poets and historians testify] **on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea.** **66** And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, **What then shall this child be?** [We probably find an echo of this question thirty years later when John entered upon his ministry--*Jn 1:19*.] **And the hand of the Lord was with him.** **67** And his father Zachariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied [This his prophecy is the last of the old dispensation, and the first of the new, or Christian, era. It also is poetry, and is a hymn of thanksgiving for the time of Messiah's [20] advent], saying, **68** **Blessed** [the hymn gets its name from this word, and is called the Benedictus] **be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he has visited** [Come back, in the person of his Spirit, to his people. After some four hundred years of absence the Holy Spirit, as the spirit of prophecy, had again returned to God's people. Malachi, the last of the prophets, had been dead about four centuries] **and wrought redemption for his people,** **69** **And has raised up a horn** [the horn is a symbol of power--*Da 7:7,8 8:21*] **of salvation for us In the house of his servant David** [this also indicates that Mary was of the house of David] **70** **(As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old)** [*Gn 3:15 22:18 49:10 Nm 24:17 2Pe 1:21 Heb 1:1*], **71** **Salvation from our enemies** [not only Rome, the enemy of Israelite prosperity, but also those evil agencies that wage ceaseless warfare against the souls of men--*Eph 6:12*], **and from the hand of all that hate us;** **72** **To show mercy towards our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant** [contract or agreement]; **73** **The oath that he swore unto Abraham our father** [see *Gn 12:3 17:4 22:16,17*], **74** **To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies should serve him without fear,** **75** **In holiness and righteousness** [holiness is good conduct toward God, righteousness is good conduct toward men] **before him all our days.** **76** **Yes and you, child** [the rest of the psalm is addressed to the infant John], **shall be called the prophet** [see *Mt 11:9 Lk 20:6*] **of the Most High: For you shall go before the face of the Lord** [the Lord Jesus Christ] **to make ready his ways** [*Isa 40:3 Mt 3:3*]; **77** **To give knowledge of salvation unto his people** [Israel had a false idea that the Messiah's salvation would be from political evil. John was needed to tell them that it was from sin that God proposed to deliver them. Perdition does not consist in political wrongs, but in divine condemnation] **In the remission of their sins** [through Christ's

work--Ac 5:31], [21] **78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Dayspring from on high** [One of the many names for Jesus or his kingdom. The prophets loved to picture Messiah's advent as a sunrise (*Isa 9:2 60:1-3 Mal 4:2 Mt 4:16 Jn 1:4,5*). Christ's coming was the dawn of a new day for Israel and for mankind] **shall visit us, 79 To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; To guide our feet into the way of peace.** [Travelers in the Judean mountains often waited patiently for the morning light, lest they should lose their lives by a false step taken in the darkness--*Isa 59:8.*] **80 And the child grew, and became strong in spirit** [*1Sa 2:26 Lk 2:40,52*] **and was in the deserts** [The thinly settled region west of the Dead Sea. In *1Sa 23:19* it is called Jeshimon, or "the Horror"] **till the day of his showing unto Israel.** [The day when he commenced his ministry and declared his commission as Messiah's forerunner.]

Section 9 ANNUNCIATION TO JOSEPH (Nazareth 5 B.C.) Mt 1:18-25

(a) 18 Now the birth [The birth of Jesus is to be handled with reverential awe. We are not to probe into its mysteries with presumptuous curiosity. The birth of common persons is mysterious enough (*Ec 9:5 Ps 139:13-16*), and we do not well, therefore, if we seek to be wise above what is written as to the birth of the Son of God] **of Jesus Christ happened like this: When his mother Mary had been betrothed** [The Jews were usually betrothed ten or twelve months prior to the marriage. So sacred was this relationship that unfaithfulness to it was deemed adultery, and was punishable by death--death by stoning (*Dt 22:23-28 Lv 20:10 Eze 16:38 Jn 8:5*). Those betrothed [22] were regarded as husband and wife, and could only be separated by divorcement.] **to Joseph, before they came together** [Before Joseph brought his bride to his own house. An espoused maiden lived in her father's house until the marriage, as is our own custom] **she was found with child of the Holy Spirit** [The two evangelists (Matthew and Luke) that give the earthly genealogy of Jesus are each careful to mention his miraculous conception through the Holy Spirit (compare *Lk 1:35*). All New Testament writers recognize Jesus as at once both human and divine. Christ's *physical* nature was begotten of the Holy Spirit, but the Christian's *spiritual* nature is begotten of him (*Jn 1:13*). The act of the Holy Spirit in this case indicates that he is a personality, and not a mere influence, as some are disposed to imagine. Influences do not create physical bodies.] **19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man** [As a righteous man he could not complete his marriage, and thus stain his family name. As a merciful man he did not wish to openly disgrace the one to whom he was so fondly attached. He wished to act justly toward his own reputation, and mercifully toward the reputation of Mary], **and not willing to make her a public example** [he did not wish to expose her to the shame of a public trial before the court, nor to punish her as the law permitted], **was minded to put her away privately** [The law of Moses gave the husband the power of divorce (*Dt 24:1*). The bill or writing certifying the divorce usually stated the cause, and was handed to the wife in the presence of witnesses. Joseph evidently intended to omit stating any cause in the bill, that there might be no record to convict her of shame. The law of divorce applied to betrothed as well as to married persons.] **20 But when he thought on these things** [God guides the thoughtful, not the unthinking], **behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him** [The sufferings of both Mary and Joseph must have been very extreme at this time--one being forced to suspect the chief object of his affections, and the other being compelled to rest under the unjust suspicions of loved ones, because of a condition that God alone could explain.] **in a dream** [A mode of communication frequently used by God (*Gn 20:3 31:11,24 37:5 41:1 1Ki 3:5 Da 7:1 Job 4:13-15*). It is difficult to say how men determined between ordinary and divine dreams, but doubtless the latter came with a glory and vividness that gave assurance of their supernatural nature. Matthew mentions four divine dreams, namely: this one; the second one given to Joseph (*Mt 2:13*); the dream of the Magi (*Mt 2:12*); the dream of Pilate's wife--*Mt 27:19*], **saying, Joseph** [We are known to angels, and they address us by name (*Ac 10:3,13 27:24*). Much more does the Lord know our names--*Jn 10:3 Lk 19:5*], **you**

son of David [the name of David was calculated to waken the memories of God's promises, and helped to prepare Joseph to receive the wonderful news that Messiah was about to be born, for Messiah was the promised heir of David], **fear not to take unto you Mary your wife** [Have no fear as to Mary's virtue and purity. Fear no disgrace in taking her. Joseph feared as a son of David that this marriage would sully his genealogy. But it was what gave point and purpose to an otherwise barren and uninteresting record. He feared as a man lest he should share Mary's apparent disgrace; but he had infinitely more reason to fear his unworthiness to share with her the exalted responsibilities of parentage to our [24] Lord--see on Lk 1:30]: **for what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she shall bring forth a son** [the angel does not say "shall bear you a son," as he said to Zachariah--*Lk 1:13*]; **and you shall call his name JESUS** [Joseph was to take the position of a legal father to the child and name it. The name means "Salvation of Jehovah" or "Jehovah is the Savior."]; **for it is he that shall save his people from their sins** [Thus from before his very birth-hour the nature of Christ's salvation is fully set forth. He came to save from the guilt of sin by having shed his blood, that sins may be remitted or washed clean. He saves from the power of sin by bestowing the gift of the Spirit, who regenerates, comforts, and strengthens, and ultimately he saves from the punishment of sin by giving us a resurrection from the dead, and an abundant entrance into the home of glory. That is no salvation at all which fails to free us from this triple bondage of sin.] **22 Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled that was spoken by the Lord** [It was not fulfilled because predicted, but was rather predicted because sure to take place. The same Spirit that foretold through [25] the lips of the prophet now interprets the foretelling through the lips of the angel] **through the prophet** [*Isa 7:14*. Isaiah's name is not given. The ancients were studious readers, and had few books, so that there was little need to cite authors by name], **saying** [About the year 740 B.C. While Ahaz was king of Judah, his land was threatened with an invasion by the united armies of Syria and Israel. Isaiah came to frightened Ahaz, promised divine aid, and told Ahaz to seek from God a sign confirming this promise. This Ahaz refused to do; whereupon Isaiah replied that God would grant a sign to the house of David. The sign was that a virgin should have a son.], **23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child** [The Sonship of Jesus demands a miraculous birth. If we doubt the miracle of his conception, we can never solve the perplexing problem of his marvelous life and death], **and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name** [rather, title; under the head of "name" the titles of Jesus are also set forth at *Isa 9:6*] **Immanuel; that is, being interpreted, God with us** [Nature shows God above us; the Law shows God against us; but the gospel shows God with us, and for us. The blessing of the church militant is Christ, God with us; that of the church triumphant is Christ, us with God. In this world Jesus walked "with us" in human form (*Jn 1:14*); and because he did so, we, in the world to come, shall walk "with him" in divine form (*1Jo 3:2 1Co 15:49*). In a personal sense Jesus may fitly be called "God with us," for he was God and man united in one body.] **24 And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.** [he followed the instructions, though contrary to his first inclination. Blessed are they who [26] permit God to guide them. As Joseph appears to have acted at once upon the angel's instruction, the marriage must have taken place several months prior to the birth of Jesus], **and took unto him his wife** [thus becoming the legally recognized father of Jesus, and though he bestowed upon Jesus but a humble name (*Lk 4:22 Mt 13:55*), he nevertheless rescued him from the reproach of an illegitimate birth]; **25 and knew her not till she had brought forth a son** [Romish teachers contend for the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary, that she may be regarded as an object of worship. This doctrine cannot be proved by Scripture. But there are weightier reasons than this that forbid us to worship her; namely, it cannot be proven from Scripture either that she was *divine* or that she was *sinless*. Moreover, the fact that she entered the marital state at all, shows that she was perfectly human, and comported herself as such]: **and he called his name JESUS.** [Two Old Testament heroes bore the name Jesus under the form of Joshua. One was captain of Israel for the conquest of Canaan (*Jos 1:1,12*), the other was high priest of Israel for rebuilding the Temple (*Zec 6:11,12*). Christ was both the Captain of our salvation and the High Priest of our profession.]

Section 10 BIRTH OF JESUS

(Bethlehem ca. 5 B.C.)

Lk 2:1-7

(c) **1 Now it came to pass in those days** [the days of the birth of John the Baptist], **there went out a decree** [a law] **from Caesar Augustus** [Octavius, or Augustus, Caesar was the nephew of and successor to Julius Caesar. He took the name Augustus in compliment to his own greatness; and our month August is named for him; its old name being Sextilis], **that all the world should be enrolled.** [This enrollment or census was the first step in the process of taxation.] **2 This was the first** [27] **enrolment.** [Publius Sulpicius Quirinius was governor of Syria, A.D. 6-11, and made a census of his province at that time, as Luke well knew (*Ac 5:37*). We have no other record showing either his governorship or a census made by him *at the time of the birth of Christ*. But he was held in high favor by the Emperor, and was, about the time of the birth of Christ, carrying on a war just north of Syria, in Cilicia, and it is therefore easy for us to accept Luke's statement that as imperial commissioner or as governor of Syria he made such a census.] **made when Quirinius was governor** [Quirinius was doubtless twice governor of Syria, his first term being about 5-1 B.C. The Greek word *hegemon*, which Luke uses for "governor," would be used for either of the Roman titles, namely: Propraetor, or senatorial governor; or Quaestor, or imperial commissioner. Quirinius may have commenced the enrollment as Quaestor and finished it ten years later as Propraetor. He was well-known character in that age. Harsh and avaricious as a governor, but an able and loyal soldier, earning a Roman triumph for successes in Cilicia, and being honored by a public funeral in A.D. 21] **of Syria.** [A Roman province including all Palestine, and a tract four or five times as large lying to the northeast of Palestine.] **3 And all went to enroll themselves** [The enrollment may have had no reference to taxation. It was more probably to ascertain the military strength of the various provinces. The Romans enrolled each person at the place where he was then residing; but permitted the Jews to return to their ancestral or tribal cities and enroll themselves as citizens of these cities], **everyone to his own city.** [The city where his ancestors had been settled by Joshua when he divided the land--*Jos 13:1-18:28*.] **4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth** [see on Lk 1:26], **unto Judea, to the city of David** [after the lapse of ten centuries the name of David still cast its fragrance over the place of his birth--*1Sa 17:12*], **which is called Bethlehem** [Meaning "house of bread." It was the later or Jewish name for the old [28] Canaanitish village of Ephrath, the Ephrath near which Rachel died (*Gn 35:19*). It was marked by Micah as the birthplace of Messiah--*Mic 5:2 Mt 2:5,6*], **because he was of the house and family of David; 5 to be taxed with Mary, who was betrothed to him** [see *Mt 1:25*], **being great with child. 6 And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered.** [The early Christians made no record of the date of Christ's birth; we find no mention of December 25 earlier than the fourth century. The Eastern church celebrated Christ's birth by a feast called Epiphany, which means "manifestation." They chose January 6 as the date for this feast, for they reasoned that if the first Adam was born on the sixth day of creation, the second Adam must have been born on the sixth day of the year. The Western church celebrated Christ's birth on the 25th of December by a feast called Natalis, which means "Nativity." But Pope Julius I. (A.D. 337-352) designated December 25 as the proper day, and the Eastern churches soon united with the Western churches in observing this day; and the custom has become universal. We do not observe this day because of the Pope's decree, but because of the tradition on which the Pope's decree was founded.] **7 And she brought forth her firstborn** [This word in no way implies that the Virgin subsequently had other children. Jesus, the only begotten, is also called "the firstborn"-*-Heb 1:6*] **son; and she wrapped** [having none to help her, she swathed him in bands with her own hands] **him in swaddling clothes** [the new-born Jewish child was washed in water, rubbed with salt, and then wrapped in bands or blankets, which confined the limbs closely--*Eze 16:4*], **and laid him in a manger** [Justin Martyr, who was born about the beginning of the second century and suffered martyrdom A.D. 165, first tells us the tradition that the stable in which Jesus was born was a cave.], **because there was no room for them in the inn.** [Eastern inns had landlords like our own. The inn was full at this time because of the number who had come to be enrolled. Inns contained rooms for persons and stalls for animals: there was no room in the former, but there was in the latter.]

Section 11
PROCLAMATION TO THE SHEPHERDS
(Near Bethlehem, ca. 5 B.C.)
Lk 2:8-20

(c) 8 And there were shepherds in the same country [they were in the same fields from which David had been called to tend God's Israel, or flock] **abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock.** [When the flock is too far from the village to lead it to the fold at night, these shepherds still so abide with it in the field, even in the dead of winter.] **9 And an angel of the Lord stood by them** [He stood upon the earth at their side, and did not float above them in the heavens, as he is usually pictured. His standing upon the earth shows a fuller fellowship and sympathy with men--compare *Ac 1:10*], **and the glory of the Lord shone round about them** [The Shechinah, or bright cloud, which symbolizes the divine presence (*Ex 24:16 1Ki 8:10 Isa 6:1-3 Ro 9:4*). It was seen by the three apostles upon the mount of transfiguration (*Mt 17:5*), by Stephen (*Ac 7:55*), and by Paul--*Ac 22:6-11*): **and they were very afraid. (c) 10 And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy** [Christianity is a religion of present joys, and leads onward to joy eternal] **that shall be to all the people: 11 for there is born to you** [born as a gift to us--*Jn 3:16*] **this day in the city of David a Savior.** [the angel omits the name of [30] Jesus, but gives the meaning of his name], **who is the Christ** ["Messiah" is the Hebrew and "Christ" is the Greek for our English word "anointed." Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. Jesus held all these three offices for all our race for all eternity] **the Lord. 12 And this is the sign** [The token by which to identify the child. A babe in a manger was not ordinary sight] **unto you: You shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.** [What a strange contrast! Idolatry on the throne (in the person of Augustus Caesar), and the founder of a new religion and a new empire lying in a manger!] **13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude** [The event was too important to be heralded by any one angel. All heaven was interested in the departure of its Prince, and marveled at the grace of the Father who sent him--*1Pe 1:12*] **of the heavenly host** [God's army (*1Ki 22:19 Ps 103:20,21*). The Deity is called "God of Sabaoth"; that is, God of hosts or multitude (*Ro 9:29 Jas 5:4 Da 7:10 Re 5:11,12*); but at this time God's army appeared to announce the coming of eternal peace] **praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest** [in the highest heavens--*Job 16:19 Ps 148:1*], **And on earth peace among men** [The angels invoke blessing on God and peace upon man. Peace between God and man, and ultimately peace between man and man] **in whom he is well pleased.** [The love of God is shed abroad upon all, even the vilest of sinners (*Ro 5:8 1Ti 1:15*); but his peace comes upon those who have accepted his Son, and in whom he is therefore especially well pleased (*Ro 9:11*).] **15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord has made known** [31] **unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger. 17 And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying that was spoken to them about the child.** [They were the first evangelists. Among the heralds of Christ we note one great prophet, John the Baptist, and one learned Pharisee, Paul; the rest are shepherds, fishermen, and publicans, yet their gospel has triumphed over the wisdom of men (*1Co 1:26-29 2Co 4:7*).] **18 And all that heard it wondered** [the gospel story excites wonder; the more we ponder it the more wonderful it becomes] **at the things that were spoken unto them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these sayings** [The silence of Mary contrasts with the talkativeness of the shepherds], **pondering them in her heart.** [Only Mary could know the fact here stated; and the statement indicates that Luke got the opening parts of his Gospel from the mother of our Lord. She had much to think about. The angelic messages to Zachariah, to herself, and to the shepherds were full of significance, and her mind would search diligently to comprehend the fullness of their meaning. In her quiet thoughtfulness the beauty of the Virgin's character shines forth--*1Pe 3:4*.] **20 And the shepherds returned** [they did not make this glorious occasion an excuse for neglecting their humble duties], **glorifying** [because of the

greatness of what had been revealed] **and praising God** [because of the goodness of what he revealed] **for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.** [Jesus came in exactly the same manner in which his coming had been spoken of or described by the angels a few hours before; and also just as his coming had been spoken of or described by the prophets centuries and centuries before. The shepherds doubtless passed to their reward during [32] the thirty years that Jesus spent in seclusion prior to his entering upon his ministry. But the rest of their commonplace life was now filled with music of praise, and their night watches lit by the glory of God, which could never entirely fade away.]

Section 12

ACCLAIM FOR THE INFANT

(Bethlehem & Jerusalem, 4 B.C.)

Lk 2:21-39

A. Circumcision and Naming (Lk 2:21).

(c) 21 And when eight days [*Gn 17:12*] **were fulfilled for circumcising him** [The rite was doubtless performed by Joseph. By this rite Jesus was "made like unto his brethren" (*Heb 2:16,17*); that is, he became a member of the covenant nation, and became a debtor to the law--*Ga 5:3*], **his name was called JESUS** [see *Lk 1:59*], **which was so called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.** [see on *Lk 1:31*.]

B. Purification by Mary (Lk 2:22-24).

(c) 22 And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled [Purification took place on the fortieth day after the nativity in the case of males, and eighty days in the case of females (*Lv 12:1-5*). Until it was performed the mother was not permitted to go to the temple, take part in any public service, or even to leave her house. It seems that the members of her family were also ceremonially unclean, because they came in daily contact with her], **they brought him up to Jerusalem** [to the temple], **to present him to the Lord** [When God slew the firstborn of Egypt he spared the firstborn of Israel. For this reason all the firstborn of Israel were regarded as being peculiarly the Lord's (*Ex 12:29,30 13:2*); and the firstborn male child of each family had to be redeemed with money (*Ex 13:11-15 Nm 18:15,16*). The redemption money for a male was five shekels of the sanctuary--*Lv 27:6*] **23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord** [for additional passages see *Ex 22:29 34:19,20*], **Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), 24 and to offer a sacrifice** [By redemption money and sacrifice the life of Jesus was ceremonially redeemed from God the Father, that his consecration of it to the will of the Father might be perfect.] **according to what is said in the law of the Lord** [*Lv 12:6-8 5:11*], **A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.** [The required offering was a yearling lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon for a sin-offering. But the law allowed a poor mother to substitute doves or pigeons for the lamb. We see here an early trace of the poverty of Him who had not where to lay his head.]

C. Acclamation by Simeon (Lk 2:25-35).

(c) 25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon [the name means "Hearing."]; **and this man was righteous and devout** [Right in outward and devout in his inward life. The first prophet to tell the world that its Messiah had come was a thoroughly good man], **looking for** [Waiting like Jacob (*Gn 49:18*), and Joseph of Arimathea (*Mk 15:43*), he realized the truth of God's promise (*Isa 49:23*). The Jews waited for a coming Prince, local, carnal, finite, temporal; we wait for a KING universal, spiritual, infinite, eternal, the Son of God. Hence the magnitude of our expected consolation is to theirs as an ocean is to a drop of [34] water] **the consolation of Israel** [A common name for the era of the Messiah, which was so called because the advent of the Christ would bring comfort to his people (*Isa 40:1*). Jews swore by the consolation of Israel, and the phrase, "May I see the consolation of Israel," was common among them. A prayer for the coming of the Messiah was daily used by them]; **and the Holy Spirit was upon him.** [*Lk 1:68*.] **26 And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit**

[probably in a dream], **that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.** [A remarkable favor, a notable blessing--*Lk 10:23,24.*] **27 And he came in the Spirit** [moved by the impulses of inspiration--*Mt 22:14 Re 1:10*] **into the temple** [those who go to church perfunctorily see little; those who go in the Spirit--according to the measure in which He is given them--see and hear much]: **and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law, 28 then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said 29 Now let your servant depart** [This hymn of Simeon is called the "*Nunc Dimittis*" from the two words with which the Latin translation of it begins. Simeon regards his death as now near, since he had seen that for which God had kept him alive. He represents as a sentinel who, seeing the rising of the day-star that is the signal that his watch is relieved, knows his weary waiting is at an end], **Lord, According to your word** [God keeps his word, and never disappoints], **in peace** [to the living the Jews said, "Go in peace" (*Leshalom*), as Jethro said to Moses (*Ex 4:18*); to the dying they said, "Go in peace" (*Beshalom*)--*Gn 15:15*]; **30 For my eyes have seen your salvation** [Only the eye that sees Christ is satisfied with seeing (*Ec 1:18*).], **31 that you have prepared** [God prepared the gospel in his counsels before Christ came into the world (*Ac 2:23*), and foretold it by the [35] prophets--*Ac 3:18*] **before the face of all peoples** [The Jewish Scriptures were then scattered among all nations, and all people were acquainted with the Hebrew expectations of a Messiah. Simeon saw in the Babe the initial step of God toward fulfilling all these prophecies]; **32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles.** [A reference to *Isa 49:6*. Christ's light has revealed the Father to the Gentiles. That Simeon should prophesy this is an evidence of the large spiritual knowledge given him, since even the apostles were slow to grasp the fullness of Christ's world-wide mission--see *Ps 98:2,3 Isa 52:10 42:6*] **And the glory** [*Isa 45:25*. Israel is doubly glorified in Jesus, in that God chose this people to receive the Word, or divine Son, in that Jesus, as a Jew, presented to the world the picture of the perfect manhood. In his divinity and his humanity Jesus glorified Israel] **of your people Israel.** [The Gentiles and Israel are here contrasted. The Gentiles refused the knowledge of God (*Ro 1:28*), and Israel abused it--*Ro 3:1-9.*] **34 and Simeon blessed them** [While blessing the parents, he refrained from blessing the child, lest it might appear that he did it as a superior. He could bless God in the heavens (see *Lk 2:28*) without fear of being misunderstood; but to bless this little Babe might seem to be presumptuous], **and said unto Mary his mother** [thus distinguishing between Mary the real parent, and Joseph the supposed one], **Behold, this child is set** [either as a stone of stumbling (*Isa 8:14 Ro 9:32,33 1Co 1:23*), or a precious cornerstone (*1Pe 2:7,8 Ac 4:11 1Co 3:11*). Jesus is the cornerstone of true religion. Those who reject him fall over him and are broken; those who accept him, build upon him, and are lifted up and edified] [36] **for the falling and the rising of many in Israel** [Jesus has always wrought changes that were like fallings and risings. In his own early lifetime Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, Nazarenes, Gadarenes, etc., sank down before his example and teaching; while fishermen, publicans and outcasts were elevated and encouraged by his sympathy.]; **and for a sign** [Something that challenges attention, and is full of significant meaning. Signs were intended to allay controversy, and to exclude contradiction, but Jesus provoked both. When he was first in the temple, opposition was prophesied; when he was last there it was fully realized--*Mt 23:38*] **that is spoken against** [during his earthly lifetime Jesus was called "deceiver," "Samaritan," "demoniac," etc.; later the Jews wrote of him as "the deceiver," "that man," and "the hung."]; **35 yes and a sword shall pierce through my own soul** [Simeon had read and [37] understood the prophecies that told of the suffering Messiah (*Isa 42:14-43:12*). Hence, to prepare the soul of Mary he touches this minor chord. By as much as the prophecies and annunciations concerning Jesus, led Mary to expect honor, and glory for her son; by so much did the rejection, persecution and cruel death of Jesus overwhelm her with piercing anguish and disappointment. It is also probable that at the time of the crucifixion Mary shared with the apostles the doubts as to the mission of Jesus, and these doubts must have been unspeakably bitter to her]; **that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.** [The word here translated "thoughts" is generally used to signify bad or evil thoughts. Jesus often revealed such (*Jn 9:16*); but the context shows that Simeon had in mind the evil thoughts that were revealed by the sufferings inflicted on Christ. Men are still revealed by their attitude toward Christ, the sincere being drawn to him, and the hypocrites being repelled from him. But at the judgment he shall shine forth as the perfect revealer of all thoughts and actions--*Mt 10:26.*]

D. Prophecy by Anna (Lk 2:36-38).

(c) **36 And there was one Anna** [the same name as Hannah (*1Sa 1:20*), meaning "He was gracious"], **a prophetess** [like Miriam (*Ex 15:20*), Deborah (*Jud 4:4*), Huldah--*2Ch 34:22*], **the daughter of Phanuel** [the same as Peniel, meaning "Face of God"--*Gn 32:30*], **of the tribe of Asher** [Asher was the second son of Jacob and Zilpah (*Gn 30:12,13*). The name means "happy." Though the ten tribes were lost and scattered, many individuals belonging to them remained in Judah--*Ac 26:7 Jas 1:1*] **(she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, 37 and she had been a widow even unto eighty-four years)** [She had been married seven years, and was now eight-four years old. Her long widowhood is mentioned, because young widows who did not remarry were held in special honor. Anna was about twenty-four years [38] old when Jerusalem was conquered by Pompey, and came under the power of Rome], **who departed not from the temple** [This may simply mean that she was unusually assiduous in her attendance at all the temple services (*Ac 2:46*); or it may be taken literally, in which case we may suppose that her prophetic talents had secured for her the right of living in one of the temple chambers.], **worshipping with fasting.** [Moses appointed one yearly fast, namely: that on the day of Atonement; but the Pharisees introduced the custom of fasting twice a week to commemorate the days when Moses was supposed to have ascended and descended Mt. Sinai; namely: on Monday and Thursday. They had also additional fasts--*Lk 5:33*] **and supplications night and day.** [In Hebrew idiom night is mentioned before day, following the example of Moses (*Gn 1:5*). There were probably night services of sacred music held in the temple, at which priests sung anthems--*Pss 134:1,2 119:62.*] **38 And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks unto God, and spoke of him** [Jesus] **to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 And when they** [the parents of Jesus] **had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned.** [Luke omits to tell that Jesus returned to Nazareth by way of Bethlehem and Egypt. Such omissions are common in all biographies.] [39]

Section 13 VISITORS FROM THE EAST (Jerusalem & Bethlehem, 4 B.C.) Mt 2:1-12

(a) **1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem** [It lies five miles south by west of Jerusalem. Its old name, Ephrath, meant "fruitful." Bethlehem means "house of bread." It was the home of Boaz and Ruth, of Jesse and David. Over the rock-hewn cave that is thought to be the stable where Christ was born, there stands a church built by the Empress Helena, A.D. 325-327, which is the oldest monument to Christ known to men.] **of Judea** [called thus to distinguish it from Bethlehem of Zebulun--*Jos 19:15*] **in the days** [it is difficult to determine the exact year of Christ's birth. Jesus was born before the death of Herod, and Josephus [40] and Dion Cassius fix the death of Herod in the year 750 of the city of Rome (A.U.C.). Herod died that year, just before the Passover, and shortly after an eclipse of the moon, which took place on the night between the twelfth and thirteenth of March. Jesus was born several months previous to the death of Herod, either toward the end of the year 749 A.U.C. (5 B.C.) or at the beginning of the year 750--4 B.C.] **of Herod** [This man was born at Ascalon, 71 B.C., and died at Jericho, A.D. 4. His father was an Edomite, and his mother an Ishmaelite. He was a man of fine executive ability and dauntless courage, but was full of suspicion and duplicity, and his reign was stained by acts of inhuman cruelty. He enlarged and beautified the temple at Jerusalem, and blessed his kingdom by many other important public works] **the king** [The life of Herod will be found in Josephus' *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Books 14-17. He was not an independent monarch, but a king subject to the Roman Empire.] **behold, Wise-men** [This word designates an order, or caste, of priests and philosophers (called magi), which existed in the countries east of the Euphrates, from a very remote period. They were particularly famous for their skill in astronomy, and had kept a record of the more important celestial phenomena, which dated back several centuries prior to the reign of Alexander the Great. Nothing is said as to the number who came or as to the country from which

they came. The number and quality of the gifts has become the foundation for a tradition that they were three kings from Arabia. Their names traditionally are Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar] **from the east** [Probably from Persia. They may have been influenced by the Jews that were scattered throughout the Persian Empire. They may have been influenced also by the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, especially Balaam's prophecy in Nm 24:17. But all this put together cannot account for the visit of the magi. They were guided directly by God, and nothing else may have even influenced them] **came to Jerusalem** [They naturally sought for the ruler of the state at the state's capital. They came to Jerusalem after Jesus had been presented in the temple, and taken back to Bethlehem, and, therefore, when the infant Jesus was more than forty days old. They must have come at least forty days before the death [42] of Herod, for he spent the last forty days of his life at Jericho and the baths of Callirrhoe; but the wise men found him still at Jerusalem. Jesus must, therefore, have been at least eighty days old when Herod died], **saying, 2 Where is he** [They seem to have expected to find all Jerusalem knowing and worshiping this new-born King.] **that is born King of the Jews?** [These words were calculated to startle Herod, who was by birth neither king nor Jew. This title was accorded to Jesus by Pilate, who wrote it in his inscription, and caused it to be placed over the head of Christ upon the cross (*Jn 19:19*). None has borne the title since; so Jesus has stood before the world for nearly two thousand years as the last and only king of the Jews. The king of the Jews was the prophetically announced ruler of all men] **for we saw** [Those in the pagan darkness of the East rejoiced in the star. It was as "a light that shines in a dark place" (*2Pe 1:19*). But those in Jerusalem appear not to have seen it, and certainly ignored it] **his star** [The action of the star of Bethlehem forbids us to think that it was any one of the ordinary heavenly bodies. It was a specially prepared luminous orb moving toward Bethlehem as a guiding sign, and resting over the house of Joseph as an identifying index] **in the east** [the magi were in the east; the star was in the west], **and are come** [if the reign of Edomite Herod began to fulfill the first part of Jacob's [43] prophecy by showing the departure of the scepter from Judah (*Gn 49:10*), the coming of the Gentile magi began the fulfillment of the second part by becoming the firstfruits of the gathering of the people] **to worship him.** [Was their worship a religious service or a mere expression of reverence for an earthly king? More likely the former.] **3 And when Herod the king had heard it** [his evil heart, full of suspicions of all kinds, caused him to keep Jerusalem full of spies; so that knowledge of the magi soon reached his ears], **he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.** [Herod was troubled because his succession to the throne was threatened, and Jerusalem was troubled because it dreaded a conflict between rival claimants for the throne. About this time Herod executed five princes and princesses from the preceding royal family, including his own wife Mariamne.] **4 And gathering [44] together all the chief priests and scribes of the people** [This is one of several expressions that designate the whole of or a portion of the Sanhedrin or Jewish court. This body consisted of seventy-one or seventy-two members, divided into three classes; namely, chief priest, scribes, or lawyers, and elders, or men of age and reputation among the people. The Sanhedrin was probably formed in imitation of the body of elders appointed to assist Moses (*Nm 11:16*). It is thought to have been instituted after the Babylonian captivity.], **he inquired of them** [Herod shows that common but strange mixture of regard and contempt for the Word of God that makes men anxious to know its predictions, that they may form their plans to defeat him. The first inquirers for Jesus were shepherds, the second were wise men, the third was a king, the fourth were scribes and priests. He wakens inquiry among all classes; but each uses a different means of research. The shepherds are directed by angels; the wise men by a star; the scribes by Scriptures; the king by counselors] **where the Christ** [the fact that these foreigners came thus wondrously guided, coupled with the fact that the King they sought was one by birth (David's line having been so long apparently extinct), led Herod to the conclusion that this coming King could be none other than the Messiah] **should be born.** [Thus, by light from different sources, king and priests and people were informed of the fact that Messiah was newly born into the world, and the very time and place of his birth were brought to notice. God gave them the fact, and left them to make such use of it as they would.] **5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem** [It was generally known that Christ would be born in Bethlehem (*Jn 7:42*). The very body or court that officially announced the birthplace of Jesus subsequently condemned him to death as an imposter] **of Judea: for thus it is written.** [The quotation that follows in *Mt 2:6* is taken from *Mic 5:2-4*, but is freely translated.] **through the prophet, 6 And you Bethlehem, land of Judah, are in no wise**

least among the princes of Judah: For out of you shall come forth a governor, Who shall be shepherd of my people Israel. 7 Then Herod privately [Herod did not wish to give the infant claimant the honor and prestige of an open and avowed concern about him. Moreover, had he openly professed a desire to worship the new King, all Jerusalem would have been conscious of his hypocrisy, and some would have found it hard to keep silent] **called the Wise-men, and learned of them** [Though Herod sought Christ from improper motives, yet he used the best methods. He asked aid of those versed in the Scriptures, and also of those proficient in science] **exactly what time the star appeared.** [That he might ascertain, if possible, exactly on what night Christ had been born.] **8 And he sent them to Bethlehem** [thus answering their question asked in *Mt 2:2*], **and said, Go and search out exactly concerning the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word that I also may come and worship him.** [Duplicity was a well-known characteristic of Herod. He had Aristobulus, the high priest, drowned by his companions while bathing, though they seemed to be only ducking him in sport. In this case Herod concealed fraud beneath an appearance of piety.] **9 And they, having heard the king, went their way** [No scribes were with them. The scribes were content with the *theory* as to the place of [46] Christ's birth, but desired no practical knowledge of the Babe himself]; **and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them** [guiding them], **till it came and stood** [thus stopping them] **over where the young child was.** [A real or ordinary star would have stood indiscriminately over every house in Bethlehem, and would have been no aid whatever toward finding the right child. The magi were undoubtedly favored with a special revelation as to the Babe and the star. It was probably given in a dream similar to that spoken of in *Mt 2:12*. The star, as one of the temporary incidentals of Christianity, faded away; but the Sun of righteousness that took its place in the spiritual firmament shines on, and shall shine on forever.] **10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced** [a comfort restored is a comfort multiplied] **with exceeding great joy.** [The return of the star assured them that God would lead them safely and surely to the object of their desires. Their joy was such as comes to those who come from seasons of dark doubt to the glories of light and faith. The star enabled them to find Jesus without asking questions, and bringing such public attention to him as would aid Herod in preventing his escape. Since the magi were guided by a star, they were forced to enter Bethlehem by night, and this contributed to the privacy of their coming and the safety of Jesus.] **11 And they came into the house** [the humble home of the carpenter might have shook their faith in the royalty of the son, but the miraculous honors accorded him in the star and the Scripture raised him in their estimation above all the humiliation of external circumstances], **and saw the young child with Mary his mother** [she was the only attendant in this King's retinue--the retinue of him who became poor that we, out of his poverty, might be made rich]; **and they** [47] **fell down** [The usual Oriental method of showing either reverence or worship] **and worshipped him** [It is safe to think that the manner in which they had been led to Jesus caused them to worship him as divine. Their long journey and their exuberant joy at its success indicate that they sought more than the great king of a foreign nation. The God who led them by a star, would hardly deny them full knowledge as to the object of their quest. Had their worship been mere reverence, Mary would, no doubt, have been included in it. We should note their faith. They had known Christ but one day; he had performed no miracles; he had none other to do him homage; he was but a helpless Babe, yet they fell down and worshiped him. Their faith is told for a memorial of them.]; **and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts** [Oriental custom requires that an inferior shall approach his superior with a gift. These gifts probably contributed to the sustenance of the parents and the child while in Egypt], **gold and frankincense** [A white resin or gum obtained by slitting the bark of the *Arbor thuris*. The best is said to come from Persia. It is also a product of Arabia. It is very fragrant when burned] **and myrrh.** [It is also obtained from a tree in the same manner as frankincense. The tree is similar to the acacia. It grows from eight to ten feet high, and is thorny. It is found in Egypt, Arabia, and Abyssinia. *Myrrh* means "bitterness." The gum was chiefly used in embalming dead bodies, as it prevented putrefaction. It was also used in ointments, and for perfume; and as an anodyne it was sometimes added to wine.] **12 And being warned of God in a dream** [this suggests that as they came by night, so they were aroused and caused to depart by night, that their coming and going might, in no way, betray the whereabouts of the infant King] **that they should not return to Herod, they** [48] **departed into their own country another way.** [They took the road from Bethlehem to Jericho, and thus passed eastward without returning to Jerusalem.]

Section 14
FLIGHT TO EGYPT
(Bethlehem & Road to Egypt, 4 B.C.)
Mt 2:13-18

(a) **13 Now when they were departed** [The text favors the idea that the arrival and departure of the magi and the departure of Joseph for Egypt, all occurred in one night. If so, the people of Bethlehem knew nothing of these matters], **behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise** [this command calls for immediate departure] **and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt** [This land was ever the refuge of Israel when fleeing from famine and oppression. One hundred miles in a direct line from Bethlehem would carry Joseph well over the border of Egypt. Two hundred miles would bring him to the river Nile. In Egypt he would find friends, possibly acquaintances. There were at that time about one million Jews in the Nile valley.], **and stay there until I tell you: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.** [Thus joy at the honor of the magi's visit and worship gives place to terror at the wrath of Herod. The quiet days at Bethlehem are followed by a night of fear and flight.] **14 And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt** [Jesus was saved by flight. God invariably prefers the ordinary to the extraordinary means]; **15 and was there until the death of Herod** [as Herod died soon after the flight to Egypt, the sojourn of the family of Jesus in that land must have been brief, for they returned after his death]: **that it might be fulfilled that was spoken by the Lord** [the message is the Lord's, the words and voice are the prophet's] **through the prophet** [see *Ho 11:1*], **saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son.** [Most take this passage from Hosea to refer to the nation Israel's Exodus from Egypt. A careful study of the context of the prophecy, however, indicates that Hosea was predicting a new start for the people of God. Messiah in Hosea is presented as a second Moses, a second David and here, in *Hos 11:1*, as a second Israel (JES)] **16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked** [the magi, no doubt, intended to return to Herod, and would have done so except for the dream, but when they failed to return, they seemed to Herod to have taken pleasure in deceiving him.] **of the Wise-men, was exceeding wrath** [wrath at being made sport of, and doubly wrath because of the serious matter as to which they presumed to jest], **and sent forth** [murderers, suddenly], **and slew** [Thus early did persecution attend those associated with Christ (*Mt 10:24,25*). This brutality was in keeping with [50] Herod's character. Jealousy as to his authority led him to murder two high priests, his uncle Joseph, his wife, and three of his own sons, besides many other innocent persons. Fearing lest the people should rejoice at his departure, he summoned the leading citizens of all the cities of his realm, and, shutting them up in the circus grounds at Jericho, ordered his sister Salome and her husband to have them all put to death at the moment when he died, that the land might mourn at his death] **all the male children that were in Bethlehem** [As Bethlehem was not a large place, the number of martyrs could not have been large. It is variously estimated that from twelve to fifty were slain. Had the parents of Bethlehem known that Jesus was on the way to Egypt, they might have saved their own children by giving information as to the whereabouts of the right child.], **and in all the borders** [Adjacent places; settlements or houses around Bethlehem.] **thereof, from two years old and under** [According to Jewish reckoning this would mean all children from birth up to between twelve and thirteen months old, all past one year old being counted as two years old], **according to the time that he had exactly learned of the Wise-men.** [That is, he used their date as a basis for his calculations. It is likely that six months had elapsed since the star appeared, and that Herod doubled the months to make doubly sure of destroying the rival claimant. Not knowing whether the child was born before or after the appearing of the star, he included all the children of that full year in which the star came.] **17 Then was fulfilled** [Most commentators think Jeremiah's words were only predictive of the loss of the Bethlehem mothers in some secondary sense. But a careful study of the prophecy in context indicates that a direct messianic reference is not impossible. (JES)] **what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet** [*Jer 31:15*], **saying, 18 A voice was heard in Ramah** [This word means "highland" or "hill." The town lies six miles north of Jerusalem. It was the birthplace

and burial-place of the prophet Samuel. **Weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children** [Why these tearful mothers in Bethlehem? Because what Christ escaped remained for his brethren, their children, to suffer.]; **and she would not be comforted, because they are not.** [Ramah was a town of Benjamin (*Jos 18:25*). Jeremiah represents Rachel weeping, because the Benjamites were descendants of Rachel, and, perhaps, because the tomb of Rachel was "in the border of Benjamin," and not far away (*1Sa 10:2*).]

Section 15 SELECTING A RESIDENCE (Egypt and Nazareth, 4 B.C.) Mt 2:19-23; Lk 2:39

(a) 19 But when Herod was dead [He died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign and the seventieth of his life. A frightful inward burning consumed him, and the stench of his sickness was such that his attendants could not stay near him. So horrible was his condition that he even endeavored to end it by suicide], **behold, an angel of the Lord** [word did not come by the infant Jesus; he was "made like unto his brethren" (*Heb 2:17*), and being a child, "he spoke as a child" (*1Co 13:11*), and not as an oracle] **appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt** [Joseph had obeyed the command given at *Mt 2:13*, and God kept the promise contained therein. God ever keeps covenant with the obedient], **saying, 20 Arise** [Happy Joseph! his path was ordered of God.] **and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel** [The phrase "land of Israel" originally meant all Palestine, but during the period of the kingdom of the ten tribes it was restricted to their portion of the country. After the captivities and the return of Judah from Babylon the phrase resumed its original meaning, and hence it is here used to include all Palestine. As Jesus was "not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (*Mt 15:24*), it was fitting that he return thither from Egypt]; **for they** ["They" is doubtless the plural of majesty; though it may include others unknown to us, who were employed by him or advised him] **are dead** [How prophetic the words! Christ's enemies die, but he lives on.] [53] **that sought the young child's life. 21 And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came** [The length of his sojourn in Egypt is uncertain. It is variously estimated at from two weeks to more than seven months] **into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard** [Joseph heard this on entering Palestine. As he knew of Herod's death by revelation, and hence before anyone else in Egypt, there was no one there to tell him who succeeded Herod] **that Archelaus** [By his last will and testament Herod divided his kingdom among three of his sons, and Augustus Caesar consented to the provision of this will. Archelaus, under the title of Ethnarch, received Judea, Idumea, and Samaria; Antipas, under the title of Tetrarch, received Galilee and Perea; and Philip, under the title of Tetrarch, received Trachonitis (with Iturea), Batanaea, and Auranitis. Each of these sons bore the name of Herod, like their father. Augustus withheld from Archelaus the title of king, promising it to him "if he governed that part virtuously." But in the very beginning of his reign he massacred three thousand Jews at once, in the temple, at the time of the Passover, because they called for justice upon the agents who performed the barbarities of his father's reign. Not long after this a solemn embassy of the Jews went to Rome, and petitioned Augustus to remove Archelaus, and make his kingdom a Roman province. After a reign of nine years, Archelaus was banished to Vienne, in Gaul, where he died in A.D. 6. After him Judea had no more native kings, and the scepter departed from Judah. The land became a Roman province, and its governors were successively Quirinius, Coponius, Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, and Pontius Pilate] **was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod** [These words sound like an echo of those employed by the [54] embassy just referred to, for it said to Augustus concerning this man, "He seemed to be so afraid lest he should not be deemed Herod's own son, that he took special care to prove it."], **he was afraid to go there** [As Matthew has spoken of Joseph residing at Bethlehem (and he did reside there for quite a while after the birth of Jesus), the use of word "there" implies that Joseph planned to return to that town. Mary had kindred somewhere in the neighborhood (*Lk 1:36,39,40*), and doubtless both parents thought that David's city was the most fitting place for the nurture of David's heir]; **and being warned of God in a dream** [God

permitted Joseph to follow the bent of his fear. Joseph's obedience shows him a fit person for the momentous charge entrusted to him], **{(c) they returned} (a) he withdrew** [From the territory of Archelaus to that of Antipas, who was a man of much milder disposition. As the brothers were not on good terms, Joseph felt sure that in no case would Antipas deliver him and his to Archelaus] **into the parts of Galilee** [It means "circuit." It is the northern of the three divisions of the Holy Land. Its population was very dense, and was a mixture of Jews and Gentiles. Hence all Galileans were despised by the purer Jews of Judea], **23 and he came and dwelled in a city called Nazareth** [see on Lk 2:39]; **(c) their own city** [This town lies on a hillside, surrounded by fifteen higher hills. It is a secluded nook. Here Jesus grew up in obscurity till he reached his thirtieth year. Here he spent about nine-tenths of his earthly life.] **(a) that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through the prophets** [Matthew uses the plural, "prophets," because this prophecy is not the actual words of any prophet, but is the general sense of many of them.], **that he should be called a Nazarene.** [The Hebrew word *netzer* means "branch" or "sprout." It is used figuratively for what is lowly or despised (*Isa 17:9 Eze 15:1-6 Mal 4:1*). [55] See also *Jn 15:6 Ro 11:21*. Now, Nazareth, if derived from *netzer*, answered to its name, and was a despised place (*Jn 1:45,46*), and Jesus, though in truth a Bethlehemite, bore the name Nazarene because it fitly expressed the contempt of those who despised and rejected him.]

Section 16

HOMELIFE AND TEMPLE VISIT

(Nazareth and Jerusalem, ca. A.D. 8)

Lk 2:40-52

(c) 40 And the child grew [This verse contains the history of thirty years. It describes the growth of our Lord as a natural, human growth (compare *Lk 1:80*); for, though Jesus was truly divine, he was also perfectly man. To try to distinguish between the divine and human in Jesus, is to waste time upon an impracticable mystery that is too subtle for our dull and finite minds], **and waxed strong** [His life expanded like other human lives. He learned as other boys; he obeyed as other children. As he used means and waited patiently for growth.], **filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him** [These words describe briefly the life of Christ during the preparatory period at Nazareth. It was a quiet life, but its sinless purity made the Baptist feel his own unworthiness compared to it (*Mt 3:14*), and its sweet reasonableness inspired in Mary, the mother, that confidence that led her to sanction, without reserve, any request or command that Jesus might utter--*Jn 2:5*.] **41 And his parents** [Males were required to attend the Passover (*Ex 13:7*); but women were not. The great rabbi, Hillel (born about B.C. 110; died A.D. 10), recommended that they should do so, and the [56] practice was esteemed an act of admirable piety] **went every year to Jerusalem to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover** [The Passover, one of the three great Jewish feasts, commemorated the mercy of God in causing his angel to "pass over" the houses in Israel on the night that he slew all the firstborn of Egypt. It took place at the full moon that occurred next after the vernal equinox. At it the firstfruits of the harvest were offered (*Lv 23:10-15*). Every adult male dwelling in Judea was required to attend this feast. Josephus tells us that the members assembled at them in Jerusalem often exceeded two million.] **42 And when he was twelve years old** [The incident that Luke here reports is the only one given in the period between the return from Egypt and Jesus' thirtieth year. It shows that Jesus did not attend the school of the rabbis in Jerusalem (*Mk 6:2 Jn 6:42 7:15*). But we learn that he could write (*Jn 8:6*), and there is little doubt but that he spoke both Hebrew and Greek], **they went up** [the altitude of Jerusalem is higher than that of Nazareth, and the distance between the two places is about seventy miles] **after the custom of the feast** [the custom was that the feast was celebrated annually in Jerusalem]; **43 and when they had fulfilled the days** [eight days in all; one day for killing the Passover, and seven for observing the feast of unleavened bread that followed it--*Ex 12:15 Lv 23:5,6*], **as they were returning, the boy Jesus** [Luke narrates something about every stage of Christ's life. He speaks of him as a babe (*Lk 2:16*), as a little child (*Lk 2:40*), here as a boy, and afterwards as a man] **tarried behind in Jerusalem** [to take advantage of the opportunity to [57] hear the great teachers in the schools]; **and his parents**

knew it not [As vast crowds attended the Passover, it was easy to lose sight of a boy amid the festal throng.]; **44 but supposing him to be in the company** [We see here the confidence of the parents, and the independence of the child. The sinlessness of Jesus was not due to any exceptional care on the part of his parents. Jews going to and from their festivals traveled in caravans for pleasure and safety. In the daytime the young folks mingled freely among the travelers, and sought out whatever companionship they wished. But in the evening, when the camp was formed, and the tents were pitched, the members of each family came together], **they went a day's journey** [They probably returned by the way of Jericho to avoid passing through Samaria, because of the hatred existing between Jews and Samaritans.]; **and they sought for him among their kinfolk and acquaintance** [those with whom he was most likely to have traveled during the day]; **45 and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him.** [Parents who have temporarily suffered the loss of their children can easily imagine their feelings. Christ, though a divine gift to them, was lost.] **46 And it came to pass, after three days** [Each part of a day was reckoned as a day when at the beginning and ending of a series. The parents missed Jesus on the evening of the first day, returned to Jerusalem and sought for him on the second day, and probably found him on the morning of the third day. The disciples of Jesus also lost him in the grave for part of one day, and all of the next, and found him resurrected on the morning of the third day--*Lk 24:21*] **they found him** [58] **in the temple** [Probably in one of the many chambers that tradition says were built against the walls of the temple and its enclosures, and opened upon the temple courts. The sacred secret that they knew concerning the child should have sent them at once to the temple to seek for him]; **sitting** [Jewish scholars sat upon the ground at the feet of their teachers] **in the midst** [the teachers sat on semi-circular benches and thus partially surrounded by their students] **of the teachers** [these teachers had schools in which they taught for the fees of their pupils.], **both hearing them, and asking them questions** [He was not teaching: the God of order does not expect childhood to teach. He was among them as a modest student, and not as a forward child. The rabbinical method of instruction was to state cases, or problems, bearing upon the interpretation or application of the law, which cases or problems were to be solved by the pupils. For typical problems see *Mt 22:15-46*]; **47 and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48 And when they** [his parents] **saw him, they were astonished** [Mary and Joseph stood as much in awe of these renowned national teachers as peasants do of kings, and were therefore astonished that their youthful son presumed to speak to them]; **and his mother said unto him, Son, why have you thus dealt with us?** [Her language implies that Jesus had been fully instructed as to the time when his parents and their caravan would depart for Galilee, and that he was expected to depart with them. Obedience to his higher duties constrained him to appear disobedient to his parents] **behold, your father** [As legal father of Jesus, this expression would necessarily have to be used when speaking of Joseph. But Jesus does not accept Joseph as his father, as we see by his answer] **and I sought you sorrowing.** [Because they thought him lost.] **49 And he said unto them** [What follows are the first recorded words of Jesus; he here speaks of the same being--the Father--to whom he commended his spirit in his last words upon the cross (*Lk 23:46*).] [59], **How is it that you sought me?** [Mary, knowing all that had been divinely revealed to her concerning Jesus, should have expected to find him in the temple] **do you not know that I must** [In this oft-repeated phrase, "I must," Jesus sets forth that devotion (*Jn 4:34*) to the will of the Father by which his whole life was directed] **be in my Father's** [Literally "the Father of me." Jesus invariably used the article in speaking of himself, and said "the Father of me," and invariably omitted the article, and said, "Father of you," when speaking of his disciples. His relationship to the Father differed from ours, and God, not Joseph, was his father] **house?** [See *Jn 2:16, 17 8:35*.] **50 And they understood not** [It may seem strange that Mary, knowing all that she did concerning the birth of Jesus, etc., did not grasp the meaning of his words, but we are all slow to grasp great truths; and failure to be understood was therefore a matter of daily occurrence with Jesus. (*Lk 9:45 18:34 Mk 9:32 Jn 10:6*.) Christ spoke plainly, but human ears were slow to comprehend his wonderful sayings. **the saying that he spoke unto them. 51 And he went down with them** [Jerusalem was among the mountains, Nazareth among the hills], **and came to Nazareth** [A beautiful and healthful town, but so lacking in piety and learning as to form the "dry ground" out of which it was prophetically predicted that the glorious and fruitful life of Jesus would spring. Here Christ rose above all times and schools and revealed to man that "life more abundant" than all

kings, lawgivers or sages ever discovered. The discourses of Jesus are the outpourings of divine knowledge, and not the result of study or self-culture]; **and he was subject** [Our [60] example in all things, he here set before us that pattern of obedience that children should observe toward their parents. In these years Jesus learned the trade of his supposed father (*Mk 6:3*). Christ was a laborer, and thereby sanctified labor.] **unto them** [His parents, Joseph and Mary. We find no mention of Joseph after this, and the probability is that he soon died]: **and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.** [She had many treasured sayings of angels, shepherds, wise men, and prophets. She now began to add to these the sayings of Christ himself.] **52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.** [He did not *literally* grow in favor with God. This is a phenomenal expression. The favor of God and man kept company for quite awhile; but the favor of God abode with Jesus when man's good will was utterly withdrawn.] [61]

Section 17

MINISTRY OF JOHN

(Wilderness, Jordan A.D. 26)

Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8; Lk 3:1-18

(b) 1 The beginning of the gospel [John begins his Gospel from eternity, where the Word is found coexistent with God. Matthew begins with Jesus, the humanly generated son of Abraham and David, born in the days of Herod the king. Luke begins with the birth of John the Baptist, the Messiah's herald; and Mark begins with the ministry of John the Baptist. While the three other evangelists take a brief survey of the *preparation* of the gospel, Mark looks particularly to the period when it began to be *preached*. *Gospel* means "good news," and news is not news until it is proclaimed. The gospel began to be preached or proclaimed with the ministry of John the Baptist (*Lk 16:16*). His ministry was the dawn of that gospel of which Christ's preaching was the sunrise] **of Jesus** [Our Lord's *name* as a human being; it means "Savior"] **Christ** [Though this is also sometimes used as a name, it is in reality our Lord's *title*. It means "the Anointed," and is equivalent to saying that Jesus is our Prophet, Priest and King] **the Son of God.** [This indicates our Lord's eternal *nature*; it was divine. Mark's Gospel was written to establish that fact, which is the foundation of the church (*Mt 16:18*). John's Gospel was written for a like purpose (*Jn 20:31*). John uses the phrase "Son of [62] God" twenty-nine times, and Mark seven times. As these two evangelists wrote chiefly for Gentile readers, they emphasized the divinity of Jesus, and paid less attention to his Jewish ancestry. But Matthew, writing for Hebrews, prefers the title "Son of David," which he applies to Jesus some nine times, that he may identify him as the Messiah promised in the seed of David--*2Sa 7:12 Ps 72:1-17 89:3,4 132:11,12.*] **(c) 1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign** [Tiberius Caesar, stepson of and successor to Augustus, began to reign as joint ruler with Augustus in August, A.U.C. 765 (A.D. 11). On August 19, 767, Augustus died and Tiberius became sole ruler. Luke counts from the beginning of the joint rule, and his fifteen years bring us to 779. In August, 779, Tiberius began his fifteenth year, and about December of that year Jesus would have completed his thirtieth year] **of Tiberius Caesar** [He was born 41 B.C., died March 16, A.D. 37. As a citizen he distinguished himself as orator, soldier and public official. But as emperor he was slothful, self-indulgent, indescribably licentious, vindictive and cruel. He was a master of dissimulation and cunning, and was a veritable scourge to his people. But he still found flatterers even in Palestine, Caesarea Philippi, and the town Tiberias being named for him], **Pontius Pilate** [see mention of him in account of our Lord's trial] **being governor of Judea** [The province of Judea was subdued by Pompey and brought under Roman control in 63 B.C. Its history from that date till the governorship of Pilate can be found in Josephus], **and Herod** [Also called Antipas. The ruler who murdered John the Baptist and who assisted at the trial of Jesus] **being tetrarch** [this word means properly the ruler of a fourth part of a country, but was used loosely for any petty tributary prince] **of Galilee** [This province lay north of Samaria, and measured about twenty-five miles from north to south, and twenty-seven miles from east to west. It was a rich and fertile country], **and his brother** [half-brother] **Philip** [He was distinguished by justice and moderation, the one decent man in the Herodian family. He married

Salome, [63] who obtained John the Baptist's head for a dance. He built Caesarea Philippi, and transformed Bethsaida Julius from a village to a city, and died there A.D. 44. After his death his domains became part of the Roman province of Syria] **tetrarch of the region of Iturea** [A district thirty miles long by twenty-five broad, lying north of Batanea, east of Mount Hermon, west of Trachonitis. Its Ishmaelite inhabitants were conquered by Aristobulus, king of Judea, 100 B.C., and forced by him to accept the Jewish faith. They were marauders, and famous for the use of the bow] **and Trachonitis** [A district about twenty-two miles from north to south by fourteen from east to west. Its name means "rough" or "stony," and it amply deserves it. It lies between Iturea and the desert, and has been infested with robbers from the earliest ages.], **and Lysanias** [Profane history gives us no account of this man. It tells of a Lysanias, king of Chalcis, under Mt. Lebanon, who was put to death by Mark Antony, 36 B.C., or sixty-odd years before this, and another who was tetrarch of Abilene in the reigns of Caligula and Claudius twenty years after this. He probably was son of the first and father of the second] **tetrarch of Abilene** [The city of Abila (that comes from the Hebrew word *abel*, meaning "meadow") is eighteen miles from Damascus and thirty-eight from Baalbec. The province laying about it is mentioned because it subsequently formed part of the Jewish territory, being given to Herod Agrippa I. by Emperor Claudius about A.D. 41], **2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas** [Annas had been high priest A.D. 7-14, when he was deposed by the procurator, Gratus. Caiaphas was son-in-law of and successor to Annas. Luke gives both names, one as the rightful and the other as the acting high priest. Compare *Ac 4:6*. Gentile innovations had made sad havoc with the Jewish law as to this office. In the last one [64] hundred and seven years of the temple's existence there were no less than twenty-eight high priests. Luke is the only one who fixes the time when Jesus began his ministry. He locates it by emperor and governor, tetrarch and high priest, as an event of worldwide importance, and of concern to all the kingdoms of men.], **the word of God** [The divine commission that bade John enter his career as a prophet (*Jer 1:2 Eze 6:1*). Prophets gave temporary and limited manifestations of God's will (*Heb 1:1,2*). Jesus is the everlasting and unlimited manifestation of the divine purpose and of the very Godhead--*Jn 14:9 12:45 Col 1:15 Heb 1:3 2Co 4:6*] **came unto John the son of Zachariah, in the wilderness.** [The wilderness of Judea is that almost uninhabitable mass of barren ridges extending the whole length of the Dead Sea, and a few miles further north. It is from five to ten miles wide.] **(a) 1 And in those days** [Some take this expression as referring to the years when Jesus dwelt at Nazareth. But it is better to regard it as a Hebraism equivalent to "that age" or "that era" (*Ex 2:11*). It contrasts the era when the Baptist lived with the era when Matthew wrote his Gospel.] **came John** [he was cousin to Jesus] **the Baptist** [So called because God first gave through him the ordinance of baptism. It has been erroneously thought by some that John borrowed this ordinance from the Jewish practice of proselyte baptism. This could not be, for John baptized his converts, but Jewish proselytes baptized themselves. The law required such self-baptism of all persons who were unclean (*Lv 14:9 Nm 19:19 8:7 Lv 15:1-16:34*). More than twenty distinct cases are specified in which the law required bathing or self-baptism, and it is to these Paul refers when he states that the law consisted in part "of divers baptisms" (*Heb 9:10*). But the law did not require this of proselytes, and proselyte baptism was a human appendage to the divinely given Jewish [65] ritual. Proselyte baptism is not mentioned in history till the third century of the Christian era. Neither Josephus, nor Philo, nor the Apocrypha, nor the Targums say anything about it, though they all mention proselytes. In fact, the oldest mention of it in Jewish writings is in the Babylonian Gemara, which was completed about five hundred years after Christ. The New Testament implies the non-existence of proselyte baptism (*Mt 21:25 Jn 1:25,33*). John could hardly have been called the *Baptist*, had he used an old-time rite in the accustomed manner. The Baptist was a link between the Old and New Testament. Belonging to the Old, he announced the New], **preaching** [Not sermonizing, but crying out a message as a king's herald making a proclamation. His discourse was brief and unembellished. Its force lay in the importance of the truth announced. It promised to the Hebrew the fulfillment of two thousand years of longing. It demanded repentance, but for a new reason. The old call to repentance had wooed with the promise of earthly blessings, and warned with the threat of earthly judgments; but John's repentance had to do with the kingdom of heaven and things eternal. It suggested the Holy Spirit as a reward, and unquenchable fire as the punishment] **in the wilderness of Judea** [that part of the wilderness that John chose for the scene of his ministry is a desert plain, lying along the western bank of the

Jordan, between Jericho and the Dead Sea], **saying, 2 Repent** [to repent is to change the *will* in reference to *sin*, resolving to sin no more] **for** [John sets forth the motive for repentance. Repentance is the duty, and the approach of the kingdom is the motive inciting to it. Only by repentance could the people be prepared for the kingdom. Those who are indifferent to the obligations of an old revelation would be ill-prepared to receive a new one] **the kingdom of heaven is at hand** [*Da* 2:44. "Kingdom of heaven" is peculiar to Matthew, who uses it thirty-one times. He also joins with the other evangelists in calling it the "kingdom of God" (*Mt* 12:28 19:24 21:31,43). We know not why [66] he preferred the expression, "kingdom of heaven."] **(c) 3 And he came** [he made his public appearance, and, like that of Elijah, it was a sudden one--*1Ki* 17:1] **into all the region about the Jordan** [The Jordan valley is called in the Old Testament the Arabah, and by the modern Arabs the Ghor. It is the deepest valley in the world, its lowest part being about thirteen hundred feet below the level of the ocean] **preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins** [as a change leading to remission or forgiveness of sins] **(a) 3 For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, (b) even (c) 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet** [Isaiah flourished from about 759 to 699 B.C.] **(a) saying, (b) Behold** [The clause beginning with "Behold," and ending with "way," is taken from *Mal* 3:1.] **I send my messenger** [John the Baptist was that messenger] **before your face** [Malachi says, "my face." "Your" and "my" are used interchangeably, because of the unity of the Deity--*Jn* 10:30], **who shall prepare your way** [Mark says little about the prophets, but at the outset of his Gospel he calls attention to the fact that the entire pathway of Jesus was the subject of prophetic prediction]; **(c) The voice** [*Isa* 40:3,4, quoted from the Septuagint. The words were God's, the voice was John's. So Paul also spoke (*1Th* 2:1-13). It was prophesied before he was born that John would be a preparing messenger for Christ--*Lk* 1:17] **of one crying in the wilderness** [This prophecy of Isaiah's could relate to none but John, for no other prophet ever made the wilderness the scene of his preaching. But John always preached there, and instead of going to the people, he compelled the people to come out to him. John was the second Elijah.] [67], **Make ready the way** [See also *Isa* 35:8-10. Isaiah's language is highly figurative. It represents a band of engineers and workmen preparing the road for their king through a rough, mountainous district. The figure was familiar to the people of the East, and nearly every generation there witnessed such road-making. Josephus, describing the march of Vespasian, says that there went before him such as were to make the road even and straight, and if it were anywhere rough and hard, to smooth it over, to plane it, and to cut down woods that hindered the march, that the army might not be tired. It is a beautiful figure, but the real preparation was the more beautiful transformation of repentance. By inducing repentance, John was to prepare the people to receive Jesus and his apostles, and to hearken to their preaching] **of the Lord, Make his paths straight. 5 Every valley shall be filled, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough way smooth** [The literal meaning of this passage is expressed at *Isa* 2:12-17. See also *Zec* 4:7. Commentators give detailed application of this prophecy, and, following their example, we may regard the Pharisees and Sadducees as mountains of self-righteousness, needing to be thrown down, and thereby brought to meekness and humility; the outcasts and harlots as valleys of humiliation, needing to be exalted and filled with hope; and the publicans and soldiers as crooked and rough byways, needing to be straightened and smoothed with proper details of righteousness. But the application is general, and not to be limited to such details.] [68]; **6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God** [This last clause of the prophecy is added by Luke alone. He loves to dwell upon the universality of Christ's gospel.] **(a) 4 Now John himself** ["Himself" indicates that John's manner of life differed from that of his disciples. He did not oblige them to practice the full measure of his abstinence] **had his raiment of** [John's dress and food preached in harmony with his voice. His clothing and fare rendered him independent of the rich and great, so that he could more freely and plainly rebuke their sins. Calling others to repentance, he himself set an example of austere self-denial. So much so that the Pharisees said he had a demon--*Mt* 11:18] **(b) 6 And was clothed with (a) camel's hair** [Camels were plentiful in the East. Their finer hair was woven into elegant cloths; but what was coarser and shaggier was made into a fabric and used for the coats of shepherds and camel-drivers, and for the covering of tents. Prophets often wore such cloth (*Zec* 13:4), and no doubt it was the habitual garb of John's prototype (*Mal* 4:5), the prophet Elijah (*2Ki* 1:8). In Elijah's day there was demand for protest against the sad havoc that

Phoenician luxury and licentiousness were making with the purer morals of Israel; and in John's day a like protest was needed against a like contamination wrought by Greek manners and customs. Both prophets, by their austerity, rebuked such apostasy, and Jezebel answered the rebuke by attempting Elijah's life, while Herodias actually took the life of John. As a herald, John was suited to the King whose appearing he was to announce, for Jesus was meek and lowly (*Zec 9:9*), and had no form nor comeliness that he should be desired--*Isa 53:2*], [69] **and a leather girdle about his loins** [The loose skirts worn in the East required a girdle to bind them to the body. This was usually made of linen or silk, but was frequently more costly, being wrought with silver and gold. John's girdle was plain, undressed leather]; **And his food was {(b) and did eat} (a) locusts** [Locusts, like Western grasshoppers, were extremely plentiful (*Joe 1:4 Isa 33:4,5*). The law declared them clean, and thus permitted the people to eat them for food (*Lv 11:22*). Arabs still eat them, and in some Oriental cities they are found for sale in the market. But they are regarded as fit only for the poor. They are frequently seasoned with camel's milk and honey] **and wild honey.** [Canaan was promised as a land flowing with milk and honey (*Ex 2:8-17 13:15 1Sa 14:26*). Many of the trees in the plains of Jericho, such as the palm, fig, manna, ash and tamarisk, exuded sweet gums, which went by the name of tree honey, but there is no need to suppose, as some do, that this was what John ate. The country once abounded in wild bees, and their honey was very plentiful. We have on the record an instance of the speed with which they could fill the place that they selected for their hives (*Jud 14:5-9*). The diet of the Baptist was very light, and Jesus so speaks of it (*Mt 11:18*). He probably had no set time for his meals, and all days were more or less fast-days. Thus John gave himself wholly to his ministry, and became a voice--all voice. John took the wilderness for a church, and filled it. He courted no honors, but no Jew of his time received more of them, and by some he was even regarded as Messiah--*Lk 3:15*.] **(b) 5 And there (a) 5 Then went out unto him (b) all** [A hyperbole common with Hebrew writers and such as we use when we say, "the whole town turned out," "everybody was there," etc. Both Matthew and Luke show that some did not accept John's baptism (*Mt 21:23-25 Lk 7:30*). But from the language of the evangelist we might infer that, first and last, something like a million people may have attended John's ministry] **the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem; (a) all [70] the region round about the Jordan** [The last phrase includes the entire river valley. On both sides of the river between the lake of Galilee and Jericho, there were many important cities, any one of which would be more apt to send its citizens to John's baptism than the proud capital of Jerusalem]; **6 and they were baptized of him** [Literally, "immersed by him." In every stage of the Greek language this has been the unquestioned meaning of the verb *baptizo*, and it still retains this meaning in modern Greek. In accordance with this meaning, the Greek Church, in all its branches, has uniformly practiced immersion from the earliest period to the present time. John's baptism was instituted of God (*Jn 1:33*), just as Christian baptism was instituted by Christ (*Mt 28:19*). The Pharisees recognized John's rite as so important as to require divine authority, and even then they underestimated it, regarding it as a mere purification--Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.5,2] **in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.** [As John's baptism was for the remission of sins, it was very proper that it should be preceded by a confession. The context indicates that the confession was public and general. John's baptism called for a confession sins, Christian baptism calls only for a confession of faith in Christ--*Ac 22:16 Ro 10:9,10 Mk 16:16*.]

Discourse #1
John's Wilderness Message
Mt 3:7-12; Mk 1:7; Lk 3:7-18

(a) 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees [Josephus tells us that these two leading sects of the Jews started about the same time in the days of Jonathan, the high priest, or B.C. 159-144. But the sentiments that at that time divided the [71] people into two rival parties entered the minds and hearts of the Jews immediately after the return from the Babylonian captivity. These returned Jews differed as to the attitude and policy that Israel should manifest toward the neighboring heathen. Some contended for a strict separation between the Jews and all pagan peoples. These eventually formed the Pharisee party, and the name Pharisee means "the separate." Originally these men were genuine patriots and reformers, but afterwards the majority of them became mere formalists. As theologians the Pharisees represented the

orthodox party, and were followed by the vast majority of the people. They believed (1) in the resurrection of the dead; (2) a future state with rewards and punishments; (3) angels and spirits; and (4) a special providence of God carried out by angels and spirits. As a sect they are said to have numbered six thousand at the time of Herod's death. They were the patriotic party, and the zealots were their extreme section. They covered an extremely selfish spirit with a pious formalism, and by parading their virtues they obtained an almost unbounded influence over the people. By exposing their hypocrisy, Jesus sought to destroy their power over the multitude, and incurred that bitter enmity with which they pursued him to his death. But certain other of the captives who returned from Babylon desired a freer intercourse with the pagans, and sought to break away from every restraint that debarred therefrom. These became Sadducees. They consented to no other restraint than the Scriptures themselves imposed, and they interpreted these as laxly as possible. Some take their name to mean "the party of *righteousness*," but more think it comes from their founder, Zadok, and is a corruption of the word Zadokite. Zadok flourished 260 B.C. His teacher, Antigonus Sochaeus, taught him to serve God disinterestedly--that is, without hope of reward or punishment. From his teaching Zadok inferred that there was no future state of rewards or punishment, and on this belief founded his sect. From this fundamental doctrine sprang the other tenets of the Sadducees. They denied all the four points held by the Pharisees, [72] asserting that there was no resurrection; no rewards and punishments hereafter; no angels, no spirits. They believed there was a God, but denied that he had any special supervision of human affairs (*Mt 22:23 Ac 23:8*). They were the materialists of that day. Considering all God's promises as referring to this world, they looked upon poverty and distress as evidence of God's curse. Hence to relieve the poor was to sin against God in interfering with his mode of government. Far fewer than the Pharisees, they were their rivals in power; for they were the aristocratic party, and held the high priesthood, with all its glories. Their high political position, their great wealth, and the Roman favor that they courted by consenting to foreign rule and pagan customs, made them a body to be respected and feared] **coming to his baptism, he said {(c) therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized on him} (a) unto them** [John spoke principally to the leaders, but his denunciation indirectly included the multitude who followed their leadership], **You offspring of vipers** [A metaphor for their *likeness* to vipers--as like them as if they had been begotten of them. The viper was a species of serpent from two to five feet in length, and about one inch thick. Its head is flat, and its body a yellowish color, speckled with long brown spots. It is extremely poisonous (*Ac 28:6*). John here uses the word figuratively, and probably borrows the figure from *Isa 59:5*. It means that the Jewish rulers were full of guile and malice, cunning and venom. With these words John gave them a vigorous shaking, for only thus could he hope to waken their slumbering consciences. But only one who has had a vision of "the King in his beauty," could presume thus to address his fellowmen. The serpent is an emblem of the devil (*Gn 3:1 Re 12:9,14,15*), and Jesus not only repeated John's words (*Mt 12:35 23:23,33*), but he interpreted the words, and told them plainly that they were "the children of the devil" (*Jn 8:44*). The Jewish rulers well deserved this name, for they poisoned the religious principles of the nation, and accomplished the crucifixion of the Son of God], **who warned [73] you to flee** [John's baptism, like that of Moses at the Red Sea (*1Co 10:2*), was a way of escape from destruction, of rightly used. Christian baptism is also such a way, and whoever will may enter thereby into the safety of the kingdom of Christ, but baptism cannot be used as an easy bit of ritual to charm away evil. It must be accompanied by all the spiritual changes that the ordinance implies] **from the wrath to come?** [Prophecy foretold that Messiah's times would be accompanied with wrath (*Isa 63:3-6 Da 7:10-26*); but the Jews were all of the opinion that this wrath would be meted out upon the Gentiles and were not prepared to hear John apply the prophecy to themselves. To all his hearers John preached the coming kingdom; to the impenitent, he preached the coming wrath. Thus he prepared the way for the first coming of the Messiah. God's wrath is his resentment against sin--*Mt 18:34 22:7 Mk 3:5*.] **8 Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance** [John had demanded repentance (*Mt 3:2*), he now demands the fruits of it. By "fruit" or "fruits," as Luke has it (*Lk 3:8*), he means the manner of life that shows a real repentance]: **9 and think not {(c) begin not}** [John nips their self-excuse in the bud] **(a) to say within yourselves** [speaking to your conscience to quiet it], **We have Abraham to our father** [The Jews thought that Messiah would rule over them as a nation, and that all Jews would, therefore, be by birthright citizens of his kingdom. They thought that descent from

Abraham was all that would be necessary to bring them into that kingdom. John's words must have been very surprising to them. The Talmud is full of expressions showing the extravagant value that Jews of a later age attached to Abrahamic descent. "Abraham," it says, "sits next the gates of hell, and doth not permit any wicked Israelite to go [74] down into it." Again, it represents God as saying to Abraham, "If your children were like dead bodies without sinews or bones, your merit would avail for them." Again, "A single Israelite is worth more before God than all the people who have been or shall be." Again, "The world was made for their [Israel's] sake." This pride was the more inexcusable because the Jews were clearly warned by their prophets that their privileges were not exclusive, and that they would by no means escape just punishment for their sins (*Jer 7:3,4 Mic 3:11 Isa 48:2*). John repeated this message, and Jesus reiterated it (*Mt 8:11,12 Lk 16:23*). We should note that in this preparation for the gospel a blow was struck at confidence and trust in carnal descent. The New Testament teaches us that we are children of Abraham by faith, and not by blood; by spiritual and not carnal descent (*Ro 4:12-16 Ga 3:26 6:15 Jn 8:39*). It had been better for the Jews never to have heard of Abraham, than to have thus falsely viewed the rights that they inherited from him]: **for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham** [John meant that their being children of Abraham by natural descent gave them no more merit than children of Abraham made out of stone would have. He pointed to the stones along the bank of Jordan as he spoke.] **10 And even now the axe (c) also (a) lies at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down** [The threatened cutting down means the end of the probation of each hearer, when, if found fruitless, he would be cast into the fire mentioned below], **and cast into the fire.** [Used as fuel.] **(c) 10 And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do?** [This is the cry of the awakened conscience (*Ac 2:37 16:30 22:10*). John answered it by recommending them to do the very reverse of what they [75] were doing, which, in their case, was true fruit of repentance.] **11 And he answered and said unto them, He that has two coats** [By "coat" is meant the tunic, or inner garment, worn next to the skin. It reached to the knees, and sometimes to the ankles, and generally had sleeves. Two tunics were a luxury in a land where thousands were too poor to own even one. Wrath was coming, and he that would obtain mercy from it must show mercy--*Mt 5:7*], **let him impart to him that has none** [For a like precept given to Christians, see *2 Co 8:13-15 Jas 2:15-17 1 Jo 3:17*]; **and he that has food, let him do likewise.** **12 And there came also publicans** [The Roman Government did not collect its own taxes. Instead of doing so, it divided the empire into districts, and sold the privilege of collecting the taxes in these districts to certain capitalists and men of rank. The capitalists employed agents to do the actual collecting. These agents were usually natives of the districts in which they lived. Those in Palestine were called publicans. Their masters urged and encouraged them to make the most fraudulent and vexatious exactions. They systematically overcharged the people and often brought false accusation to obtain money by blackmail. These publicans were justly regarded by the Jews as apostates and traitors, and were classed with the lowest and most abandoned characters. The system was bad, but its practitioners were worse. The Greeks regarded the word "publican" as synonymous with "plunderer." Being publicly condemned, and therefore continually kept conscious of their sin, the publicans repented more readily than the self-righteous Pharisees. On publicans, also see on *Mt 5:46*] **to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher** [The publicans, though lowest down, gave John the highest title. Self-abnegation is full of the virtue of reverence, but self-righteousness utterly lacks it], **what must we do? 13 And he [76] said unto them, Extort no more than what is appointed you.** [Such was their habitual, universal sin. No man should make his calling an excuse for evil-doing.] **14 And soldiers** [These soldiers were probably Jewish troops in the employ of Herod. Had they been Romans, John would doubtless have told them to worship God] **also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence** [The soldiers, poorly paid, often found it convenient to extort money by intimidation. Strong in their organization, they terrified the weak and enforced gratuities by acts of violence], **neither accuse any one wrongfully** [John here condemns the custom of blackmailing the rich by acting as informers and false accusers against them]; **and be content with your wages.** [The term "wages" included rations and money. The soldiers were not to add to their receipts by pillage or extortion. Soldiers' wages were about three cents a day, so they were exposed to strong temptation. Yet John did not bid them abandon their profession, and become ascetics like himself. His teachings were practical. He allowed war as an

act of government.] **15 And as the people were in expectation** [Expecting the Christ--see *Jn 1:19-28*], **and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he was the Christ** [Prophecy induced a messianic expectation. The scepter had departed from Judah, and Caesar's deputies ruled. Tetrarchs and procurators held the whole civil government. In their hands lay the power of life and death from which only Roman citizens could appeal (*Ac 25:11*). The power of the Jewish courts was limited to excommunication or scourging. The seventy weeks of Daniel were now expiring, and other prophecies indicated the fullness of time. But distress, rather than prophecy, enhanced their expectation. Tiberius, the most infamous of men, governed the world. Pontius Pilate, insolent, cruel, was making life irksome and maddening the people. Herod Antipas, by a course of reckless apostasy and unbridled lust, [77] grieved even the religious sense of the hypocrite. Annas and Caiaphas, impersonators of materialism, sat in the chief seat of spiritual power. Men might well look for a deliverer, and hasten with joy to hear of a coming King. But, nevertheless, we could have no more forceful statement of the deep impression made by John's ministry than that the people were disposed to take him for the Christ]; **16 John answered, saying unto them all, (b) 7 And he preached, saying, (a) 11 I indeed baptize {(b) baptized} (a) you in {(c) with} water unto repentance** [That is, unto the completion of your repentance. Repentance had to begin before the baptism was administered. After the sinner repented, baptism consummated his repentance, being the symbolic washing away of that from which he had repented and the bringing of the candidate into the blessings granted to the repentant--*Mk 1:4 Lk 3:3*]: **(c) But there {(a) he that}** [John preached repentance because of a coming King; he now announces who the King is. He pictures this King as, first, administering a different baptism from his own; second, as a judge who would separate the righteous from the wicked, just as a husbandman sifts the wheat from the chaff] **(b) comes after me** [Subsequent to me in ministry. But John indicates that the coming of Christ would be closely coupled with his own appearing. One event was to immediately follow the other. So Malachi binds together in one time the appearing of both forerunner and judge--*Mal 3:1-3*] **he that is mightier than I** [mightier both to save and to punish], **(a) whose shoes** [The sandal then worn was a piece of wood or leather bound to the sole of the foot to protect it from the burning sand or the sharp stones. It was the forerunner of our modern shoe--see on *Jn 1:27*] **I am not worthy to bear** [To untie or carry away the shoe of the master or his guest was the work of the lowest slave of the household. As a figure of speech, the shoe is always associated with subjugation and slavery (*Psa 60:8*). John means, "I am not worthy to be his servant." John was simply the forerunner of Jesus; the higher office and honor of being Jesus' attendants was reserved for others--*Mt 11:11*]: **(b) the latchet** [the lace or strap--see on *Jn 1:27*] **of whose shoes I am [78] not worthy to stoop down and unloose. (c) he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit** [What is here referred to was foretold by the prophets (*Isa 44:3 Joe 2:28*). In the early church there was an abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God (*Tit 3:5,6 Ac 2:3,4,17 10:44*). This prophecy began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (*Ac 1:5 2:4*). In the choice of the word "baptize" God indicated through his prophet how full this flooding of the Spirit would be] **and in fire** [Many commentators regard the expression "in fire" as a mere amplification of the spiritual baptism added to express the purging and purifying effects of that baptism, but the context forbids this, for, in *Mt 3:10*, casting the unfruitful trees into the fire represents the punishment of the wicked, and, in *Mt 3:12*, the burning of the chaff with fire does the same, and consequently the baptizing in fire of the intervening verse must, according to the force of the context have the same reference. True, the expression "he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and with fire," does not separate the persons addressed into two parties, and, if the context is disregarded, might be understood as meaning that the same persons were to be baptized in both; yet the context must not be disregarded, and it clearly separates them]: **17 whose fan** [Winnowing shovel. In the days of John the Baptist, wheat was beaten out by flails, or trodden out by oxen on some smooth, hard plot of ground called the threshing-floor. These threshing-floors were usually on elevations where the wind blew freely. When the grain was trodden out, it was winnowed or separated from the chaff by being tossed into the air with a fan or winnowing shovel. When so tossed, the wind blew the chaff away, and the clean grain fell upon the threshing-floor] **is in his hand** [Ready for immediate work. Both John and Malachi, who foretold John, are disposed to picture Jesus as the judge (*Mal 3:2-5*). Of all the pictures of God that the Bible gives, that of a judge is the most common and frequent], **thoroughly to {(a) and he will thoroughly} (c) cleanse his threshing-floor** [Removing the [79] chaff is called purging the

floor. Humanity is a mixture of good and bad, and to separate this mixture, save the good and destroy the bad, is the work of Christ. He partially purges the floor in this present time by gathering his saints into the church and leaving the unrepentant in the world. But hereafter on the day of judgment he will make a complete and final separation between the just and the unjust by sending the evil from his presence and gathering his own into the garner of heaven (*Mt 25:32,33*). He shall also winnow our individual characters, and remove all evil from us--*Lk 22:31,32 Ro 7:21-25*, and to **{(a) and he will} (c) gather the {(a) his} (c) wheat into his {(a) the} (c) garner** [Eastern garners or granaries were usually subterranean vaults or caves. Garnered grain rested in safety. It was removed from peril of birds, storms, blight and mildew]; **but the chaff** [when the Bible wishes to show the worthlessness and the doom of the ungodly, chaff is one of its favorite figures--*Job 21:18 Ps 1:4 Isa 17:13 Jer 15:7 Hos 13:3 Mal 4:1*] **he will burn up** [To prevent chaff from being blown back and mixed again with the wheat, it was burned up.] **with unquenchable fire** [In this and in other places (*2Th 1:8,9 Mk 9:48 Mt 25:41*), the future suffering of the wicked is taught in the Bible. He shows no kindness to his neighbor, no friendship toward mankind, who conceals the terrors of the Lord. These terrors are set forth in no uncertain terms. Many believe that God will restore the wicked and eventually save the human race. Others hold that God will annihilate the wicked, and thus end their torment. This passage and the one cited in Mark would be hard to reconcile with either of these views; they indicate that there will be no arrest of judgment nor stay of punishment when once God begins to execute his condemnation. God purged the world with water [80] at the time of the flood; he will again purge it with fire on the day of judgment--*2Pe 3:7-10.*] **18 With many other exhortations** [The sermon here given is in the nature of a summary. It embodies the substance of John's preaching. Afterwards John preached Christ more directly--*Jn 1:29-36*] **therefore preached he good tidings unto the people.** [but, like the good tidings of the angel at Bethlehem, it was good only to those who, by repentance, made themselves well pleasing to God.] [81]

Section 18

BAPTISM OF JESUS

(Jordan near Jericho, Fall A.D. 26)

Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-22

(b) 9 And {(a) 13 Then} (b) it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came (b) from Nazareth of Galilee, (a) to the Jordan [Tradition fixes upon a ford of Jordan east of Jericho as the place where Jesus was baptized. It is the same section of the river that opened for the passage of Israel under Joshua, and later for Elijah and Elisha. This ford is seventy or eighty miles from Nazareth] **unto John, to be baptized of him** [He set out from Nazareth, intending to be baptized. Such was his intention before he heard John preach, and he was therefore not persuaded to do it by the preaching. His righteousness was not the result of human persuasion.] **(b) and was baptized of John in** [Greek "into." The body of Jesus was immersed or plunged into the river] **(a) 14 But John would have hindered him** [It seemed to John too great an honor for him to baptize Jesus, and too great a humiliation for Jesus to be baptized. There is some dispute as to how John came to know this righteousness of Christ, which prompted his protest. The one natural explanation is, that the intimacy of the two families indicated at the beginning of Luke's account had been kept up, and John knew the history of his kinsman], **saying, I have need to be baptized by you** [those are most fit to administer an ordinance who have themselves deeply experienced the need [82] of it], **and do you come to me?** [John felt that he needed Jesus' baptism, but could not think that Jesus needed his. The words "I," "you" and "me," show that John contrasted the baptizers as well as the baptisms. As a human being he marveled that the Son of God should come to him to be immersed. Moreover, it should be noted that this protest of John's needed to be made, for it saved Jesus from being baptized without explanation, as if he were a sinner. Baptism without such explanation might have compromised our Lord's claim as the sinless one.] **(a) 15 But Jesus answering said unto him, Permit it now** [Permit me for this moment to appear as your inferior. The future will make plain and clear the difference between us, both as to our missions and our natures. The words show a messianic consciousness on the

part of Jesus]: **for thus it becomes us** [Some take the word "us" as referring to Jesus and John, but the clause "to fulfill all righteousness" shows that "us" refers to Jesus, and he uses the plural to show that it also becomes all of us] **to fulfill all righteousness** [Jesus came not only to fulfill all the requirements of the law, but also all that wider range of righteousness of which the law was only a part. 1. Though John's baptism was no part of the Mosaic ritual, it was, nevertheless, a precept of God, given by his prophet (*Jn 1:33*). Had Jesus neglected or refused to obey this precept he would have lacked a portion of the full armor of righteousness, and the Pharisees would have hastened to strike him at this loose joint of his harness (*Mt 21:23-27*). 2. It was the divinely appointed method by which the messiahship of Jesus was to be revealed to the witness John (*Jn 1:33,34*). We should note here that those who fail to obey God's ordinance of baptism fail (1) to follow the example of Jesus in fulfilling the divine will and precepts; (2) to obey one of the positive commands of almighty God spoken by his own Son.] **Then he permitted him.** [John's humility [83] caused him to shrink from this duty, but did not make him willfully persist in declining it. Humility ceases to be a virtue when it keeps us from performing our allotted tasks.] **(c) 21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized** [This may mean that, on the day of his baptism, Jesus was the last candidate, and hence his baptism was the most conspicuous of all; but it more probably means that Jesus was baptized in the midst of John's work--at the period when his baptism was in greatest favor], **that, Jesus also having been {(a) 16 And Jesus, when he was} (c) baptized, and praying** [All divine ordinances should be accompanied with prayer. Luke frequently notes the times when Jesus prayed. Here, at the entrance of his ministry, he prayed, and at the last moment of it he also prayed (*Lk 23:46*). In his highest exultation at the transfiguration (*Lk 9:29*), and in the lowest depths of humiliation in Gethsemane (*Lk 22:41*), he prayed. He prayed for his apostles whom he chose (*Lk 6:12*), and for his murderers by whom he was rejected (*Lk 23:34*). He prayed before Peter confessed him (*Lk 9:18*), and also before Peter denied him--*Lk 22:32*], **(b) 10 And immediately coming up out of {(a) went up immediately from} (b) the water** [the two prepositions, "out of" and "from," show that Jesus was not yet fully out of the river, and that the vision and the voice were immediately associated with his baptism], **(a) and lo, (b) he saw** [The statement that *he* saw the Spirit descending, which is also the language of Matthew, has been taken by some as implying that the Spirit was invisible to the multitude. But we know from John's narrative that it was also seen by John the Baptist (*Jn 1:33,34*), and if it was visible to him and to Jesus, and it descended, as Luke affirms, in a bodily shape like a dove (*Lk 3:22*), it would have required a miracle to hide it from the multitude. Moreover, the object of the Spirit's visible appearance was to point Jesus out to others, especially John; and to point him out as the person concerning whom the voice from heaven was uttered. No doubt, then, the Spirit was visible and audible to all who [84] were present] **the heavens rent asunder** [for], **(a) the heavens were {(c) heaven was} (a) opened unto him** [The heavens open at the beginning of Jesus' ministry to honor him, and at the end of it to receive him. Christ is the opener of heaven for all men], **and he saw the Spirit of God descending** [the Spirit came upon Jesus to give him the miraculous power that he afterward exerted--*Lk 4:14*] **as a dove** [That is, like a dove. All four evangelists are careful to inform us that it was not an actual dove, and coming upon him; (c) 22 and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form [The Spirit descended in this manner that he might be revealed to be a personal substance and not merely an operation of the Godhead, and might thus make a sensible demonstration as to his proper place in the Trinity], **as a dove** [The descent of the Spirit upon Jesus was in accordance with prophecy (*Isa 11:2 41:1*). The dove shape suggests purity, gentleness, peace, etc. Jesus makes the dove a symbol of harmlessness (*Mt 10:15*). In fact, the nature of this bird makes it a fit emblem of the Spirit, for it comports well with the fruits of the Spirit (*Ga 5:22,23*). The nations of the earth emblazon eagles upon their banners and lions upon their shields, but He who shall gather all nations into his kingdom, appeared as a Lamb, and his Spirit appeared under the symbol of a dove.] **upon him (a) 17 and lo, a voice (c) came (a) out of the heavens, {(c) heaven}** [Voices from heaven acknowledged the person of Christ at his birth, his baptism, his transfiguration and during the concluding days of his ministry. At his baptism Jesus was honored by the attestation of both the Spirit and the Father. But the ordinance itself was honored by the sensible manifestation of each several personality of the Deity--that the three into whose name we ourselves are also baptized], **(a) saying, This is {(b) you are}** [The "this is," etc. of Matthew (*Mt 3:17*) are probably the words as John the Baptist reported them; the "you are," etc., of Mark

(*Mk 1:11*) and Luke (*Lk 3:22*) are the words as Jesus actually heard them. The testimony of the Father is in unreserved support of the fundamental proposition of Christianity on which the church of Christ is founded (*Mt 16:15-18*). On this point no witness in the universe was so well qualified to speak as the Father, and no other fact was so well worthy the honor of being sanctioned by his audible utterance as this. The testimony of Christ's life, of his works, of the Baptist, and of the Scriptures might have been sufficient; but when the Father himself speaks, who shall doubt the adequacy of the proof? **(a) my beloved Son** [See also *Mt 17:5*. The Father himself states that relationship of which the apostle John so often spoke (*Jn 1:1*). Adam was made (*Gn 1:26*), but Jesus was begotten (*Ps 2:7*). Both were sons of God, but in far different senses. [86], **in whom {c) in you}** [Some make the phrases "in whom" and "in you" (*Mt 3:17 Lk 3:22*) to mean more than simply a declaration that God is pleased *with* Jesus. They see in it also the statement that the Father will be pleased with all who are "in Christ Jesus"--*Eph 1:6*] **(a) I am well pleased** [It is no slight condemnation to be well pleasing to God (*Job 4:18*).] **(c) 23 And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age.** [The age when a Levite entered upon God's service (*Nm 4:3,47*); at which Joseph stood before Pharaoh (*Gn 41:46*); at which David began to reign (*2Sa 5:4*).

Section 19

WILDERNESS TEMPTATION BATTLE (Wilderness of Judea, Fall A.D. 26) Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13

A. Forty-day Fast (Mt 4:1-2; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-2).

(c) 1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, (b) 12 And immediately the Spirit drove him forth (c) and (a) 1 Then [Just after his baptism, with the glow of the descended Spirit still upon him, and the commending voice of the Father still ringing in his ears, Jesus is rushed into the suffering of temptation.] **was Jesus led up** [The two expressions "drove" and "led up" (*Mt 4:1 Lk 4:1*) show that Jesus was drawn to the wilderness by an irresistible impulse, and did not go there of his own volition (*Eze 40:2*). He was brought into temptation, but did not seek it. He was led of God into temptation, but was not tempted of God. [87] **of the Spirit into the wilderness** [The wilderness sets in back of Jericho and extends thence along the whole western shore of the Dead Sea. The northern end of this region is in full view from the Jordan as one looks westward, and a more desolate and forbidding landscape it would be hard to find. It is vain to locate the temptation in any particular part of it. Jesus may have wandered about over nearly all of it] **(a) to be tempted of the devil** [The account of the temptation must have been given to the disciples by Jesus himself, and as it pleased him to give it to us as an actual history of real facts, it behooves us to accept it without being presumptuously inquisitive. Jesus had taken upon him our flesh, and hence he could be tempted, with a possibility of falling. But his divinity insured his victory over temptation. Sinlessness does not preclude temptation, else Adam could not have been tempted, nor could Satan himself have fallen. Moreover, temptation is in so sense sin. It is the yielding of the will to temptation that constitutes sin. The spiritual history of humanity revolves around two persons; namely, the first and the second Adam. The temptation of Christ was as real as that of Adam. He had taken upon himself our temptable nature (*Php 2:7,8*), and he was tempted not as a private soldier, but as the second Adam, the Captain of [88] our salvation (*Heb 2:10-18*). The failure of the first Adam brought sorrow, darkness and death; the success of the second Adam brought joy, light and immortality. The word "devil" is Greek. The word "Satan" is Hebrew, and means "adversary" (*Job 2:1*). Satan is referred to under many other terms, such as Beelzebub (*Mt 12:24*); serpent (*Re 12:9*); prince of the powers of the air (*Eph 2:2*); Abaddon (Hebrew) and Apollyon (Greek), meaning "destroyer" (*Re 9:11*); Belial, meaning "good for nothing" (*2Co 6:15*); murderer and liar (*Jn 8:44*); prince of this world (*Jn 12:31*); god of this world (*2Co 4:4*); and the dragon (*Re 12:7*). These terms are always used in the Bible to designate an actual person; they are never used merely to personify evil. The devil may have appeared to Jesus in bodily form, or he may have come insensibly as he does to us. Our Lord's temptation makes the personality of the tempter essential, else Christ's own heart must have suggested evil to him, which is incompatible with his perfect holiness.] **(b) 13 And he was (c) led in the Spirit**

[that is, under the power of the Spirit] **in the wilderness** [Isolation from humanity is no security from temptation.] **2 during forty days** [Matthew (*Mt 4:2*) speaks of the temptation as coming "after" forty days. Evidently Mark (*Mk 1:13*) and Luke regard the long fast as part of the process of temptation, seeing that without it the first temptation would have been without force. There is no evidence of any other specific temptations before the three], **being tempted of (b) Satan; (c) the devil, (b) and he was with the wild beasts** [A graphic touch, showing the dreariness and desolation of the wilderness, and indicating its peril. Lions, [90] wolves, leopards and serpents have been found in the Judean wilderness]; **(c) And he did eat nothing** [A forty days' fast has been safely accomplished in modern times, and as it was Jesus who fasted, we see no reason why we should not take Luke's statement literally, as indicating an absolute fast] **in those days: and when they were completed. (a) 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights** [A forty days' fast was accomplished by Moses (*Ex 34:28 Dt 9:18*), and by Elijah (*1Ki 19:8*), and it is a significant fact in this connection that these two men appeared with Christ at his transfiguration (*Mt 17:3*). Those who share Christ's sufferings shall also share his glorification (*Ro 8:17 2Ti 2:11,12*). The forty days' fast became a basis for the temptation. We are told that temptation results from the excitement of desire (*Jas 1:14*), and, as a rule, the greater the desire the greater the temptation. Viewed from this standpoint the temptation of the second Adam greatly exceeded in strength that of the first, for Adam abstained as to a particular fruit, but Christ fasted as to all things edible], **he afterward hungered.** [Here, for the first time, our Lord is shown as sharing our physical needs.]

B. First Temptation (Mt 4:3; Lk 4:3).

(a) 3 And the tempter came [Satan is pre-eminently the tempter, for other tempters are his agents. He may possibly have appeared as an angel of light (*2Co 11:14*), but the purpose of his coming is more important than the manner of it. He came to produce sin in Jesus, for sin would render him forever incapable of becoming our Savior--a sacrifice for the sins of others] **(c) 3 And the devil said unto him, If you are the Son of God, command this stone that it {(a) command that these stones} become bread.** [The devil's "if" strikes at the faith of Christ, and faith is the bond of union and accord between man and God. The main sin of this temptation was therefore distrust, though [91] it had other sinful phases. The Father's voice had just declared the Sonship of Jesus, and Satan here boldly questions the truth of God's words, just as he did in the beginning (*Gn 3:3-5*). This temptation appealed to the present appetite, the impulse of the moment, as many of our temptations do. This first temptation is still Satan's favorite with the poor. He suggests to them that if they were really the beloved objects of God's care, their condition would be otherwise. We should note that Jesus performed no selfish miracle. Such an act would have been contrary to all Scripture precedent. Paul did not heal himself (*1Co 12:7-9 Ga 4:13 Col 4:14*), nor Epaphroditus, (*Php 2:25-27*), nor Trophimus (*2Ti 4:20*). Denying himself the right to make bread in the wilderness, Christ freely used his miraculous power to feed others in the desert (*Mt 14:15-21*).

C. Jesus' First Response (Mt 4:4; Lk 4:4).

(a) 4 But he {(c) 4 And Jesus} (a) answered and said, (c) unto him, It is written [Jesus quotes *Dt 8:3*. It is a saying relative to the times when Israel was sustained by manna in the wilderness. The case of Jesus was now similar to that of Israel. He was in a foodless wilderness, but he trusted that as God had provided for Israel in its helplessness, so would he now provide for him. Israel sinned by doubt and murmuring, and proposing to obtain bread in its own way--that is, by returning to Egypt (*Ex 16:1-9*). Jesus avoided a like sin. We should note the use that our Lord made of Scripture: in his hour of trial he did not look to visions and voices and special revelation for guidance, but used the written Word as the lamp [92] for his feet (*Ps 119:105*); in the conflict of temptation he did not defend himself by his own divine wisdom, but used that wisdom that God had revealed to all Israel through his prophets. Jesus fought as a man (*Php 2:6,7*), and used that weapon that, as God, he had given to man (*Eph 6:17*). Jesus used the Scripture as of final, argument-ending authority. Jesus permitted Satan neither to question nor pervert the Scripture], **Man** [In using the word "man" Jesus takes his stand with us as a human being] **shall not live by bread alone** [Called out of Egypt as God's Son (*Mt 2:15*), Jesus could well expect that he would

be fed with manna after his forty days' fast.] **(a) but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God** [To satisfy our sense of duty is often more pleasant than to appease the pangs of hunger (*Jn 4:32-34 Job 23:12 Jer 15:16*). The trust of Jesus that God would speak in his behalf and save him, was like that of Job (*Job 13:15*). God can sustain our lives without food if he chooses. We shall live if God wills it, bread or no bread; and we shall likewise die at his word (*Mt 6:25 Jn 6:47-58 Ac 17:28*). God can support our lives independent of our body--*Mt 10:28*.]

D. Second Temptation (Mt 4:5-7; Lk 4:9-12).

(a) 5 Then the devil took him [Matthew emphasizes the [93] compulsory companionship of Satan. Jesus was in the hands of Satan as was Job (*Job 2:5,6*); but in Jesus' case Satan had the power of life and death, and he eventually took Jesus to the cross and slew him there] **into the holy city** [A common name for Jerusalem. The Holy City on earth did not exclude the tempter. But in the Holy City that is to come there will be no temptation]; **(c) 9 And he led him to Jerusalem, (a) and set him** [The two verbs "took" and "set" imply that Satan exercised a control over the bodily person of our Lord] **on the pinnacle of the temple** [The royal portico of Herod was at the southeast corner of the temple enclosure, and overlooked the valley of Kidron. Here was then, and is yet, the greatest height about the temple, and it was, therefore, the most suitable place for Satan's proposal], **6 and said {(c) said} (a) unto him, If** [The temptations of our Lord show how positively Satan was convinced of the deity of Christ. The opening scenes of Christ's ministry are redolent with his divinity. The Baptist asserted his purity and might, the Spirit visibly acknowledged his worthiness, the Father audibly testified to his Sonship, and the devil twice assaulted him as the divine champion] **you are the Son of God, cast yourself down** [94] [The first temptation was to under-confidence; the second to over-trust and presumption--two very dangerous conditions of the soul. Men begin by disparagingly doubting that Jesus can save them from their sins, and end by recklessly presuming that he will save them in their sins. It is urged by some as to this temptation that there is no hint of vainglory or display, because nothing is said about casting himself down in the presence of the people, and that Jesus was merely taken to the temple because the sacred locality would tend to heighten his trust in the protecting promise that Satan quoted. But this ground is not well taken, for 1. The temple presumes a crowd. 2. We have a right to presume that this temptation would be like others to which Jesus was subjected. He was frequently invited to work miracles to satisfy curiosity, and he invariably refused to do so]: **(c) from hence: 10 for it is written** [This quotation is taken from *Ps 91:11,12*, and applies to man generally. Note 1. The devil's head is full of Scripture, but to no profit, for his heart is empty of it. 2. By quoting it he shows a sense of its power that modern rationalism would do well to consider. 3. Satan's abuse of Scripture did not discourage Christ's use of it], **He shall give his angels charge concerning you** [Satan's words appeal to Jesus to be more religious; to put more trust and reliance upon the promises of the Father; and he puts him in the place--the temple--where he might argue that God could least afford to let his promise fail], **to guard you: 11 and, On their hands they shall bear you up** [All who love pomp, display of artistic taste, gaities of fashion, intoxication of fame, etc., fall by this temptation. Those who truly rest on God's promises, stand on a sure [95] foundation, but those who rise on bubbles must come down when they burst], **Lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

E. Jesus' Second Response (Mt 4:7; Lk 4:12).

(c) 12 And Jesus answering, said unto him, (a) again it is written {(c) said,} ["Written," "said"; the writings of Scripture are in general the sayings of God. But the Bible is not made up of isolated texts. To get a right understanding we must compare Scripture with Scripture. We could have no higher endorsement of the Old Testament than this use of it by Christ. It was sufficient for him in his temptations, and with the addition of the New Testament, it is sufficient for us in all things--*2Ti 3:16,17 Col 3:3-16*], **(a) You shall not make trial** [Make experiment upon God, set traps for him, put one's self in dangerous situations, hoping thereby to draw forth some show of loving deliverance. Had Jesus cast himself down, he would have demanded of the Father a needless miracle to prove his Sonship, and would thereby have put the love of God to an unnecessary trial. All who jeopardize themselves without any command of God or call of duty, make trial of his love] **of the Lord your God.**

F. Third Temptation (Mt 4:8-10; Lk 4:5-8).

(a) 8 Again, the devil took him [whether naturally or supernaturally, "whether in the body or out of the body" (2Co 12:2-4), we can not tell. But it was a real, practical trial and temptation] **unto an exceeding high mountain** [it is immaterial which mountain this was; for from no mountain could one see the whole earth with the natural eye], **(c) 5 And he led him up, (a) And showed {(c) showed} (a) him** [It is not said by either evangelist that Jesus saw the kingdoms from the mountain-top, but that Satan *showed* them to him. From any high Judean mountain it would be easy for him to locate Rome, Greece, Egypt, Persia and Assyria, and as he pointed out their locality a few brief words of description would picture them to the imagination of Jesus, and cause their glories to move before his eyes. But it is very likely that to this description some sort of supernatural vision was added.] **all the kingdoms of the world** [It tempted Jesus to realize the dreams [96] that the Jewish nation entertained. It was an appeal to him to reveal himself in the fullness of his power and authority as above generals, princes, kings, and all beings of all ages. An appeal to obtain by physical rather than by spiritual power; by the short-cut path of policy rather than by the long road of suffering and martyrdom. Jesus came to obtain the kingdoms of the world. He was born King of the Jews, and confessed himself to be a King before Pilate. All authority is now given to him, and he must reign until he puts all his enemies under his feet, and until all the kingdoms of the world become his kingdom. Satan's way to obtain this kingdom differed from God's way. He might obtain it by doing Satan's will and becoming his worshiper, or by worshipping God and doing his will. Satan would give the speedier possession, but God the more lasting.], **and the glory of them** [That is, all their resources as well as their magnificence. Their cities, lands and people, their armies, treasures and temples, etc. Many parents, in encouraging their children to seek earthly glory and distinction, unconsciously assist Satan in urging this temptation]; **(c) in a moment of time** [These words strongly indicate that the prospect must have been supernaturally presented. The suddenness of the vision added greatly to the power of the temptation]; **(a) 9 and he (c) the devil said unto him, To you will I give all this authority {(a) All these things will I give you,}** [From the standpoint of Christ's humanity, how overwhelming the temptation! It was the world's honors to one who had for thirty years led the life of a village carpenter; it was the world's riches to him who had not where to lay his head. From the standpoint of Jesus' divinity the temptation was repulsive. It was a large offer in the sight of Satan, but a small one in the sight of him who made all the worlds. Such offers are large to the children of the world, but small to those who are by faith joint-heirs with Christ (*Ro 8:17 Php 3:7,8*). But the temptation was, nevertheless, very specious and plausible. The power of Jesus linked with that of Satan, and [97] operating through Jewish fanaticism and pagan expectation would, in a few months, have brought the whole earth into one temporal kingdom, with Jesus as its head. But the kingdom of Christ rested upon a surer promise (*Ps 2:8*) than that here given by the "father of lies." God had promised, and, despite the pretensions of Satan, God had not yet retired from the government of the world. It was true that Satan and his emissaries had, by usurpation, gained an apparent possession of the world, but Jesus had right to it as the heir of God (*Mt 21:33-43*). Being stronger than Satan, he had come to regain his kingdom, not by treaty, but by conquest (*Lk 11:19-22*). Moreover, he would obtain it as a spiritual and not as a carnal kingdom. It should be noted also that Satan omits the words "if you are the Son of God" (*Mt 4:3,6*) in this instance, for their presence would have marred the force of the temptation. Note also that this was the only temptation wherein Satan evinced any show of generosity. He is slow to give anything, and most of us sell out to him for nothing--*Isa 52:3*], **and the glory of them: for it has been delivered unto me** [Satan does not claim an absolute but a derivative right, and his claim is not wholly unfounded (*Jn 12:31 14:30 16:11*). But the kingdom has been delivered unto him by men rather than by God (*Eph 2:2*). How much more quickly Jesus would have obtained power, had he received it from men by consenting to co-operate with them in their sinful practices as does Satan]; **and to whomsoever I will** [Not so Jesus. His giving is according to the Father's will--*Mt 9:23*] **I give it** [The Emperor Tiberius then held it in the fullest sense ambition ever realized. Yet he was the most miserable and degraded of men. Satan knows how to take full toll for all that he gives.] **7 If** [In the temptations Satan uses three "ifs." The first "if" is one of despairing doubt (*Mt 4:3 Lk 4:3*); the second, one of vainglorious speculation (*Mt 4:6 Lk 4:9*); the third, one of moral and [98] spiritual compromise--*Mt 4:9 Lk 4:7*] **you therefore will (a) fall down**

and worship (c) before me [Satan and God each seek the worship of man, but from very different motives. God is holiness and goodness, and we are invited to worship him that we may thereby be induced to grow like him. But Satan seeks worship for vanity's sake. How vast the vanity that would give so great a reward for one act of worship! Verily the devil is fond of it. He gives nothing unless he obtains it, and all his generosity is selfishness. Worshiping before Satan is the bending of the soul rather than of the body. He holds before each of us some crown of success, and says: "Bend just a little; slightly compromise your conscience." It is Satan's sin to make such suggestions, but it is not our sin until we comply with them. We may more quickly obtain by his wrong way, but more surely by God's right way., **it shall all be yours.**

G. Jesus' Third Response (Mt 4:10; Lk 4:8).

(c) 8 And (a) 10 Then (c) Jesus answered and said {(a) said} (c) unto him, (a) Get away [The passionate utterance of an aroused soul. Indignation is as divine as patience (*Eph 4:26*). Satan's sweetest temptation was most disgusting to Christ, for its sin was so grossly apparent. It ran counter to the very first of the Ten Commandments. Jesus would give it no room in his thoughts; he spurned it, as being as heinous as the law describes it (*Dt 5:6-11*). Temptation must be peremptorily rejected. Jesus did not stop to weigh the worthiness of Satan; it was sufficient that God only is to be worshiped. As God, Jesus was himself an object of worship; but as man he worshiped the Father privately and publicly. Satan [99] sought to command Jesus, but was commanded of him. Step by step Satan has obeyed this command, and foot after foot, earth's spiritual world has been yielded by his departing presence], **Satan** [The first and second temptations were so subtle and covert, and their sin so skillfully disguised, as to suggest that Satan himself was disguised. If so, his pride and vanity, revealed in this last temptation, betrayed him so that Jesus tore off his mask and called him by his right name. When he tempted him in a somewhat similar matter, Jesus called Simon Peter by this name (*Mt 16:23*), but he laid a different command upon each of them. To Satan he spoke as an enemy, saying, "Get you hence." He ordered Satan from his presence, for he had no proper place there. To Peter he spoke as to a presumptuous disciple, saying, "Get you behind me." The disciple is a follower of his master, and his proper place is in the rear]: **for it is written** [Jesus gives a free translation of *Dt 6:13*. He substitutes the word "worship" for the word "fears." Fear prohibits false and induces true worship, and loving worship is the source of all acceptable service. The three Scripture quotations used by Jesus are all from the book of Deuteronomy.], **You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.** [By serving God, Jesus obtained all the earthly authority that the devil offered him, and heavenly authority in addition thereto (*Mt 28:18*).] **(c) 13 And when the devil had completed every temptation. (a) 11 Then the devil left {(c) he departed from} him for a season.** [See *Jas 4:7*. But Satan left to return many times. Here was the first being endowed with human nature who had defeated Satan under all circumstances for thirty years. This was Satan's first defeat under Christ's ministry. His last is yet to come, and it shall come by this same Christ. Temptations are battles. They leave the victor stronger and the [100] vanquished weaker. Hence Satan when resisted is represented as fleeing. But he only flees for a season. He never despairs of the conflict so long as man is on the earth. Christ was constantly tempted by the returning devil (*Lk 22:28*).] **(a) and behold, angels came** [They had probably witnessed the contest. Angels do not appear again visibly ministering unto Jesus until we find him in Gethsemane (*Lk 22:43*).] **and ministered unto him.** [Jesus was probably fed by the angels, as was Elijah by one of them (*1Ki 19:4-7*). Satan and suffering first, then angels, refreshment and rest. God had indeed given his angels charge, and they came to him who refused to put the father to the test. But they did not assist Jesus during his temptation, for that was to be resisted by himself alone--*Isa 63:3*.]

PART TWO
YEAR OF OBSCURITY
A.D. 27

Section 20
JOHN'S INTRODUCTION OF JESUS
(Bethany Beyond Jordan, February A.D. 27)
Jn 1:19-34

A. John's Witness about Himself (Jn 1:19-28).

(d) 19 And this is the witness of John [John had been sent to testify, "and" this is the matter of his testimony], **when the Jews** [The term "Jews" is used seventy times by John to describe the ruling classes of Judea] **sent unto him** [In thus sending an embassy they honored John more than they ever honored Christ. They looked upon John as a priest and Judean, but upon Jesus as a carpenter and Galilean. It is probable that the sending of this investigating committee marks the period when the feelings of the rulers toward John changed from friendliness to hostility. At the first, probably led on by the prophecies of Daniel, these Jews found joy in [101] John's coming (*Jn 5:33-35*). When they attended his ministry in person he denounced their wickedness and incurred their hatred] **from Jerusalem priests and Levites** [they were commissioned to teach (*2Ch 15:3 Ne 8:7-9*), and it was probably because of their wisdom as teachers that they were sent to question John about his baptism] **to ask him, Who are you? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed** [The repetition here suggests John's firmness under repeated temptation. As the questioners ran down the scale from "Christ" to "that prophet," John felt himself diminishing in their estimation, but firmly declined to take honors that did not belong to him], **I am not** [in this entire section (*Jn 1:20-24*) John places emphasis upon the pronoun "I," that he may contrast himself with Christ] **the Christ** [The fact that the Jews were disposed to look upon John as the Messiah gave all the greater weight to his testimony; for the more exalted the person of the witness, the weightier are his words.] **21 And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah?** [Malachi had declared that Elijah should precede the Messiah (*Mal 4:5*). The Jews interpreted this prophecy literally, and looked for the return of the veritable Elijah who was translated (*Mt 17:10*). This literal Elijah did return, and was seen upon the Mount of Transfiguration before the crucifixion of our Lord. But the prophecy of Malachi referred to a spiritual Elijah—one who should come "in the spirit and power of Elijah," and in this sense John fulfilled Malachi's prediction—*Lk 1:17 Mt 11:14 17:12*.] **And he said, I am not** [He answered their question according to [102] the sense in which they had asked it. He was not the Elijah who had been translated about nine hundred years before this time—*2Ki 2:11*.] **Are you the prophet?** [Moses had foretold a prophet who would come (*Dt 18:15-18*), but the Jews appear to have had no fixed opinion concerning him, for some thought he would be a second Moses, others a second Elijah, others the Messiah. The Scriptures show us how uncertain they were about him (*Mt 16:14 Jn 6:14 7:40,41*). As to Jeremiah being that prophet, see *2 Macc. 2:7*.] **And he answered, No.** [He was not the prophet, either as he or they understood that term. John gives us a beautiful example of humility. Like Paul, he would not be overvalued—*Ac 14:13-15 1Co 1:12,13*.] **22 They said therefore unto him, Who are you? that we may give an answer to them that sent us What do you say of yourself?** [Unable to guess his office, they asked him to state it plainly.] **23 He said, I am the voice** [It is as though John answered, "You ask who I am. My personality is nothing; my message everything. I shall pass away as a sound passes into silence; but the truth that I have uttered shall abide." In his answer John shows himself to be the spiritual Elijah, for he declares that he came to do the work of Elijah; namely, to prepare the people for the advent of Messiah. There are many echoes in the world; but few voices] **of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord** [prepare the minds and hearts of the people that Christ may freely enter in], **as said Isaiah the prophet. [Isa 40:3.] 24 And they had been sent were from**

[103] **the Pharisees.** [Of all the Jewish sects the Pharisees were most attentive to external rites and ceremonies, and hence would notice John's baptism more than would others.] **25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?** [If you are no more important personage, who do you presume to introduce any other ordinance than those provided for by the law of Moses? The question shows that to them John's baptism was a new rite. Even if proselyte baptism then existed at this time (of which there is certainly no sufficient evidence), it differed in two marked ways from John's baptism: 1. John baptized his converts, while proselytes baptized themselves. 2. John baptized Jews and not Gentiles.] **26 John answered them, saying, I baptize in water: but in the midst of you stands one whom you know not, 27 even he that comes after me** [that is, follows in that way that I as forerunner am preparing for him], **The latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose.** [The words "stands" and "shoe" showed that the person of whom the Baptist spoke had a visible, bodily form. To loose the latchet was a peculiarly servile office. The greatest prophet felt unworthy to render Christ this humble service, but unconverted sinners often presume to serve Christ according to their own will, and fully expect to have their service honored and rewarded. Taken as a whole, the answer of John appears indirect and insufficient. What was there in all this to authorize him to baptize? This appears to be his meaning: "You demand my authority for baptism. It rests in him for whom I prepare the way. It is a small matter to introduce baptism in water for one so worthy. If you accept him, my baptism will need no explanation; and if you reject him, my rite and its authority are both wholly [104] immaterial."] **28 These things were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan** [Owing to variation in the manuscripts, we may read "Bethany" or "Bethabara." Tradition fixes upon the Jericho ford, which is about five miles on an air line north of the Dead Sea, as the site of Jesus' baptism. But this spot is eighty miles from Cana of Galilee, and hence Jesus, leaving it on foot, could not well have attended the wedding in Cana on "the third day" (*Jn 2:1*). We must therefore look for Bethany or Bethabara farther up the river. John the Baptist was a roving preacher (*Lk 3:3*), and during the forty days of Jesus' temptation seems to have moved up the river Jordan. Being *beyond* the Jordan, Bethany is not in Galilee.] **where John was baptizing.**

B. John's Witness about Jesus (Jn 1:29-31).

(d) 29 On the morrow he saw Jesus coming unto him [Jesus had just returned from the temptation in the wilderness. This is his first appearance in John's Gospel. The fact that John leaves out all the early history of Jesus shows that he wrote many years after the other evangelists, when all these facts were so well known as to need no mention by him], **and said, Behold, the Lamb of God** [Lambs were commonly used for sin-offerings (*Lv 4:32*), and three of them were sacrificed in the cleansing of a leper (*Lv 14:10*). A lamb was also the victim of the morning (9 A.M.) and evening (3 P.M.) sacrifice (*Ex 29:38*)--the hours when Jesus was nailed to the cross and when he expired. A lamb was also the victim at the Passover supper. The great prophecy of Isaiah, setting forth the vicarious sacrifice of Christ (*Isa 53:1-12*) depicts him as a lamb, and in [105] terms that answer closely to the words here used by John. The Jews to whom John spoke readily understood his allusion as being to sacrificial lambs; but they could not understand his meaning, for they had no thought of the sacrifice of a person. Jesus is called the Lamb of God because he is the lamb or sacrifice that God provided and accepted as the true and only sin-offering--*Heb 10:4-14 1Pe 1:19*], **that takes away the sin of the world!** [The present tense, "takes," is used because the expiatory effect of Christ's sacrifice is perpetual, and the fountain of his forgiveness never fails. Expiated sin is thus spoken of as being taken away (*Lv 10:17 Ex 34:7 Nm 14:18*). Some, seeking to avoid the vicarious nature of Christ's sacrifice, claim that the Baptist means that Jesus would gradually lift the world out of sin by his teaching. But lambs do not teach, and sin is not removed by teaching, but by sacrifice (*Heb 9:22 Re 5:9*). Jesus was sacrificed for the world, that is, for the entire human family in all ages. All are bought, but all do not acknowledge the purchase (*2Pe 2:1*). He gives liberty to all, but all do not receive it, and some having received it return again to bondage (*Ga 4:9*). The Baptist had baptized for the remission of sins. He now points his converts to him who would make this promise good unto their souls.] **30 This is he of whom I said** [for this saying see *Jn 1:15,27*], **After me comes a man who is preferred before me: for he was before me.** [As a man John was six months older than Jesus, but Jesus was the eternal Word. The Baptist therefore asserts here the pre-existence

of our Lord.] **31 And I knew him not** [had no such certain knowledge of him as would fit me to testify concerning him]; **but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water.** [John baptized not only that he himself might know Christ by the spiritual sign, but also that through that knowledge duly published all Israel might know him.] **32 And John bare witness, [106] saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him.** [The descent of the Spirit served at least two purposes: 1. It enabled John to identify the Messiah. 2. It was, so to speak, an official recognition of Jesus as Messiah similar to the anointing or crowning of a king. It is asserted by some that it was of no benefit to Jesus, since his own divine powers permitted of no addition; but the language of Scripture indicates otherwise--*Isa 11:2,3 Lk 4:17-19 Jn 3:34.*] **33 And I knew him not** [John's assertions that he did not know Jesus are assertions that he did not know him to be the Messiah. He *believed* it, as appears from his reluctance to baptize him, but he did not know it. His language to the people shows this (*Jn 1:26*). Many of the people must have known Jesus, but none of them knew him to be the Messiah. Moreover, when John denied that he knew Jesus as Messiah we must not take it that he was ignorant of the past history of Jesus. No doubt he knew in a general way who Jesus was; but as the official forerunner and announcer of Jesus, and as the heaven-sent witness (*Jn 1:6,7*), it was necessary that the Baptist should receive, by personal revelation from God, as here stated, an indubitable, absolute knowledge of the messiahship of Jesus. Without this, John would not have been truly qualified as a witness. John kept silent till he could testify of his own knowledge]: **but he that sent me** [thus humbly does John claim his divine commission as a prophet] **to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever you shall see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him** [John seems to emphasize the abiding of the Spirit. The Spirit of God was also bestowed upon the prophets and the apostles, but in them his power was intermittent, and not constant; visions came to them intermittently, but with Christ the fellowship of the Spirit was continuous], **the same is he that baptizes in the Holy Spirit.** [Christ bestows the Spirit upon his own. If he himself received the Spirit at the time of his baptism, why should [107] it be thought strange that he bestows the Spirit upon his disciples at the time of their baptism?--See *Ac 2:38 19:1-7 Tit 3:5.*] **34 And I have seen** [that is, I have seen the promised sign], **and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.** [This is the climax of John's testimony. It was twofold, embracing the results of the two senses of sight and hearing. 1. John saw the dove-like apparition of the Spirit, which convinced him that Jesus was the one to baptize in the Spirit. 2. He *heard* the voice of the Father, which convinced him that Jesus was the Son of God. As to each of these two facts he had a separate revelation, appealing to a different sense, and each given by the personage of the Deity more nearly concerned in the matter revealed. John was not only to prepare the people to receive Christ by calling them to repentance, and baptizing them for the remission of their sins; there was another work equally great and important to be performed. Their *heads* as well as their *hearts* needed his preparatory services. His testimony ran counter to and corrected popular opinion concerning Christ. We see that John corrected four errors: 1. The Jews looked for a Messiah of no greater spiritual worthiness than John himself, but the Baptist disclaimed even the right to unlace the Lord's shoe, that he might emphasize the difference between himself and the Messiah in point of spiritual excellence. 2. The Jews looked for one who would come after Moses, David, and the prophets, and lost sight of the fact that he would be before them, both in point of time and of honor (*Mt 22:41-46*). 3. The Jews looked for a liberator from earthly bondage--a glorious king; John pointed them to a liberator from spiritual bondage, a perfect sacrifice acceptable to God. 4. The Jews looked for a human Messiah, a son of David. John enlarged their idea, by pointing them to a Messiah who was also the Son of God. When the Jews accept John's guidance as a prophet, they will believe in the messiahship of Jesus.] [108]

Section 21
FIRST DISCIPLES
(Bethany Beyond Jordan, Spring, A.D. 27)
Jn 1:35-51

A. John Points Two Disciples to Jesus (Jn 1:35-39).

(d) **35 Again on the next day** [John's direct testimony bore fruit on the second day] **John was standing, and two of his disciples** [An audience of two. A small field; but a large harvest]; **36 and he looked** [Gazed intently. The word is used at *Mk 14:67 Lk 22:61 Mk 10:21,27*. John looked searchingly at that face, which, so far as any record shows, he was never to see on earth again.] **upon Jesus as he walked** [This detail seems to be introduced to show that the Baptist did not stop Jesus and enter into familiar conversation with him. The witness of John was wholly that of an inspired, unbiased prophet, and not that of a friend or a familiar acquaintance], **and said, Behold the Lamb of God!** [John repeats this testimony. He might have chosen another message, but preferred this one.] **37 And the two disciples** [Andrew and probably John, the writer of this Gospel. The following are indications that it was John: 1. From this time on he speaks as an eyewitness. 2. We have no other account in his Gospel on his call to discipleship. 3. On seven other occasions in this Gospel he withholds his name--*Jn 13:23 19:26,35 20:2 21:7,20,24*] **heard him speak, they followed Jesus.** [Here is the fountainhead of Christianity, for Christianity is following Jesus.] **38 And Jesus turned, and beheld them following, and said unto them, What do you want?** [They doubtless felt such awe and reverence for the person of Jesus as would make them hesitate to address him. Hence Jesus himself opens the way for intercourse with himself.] **And they said unto him, Rabbi (that is to say, being interpreted, Teacher)** [109] [By the way in which John explains Jewish words and customs, it becomes apparent that his Gospel was written for Gentiles as well as for Jews. Some take these explanations as evidence that John's Gospel was written after the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem. They are indeed a slight evidence of this, for it is more expedient to explain a custom that has ceased to exist than one that survives to explain itself], **where do you live?** **39 He said, Come, and you shall see.** [The fitting invitation of him who says: "Seek, and you shall find"--*Mt 7:7 Lk 11:9*.] **They came therefore and saw where he abode; and they abode with him that day: it was about the tenth hour.** [It being a crisis in his life, John remembered the very hour. If John reckoned time according to the Jewish method, it was about 4 P.M. If according to the Roman method, it was 10 A.M. We are inclined to accept the latter as correct.]

B. Simon Brought to Jesus (Jn 1:40-42).

(d) **40 One of the two that heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.** **41 He found first** [before he did anything else] **his own brother Simon** [The word "own" is here coupled with "brother" to show that Simon was not a mere relative (as the word "brother" might mean), but it was literally Andrew's brother] **and said unto him, We have found the Messiah (that is, being interpreted, Christ).** ["Messiah" is Hebrew, "Christ" is Greek, "Anointed" is English. Jesus is the anointed of God. In finding him, Andrew had made the greatest discovery that it is possible for a man to make.] **42 He brought him unto Jesus.** [Thus Andrew has in a sense the honor of being the first Christian evangelist.] **Jesus looked upon him, and said, You are Simon [this name means "hearing"] the son of John: you shall be called Cephas (that is by interpretation, Peter).** ["Cephas" is Hebrew, "Peter" is Greek, "stone" is English. It means a mass of rock detached from the bedrock or strata on which the earth rests. The future tense, "you shall be," indicates that Peter was to win his name. It is given prophetically to describe the stability to which the then weak and vacillating Simon would attain.] [110]

C. Jesus Found Philip (Jn 1:43-44).

(d) **43 The next day he decided to go forth into Galilee, and found Philip** [In the Synoptists, Philip is a mere name in the apostolic list (*Mt 10:3 Mk 3:18 Lk 6:14*). Through John we gain some acquaintance with him--*Jn 6:5 12:21 14:8*]; **and Jesus said unto him, Follow me.** [The Lord's usual invitation to discipleship--*Mt 4:19 8:22 9:9 19:21 Mk 2:14 10:21 Lk 5:27 9:59 Jn 21:19*.] **44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida** [Bethsaida of Galilee, on the northwestern shore of the Lake of Galilee. It was a wicked place--*Mt 11:21 Lk 10:13*], **of the city of Andrew and Peter.** [It appears that Peter afterward moved to Capernaum--*Mk 1:29*.]

D. Nathanael Brought to Jesus (Jn 1:45-46).

(d) 45 Philip found Nathanael [Nathanael is commonly identified with Bartholomew for the following reasons: 1. The name Bartholomew is only a patronymic, and hence its bearer would be likely to have an additional name. (Compare *Mt 16:17 Ac 4:36*.) 2. John never mentions Bartholomew, and the Synoptists never mention Nathanael, though John mentions him among apostles at the beginning and at the close of Christ's ministry. 3. The Synoptists, in their list of apostles, invariably place Philip next to Bartholomew, and show a tendency to place brothers and friends together. 4. All the other disciples mentioned in this chapter become apostles, and none are so highly commended as Nathanael. 5. Bartholomew is connected with Matthew in the list at *Ac 1:13*, and the names Matthew and Nathanael both mean the same, and are equal to the Greek name Theodore, which means "gift of God." But even so the identification is not perfect], **and said unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote** [In brief, Moses wrote of him as a Prophet, David as Lord, Isaiah as the Son of the virgin and suffering Servant, Jeremiah as the [111] Branch, Ezekiel as the Shepherd, Malachi as the Messenger of the Covenant, Daniel as the Messiah.], **Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.** [Philip knew no better at this time, and John did not change the words of Philip to suit his later knowledge of Christ's parentage. John has already declared the divine origin of Jesus (*Jn 1:14*), thereby agreeing with the detailed account of Matthew and Luke.] **46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?** [Because of their lack of culture, their rude dialect, and their contact with Gentiles, the Galileans were lightly esteemed by the inhabitants of Judea (*Jn 7:52*). But here Nathanael, a Galilean himself, speaks slightly of Nazareth. Some think that Nazareth was no worse than the rest of Galilee, and that Nathanael speaks thus disparagingly because he dwelt in the neighboring town of Cana, and felt that jealousy that often exists between rival villages. The guileless Nathanael had no such jealousy, and the persistency with which the enemies of Jesus called him the Nazarene indicates that there was more than a local odium attached to the name Nazareth. Moreover, it was the first city to offer violence to Christ and was ready on one day's acquaintance with his preaching to put him to death.] **Philip said to him, Come and see.** [So said afterward the woman of Samaria (*Jn 4:29*). Investigation removes prejudice.]

E. Conversation with Nathanael (Jn 1:47-51).

(d) 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed [An Israelite in spirit as well as in flesh (*Ro 2:28,29 9:16*).], **in whom is no guile!** [Such a character contrasted sharply with the prevalent formalism and hypocrisy of that day.] **48 Nathanael said unto him, How do you know me?** [Nathanael's surprise clearly indicates that the knowledge [112] that Jesus exhibited was miraculous. **Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called you, when you went under the fig tree, I saw you.** [The fig-tree affords the densest shade in Palestine--a shade where no sunspot can be seen. This fact made it a resting-place and a refuge from the fierce sunlight. Under such a cover Jesus saw Nathanael when he was alone. Such superhuman knowledge wrought faith in Nathanael, as it did afterward in the woman of Samaria.--See *Pr 15:3*.] **49 Nathanael answered and said unto him, Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.** [*Ps 2:7* and *Isa 9:6* prophetically announce Jesus as the Son of God. These and other prophecies had just been more clearly announced by the Baptist (*Jn 1:34*). It is clear, therefore, where Nathanael got his words; but it is not so clear how well he understood them. This is the first recorded uninspired confession of the divinity of Jesus, but *Mt 16:16,17* indicates that it was but partially comprehended, else Peter might have been instructed by Nathanael. The expression "King of Israel" probably expressed the hope that Nathanael then entertained that Jesus would restore the ancient Jewish kingdom of David--*Ac 1:6*.] **50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto you, I saw you underneath the fig tree, do you believe? you shall see greater things than these.** [Nathanael regarded the revelation of his character and whereabouts as a great thing, but he was destined to see yet greater miracles.] **51 And he said unto him, Verily, verily** [This word means "in truth." John twenty-five times represents the Savior as using the double "verily." Matthew quotes the single "verily" thirty times, Mark fourteen times, and Luke seven times. The word is used to mark the importance of the truth about to be uttered], **I say unto you** ["you" is plural and includes all present as well as Nathanael], **You all shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.** [113] [Jesus having referred to Nathanael as a true Israelite,

promises to him--and to those like him--a blessing answering to Jacob's vision of the ladder; that is, that the ascent and descent of ministering angels shall be by means of Christ. Jesus calls himself the Son of man upwards of eighty times. The expression is found in all four Gospels, but is there invariably used by Christ himself. Stephen (*Ac 7:56*) and John (*Re 1:13*) also use this title, to indicate that the glorious being whom they saw was like Jesus--like him in his human estate. In this chapter Jesus has been called by others "The Lamb of God," "the Son of God," "the Messiah," and "the King of Israel." Jesus chooses yet another title, "Son of man," for himself. At this earliest dawning of their expectations, while their minds were thus full of his titles of glory, Jesus introduces to his disciples this one that speaks of his humanity and humility. The expression may have been suggested by *Da 7:13,14.*]

Section 22 FIRST MIRACLE (Cana of Galilee, A.D. 27) Jn 2:1-11

A. Wedding Invitation (Jn 2:1-2).

(d) 1 And the third day [From the calling of Philip (*Jn 1:43*). The days enumerated in John's first two chapters constitute a week, and may perhaps be intended as a contrast to the last week of Christ's ministry (*Jn 12:1*). It took two days to journey from the Jordan to Cana] **there was a marriage** [In Palestine the marriage ceremony usually began at twilight. The feast after the marriage was at the home of the bridegroom, and was sometimes prolonged for several days (*Gn 29:27 Jud 14:12*); but in this case it seems likely that poverty limited the wedding feast to one day.] **in Cana of Galilee** [The site of Cana is disputed. The likely spot is a little over three miles northeast of Nazareth.[114]; **and the mother of Jesus was there** [John never called our Lord's mother by her name. He assumes that she is known to his readers. This is one of the many points tending to show the supplemental character of John's Gospel. He avoids repeating what is found in the first three Gospels]: **2 and Jesus also was invited** [being the Creator of woman, and the author of matrimony, it was fitting that the Son of God should grace a marriage feast with his presence], **and his disciples, to the marriage.** [This is the earliest use of the term "disciples" in the ministry of Jesus. His disciples were Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, and probably John and James.]

B. A Request by Mary (Jn 2:3-5).

(d) 3 And when the wine failed [Probably the arrival of Christ and his disciples helped to exhaust the supply. Shortage of provision when guests are invited is considered a great humiliation the world over], **the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine.** [The interest that Mary took in the feast and the way in which she addressed the servants at *Jn 2:5*, suggests that she was a close friend of the bridegroom's family. Though she merely states the unfortunate condition to Jesus, her statement is a covert petition to him that would remedy it, as our Lord's answer shows. She practically requested him to work a miracle, nor is it strange that she should do this. Remembering the many early sayings about him that she had treasured in her heart (*Lk 2:19,51*), and doubtless being informed of what had occurred at his baptism, and of the proclamation that John the Baptist had made concerning him, and seeing a group of disciples gathered about him, it was very reasonable for her to expect him to do something that would reveal the high purposes for which he had been born.] **4 And Jesus said unto her, Woman,** [115] **what have I to do with you?** [Jesus did not call her "mother," but "woman," a term of courteous respect, but indicating no spirit of obedience. Moses recognized that parental duties were subordinate to divine (*Dt 33:9*); and Jesus emphasized that principle (*Mt 10:37*). The expression, "What have I," etc., is used frequently in the Scriptures and invariably indicates a mild rebuke (*Jud 11:12 2Sa 16:10 1Ki 17:18 2Ki 3:13 Mt 8:29 Mk 1:24 Lk 8:28*). It means, "leave me to act as I please," and Jesus uses it to assert that he is independent of all human relationships in the exercise of his messiahship. It corrects two errors taught by the Catholic Church: 1. Catholicism says that our Lord's mother was immaculate, but if this were true she could not have

incurred our Lord's rebuke. 2. Catholicism teaches that Mary's intercession is recognized by Christ. But this is the only instance on record of such intercession, and though it was addressed to Christ while in the flesh and was concerning a purely temporal matter, it was promptly rebuked.] **my hour is not yet come.** [Our Lord's answer indicates that Mary's request had in it more than a desire for the gift of wine. What she principally wanted was to have Jesus manifest himself as Messiah. Now, Jesus gave many secondary, but only one supreme, manifestation of his glory or messiahship. His miracles were secondary manifestations, but his Passion was the supreme manifestation (*Jn 8:28 2:18,19 Mt 12:38-40*). Jesus called this supreme sign his "hour" (*Jn 12:23,27 17:1 Mt 26:45 Lk 22:53*; see also *Jn 7:30 8:20*). His mother sought for a supreme sign, but at that time only a secondary sign could be fittingly given.] **5 His mother said unto the servants** [though he had spoken words of rebuke, his mother was neither offended nor discouraged [116] because of them], **Whatever he says unto you, do it.** [She commands unlimited obedience.]

C. A Mighty Miracle (Jn 2:6-10).

(d) 6 Now there were six waterpots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying [The details of the account suggest that John was an eyewitness. The Jews regarded themselves as ceremonially unclean if they did not wash their hands before eating--*Mt 15:2 Mk 7:3,4*], **containing two or three firkins apiece.** [The six waterpots held two or three firkins apiece--between eighteen and twenty-seven gallons, a firkin being nine gallons.] **7 Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water.** [The jars had been partially emptied by the ablutions of the company.] **And they filled them up to the brim.** [This statement serves two purposes. 1. It emphasizes the great quantity. 2. It shows there was no room to add anything whatever to the contents of the jars. As to the quantity, it was between 106 and 162 gallons. As we do not know the number of guests nor the duration of the feast, we can not accurately measure the Lord's bounty.] **8 And he said unto them, Draw out now** [the word "now" seems to indicate the turning-point when the water became wine], **and bear unto the ruler of the feast.** [According to the custom of that age, one of the guests was usually chosen to preside over such festivities, and [117] he was called "the ruler." Our modern toastmaster is probably a relic of this ancient custom.] **And they bare it. 9 And when the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and knew not where it had come from (but the servants that had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast called the bridegroom, 10 and said unto him, Every man sets on first** [when the taste is sharpest, and most critical] **the good wine** [the adjective "good" refers rather to flavor than to strength]; **and when men have drunk freely** [The ruler was no disciple of Jesus, and he speaks in the merry spirit of the world. He gives his own experience as to the habits of feasts, and his words give no indication that those present indulged to excess], **then what is worse: you have kept the good wine until now.** [As to the bearing of this miracle upon the question of temperance, the New Testament elsewhere clearly condemns the immoderate use of wine, and as these condemnations proceed from Christ we may rightly conceive of him, as in this instance, doing nothing contrary thereto. The liquors of this land in the strength of their intoxicating properties differ so widely from the light wines of Palestine that even the most moderate use of them seems immoderate in comparison. In creating wine Jesus did no more than as Creator and Renewer of the earth he had always done. From the beginning God has always so created or replenished the earth as to allow the possibility of excess.]

D. A Crucial Statement (Jn 2:11).

(d) 11 This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory [This was the beginning or first of the miracles, and John's statement brands as false all the Catholic traditions that tell of miracles performed by Christ in his childhood. We should note also that it was a sign. The value of the miracle was in what it signified, not in what it wrought. It manifested the glory of Christ, part of which glory is his power to change the worse into the better, the simpler into the richer. [118]; **and his disciples believed on him.** [In this chapter John as a disciple three times gives us a disciple's point of view as to Christ's miracles; here, and at *Jn 2:17* and at *Jn 2:22*. They implanted faith in those whose hearts were right before God (*Jn 5:38*). The miracles of Christ created widespread excitement.]

Section 23
FIRST RESIDENCE AT CAPERNAUM
(Galilee, Spring, A.D. 27)
Jn 2:12

(d) 12 After this he went down to Capernaum [Jesus is said to have gone "down" because Cana is among the hills, and Capernaum was by the Lake of Galilee, about six hundred feet below sea level--see on Mt 4:13], **he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples** [Our Lord's brethren are mentioned nine times in the New Testament, and a study of these references will give us some light. Three of them, namely, *Jn 7:3,5,10 1Co 9:5 Ga 1:19*, are rather noncommittal. The other six (*Mt 12:46 13:55 Mk 3:32 6:3 Lk 8:19,20 Jn 2:12*) speak of his brethren in connection with his mother, and strongly indicate that Jesus was the first-born son of Mary, and that she had at least four other sons, besides daughters. These brethren of Jesus are constantly represented as attending his mother, without a hint that they were not her children.]; **and there they stayed not many days.** [Because the Passover was at hand, and he went up to Jerusalem. This notice of the brief sojourn of Jesus at Capernaum throws light on several things: 1. It shows where Jesus spent most of his time between his baptism and the first Passover. 2. It helps to explain how the nobleman, who afterwards sought him at Cana, became acquainted with him. 3. It prepares us to look for his first visit to Nazareth at a later period. 4. It also explains why Jesus sought Capernaum as his place of residence after leaving Nazareth. Moreover, it shows that the natural ties of kindred were not immediately snapped by Christ. Until he went up to the first Passover, he abode with his mother and his brethren.] [120]

Section 24
JESUS ATTENDS FIRST PASSOVER
(Jerusalem, April 9, A.D. 27)
Jn 2:13-3:21

A. First Temple Cleansing (Jn 2:13-17).

(d) 13 And the Passover of the Jews was at hand [We get our information as to the length of our Lord's ministry from John's Gospel. He groups his narrative around six Jewish festivals: 1, He here mentions the first Passover; 2, another feast, which we take to have been also a Passover (*Jn 5:1*); 3, another Passover (*Jn 6:4*); 4, the feast of tabernacles (*Jn 7:2*); 5, dedication (*Jn 10:22*); 6, Passover (*Jn 11:55*). This gives the entire length of our Lord's ministry as three years and a fraction], **and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.** [It was fitting that he should enter upon his full ministry in this city, as it was still the center of what was recognized as a heaven-revealed worship. The fitness of Jerusalem for such beginnings was afterwards recognized in the preaching of the gospel of the New or Christian dispensation--*Ac 1:8.*] **14 And he found in the temple** [Our English word "temple" includes two Greek words; namely, 1. The *naos*, or [121] sanctuary--the small structure that contained the holy and most holy places, and that answered to the tabernacle used in the wilderness. 2. The *heiron*, or entire court space that surrounded the *naos*, and that included some nineteen acres. The *heiron* was divided into four courts, and as one entered toward the *naos* from the east, he passed successively through them, as follows: 1, Court of the Gentiles; 2, of the women; 3, of Israel; 4, of the priests. It was in this outer or Gentiles' court that the markets described in this section were held.] **Those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting** [This market in the temple was for the convenience of the people, and the nearness of the Passover increased its size. Oxen and doves were constantly needed for sacrificial purposes, and as each family that ate the Passover required a lamb, they would be in the market in great abundance. Josephus tells us it required about two hundred thousand lambs for the Passover feast.] **15 and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all** [The rest of the verse shows that "all" does not refer to men, but to sheep and oxen. The

scourge was used in driving them out] **out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables** [The Jews were each required to pay, for the support of the temple service, one half-shekel annually (*Ex 30:13 Mt 17:24*). These money-changers sat at small tables, on which their coins were piled and counted]; **16 and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things away** [As the doves were in cages of wicker-work, they could not be driven out; hence Jesus called upon their owners to remove them. Though Jesus cleansed the house, he wrought no waste of property. The sheep and oxen were safe outside the temple, the scattered money could be gathered from the stone pavement, and the doves were not set free from their cages]; **do not make my Father's house a house of merchandise.** [Jesus bases his peculiar authority over the temple on his peculiar relationship to Him for whom the temple was built. [122] As a Son, he purged the temple of his Father. In the beginning of his ministry he contested their right to thus appropriate his Father's house to their uses, but in the end of his ministry he spoke of the temple as "your house" (*Mt 23:38*), thereby indicating that the people had taken unto themselves what truly belonged to God, even as the wicked husbandmen appropriated the vineyard (*Lk 20:14,15*). The rebuke of Jesus was addressed to the priests, for the market belonged to them, and the moneychangers were their agents. Edersheim says that this traffic alone cleared the priests about three hundred thousand dollars a year. On this occasion Jesus objected to the use of the temple for trade without criticizing the nature of the trade. When he purged the temple three years later, he branded the traders as robbers--*Mt 21:13.*] **17 His disciples remembered that it was written** [*Ps 69:9*], **Zeal for** [loving concern for] **your house shall eat me up.**

B. Christ Defends his Actions (Jn 2:18-22).

(d) 18 The Jews therefore answered and said unto him, What sign do you show unto us, seeing that you have a right to do these things? [The Jews felt that only a divinely commissioned person could interfere with the ordering of God's house. They therefore called upon Jesus to give them a sign as evidence that he possessed such divine commission. The manner in which he had cleansed the house of its traffickers was of itself a sign, if they had only had eyes to see it. Jesus could not have thus cleansed the temple unaided had he been a mere man.] **19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.** [John here records this saying, and Matthew (*Mt 26:61*) and Mark (*Mk 14:58*) tell us how at the trial it was twisted into a charge against Christ; thus the Evangelists supplement each other. [123] For the temple in this sentence uses the word "*naos*," or sanctuary, the structure that was peculiarly the seat of God's presence. The sanctuary was a figure or symbol of the body of Christ, and the words of Jesus were a covert prediction that as they were desecrating the symbol so would they destroy his body, which it symbolized.] **20 The Jews therefore said, Forty-six years was this temple in building** [The temple that then stood upon Mount Moriah was the third structure that had occupied that site. The first temple, built by Solomon (1012-1005 B.C.), was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. The second temple, built by Zerubbabel and Jeshua (520 B.C.), had been torn down and rebuilt by Herod the Great, but in such a manner as not to interfere with the temple service. The sanctuary was completed in one year and a half, while the courts required eight years. Josephus says eighteen thousand workmen were employed in its erection. Additional outbuildings and other work had been carried on from that time, and the whole was not completed until A.D. 64], **and will you raise it up in three days?** [To put before him the difficulty of what he apparently proposed to do, they merely mention one item--time. They say nothing of the army of workmen, nothing of a variety and cost of material, nothing of the skill required in the process of construction. How impossible seemed his offer! Yet by no means so impossible as that real offer that they misunderstood. A man might rear a temple in three days, but, apart from Christ Jesus, self-resurrection is unknown to history.] **21 But he spoke of the temple of his body** [John differs from the other three Evangelists, in that he frequently comments upon the facts that he records. Both history and commentary are inspired.] **22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his** [124] **disciples remembered that he spoke this** [It was three years before they understood this saying.]; **and they believed the scripture** [several passages foretell the resurrection--*Ps 16:9,10 68:18*], **and the word that Jesus had said.** [They believed that Jesus had meant to predict that the Jews would kill him, and that he would rise again on the third day.]

C. Christ Demonstrates his Knowledge (Jn 2:23-25).

(d) **23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast** [the seven days' feast of unleavened bread--Lv 23:5,6], **many believed on his name, beholding his signs that he did.** [We have no description of the miracles wrought at this time. See Jn 4:45 20:30.] (d) **24 But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men** [The word here translated "trust" is the same as that translated "believe" in Jn 2:23. They trusted him, but he did not trust them, for he knew them. He did not tell them anything of his plans and purposes, and the conversation with Nicodemus that follows is a sample of this reticence], **25 and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.** [John gives us many examples of this supernatural knowledge that Jesus possessed. See Jn 1:42,47,48 3:3 4:29 6:61,64 11:4,14 13:11 21:17. This chapter itself gives us a faithful picture of "what was in man." We find in it temple, profaners, money-makers, sign-seekers, opposers of reform, false and weak professors of faith, etc., but none to whom Jesus could trust himself.] [125]

D. Conversation with Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-21).

(d) **1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.** [Nicodemus is mentioned only by John. His character is marked by a prudence amounting almost to timidity. At Jn 7:50-52 he defends Jesus, but without committing himself as in any way interested in him: at Jn 19:38,39 he brought spices for the body of Jesus, but only after Joseph of Arimathea had secured the body. Nicodemus was a ruler, or a member of the Sanhedrin]: **2 the same came unto him by night** [Thus avoiding the hostility of his colleagues, and also obtaining a more personal and uninterrupted interview with Jesus. That his coming by night revealed his character is shown by the fact that John repeats the expression when describing him at Jn 19:39. But, in justice, it should be said that Nicodemus was the only one of his order who came at all during our Lord's life], **and said to him, Rabbi, we** [Nicodemus uses the plural, to avoid committing himself too much. Nicodemus would assert nothing but what was commonly admitted by many. We learn from Jn 12:42,43 that late in the ministry of Christ, when hostility towards him was most bitter, many of the rulers still believed in him. No doubt, then, when Nicodemus said "we" he used the word advisedly and conscientiously] **know that you are a teacher come from God** [The rulers knew that Jesus was not the product of any of the rabbinical schools, and his miracles marked him as a prophet and distinguished him from all who were guided merely by reason, no matter how learned]; **for no one can do these signs that you do** [Jn 2:25], **except God be with him.** [These words show the effect of Christ's miracles. Miracles arrest attention and challenge investigation, [126] and prove that he who works them is from God--Ac 10:38.] **3 Jesus answered** [Not the words, but the thoughts of Nicodemus. The answers of Jesus often look rather to the thoughts of the questioner than to the form of the question. Nicodemus came seeking to know something about the kingdom of God, and Jesus opened at once upon the subject] **and said unto him, Verily, verily** [see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** [The word translated "anew" may also mean "from above," and some commentators seek to so translate it here, but it is rightly translated "anew," for Nicodemus understood it to mean a *second* birth. To "see" the kingdom means to possess or enjoy it--Ps 16:10 90:15 Jn 8:51 Lk 2:26.] **4 Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?** [Knowing that a man cannot be literally born a second time, Nicodemus states to Jesus the literal import of his words, hoping thereby to draw from him an explanation of this new, strange metaphor that he was using. So far as he did grasp the meaning of Jesus, Nicodemus saw himself barred forever from the kingdom by an impossible requirement.] **5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily** [see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** [By far the vast majority of scholars consider the word "water" in this verse as a reference to Christian baptism. The Cambridge Bible says "the outward sign and inward grace of Christian baptism are here clearly given, and an unbiased mind can scarcely avoid seeing this plain fact. This becomes still clearer when we compare [127] Jn 1:26,33, where the Baptist declares, 'I baptize in water', the Messiah 'baptizes in the Holy Spirit'. The fathers, both Greek and Latin, thus interpret the passage with singular unanimity." Men

would have no difficulty in understanding this passage were it not that its terms apparently exclude "the pious unimmersed" from Christ's kingdom. But difficulties, however distressing, will justify no man in wresting the Scriptures of God (*2Pe 3:16 Ro 3:4*). Water and Spirit are joined at *Mt 28:19 Ac 2:38 19:1-7 Tit 3:5*.] **6 What is born of the flesh is flesh; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.** [Jesus here draws the distinction between fleshly birth and spiritual birth. He did this to prepare Nicodemus to understand that it is the *spirit* and not the flesh that undergoes the change called the new birth. Regeneration is no slight, superficial change, but a radical one, and one that we cannot work for ourselves.] **7 Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born anew.** [Jesus here plainly declares that none are exempt from this gospel requirement. Man must obtain more than his fleshly nature if he would inherit eternal life.] **8 The wind blows where it will, and you hear the sound thereof, but know not where it comes from, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.** [The process by which a person is regenerated by the Spirit of God is no more mysterious than other operations in the natural world, of which operations the blowing of the wind is taken as an example. The statement is equivalent to Paul's maxim that faith comes by hearing the [128] word of God--*Ro 10:17*.] **9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?** [Nicodemus should have understood that such a change as Jesus was speaking of would be necessary, for, 1. It was foreshadowed in the Old Testament (*Dt 10:16 1Sa 10:9 16:13 Ps 51:10 Eze 18:31 Jer 4:4*). 2. John the Baptist suggested the need of some such change when he attacked the Jewish trust in their descent from Abraham--*Mt 3:9 Lk 3:8*.]

Discourse #2
Discourse to Nicodemus
John 3:11-21

11 Verily, verily [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, We** [a rhetorical plural--*Mk 4:30*] **speak what we know, and bear witness of what we have seen.** [his words were not founded upon reasoning, speculation, and guesses, but were the plain testimony of an eye-witness, who was able to see and had seen things that to us are invisible]; **and you receive not our witness.** [You teachers of Israel, who, above all men, should receive our guidance, are the very last to follow us.] **12 If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?** [Jesus here divides religious phenomena into two divisions--earthly and heavenly. The earthly phenomena are those that have their sphere in this world. In this sense [129] regeneration is an earthly thing; for though it has a heavenly origin, its manifestations are among the daily sights and experiences of our earthly life. Religion has also its heavenly phenomena, such as the ordering of God's celestial household; the experiences of those who pass into the divine presence; the propitiation, or the changes wrought in the attitude of God toward man by the sacrifice of Christ; the powers and limitations of Christ's priestly intercession, etc. These things have their sphere far removed from earth, and transcended the comprehension of Nicodemus. Now, if Nicodemus would not believe Jesus when he told him of things that he himself partially knew, how would he believe when Jesus spoke of what was utterly unknown to him?] **13 And no one has ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.** [Nicodemus is here informed that Christ alone can teach concerning heavenly things. Jesus can so teach, for he did not begin on earth and ascend to heaven, but he came from heaven to earth, and returned (afterwards) to heaven. Jesus speaks of himself as being present in heaven, because his divine nature was in constant communication with the powers of heaven. If we conceive of heaven as a locality (a proper conception), Jesus was upon the earth; but if we conceive of it as a present communion with the presence of God (also a proper conception), then Christ was in heaven as he talked with Nicodemus--*Jn 8:29*.] **14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; 15 that whoever believes may in him have eternal life.** [Jesus here indicates the prophetic character of the Old Testament. The extent of Christ's endorsement of the Old Testament becomes apparent when we consider on how many occasions he revealed himself under the same symbolism that the Old Testament used to reveal him. At *Jn 2:19* he revealed his resurrection under the symbolism of the destroyed and restored temple. At *Mt 12:40* the same

event is revealed under the symbolism of Jonah and the whale. And [130] here his crucifixion is likewise partially veiled and partially disclosed under a symbolic reference to the brazen serpent. The account of the brazen serpent will be found at *Nm 21:4-9*. The lesson of the brazen serpent will be found in its main points of resemblance to the crucifixion of Christ. When the people were bitten by fiery serpents, something made to resemble a serpent was hung upon a pole, and the people who looked to it in faith through it healing and life. Such is the epitome of Christ's gospel. When the world was perishing because of sin, Jesus, made to resemble sin (*Ro 8:3 2Co 5:21*) was hung upon the cross, that those who look unto him in faith (*Isa 45:22*) may find life through him--*1Jn 5:11-13*.] **16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have eternal life.** [Luther calls this verse "the Bible in miniature." It is a lesson as to God's love: 1. Its magnitude--he gave his only begotten Son. 2. Its reach--he gave it to a sinful world (*Ro 5:8*). 3. Its impartiality--he gives it to whomsoever; that is, to all alike (*Mt 5:45 Re 22:17*). 4. Its beneficial richness--it blesses with life eternal. 5. Its limitations--it is nowhere said that God so loves that he will save unbelievers. Love is the mutual and binding grace between God and man; it may almost be said that in Christ it made God human and man divine. John uses the word "eternal" seventeen times in his Gospel (*Jn 3:15,16,36 4:14,36 5:24,39 6:27,40,47,54,68 10:28 12:25,50 17:2,3*) and six times in his first Epistle (*1Jo 1:2 2:25 3:15 5:11,13,20*). He always applies it to life. The Synoptists use it eight times (*Mt 18:8 19:16,29 25:41,46 Mk 3:29 10:17,30 Lk 10:25 16:9 18:18,30*), applying it to life, and also to fire, punishment, damnation, and habitation.] **17 For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.** [Christ's first mission to the world was for salvation rather than for judgment. His second mission will be for judgment, but a judgment-hour wherein he will be able to save those who have accepted the means of grace that he established by his first coming. But the first coming of Christ incidentally involved judgment (*Jn 9:39*), and John the Baptist emphasized the judgment of Christ. [131] This judgment, however, was not the principal object of Christ's coming, but was an inevitable result of it. Jesus here speaks of it as a self-executed judgment. It was a necessary result of the revealed presence of Christ (*Lk 2:35*). That Christ is at present a Savior, and not a judge, is a truth that needs to be emphasized.] **18 He that believes on him is not judged; he that believes not has been judged already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.** [The name "Jesus" means "Savior"; to disbelieve this name is to reject Christ as Savior. *Jn 3:14,15* require belief in Jesus as the Son of man. This verse requires belief in him as the Son of God. Belief in this dual nature of Jesus is essential to salvation. The verse teaches that God's judgments are in a state of perpetually present enactment. The believer is saved now (*Ac 13:39*), and the unbeliever rests already under that condemnation that he fears the Son of God may some day pronounce against him.] **19 And this is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. 20 For everyone that does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his works should be reproved. 21 But he that does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.** [These verses show that when God judges a man by his faith, the judgment is not arbitrary and irrational. Men *believe* according to the secret aspirations and desires of their nature. Christ, as the example and model of life, shines out as the light of the world; those who approve and love such a life are drawn to him and constrained to believe in him. Spiritually, they abide in his presence, that they may compare their lives with his, and that they may be assured that their works are [132] wrought under the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, who is sent of Christ. But one whose desires are evil shrinks from Christ, and struggles to disbelieve in him: he seeks to know as little of Christ as possible, because such knowledge exposes the wickedness and depravity of his own sinful nature.]

Section 25

FIRST JUDEAN MINISTRY

(Judea and Aenon)

Jn 3:22-36

A. Introduction (Jn 3:22-23).

(d) 22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea [That is, he left Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, and went into the rural districts thereof. We find him there again in *John 11* and *Luke 13-18*. He gained disciples there, but of them we know but few, such as Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Simeon, and Judas Iscariot]; **and there he tarried with them** [It is not stated how long he tarried, but it may have been from April to December, for the Passover was in April, and December was "yet four months" before the harvest--*Jn 4:35*], **and baptized**. [This baptism was not into the three names of God (*Jn 7:39*), into which the apostles were afterwards directed to baptize (*Mt 28:19*). It was a continuation of John's baptism, preparatory to the organization of the church--a preparation for the kingdom.] **23 And John also was baptizing** [The fact that John also was baptizing is a further indication that the baptism administered by Jesus was [133] preparatory. There would hardly be two kinds of baptism administered by divine consent at one time] **in Aenon** [This name means "springs"] **near to Salim, because there was much water there** [A valley three miles north of Salim has been suggested as the spot. A perennial stream, with copious springs all along its course, furnishes, even in the longest, driest summers, the "much water" required for baptism]: **and they came, and were baptized. 24 For John was not yet cast into prison.** [John's Gospel shows that the ministry of Christ was well under way before that of the Baptist ceased: a fact that the Synoptists do not reveal--see *Mt 4:12 Mk 6:17 Lk 3:20*.]

B. Discouragement of John's Disciples (Jn 3:25-26).

(d) 25 There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying. [What this questioning was we are not told. The word "therefore" doubtless refers to [134] the baptisms just mentioned, so that the dispute probably related to the necessity or purifying effects of that ordinance. But whatever the dispute was about, it brought to notice the fact that Jesus was baptizing more than John, a fact that some of the disciples of John quickly resented.] **26 And they came unto John, and said to him, Rabbi, he that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, the same baptizes, and all men come to him** [This verse shows that John's disciples looked upon Jesus as one who owed all his position and popularity to the Baptist's testimony, and were, therefore, surprised to find that Jesus was surpassing John. They looked upon this conduct as a species of ingratitude on the part of Jesus. This verse also shows us that the witness of John did not pass unheeded. His witness was public and notorious, and men remembered it, though they did not always profit by it. That these friends of John felt unkindly toward Jesus is shown by their exaggerated statement that "all men come to him."]

C. Description of John's Attitude (Jn 3:27-30).

(d) 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it has been given him from heaven. [A *man* (referring to himself) can only take what is given to him; the Son of God takes what he chooses. The friend receives only what hospitality extends to him, but the heir takes what he will, as the owner of the house.] **28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said** [In stating that John had borne witness (*Jn 3:26*) John's disciple had already committed themselves to the fact that John disclaimed to be the Messiah, and that Jesus was the Messiah; for it was concerning these two things that John had given his testimony], **I am not the Christ, but, that I am sent before him. 29 He that has the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, that stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is made full.** [John looks upon the body of disciples as [135] the Lord's bride, and prophetically anticipates the very title that was subsequently applied to the church. It was the duty of "the friend of the bridegroom" to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, and to promote the mutual interests of the bride and bridegroom. His duties and responsibilities greatly exceeded those of our "best man," for it was his place to demand the hand of the bride, and to prepare everything for the reception of the bride and bridegroom. Joy at the sound of the bridegroom's voice is part of the drapery of John's figure. Voices of bride and bridegroom are a Biblical symbol of festivity and joy (*Jer 7:34 25:10 33:11*).] **30 He must increase, but I must decrease.** [Noble words! "He must increase"--because the divine law has

ordered it, and prophecy has foretold it (*Isa 52:13*), and because the very divinity of his nature absolutely requires it. "I must decrease"--in popularity, in power, in following. He was a Jewish prophet, and as the power of the New Dispensation, under Christ, gained headway, the Old Dispensation, of which he was a part, waxed old, and was ready to vanish away.]

D. Definition of Jesus' Superiority (Jn 3:31-36).

(d) 31 He that comes from above is above all: he that is of the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaks: he that comes from heaven is above all. [Some think that the testimony of the Baptist closes with *Jn 3:30*, and that the rest of the chapter is the comment of the apostle John, but there is certainly no sufficient ground for such a view.] **32 What he has seen and heard, of that he bears witness; and no man receives his witness.** [In *Jn 3:31,32* the Baptist [136] draws a contrast between his testimony and that of the Messiah. The Baptist's testimony was largely of a negative character. He testified that he was not the Christ (*Jn 3:28*), and while he pointed Jesus out as the Christ, the worthy one, the spiritual baptizer, he nowhere undertook to elaborate as to the character or nature of Jesus. He looked upon Jesus as being so far above all earthly prophets that no prophet could reveal him. The task of such revelation devolved upon Jesus himself. It was no heavy disappointment to John that his disciples had failed to grasp his testimony concerning himself, and yet so few were persuaded by the testimony of Jesus that John hyperbolically says "no man receives his witness."] **33 He that has received his witness has set his seal to this, that God is true.** [We have here a metaphor, taken from the sealing of a document, as an expression of trust in or adherence to it. Compare *Jn 6:27 1Co 9:2*. To receive Christ's witness was to publicly confess a conviction that God was true--true to his promise that he would send a Messiah, a Savior (*Ro 3:4*). To believe Christ is to believe God; to make Christ a liar is to make the Father one also, for he speaks concerning Christ (*1Jo 5:10*) and through Christ--*Jn 7:16 16:24*.] **34 For he whom God has sent speaks the words of God: for he gives not the Spirit by measure.** [To give anything by measure indicates a partial, scanty bestowal (*Eze 4:16*). The Spirit of God, even in inspired prophets, was but a partial and intermittent gift (*1Co 7:25 13:9 1Pe 1:11 Heb 1:1*), but in Jesus, the Son of God, the Spirit of God dwelt fully and uninterruptedly (*Col 1:19*). The present tense, "gives," points to a continuous communication of the Spirit. If Christ had received the Spirit "by measure," then his gift of the Spirit might be exhausted.] **35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand.** [This fact was afterwards asserted by Jesus (*Mt 28:18*). Jesus is indeed King of kings--*Ps 2:6-8 Mt 11:27 Ac 2:33 10:36 Eph 1:22*.] [137] **36 He that believes on the Son has eternal life** [the New Testament represents everlasting life as a present possession obtained by belief]; **but he that obeys not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.** [In the second clause of this verse "obeys" stands in contrast with "believes" in the first clause. No mental assent, however strong, is reckoned by the Scriptures as faith unless it results in obedience (*Jas 2:20 Ro 1:5*). "Wrath of God" is a strong phrase, and is not to be lightly explained away. The unconverted sinner rests under this wrath. The Baptist already repeatedly had warned the Jewish people of wrath to come if they rejected the Messiah, and in this, his last recorded utterance, he boldly reiterates that warning.]

Section 26 JESUS MOVES NORTH (December A.D. 27)

Mt 4:12; Mk 1:14; Lk 3:14, 19-20; Jn 4:1-45

A. Departure for Galilee (Mt 4:12; Mk 1:14; Lk 3:19-20; Jn 4:1-4).

(c) 19 but Herod the tetrarch [son of Herod the Great, and tetrarch, or governor, of Galilee], **being reproved by him** [that is, by John the Baptist] **for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done** [A full account of the sin of Herod and persecution of John will be found at *Mt 14:1-12* and *Mk 6:14-29*. John had spoken the truth to Herod as fearlessly as to the Pharisees, publicans and soldiers], **20 added this also to them all** [the sins of Herod, as a ruler, already outweighed [138] his virtues; (compare *Da 5:27*); but, with reckless

abandon, Herod went on, adding to the weighty reasons that justified his condemnation], **that he shut up John in prison.** [In the fortress at Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea, as we learn from Josephus. The duration of the ministry of John the Baptist is variously estimated at from fourteen to eighteen months.] **(b) 14 Now after John was delivered up** [either delivered up by the people to Herod (*Mt 17:12*), or delivered up by Herod himself to the warden of the castle of Machaerus (*Lk 12:58*), or by Providence to Herod himself--*Ac 2:23*], **(a) when he** [Jesus] **heard** [he was in Judea when he heard it] **that John was delivered up** [and], **(d) 1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John** [We saw at *Jn 3:26* how the Baptist heard about the number of Jesus' baptisms, being informed by his jealous friends. Like jealous friends, no doubt, informed the Pharisees. Jesus may have known of this information being given by reason of his supernatural powers, but it is more likely that he heard of it in a natural way] **2 (although Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)** [Jesus, as divine Lawgiver, instituted baptism, and his disciples administered it. We nowhere hear of the disciples of John administering baptism. In fact, the Baptist, like the disciples of Jesus, baptized under a divine commission, and could not delegate the power to others. It was the office of Jesus to commission others to this work, not to perform it himself. Had he done so, those baptized by him might have foolishly claimed for themselves some peculiar honor by reason thereof (*1Co 1:14,15*). Jesus was the spiritual baptizer, in which baptism the efficacy lies in the ministrant; but water baptism, the efficacy of which lies rather in the spirit of the one baptized than in the virtues of the ministrant, Jesus left to his disciples], **3 he left Judea, and departed again {(a) withdrew (b) came} (d) into Galilee.** [We have in these verses two reasons assigned for the withdrawal of Jesus into Galilee, namely: 1. The imprisonment of John the Baptist (*Mt 4:12 Mk 1:14*). [139] 2. Knowledge of the Pharisees that Jesus was baptizing more disciples than John (*Jn 4:1*). The first gives us the reason why he went to Galilee, the second the reason why he left Judea. Jesus did not go into Galilee through fear of Herod, for Herod was tetrarch of Galilee. The truth is, the absence of John called for the presence of Jesus. The northern part of Palestine was the most fruitful soil for the gospel. During the last six or eight months of John's ministry we find him in this northern field, preparing it for Christ's kingdom. While we cannot say definitely that John was in Galilee (Bethabara and Aenon being the only two geographical names given), yet he certainly drew his audiences largely from the towns and cities of Galilee. While John occupied the northern, Jesus worked in the southern district of Palestine; but when John was removed, then Jesus turned northward, that he might sow the seed of the kingdom in its most fruitful soil. But if there was a reason why he should go to Galilee, there was an equal reason why he should depart from Judea. His popularity, manifesting itself in the number of his baptisms, was exciting that envy and opposition that caused the rulers of Judea eventually to take the life of Jesus (*Mt 27:18*). The Pharisees loved to make proselytes themselves (*Mt 23:15*). They no doubt envied John's popularity, and much more, therefore, would they be disposed to envy Christ. The influence of the Pharisees was far greater in Judea than in Galilee, and the Sanhedrin would readily have arrested Jesus had he remained in Judea (*Jn 7:1 10:39*), and arrest at this time would have marred the work of Jesus. Therefore, since it is neither sinful nor unbecoming to avoid persecution, Jesus retired to Galilee, when he remained until his second Passover. By birth a prophet of Judea, he became, in public estimation, by this retirement, a prophet of Galilee. Though Jesus first taught in Judea, the ministry in Galilee so far eclipsed the work in Judea that it was spoken of as the place of beginning (*Lk 23:5 Ac 10:37*), and prophetically designated as the scene of the divine manifestation--*Mt 4:14-16*.] **4 And he had to pass through Samaria.** [The province that [140] took its name from the city of Samaria, and that lay between Judea and Galilee. Owing to the hatred that existed between Jews and Samaritans, many of the Jews went from Jerusalem to Galilee by turning eastward, crossing the Jordan, and passing northward through Perea. This journey required about seven days, while the more direct route, through Samaria, only took three days. Galileans often passed through Samaria on their way to and from the Jerusalem feast (Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.6,1). The arrest of John would scatter his flock of disciples (*Mk 14:27*), and Jesus, as chief shepherd (*1Pe 5:1-4*), hastened to Galilee, to gather together those that might else go astray and be lost.]

B. A Rest at Jacob's Well (Jn 4:5-8).

(d) 5 So he came to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 and Jacob's well was there. [Sychar lies scarcely half a mile north of the well. The Old Testament is silent as to when or why Jacob dug this well.[141] Travelers have thrown stones into it to sound its depth, until at present it is only sixty-six feet deep, and has no water in it except in very wet winters.] **Jesus therefore, being weary from his journey, sat down by the well.** [John gives us important items as to the humanity of Jesus. He tells us how he sat as a wayworn traveler, hungry and thirsty, at Jacob's well; and he alone records the words, "I thirst," spoken on the cross (*Jn 19:28*).] **It was about the sixth hour.** [That is, twelve o'clock, if we reckon by Jewish time, or six o'clock in the evening, if we reckon by the Roman method. We prefer the latter method.] **7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water** [She was not of the city of Samaria (that was then called Sebaste), but a woman of the province of Samaria. [142]: **Jesus said unto her, Give me to drink. 8 For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.** [Had the disciples been present they would have bargained with the woman for the use of her rope and pitcher; but in their absence Jesus himself asked her for a drink. He met her on the ground of a common humanity, and conceded to her the power of conferring a favor. Women have been immemorially the water-carriers in the East (*Gn 24:13,14 Ex 2:16*).]

C. Conversation with a Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:9-26).

(d) 9 The Samaritan woman therefore said unto him, How is it that you, being a Jew [as his language and dress declared], Do you ask drink of me, whom am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) [It is not likely that she meant to refuse his request, but she yielded to the temptation to banter one who she thought despised her, and whose necessities now caused him for a moment to forget his pride. The ancestors of the Samaritans were introduced into the land of Israel by the king of Assyria, after he led the ten tribes into captivity (*2Ki 17:24-41*). When the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon and began to rebuild their temple, the Samaritans asked permission to build with them, and when this was refused, an enmity arose between the two people that never died out (*Ezr 4:1-5 Ne 2:10,19 4:1-3*). We must, however, restrict the word "dealings" to social intercourse. Race antipathy did not ordinarily interfere with trade or other matters involving money, as is shown by *Jn 4:8*. [143] **10 Jesus answered and said unto her, if you knew the gift of God, and who it is that said to you, Give me to drink; you would have asked of him, and he would have given you living water.** [Jesus is himself the Gift of God (*Jn 3:16 2Co 9:15*). But she knew not that God had bestowed a special Gift, and much less that the one to whom she spoke was that Gift. Had she known she would have understood that though physically Jesus was the object of her charity, spiritually their cases were reversed, and she was the needy one, as Jesus intimates. "Living water" would mean literally "running" or "spring water," as contrasted with still or cistern water (*Gn 26:19 Lv 14:5*). Jesus here uses it in the spiritual sense.] **11 The woman said unto him, Sir [the word "Sir" is elsewhere translated "Lord"], you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: where then do you have that living water?** [She understood his words literally, and was puzzled by them; but, won by the courtesy that suggested an exchange of gifts, she answered respectfully, though incredulously.] **12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle?** [We should note three points in this verse: 1. The greatness of Jesus. The woman had just called him "Lord." The man at Bethesda, though he knew not Jesus, afterwards did the same (*Jn 5:7*). People felt the majesty and dignity of Jesus. When he offered to give a greater blessing than that given by Jacob, the woman at once contrasted him with Jacob--Jacob with sons and cattle and wealth--and wondered if this lonely [144] stranger could really imagine himself greater than the illustrious patriarch. 2. She claimed descent from Jacob; it was a false claim. Jesus classed the Samaritans with Gentiles (*Mt 10:5*), and spoke of them as strangers or aliens (*Lk 17:18*). 3. She spoke of the well as given by Jacob. She meant that it had been given to Joseph (*Gn 48:22*), and that her people had inherited it as descendants of Joseph.] **13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Everyone that drinks of this water shall thirst again: 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst** [Jesus here draws a contrast between earthly and heavenly blessings. No worldly joy gives lasting satisfaction, but Jesus is the bread and water of life to his disciples (*Jn 6:35*) their unailing satisfaction]; **but the water that I shall give him shall become**

in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. [A beautiful figure of the joy in Christ. In heat, in cold; in drought, in shower; in prosperity, in adversity; it still springs up, cheering and refreshing the soul, and this unto all eternity--*Re 7:17 21:6.*] **15 The woman said unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way here to draw.** [She but dimly comprehended the nature of Christ's offer, but was persuaded of two things: 1. The wonderful water was to be desired. 2. Jesus was able and willing to give it. When she spoke of coming "to draw" her words suggested the household to which it was her duty to minister, and prepared the way for the command of Jesus to bring the head of the household.] **16 Jesus said unto her, Go, call your husband, and come here.** [She had asked Jesus for the water of God's grace, but she needed to be made conscious of how much she needed it--conscious (if we follow the figure) of her dormant thirst. Jesus, therefore, gave command to call her husband, that by so doing he might reveal her life and waken her to repentance.] **17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, You have spoken the truth, I have no husband: 18 for [145] you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: this you have said truly.** [The divine wisdom of Jesus brought to light a sad state of affairs. During the period of five marriages the woman's life had at least some outward show of respectability, but now it was professedly unclean. The number of marriages reflects somewhat upon the character of the woman, and hints that some of them may have been dissolved by her own fault, though the loose divorce law of that age permitted a man to dissolve the marriage ties on very slight provocation.] **19 The woman said unto him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.** [She had heard of the miraculous knowledge of the Jewish prophets, and this evidence given her by Jesus persuaded her that he was one of them, as a like evidence had persuaded Nathanael (*Jn 1:48,49*). By thus calling him a prophet she virtually confessed the truth as to all the things concerning which he had accused her.] **20 Our fathers worshiped in this mountain [that is, Mount Gerizim]; and you [Jews] say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.** [Though a desire to divert the conversation from her own sins may have, in some slight measure, prompted the woman to bring up this question about places of worship, yet her main motive must have been far higher. This woman sought to have the great dispute between Jew and Samaritan decided. [146] About 332 B.C. a governor of Samaria built a temple on Mount Gerizim for a renegade priest from Jerusalem who had married his daughter. That temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus about 129 B.C., but the place where it stood was still the sacred center of Samaritan worship. Mount Gerizim, and its supporting city of Shechem, had many grounds on which to base their claims to be a sacred locality: 1, Here God appeared to Abraham for the first time after his entering Canaan (*Gn 12:6,7*); 2, here Jacob first dwelt (*Gn 33:18*); 3, here Joseph came seeking his brethren (*Gn 37:12,13*); 4, here was a city of refuge (*Jos 20:7-9*); 5, here Joshua read the blessings and cursings (*Jos 8:33*); 6, here also he gave his last address (*Jos 24:1*); 7, here were buried the bones of Joseph (*Jos 24:32*), and the neighborhood was prominent at the time of the division of the ten tribes (*1Ki 12:1,25*). We should note that the Samaritans worshiped in Mt. Gerizim because they could say, "Our fathers did so." Thus many errors are perpetuated today because our fathers practiced them; but our fathers had no more authority to alter or amend God's word than we have. The Jews worshiped in Jerusalem because it had been prophesied that God would select a spot as the peculiar place for his worship (*Dt 12:5-11*), and because according to this prophecy God had selected Mount Moriah in Jerusalem--*1Ki 9:3 2Ch 3:1,2.*] **21 Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour comes, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father.** [Jesus uses the word "hour" to indicate that the time was *near at hand* when all religious distinctions as to places would be abolished, and when every spot might be used for purposes of worship--*1Ti 2:8.*] **22 You worship what you know not: we worship what we know. For salvation is from the Jews.** [Jesus here speaks as a Jew, and draws a comparison between the intelligent worship of his people and the ignorant worship of the Samaritans. Though the Samaritans possessed the Pentateuch, they were without the revelation of God that the prophets of Israel had developed, and their worship was neither authorized nor accredited by God. Moreover, it led toward nothing; for salvation was evolved from the Jewish religion, and not from that of Samaria. Salvation proceeded from the Jews. From them, according to the flesh, Christ came, and from them came also the prophets, apostles, and inspired writers who have given us that full knowledge of salvation that we possess today. [148] **23 But the hour comes, and now is** [the hour is really

here, but the knowledge of it is not yet comprehended], **when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such does the Father seek to be his worshippers.** [Jesus draws the mind of the woman from the place of worship to the Person or Being worshiped, and from the form to the spirit of worship. God seeks for genuine and not formal worshippers, and for those who worship him in truth; that is, those who render him the obedience of faith with a filial spirit, and not those who render him the empty service of types and shadows, ceremonies and rites, which, through disbelief, have lost their meaning.] **24 God is a Spirit** [These words contain one of the most simple, yet most profound, truths that ever fell upon mortal ear. They show that 1, God is absolutely free from all limitations of space and time, and is therefore not to be localized in temples (*Ac 7:48*); 2, that God is not material, as idolaters contend; 3, that he is not an abstract force, as scientists think, but a Being; 4, that he is lifted above all need of temples, sacrifices, etc., that are a benefit to man, but not to God (*Ac 17:25*).: **and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.** [That is, men must offer a worship corresponding with the nature and attributes of God.] **25 The woman said unto him, I know that Messiah comes (he [149] that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.** [The breadth and largeness of Jesus' teaching suggested to her the great Teacher who was to come, and caused her to yearn for him who could tell, as she thought, perhaps even larger things. This woman's idea of the Messiah was probably also very crude, but it was in part an improvement on the general Jewish conception, for it regarded him as a teacher rather than a world-conquering, earthly prince.] **26 Jesus said unto her, I that speak to you am he.** [This is the first recorded declaration of his messiahship made by Jesus. He was not confessed to be Messiah by Simon Peter (*Mt 16:16*) till the last year of his ministry. Jesus spoke more freely as to his office in Samaria than in Judea or Galilee; for, 1, the Samaritans would make no effort to take him by force and make him a king (*Jn 6:15*); 2, his short stay in Samaria justified an explicit and brief revelation.]

C. Personal Witness in Samaria (Jn 4:27-30).

(d) 27 And at this time his disciples came; and they marveled that he was speaking with a woman. [The estate of woman was then, and had been for a long time previous, very low. Jewish contempt for women is made apparent by the readiness with which the Jews divorced them. According to the rabbis, one was not to talk to a woman in public, not even his wife.]; **yet no man said, What are you seeking? or, Why are you speaking with her?** [So deep was their reverence and respect that they did not question, though they did not understand.] **28 So the woman left her water pot** [in the forgetfulness [150] of great joy, and as the unconscious pledge of her return], **and went away into the city [Sychar], and said to the people, 29 Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did** [To publish Christ is one of the first impulses of those who feel Christ's gracious power. Her invitation is like that given by Philip (*Jn 1:46*). Her statement is not so much of an exaggeration as it at first appears. Her five marriages and present state covered the whole period of her maturer life, and the way in which Jesus had disclosed it all convinced her that every detail of it was spread out before him]: **can this be the Christ?** [Her question does not imply that she herself had any doubts about the matter. She uses the interrogative form because she does not wish to be dogmatic, but prefers to let the people judge for themselves. Observe the woman's change of mind concerning Jesus. She first called him "Jew" (*Jn 4:9*), then "Sir" (*Jn 4:11*), then "prophet" (*Jn 4:19*), and now she invites her city to come forth and see "the Christ."] **30 They went out of the city, and were coming to him.**

D. Instructions for the Disciples (Jn 4:31-38).

(d) 31 In the meanwhile [the time between the departure of the woman and the arrival of her fellow-townsmen] **the disciples implored him, saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of. 33 The disciples therefore said one to another, Has any man brought him anything to eat?** [They understood his words literally, as a declaration that he had dined.] **34 Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work.** [His delight at the woman's conversion, as a part of the work that his Father had given him to do, overcame for a time his desire for food. Food has several characteristics: 1. enjoyment; 2. satisfaction of desire; 3. refreshment and strength. God's work

had these characteristics to Jesus, whose life fulfilled the principle that man shall not live by bread alone--*Mt 4:4 Lk 4:4*.] **35 Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white [151] already unto harvest.** [Jacob's well overlooked the luxuriant grainfields of the plain of Moreh. As the disciples looked abroad over its patches of varying green, they would say that it would yet be four months before these patches could be harvested. The harvests in the natural world are slow. But turning their eyes toward Sychar, the disciples could see the citizens of the town in their white garments pouring forth to see Jesus, and to be gathered by him as a harvest of disciples that had sprung up and ripened from the seeds of truth sown by the woman but a few moments before. Spiritual sowing brings speedy harvests. Some commentators look upon the words of Jesus as proverbial, but there is no proverb extant that places only four months between sowing and reaping. In Palestine this period covers six months. We must, therefore, take the words of Jesus as a plain statement as to the length of time between the date of his speaking and the date of harvest. Harvest begins about the middle of April, and counting back four months from that date we find that this visit to Sychar occurred somewhere about the middle of December.] **36 He that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal: that he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together.** [Harvest times were seasons of great joy (*Dt 16:13-15 Ps 126:6 Isa 9:3*). But the joy of joys shall come when God gathers his redeemed into the heavenly garner. In this present the humble teacher sows and the evangelist, or more gifted brother, reaps; but in that glad hour it shall matter little whether we have been a sower or a reaper, for we shall all rejoice together. Sower and reaper alike shall receive wages, a part of which shall be the "fruit" gathered--the souls saved. Jesus regarded gaining a brother as a large compensation, a great gain--*Mt 18:15*.] **37 For herein is the saying true** [see *Isa 65:21,22 Lv 26:16 Job 31:8 Mic 6:15*], **One sows, and another reaps. 38 I sent you to reap** [Christ, as Lord of the harvest, sent both sowers and reapers] **that whereon you have not labored: others have labored, and you have entered into [152] their labor.** [In earlier days many prophets and holy men had labored to prepare the people of Palestine, that they might be gathered of Christ as disciples. Later John the Baptist had wrought a mighty work toward this same end. Into a field thus sown and cultivated Jesus was now leading his apostles that they might reap for him the ripened harvest. He bids them observe the speedy and easy reaping on this occasion as an encouraging example to them that they may go forth with strong assurance and confidence. Even the minds of the Samaritans were prepared to receive him, and a quick harvest could be gathered among them.]

E. Conversion of the Samaritans (Jn 4:39-42).

(d) **39 And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that ever I did.** [The Jews rejected the testimony of the prophets and holy men of God as recorded in the Scripture (*Jn 5:46,47*), but the Samaritans accepted the testimony of this woman, and she was a sinner.] **40 So when the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days.** ["His own" received him not, but these "strangers" welcomed him. The stay was brief, but long enough to prepare the way for a future church among the Samaritans in the neighboring city of Samaria (*Ac 8:5-8*).] **41 And many more believed because of his word: 42 and they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of your speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.** [Only such ready hearers could arrive at so great a truth in so short a time. Wealth of revelation and blessing had made the Jews selfish, and their conception of the Messiah was so perverted by this selfishness that they could not conceive of him as being a *world* Savior. The incident presents the expansiveness of Christianity in a threefold aspect; namely: 1, we see it [153] breaking down the walls of racial prejudice; 2, we observe it elevating woman, and certifying her fitness to receive the very highest spiritual instruction; 3, we behold it lifting up the degraded and sinful, and supplying them from the fountains of grace.]

F. Arrival in Galilee (Lk 4:14; Jn 4:43-45).

(d) **43 And after the two days** [the two days spent among the Samaritans at Sychar] **he went forth from there [Samaria] into Galilee. (c) 14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit**

into Galilee ["Power of the Spirit" here means its manifest *use* to perform miracles, rather than its presence, influence or direction. Jesus was always under the influence and direction of the Spirit, but did not previously perform miracles]: **(d) 44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honor in his own country.** [Galilee was Jesus' "own country" (*Jn 1:46 2:1 7:3,41,52 Lk 23:5-7*). In Judea he had begun to receive so much honor as to bring him into danger at the hands of the Pharisees: he would receive less in Galilee. *Jn 4:43* resumes the itinerary of *Jn 4:1,2*, after the interlude that tells of the woman at Sychar.] **45 So when he came into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did in Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.** [The works that Jesus had done in Jerusalem were for the most part fruitless as to its inhabitants, but they bore the fruit of faith in far-off Galilee. Of "the many who believed on him" in Jerusalem (*Jn 2:23*), it is highly probable that a large number were Galilean pilgrims who were then there attending the Passover.] [154]

End of A.D. 27

PART THREE
YEAR OF POPULARITY
A.D. 28

Section 27
GALILEAN MINISTRY OVERVIEW
(January A.D. 28)
Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14-15; Lk 4:14-15

(a) 17 From that time Jesus began to preach [The time here indicated is that of John the Baptist's imprisonment and Jesus' return to Galilee (*Mt 4:12*). This time marked a new period in the public ministry of Jesus. Hitherto he had taught, but he now began to preach. When the voice of his messenger, John, was silenced, the King became his own herald. While Matthew gives us many of the earlier incidents of Christ's life, he enters upon the account of his *ministry* at the time when Jesus returned to Galilee. From that time forward he was probably an eyewitness of the events that he records], **(b) preaching the gospel of God, 15 And saying, {(a) and to say,} Repent, for (b) the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God {(a) of Heaven} (b) is at hand.** [Jesus preached the gospel or good news of his own advent and of the setting up of the unending kingdom that would convert the world to righteousness and save the souls of men. Jesus himself declares that the prophesied time for the setting up of his kingdom was at hand. There were many general prophecies as to this kingdom, but one that especially fixed the *time* of its coming; namely, *Da 9:24-27*. [155] Jesus announced the coming of a new dispensation. The King had already come, but the kingdom in its organization and administration was as yet only "at hand." Until the crucifixion of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the kingdom could not be fully organized, for the blood shed upon the cross furnished the means for purification that precedes a proper entrance into the kingdom, and the coming of the Holy Spirit afforded that indwelling strength by which those entering are enabled to abide therein]: **repent, and believe in the gospel.** [That is, prepare for the kingdom by repenting of sin, and by believing the glad news that the kingdom was approaching, for the King had come (*Jn 1:49*). The preaching of Jesus at this time did not differ materially from that of John the Baptist, for John preached repentance and the approaching kingdom (*Mt 3:2*), and the gospel (*Lk 3:18*), and belief in the King (*Jn 1:29,36 3:36*). The fact that repentance comes before belief in this passage is by some taken as an indication that repentance precedes faith in the process of conversion, but it should be remembered that the preaching here is addressed to the Jewish people, who already believed in God, and in the Scripture as the revelation of God. They were, therefore, required to bring forth fruit worthy of the old faith and the old revelation as preparatory to their reception of the new faith and the new revelation. Thus repentance and faith appears to be the established order for Hebrews (*Heb 6:1*), and their [156] proselytes (*Ac 20:21*), because of the spiritual standpoint or condition in which the gospel found them. But those who have no faith in God can surely have no repentance toward him, for belief precedes every call upon God, whether for mercy, pardon, or any other blessing--*Ro 10:13,14*], **(c) and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about.** [The miracles of Jesus and the manner in which he taught caused the people to glorify his name.] **15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.** [If we may trust later tradition (and the New Testament corroborates it), synagogues were very plentiful in that day, there being at least one in each town. In the synagogue the people met on Sabbath and feast days. The temple at Jerusalem was used for ceremonial worship, but the services in the synagogue were of far different order, the study and application of the Scripture being the principal feature. (Also see on Mk 1:39 on the synagogue.)]

Section 28
SECOND MIRACLE AT CANA

(January A.D. 28)
Jn 4:46-54

A. Request of a Nobleman (Jn 4:46b-49).

(d) 46 He came therefore again [that is, in consequence of the welcome that awaited him] **unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine** [see on Jn 1:21]. **And there was a certain nobleman** [literally, "king's man," a word that Josephus uses to designate a soldier, courtier, or officer of the king. He was doubtless an officer of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee.], **whose son was sick at Capernaum.** [The nouns in this verse are suggestive. We have a "nobleman," yet neither riches nor office lifted him above affliction; a "son," yet approaching an untimely death before his father; and both these parties came to sorrow in "Capernaum," the city of consolation. Neither circumstance, nor age, nor situation can guarantee joy. We must still be seeking Jesus.] **47 When he heard** [157] **that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee** [and was therefore within not very easy reach of his sick child's bedside], **he went unto him** [literally, "he went away unto him." The verb contains a delicate suggestion that the father was reluctant to leave the son, even to seek aid], **and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.** [Many, like this father, only seek divine aid when in the utmost extremity.] **48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except you see signs and wonders, you will in no wise believe.** [Though Jesus spoke these words to the nobleman, yet he also intended them for those who stood by, for he used the plural "you." That the Galileans in general deserved reproof for their lack of faith, is shown by the upbraiding words that he spoke concerning their cities (*Mt 11:20-24*). Jesus wanted men to believe in him because of his self-evidencing character and words (*Jn 10:38 14:11 15:22-24 20:29*). But the people required to have their faith buttressed by miracles. There is a vast difference between believing in a man, and believing his credentials. Miracles were our Lord's credentials; his ministry among men can not be thought of without them; and when the Baptist's faith in Christ himself wavered, Jesus referred him to them (*Mt 11:4,5*). See also *Jn 10:37*. The two words, "signs" and "wonders," indicate the two aspects of miracles. To the thoughtful they were signs or attestations that the one who performed them acted under the authority and approval of God; to all others they were mere wonders, which startled by their strangeness. Jesus was fresh from Sychar, where many required no other sign than his words.] **49 The nobleman said unto him, Sir, come down before my child dies.** [The father felt that the case was too urgent to admit of delay for argument. It seemed to him that he raced with death. His faith differed from that of the centurion in that he felt that the *presence* of Jesus was required to perform the miracle. He also regarded the powers of Jesus as limited to the living; but we must not censure his faith as particularly weak, for in both these [158] respects it resembled that possessed by Mary and Martha--*Jn 11:21,22,32,39*.]

B. Discovery of the Nobleman (Jn 4:50-54).

(d) 50 Jesus said unto him, Go your way; your son lives. [Jesus enlarges the nobleman's conception of his divine power by showing him that his words take effect without regard to distance.] **The man believed the word that Jesus had spoke unto him, and he went his way.** **51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived.** **52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better.** [The father expected that the fever would depart slowly, as it usually does; but the reply of the servants shows that he was mistaken.] **They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.** [Though for harmonistic reasons we are persuaded that John himself uses the Roman method of computing the hours, which would make the phrase here mean 7 P.M., yet since the phraseology here is not his, but that of the Galilean servants, we take it to mean 1 P.M., for they would use the Jewish method of computing from sunset to sunset. If both parties had started at once, they would have met before sundown, as each had but eleven miles to traverse. But it is more reasonable to suppose that the wearied but now-believing father sought some refreshment and a brief rest before returning, and that the servants tarried awhile to see if the child's recovery was permanent. This would lead to their meeting after sundown, at which time, according to the invariable custom, they would call the previous period of daylight "yesterday."] **53 So the father knew that it was at that hour that Jesus said unto him, Your son lives: and he believed, and his whole house.**

[We note here a growth in the faith of the nobleman. He first believed in the power of Jesus' *presence*, then in the power of Jesus' *word*, and finally he believed generally in Jesus, and his household shared his belief. This is the first mention of a believing household; for others see *Ac 16:14,15,34 18:8*.] **54 This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judea into Galilee.** [159] [One small sign and many converted in Samaria; two great miracles and one household converted in Galilee. Such is the record. Jesus doubtless had many other converts in Galilee, but it is often true that the greater labor brings the lesser harvest.]

Section 29 RELOCATION TO CAPERNAUM (January A.D. 28) Mt 4:13-16

(a) 13 And leaving Nazareth [This expression means that Jesus now ceased to make Nazareth his home. For description of Nazareth, see on *Lk 2:51*], **he came and dwelt in Capernaum** [See on *Jn 2:12*. *Capernaum* means "city of Nahum," or "village of consolation." The word "dwelt" means that Jesus made this town his headquarters. He owned no house there (*Mt 8:20*). He may have dwelt with some of his disciples—for instance, Simon Peter--*Mt 8:14-16*], **that is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali** [Capernaum was in Naphtali, and the border of the tribe of Zebulun was three or four miles south of it. This part of the country was densely populated, and had in it many choice individuals such as Jesus chose for his apostles]: **14 that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through Isaiah the prophet** [*Isa 8:21-9:2*], **saying, 15 The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.** [This land or region was the first to suffer in the beginning of those wars that finally resulted in the captivity of the ten tribes. The people of this district were smitten by Benhadad (*1Ki 15:20*), and afterwards by Tiglath-pileser (*2Ki 15:29 1Ch 5:26*), some time before the general captivity of the ten tribes (*2Ki 17:6*). It is called "Galilee of the Gentiles," because it was inhabited by Egyptians, Arabians, and Phoenicians, as well as by Hebrews.] **16 The people that [160] sat in darkness saw great light, And to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, To them did light spring up.** [Those who by reason of their ignorance and depravity suffered the torments of war, and sat as it were under the shadow of the wing of death, were designated by prophecies as the class among whom the light of the gospel would spring up in the fullness and richness of its blessing. Jesus, the "Light of the world" (*Jn 8:12 9:5*), fulfilled this prophecy, and apart from him there can be no pretense of its fulfillment. Galilee had its prophets, but the enemies of Jesus themselves bear witness that none of them were great enough "lights" to fulfill this prophecy--*Jn 7:52*.]

Section 30 FOUR CHOSEN FISHERMEN (Sea of Galilee near Capernaum) Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11

A. Call of Peter and Andrew (Mt 4:18-20; Mk 1:16-18; Lk 5:1-9).

(a) 18 And walking (b) 16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee [This lake is a pear-shaped body of water, about twelve and a half miles long and about seven miles across at its widest place. It is six hundred eighty-two feet below sea level; its waters are fresh, clear and abounding in fish, and it is surrounded by hills and mountains, which rise from six hundred to a thousand feet above it. Its greatest depth is about a hundred sixty-five feet], **he [Jesus] saw (a) two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, {(b) the brother of Simon} casting a net in {(a) into} the sea** [The net (*amphiblestron*) was a dragnet, a circular bell-shaped affair, which was thrown upon the water, so that it spread out and [161] caught, by sinking, whatever was below it]; **for they were fishermen.** [Though Simon and Andrew had been companions of

Jesus on at least one journey, they did not as yet understand that his service would require all their time. The fact that Jesus now temporarily resided at Capernaum afforded them an opportunity to return to their old occupation, which they readily embraced. Fishing was then a prosperous trade on the lake of Galilee.] **(b) 17 And Jesus said {(a) he said} (b) unto them, Come after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.** [It was an invitation to follow, that they might be instructed by hearing his teaching and beholding his work. Jesus called them from a lower to a similar but higher labor. The fisherman found many points of resemblance between the old and new calling, such as, 1, daily hardships and dangers; 2, earnest desires for the objects sought; 3, skill and wisdom in the use of means, etc. Disciples are fishers, human souls are fish, the world is the sea, the gospel is the net, and eternal life is the shore to which the catch is drawn.]

B. Call of James and John (Mt 4:21-22; Mk 1:19-20; Lk 5:10-11).

(a) 21 And going on from there (b) a little further, (a) he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, (b) who also were in the boat (a) with Zebedee their father, mending their {(b) the} nets. [They also, like Peter and Andrew, were at work when Jesus found them. God calls the busy to his business. Moreover most of these were called from lowly work, for such is God's method (1Co 1:26-29). We should note two reasons why God chose the lowly and unlearned: 1, their minds being free from prejudice were more ready to entertain new truth; 2, the strength of the gospel was made more apparent by the [162] weakness of its ministers (1Co 2:3-5 2Co 4:7 Zec 4:6). Of these two brothers, James was the first apostolic martyr and John the last survivor of the twelve. James was beheaded about A.D. 44 (Ac 12:1,2); and John, after upwards of seventy years of Christian service, died at Ephesus about A.D. 100.] **20 And immediately he called them** [From Matthew and Mark we would suppose that Jesus was alone when he called the two sets of brothers, and that with them he immediately left the lake. But we learn from Luke that he taught and worked a miracle before leaving the lake--Lk 5:1,3].

C. Sermon from the Boat (Lk 5:1-3).

(c) 1 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret [This body of water bore many names. It was anciently called Chinnereth (Nm 34:11), or Chinneroth (Jud 12:3), from a fortified town (Jos 19:35) and district (1Ki 15:20) in Naphtali bearing that name. It is here called Gennesaret, from a plain of that name upon its northwestern shore (which may be a corruption of the old name Chinnereth.) It received its name, Galilee, from the district to which it belongs, and in later times it bore the name Tiberias (Jn 6:1), from the city of that name on its western shore. (Also see on Mk 6:53.); **2 and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets.** [We may conceive of the fishermen, in answer to Jesus' call, drawing their boats together to the point where he stood upon the shore. Then, as Jesus stood teaching, they occupied themselves in the shallow water behind by washing their nets while they listened to him.] **3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land.** [He did this that he might avoid the press, and that the people might be better able both to see and to hear.] **And he sat down** [the usual posture of a teacher] **and taught the multitudes out of the boat.**

D. A Large Catch (Lk 5:4-11). Third Miracle

(c) 4 And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a [163] draught. ["Put out" is in the singular, being addressed to Simon alone; "let down" is plural, being addressed generally to those in the boat.] **5 And Simon answered and said, Master, we have toiled all the night, and took nothing: but at your word I will let down the nets.** ["Master" is a broader word than "Rabbi"; it indicates a superior, but does not confine his superiority to matters of instruction. The words of Peter show a willingness to oblige or honor Jesus, but are devoid of hope as to the thing proposed. Night was the time for fishing (Jn 21:3); and the proper place to cast the net was near the shore; but if Jesus wished to fish by daylight in the middle of the lake, Simon was not too weary to humor the wish.] **6 And**

when they had done this, they caught a great multitude of fish; and their nets were breaking [that is, the nets began to snap when they tried to lift them out of the water]; **7 and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them.** [This indicates that they were well out into the lake, where it was easier to beckon than to shout explanations. Some think the marvel wrought by Jesus made them speechless, but they were so engrossed in the magnitude and value of the catch that the full glory of the miracle had not yet come upon them.] **And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.** [They probably ran a second net under the one that enclosed the fishes, and by thus doubling the strength of the net were able to draw the fish up between the boats. A great load thus suddenly dumped in the side of a boat will cause it to list, dip water and threaten to sink. Such appears to have been the case here until the loads were so distributed as to right the ships.] **8 But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.** **9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fish that they had taken** [This miracle came home to the soul of Peter because it was wrought in his own boat, with his own nets, and concerned his own business. [164] Peter's request shows how deeply the miracle impressed him. It gave him that sense of the divine presence that never fails to overwhelm the hearts of men. No man can behold God in his glory and live (*Ex 33:20-23 20:18,19*); and though there have been exceptions where men have seen God or his representatives and lived (*Ex 24:9-11 Jud 6:21-23 13:22,23 Isa 6:1-5 Da 10:16-19 Gn 32:30*); yet no man, not even the purest, has ever stood in the presence of God or his ministers without feeling such a sense of weakness and sinfulness as to almost extinguish life--*Re 1:17 Job 42:5,6*]; **10 and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth you shall catch men.** [Jesus here shows the purpose for which this miracle had been wrought. It was a prophetic type or picture that foreshadowed the triumphs of the day of Pentecost and other seasons when the apostles had great ingatherings of souls through the preaching of the gospel.] **11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they (a) immediately (c) left all** [that is to say, Peter and Andrew], **(b) left the nets** [but James and John], **(a) left the boat and their father, (b) Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him. {(c) followed him}** [The four partners, boats, different kinds of nets, hired servants, etc., and the fact that Salome, the wife of Zebedee, was one of those who ministered to Christ out of her substance (*Mt 27:55,56 Lk 8:3*), all indicate a business of respectable proportions. Evidently when the four men left the boats and nets Zebedee took charge of them. While the four rightly recognized that the divine call was superior to their earthly obligations, there is nothing that leads us to imply that their sudden departure discomfited Zebedee. The call of Christ here marks a change in their relationship to him. Hitherto discipleship had not materially interfered with [165] business, but this present call separated them from their occupation, and prepared them for the call to be apostles that came later, and that required them to be his constant companions--*Mk 3:14*.]

Section 31

HEALING OF A DEMONIAIC

(Capernaum, February, A.D. 28)

Mk 1:21-28; Lk 4:31-37

(b) 21 And they [Jesus and the four fishermen whom he called--*Mk 1:16-20*] **go into {(c) he came down to} Capernaum, a city of Galilee.** [Luke has just spoken of Nazareth, and he uses the expression "down to Capernaum" because the latter was on the lakeshore while Nazareth was up in the mountains.] **And (b) immediately on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. {(c) was teaching them}** **(b) 22 And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having {(c) his word was with} (b) authority, and not as the scribes.** [This was probably the next Sabbath after the calling of the four fishermen (*Mk 1:16-20*). The astonishment of the people was natural. Not yet recognizing Jesus' divinity, they could not understand how one so humble could speak with such authority. They contrasted his teaching with that of the scribes. The scribes were learned men who preserved, copied and expounded the

law and the tradition (*Ezr 7:6,12 Ne 8:1 Mt 15:1-6 23:2-4 Mk 12:35 Lk 11:52*). They were also called "lawyers" (*Mk 12:28 Mt 22:35*), and "doctors of the law" (*Lk 5:17-21*). Though the teaching of Jesus differed from the teaching of the scribes as to *matter*, the contrast drawn is as to *manner*. They spoke on the authority of Moses or the elders, but Jesus taught by [166] his own authority. Their way was to quote minute precedents supported by endless authorities. **23 And immediately there was in their {(c) the} (b) synagogue a man with {(c) that had} (b) an unclean spirit {(c) a spirit of an unclean demon}** [Matthew, Luke and Mark all concur in pronouncing demons unclean; that is, wicked (*Mt 10:1 12:43 Mk 1:23,26,27 3:11,30 5:2,8,13 6:7 7:25 9:25 Lk 4:33,36 6:18 8:29 9:42 11:24*). They thus corrected the prevailing Greek notion that some of the demons were good. The word "demon," as used in our Savior's time by both Jews and Greeks, meant the spirits of the departed or the ghosts of dead men. The teaching of that and prior ages was that such spirits often took possession of living men and controlled them. But whatever these demons were, the Scripture, both by its treatment of them and its words concerning them, clearly indicates that they were immaterial, intelligent beings, which are neither to be confused with maladies and diseases of the body, nor with tropes, metaphors, or other figures of speech. It would be impossible to regard demon possession as a mere disease without doing violence to the language used in every instance of the expulsion of a demon. The frequency of demonic possession in the time of Jesus is probably due to the fact that his advent [167] formed a great crisis in the spiritual order of things; **and he cried out, (c) with a loud voice** [The man cried, the unclean spirit determined what he should cry. The silence and decorum of the synagogue made the outcry more noticeable, and the demon betrayed his excitement and alarm in speaking before he was spoken to], **(b) 24 saying, (c) 34 Ah! what have we to do with you** [for explanation of this idiom see on *Jn 2:4*], **Jesus you Nazarene? are you come to destroy us?** [Jesus came to destroy the *works* of the devil (*1Jo 3:8*). At his second coming the *workers* themselves shall suffer (*Mt 25:41*). The demons recognized that the time of this "torment" had not yet come--*Mt 8:29*.] **I know you who you are, the Holy One of God.** [It is impossible that fever or disease, mental or physical, could give such supernatural knowledge. The demon called Jesus the Holy One, 1, because it was one of his proper Scriptural names (*Ps 16:10 Ac 3:14*); 2, because holiness was that characteristic that involved the ruin of demons as unholy ones--just as light destroys darkness. We should note here the unfruitful knowledge, faith, and confession of demons. They lacked neither knowledge (*Mt 8:29*), nor faith (*Jas 2:19*), nor did they withhold confession; but Jesus received them not. Repentance and willing obedience are as necessary as faith or confession.] **35 Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold your peace, and come out of him.** [We have in this phrase two personages indicated by the personal pronoun "him"; one of whom is commanded to come out of the other; one of whom is now rebuked and hereafter to be destroyed, the other of whom is delivered. In commanding silence Jesus refused to receive the demon's testimony. We can see at least three reasons for this: 1, it was not fitting that the fate of the people should rest upon the testimony of liars; 2, because receiving such testimony might have been taken as an indication that Jesus sustained friendly relations to demons--something that the enemies of [168] Christ actually alleged (*Mt 12:24*); 3, the messiahship of Jesus was to be gradually unfolded, and the time for its public proclamation had not yet come.] **And when the demon {(b) unclean spirit} (c) had thrown him down in the midst, (b) tearing him and crying with a loud voice, (c) he came out of him, having done him no hurt.** [The demon first racked the body of the man with a convulsion, and then, with a cry of rage, came out. All this was permitted that, 1, there might be clear evidence of demonic possession; 2, the demon's malignity might be shown; 3, it might be manifested that the spirit came not out of its own accord, but because compelled thereto by the command of Christ. The cry was, however, a mere impotent expression of anger, for Luke, "the beloved physician" (*Col 4:14*), notes that it did the man no hurt.] **(b) 27 And they were all amazed, {(a) amazement came upon all}, (b) insomuch that they questioned among themselves, (c) and they spoke together, one with another, saying, (b) What thing is this? (c) What is this word? (b) a new teaching! (c) for with authority and power he commands (b) even the unclean spirits, (c) and they come out. (b) and they obey him.** [The power to command disembodied spirits thus amazed the people, because it was more mysterious than the power to work physical miracles. By this miracle Jesus demonstrated his actual possession of the authority that he had just assumed in his teaching.] **28 And the report of him went out immediately {(c) 37 And there went forth a rumor concerning him} (b)**

everywhere into all **{(c) every place of}** **(b) the region of Galilee roundabout.** [This fame was occasioned both by the miracle and the teaching. The benevolence and publicity of the miracle, and its power--the power of one mightier than Satan--would cause excitement in any community, in any age. Though this is the first miracle recorded by either Mark or Luke (*Mk 1:25,26 Lk 4:35*), yet neither asserts that it was the *first* miracle Jesus wrought, so there is no conflict with *Jn 2:11.*] [169]

Section 32 CAPERNAUM MIRACLES (Capernaum, February, A.D. 28) Mt 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-34; Lk 4:38-41

A. Peter's Mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-15; Mk 1: 29-31; Lk 4:38-39). [Miracle 5]

(c) 38 And he arose out of the synagogue [where he had just healed the demoniac (*Mk 1:21*); on the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*], **(b) 29 And immediately, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came **{(c) entered}** **(b) into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.**** [Peter and Andrew had dwelt at Bethsaida (*Jn 1:44*). They may have moved to Capernaum, or Bethsaida, being near by, may be here counted as a part, or suburb, of Capernaum. Its name does not contradict this view, for it means "house of fishing" or "fishery."] **30 Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of **{(c) was gripped with}** a great fever.** [The Papists, who claim that Peter was the first pope, must confess that he was married at this time, and continued to be so for years afterwards (*1Co 9:5*). Luke speaks as a physician; for Galen, the father of medicine, divided fevers into little and great.] **(a) 14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying sick of a fever. (b) and immediately they tell him of her: (c) and they besought him for her.** [Their interest in her shows the spirit of love and kindness that pervaded the home.] **(b) 31 and he came (c) 39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever** [Though it was an inanimate force, it was still subject to rebuke, as were the winds and waves of Galilee--*Mt 8:26*]; **(a) 15 And he touched her hand, (b) and took her by the hand, and raised her up** [thus showing the miracle came from him, and that he felt a tender interest in the sufferer]; **(c) and it **{(b) the fever}** **(c) left her: and immediately she rose up **{(a) arose,}** **(b) and she ministered unto them. **{(a) him.}****** [Her complete recovery emphasized the miracle. Such fevers invariably leave the patient weak, [170] and the period of convalescence is long and trying, and often full of danger. She showed her gratitude by her ministry.]**

B. Other Healings the Same Day (Mt 8:16-17; Mk 1:32-34; Lk 4:40-41).

(b) 32 And at evening, (a) when evening was come, (c) when the sun was setting, **{(b) did set,} **(c) all they that had any sick with various diseases, brought them unto him; (b) they brought unto him all that were sick, and them **{(a) many}** **(b) that were possessed with demons.**** [Their delay till sundown was unquestionably caused by the traditional law of the Sabbath that forbade men to carry any burden on that day (*Jn 5:10*). The Sabbath closed at sundown (*Lv 23:32*). The distinction is drawn between the sick and the demon-possessed. Two reasons why demonic possession was so common at that time: 1, the intense wickedness of the nation; 2, the addiction of the nation to magic, whereby the people invited evil spirits to be familiar with them.] **(c) and he laid his hands on every one of them, (a) and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all (c) them (a) that were sick: 17 that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through Isaiah the prophet [*Isa 53:4*], saying, He took on himself our infirmities, and bore our diseases.** [Isaiah's vision is progressive; he sees, first, a man of sorrows; second, a man sorrowful because he bore the sickness and sorrows of others; third, a man who also bore sin, and healed the souls of others by so doing. Such was the order of Christ's life. His early years were spent in poverty and obscurity; his days of ministry in bearing, by sympathy and compassion, the sicknesses and sorrows of others (*Jn 11:35 Mk 14:34*); and in the hour of his crucifixion, he became the world's sin-bearer--*Jn 1:29 1Pe 2:24.*] **(b) 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick of various diseases, and cast out many demons; (c) 41 And demons also came out from many, crying out, and****

saying, **You are the Son of God. And rebuking them, he permitted them {(b) the demons} (c) not to speak, (b) because they knew him. (c) that he was Christ.** [The Son of God permitted his disciples to receive no information from demonic sources. He forbade demons to speak in the presence of his own, even on the most important of all topics.] [171]

Section 33
FIRST TOUR OF GALILEE
(March A.D. 28)
Mt 4:23-25; Mk 1:35-39; Lk 4:42-44

A. A Quiet Time (Mk 1:35; Lk 4:42).

(b) 35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up went out [that is, from the house of Simon Peter], **and departed into a desert place, and there prayed.** [Though Palestine was densely populated, its people were all gathered into towns, so that it was usually easy to find solitude outside the city limits. A ravine near Capernaum, called the Vale of Doves, would afford such solitude. Jesus taught (*Mt 6:6*) and practiced solitary prayer. Jesus being in all things like men, except that he was sinless (*Heb 2:17*), must have found prayer a real necessity. He prayed as a human being. Several reasons for this season of prayer are suggested, from which we select two: 1. It was a safeguard against the temptation to vainglory induced by the unbounded admiration and praise of the multitude whom he had just healed. 2. It was a fitting preparation on the eve of his departure on his first missionary tour.] **(c) 42 And when it was day, he came out and went into a desert place.** [Mark (*Mk 1:35*) has in mind the season when Jesus sought the Father in prayer, and so he tells us it was "a great while before day." Luke has in mind the hour when Jesus faced and spoke to the multitude, so he says, "When it was day."]

B. A Desperate Search (Mk 1:36-38; Lk 4:42).

(b) 36 And Simon. [As head of the house that Jesus had just left, Simon naturally acted as leader and guide to the party that sought Jesus] **and they that were with him** [they who were stopping in Simon's house; namely: Andrew, James, and John--*Mk 1:29*] **followed after him** [172] [literally, "pursued after him." Simon had no hesitancy in obtruding on the retirement of the Master. This rushing after Jesus in hot haste accorded with his impulsive nature. The excited interest of the people seemed to the disciples of Jesus to offer golden opportunities, and they could not comprehend his apparent indifference to it]; **37 and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking you.** [The disciples saw a multitude seeking Jesus for various causes: some to hear, some for excitement, some for curiosity. To satisfy the people seemed to them to be Christ's first duty. Jesus understood his work better than they. He never encouraged those who sought through mere curiosity or admiration (*Jn 6:27*). Capernaum accepted the benefit of his miracles, but rejected his call to repentance--*Mt 11:23*.] **38 And he said unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns** [the other villages of Galilee], **that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth.** [That is, I came forth from the Father (*Jn 16:28*) to make and preach a gospel. His disciples failed to understand his mission.] **(c) and the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stopped him, that he should not go from them.** [They would have selfishly kept his blessed ministries for their own exclusive enjoyment.]

C. A Bold Announcement (Mt 4:23; Mk 1:39; Lk 4:43).

(c) 43 But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent. [Jesus sought to arouse the entire nation. What the disciples regarded as a large work in Capernaum was consequently in his sight a very small one. Those who understand that it is God's will to save every man that lives upon the earth will not be overexcited by a successful revival in some small corner of the great field of labor.] **(b) 39 And he (a) Jesus went about in all Galilee** [The extreme length of Galilee was about sixty-three miles, and its extreme width about thirty-three miles. Its average [173] dimensions were about fifty by twenty-five miles. It contained, according to Josephus, two hundred and forty towns and villages. Its population at that time is estimated at about three million. This circuit of Galilee must

have occupied four or five months. The verses of this paragraph are, therefore, a summary of the work and influence of Jesus during the earlier part of his ministry. They are a general statement, the details of which are given in the subsequent chapters of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke--the Gospel of John dealing more particularly with the work in Judea], **(b) into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, (a) teaching in their synagogues** [The word "synagogue" is compounded of the two Greek words *sun*, "together," and *ago*, "to collect." It is, therefore, equivalent to our English word "meeting-house." The synagogue came into historic prominence after the books of the Old Testament were written. At the time of our Savior's ministry synagogues were scattered all over Palestine, and also over all quarters of the earth wherever the Jews had been dispersed. Synagogues were found in very small villages, for wherever ten "men of leisure," willing and able to devote themselves to the service of the synagogue, were found, a synagogue might be erected. In the synagogues the people met together on the Sabbaths to pray, and to listen to the reading of the portions of the Old Testament, and also to hear such instruction or exhortation as might be furnished. With the permission of the president of the synagogue any one who was fitted might deliver an address. Thus the synagogues furnished Jesus (and in later times his disciples also) with a congregation [174] and a suitable place for preaching. We find that on weekdays Jesus often preached in the open air. But the synagogues are thus particularly mentioned, probably, because in them were held the most important services, because they were necessary during the rainy and cold season, and because their use shows that as yet the Jewish rulers had not so prejudiced the public mind as to exclude Jesus from the houses of worship], **and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, (b) and casting out demons** [Mark singles out this kind of miracle as most striking and wonderful], **(a) and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.**

D. Summary of the Galilean Tour (Mt 4:24-25; Lk 4:44).

(a) 24 And the report of him went forth into all Syria [caravans passing through Galilee back and forth between the Mediterranean seaports on the west and the Persian cities on the east, and between Damascus on the north and Egypt on the south, would carry the reports concerning Jesus far and wide]: **and they brought unto him all that were sick, gripped with various diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them.** [Thus, by his actions, Jesus showed that the kingdom of God had come. The wonders of Moses were mostly miracles of judgment, those of Jesus were acts of compassion. The term "palsy" included all forms of paralysis, catalepsy, and cramps--see on Mk 2:3] **25 And there followed him great multitudes** [these popular demonstration, no doubt, intensified the erroneous notion of his disciples that the kingdom of Jesus was to be one of worldly grandeur] **from Galilee and Decapolis** [As a geographical term, "Decapolis" refers to that part of Syria lying east, southeast, and south of the Lake of Galilee. [175] The ten cities of Decapolis were colonized principally by veterans from the army of Alexander the Great. In the time of Jesus they were chiefly inhabited by Greeks, and not by Jews.] **and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.** [The land beyond Jordan was called Perea, which means "beyond." According to Josephus, it included territory between the cities of Pella on the north and Macherus on the south.] **(c) 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.**

Section 34 HEALING OF A LEPER (Galilee, March, A.D. 28) Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-16

A. Approached by the Leper (Mt 8:2; Mk 1:40; Lk 5:12).

(c) 12 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities [it was a city of Galilee, but as it was not named, it is idle to conjecture what city it was], **behold, (b) there comes {(a) came} (b) to him a leper** [The word "leprosy" comes from "*lepo*," which means to "peel off in scales." The facts that the priests had to handle and examine lepers, and that anyone who was white all over with leprosy was declared clean (Lv 13:12-13), led scholars to think that the laws of Moses, which

forbade anyone to approach or touch a leper, were not enacted to prevent the spread of a contagion, but for typical and symbolic purposes. It is thought that God chose the leprosy as the symbol of sin and its consequences, and that the Mosaic legislation was given to carry out this conception. Being the most loathsome and incurable of all diseases, it fitly represents in bodily form the ravages of sin in the soul of a man. But there must also have been a sanitary principle in God's laws, since we still deem it wise to separate lepers, and since other people besides the Hebrews prohibited lepers from mingling with other [177] citizens. Leprosy (Elephantiasis) is the most awful disease known. The body of its victim disintegrates joint by joint, until the whole frame crumbles to pieces. Another form of "leprosy" is Psoriasis, a milder, but is very distressing disease. In addition to the scaly symptoms, the skin becomes hard and cracks open, and from the cracks an ichorous humor oozes. The disease spreads inwardly, and ends in consumption, dropsy, suffocation, and death], **(c) a man full of leprosy** [Luke meant to describe a leper in the last stages of the disease--a leper past all hope]: **and when he saw Jesus, (b) beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying to him, (c) he fell on his face, (a) and worshipped him, (c) and besought him, saying, (b) unto him, (c) Lord** [The Jews, in addressing any distinguished person, usually employed the title "Lord." They were also accustomed to kneel before prophets and kings. It is not likely that the leper knew enough of Jesus to address him as the Son of God. He evidently took Jesus for some great prophet; but he must have had great faith, for he was full of confidence that Jesus had power to heal him, although there was but one case of leper-cleansing in the Scriptures--*2Ki 5:1-19 Lk 4:27*], **if you will, you can make me clean.** [The leper believed in the power of Jesus, but doubted his willingness to expend it on one so unworthy and so unclean. In temporal matters we cannot always be as sure of God's willingness as we can be of his power. The man asked rather for the blessing of cleanness than for health. To the Jew uncleanness was more horrible than disease. It meant to be an outcast from Israel, and to be classed with swine, dogs and other odious and abhorrent creatures. The leper, therefore, prayed that the Lord would remove his shame [178] and pollution.]

B. Healing for the Man (Mt 8:3; Mk 1:41-42; Lk 5:13). [Miracle 6]

(b) 41 And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him [Mark habitually notes the feelings, and hence also the gestures of Jesus. It was not an accidental, but an intentional, touch. Popular belief so confused and confounded leprosy with the uncleanness and corruption of sin, as to make the leper feel that Jesus might also compromise his purity if he concerned himself to relieve it. The touch of Jesus, therefore, gave the leper a new conception of divine compassion. It is argued that Jesus, by this touch, was made legally unclean until the evening (*Lv 13:46 11:40*). But we should note the spirit and purpose of this law. Touch was prohibited because it defiled the person touching, and aided not the person touched. In Jesus' case the reasons for the law were absent, the conditions being reversed. Moreover, Jesus, as a priest after the order of Melchizedek (*Heb 5:6*), possessed the priestly right to touch the leper without defilement--*Heb 4:15*], **and said unto him, {(c) saying,} I will; be made clean.** [The Lord's answer is an echo of the man's prayer (*Mk 1:40*). The words, "I will," express the high authority of Jesus.] **(b) 42 And immediately the {(a) his} (c) leprosy departed from him, {(a) was cleansed.} (b) and he was made clean.** [Luke says, 'departed', giving the merely physical view of the event. Matthew says, 'was cleansed', using ceremonial language. Mark combines the two forms.]

C. Directives to the Man (Mt 8:4; Mk 1:43-44; Lk 5:14).

(b) 43 And he strictly charged him, (c) to tell no man [The language used indicates that Jesus sternly forbade the man to tell what had been done. The man's conduct, present and future, shows that he needed severe speech. In his uncontrollable eagerness to be healed he had overstepped his privileges, for he was not legally permitted to thus enter cities and draw near to people (*Nm 5:2,3*); he was to keep at a distance from them, and covering his mouth, was to cry, "*Tame*, [179] *tame*"--"unclean, unclean" (*Lv 13:45,46 Lk 17:12,13*). The man evinced a like recklessness in disregarding the command of Jesus--*Mk 1:45*): **(b) and immediately sent him out, (a) 4 And Jesus said unto him, See that you tell no man; {(b) say nothing to any man:}** [Several reasons are suggested why the Lord thus commanded silence: 1. It may have been

better for the man not to mention his cure (*Jn 9:34*). 2. He required the decision of the priest to make him legally clean; and too much talk might so prejudice the priests as to lead them to refuse to admit his cure. 3. But the best reason is that it accorded with our Lord's general course, which was to suppress excitement, and thus prevent too great crowds from gathering about him and hindering his work. To take this view is to say that Jesus meant to prevent exactly what happened] **(c) but go, and show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing, according as Moses commanded, (b) the things that {(a) the gift that} Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.** [Though healed of his leprosy, the man was not legally clean until declared so by the priest. The priest alone could readmit him to the congregation. The local priest inspected the healed leper, and if he was found clean or cured, he was purified by the use of two birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, razor and bath. After seven days he was again inspected, and if still cured the priest repaired with him to the temple, where he offered the gift for his cleansing, which was three lambs, with flour and oil; or if the leper was poor, one lamb and two doves or pigeons, with flour and oil (*Lv 14:19-22*). The healed leper was a testimony that Messiah, the great Physician, had come, and that he respected the law of Moses. This testimony was given both to priests and people.]

D. Response of the Man (Mk 1:45; Lk 5:15-16).

(b) 45 But he went out [from the presence of Jesus and from the city], **and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, {(c) 15 But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him:}** [The leper was so elated that he could scarcely refrain from publishing his cure, and he must also have thought that this was what Jesus really [180] wanted--that in commanding him not to publish it he did not mean what he said] **and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. (b) insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city** [Not a natural or physical inability, but the inability of impropriety. Jesus could not do what he judged not best to do. The excitement cause by such an entry was injurious in several ways: 1. It gave such an emphasis to the miracles of Jesus as to make them overshadow his teaching. 2. It threatened to arouse the jealousy of the government. 3. It rendered the people incapable of calm thought. Two things constantly threatened the ministry of Jesus, namely, impatience in the multitude, and envious malice in the priests and Pharisees. Jesus wished to add to neither of these elements of opposition. Thus the disobedience of the leper interrupted Jesus, and thwarted him in his purpose to visit the villages.], **(c) 16 But he withdrew himself in the deserts, {(b) was without in desert places:}** [That is, the remote grazing-lands like that desert in which he afterwards fed the five thousand. Such was our Lord's unexampled meekness that he preferred the silent deserts to the applause of multitudes. His meekness was as high above the capacity of a merely human being as were his miracles] **(c) and prayed.** [Luke's gospel is pre-eminently the gospel of prayer and thanksgiving] **(b) and they came to him from every quarter.**

Section 35 HEALING OF A PARALYTIC (Capernaum, March A.D. 28) Mt 9:2-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26

A. Setting for the Miracle (Mk 2:1-2; Lk 5:17).

(c) 17 And it came to pass on one of those days, (b) when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, (c) that he was teaching; (b) it was noised that he was in the house. [Luke uses the general expression [181] "those days," referring to the early portion of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. Mark says, "some days," which implies the lapse of a considerable interval. The healing of the leper created such excitement that for some time, several weeks, Jesus kept out of the cities. He now, after the excitement has subsided, quietly enters Capernaum, and probably goes to the house of Simon Peter, now looked upon as his headquarters in Capernaum (*Mk 1:29*). His entrance into Capernaum marks the end of his first missionary tour through Galilee.] **2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no**

longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spoke the word unto them. [The house was probably a one-storied structure, built in the form of a square, or rectangle, with an open space in the center called the court. They have one door that opens from the street into an open space called the porch, and this porch in turn opens upon the court. In this porch there is usually a stairway leading to the roof. The roofs are invariably flat, and are surrounded by a parapet to keep those on them from falling off. Roofs or housetops are used as we use yards, only they are somewhat private. Jesus was in the room opposite the porch across the court. If so, the crowd at the door might catch an occasional word, or by tiptoeing obtain a momentary glance; and thus fan the hope of some ultimate satisfaction. The gospel is here called "the word," for it is the Word among words, as the Bible is the Book among books.] **(c) and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by** [the fact that they were sitting, shows that they were honored above the rest: Jesus did not increase their ill-will by any needless disrespect], **who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judea and [182] Jerusalem** [It is not likely that such a gathering came together by accident. Capernaum was known to be the headquarters of Jesus, and these leaders of the people had doubtless gathered there to wait for some opportunity to see or hear Jesus. They recognized the necessity of coming to some definite judgment regarding him. We shall see in this scene the beginning of their hostility to Jesus, which developed into four objections: 1. Alleged blasphemy; 2. Intercourse with publicans and sinners; 3. Supposed neglect of ascetic duties, such as washings, fasting, etc.; 4. Alleged violation of the Sabbath]; **and the power of the Lord was with him to heal.** [That is to say, the power of God the Father was then working in Jesus to perform miracles (*Jn 14:10*). The cold disbelief of the Pharisees did not prevent Jesus from working miracles, as disbelief usually did--*Mt 13:58 16:1-4*.]

B. Preparation for the Miracle (Mt 9:2; Mk 2:3-4; Lk 5:18-19).

(c) 18 And behold, men bring {(a) they brought (b) they come, bringing} unto him a man sick of the palsy, {(c) that was palsied:} (a) lying on a bed: (b) carried by four [*Palsy* is an abbreviation of the word "paralysis." It is caused by a cessation of the nervous activities. See on Mt 4:24. In the East bedsteads were practically unknown. An Oriental bed is a thin mattress, or pallet, just large enough for a man to lie upon. Such a bed could be easily carried by four men, if each took hold of a corner.] **(c) and they sought to bring him in** [that is, into the house], **and to lay him before him. 19 And not finding by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, (b) 4 And when they could not come near unto him for the crowd** [To these four who sought Jesus it seemed a case of now or never. If they waited till another season, Jesus might withdraw himself again for "some days," or the palsied man might die. "Now" is always the day of salvation], **(c) they went up to the [183] housetop** [They went up by means of the stairs in the porch, or by ascending to the roof of an adjoining house, and stepping across to the roof of Simon's house. Many commentators assert that they went up by an outside stairway, erroneously believing that such stairs are common in Palestine; but they are almost unknown there, and their presence would only expose the inmates of the house to violence and pillage], **(b) they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. (c) and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus.** [The man was let down "through the tiles" (*Lk 5:19*), which indicates that the remaining tiles encased an opening through which he was lowered. The tiles were plates of burnt clay, suitable for roofing rather than for building walls or parapets. We are not told in what part of the house Jesus stood, but evidently an opening was made in the flat roof above him, and the man was lowered to the floor in front of Jesus by means of short straps or pieces of rope fastened to the four corners of the bed.]

C. Necessity of the Miracle (Mt 9:2-3; Mk 2:5-7; Lk 5:20-21).

(b) 5 And Jesus seeing their faith [The four friends of the sick man showed their faith by those bold and persistent efforts that took liberties with the house of a neighbor; and the palsied man showed his faith by consenting to the extraordinary means employed in his behalf] **said {(a) said} unto the sick of the palsy, Son, {(c) Man,} (a) be of good cheer; (c) your sins are forgiven you.** [The affectionate address, "Son," might have ordinarily surprised the Jewish doctors, who held themselves too far removed from sinners to speak familiarly with them. [184] But the smaller

surprise was swallowed up in the greater, when they heard Jesus pronounce the forgiveness of the man's sins. Since man had trod the globe, sin against God had never been pardoned by the direct, authoritative utterance of fleshly lips. Such power resides in Jesus alone.] **(b) 6 But there were certain of the scribes (c) and the Pharisees (b) sitting there, (a) 3 And behold, [they] (c) began to reason, (b) and reasoning in their hearts, (a) said within themselves, (c) saying, (a) This man blasphemes. (b) 7 Why does this that man thus speak?** [A scornful expression, literally, "this one these things."] **(c) Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, (b) but one, even God? (c) alone?** [To *blaspheme* is to say or do something that reflects evil on the character and nature of God. Such blasphemies may be divided into three general heads, thus: 1. To attribute the unworthy to God. 2. To deny the worthy to God. 3. To arrogate or claim any attribute, power, authority, etc., which belongs to exclusively to God. It was under this third head that Jesus seemed to lay himself open to accusation--an accusation entirely just if he had not been the [185] Son of God. The Pharisees were not faulty in their logic, but were mistaken in their premises; hence Jesus does not deny their doctrine; he merely corrects their mistaken application of it to himself. As to this pronounced forgiveness of Jesus, two questions arise: 1. Why did he forgive the man's sins? The haste with which the man was brought to Jesus suggests that his condition was critical; in which case the torment of sin would be the greater. As a searcher of hearts, Jesus saw the unuttered desire of the sick man, and at once responded to it. If his words meant nothing to the conscience of the man, they were wasted; but Jesus knew what was in man. 2. Why did he pronounce the forgiveness so publicly? As the terms of pardon prescribed in the law were yet in full force, this open speech of Jesus was a surprising assertion of authority. In fact, such assertions were exceptional in his ministry; for only on three recorded occasions did he thus forgive sins (*Lk 7:48 23:43*). Being the exceptional and not the established method of pardon, and being thus employed in the presence of so representative an audience, it was evidently used for a special purpose; and that purpose was to show that Jesus had such power, that men seeing this power might believe him to be the Son of God. Jesus exercised this authority in the presence of those most interested in exposing it if false, and most able to explode it had it not been true. Whether his words were truth or blasphemy, was the controversy between Christ and the rulers from that day to the end of his ministry--*Mt 26:65*.]

D. Performance of the Miracle (Mt 9:4-7; Mk 2:8-11; Lk 5:22-25). [Miracle 7]

(b) 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned {(c) their reasoning,} (b) within themselves, (a) 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts [Jesus read their thoughts by his divine insight, and not because of any recognized habit or tendency on their part to criticize him, for this is the first recorded indication of hostility on the part of the Pharisees, [186] though it is hinted at, at *Jn 4:1*. Such discernment of the thought was to be a characteristic mark of the expected Messiah (*Isa 11:2,3*), and Jesus had it (*Jn 2:25*). It also is an attribute peculiar to God--*1Ch 28:9 Jer 17:10 Ro 8:27 Re 2:23*] **(c) answered and said {(b) said} unto them, (a) Why you think evil in your hearts?** [Jesus could see invisible sin, and could forgive it or condemn it, as the conditions moved him. The powers of discernment, forgiveness and condemnation make him the perfect Judge.] **(b) Why do you reason in your hearts? (a) 5 For which is easier, (b) to say to the sick of the palsy, (c) Your sins are forgiven; (b) or to say, Arise, and take up your bed, and walk?** [To understand this sentence we should place the emphasis upon the word "say," because the question at issue was the power or effect of his speech. The rabbis, after their first shock of surprise, thought that Jesus feared to attempt the fraud of a so-called miracle in the presence of learned men, lest he should be detected and exposed; and hence looked upon his present action as an attempt to bear himself safely off before the public, and to maintain his standing by the use of high-sounding words. They felt that he used words of unseen effect, because he dared not use those of seen effect. This was precisely the view that Jesus knew they would take, and that he wished them to take; for by showing his ability to work in the realms of sight what is impossible; namely: the healing of the sick man, he could place before them proof suited to their own reasoning that he had a like ability to work the impossible in the realms of the unseen; namely: the forgiveness of the man's sins. By thus demonstrating his authority in the eternal and physical world, Jesus assures us of his dominion over the internal and spiritual.] **10 But that you may know that the Son of man** [Daniel's name for the Messiah--*Da 7:10-13*] **has authority on earth to forgive sins** [187] Jesus

is saying, "You think that forgiveness can only be granted by the Father in heaven, but it can also be granted by the Son upon earth. What you have heretofore sought from the Father you may now seek from me." As to the test of power or authority, the miracle of Jesus was very convincing; for in the popular opinion sin was a cause of which disease was the effect. The Jews were right in seeing this connection, but they erred in thinking that they were warranted in *personally* crinating every one whom they found afflicted, and in judging that the weight of the affliction indicated the quantity of the sin. The Book of Job should have corrected this error. Such unrighteous judgments are condemned by Christ (*Jn 9:3 Lk 13:2-5*)., **(a) (then said he to the sick of the palsy), {(c) (he said unto him that was palsied),} I say unto you, Arise, and take up your couch, {(b) bed,} (c) and go up to your house.** [What command could be more pleasant than what bade this sick man go home forgiven and healed?] **25 And immediately he rose up {(a) arose,} (c) before them,**

E. Result of the Miracle (Mt 9:8; Mk 2:12; Lk 6:26).

(b) and immediately took up the bed, (c) upon which he lay [The bed had borne the man; now the man bore the bed.], **(b) and went forth before them all (a) and departed to his house. [188] (c) glorifying God. (b) insomuch that they were all amazed, 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they were afraid, (c) 26 And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God** [The "all" of this passage hardly includes the scribes and Pharisees, or, if it does, their admiration of Jesus was but a momentary enthusiasm, which quickly passed away]; **(a) who had given such authority unto men.** [Those present regarded Jesus as a mere man among other men. They therefore looked upon his power as a gift given to men generally, and not as something peculiar to himself. It is likely that they took the words "Son of man" (*Mt 9:6*) as referring to men generally, and not as a reference to the Messiah, such as Jesus meant it to be.] **(b) saying, We never saw it on this fashion, (c) and they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today.** [Literally, "seen paradoxes": things contrary to common thought and ordinary experience. They had seen a threefold miracle: sins forgiven, thoughts read and palsy healed.]

Section 36 CALL OF MATTHEW (Capernaum, Spring A.D. 28) Mt 9:9; Mk 2:13-14; Lk 5:27-28

A. Circumstances (Mt 9:9; Mk 2:13-14; Lk 5:27).

(c) 27 And after these things [after the healing of the paralytic] **he went forth, (a) again by the seaside** [that is, he left Capernaum, and sought the shore of the sea, which formed a convenient auditorium for him, and which was hence a favorite scene for his teaching]; **and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. 14 And as he (a) Jesus passed by from thence, he saw (c) and saw (a) a man, (c) a publican, named {(c) called} Matthew, (c) Levi, (b) the son of Alphaeus** [It will be observed that Matthew, in his account of his call, does not make himself prominent. All [189] the Evangelists keep themselves in the background. Because Mark and Luke give us the name Levi, and we are satisfied that Levi is another name for Matthew. Mark involves us in another difficulty by calling Levi the son of Alphæus; for a man named Alphæus was the father of James the younger (*Mt 10:3*). It is not likely, however, that Matthew and James were brothers, for Alphæus was a very common Jewish name, and brothers are usually mentioned in pairs in the apostolic lists, and these two are not so mentioned.], **sitting at the place of toll** [Wherever it is at all practicable, Orientals sit at their work. The place of toil was usually a booth or a small hut. Whether Matthew's booth was by the lake, to collect duties on goods and people ferried across; or whether it was by the roadside on the great highway leading from Damascus to Acco, to collect taxes on all produce brought into Capernaum, is not material.]

B. Call (Mt 9:9; Mk 2:14; Lk 5:27-28).

(a) and he said {(c) said} unto him, Follow me. 28 And he forsook all, And he arose {(c) rose up} and followed [190] him. [Such obedience was not, of course, performed in ignorance; it indicates that Matthew was already a disciple, as were the four fisherman when they also received a like call. Matthew was now called to become a personal attendant of Jesus, preparatory to being chosen an apostle. Nor are we to conclude from the abruptness of his movements that he went off without settling accounts with the head of his office. Though it may be more dramatic to thus picture him as departing at once, yet the settlement of accounts was indispensable to his good name in the future, and in no way diminishes the reality and beauty of his sacrifice--a beauty that Matthew himself forbears to mention, as became him (*Pr 27:2*). But Matthew certainly neither delayed nor sought counsel (*Ga 1:15,16*). By thus calling a publican, Jesus reproved the religious narrowness of his times.] [191]

Section 37

A SABBATH HEALING

(Jerusalem, April, A.D. 28)

Jn 5:1-47

A. Introduction (Jn 5:1-5).

(d) 1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [Older commentators almost unanimously regarded this unnamed feast as the Passover; but some think it is the feast of Tabernacles or Purim. In favor of its being the Passover we submit two points: 1. Daniel seems to forecast the ministry of the Messiah as lasting one-half of a week of years (*Da 9:27*). 2. It fits better in the chronological arrangement, for in the next scene we find the disciples plucking grain, and the Sabbath question is still at full heat. But the harvest season opens with the Passover. This is then the second Passover Jesus attended in Jerusalem.] **2 Now there is** [the present tense is used, for while the city was destroyed, the pool evidently still existed.] **in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew** [that is, in Aramaic, a dialect of the classic Hebrew, in which the Old Testament was written, and the language then in use in Palestine] **Bethesda, having five porches** [It had five covered porticos, probably erected for the accommodation of the sick, whence it is called Bethesda, that is, "house of mercy.] **3 In these lay a great multitude of them that were sick, blind, lame, withered. 5 And a certain man was there, who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity.** [It is not said that he had spent all these years beside the pool, nor is it likely that he had. The time is given to mark the inveteracy of the disease, and to show the pathos of his situation. The facts that he had a bed, and that his healing was demonstrated by his walking, argue that his disease was either rheumatism, or some form of paralysis.]

B. Need for Healing (Jn 5:6-7).

6 When Jesus saw him lying, and knew [By divine intuition, just as he also knew the lives of Nathanael and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well--*Jn 1:47-51 4:15-19,29*] **that he had been now a long time in that case, he said unto him, Do you desire to be made whole?** [By this question Jesus aroused the man from the apathy of despair, awakening him to hope and effort. Moreover, Jesus only healed as men consented to his healing.] **7 The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me.** [The man's lack of healing was not due to want of interest, but to want of means. The lower flight of ten steps leading to the pool is only four and half feet wide, and the pool itself is but twenty-one feet and nine inches by nine feet [195] in breadth at its widest part. A half-dozen selfish men rushing down this narrow passage, and filling the small space in the pool, would easily crowd out one who was friendless and more than usually helpless.]

C. The Miracle (Jn 5:8-9).

8 Jesus said unto him, Arise, take up your bed, and walk. [The bed was the light mattress or pallet of the poor elsewhere noted (see on *Mk 2:3*), which could be easily rolled up and carried

under the arm.] **9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked.** [Christ spoke, the man obeyed, and by the obedience of faith was made whole.] **Now it was the Sabbath on that day.** [There was apparently nothing urgent in the sick man's condition that made an immediate cure necessary; but Jesus healed because it was the Sabbath, that he might thereby draw such an issue between himself and the Jewish rulers as would afford opportunity for him to present his divine claims to them in the clearest and most forceful manner. He healed on the Sabbath, that he might assert divine relations to the Sabbath, and by so doing bring about a disputation that would enable him to develop before them his divine relations to the Father.]

D. The Critics (Jn 5:10-13).

(d) 10 So the Jews [That is, the Jewish rulers. John frequently uses the term with this restricted meaning (*Jn 1:19 7:13 9:22 18:12,14*). The man was officially stopped and questioned] **said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.** [They would have cited in proof of their assertion *Ex 31:13 Nm 15:35 Jer 17:21-23 Ne 13:19*. In this case a man lying on his bed, away from home, is suddenly healed. Under such circumstances *Jewish tradition* said that he must either spend the rest of the day watching his bed, or else he must go off and leave it to be stolen. But He who rightfully interpreted the law of [196] his own devising, and who knew that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (*Mk 2:27*), ordered the healed one to carry his bed along home with him. Elsewhere we shall find that Jesus was careful to show that his sabbatic actions were strictly legal; but in this case, that he might bring his divine claims plainly before the rulers, he ignored the question as to the human legality of his act that he might present without confusion its divine legality. Hence he used only one method of justification; namely: an appeal to his divine rights as exhibited in the habits of his Father. It was the divine and not the human in Jesus that wrought this miracle, so Jesus causes the whole controversy to turn on the divine rights, that he may use the occasion for an elaborate discussion of his divine claims and the proofs by which they are sustained.] **11 But he answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed, and walk.** [The man very naturally shifts the burden of responsibility. If he was violating the Sabbath, he had been ordered to do it by one who had alone empowered him to do it. Of himself he would not and could not have done it.] **12 They asked him, Who is the man that said unto you, Take up your bed, and walk?** [By using the word "man" they suggest the contrast between human authority and divine law. They were more concerned about the law than about mercy.] **13 But he that was healed knew not who it was: for Jesus had gone away, a multitude being in the place.** [Jesus, not wishing to unduly excite the multitude by his presence, had passed on.]

E. Encounter in the Temple (Jn 5:14-15).

(d) 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the [197] **temple** [possibly he was there offering sacrifices in thanksgiving for his recovery, in the spirit of *Ps 66:13,14*, but it is as likely that he was there merely enjoying the sights and privileges from which he had so long been excluded], **and said unto him, Behold, you have been made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing befall you.** [Many human ills are directly traceable to sin, and this one appears to have been so; for death is the wages of sin (*Ro 6:23*), and sickness is partial payment. It is a solemn thought that sin can produce worse conditions than even this case, where it found its victim in youth, and left him a withered old man, bed-ridden, helpless, and friendless.] **15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.** [There was evidently no unworthy motive in his action; for he did not report it that it was Jesus who made him break the Sabbath to condemn Jesus; on the contrary, he said it was Jesus who made him whole, so honoring Christ. Feeling (as any Jew would have felt) that he ought to clear himself before the rulers of his people, the man, no doubt, honestly thought that the name and authority of the great Prophet of Nazareth would end all question as to the conduct of both Healer and healed. If so, he was sadly mistaken.]

F. Persecution of Jesus (Jn 5:16-18).

(d) 16 And for this cause the Jews persecuted Jesus [Literally, "pursued," or "hunted Jesus." This is John's first plain declaration of open hostility to Jesus, though he has already implied it.

From this point the blood-red line of conspiracy against the life of Jesus runs through this Gospel], **because he did these things on the Sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered them, My Father works even until now, and I work.** [The dual nature of Jesus permitted both a divine and human attitude toward the Sabbath. We have shown that Jesus chose to assert his divine attitude, for in no other matter did these Jews have clearer distinction as to the difference between divine and human right than in this matter of Sabbath observance. If Jesus were a mere man, their ideas of law clearly condemned him; but if Jesus were indeed God, their knowledge of divine conduct in the whole realm of nature [198] clearly justified him, and the miracle asserted his divine control in nature's realm. While God rested from creation on the Sabbath, nothing can be clearer than that in works of sustenance, reproduction, healing and providence, God has never rested, and never made distinctions between the days of our week. In the light of the gospel we find also that his redemptive work has never ceased and, considering the part that Jesus was even then accomplishing in this field of labor, his words, "and I work," are full of meaning.] **18 For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath** [Not only violated, but denied its authority over his divine nature], **but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God.** [They rightly interpreted Jesus as asserting relationship to God differing from that sustained by others, as expressed in some few passages in the Old Testament, where God is spoken of as a Father to the people generally; that is, their Creator. No man could claim such unity of nature as would exempt him from the obligation of the fourth commandment. Had they misunderstood Jesus in this all-important point, how quickly would he have corrected them, for he could not have been less righteous than Paul and Barnabas--Ac 14:11-15.]

Discourse #3
The Father and the Son
John 5:19-47

19 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them. [His answer is a connected address, the theme being his own character, mission, authority, and credentials as the Son of God. It is the Christology of Jesus, and instead of being a retraction of the claim to divinity that the Jews accused him of making, it is a complete and amplified reassertion of it. Jesus first declares his relations to the Father (*Jn 5:19-23*), which are set forth in four divisions, each of which is introduced by the word "for"; namely: 1. Unity of action (*Jn 5:19*). 2. Unity of love, counsel, and plan (*Jn 5:20*). 3. Unity in life-impartation (*Jn 5:21*). 4. Unity in judgment, resulting in unity of honor (*Jn 5:22,23*). This last division formed a turning point in the discourse. Since there is there unity of honor, it is important that men should honor Jesus, [199] and also otherwise sustain right relationships to him, and Jesus therefore, to enlighten the Jews as to their duty toward him, proceeds to set forth his relations to men (*Jn 5:23-30*), which he also gives in four divisions, closely correlative to his four statements as to the Father, thus: 1. Right to receive divine honor from men (*Jn 5:23*). 2. Authority to execute life and death judgment over men (*Jn 5:24*). 3. Power of life-impartation as to men, and that both spiritually and literally (*Jn 5:25-29*). 4. All Jesus' relationships to man to be sustained and executed according to the will and plan or mission of God (*Jn 5:30*). But since all these various relationships grow out of his divine nature, Jesus next submits the credentials that establish his claim to such a nature (*Jn 5:31-39*). These also are given in four divisions; namely: 1. Testimony of the Baptist (*Jn 5:31-35*). 2. Testimony of the Father (*Jn 5:37*). 3. Jesus' own works and ministry (*Jn 5:36*). 4. Testimony of Scripture (*Jn 5:38,39*). Or we may regard Jesus as asserting that the Father testifies to the Son's divinity in four different ways. The discourse then closes with an application of its truth to the Jewish auditors (*Jn 5:40-47*). They are told that all this truth is lost on them because of their own fourfold sinful condition, which is thus stated: 1. Lack of will to come to Christ (*Jn 5:40*). 2. Lack of real love toward God, or desire for his honor (*Jn 5:41-43*). 3. Love for the honor of men, rather than the honor of God (*Jn 5:44*). 4. Want of real faith in the Mosaic writings--*Jn 5:45-47*], **Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing: for whatever things he does, these the Son also does in like manner.** [The Jews regarded Jesus as claiming equality with God in a vain-glorious, honor-seeking spirit; but Jesus restates himself, so as to show that the claim is really a renunciation or abdication of all

independent greatness--as having an equality exercised in absolute subservience (*Isa 42:1 Php 3:6-9*). They had accused him as a human being acting contrary to the law of the Father. But he declares himself to be a divine being, so united to the Father as to have no will or action apart from the Father, a condition the resultant of which is [200] not weakness and insufficiency, but the strength and perfection arising from an absolute and indissoluble union with the Father--the glory of divinity. Jesus asserts his equality with the Father in such a way as not to depreciate the dignity and glory of the Father.] **20 For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that he does: and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel.** [The love of the Father towards the Son was source of revelation, and that the revelation was progressive. Love constrained the Father to reveal, and love in turn constrained the Son to act according to the revelation. Moreover, this unity of love would be evidenced by greater works in the future, of which two are enumerated; namely, resurrection and judgment, the former being at first spiritually and afterwards literally outlined. The Father would show these works to the Son by causing him to do them; there would be no separate act of the Father so that the works would be twice performed. These works would produce faith in those of right spirit. But among such hardened hearts as those whom Jesus addressed they would only produce wonder and consternation. Those who withheld the tribute of faith should pay that of amazement. Putting the statements of *Jn 5:19* and *Jn 5:20* together, we find that the Son knows all that the Father does, and likewise does all that the Father does, and in like manner. There could be no higher assertion or equality than this; in fact, it asserts identity rather than equality. But the equality is not the result of conquest, nor was it one of power opposed to power, but is freely given and accorded by reason of love.] **21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom he will.** [Since the verbs in this [201] verse are in the present tense, and since Jesus is not known to have raised the physically dead before this time, it is rightly taken that he here speaks only of raising the spiritually dead. Our miserable existence in sin is often spoken of in Scripture as a death from which we must be revived (*Eph 2:1,5 Col 2:13 Re 3:1*). The use of the word "will" likewise indicates a spiritual resurrection, for Christ exercised discrimination in such resurrections; but the final, literal resurrection is without discrimination. See the word "all" in *Jn 5:28*. The meaning, therefore, is that as the Father performs physical resurrections, so the Son (for the present) performs spiritual resurrections (to be followed by physical resurrections). Jesus later gave those at Jerusalem a sign of his power to literally raise the dead by the resurrection of Lazarus (*Jn 11:44*). Resurrection is bestowed or withheld according to Jesus' will, but his will is not arbitrarily exercised. He visits those who receive him, and revives those who believe him. If the Son possessed right of concurrent action on these lofty planes, concurrent use of the sabbath was a small matter indeed.] **22 For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he has given all judgment unto the Son.** [That is to say, the Father does not act in judgment without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, for in no work is either isolated from the other. Resurrection is nearly always associated with judgment, and in this instance it is in reviving that the judgment is manifested or executed. (See *Jn 5:29* also.) Note that judgment begins in this world--*Jn 9:39*]; **23 that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.** ["Even as" means in the same manner and in equal degrees. The prerogative of judgment was committed unto Jesus that men might behold his true majesty. If this verse does not teach us to worship Jesus as God, language cannot teach it. God does not give his glory unto another (*Isa 42:8*), nor could he, by reason of his very nature, arbitrarily will such honor to one whose character and nature were unworthy of it. In these words Jesus exposed the ruinous attitude assumed by the Jews in seeking to slay him.] [202] **He that does not honor the Son does not honor the Father that sent him.** [Honor paid to the Father pertains or belongs to his nature and character. But the Son is the manifestation of that nature and character (*Jn 14:7-11 Heb 1:3*). Therefore to fail to honor the Son is to fail to honor the Father. Only those who honor Jesus take pains to honor the Father.] **24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes him that sent me, has eternal life. And does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.** [Eternal life is a present gift, just as condemnation is a present condition (*Jn 3:18*). To "hear" means in this case to receive and obey, so that eternal life is conditioned upon a knowledge of the revelation of the Father and Son, and a right use of that knowledge. Those who have learned of and obey Jesus have already escaped or avoided the judgment--*Ro 8:1*.] **25 Verily, verily [see on *Jn 1:51*], I say unto you, The hour comes, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and**

they that hear shall live. [The "has passed" of *Jn 5:24* and the "now is" of this verse show that Jesus is, thus far, primarily speaking of a present and hence a spiritual resurrection, or regeneration. Christianity, or the dispensation of regeneration, was to formally begin at Pentecost (*Ac 2:1-4*), but it was already present in a preliminary form in the teaching of Jesus, for those who hearkened to it were counted as already redeemed. Yet the spiritual condition of even the apostles was at that time such that the hour of grace is spoken of as more future than present--more "coming" than "at hand."] **26 For as the Father has life in himself, even so he gave to the Son also to have life in himself** [Not only an independent life, such as man does not possess (*Ac 2:27,28*), but a life that is a source of life to others. This regenerating power completed Jesus' official status as judge, so that wherever he awarded life, he could at the same time bestow it]; **27 and he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man.** [We can see several reasons, [203] humanly speaking, why the humanity of Jesus should be made a ground for committing the judgment of the races of men to him: 1. Jesus having experienced our infirmities and temptations, we can feel sure of his sympathy (*Heb 4:15,16*). 2. Jesus, partaking of the nature of both God and man, is, because of his unique nature, the only fit daysman or umpire between them (*Job 9:33*). Possibly we may regard it as a reward of humility--*Php 2:8,9*.] **28 Marvel not at this** [Jesus seems to here answer the surprised expression of their faces by enlarging his statements]: **for the hour comes, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, 29 and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.** [We have here the future, literal, and final resurrection (*Da 12:2*); a scene of such stupendous grandeur as to overshadow all the marvelous in all that Christ shall have previously done.] **30 I can of myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous; because I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me.** [Jesus here reasserts his dependence upon the Father, not as a bare repetition of his relationship to the Father, but for the purpose of developing his relationship to men as based on or growing out of this relationship to the Father. The Jews, as they listened to him, were conscious that he was even then judging and passing sentence of condemnation upon them. Jesus does not deny the correctness of this view, but shows that, because of his relationship or dependence upon the Father, they are getting perfect justice, for: 1. His judgment was free from all personal bias and selfish retaliation, and was, 2. Positively perfect, being wholly inspired by the Father's will.] **31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. 32 It is another** [that is, the Father; for similar reference, see *Jn 8:50-54*] **that bears witness of me; and I know that the witness that he gives of me is true.** [These two verses form, as noted, a transition in the discourse. [204] In them Jesus passes from discussing himself and the divine and human phases of his nature and office to take up the evidences that attest him, first asserting that the truth of what he has said does not rest solely on his own veracity. There is here an indirect reference to that clause of the Jewish law that required two witnesses. See *Jn 8:14-18*. But the saying is deeply spiritual. Since Jesus did nothing of himself, his very testimony was not his own, but was the Father's who sent him, and was therefore absolutely true in the consciousness of Jesus. If Jesus had testified independently of the Father--had it been possible--it would have been in the nature of the case contrary to that consensus of the divine will which forms the truth.] **33 You have sent unto John** [this shows that Jesus was addressing the rulers--*Jn 1:19*], **and he has borne witness unto the truth.** [John had witnessed the truth concerning the messiahship of Jesus. Some think that the pronoun "another" in *Jn 5:32* refers to John also, but by the present tense "witnesses" of that verse, and the past tense "has borne witness" of this verse, the ever-abiding testimony of the Father is contrasted with the finished testimony of John, who is now silenced by imprisonment.] **34 But the witness that I receive is not from man: howbeit I say these things, that you may be saved.** [In the light of *Jn 1:6,7*, it sounds strange to hear Jesus thus renounce the testimony of the Baptist. But the phrase, "is not from man," is the Hebrew negative, meaning *not from man alone*. Jesus therefore meant to accept it, as he in the next breath did that of Moses, as prophetic--as the testimony of the Father spoken through a human medium; but meant to reject it as a merely human testimony, such as it was in the view of these Jews who denied in their hearts that John was a prophet. This mission of Jesus was not to be proved by uninspired testimony, for uninspired man cannot testify of God from lack of full and adequate knowledge (*Mt 11:27 16:17*). And yet if the Jews were willing to accept such testimony, Jesus in kindness would permit it, that

by any fair means they might believe and be saved.] **35 He was the lamp that burns and shines; and you were willing to rejoice for a [205] season in his light.** [They were willing, like children, to play in John's light without stopping to seriously consider its meaning, but when he bore testimony to Christ they blasphemed him--*Lk 7:33*.] **36 But the witness that I have is greater than *that of John*; for the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me.** [By "greater witness" Jesus means testimony that is more convincing. All divine testimony is of equal veracity, but some it is more obviously convincing. The less the testimony savors of humanity, and the more purely divine it appears, the more convincing it is (*1Jn 5:9*). The term "works" is not to be confined to miracles, for the word "accomplish" indicates a wider meaning. The entire messianic mission or redemptive work that ended with our Lord's words, "It is finished" (*Jn 17:4 19:30*), and that is indicated in this very discourse in *Jn 5:20*, and outlined by referring to spiritual judgment and regeneration, should be included. The Father did not send the Son to merely work miracles, but to redeem the world.] **37 And the Father that sent me, he has borne witness of me. You have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his form.** **38 And you do not have his word abiding in you: for whom he sent, him you believe not.** [The testimony of the Father was given in three forms: 1. By direct or audible voice and the visible sending of the Spirit--as at Jesus' baptism. 2. By revelations, through the medium of prophets and angels gathered and preserved in the Old Testament Scriptures. 3. Through the Son and his works. Jesus here asserts that all testimony of the first kind had failed to reach the Jewish rulers; that the testimony of the second kind has been utterly lost upon them, for they failed to see its accordance with the testimony of the third kind that he was even then exhibiting to them, neither had it taught them to expect a personal Savior.] **39 You [206] search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and these are they that bear witness of me; 40 and you will not come to me, that you may have life.** [In their zeal for the Scriptures the Jews had counted every letter of them, expecting to find life in the laws and precepts; but they failed to find Him of whom the Scriptures spoke in figure, type and prophecy. In their reverence for the Book they failed to see that it was a mere means intended to acquaint them with him through whom life was to come. Hence, there is deep pathos in the co-ordination "and--and." The verses give us three points worthy of deepest reflection: 1. Protestantism may love the Book and show a martyr's loyalty to it, and yet fail utterly to render any acceptable love or loyalty toward the Being revealed in the Book. 2. Criticism, both higher and lower, may submit every text to microscopic investigation, and yet be as blind as the ancient Pharisees to its true meaning. It is profoundly true that the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned (*1Co 2:14*), and that pride of literary culture, and the self-worship of intellectualism tend to spiritual blindness (*Mt 11:25 15:14 Lk 8:10 Eph 4:17,18 Isa 5:21*). It seems to come upon such a visitation from God, as in the case of Elymas (*Ac 13:8-12*). 3. Though free will is meant to be man's crowning glory, yet it may result in his shame and ruin.] **41 I receive not glory from men.** [Jesus here shows that his rebuke of their disbelief does not spring from personal pique or disappointed ambition. He came seeking faith that he might save, not honor that he might be glorified, and honor paid to him is by him transferred to God (*Php 2:10,11*), just as honor paid to the true Christian is transferred to Christ.] **42 But I know you, that you have not the love of God in yourselves.** [He speaks as the Searcher of hearts (*Jn 1:47-50 2:24,25*). Knowing them absolutely, he found them to be self-worshippers, devoid [207] of that love Godward that begets belief, and lacking in their natures what would enable them to understand him and his spirit, no matter what evidence was submitted to them.] **43 I have come in my Father's name, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive.** [Some think that this is spoken primarily of a pre-eminently great antichrist who is yet to come and deceive many of the Jews, and who shall be such an incarnation of Satan as Jesus was of God (*Re 13:1-9*). But they have already received many false christs with joy. False christs come in their own name--for their own honor--and make no war on bosom sins, but upon earthly enemies; but Jesus came not to manifest himself, but his Father.] **44 How can you believe, who receive glory one of another, and the glory that comes from the only God you do not seek?** [The question was as to their believing Jesus to be the Messiah. Expecting one who would bring great honor to themselves by his triumphs over his foes, and seeing nothing of this kind to be expected from Jesus, they could not believe him to be the Messiah.] **45 Think not that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuses you, even Moses, on whom you have**

set your hope. [Jesus here assumes that the Jews gave enough credence to his words to fear that he might hereafter appear as their accuser. But Jesus designs to appear rather as Advocate than as Prosecutor (*1Jn 2:1*). It was their fault that he was not their Advocate.] **46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47 But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe my words?** [In these verses Jesus explicitly endorses the Mosaic authorship and authenticity of the Pentateuch, and sets forth one purpose for which Moses wrote it. Jesus was the essential subject of the law and prophets (*Lk 24:27,44-46* [208] *Ro 16:25,26*). The emphasis is on "his writings" and "my words." They professed to reverence Moses and to receive his writings, while they openly despised Jesus and repudiated his words as fast as he spoke them. The phrase "wrote concerning me" is not to be restricted to *Dt 18:15-18*. Moses wrote symbolically of Jesus through his entire work. The Epistle to the Hebrews is a partial elaboration of the Christology of Moses. But there is doubtless a depth of meaning in the Pentateuch that has never yet been fully fathomed, for there is fullness in Scripture greatly exceeding the popular conception. Moreover, the Old and New Testaments are so linked together that to reject one is eventually to reject the other, or to read it with veiled eyes--*2Co 3:15*.]

Section 38

GRAINFIELD CRITICISM

(Traveling to Galilee, April, A.D. 28)

Mt 12:1-8; Mk 2:23-28; Lk 6:1-5

A. Disciples under Attack (Mt 12:1-2; Mk 2:23-24; Lk 6:1-2).

(b) 23 And (c) 1 Now it came to pass (a) 1 At that season (b) that he (a) Jesus went {(b) was going} on the {(c) a} (b) Sabbath day through the grainfields; (a) and his disciples were hungry and began (b) as they went, to pluck the ears. (a) and to eat, (c) and his disciples plucked the ears, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. [This lesson fits in chronological order with the last, if the Bethesda events took place at Passover. The paschal lamb was eaten on the fourteenth Nisan, or about the first of April, which is the beginning of the harvest season. Barley ripens in the Jordan valley about the first of April. Wheat ripens from one to three weeks later than barley. [209] If this Sabbath is the first after the Passover, it is probable that it was barley that the disciples ate. Barley bread was and is a common food, and it is common to chew the grains of both it and wheat.] **(c) 2 But {(b) 24 And} (c) certain of the Pharisees (a) when they saw it, said unto him, Behold, your disciples do what is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath. (b) why do they on the Sabbath day what is not lawful? (c) Why do you what it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?** [The Pharisees did not object to the act of taking the grain. Such plucking of the grain was allowed by the law (*Dt 23:25*) and is still practiced by hungry travelers in Palestine, which is, and has always been, an unfenced land, the roads, or rather narrow paths, of which lead through the grainfields, so that the grain is in easy reach of the passer-by. The Pharisees objected to the plucking of grain because they considered it a kind of reaping, and therefore *working* on the Sabbath day.]

B. Jesus Accuses Critics of Ignorance (Mt 12:3; Mk 2:25-26; Lk 6:3-4).

(a) 3 But {(b) 25 And} (c) Jesus answering them (a) said unto them, Have you not read {(b) Did you never read} (c) even this [There is a touch of irony here. The Pharisees prided themselves upon their knowledge of Scriptures, but they had not read (so as to understand them) even its most common incidents], **what David did, (b) when he had need, and was hungry, he, and they that were with him? 26 How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, (c) and took and ate the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat {(a) which it was not lawful for him to eat,} neither for them that were with him, but only {(c) except} for the priests alone?** [Jesus here refers to the incident recorded at *1Sa 21:1-6*. David went with his followers to the tabernacle at Nob near Jerusalem, and being hungry, asked bread of the priests. There was no bread at hand except the showbread. This bread was called showbread because it was "set out" or "exhibited" before Jehovah. It consisted of twelve loaves, which were baked upon the Sabbath, and were placed, hot, in two

rows upon the showbread table every Sabbath day. The twelve old loaves that were then removed were to be eaten by the priests and no one else (*Lv 24:5-9*). It was these twelve old loaves that were given to David (*1Sa 21:6*). Since the showbread was baked on the Sabbath, the law itself ordered work on that day.]

C. Jesus Accuses Critics of Inconsistency (Mt 12:5).

(a) 5 Or have you not read in the law, that on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple profane [that is, degrade and put to common use] **the Sabbath, and are guiltless?** [Having cited a passage from the prophets, Jesus now turns to the law--the final authority. He also turns from a parallel argument concerning sacred food to a direct argument concerning the sacred day. The Sabbath was the busiest day in the week for the priests. They baked and changed the showbread; they performed sabbatical sacrifices (*Nm 28:9*), and two lambs were killed on the Sabbath in addition to the daily [211] sacrifice. This involved the killing, skinning, and cleaning of the animals, and the building of the fire to consume the sacrifice. They also trimmed the gold lamps, burned incense, and performed various other duties. The profanation of the Sabbath, however, was not real, but merely apparent. Jesus cites this priestly work to prove that the Sabbath prohibition was not universal, and hence might not include what the disciples had done. The fourth commandment did not forbid work absolutely, but labor for worldly gain. Activity in the work of God was both allowed and commanded.]

D. Jesus Accuses Critics of Blindness (Mt 12:6).

(a) 6 But I say [asserting his own authority] **unto you, that one greater than the temple is here.** [The word "greater" is in the neuter gender, and the literal meaning is therefore "a greater thing than the temple." The contrast may be between the *service* of the temple and the service of Christ, or it may be a contrast between the divinity, sacredness, or divine atmosphere that hallowed the temple, and the divinity or Godhead of Christ. But, however we take it, the meaning is ultimately a contrast between Christ and the temple, similar to the contrast between himself and Solomon, etc. (*Mt 12:41,42*). It was a startling saying as it fell on Jewish ears, for to them the temple at Jerusalem was the place honored by the very Shekinah of the unseen God, and the only place of effective worship and atonement. If the temple service justified the priests in working upon the Sabbath day, much more did the service of Jesus, who was not only the God of the temple, but was himself the true temple, of which the other was merely the symbol, justify these disciples in doing what was not legally, but merely traditionally, unlawful.]

E. Jesus Accuses Critics of Heartlessness (Mt 12:7; Mk 2:27).

(a) 7 But if you had known what this means, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless. [This passage is quoted from *Ho 6:6*, and is reiterated at *Mt 9:13*. It is an assertion of the superiority of inward life over outward form, for the form is nothing if the heart is wrong. The saying is first suggested by David himself (*Ps 51:16,17*), [212] after which it is stated by Hosea and amplified by Paul (*1Co 13:3*). The quotation has a double reference both to David and the disciples as above indicated. Having given the incident in the life of David, Jesus passes on from it without comment, that he may lay down by another example the principle that justified it. This principle we have just treated, and we may state it thus: A higher law, where it conflicts with a lower one, suspends or limits the lower one at the point of conflict. Thus the higher laws of worship in the temple suspended the lower law of Sabbath observance, and thus also the higher law of mercy suspended the lower law as to the showbread when David took it and mercifully gave it to his hungry followers, and when God in mercy permitted this to be done. And thus, had they done what was otherwise unlawful, the disciples would have been justified in eating by the higher law of Christ's service. And thus also would Christ have been justified in permitting them to eat by the law of mercy, which was superior to what rendered the seventh day to God as a sacrifice.] **(b) 27 And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:**

F. Jesus Asserts Authority over the Sabbath (Mt 12:8; Mk 2:28; Lk 6:5).

(a) 8 For the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. (b) 28 so that the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath. [The expression "Son of man" is used eighty-eight times in the New Testament, and always means the Messiah, and not man generally. The Sabbath was made for man's convenience and blessing, and so Jesus, who was complete and perfect manhood, was Lord of it. But men who were incomplete and imperfect in their manhood, cannot trust their fallible judgment to tamper with it. Though the day was made for man, this fact would not entitle man to use it contrary to the laws under which it was granted. As Lord of the day Jesus had a right to interpret it and to apply it. In asserting his Lordship over it, Jesus takes the question outside the range of argument and brings it within the range of authority.] [213]

Section 39 SABBATH CONTROVERSY IN A SYNAGOGUE (Probably Galilee, May, A.D. 28) Mt 12:9-14; Mk 3:1-6; Lk 6:6-11

A. The Challenge (Mt 12:9-10; Mk 3:1-2; Lk 6:6-8).

(a) 9 And he departed from there. [The word here points to a journey as in *Mt 11:1* and *Mt 15:29*, which are the only places where Matthew uses this expression. It may indicate the return to Galilee from the Passover, since a cognate expression used by John expresses such a journey from Galilee to Judea. See *Jn 7:3*], **(c) 6 And it came to pass on another Sabbath** [another Sabbath than that on which the disciples plucked the grain--*Lk 6:1*], **that he entered (b) again (a) and went into their {(c) the} synagogue and taught** [The use of the pronoun "their" indicates that the synagogue in question was under the control of the same Pharisee who had caviled about plucking grain on the Sabbath (*Mt 12:2*). Where the synagogue was is not known. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*]: **(a) 10 and behold, (b) there was a man who had {(a) having} a {(b) his} hand withered. (c) and his right hand was withered.** [The hand had dried up from insufficient absorption of nutriment, until its power was gone.] **(b) 2 And they (c) the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, (b) whether he would heal him on the Sabbath day; (c) that they might find how to accuse him.** [They sought to accuse him before the local judges or officers of the synagogue; that is, before a body of which they themselves were members. Jesus gave them abundant opportunity for such accusation, for we have seven recorded [214] instances of cures on the Sabbath day; namely: *Mk 1:21,29 Jn 5:9 9:14 Lk 13:14 14:2*, and this case.] **(a) And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?** [They were afraid that Jesus might not notice the man, so they spoke about him. But, taught by their experience in the grainfield, they changed their bold assertion, "It is not lawful" (*Mt 12:2*), and approached the subject with a guarded question, hoping to get an answer that could be used as a ground for accusation.] **(c) 8 But he knew their thoughts** [omnisciently]; **and he said to {(b) said unto} the man that had his hand withered, (c) Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.** [Jesus thus placed the man openly before all the people, as though he stood on trial as to his right to be healed on the Sabbath day.]

B. Jesus' Response (Mt 12:11-13; Mk 3:3-5; Lk 6:9).

(a) 11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be of you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? 12 How much then is a man of more value than a sheep! [A man who had but one sheep would set a high value upon it. But the most valuable sheep is not to be weighed in the balance against a man. The fact that Jesus used this illustration shows clearly that such an action was allowed at that time, though the rabbins forbade it afterward.] **Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. (c) 9 And Jesus aid {(b) said} unto them, (c) I ask you, Is it lawful on the Sabbath (b) day to do good, or to do harm? to save life, or to kill? {(c) destroy it?}** [The rules of the Pharisees made the Sabbath question wholly a matter of doing or of not doing. But Jesus made it a question of doing good, and his question implies that a failure to do good, when one is able, is harmful and sinful. To refrain from healing in such an instance would have been to abstain from using a power given him for that very purpose.] **(b) But they held their peace.** [afraid to say that Jesus was wrong and stubbornly unwilling to admit that he was right.] **5 And**

when he had looked round about on them (c) all, (b) with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart [The anger of Jesus was not a spiteful, revengeful passion, but a just indignation (*Eph 4:26*). God may love the sinner, but he is angry at sin. Anger is not sin, but it is apt to run into it: hence it is a dangerous passion. Righteous anger rises from the love of God and man, but what rises from self-love is sinful], he said {(c) said} (a) 13 Then (c) unto him, (b) the man, Stretch forth your hand. (c) And he did so: (a) he stretched it forth; and it (b) his hand was restored. (a) whole, as the other. [As Jesus here healed without any word or action of healing, merely ordering the man to stretch forth his hand, the Pharisees could find no legal ground for accusation.]

C. Reaction of the Pharisees (Mk 3:6; Lk 6:11).

(c) 11 But they were filled with anger; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus. (b) 6 And the Pharisees went out, and immediately with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him. [Here the three Synoptists first tell of the counsel to put Jesus to death, and like John, they described the anger of the Jewish rulers as arising because of this Sabbath question. Their real motive was envious hatred, but their pretext was a zeal for the law. That it was not genuine zeal for the law is shown by the fact that they consulted with the Herodians or the adherents of Herod Antipas, as they also did afterwards (*Mt 22:16 Mk 12:13*). They needed the secular power of the Herodians to secure the death of Jesus. But the Herodians were no friends of the Jewish law; in fact, they were real perverters of that law that Jesus merely correctly interpreted. This party and its predecessors had [216] flatteringly tried to make a Messiah of Herod the Great, and had been friends of Rome and patrons of Gentile influence. They favored the erection of temples for idolatrous ends, and pagan theaters and games, and Gentile customs generally.]

Section 40 SEASIDE MIRACLES (Sea of Galilee, May A.D. 28) Mt 12:15-21; Mk 3:7-12

A. Popularity of Jesus (Mt 12:15-16; Mk 3:7-10).

(a) 15 And Jesus perceiving it withdrew (b) with his disciples (a) from thence: (b) to the sea [This was the first withdrawal of Jesus for the avowed purpose of self-preservation. After this we find Jesus constantly retiring to avoid the plots of his enemies. The Sea of Galilee, with its boats and its shores touching different jurisdictions, formed a convenient and fairly safe retreat]: (a) and many followed him; (b) and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him. [Idumaea was the land formerly inhabited by the Edomites. It is a Greek word from "Edom," which was another word for Esau (*Gn 25:30*), and means "red." This land was originally the narrow strip reaching from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea, being about one hundred miles long and fifteen or twenty broad. During the Babylonian captivity, however, the Edomites took possession of the southern portion of Judea. They were conquered by John Hyrcanus, one of the Hasmonean princes about 120 B.C., and were by him made subservient to the law and incorporated with the Jewish people. As before [217] noted (*Mt 2:1 Lk 1:5*), Herod the Great sprang from this people. Tyre and Sidon were Phoenician cities on the Mediterranean seacoast, westward from the Lake of Galilee. Also see on Mt 11:21.] 9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. 10 for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him. [Literally, they "fell upon him"; such was their eagerness to be healed by touching him. Compare *Lk 6:19*.] (a) and he healed them all, 16 and charged them that they should not make him known:

B. Prophetic Significance of Jesus' Ministry (Mt 12:17-21).

(a) 17 that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through Isaiah the prophet [Isa 42:1-4. Partly taken from the Septuagint and part an original translation], saying, 18 Behold, my servant whom I have chosen; My beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, And he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles. [The word translated "servant," means also "son," but it is rightly translated "servant" here, for the Father uses another word when he would designate Jesus as specifically his Son (*Mt 3:17 17:5*). Jesus was a servant in form (*Php 2:7*), and in obedience (*Heb 10:9*). The word "judgment," as used in the Old Testament, from which it is here translated, means "rule," "doctrine," "truth." It is usually here understood as meaning that Jesus would reveal the gospel or the full truth of the new dispensation to the Gentiles.] **19 He shall not strive, nor cry aloud; Neither shall anyone hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, Till he send forth judgment unto victory.** [These two verses find their fulfillment in the events of this paragraph. Jesus did not strive or quarrel with the Pharisees, but having victoriously put them to silence, he meekly and quietly withdrew from their presence, and the healing of the multitudes that followed him as aptly fulfilled the prediction about the reed and the flax, for these two words, symbolic of weakness (*Isa 36:6*) and patience-trying annoyance (*Pr 10:26*), fitly represented the sick and lame and blind--sinners who, by affliction, had been made contrite and poor in spirit, remorseful and repentant, and who were brought to Jesus to be healed. If the hollow cylinder of the reed is bruised, its strength is gone, and it is no longer able to stand erect. Flax was then used where we now use cotton, as wicking for lamps. Imperfection in the fiber of it would cause it to smoke. A violent [218] man, irritated by the fumes of the smoking wick, would put it out, and cast it from him. But the Lord's servant would patiently fan it to flames. The statement that he would not break these bruised reeds, or quench this smoking flax, was an emphatic declaration, by contrast, that he would heal their bruises and fan their dying energies and resolutions into a flame, until he sent forth judgment unto victory; that is, until the gospel--the authoritative announcement of the divine purpose or will--shall be sent forth and advanced to its final triumph. Christ shall show patient mercy and forbearance until the gospel shall practically exclude the need of it, by triumphing over Jewish opposition and Gentile impiety so as to bring about universal righteousness.] **21 And in his name shall the Gentiles hope.** [This verse sets forth the breadth of Christ's conquest over all nations. It reaches beyond our times into a future that is yet to be. But it was partially fulfilled by the presence of Idumeans and citizens of Tyre and Sidon in the multitudes that Jesus healed--unless we say that only Jews from these quarters are meant, which is not likely.]

C. Unwelcome Proclamation by Demons (Mk 3:11-12).

(b) 11 And unclean spirits, whenever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, You are the Son of God. 12 And he charged them much that they should not make him known. [Because this was not the right time, nor were they the right witnesses to make him known.] [219]

Section 41 SELECTION OF THE TWELVE (Near Capernaum May A.D. 28) Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:12-16

A. Process (Mk 3:13-15; Lk 6:12-13).

(c) 12 And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain (b) 13 And he went up into the mountain, (c) to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God. [It was a momentous occasion. He was about to choose those to whom he was to entrust the planting, organizing, and training of that church that was to be the purchase of his own blood. Jesus used such important crises, not as occasions for anxiety and worry, but as fitting times to seek and obtain the Father's grace and blessing.] **(c) 13 And when it was day, he called his disciples: (b) and called unto him he had chosen; and they went unto him. (c) and he chose from them twelve** [We can not think that the number twelve was adopted carelessly. It unquestionably

had reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, over whom the apostles were to be tribal judges or viceroys (*Lk 22:30*), and we find the tribes and apostles associated together in the structure of the New Jerusalem (*Re 21:12-14*). Moreover, Paul seems to regard the twelve as ministers to the twelve tribes, or to the circumcision, rather than as ministers to the Gentiles or the world in general (*Ga 2:7-9*). See also *Jas 1:1 1Pe 1:1*. The tribal reference was doubtless preserved to indicate that the church would be God's new Israel], **(b) 14 And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out demons: (c) whom also he named apostles** [The word "apostle" means "one sent." Its meaning was kindred to the word "ambassador" [220] (*2Co 5:20*), the messenger whom a king sent to foreign powers, and also to our modern word "missionary," which also means "one sent." Christ himself was an apostle (*Heb 3:1*), and so sent them (*Jn 20:21*). The apostles were to be with Jesus, that they might be taught by his words, and that they might become teachers of that word and witnesses as to the life and actions of Jesus. A necessary condition, therefore, to their apostleship was this seeing of Jesus and the consequent ability to testify as to his actions, especially as to his resurrection (*Ac 1:8,21 1Co 9:1 Ac 22:14,15*). They could therefore have no successors. All the apostles were from Galilee except Judas Iscariot]:

B. First Quartet (Mt 10:2; Mk 16-18a; Lk 6:14a).

(a) 2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these [Mark and Luke give the names of the apostles at the time when they were chosen, but Matthew gives them at the time when they were sent out]: **The first, Simon, who is called Peter, (c) whom he also named {(b) surnamed} Peter** [For the surnaming of Simon, see *Jn 1:41,42*. Peter, by reason of his early prominence, is named first in the four lists. His natural gifts gave him a personal but not an ecclesiastical pre-eminence over his fellows. As a reward for his being first to confess Christ, he was honored by being permitted to first use the keys of the kingdom of heaven; that is, to preach the first gospel sermon both to the Jews and Gentiles. But after these two sermons the right of preaching to the Jews and Gentiles became common to all alike. That Peter had supremacy or authority over his brethren is nowhere stated by Christ, or claimed by Peter, or owned by the rest of the twelve. On [221] the contrary, the statement of Jesus places the apostles upon a level (*Mt 23:8-11*). See also *Mt 18:18 19:27,28 20:25-27 Jn 20:21 Ac 1:8*. And Peter himself claims no more than an equal position with other officers in the church (*1Pe 5:1,4*), and the apostles in the subsequent history of the church acted with perfect independence.]; **(a) and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; {(b) the brother of James;} and them he surnamed Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder** [Why James and John were called sons of thunder is not stated, but it was probably because of their stormy and destructive temper (*Lk 9:51-56 Mk 9:38*). The vigor of the two brothers is apparent, for it marked James as a fit object for Herod's spleen (*Ac 12:2*), and it sustained John to extreme old age, for [223] he died at Ephesus at a ripe old age. No change is noted in the nature of James during the brief time that he survived his Lord. But the gracious and loving character of the aged John showed the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. But even to the last this son of thunder muttered in portentous strains against Diotrefes (*3Jo 1:9,10*), and his denunciations of sins and sinners is very forceful, including such epithets as "liar," "antichrist," "deceiver," "children of the devil" (*1Jo 1:6 2:4,22 3:15 2Jo 1:3-11*). It is also worthy of note that except in this verse in Mark, which applies the name "Son of thunder" to John, neither the word "thunder," nor any of its derivatives is found anywhere in the New Testament except in the writings of John, by whom it and its derivatives are used eleven times.]

C. Second Quartet (Mt 10:3a; Mk 3:18a; Lk 6:14b-15a).

(a) 3 Philip, and Bartholomew [as noted at *Jn 1:45*, Bartholomew is usually identified with the man whom John calls Nathanael.]; **Thomas, and Matthew the publican** [Thomas is also called Didymus, the first being the Aramaic and the second the Greek word for "twin" (*Jn 11:16 20:24 21:2*). Matthew calls himself "the publican" (*Mt 10:3*). None of the others apply that term of reproach to him. Matthew doubtless assumes it in remembrance of the riches of Christ's grace toward loving him while he was yet a sinner. Exposing the sin of his own past life, he is silent as to the past lives of the others, not even noting that the first four were humble "fishermen."]

D. Third Quartet (Mt 10:3b-4; Mk 3:18b-19; Lk 6:15b-16).

James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; {(c) Judas the son of James,} [Matthew's father was also named Alphaeus, but it was another Alphaeus. This was a very common name. The apostle James [224] was also called James the Less (*Mk 15:40*); probably because he was younger than the son of Zebedee. He must not be confounded with James the Lord's brother. [225] We do not know the James who was the father of Judas, and of Judas himself we know very little. He seems to have been known at first by his name Thaddaeus, possibly to distinguish him from Iscariot, but later (for Luke and John wrote later than Matthew and Mark) by the name Judas--*Jn 14:22 Lk 6:16.*] **(a) 4 Simon the Cananaean, (c) who was called the Zealot** ["Cananaean" means the same as "zealot." It comes from the Hebrew word *kana*, which means "zealous." The Zealots were zealous for the Jewish law, and citing Phinehas (*Nm 25:7,8*) and Elijah (*1Ki 18:40*) as their examples, they took justice in their own hands and punished offenders much after the manner lynchers. Whatever they were at first, it is certain that their later course was marked by frightful excesses, and they are charged with having been the human instrument that brought about the destruction of Jerusalem. See Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 4.3.9, 5.1-4, 6.3; 7.8.1. Simon is the least known of all the apostles, being nowhere individually mentioned outside the lists], **(a) and Judas Iscariot, (c) who became a traitor; (a) who also betrayed him.** [Judas is named last in all the three lists (*Mt 10:4 Mk 3:19 Lk 6:16*), and the same note of infamy attaches to him in each case. As he was treasurer of the apostolic group, he was probably chosen for office because of his executive ability. He was called Iscariot from his native city Kerioth, which pertained to Judah--*Jos 15:25.*]

Section 42

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

(Hillside near Capernaum, June A.D. 28)

Mt 5:1-7:29; Lk 6:17-49

(c) 17 and he came down with them [the twelve apostles whom he had just chosen], **and stood on a level place** [The "level place" was a plateau on the side of the mountain, and not the plain at its base. The sermon is an announcement of certain distinctive features of the kingdom of heaven, which was said to be at hand.], **and a great multitude of his disciples, and a great number of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; 18 and they that were troubled with unclean spirits were** [227] **healed. 19 And all the multitude sought to touch him; for power came forth from him, and healed them** all. [By comparing this with the foregoing section, we shall find that Mark had described this same crowd (*Mk 3:10*); the only difference between him and Luke being that he tells about it the day before Jesus chose the twelve apostles, while Luke describes its presence on the day after the event. Thus one substantiates the other.] **(a) 1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain: and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him** [In sitting he followed the custom of Jewish teachers. The instruction of Jesus was at no time embellished with oratorical action. He relied upon the truth contained in his words, not upon the manner in which he uttered it.]; **(c) 20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples** [Luke notes the eloquent look of Jesus here and elsewhere (*Lk 22:61*). While spoken to all, the sermon was addressed to the disciples, revealing to them the nature of the kingdom, and contrasting with it: 1. Popular expectation; 2. The Mosaic system; 3. Pharisaic hypocrisy], **(a) 2 and he opened his mouth, and taught them, (c) and said, {(a) saying,}** [Jesus spoke with the full-toned voice of power--with open mouth.]

Discourse # 4
Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5-7

A. Promises to Messiah's Subjects (Mt 5:3-12; Lk 6:20-26).

(a) 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [The sayings in this subdivision are called beatitudes from the word *beati* (meaning "blessed"), with which they begin in the Vulgate, or Latin Bible. According to Matthew, these beatitudes are nine in number and seven in character, for the last two, which concern persecution, do not relate to traits of character, but to certain external circumstances that lead to blessings. Luke gives us [228] beatitudes not recorded in Matthew. Most of the beatitudes are paradoxical, being the very reverse of the world's view, but Christians who have put them to the test have learned to realize their unquestionable truth. The poor in spirit are those who feel a deep sense of spiritual destitution and comprehend their nothingness before God. The kingdom of heaven is theirs, because they seek it, and therefore find and abide in it. To this virtue is opposed the pride of the Pharisee, which caused him to thank God that he was not as other men, and to despise and reject the kingdom of heaven. There must be emptiness before there can be fullness, and so poverty of spirit precedes riches and grace in the kingdom of God.] **4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.** [*Isa 42:2,3 Lk 2:25 Ro 8:18 Jn 16:20,21.* The blessing is not upon all that mourn (*2Co 7:10*); but upon those who mourn in reference to sin. They shall be comforted by the discovery and appropriation of God's pardon. But all mourning is traced directly or indirectly to sin. We may take it, therefore, that in its widest sense the beatitude covers all those who are led by mourning to a discerning of sin, and who so deplore its effects and consequences in the world as to yearn for and seek the deliverance that is in Christ. Those to whom Christ spoke the beatitude bore a double sorrow. Not only did their own sins afflict their consciences, but the hatred and opposition of other sinners added many additional sighs and tears. Joy springs from such sorrow so naturally that it is likened to harvest gathered from the seed (*Ps 126:6*). But sorrows, even apart from a sense of sin, often prove blessings to us by drawing us near unto God.] **5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.** [His hearers were full of hopes that, as Messiah, he would glut their martial spirit, and lead them to world-wide conquest. But the earth was not to be subjugated to him by force. Those who were meek and forbearing should receive what the arrogant and selfish grasp after and cannot get. [229] The meek shall inherit it in two ways: 1. They shall enjoy it more fully while in it. 2. They shall finally, as part of the triumphant church, possess and enjoy it. Doubtless there is also here a reference to complete possession to be fulfilled in the new earth--*Dan 7:27 Re 3:21 5:10.*] **6 Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.** [Those who feel a most intense desire for righteousness shall obtain it. Under no other religion had such a promise ever been given. Under Christianity the promise is clear and definite. Compare *Ro 8:3,4 Heb 7:11,19,25.* This promise is realized in part by the attainment of a higher degree of righteous living, and in part by the perfect forgiveness of our sins. But the joy of this individual righteousness, blessed as it is, shall be surpassed by that of the universal righteousness of the new creation--*2Pe 3:13.*] **7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.** [As meekness is rather a passive virtue, so mercy is an active one. The meek bear, and the merciful forbear, and for so doing they shall obtain mercy both from God and man. This beatitude, like the rest, has a subordinate, temporal application; for God rules the world in spite of its sin. This beatitude has primary reference to the forgiveness of offenses. The forgiving are forgiven--*Mt 6:14,15.*] **8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.** [The pure in heart are those who are free from evil desires and purposes. They have that similarity of life to the divine life that excludes all uncleanness, and that enables them to comprehend, after a sympathetic fashion, the motives and actions of God. Such see God by faith now, that is, by the spiritual vision of a regenerate heart (*Eph 1:17,18*), and shall see him face to face hereafter (*1Co 13:12 1Jo 3:2,3*). The Jews to whom Christ spoke, having their hearts defiled with carnal hopes and self-righteous pride, failed to see God, [230] as he was then revealing himself in the person of his Son, thus forming a sad contrast to the gracious promise of the beatitude.] **9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.** [The term includes all who make peace between men, whether as individuals or as communities. It includes even those who worthily endeavor to make peace, though they fail of success. They shall be called God's children, because he is the God of peace (*Ro 15:33 16:20 2Co 13:11*); whose supreme purpose is to secure peace (*Lk 2:14*); and who gave his Son to be born into this world as the Prince of Peace (*Isa 9:6*). Here again Jesus varies from human ideas. In worldly kingdoms the makers of war stand highest, but in his kingdom peacemakers outrank them, for the King himself is a great Peacemaker--*Col 1:20 Eph 2:14.*] **10 Blessed are they that have been**

persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [Those who suffer because of their loyalty to the kingdom of heaven are blessed by being bound more closely to that kingdom for which they suffer.] **(c) Blessed are you poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are you that hunger now: for you shall be filled. Blessed are you that weep now: for you shall laugh.** [These three beatitudes given by Luke (*Lk 6:20,21*), like the two closing beatitudes of Matthew (*Mt 5:9-11*) are pronounced not upon character, but upon those in certain trying conditions. They are addressed to the disciples (*Lk 6:17*), and are meant to strengthen and encourage them to continue in the life of sacrifice when discipleship demanded. For light upon the meaning of these beatitudes, see such passages as these: *Mt 10:37-39 16:24-26 Mk 10:28-30 Mt 10:22-25*. The service to which Jesus called meant poverty, hunger, and tears, but it led to rich reward--*1Co 11:23-33 1Co 12:1-5*.] **22 Blessed are you, when men shall hate you, and when [231] they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, (a) and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my (c) the Son of man's sake.** [The Master here presents the various forms of suffering that would come upon the disciples by reason of their loyalty to him. We shall find several like statements as we proceed with the gospel story. They would first be conscious of the coldness of their brethren before the secret hate became outspoken and active. Later they should find themselves excommunicated from the synagogue (*Jn 16:2*). This act in turn would be followed by bitter reproaches and blasphemy of the sacred name by which they were called--the name Christian (*Jas 2:7 1Pe 4:4*). "'Malefic' or 'execrable superstition' was the favorite description of Christianity among Pagans (Tacitus, *Annals*, 15. 44; Suetonius, *Lives of the Cæsars*, "Nero," 16), and Christians were charged with incendiarism, cannibalism and every infamy" (*Farrar*). All this would finally culminate in bloody-handed persecution, and procure the death of Christ's followers by forms of law; all manner of false and evil accusations would be brought against them.] **23 Rejoice in that day, (b) and be exceeding glad: (c) and leap for joy: for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets. (a) for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.** [In commanding rejoicing under such circumstances Jesus seemed to make a heavy demand upon his disciples, but it is a demand that very many have responded to *Ac 5:41 16:25*. For instances of persecution of the prophets, see *1Ki 19:10 2Ch 16:10 1Ki 22:27 2Ch 24:20,21 Jer 26:23 32:2 37:15 38:4-6,28 Heb 11:36-38*.] **(c) 24 But woe unto you that are rich! for you have received your consolation. [Lk 16:25.] 25 Woe unto you that are full now! for you shall hunger. Woe unto you, you that laugh now! for you shall mourn and weep.** [These three woes are respectively the converse of the three beatitudes recorded by [232] Luke (*Lk 6:20,21*). This converse is to be expected, for as long as sin lasts woes stand over against beatitudes as Ebal against Gerizim (see *Dt 11:29 Jos 8:33*). But the woe here expressed by the Savior is more of a cry of compassion than a denunciation, and may be translated, "Alas for you!" The first woe applies to those who love and trust in riches (*Mk 10:24*). Jesus does not clearly define the line beyond which the possession of riches becomes a danger, lest any, fancying himself to be on the safe side of the line, should lull himself to repose and be taken off his guard. Riches are *always* dangerous, and we must be ever watchful against their seduction. The second woe is kindred to the first. Righteousness is the soul's true food. Those who feast upon it shall be satisfied, but those who satiate themselves with this world shall waken some day to a sense of emptiness, since they have filled themselves with vanity (*Ec 2:1-11 Jas 5:1-6*). The third woe is not pronounced upon those who make merriment an occasional relief (*Pr 17:22 15:13,15*); but upon those who, through lack of earnestness, make it a constant aim. Half the world has no higher object in life than to be amused (*Pr 13:14 Ec 7:6*). Those who sow folly shall reap a harvest of tears. The truth of this saying was abundantly fulfilled in the Jewish wars, which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem about forty years later.] **26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.** [This is the converse to the beatitudes pronounced upon those who are reviled, etc. (*Mt 5:11*). A righteous life rebukes an evil one, and the general tendency of evil is to deride what rebukes it. This tendency caused the wicked of Christ's times to say that he had a demon (*Mt 11:18, Lk 7:33 Jn 10:20*), and that he cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub (*Mt 12:24 Mk 3:22 Lk 11:15*). A good name is more to be desired than great riches; but we must not sacrifice our fidelity to Christ in order to attain it. If we adhere strictly to the virtues that Christ enjoined, we shall find that the world has an evil name for every one of them.

Earnest contention for his [233] truth is called bigotry; loyalty to his ordinances is dubbed narrowness; strict conformity to the laws of purity is named puritanism; liberality is looked upon as an effort to court praise; piety is scorned as hypocrisy, and faith is regarded as fanaticism.]

B. Influence and Duties of Messiah's Subjects (Mt 5:13-16).

(a) 13 You are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and be trodden under foot of men. [Salt has been used from time immemorial as an agent in the preservation of meats. The multitudes that heard Jesus were familiar with its use in curing fish. The pickled fish of Galilee were known throughout the Roman world. It is worthy of note that the salt of Palestine gathered from the marshes is not pure. Because of the foreign substances in it, it loses its savor and becomes insipid and useless, when exposed to the sun and air, or when permitted for any considerable time to come in contact with the ground; but pure salt does not lose its savor. The verse teaches that God's people keep the world from putrefaction and corruption. There was not salt enough in the antediluvian world to save it from the flood, in Sodom to save it from fire, nor in Canaan to preserve its people from destruction. It also teaches--as does experience--that a disciple may lose those qualities that make him salt. See notes on Mk 9:50 and on Lk 14:34.] **14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.** [As light dispels darkness and enables a man to see his way, so the Christian, by his teaching and example, removes ignorance and prejudice, and discloses the way of life. The church, reflecting the light of Christ, is of necessity a conspicuous body, so that neither its blemishes nor its beauty can be concealed. For air and for [234] protection cities were frequently built upon hills. Jerusalem and Samaria were both hill cities.] **15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel [a common measure, found in every Jewish house, and containing about a peck], but on the stand; and it shines unto all that are in the house.** [Lamps were then crude affairs without chimneys, in which, for the most part, olive oil was burned. Candles were not then known. The word "candle," where used in the King James Version, is a mistranslation.] **16 Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.** [The light of the Christian is to shine not ostentatiously, but naturally and unavoidably. It is to shine not only in his teaching or profession, but in such works and actions as unprejudiced men must acknowledge to be real excellencies. Moreover, it must so shine that it shall not win praise for itself, but for him who kindled it. Men do not praise the street lamps that protect them from robbery and assault, but they praise the municipal administration that furnishes the lamps.]

C. Superiority of Messiah's Teaching (Mt 5:17-48; Lk 6:27-30,32-36).

(a) 17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. [This verse constitutes a preface to the section of the sermon that follows it. It is intended to prevent a misconstruction of what he was about to say. "Destroy" is here used in antithesis, not with "perpetuate," but with "fulfill." To destroy the law would be more than to abrogate it, for it was both a system of statutes designed for the ends of government, and a system of types foreshadowing the kingdom of Christ. To destroy it, therefore, would be both to abrogate its statutes [235] and prevent the fulfillment of its types. The former, Jesus eventually did; the latter, he did not. As regards the prophets, the only way to destroy them would be to prevent the fulfillment of the predictions contained in them. Instead of coming to destroy either the law or the prophets, Jesus came to fulfill all the types of the former, and (eventually) all the unfulfilled predictions of the latter. He fulfills them partly in his own person, and partly by his administration of the affairs of his kingdom. The latter part of the process is still going on, and will be until the end of the world.] **18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all things be accomplished.** [The jot or *yod* answering to our letter *i* was the smallest of the Hebrew letters. The tittle was a little stroke of the pen, by which alone some of the Hebrew letters were distinguished from others like them. To put it in English, we distinguish the letter *c* from the letter *e* by the tittle inside of the latter. This passage not only teaches that the law was to remain in full force until fulfilled, but it shows the precise accuracy with which the law was given by God.] **19 Whoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in**

the kingdom of heaven: but whoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. [Disobedience is a habit, and it is not easily laid aside. Hence he that is unfaithful in what is little will also be unfaithful in what is great. So also those who were disobedient and reckless under the Jewish dispensation would be inclined to act in like manner in the new, or Christian, dispensation: hence the warning. Not only shall God call such least, but men also shall eventually do likewise. Those who by a false system of interpretation, or an undue regard for the traditions of men, enervate or annul the obligations of Christ's laws or ordinances, and teach others to do the same, shall be held in low esteem or contempt by the church or kingdom of God as fast as it comes to a knowledge [236] of the truth. Greatness in the kingdom of heaven is measured by conscientiousness in reference to its least commandments. Small Christians obey the great commandments, but only the large are careful about the least.] **20 For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.** [Since the scribes and Pharisees were models of righteousness in their own sight and in that of the people, Jesus here laid down a very high ideal. Though one may now enter the kingdom of heaven having of himself far less righteousness than that of the Pharisees, yet he must attain righteousness superior to theirs, or he cannot abide in the kingdom. A large portion of the sermon from this point on is a development of the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven in contrast with old dispensation righteousness and Pharisaic interpretation of it. The laws of Moses regulated civil conduct, and being state laws, they could only have regard to overt acts. But the laws of the kingdom of Christ are given to the individual, and regulate his inner spiritual condition, and the very initial motives of conduct; in it the spirit-feelings are all acts--*1Jo 3:15.*] **21 You have heard** [*Ex 20:13 Dt 5:17.* The common people, for the most part, knew the law only by its public reading, and hence the exposition of the scribes that accompanied the readings shared in their estimation the very authority of Scripture itself.] **that it was said to them of old time, Do not kill; and whoever shall kill shall be in danger [shall be liable to] of the judgment; 22 but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whoever shall say to his brother, Raca [an expression of contempt frequently used in rabbinical writings, but of uncertain derivation, so that it may mean "empty head" or "spit out"; that is, heretic], shall be in danger of the council: and whoever shall say, You fool [Folly and impiety were equivalent with the Hebrews.], shall be in [237] danger of hell fire.** [We have here three degrees of criminality or offense as to the sin of anger: 1. Silent rage; 2. Railing speech; 3. Bitter reproach (*Ps 14:1*). With these are associated respectively three different degrees of punishment. The law of Moses provided for the appointment of judges (*Dt 16:18*), and Josephus informs us that in each city there were seven judges appointed (*Antiquities*, 4.8,14). This tribunal was known as the judgment, and by it the case of the manslayer was determined. Compare *Nm 35:15,24,25* with *Jos 20:4*. And in determining his case this court might certify it for decision to the Sanhedrin, or they might themselves confine the man in one of the cities of refuge, or order him to be stoned to death. The second punishment would be the result of a trial before the Sanhedrin or council. This chief court of the Jews sat at Jerusalem (*Dt 17:8-13*), and common men stood in great awe of it. The third punishment passes beyond the pale of human jurisdiction. It is the final punishment--being cast into hell. The Scripture word for "hell" is derived from the name of a place in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, called the valley of Hinnom. It was a deep, narrow valley, lying southeast of Jerusalem. The Greek word *Gehenna* (which we translate "hell") is first found applied to it in the Septuagint translation of *Jos 18:16*. (For the history of the valley, see the following passages of Scripture: *Jos 15:8 2Ch 28:3 33:6 Jer 7:31 19:1-5 2Ki 23:1-14 2Ch 34:4,5.*) The only fire certainly known to have been kindled there was the fire in which children were sacrificed to the god Moloch. This worship was entirely destroyed by King Josiah, who polluted the entire valley so as to make it an unfit place even for heathen worship. Some commentators endeavor to make this third punishment a temporal one, and assert that fires were kept burning in the valley of Hinnom, and that as an extreme punishment the bodies of criminals were cast into those fires. But there is not the slightest authentic evidence that any fire was kept burning there; nor is there any evidence at all that casting a criminal into the [238] fire was ever employed by the Jews as a punishment. It was the fire of idolatrous worship in the offering of human sacrifice that had given the valley its bad name. This caused it to be associated in the mind of the Jews with sin and suffering, and led to the application of its name, in the Greek form of it, to the place of

final and eternal punishment. When the conception of such a place as hell was formed, it was necessary to give it a name, and there was no word in the Jewish language more appropriate for the purpose than the name of this hideous valley. It is often used in the New Testament, and always denotes the place of final punishment (*Mt 10:28 18:9 23:33 Mk 9:43*). We should note that while sin has stages, God takes note of it from its very first germination in the heart, and that a man's soul is imperiled long before his feelings bear their fruitage of violence and murder.] **23 If therefore** [having forbidden anger, Jesus now proceeds to lay down the course for reconciliation] **you are offering your gift at the altar** [what was popularly esteemed the very highest act of worship], **and there you remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.** [Reconciliation takes precedence of all other duties, even of offerings made to God. God hears and heeds the voice of the unreconciled brethren, and the gift is bestowed upon the altar in vain. The offering of unclean hands is an abomination. The lesson teaches us to be reconciled with all who bear grudges against us, and says nothing as to whether their reasons are sufficient or insufficient, just or unjust.] **25 Agree with your adversary** [opponent in a lawsuit] [239] **quickly, while you are with him in the way** [on the road to the judge]; **lest perhaps your adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer** [one answering somewhat to our sheriff], **and you be cast into prison.** [In this brief allegory one is supposed to have an adversary at law who has just cause against him, and who will certainly gain a verdict when the case comes into court. The plaintiff himself used to apprehend the defendant. The defendant is, therefore, advised to agree with this adversary while the two are alone on the way to the judge, and thus prevent a trial. Jesus still has in mind the preceding case of one who has given offense to his brother. Every such one is going to the final judgment, and will there be condemned unless he now becomes reconciled to his brother.] **26 Verily I say unto you, You shall by no means come out of prison, until you have paid the last farthing.** [This is the text on which the Roman Catholic Church has built its doctrine of purgatory, and one of those on which the Universalists build theirs of final restoration. But neither "prison" nor "until" necessarily point to ultimate deliverance. Compare *2Pe 2:4* and *Jude 1:6*. The allusion here is of course to imprisonment for debt. In such a case the debtor was held until the debt was paid, either by himself or some friend. If it were not paid at all, he remained in prison until he died. In the case that this is made to represent, the offender would have let pass all opportunity to make reparation and no friend can make it for him; therefore, the last farthing will never be paid, and he must remain a prisoner forever. So far, therefore, from being a picture of hope, it is one that sets forth the inexorable rigor of divine justice against the hardened and impenitent sinner. It is intended to teach that men cannot pay their debts to God, and therefore they had better obtain his forgiveness through faith during these days of grace. It exposes the vain hope of those who think that God will only lightly exact his debts. God knows only complete forgiveness or complete exaction. This is an action founded upon the perfection of his nature. The Greek word [240] translated "farthing," is derived from the Latin *quadrans*, which equals the fourth part of a Roman *As*, a small copper or bronze coin that had become common in Palestine. The farthing was worth about one-fifth part of a cent.] **27 You have heard that it was said** [*Ex 20:14 Dt 5:18*], **You shall not commit adultery: 28 but I say unto you, that every one that looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.** [Here, as in reference to murder (*Mt 5:21,22*), Jesus legislates against the thought that lies back of the act. He cuts off sin at its lowest root. The essence of all vice is intention. Those who indulge in unchaste imaginations, desires and intentions are guilty before God--*2Pe 2:14*.] **29 And if your right eye** [the organ of reception] **causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from you** [these words indicate decision and determination, and suggest the conduct of a surgeon, who, to protect the rest of the body, unflinchingly severs the gangrened members]: **for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not your whole body be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand** [the instrument of outward action] **causes you to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from you: for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not your whole body go into hell.** [Jesus here emphasizes the earnestness with which men should seek a sinless life. To this the whole Scripture constrains us by the terrors of hell, and encourages us by the joys of heaven. The right eye and hand and foot were regarded as the most precious (*Zec 11:17 Ex 29:20*), but it is better to lose the dearest thing in life than to lose one's

self. To be deprived of all earthly advantage than to be cast into hell. Of course the Savior does not mean that we should apply this precept literally, since bodily mutilation will not cure sin that resides in the will and not in the organ of sense or action. A literal exaction of the demands of this precept would turn the church into a hospital. We should blind ourselves by taking care not to look with evil eyes; we should [241] maim ourselves by absolutely refusing to go to forbidden resorts, etc.] **31 It is said also [Dt 24:1,3], Whoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 but I say unto you, that every one that puts away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, makes her an adulteress** [the mere fact of divorce did not make her an adulteress, but it brought her into a state of disgrace from which she invariably sought to free herself by contracting another marriage, and this other marriage to which her humiliating situation drove her made her an adulteress]: **and whoever shall marry her when she is put away commits adultery.** [The law of divorce will be found at *Dt 24:1-4*. Jesus explains that this law was given by Moses on account of the hardness of the people's heart; that is, to prevent greater evils (*Mt 19:8*). The law permitted the husband to put away the wife when he found "some unseemly thing in her" (*Dt 24:1*). But Jesus here limits the right of divorce to cases of unchastity, and if there be a divorce on any other ground, neither the man nor the woman can marry again without committing adultery (*Mt 19:9*). Such is Jesus' modification of the Old Testament law, and in no part of the New Testament is there any relaxation as to the law here set forth. It is implied that divorce for unchastity breaks the marriage bond, and it is therefore held almost universally, both by commentators and moralists, that the innocent party to such a divorce can marry again. Of course the guilty part could not, for no one is allowed by law to reap the benefits of his own wrong. For further light on the subject, see *Ro 7:1-3 1Co 7:10-16,39*.] **33 Again, you have heard that it has been said to them of old time, You shall not break you oath, but shall perform [242] unto the Lord your oaths [Lv 19:12 Nm 30:2 Dt 23:21]: 34 but I say unto you, Do not swear at all; neither by heaven; for it is the throne of God; 35 nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. [Ps 48:2.] 36 Neither shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 But let your speech be, Yes, yes; No, no: and whatever is more than these is of the evil one.** [It will be seen from the quotation given by Jesus that the law permitted oaths made unto the Lord. It was not the intention of Jesus to repeal this law. But the Jews, looking upon this law, construed it as giving them exemption from the binding effect of all other oaths. According to their construction no oath was binding in which the sacred name of God did not directly occur. They therefore coined many other oaths to suit their purposes, which would add weight to their statements or promises, which, however, would not leave them guilty of being forsworn if they spoke untruthfully. But Jesus showed that all oaths were ultimately referable to God, and that those who made them would be forsworn if they did not keep them. To prevent this evil practice of loose swearing Jesus lays down the prohibition, "Swear not at all"; but the universality of this prohibition is distributed by the specifications of these four forms of oaths, and is, therefore, most strictly interpreted as including only such oaths. Jesus surely did not intend to abolish now, in advance of the general abrogation of the law, those statutes of Moses that allowed, and in some instances required, the administration of an oath. See *Ex 22:11 Nm 5:19*. What we style the judicial oaths of the law of Moses then were not included in the prohibition. This conclusion is also reached when we interpret the prohibition in the light of authoritative examples; for we find that God swore by himself (*Gn 22:16,17 Heb 6:13 7:21*). Jesus answered under oath before the Sanhedrin (*Mt 26:63*), and Paul also made oath to the Corinthian church (*2Co 1:23*). See also *Ro 1:9 Ga 1:20 Php 1:8 [243] 1Co 15:31 Re 10:5,6*. We conclude, then, that judicial oaths, and oaths taken in the name of God on occasions of solemn religious importance, are not included in the prohibition. But as these are the only exceptions found in Scriptures, we conclude that all other oaths are forbidden. Looking at the details of the paragraph, we find that oaths by heaven and by the earth, by Jerusalem and by the head, are utterly meaningless except as they have reference to God.] **38 You have heard that it was said [Ex 21:24 Lv 24:20 Dt 19:21], An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 but I say unto you, Do not resist him that is evil** [The *lex talionis*, or law of like for like, was the best possible rule in a rude state of society, its object being not to sacrifice the second eye, but to save both, by causing a man when in a passion to realize that every injury that he inflicted upon his adversary he would in the end inflict upon himself. From this rule the scribes drew the false inference that revenge was proper,

and that a man was entitled to exercise it. Thus a law intended to prevent revenge was so perverted that it was used as a warrant for it. This command that enjoins non-resistance, like most of the other precepts of this sermon, does not demand of us absolute, unqualified pacity at all times and under all circumstances. In fact, we may say generally of the whole sermon on the mount that it is not a code for slaves, but an assertion of principles that are to be interpreted and applied by the children of freedom. We are to submit to evil for principle's sake and to accomplish spiritual victories, and not in an abject, servile spirit as blind followers of a harsh and exacting law. On the contrary, taking the principle, we judge when and how to apply it as best we can. Absolute non-resistance may so far encourage crime as to become a sin. As in the case of the precept about swearing just above, Jesus distributes the universal prohibition by the specification of certain examples, which in this case are three in number]: **but [244] whoever smites you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.** [This first example is taken from the realm of physical violence. The example given, a slap in the face, has been regarded as a gross insult in all ages, but it is not an assault that imperils life. We find this precept illustrated by the conduct of the Master himself. He did not literally turn the other cheek to be smitten, but he breathed forth a mild and gentle reproof where he might have avenged himself by the sudden death of his adversary (*Jn 18:22,23*). The example of Paul also is given, but it is not so perfect as that of the Master (*Ac 23:2-5*). Self-preservation is a law of God giving rights that, under most circumstances, a Christian can claim. He may resist the robber, the assassin and all men of that ilk, and may protect his person and his possessions against the assaults of the violent and lawless (*Ac 16:35-39*). But when the honor of Christ and the salvation of man demands it, he should observe this commandment even unto the very letter.] **40 And if any man would go to law with you, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also.** [This second case is one of judicial injustice, and teaches that the most annoying exactions are to be endured without revenge. The coat was the inner garment, and the cloak was the outer or more costly one. The creditor was not allowed to retain it overnight, even when it was given to him as a pledge from the poor, because it was used for a bed-covering (*Ex 22:26,27*). The idea therefore is, Be ready to give up even what by law cannot be taken. This case, as the one just above, is also an instance of petty persecution, and shows that the command does not forbid a righteous appeal to the law in cases where large and important interests are involved.] **41 And whoever shall compel you to go one mile [the Roman mile; it was one hundred forty-two yards short of the English mile], go with him two.** [This third instance is a case of governmental oppression. It supposes a man to be impressed by government officials to go a mile. The custom alluded to [245] empowered a government courier to impress both men and horses to help him forward. For an example of governmental impress, see *Lk 23:26*. The exercise of this power by the Romans was exceedingly distasteful to Jews, and this circumstance gave a special pertinency to the Savior's mention of it. The command, "Go with him two," requires a cheerful compliance with the demands of a tyrannical government--a doubling of the hardship or duty required rather than a resistance to the demand. But here again the oppression is not an insupportable one. A man might go two miles and yet not lose his whole day's labor. The Savior chooses these lesser evils because they bring out more distinctly the motives of conduct. If we resist the smaller evils of life, we thereby manifest a spirit of pride-seeking revenge; but when the larger evils come upon us, they waken other motives. A man may strive for self-protection when life is threatened without any spirit of revenge. He may appeal to the law to protect his property without any bitterness toward the one who seeks to wrest it from him, and he may set himself against the oppression of his government from the loftiest motives of patriotism. If revenge slumbers in our breast, little injuries will waken it as quickly as big ones.] **42 Give to him that asks you, and from him that would borrow of you do not turn away.** [Jesus here turns from the negative to the positive side of life. Our conduct, instead of being selfish and revengeful, should be generous and liberal. A benevolent disposition casts out revenge as light does darkness. No lending was provided for by the law of Moses except for benevolent purposes, for no interest was allowed, and all debts were canceled every seventh year. The giving and lending referred to, then, are limited to cases of real want, and the amount given or loaned is to be regulated accordingly. Giving or lending to the encouragement of vice or indolence cannot, of course, be here included. Good actions are marred if they bear evil fruit.] **43 You have heard that it was said [*Le 19:18*], [246] You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy: 44 but I say unto you, (c) that hear, Love your**

enemies, do good to them that hate you 28 bless them that curse you [1Co 4:12], (a) and pray for them that persecute you; (c) that despitefully use you. [The law commanding love will be found at *Lv 19:18*, while the sentiment "hate your enemy" is not found in the law as a precept. But the Jews were forbidden by law to make peace with the Canaanites (*Ex 34:11-16 Dt 7:2 23:6*), and the bloody wars that were waged by God's own command inevitably taught them to hate them. This was the feeling of their most pious men (*1Ch 20:3 2Ki 13:19*), and it found utterance even in their devotional hymns; for example, *Ps 137:8,9 139:21,22*. It is a true representation of the law, therefore, in its practical working, that it taught hatred of one's enemies. This is one of the defects of the Jewish dispensation, which, like the privilege of divorce at will, was to endure but for a time. To love an enemy has appeared to many persons impossible, because they understand the word "love" as here expressing the same feeling in all respects that are entertained toward a friend or a near kinsman. But love has many shades and degrees. The exact phase of it that is here enjoined is best understood in the light of examples. The parable of the good Samaritan is given by Jesus for the express purpose of exemplifying it (*Lk 10:35-37*); his own example in praying on the cross for those who crucified him serves the same purpose, as does also the prayer of Stephen made in imitation of it (*Lk 23:34 Ac 7:60*). The feeling that enables us to deal with an enemy after the manner of the Samaritan, or Jesus, or Stephen, is the love for our enemies that is here enjoined. It is by no means an impossible feeling. Prayer, too, can always express it. Prayer is what we always have in our power to bestow, and they never in theirs to refuse.] **(a) 45 that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on [247] the just and the unjust.** [Jesus here gives two reasons why we should obey this precept: 1. That we may be like God; 2. That we may be unlike publicans and sinners. Of course right action towards our enemies does not make us sons of God, but it proves us such by showing our resemblance to him. We are made children of God by regeneration (*Jn 1:12*). God, in his daily conduct toward the children of this earth, does not carry his discrimination to any great length. Needful blessings are bestowed lavishly upon all.] **(c) 29 To him that smites you on the one cheek offer also the other; and from him that takes away your cloak withhold not your coat also. 30 Give to every man that asks of you; and of him that takes away your goods ask them not again.** [The teaching of this passage has been explained above. It is repeated because of its difference in verbiage, and because its position here illustrates the spirit of the verses that precede it.] **(a) 46 For {(c) 32 And} if you love them that love you, what thanks {(a) reward} do you have? do not even the publicans the same? (c) for even sinners love those that love them. 33 And if you do good to them that do good to you, what thanks do you have? for sinners also do the same?** [The Roman publican proper was a wealthy man of the knightly order, who purchased from the state the privilege of collecting the taxes, but the publicans mentioned in the Scripture were their servants--the men who actually collected the taxes, and the official name for them was *portitores*. These latter were sometimes freedmen or slaves, and sometimes natives of the province in which the tax was collected. The fact that the Jews were a conquered people, paying tax to a foreign power, made the tax itself odious, and hence the men through whom it was extorted from them were equally odious. These men were regarded in the double aspect of oppressors and traitors. The odium thus attached to the office prevented men who had any regard for the good opinion of their countrymen from accepting it, and left it in the hands of those who had no self-respect and no reputation. (See on *Lk 3:12*.) Jesus teaches that our religion is [248] worth little if it begets in us no higher love than what is shown by natural, worldly men.] **34 And if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks do you have? [compare *Mt 5:42*] even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love your enemies, and do them good [*Ex 23:4 Pr 24:17 Ro 12:17,19-21*], and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.** [To make our neighbor purchase, in any way, the assistance that we give him is to profit by his misery; and, by laying him under obligations that we expect him in some way or other to discharge, we increase his wretchedness under the pretense of relieving him.] **(a) 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what are you doing more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same?** [The Jews despised the Gentiles, so that they did not usually greet them. This was especially true of the Pharisees. The morality, therefore, of this sect proved to be, in this respect, no better than that of the heathen. Salutation has always been an important

feature in Eastern social life. The salutation, with all its accompaniments, recognized the one greeted as a friend.] **(c) 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (a) 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.** [Luke emphasizes the particular characteristic of God's perfection that Jesus has been discussing; namely, mercy (*Lk 6:36*); but Matthew records the broader assertion that bids us resemble God's perfections in all their fullness and universality. God is our model. Everything short of that is short of what we ought to be. God cannot be satisfied with what is imperfect. This requirement keeps us in mind of our infirmities, and keeps us at work. Like Paul, we must be ever striving (*Php 3:12*). Our standard is not the perfection of great and heroic men, but of the infinite Creator himself.] [249]

D. Motives in Religious Exercises (Mt 6:1-18).

(a) 1 Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else you have no reward of your Father who is in heaven. [This verse refers back to *Mt 5:20*, where the disciple is told that his righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. Matthew's fifth chapter deals with the actions themselves, but this sixth chapter treats of the motives and manners of our actions.] **2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.** [Trumpets were sounded as signals to large bodies. This fact gave to the word "trumpet" a symbolic significance. Anything that is noised or blazoned abroad is spoken of as being *trumpeted*. The figure also conveys the idea of pompous self-laudation. Hence we still speak of an egotistical man as one who "blows his own trumpet." The hypocrites of that day did not blow a literal trumpet to call attention to their gifts any more than the hypocrites of this day do. But they used methods to call attention to their generosity as those of our time do when they publish an account of their munificence in the newspapers. Almsgiving was a prominent feature of Jewish life. Transplanted from Judaism, almsgiving became one of the characteristic features of the early church (*Ac 9:36 10:2 Ga 2:10*). Christ corrected the error as to it in what he said about the widow's mites (*Mk 12:43,44 Lk 21:3,4*). As these hypocrites sought the praise of men, they had their reward when they received it. On the significance of the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*.] **3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand does: 4 that your alms [250] may be in secret: and your Father who sees in secret shall recompense you.** [Jesus here recommends secret and noiseless giving, by the never-to-be-forgotten metaphor of the left and right hand. Our generosity is to come so spontaneously, and with so little thought, that the liberality of one part of the body shall not be communicated to the other. The command does not forbid publicity, but that spirit that *desires* publicity. Good deeds may be published by others to stimulate good in others; but care should be taken lest they be stimulated to give for the sake of like notoriety (*Mk 12:41-44 Ac 4:36,37*). Salvation is a matter of favor, and not of merit. But there is, nevertheless, a recompense attendant upon it. The joys of the world come, and the blessings in this world are included in that recompense--*Mt 25:34-40*.] **5 And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the street. that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.** [Jesus deals with our conduct toward God as well as toward man. However perfectly we may act toward man, our life is one-sided and imperfect if we omit or improperly perform our duties toward God. The Pharisaical habit of standing in a prayerful attitude, to be seen of men, was certainly not prayer. As Pharisees loved the standing and not the praying, so Christians should love the praying and not the standing. Yet prayer for the edification or comfort of others is not here condemned. Prayer itself is nowhere condemned. It is the ostentatious prayer-attitude that Jesus stamps with his displeasure. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*.] **6 But you, when you pray, enter into your inner chamber, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, [251] and your Father who sees in secret shall recompense you.** [The inner chamber was properly a little room in the interior of the house or on the housetop, but it is here used to indicate any place of privacy, and the shut door emphasizes the strictness of the privacy, for in all personal prayer we should strive to be alone with God. Jesus found a prayer-chamber upon the mountain-top and in the garden--*Mt 14:23 26:36*.] **7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Do not be therefore like unto them: for your Father knows**

what things you have need of, before you ask him. [For samples of repetitions, see *1Ki 18:26* *Ac 19:34*. Strictly speaking, Jesus does not here forbid either a long prayer, or the use of the same words in a prayer when the heart sincerely prompts the utterance. He himself prayed at great length, even continuing in prayer all night (*Lk 6:12*), and in the garden he thrice repeated the same words (*Mt 26:44*). What he does forbid is making the number and length of prayers an object of consideration or a source of trust. This command is especially violated by the repetitions of the Roman Catholic rosary. Speech to God cannot be ordered too carefully (*Ec 5:2*). In stating that God knows our desires before we ask, Jesus gives the reason against vain repetitions. God does not need elaborate explanations, and prayer is not uttered to inform him, but to put ourselves in such communion with him as to make us fit to receive. Moreover, prayer is a matter of asking and receiving, and not a meritorious service, as Mohammedans and Catholics still hold, and as the Pharisees held. With them, as public prayers were to gain credit with men, so long and repeated prayers were to obtain merit before God. Christ teaches contrary to all this.] **9 After this manner therefore pray** [having pointed out the errors that then characterized prayer, Jesus proceeds to give a brief outline as a model in matter, arrangement, and expression]: **Our Father who is in heaven.** [The common Jewish invocation was, "O Lord God of our fathers." Jesus, as the brother of man, [252] introduced this new and precious invocation, which puts us in prayer's proper attitude], **Hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.** [This is the first section of the prayer.] **11 Give us this day our daily bread.** [So long as it is "this day" we do not need tomorrow's bread.] **12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.** [God cannot forgive the temper that is unforgiving, for it can only exist in a heart blind as to the amount of its debt. Forgiveness, too, must be a completed act before we begin to pray. Our Lord lays stress on this one point in the prayer, returning to it after he had closed the form, that he may assure us that the divine procedure will, in this respect, be fashioned to our own. "Debt" is a mild word for our sin, and is broader than "trespass." "Trespass" indicates a misstep, a wrong-doing, but "debt" an unfulfilled obligation of any kind. We must not be hard in exacting our rights, when to do so would be oppressive. See on *Lk 11:4*.] **13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** [This petition, to be effective, must be followed by an earnest effort on our part to fulfill it. We prefer to read "the evil," rather than "the evil one," for the neuter is more comprehensive (*2Ti 4:18*), and includes deliverance from the evil thoughts of man's own heart, and from evils from without as well as temptations of Satan. As to the prayer generally, we note the following: It is divided into two sections, and each section is subdivided into three heads. Of these the first three are invocations for the glory of God; thus: 1. That God may be glorified in his name, so that it shall be universally revered; 2. That God may be glorified in his kingdom--that kingdom before which every power of evil shall eventually fall; 3. That God may be glorified in the hearts of humanity by all men becoming obedient unto his will (*Mt 6:9,10*). These petitions come first, for it is of first importance to us that God should be honored in his person, in his authority and in his desires. The three petitions represent three stages of spiritual growth in the communion and fellowship with God. We first know and revere his name [253] as God. From that we advance to the full recognition of his royal and divine authority. And from this in turn we again advance until we know him fully as Father, and, forgetting his authority, perform his wishes through the joyous constraint of love, as do the angels in heaven. The second three petitions are for humanity; thus: 1. *For their bodies*, that they may have sustenance (*Mt 6:11*). It is not a petition for milk and honey, symbols of luxury, but for bread, life's staff and necessity, and for bread in moderation--bestowed day by day, like the manna. 2. *For their souls in things concerning the past*--that past trespasses may be forgiven (*Mt 6:12*). This is the one thing needful to the soul in regard to the past. Since a certain soul condition is necessary (namely: the spirit of forgiveness), as a condition precedent to obtaining this petition, that condition is plainly stated in the petition itself. 3. *For their souls as to the future*, that they may be enabled to avoid temptation, and that they may be finally delivered from evil (*Mt 6:13*). God does not tempt us (*Jas 1:13*), but he can permit us to be led into temptation, or he can shield us from it, only permitting us to enter so far into it as to come off victorious over it (*1Co 10:13 2Pe 2:9*); so that it shall prove unto us a blessing instead of a curse--*Jas 1:12 5:11*.] **14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.** [Forgiveness may be difficult, but it is essential: we should realize that

as we pray. Jesus presents this truth positively and negatively, that we may make no mistake about it. Those who are accustomed to repeat the Lord's Prayer will notice that the doxology with which it closes is omitted. It was probably inserted from some early liturgy. It is absent from the oldest manuscripts, and interrupts the connection of the thought about forgiveness. All textual editors omit it.] **16 Moreover when you fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces.** [by omitting to wash their faces and neglecting to dress or anoint their beards], **that they may [254] appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.** **17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face;** **18 that you be not seen of men to fast, but of your Father who is in secret: and your Father, who sees in secret, shall recompense you.** [Fasting, as an aid to meditation and prayer, is a wholesome practice, but stated fasts lead to hollow formality, and fasts that are endured for public praise are an abomination. Christ admonishes us to conceal the fast, and so avoid the temptation to be hypocritically ostentatious, for fasting is intended for self-abasement, and not to cultivate pride. His words allude to the practice of anointing. Rich Jews were accustomed to anoint their bodies daily with olive or sweet oil. This was refreshing, and prevented many of the disease that the dry, hot air of Palestine made prevalent.]

E. Kingdom Treasures (Mt 6:19-34).

(a) 19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal. [In our Lord's time banks, such as we have, were unknown, and in order to keep money its possessor frequently buried it, thus subjecting it to rust and corrosion. The havoc caused by moths is too familiar to need comment (*Jas 5:2*). Costly and ornamental apparel was reckoned among a man's chief treasures in olden times. See *Jos 7:21 2Ki 5:5 Lk 16:19*. Oriental houses were frequently made of loose stone or sun-dried bricks, so that the thief found it easier to enter by digging through the wall than by opening the barred door. A too literal compliance with this negative precept would discourage thrift. The precept is not intended to discourage the [255] possession of property in moderation, but it forbids us to hoard for selfish purposes, or to look upon our possessions as permanent and abiding.]: **20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal** [As the impossibility of hoarding earthly treasures is in *Mt 6:19* urged as a reason against it, so in this verse the possibility of amassing perpetual possessions in heaven is set forth as the reason why we should do it. Thus the striking contrast between the two kinds of treasures is brought to our notice, so that it is the height of folly not to make a proper choice between them]: **21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.** [Having contrasted the two treasures, Jesus here suggests the contrast between the two places where they are stored up. Since the heart follows the treasure, that it may dwell with the object of its love, we should place our treasures in heaven, even if the treasures there were no better than the treasures on earth; for it is better that our hearts should abide in the city of God than on this sinful earth.] **22 The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light.** **23 But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you be darkness, how great is the darkness!** [In these two verses there is a brief allegory, the meaning of which is to be ascertained from the context. The subject under consideration is the propriety of laying up treasures, not on earth, but in heaven, and the effect that treasures have upon the heart. Now, the heart or affection is to the soul much the same as the eye is to the body. If we do not set our affections upon spiritual things, the time quickly comes when we cannot see them (*1Co 2:14 Jn 3:19-21*). Jesus therefore represents our affections as if they were an eye. If the eye is single--that is, [256] if it sees nothing with a double or confused vision--then the man receives through it clear views of the outside world, and his inner man is, so to speak, full of light. But if his eye is diseased or blinded, then his inner man is likewise darkened. Applying the allegory to the spiritual man, if his heart is single in its love toward God and the things of God, then he has clear views as to the relative importance and value of things temporal and eternal, things earthly and things heavenly. But if the heart looks with a double interest upon both earthly and heavenly treasure, it makes the man double-minded (*Jas 1:6-8*), and so spoils his life (see on *Mt 20:15*). God does not permit a double affection any more than he does a double service, and a man who seeks to continue in it will soon be visited with great darkness as to the things of God, and will become blind in heart and conscience--*Ro*

1:21-25.] **24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.** [*Mammon* was a common Aramaic word used in the East to express material riches. It is here personified as a kind of god of this world. Jesus here assumes that we are framed to serve (*Gn 2:15*); and hence that we must choose our master, for it is impossible to serve two masters whose interests are different and conflicting. They conflict here, for it is mammon's interest to be hoarded and loved, but it is God's interest that mammon be distributed to the needy and be lightly esteemed. God claims our supreme love and our undivided service.] **25 Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?** [The word "anxious" is derived from a word that indicates a state of doubt or double-mindedness. It therefore indicates that sense of suspense or worry that comes from a mind in doubt. Compare *Lk 12:29*. Hence we may say that Jesus is here continuing the contrasts of *Mt 6:24*, and that, having warned [257] against a double vision and a double service, he now warns against a double mind as to the comparative value of the benefits to be derived from the service of God or the service of mammon. Mammon can only supply food, but God gives the life; mammon can only furnish clothing, but God gives the body. By single-mindedness we can find peace, for God is to be relied upon. By double-mindedness we fall to worrying, for mammon may fail to supply those things that we feel we need.] **26 Behold the birds of the heaven they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more value than they?** [Literally, "do you not greatly excel them?" The birds do not serve mammon at all, yet God feeds them. Surely, then, man who excels the birds both in his intrinsic value and in his capacity for temporal and eternal service, can expect to receive from God his sufficient food.] **27 And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?** [Peace and trust characterize the service of God. The rewards of mammon, on the contrary, are won by anxiety. But the rewards of mammon cannot lengthen life as can God. Therefore we should not hesitate to choose God's service.] **28 And why are you anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.** [The magnificence of Solomon and of his court is proverbial in the East unto this day. To the Jew he was the highest representative of earthly grandeur, yet he was surpassed by the common lily of the field. See *So 3:6-11*. Which lily is here meant cannot be determined. Some think it was the fragrant white lily that grows profusely all over Palestine. Others favor the scarlet martagon or the anemone coronaria, or the Huleh lily, a species of iris. It is likely, however, that scholars are trying to draw distinctions where Jesus himself drew none. It is highly probable that in popular speech many of the common [258] spring flowers were loosely classes together under the name "lily."] **30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?** [This is the only term of reproach Jesus applied to his disciples. As to the grass and oven we may say that the forests of Palestine had been cleared off centuries earlier, and the people were accustomed to use the dried grass, mingled with wild flowers and weeds, for fuel. The oven was a large, round pot of earthenware, or other material, two or three feet high, and narrowing toward the top. This was first heated by fire within, after which the fire was raked out, and the dough put inside.] **31 Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we be clothed?** [God's care for the grass that lasts but for a day should teach us to expect that he will show more interest in providing for those who have been fashioned for eternity.] **32 For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.** [Christians having a heavenly Father to supply their wants, should not live like the Gentiles, who have no consciousness of such a Father. Of what use is all our religious knowledge if we are still as careworn and distrustful as the benighted heathen?]; **for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.** [Here is the panacea for anxiety. Being God, the Supreme One knows; being a Father, he feels. Many repose with confidence upon the regularity and beneficence of his providential laws; but far sweeter is that assurance that arises from a sense of God's personal interest in our individual welfare--an interest manifested by the gift of his Son.] **33 But seek first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.** [The kingdom of heaven is the real object of our search. It must be sought first both in point of time and of interest,

and it must be kept ever first in our thoughts after it is found. That Christian faith and obedience leads to worldly prosperity is proved by countless [259] instances that are multiplied with each succeeding day. The security of Christ's kingdom leads to that cheerfulness that renews the strength, and to that undistracted industry that brings success.] **34 Be not therefore anxious for tomorrow: for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.** [Each day has trouble enough without adding to it by borrowing somewhat from future day. Serve God today with the strength you used to expend in carrying troubles that you borrowed from the future, and God will order the affairs of tomorrow.]

F. Teaching Concerning Judging (Mt 7:1-6; Lk 6:37-42).

(a) 1 Judge not, that you be not judged. (c) 37 And judge not, and you shall not be judged [Here again Jesus lays down a general principle in the form of universal prohibition. The principle is, of course, to be limited by other Scriptural laws concerning judgment. It does not prohibit: 1. Judgment by civil courts, which is apostolically approved (*2Pe 2:13-15 Heb 13:17 Tit 3:1*). 2. Judgment of the church on those who walk disorderly; for this also was ordered by Christ and his apostles (*Mt 18:16,17 Tit 3:10 2Th 3:6,14 2Jo 1:10 1Ti 1:20 6:5*). 3. Private judgment as to wrong-doers. This is also ordered by Christ and his apostles (*Mt 7:15,16 Ro 16:17 1Jo 4:1 1Co 5:11*). The commandment is leveled at rash, censorious and uncharitable judgments, and the fault-finding spirit or disposition that condemns upon surmise without examination of the charges, forgetful that we also shall stand in the judgment and shall need mercy (*Ro 14:10 Jas 2:13*). Our judgment of Christians must be charitable, (*Jn 7:24 1Co 13:5,6*) in remembrance of the fact that they are God's servants (*Ro 14:4*); and that he reserves to himself the ultimate right of judging [260] both them and us (*Ro 14:4 1Co 4:3,4 2Co 5:10*).] **(a) 2 For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you use, it shall be measured unto you.**

(c) and condemn not, and you shall not be condemned: release, and you shall be released [Though God shall judge us with absolute justice, yet justice often requires that we receive even in the same measure in which we have given it, so in a sense the merciful receive mercy, and the censorious receive censure (*Jas 2:12,13*). But from men we receive judgment in the measure in which we give it. Applying the teaching here given locally, we find that Jesus, having condemned the Pharisees in their manner of praying (*Mt 6:5,6*), now turns to reprove them for their manner of judging. Their censorious judgments of Christ himself darken many pages of the gospel. But with a bitter spirit they condemned as sinners beyond the pale of mercy whole classes of their countrymen, such as publicans, Samaritans, and the like, besides their wholesale rejection of all heathen. These bitter judgments swiftly returned upon the heads of the judges and caused the victorious Roman to wipe out the Jewish leaders without mercy. It is a great moral principle of God's government that we reap as we sow (*Job 4:8 Pr 72:8 Ho 8:7 10:12 2Co 9:6 Ga 6:7,8*).] **38 give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure you use it shall be measured to you again.** [This is not necessarily a promise of the return of our gift in kind. It rather means that we shall receive an equivalent in joy and in that blessedness that Jesus meant when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Ac 20:35*). The figurative language is borrowed from the market where the salesman, grateful for past kindnesses, endeavors, by pressing, shaking, and piling up, to put more grain into the measure for us than it will contain. Pockets were unknown to the ancients, and what they wished to take with them was carried in the fold in the bosom of the coat, the girdle below holding it up. [261] Ruth bore this a heavy burden in her mantle (*Ru 3:15*).] **39 And he spoke also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind? shall they not both fall into a pit?** [Whoever lacks the knowledge of divine truth cannot so lead others that they shall find it. They shall both fall into the pitfalls of moral error and confusion.] **40 The disciple is not above his teacher: but every one when he is perfected shall be as his teacher.** [Pupils do not surpass their teachers, or, if they do, they are self-taught, and hence do not owe to their teachers that wherein they rise superior to them. All that the scholar can hope from his teacher is that when he is perfectly instructed he shall be as his teacher. But if the teacher is a blind man floundering in a ditch (*Lk 6:39*), he affords but a dismal prospect for his pupils. The perfection of such teaching is certainly not desirable.] **(a) 3 And why do you behold the mote [chip or speck of wood dust] that is in your brother's eye, but do not consider the beam [heavy house timber] that is in your own eye? 4 Or how will {(c) can} you**

say to your brother, Brother, let me cast out the mote (a) out of your eye; (c) that is in your eye, when you yourself do not behold the beam that is in your own eye? {(a) and lo, the beam is in your own eye?} 5 You hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of your own eye; and then shall you see clearly to cast out the mote out of your brother's eye. (c) that is in your brother's eye. [In Matthew and Luke Jesus gives slightly varying applications to this allegorical passage by setting it in different connections. In Luke, as we see, he places it after the words that describe the disastrous effect of being blind leaders of the blind (*Lk 6:39,40*). It therefore signifies in this connection that we ourselves should first see if we would teach others to see. In Matthew he places it after the words about censorious judgment (*Mt 7:1,2*), where it means that we must judge ourselves before we can be fit judges of others. The thought is practically the same, for there is little difference between correcting others as their teachers or as [262] their self-appointed judges. Jesus graphically and grotesquely represents a man with a log, or rafter, in his eye trying to take a chip or splinter out of his neighbor's eye. Both parties have the same trouble or fault, but the one having the greater seeks to correct the one having the less. The application is that he who would successfully teach or admonish must first be instructed or admonished himself (*Ga 6:1*). In moral movements men cannot be pushed; they must be led. Hence those who would teach must lead the way. Those who have reformed their own faults can "see clearly" how to help others. But so long as we continue in sin, we are blind leaders of the blind.] **(a) 6 Give not what is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you.** [The connection here is not obvious. This saying, however, appears to be a limitation of the law against judging. The Christian must not be censoriously judicial, but he should be discriminatingly judicious. He must know dogs and swine when he sees them, and must not treat them as priests and kings, the fit objects for the bestowal of holy food and goodly ornaments. Dogs and swine were unclean animals. The former were usually undomesticated and were often fierce. In the East they are still the self-appointed scavengers of the street. The latter were undomesticated among the Jews, and hence are spoken of as wild and liable to attack man. Meats connected with the sacrificial service of the altar were holy. Even unclean men were not permitted to eat of them, much less unclean brutes. What was left after the priests and clean persons had eaten was to be burned with fire (*Lv 6:24-30 7:15-21*). To give holy things to dogs was to profane them. We are here forbidden, then, to use any religious office, work, or ordinance, in such a manner as to degrade or profane it. Saloons ought not to be opened with prayer, nor ought adulterous marriages to be performed by a man of God. To give pearls to swine is to press the claims of the gospel upon those who despise it until they persecute you for annoying them with it. When such men are known, [263] they are to be avoided. Jesus acted on this principle in refusing to answer the Pharisees, and the apostles did the same in turning to the Gentiles when their Jewish hearers would begin to contradict and blaspheme. Compare *Mt 15:2,3 21:23-27 Ac 13:46 19:9*.]

G. Teaching on Prayer (Mt 7:7-11).

(a) 7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you [The words here are slightly climacteric. Asking is a simple use of voice, seeking is a motion of the body, and knocking is an effort to open and pass through obstacles]: **8 for everyone that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened.** [Jesus here uses the universal "everyone," but he means everyone of a class, for the term is modified by the prescribed conditions of acceptable prayer (*Mt 6:14,15 Jas 1:6,7 4:3 1Jo 5:14*). We see also by *Mt 7:9* that it means everyone who is recognized by God as a son. All God's children who pray rightly are heard.] **9 Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; 10 or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent?** [Fish and bread were the common food of the peasants of Galilee. A stone might resemble a cake, but if given it would deceive the child. A serpent might resemble an eel or a perch, but if given it would be both deceptive and injurious.] **11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?** [Here is an argument from analogy. It is assumed that the paternal feeling that prompts us to give good [264] things to our children, is still a higher degree in God with reference to his children; and hence it is argued that he will much more give good things to those who ask him. Since it is Jesus who assumes the likeness on

which the argument rests, we may rely on the correctness of the reasoning; but we must be cautious how we derive arguments of our own from the analogy between God's attributes and the corresponding characteristics of man. For example, this attribute of paternal feeling has been employed to disprove the reality of the eternal punishment with which God himself threatens the sinner, because the paternal feeling in man would prevent him from so punishing his own children. The fallacy in the argument consists in assuming that the feeling in question must work the same results in every particular in God that it does in man. But Revelation teaches that such is not the case.]

H. Teaching on the Golden Rule (Mt 7:12; Lk 6:31).

(a) 12 All things therefore whatever you would {(c) 31 and as you would} that men should do to {(a) unto} you, even so do you also unto {(c) to} them likewise. (a) for this is the law and the prophets. [Jesus connects the Golden Rule with what precedes with the word "therefore." We are to practice the Golden Rule because God's divine judgment teaches forbearance, and his goodness teaches kindness. This precept is fitly called the Golden Rule, for it embraces in its few words the underlying and governing principle of all morality. It contains all the precepts of the law with regard to man, and all the amplifications of those precepts given by the prophets. It teaches us to put ourselves in our neighbor's place, and direct our conduct accordingly. It assumes, of course, that when we put ourselves in our neighbor's place, we are wise enough not to make any foolish wishes, and good enough not to make any evil ones. The great sages Socrates, Buddha, Confucius and Hillel each [265] groped after this truth, but they stated it thus: "Do not do to others what you would not have done to you"; thus making it a rule of *not* doing rather than of *doing*. But the striking difference between these teachers and Christ lies not in the statements so much as in the exemplification. Jesus *lived* the Golden Rule in his conduct toward men, and maintained perfect righteousness before God in addition thereto.]

I. Two Ways Contrasted (Mt 7:13-23; Lk 6:43-45).

(a) 13 Enter in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. 14 For small is the gate, and narrow the way, that leads unto life, and few are they that find it. [The Master here presents two cities before us. One has a wide gateway opening onto the broad street, and other a narrow gate opening onto a narrow street or alley. The first city is Destruction, the second is Life. Compare *Lk 13:24*.] **15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.** [From the two ways Jesus turns to warn his disciples against those who lead into the wrong path--the road to destruction. Prophets are those who lay claim to teach men correctly the life that God would have us live. The scribes and Pharisees were such, and Christ predicted the coming of others (*Mt 24:5,24*), and so did Paul (*Ac 20:29*). Their fate is shown in *Mt 7:21,22*. By "sheep's clothing" we are to understand that they shall bear a gentle, meek, and inoffensive outward demeanor; but they use this demeanor as a cloak to hide their real wickedness, and so effectually does it hide it that the false prophets often deceive even themselves.] **16 By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree brings [266] forth evil fruit. (c) 43 For there is no good tree that brings forth corrupt fruit; nor again a corrupt tree that brings forth good fruit. (a) 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (c) 44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush do they gather grapes. (a) 19 Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.** [It is a law of universal application that whatever is useless and evil shall eventually be swept away.] **20 Therefore by their fruits you shall know them. (c) 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.** [Teachers are to be judged by their conduct as men, and also by the effect of their teaching. If either be predominantly bad, the man must be avoided. But we must not judge hastily, nor by slight and trivial actions, for some specimens of bad fruit grown on good trees.] **(a) 21 Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will**

of my Father who is in heaven. [To say, "Lord, Lord," is to call on the Lord in prayer. While it is almost impossible to overestimate the value of prayer when associated with a consistent life, it has been too common to attribute to it a virtue that it does not possess. The Pharisees were excessively devoted to prayer, and they led the people to believe that every prayerful man would be saved. The Mohammedans and Romanists are subject to the same delusion, as may be seen in their punctilious observance of the forms of prayer, while habitually neglecting many of the common rules of morality. It is here taught that prayer, unattended *by doing the will* of the Father in heaven, cannot save us. Doing the will of God must be understood, not in the sense of sinless obedience, but as including a compliance with the conditions on which sins are forgiven. Whether under the [267] old covenant or the new, sinless obedience is an impossibility; but obedience to the extent of our possibility amid the weaknesses of the flesh, accompanied by daily compliance with the conditions of pardon for our daily sin, has ever secured the favor of God.] **22 Many will say to me in that day** [the final judgment day], **Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by your name, and by your name cast out demons, and by your name do many mighty works?** [Jesus here prophetically forecasts those future times wherein it would be worthwhile to be a Christian. In these days we may well question the motives that induce us to serve Christ. High place in the visible kingdom is no proof of one's acceptance with God. Neither are mighty works, though successfully wrought in his name. Judas was an apostle and miracle-worker, and Balaam was a prophet, yet they lacked that condition of the heart that truly allies one with God (1Co 13:1-3). Jesus says the number of false teachers is large. We must not carelessly ignore the assertion of that important fact. We should also note that Christ will not lightly pass over their errors on the judgment day, though they seem to have discovered them for the first time. Such truths should make us extremely cautious both as teachers and learners.] **23 And then will I profess** [better, confess] **unto them, I never knew you** [never approved or recognized you--see Mt 25:12]: **depart from me** [Mt 25:41], **you that work iniquity.** [This indicates that false teachers filled with a patronizing spirit toward the Lord, and with a sense of power as to his work, will be deceived by a show of success. Through life Christ appeared to them to be accepting them and approving their lives, but he now confesses that this appearance was not real. It arose from a misconception on their part and on that of others. Many works that men judge to be religious really undermine religion. The world esteems him great whose ministry begets Pharisees, but in Christ's eyes such a one is a worker of iniquity.] [268]

J. Conclusion and Application (Mt 7:24-29; Lk 6:46-49).

(c) 46 And why call you me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say? [Why do you give me the title, but withhold the service that should go with it?--Mal 1:6.] **(a) 24 Everyone therefore that (c) comes unto me, and hears my words** {(a) these words of mine,} **and does them** [Jn 13:17 Jas 1:22], **(c) I will show you whom he is like: 48 he is like** {(a) shall be likened unto} **(c) a man building a house, who dug and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: (a) a wise man who built his house upon the rock** [The word "rock" suggests Christ himself. No life can be founded upon Christ's teaching unless it be founded also upon faith and trust in his personality. For this we must dig deep. God is not to be found on the surface]: **25 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; (c) and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, and could not shake it: (a) and it fell not: (c) because it had been well built. (a) for it was founded upon the rock.** [The imagery of this passage would be impressive anywhere, but is especially so when used before an audience accustomed to the fierceness of an Eastern tempest. Rains, floods, etc., represent collectively the trials, the temptations and persecutions that come upon us from without. There comes a time to every life when these things throng together and test the resources of our strength.] **26 And every one** {(c) 49 **But he**} **(a) that hears these words of mine, and does not do them shall be like** {(c) is like} **(a) a foolish man, who** {(c) that} **built a** {(a) his} **house upon the sand:** {(c) earth} **without a foundation; (a) 27 and the rain** [269] **descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house;** {(c) against which the stream brake,} **and immediately it fell in; (a) and great was the fall thereof. (c) and the ruin of that house was great.** [Jesus here limits the tragedy to a single house. A single soul is a great ruin in the eyes of God. Jesus did not end his sermon with a strain of consolation. It is not always best to do so.] **(a) 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the**

multitudes were astonished at his teaching: 29 for he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes. [See on Mk 1:22.]

Section 43 HEALING A CENTURION'S SERVANT (Capernaum, June A.D. 28) Mt 8:1, 5-13; Lk 7:1-10

A. Circumstances (Mt 8:1, 5; Lk 7:1-2).

(c) 1 After he had ended all his sayings in the ears of the people, (a) 1 And when he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. (c) he entered into Capernaum. [Jesus proceeded from the mountain to Capernaum, which was now his home, or headquarters. The multitudes that are now mentioned for the third time were not wearied by his sermon, and so continued to follow him. Their presence showed the popularity of Jesus, and also emphasized the fact that the miracles that followed the sermon were wrought in the presence of the vast throngs of people.] (a) 5 And when he was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion [The context shows that this centurion or captain of a hundred men was a Gentile, but whether he was in the employ of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, or an officer in the Roman army, is [270] not clear, neither is very important. The army of Antipas, like that of other petty kings, was modeled after that of Rome], (c) 2 And a certain centurion's servant [slave boy], who was dear unto him, was sick, and at the point of death.

B. First Entreaty (Mt 8:5-7; Lk 7:3-5).

(c) 3 And when he heard concerning Jesus [The sequel shows that the centurion probably had heard how Jesus had healed the son of his fellow-townsmen--*Jn 4:46-54*], he sent unto him elders of the Jews [To reconcile Matthew and Luke, we have only to conceive of the centurion as coming to the edge of the crowd about Jesus, but modestly refraining from coming into the Lord's immediate presence.] asking him that he would come and save his servant. (a) beseeching him, 6 and saying, Lord, my servant lies in the house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. [In this instance we have probably a case of progressive paralysis, attended by muscular spasms, and involving the respiratory movements, where death is manifestly imminent and inevitable. In such a case there would be symptoms indicative of great distress, as well as immediate danger to life. As to palsy generally, see on Mt 4:24 and Mk 2:3.] (c) 4 And they, when they came to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that you should do this for him; 5 for he loves our nation, and himself built us our synagogue. [The centurion evidently believed in and worshiped God, but, influenced probably by his profession, did not become a proselyte by being circumcised and conforming entirely to the Mosaic law. The foundations of the synagogue built by this centurion are visible to this day at the site of Capernaum. [271] On the institution of the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39.] (a) 7 And he said to him [that is, answering him as represented by his friends], I will come and heal him.

C. Second Entreaty (Mt 8:8-9; Lk 7:6-8).

(c) 6 And Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, (a) 8 And the centurion answered and said, {(c) saying unto him,} Lord, trouble not yourself: for I am not worthy that you should come under my roof [not because his house was a poor one, for he was evidently well-to-do--*Lk 7:5*]: 7 wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto you: (a) but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. [The centurion, well knowing that it was unlawful for Jews to go into the houses of the Gentiles, lest they should sully the sanctity that they desired to maintain, wished to spare Jesus any embarrassment. Whatever he may have thought of this custom with regard to the Pharisees, he attributed to Jesus so high a degree of sanctity that he accepted the doctrine as true in reference to him. The centurion showed his great faith partly by believing that Jesus could heal by a word, but chiefly in his lofty conception of Jesus as compared with himself. As Jesus rises, we sink in the scale of our estimation. The centurion's faith would have been

wonderful enough in an Israelite, but it was all the more wonderful when found in the bosom of a Gentile. The word "found" (*Lk 7:10 Mt 8:10*) suggests that Jesus came seeking faith: he will come seeking it again (*Lk 18:8*). The elders, little knowing the wideness of our Lord's vision and sympathy, supposed that Jesus would look upon the splendid synagogue erected for the Jewish people as a sufficient motive for granting their request (*Lk 7:5*). Even the apostles were slow to learn that at heart Jesus knew neither Jew nor Gentile.] **(c) 8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant [not a soldier, but a household slave], Do this, and he does it.** [Having those over him, he knew how to obey, and [272] having those under him, he knew how to be obeyed. He was familiar, therefore, with all the principles of obedience. Knowing from the healing of the nobleman's son, or from other reports concerning Jesus, that the realm of nature obeyed Jesus, he judged from his knowledge of earthly obedience that Jesus had those who could come and go for him, and who could carry his messages and enforce obedience to them. He felt that the presence of Jesus was not at all necessary to the healing.]

D. Jesus' Response (Mt 8:10-13; Lk 7:9-10). [Miracle 10]

(a) 10 And when Jesus heard it, {(c) these things,} he marveled at him, and turned and said unto (a) them (c) the multitude that followed him, (a) Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. [To some it seems strange that Jesus could marvel, but he had all the actual feelings of a man. Jesus is never said to have marveled but twice. In this case it was because of belief, and in the other (*Mk 6:6*), it was because of unbelief. Those who think that Jesus gave or gives faith should note this fact. If Jesus had given the centurion faith, he could not have been surprised to find that he had it; and, if he failed to bestow it upon the people of Nazareth, it would have been inconsistent in him to express surprise at their lack of it. It would seem, however, irreconcilable with the character and affectionate nature of Christ, to bestow faith in such profusion upon this Gentile stranger, and withhold every spark of it from his near kinsmen and fellow-townsmen. Faith is no miraculous gift. Faith means no more or less than belief; and a man believes the Scripture facts in the same manner and by the same processes that he believes any other facts.] **11 And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven** [Jesus here predicts the conversion of the Gentiles, since that fact is suggested to him by the faith of this centurion. The east and the west represent the extreme points of the compass in the directions in which the world was most thickly inhabited. But Jesus refers rather to spiritual separation than to [273] geographical distances--*Mal 1:11 Isa 49:19 Jer 16:19 Zec 8:22.*] **12 but the sons of the kingdom** [The child of anything in Hebrew phraseology expressed the idea of special property that one has in the thing specified, as, for instance, children of disobedience (*Eph 2:2*). Jesus here means, then, the Jews, to whom the kingdom belonged by hereditary descent--*Ro 9:4*] **shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.** [In this paragraph Christ's kingdom is set forth under the simile of a great feast, a familiar simile with Jesus (*Mt 26:29 Lk 22:30*). Great feasts of the Jews were usually held in the evening. Inside, therefore, there would be joy and light and gladness, but outside there would be darkness and disappointment, tears and bitter self-reproach (*Mt 25:10-13*). The despised outcasts should be brought in and placed at the festal board, while the long-invited guests--the natural and fleshly heirs of Abraham's invitation--would be excluded (*Mt 21:43*). Hell is absence from spiritual light, separation from the company of the saved, lamentation and impotent rage.] **13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go your way; as you have believed, so be it done unto you. And the servant was healed in that hour.** [In the moment when Jesus spoke, the servant was healed--not relieved, but healed.] **(c) 10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole.** [The centurion, long before this when he was building the synagogue, had doubtless heard with delight concerning the wonderful works wrought by the mighty prophets in the olden time; he little dreamed that his own eyes should see them all surpassed.] [274]

Section 44

JESUS RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON

(Nain, Galilee June, A.D. 28)
Lk 7:11-17

A. A Resurrection (Lk 7:11-15). [Miracle 11]

(c) 11 And it came to pass soon afterwards [many ancient authorities read "on the next day"], **that he went into a city called Nain; and his disciples went with him, and a great multitude.** [We find that Jesus had been thronged with multitudes continuously since the choosing of his twelve apostles. Nain was in the hills about twenty-five miles south of Capernaum.] **12 Now when he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there was carried out one that was dead, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and many people of the city were with her.** [Tombs were outside the towns, that ceremonial pollution could be avoided. The Jews were careful to give public expression to their sympathy for those who were bereaved (*Jn 11:19*). The death of an only child represented to them as to us the extreme of sorrow (*Jer 6:26 Zec 12:10 Am 8:10*). But in this case the sorrow was heightened by the fact that the mother was a widow, and hence evidently dependent upon her son for support. Her son had comforted her in her first loss of a husband, but now that her son was dead, there was none left to comfort.] **13 And when the Lord saw her [275], he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.** [As the funeral procession came out of the gate, they met Jesus with his company coming in. Hence there were many witnesses to what followed. But the miracle in this instance was not wrought so much to attest our Lord's commission, or to show his power, as to do good. As Jesus had no other business in Nain but to do good, we may well believe that he went there for the express purpose of comforting this forlorn mother. Compare *Jn 11:1-5*.] **14 And he came near and touched the bier: and the bearers stood still.** [The "bier" was a stretcher of boards, with the pallet or bed upon it, and the body of the young man wrapped in linen lying upon the bed. Jesus was, no doubt, known to many in Nain, and it is no wonder that those who bore the bier stood still when he touched it. Though we cannot say that he had raised the dead prior to this, we can say that he had healed every kind of disease known among the people, and therefore his act would beget a reasonable expectancy that he might do something even here.] **And he said, Young man, I say unto you, Arise.** [Here, as in the other instances where Jesus revived the dead, we find that he issues a personal call to the party whose remains are before him. It suggests the sublime thought that he has as full dominion and [276] authority over the unseen as over the seen; and that should he issue a general call, all the dead would revive again as obediently and immediately as did the single one to whom he now spoke (*Jn 5:28,29*). The command of Jesus, moreover, is spoken with the ease and consciousness of authority known only to Divinity.] **15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak.** [Thus showing that not only life, but also health and strength, were restored.] **And he gave him to his mother.** [As the full fruitage of his compassion. The scene suggests that Christ will, with his own hands, restore kindred to kindred in the glorious morning of resurrection.]

B. Reaction to the Resurrection (Lk 7:16-17).

(c) 16 And fear took hold on all [Because the power of God had been so signally manifested among them. They recognized the presence of God's power and mercy, yet by no means apprehended the nearness of his very person]: **and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and, God has visited his people.** [Expectation of the return of one of the prophets was at that time widespread. See *Lk 9:8,19*. That they should esteem Jesus as no more than a prophet was no wonder, for as yet even his apostles had not confessed him as the Christ. In state and conduct Jesus appeared to them too humble to fulfill the popular ideas of messiahship. But in wisdom and miracle he outshone all God's former messengers. The "visiting" of God refers to the long absence of the more strikingly miraculous powers of God as exercised through the prophets. None had raised the dead since the days of Elisha--*2Ki 4:32-37*.] **17 And this report went forth concerning him in the whole of Judea, and all the region round about.** [This great miracle caused the fame of Jesus to fill all Judea as well as Galilee. It seems, from what next follows, to have reached John the Baptist in his prison on the east of the Dead Sea--see *Mt 11:2*.] [277]

Section 45
A QUESTION FROM JOHN THE BAPTIST
(Galilee June A.D. 28)
Mt 11:2-30; Lk 7:18-35

A. Question (Mt 11:2-3; Lk 7:18-20).

(c) 18 And the disciples of John told him of all these things. (a) 2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent by his disciples (c) 19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them unto the Lord [John had been cast into prison about December, A.D. 27, and it was now after the Passover, possibly in May or June, A.D. 28. Herod Antipas had cast John into prison because John had reproved him for taking his brother's wife (*Mt 14:3 Mk 6:17*). According to Josephus, the place of John's imprisonment and death was the castle of Machaerus (or Makor), east of the Dead Sea (*Antiquities*, 18.5.1,2). It was built by Herod the Great, and was not very far from that part of the Jordan in which John had baptized, so that it is probable that Herod resided in this castle when he went to hear John preach (*Mt 14:4 Mk 6:18*). We learn elsewhere that Herod felt kindly towards John (*Mk 6:20*), and this fact, coupled with the statement that John called two of his disciples to him, suggests that John must have been held as an honored prisoner.], (a) 3 and said unto him, {(c) saying,} **Are you he that comes, or should we look for another?** [The prophets spoke of the Messiah as the coming one, and John himself had done likewise--*Mt 3:11*.] 20 And when the men had come unto him, they said, **John the Baptist has sent us unto you, saying, Are you he that comes, or should we look for another?** [This passage has been a puzzle to expositors from the very earliest times. Being unable to understand how the Baptist, being an inspired prophet and favored with visions of the supernatural, [278] could give way to skeptical doubts, they have exhausted their inventive genius to explain what John meant by his question. Among these many explanations the best is that John wished to get Jesus to publicly declare himself for the sake of quieting all rumors concerning him, his fault being kindred to that of Jesus' mother when she tried to hasten Jesus' hour at the wedding of Cana (*Jn 2:4*). But the plain, unmistakable inference of the text is that John's faith wavered. The Bible does not represent the saints as free from imperfection. It does not say that inspiration is omniscience, or that visions and miracles remove doubts. The most instructive parallel is that of Simon Peter. He witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, beheld the glory of God, and heard the voice of the Father (*Mt 17:1-6*); yet he sank below the Baptist, and denied the Lord with cursing; and no man has ever thought it at all incredible that he should do so. The trial of John's faith, though not so clearly depicted as that of Peter, was perhaps equally searching. His wild, free life was now curbed by the irksome tedium of confinement. His expectations were not fulfilled. The unfruitful trees had not been cut down, the grain had not been winnowed, or the chaff burned. Moreover, he held no communion with the private life of Jesus, and entered not into the sanctuary of his Lord's thought. We must remember also that his inspiration passed away with the ministry, on account of which it was bestowed, and it was only *the man John*, and not the prophet, who made the inquiry. The inquiry itself, too, should be noted. It is not, Are you what I declared you to be? but, Being all of that, are you *the* one who should come, or must we look for *another*? John no doubt shared with all Jews the idea that Messiah was to set up an earthly kingdom, and seeing in Jesus [279] none of the spirit of such a king, he seems to have questioned whether Jesus was to be the finality, or whether he was to be, like himself, a forerunner, preparing the way for the ultimate Messiah. He did not grasp the thought that Jesus was both Alpha and Omega; that Jesus, the lowly servant of humanity, by service and sacrifice is evermore preparing the way for Jesus the King.]

B. Jesus' Answer (Mt 11:4-5; Lk 7:21-22).

(c) 21 In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. 22 And he (a) Jesus answered and said unto them, **Go and tell John the things that you hear and see: {(c) have seen and heard;}** (a) 5 the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings to them. [John himself, when thus

questioned, had answered plainly, saying, "No" (*Jn 1:20, 21*), and he probably expected a like categorical answer from Jesus. The indirect answer of Jesus, ending with a beatitude, was well calculated to waken in John beneficial thoughtfulness, for it threw his mind back upon the prophecies of God, such as *Isa 30:5,6 42:7 41:1-3*, etc. It may be inferred that Jesus withheld answering the messengers (*Lk 7:20*) and went on with his works of grace that these might testify to John more potently than mere words of assertion. Jesus did not work miracles to gratify skeptical curiosity, but he did use them, as here, to strengthen wavering faith (*Mk 9:24 Jn 11:15 14:11*); Jesus sums up his work in the form of a climax, wherein preaching the gospel to the poor stands superior even to the raising of the dead. Attention to the poor has always been a distinctive feature of Christianity. To care for the poor is above miracles.]

C. A Beatitude (Mt 11:6).

(a) 6 And blessed is he, whoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me. [The scribes had stumbled and failed to believe in Jesus because he did not fulfill their ideal, or come up to their expectations. Jesus seeks to woo John from a like fate by the sweet persuasion of a beatitude. John must realize that it is better for the subject to fall in with the plans of the all-wise King, as he fulfills the predictions of God the Father, than for the King to turn aside and frustrate the plan of the ages to humor the passing whim of a despondent and finite mind.]

<p style="text-align:center">Discourse #5 The Greatness of John Mt 11:7-30; Lk 7:24-35</p>

A. John's Greatness (Mt 11:7-19; Lk 7:24-35).

(c) 24 And when the messengers of John departed, {(a) 7 And as these went their way,} (c) he (a) Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John [The commendation of Jesus that follows was not spoken in the presence of John's messengers. It was best that John should not hear it. We also do our work under the silent heavens and wait for the future plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant"--*Mt 25:21,23*], **What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? 8 But what did you go out to see? (c) a man clothed in soft raiment? (a) Behold, they that wear soft raiment (c) they that are gorgeously dressed, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. {(a) houses.}** [After the departure of John's messengers Jesus immediately clears the character of John of unjust suspicion. John, who had testified with such confidence as to the office and character of Jesus, now comes with a question betraying a doubtful mind and wavering faith. Was John then a vacillating man? Was he guilty of that lack of steadfastness that the world looks upon as intolerable in all who it esteems great? Was he blown about by every wind of public opinion like the tall reed (the *Arunda donax*) that skirts the Jordan, and that stands, bearing its beautiful blossoming top twelve feet high one moment, only to bow it to earth the next, the slender stem yielding submissively to the passing breeze? Was he a voluptuary about to condescend to flatter Herod and retract [281] his reproof, that he might exchange his prison for a palace? Those who had gone to the wilderness to see John had found no such man, and John was still the John of old. One act does not make a character, one doubt does not unmake it. John was no reed.] **9 But why did you out? {(c) 26 But what did you go out to see?} (a) to see a prophet? Yes, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.** [*Mt 11:10* shows us that John was a messenger as well as a prophet. Prophets foretold the Messiah, but John was the herald who announced him. John was miraculously born, and was himself the subject of prophecy. Great as was John in popular estimation, that estimation was insufficient.] **10 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, Who shall prepare your way before you.** [This quotation is taken from *Mal 3:1*, where it reads "my messenger . . . before me." But Mark (*Mk 1:2*) concurs with Matthew and Luke (*Lk 7:27*) in the reading given here. From the change in the words it appears that Christ is one with God the Father, and that the coming of Christ is the coming of God.] **11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater {(c) there is none greater} (a) than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little**

in the kingdom of heaven {(c) of God} is greater than he. [We find from this passage that all true greatness arises from association, relation and contact with Jesus Christ. To be Christ's forerunner is to be above teacher and prophet, Levite and priest, lawgiver and king, and all else that the world estimates as great. If all greatness be thus measured by contact of Christ, how great must Christ be! But the least in the kingdom is greater than John. "This shows: 1. That John was not in the kingdom of God. 2. That, as none greater than John has been born of women, no one had yet entered the kingdom. 3. That, therefore, it had not yet been set up; but as John himself, Jesus, and the Twelve under the first commission, preached, was 'at hand'. [282] 4. All in the kingdom, even the humble, have a station superior to John's. The old legal maxim says, "The least of the greatest is greater than the greatest of the least," which is as much as to say that the smallest diamond is of more precious substance than the largest flint. The least born of the Holy Spirit (*Jn 1:12,13* and *Jn 3:5*) is greater than the greatest born of women. They are greater in station, privilege and knowledge. The dispensations rise like lofty steps, and the lowest that stand upon the New Testament dispensation are lifted above the tallest who rest upon the dispensation of Moses. This is perhaps prophetically suggested by Zechariah--*Zec 12:8*.] **(c) 29 And all the people** [the common people, and not the rulers] **when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.** [They justified or approved the wisdom of God in sending such a prophet as John and establishing such an ordinance as baptism.] **30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him.** [The counsel of God was that the nation should be brought to repentance by John, that it might be saved by Jesus; but the Pharisees frustrated this plan so far as they were concerned, by their proud refusal to repent. All who followed their example shared their unhappy success. It is noteworthy that Jesus emphasizes baptism as the test as to whether men justify or reject God's counsel.] **(a) 12 From the days of John the Baptist until now** [a period of about three years] **the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force.** [Jesus pictures the kingdom of heaven as a besieged city. The city is shut up, but the enemies that surround it, storm its walls and try to force an entrance--an apt illustration that many fail to comprehend. The gates of Christ's kingdom were not opened until the day of Pentecost (*Ac 2:22-36*), but men hearing it was about to be opened sought to enter prematurely, not by the gates that God would open when Simon Peter used the keys (*Mt 16:19*), but by such breaches as they themselves sought to make [283] in the walls. Examples of this violence will be seen in the following instances (*Jn 6:15 Mt 20:21 Lk 19:11,36-38 22:24-30 Ac 1:6*). The people were full of preconceived ideas with regard to the kingdom, and each one sought to hasten and enjoy its pleasures as one who impatiently seizes upon a bud and seeks with his fingers to force it to bloom. The context shows that John the Baptist was even then seeking to force the kingdom.] **13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if you are willing receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come. 15 He that has ears to hear, let him hear.** [The Old Testament was the work of a long series of prophets. This series was closed by John the Baptist. But John differed from all the others in the series; for they prophesied concerning the kingdom, while John turned from their course to preach that the kingdom was at hand, and thereby incidentally brought upon it the assaults of violence. As to John the Baptist being the prophetic Elijah, see on *Jn 1:21*.] **16 But unto what (c) then shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? 32 They are {(a) It is} like unto children sitting {(c) that sit} in the marketplace {(a) marketplace} (c) and (a) who call (c) one to another; (a) unto their fellows 17 and (c) who say, We piped unto you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep. {(a) mourn}. (c) 33 For John the Baptist is come {(a) came} neither eating nor drinking, {(c) eating no bread nor drinking wine;} and you {(a) they} say, He has a demon. 19 The Son of man came {(c) is come} eating and drinking; and you {(a) they} say, Behold a man gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom is justified (c) of all her children. (a) by her works.** [Oriental marketplaces were open squares where men transacted business and where children held their sports. Jesus here pictures two groups of little ones, one of which wishes to play, the other of which is sullen and intractable. The mirthful group first seeks to play a wedding game. They pipe and dance, but the sullen group sits

unmoved. Not [284] disheartened by failure to succeed, the mirthful ones try their hand again and hope for better luck by playing funeral. But this also fails, causing them to lift up their voices in questioning remonstrance. John came mourning and Jesus came piping, and that the Jews were satisfied with neither. It was God in his messengers--his prophets and his Son--who came to set the world right. It was these messengers who took the initiative and who demanded the changes. It was the people who sulked and refused to comply with the divine overtures. The whole tenor of Christ's teaching--the parables of the supper, etc.--represents the Jews as being invited and refusing the invitation. It was John and Jesus who preached repentance, but there was no instance where any called on them to repent. Jerusalem never wept over an intractable Jesus, but Jesus wept over the people of Jerusalem because they "would not" (*Mt 23:37*). Jesus and John each besought the people to prepare for the kingdom of God, but the people sneered at one [285] as too strict and at the other as too lenient, and would be won by neither. To justify them in rejecting God's counsel, they asserted that John's conduct was demonic and that of Jesus was criminal, thus slandering each. But the lives or works of Jesus and John were both directed by the wisdom of God, and all those who were truly wise towards God--children of wisdom (see *Lk 7:29*)-justified or approved of God's course in sending such messengers. We should observe that with all the cares of his great mission upon him, the great heart of our Lord took note of the sports of children.]

B. Woe on Unrepentant Cities (Mt 11:20-24).

(a) 20 Then he began to upbraid the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they did not repent. [That is to say, those cities that were especially favored. It does not mean that more miracles were worked in them than in *all* the other cities; but that more were done in *each* of these than in *any* other.] **21 Woe** [rather, "Alas for you!" an exclamation of pity more than anger] **unto you, Chorazin! woe unto you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, had been done in Tyre and Sidon that were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.** [Chorazin was about two miles from Capernaum. Its site is marked by extensive ruins, including the foundations of a synagogue, columns, and walls of buildings. Bethsaida was probably a suburb of Capernaum. We have no record of a miracle wrought at Chorazin, nor of one wrought at Bethsaida either, unless the miracles wrought at Simon's house (see on *Mt 8:14-17*) were in Bethsaida. Tyre and Sidon were neighboring Phoenician cities on the Mediterranean coast and were noted for their luxury and impiety. This comparison between the pagan cities on the seacoast and the Galilean cities by the lake no doubt sounded strange to Jesus' disciples, but in the years that followed, Tyre and Sidon received the gospel [286] (*Ac 21:3 27:3*), and Tyre became a Christian city, while Tiberias, just south of Capernaum, became the seat of Jewish Talmudism. Sackcloth was a coarse fabric woven of goat's or camel's hair, and was worn by those who mourned. It was called sackcloth because, being strong and durable, it was used for making the large sacks in which rough articles were carried on the backs of camels. Ashes were put upon the head and face as additional symbols of grief. Jesus here uses these symbolic words to indicate that these cities would have repented thoroughly.] **22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, shall you be exalted unto heaven? you shall go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom that were done in you, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.** [Several great truths are taught in this paragraph. We note the following: 1. Every hearer of the gospel is left either much more blessed or much more wretched. 2. That the miracles that Jesus wrought were calculated to lead men to repentance, for they demonstrated his authority to demand that man should repent. 3. That even among those who stand condemned at the judgment there is a difference, and that it shall be more tolerable for some than for others. 4. That God takes account of our opportunities when he comes to measure our guiltiness (*Mt 5:21,22 10:15 Lk 11:47,48 Jn 9:41 15:22-24 Ro 2:12*). Capernaum was the most favored spot on earth, for Jesus made it his home. He therefore speaks of it figuratively as being exalted to heaven. "Hades" means the abode of the dead. It stands in

figurative contrast to heaven and indicates that Capernaum shall be brought to utter ruin. Though Jesus was not displeased with the walls and houses, but with those who dwelt in them, yet the uncertain sites of these cities are marked only by ruins, and present to the traveler who searches among [287] rank weeds for their weather-worn stones the tokens of God's displeasure against the people who once dwelt there. In less than thirty years these three cities were destroyed. Sin destroys cities and nations, and permanent temporal prosperity depends upon righteousness. The history of the destruction of Sodom in the time of Abraham is well known. As it was one of (*Nm 13:22*) the oldest cities of any great importance in Palestine, this reference to its remaining is the more striking, showing that its destruction did not come from the mere operation of natural law, but as a divine punishment meted upon it for its sins--a punishment that might have been avoided by repentance (*Jon 3:10*). There is hope for the greatest sinner if Sodom might thus escape.]

C. Jesus' Prayer (Mt 11:25-27).

25 At that season [while these thoughts of judgment were in his mind] **Jesus answered** [replying to the thoughts raised by this discouraging situation--this rejection] **and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you hid these things from the wise and understanding** [the selfish and shrewd; the scribes and Pharisees, wise in their own conceit--*Jn 9:40,41*], **and revealed them unto babes** [the pure and childlike; the apostles and their fellows who were free from prejudice and bigoted prepossession. God hid and revealed solely by his method of presenting the truth in Christ Jesus. The proud despised him, but the humble received him]: **26 yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in your sight.** [This is a reiteration of the sentiment just uttered. It means "I thank you that it pleases you to do thus." The Son expresses holy acquiescence and adoring satisfaction in the doings of Him who, as Lord of heaven and earth, had right to dispose of all things as it pleased him.] **27 All things have been delivered unto me of my Father** [*Jn 3:35*. All things necessary to the full execution of his office as Lord of the kingdom were entrusted to Jesus, but for the present only potentially. The actual investiture of authority did not take place until the glorification of Jesus (*Mt 28:18 Col 1:16-19 Heb 1:8*). The authority thus delivered shall be eventually returned [288] again--*1Co 15:28*]: **and no one knows the Son, except the Father; neither does any know the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal him.** [Here again are many important truths taught: 1. While we may have personal knowledge of Jesus, we cannot know him completely. His nature is inscrutable. And yet, in direct opposition to our Lord's explicit assertion, creeds have been formed, defining the metaphysical nature of Christ, and enforcing their distinctions on the subject that Jesus expressly declares that no man understands, as necessary conditions of church membership in this world, and of salvation in the world to come. It would be difficult to find a more audacious and presumptuous violation of the words of Jesus than the Athanasian Creed, with its thrice-repeated curses against those who did not receive its doctrines. 2. We can have no correct knowledge of God except through revelation. 3. Jesus begins the revelation of the Father in this world, and completes it in the world to come. 4. By this exclusive claim as to the knowledge of the Father, Jesus asserts his own divinity. 5. Christ's exalted power comes by reason of his exalted being.]

D. Jesus' Invitation (Mt 11:28).

(a) 28 Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. [The preceding remarks are prefatory to this invitation. The dominion that Jesus exercises, the nature that he possess, and the knowledge that he can impart justify him in inviting men to come to him. The labor and the rest here spoken of are primarily those that affect souls. That is, the labor and the heavy burden that sin imposes, and the rest that follows the forgiveness of that sin. Incidentally, however, physical burdens are also made lighter by coming to Jesus because the soul is made stronger to bear them. The meekness and lowliness of Jesus lend confidence to those whom he

invites that no grievous exactions will be made of them. "Taking the yoke" is a symbolic expression. [289] It means, "Submit to me and become my disciple," for the yoke is symbolic of the condition of servitude--*Jer 27:11,12 Isa 9:4 Ac 15:10 Ga 5:1 1Ti 6:1.*]

Section 46

JESUS' FEET ANOINTED

(Galilee, July A.D. 28)

Lk 7:36-50

A. The Incident (Lk 7:36-38).

(c) 36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. [We learn from *Lk 7:40* that the Pharisee's name was Simon. Because the feast at Bethany was given in the house of Simon the leper, and because Jesus was anointed there also, some have been led to think that Luke is here describing this supper. See *Mt 26:6-13 Mk 14:3-9 Jn 12:1-8*. But Simon the leper was not Simon the Pharisee. The name Simon was one of the most common among the Jewish people. It was the Greek form of the Hebrew Simeon. The New Testament mentions nine and Josephus twenty Simons, and there must have been thousands of them in Palestine at that time. The anointing at Bethany was therefore a different occasion from this.] **And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.** [Literally, "reclined at meat." The old Jewish method of eating was to sit cross-legged on the floor or on a divan, but the Persians, Greeks and Romans reclined on couches, and the Jews, after the exile, borrowed this custom. We are not told in plain terms why the Pharisee invited Jesus to eat with him. The envy and cunning that characterized his sect leads us to be, perhaps, unduly suspicious that his motives were evil. The narrative, however, shows that his motives were somewhat akin to those of Nicodemus. He wished to investigate the character and claims of Jesus, and was influenced more by curiosity than by hostility--for [290] all Pharisees were not equally bitter (*Jn 7:45-52*). But he desired to avoid in any way compromising himself, so he invited Jesus to his house, but carefully omitted all the ordinary courtesies and attentions that would have been paid to an honored guest. Jesus accepted the invitation, for it was his custom to dine both with Pharisees and publicans, that he might reach all classes.] **37 And behold, a woman who was in the city, a sinner; and when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster cruse of ointment.** [The cruse that she brought with her was called "an alabaster." Orientals are very fond of ointments and use them upon the face and hair with profusion. They were scented with sweet-smelling vegetable essence, especially that extracted from the myrtle. Originally the small vases, jars or broad-mouthed bottles, in which the ointment was stored, were carved from alabaster, a variety of gypsum, white, semi-transparent and costly. Afterwards other material was used, but the name "alabaster" was still applied to such cruses. That used by Mary of Bethany was probably the highest grade ointment in the highest-priced cruse (*Jn 12:3*). The context here [291] leaves us free to suppose that both the cruse and the unguent were of a cheaper kind], **38 and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.** [To see this scene we must picture Jesus stretched upon the couch and reclining on his left elbow. The woman stood at the foot of the couch behind his feet. His feet were bare; for every guest on entering left his sandals outside the door. The woman, feeling strongly the contrast between the sinlessness of Jesus and her own stained life, could not control her emotions. The tears poured down in a flood upon his naked feet, as she bent down to kiss them; and deeming them rather fouled than washed by this, she hastened to wipe them off with the only towel she had, the long tresses of her own hair, after which she put the ointment upon them.]

B. Reaction to the Incident (Lk 7:39).

(c) 39 Now when the Pharisee that had bidden him saw it, he spoke within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is that touched him, that she is a sinner. [Public opinion said that Jesus was a prophet (*Lk 7:16*), and Simon, from the Pharisee's standpoint, feared that it might be so; and therefore no

doubt felt great satisfaction in obtaining this evidence that he accepted as disproving the claims of Jesus. He judged that if Jesus had been a prophet he would have both known and repelled this woman. He would have known her because discerning of spirits was part of the prophetic office--especially the messianic office (*Isa 11:2-4 1Ki 14:6 2Ki 1:1-3 5:26*). Compare *Jn 2:25*. He would have repelled her because, according to the Pharisaic tradition, her very touch would have rendered him unclean. The Pharisees, according to later Jewish writings, forbade women to stand nearer to them than four cubits. Thus reasoning, Simon concluded that Jesus had neither the knowledge nor the holiness that are essential to a prophet. His narrow mind did not [292] grasp the truth that it was as wonderful condescension for Christ to sit at his board as it was to permit this sinner to touch him.]

C. Parable: Forgiving Moneylender (Lk 7:40-43).

(c) 40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto you. And he said, Teacher, say on. [Jesus heard Simon's thoughts (*Lk 7:39*) and answered them. Simon called Jesus "Teacher," little thinking how fully Jesus was about to vindicate the justice of the title, thus given him in compliment.] **41 A certain lender had two debtors: the one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.** [The denarius was a silver coin issued by Rome that contained nearly seventeen cents' worth of that precious metal. The two debts, therefore, represented respectively about seventy-five dollars, and seven dollars and fifty cents. But at that time a denarius was a day's wages for a laboring man (*Mt 20:2,4,12,13*), so that the debt is properly translated into our language as if one owed five hundred and the other fifty days of labor.] **42 When they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both.** [In this brief parable God represents the lender, and the woman the big and Simon the little debtor. Simon was (in his own estimation) ten times better off than the woman; yet they were each in an equally hopeless case--having nothing with which to pay; and each in an equally favored case--being offered God's free forgiveness. Forgiveness is expressed in the past tense in the parable, but merely as part of the drapery and not for the purpose of declaring Simon's forgiveness. It indicates no more than that Jesus was equally *willing* to forgive both. But the Pharisee did not seek his forgiveness, and the absence of all love in him proved that he did not have it.] **Which of them therefore will love him most?** [It was Jesus' custom to thus often draw his verdicts from the very lips of the parties concerned--*Lk 10:36,37 Mt 21:40,41*.] **43 Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most.** [The "suppose" of Simon betrays a touch of supercilious irony, showing that the Pharisee thought the question very trivial. **And he said unto him, You have rightly judged.** [Simon's words were more [293] than an answer. They were a judgment as well. Jesus had concealed Simon's conduct under the vestments of a parable, and had thus led him to unwittingly pronounce sentence against himself. Simon, the little debtor, was a debtor still; having no acts of gratitude to plead in evidence of his acquittal. From this point the words of Jesus take up the conduct of Simon that we should here picture to ourselves. We must imagine the guests arriving; Simon receiving them with all courtesy, and embracing each in turn; slaves ready to wash the dust of the road from their sandaled feet, and to pour sweet olive oil over their heads to soften the parched skin. See *Gn 18:4 19:2 24:32 Ru 3:3 1Sa 25:41 Ps 23:5 141:5 Ec 9:8 Da 10:3 Am 6:6 Mt 6:17*. But there is one of the guests not thus treated. He is but a poor man, invited as an act of condescending patronage. No kiss is offered him!]

D. Forgiveness for a Sinful Woman (Lk 7:44-50).

(c) 44 And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Do you see this woman? [Simon is to look upon the woman as one whose actions stood in contrast to his own.] **I entered into your house, you gave me no water for my feet: but she has wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair.** [Jesus here draws the first contrast. In the East, where the feet without stockings are placed in sandals instead of shoes, water becomes essential to one who would enter a house. The guest should be afforded an opportunity to wash the dust from his feet, not only for comfort's sake, but also that he might not be humiliated by soiling the carpets on which he walked, and the cushions on which he reclined. The trifling courtesy Simon had omitted; but the woman had amply supplied his omission, bathing the Lord's feet with her tears.] **45 You gave me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet.** [We

have here the second contrast. A kiss was the ordinary salutation of respect in the East. Sometimes the hand was [294] kissed, and sometimes the cheek (2Sa 15:5 19:39 Mt 26:49 Ac 20:37 Ro 16:16). We may note incidentally that we have no record of a kiss upon the cheek of Jesus except that given by Judas (Mt 26:48,49 Mk 14:44,45 Lk 22:47). The woman had graced the feet of Jesus with those honors that Simon had withheld from his cheek.] **46 My head with oil you did not anoint: but she has anointed my feet with ointment.** [Anointing was a mark of honor that was usually bestowed upon distinguished guests (Am 6:6 Ps 23:5 141:5). To anoint the feet was regarded as extreme luxury (Pliny, *Natural History*, 13.4). In this third case Jesus makes a double comparison. To anoint the feet was more honored than to anoint the head, and the ointment was a more valuable and worthy offering than the mere oil that ordinary courtesy would have proffered.] **47 Wherefore I say unto you, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.** [Her love was the result, and not the cause, of her forgiveness. Our sins are not forgiven because we love God, but we love God because they are forgiven (1Jo 4:19). Such is the inference of the parable, and such the teaching of the entire New Testament. We search the story in vain for any token of love on the part of Simon.] **48 And he said unto her, Your sins are forgiven.** [See on Mk 2:5.] **49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that even forgives sins?** [They were naturally surprised at this marvelous assumption of authority, but in the light of what had just been said they did not dare to express themselves. Ignorance of Christ's person and office caused them to thus question him. We are not told that Simon joined in asking this question.] **50 And he said unto the woman, Your faith has saved you; go in peace.** [Jesus did not rebuke his questioners, because the process of forgiveness was something that could not be demonstrated to their comprehension, and hence their error could not be made clear. Jesus attributed her forgiveness to her faith. "Peace" was the Hebrew and "grace" [295] was the Greek salutation. It is here used as a farewell, and means "Go in the abiding enjoyment of peace."]

Section 47

SECOND TOUR OF GALILEE

July-August A.D. 28

Lk 8:1-3

(c) **1 And it came to pass soon afterwards** [that is, soon after his visit to the Pharisee--Lk 7:36], **that he went about through cities and villages** [thus making a thorough circuit of the region of Galilee], **preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God** [John had preached repentance as a preparation for the kingdom; but Jesus now appears to have preached the kingdom itself, which was indeed to bring good tidings--Ro 14:17], **and with him the twelve** [We here get a glimpse of the tireless activities of the ministry of Christ. Journeying from place to place, he was constantly preaching the gospel publicly to the people, and as ceaselessly instructing his disciples privately. The twelve [296] were now serving an apprenticeship in that work on which he would soon send them forth alone. From this time forth we can hardly look upon Capernaum as the home of Jesus. From now to the end of his ministry his life was a wandering journey, and he and his apostles sustained by the offerings of friends. The circuit of Galilee here mentioned is peculiar to Luke], **2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary that was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out** [What a change of service, from demoniac bondage to the freedom of Christ!], **3 and Joanna the wife of Chuzas Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered unto them of their substance.** [Mary's name indicates that she was a native of Magdala. The town was on the west shore of the lake, at the southeast corner of the plain. Mary Magdalene is not classed with restored profligates, but with those who were healed of infirmities. Joanna is mentioned again at Lk 24:10; of Susanna there is no other record, this being enough to immortalize her. Of Chuzas we know nothing more than what is stated here. "Steward" may be translated "administrator," "superintendent" or "governor." It conveys the impression of an officer of high rank. [297] Chuzas was no doubt a man of means and influence. As there was no order of

nobility in Galilee, and as such an officer might be nevertheless styled a nobleman, this Chuzas was very likely the nobleman of *Jn 4:46*. If so, the second miracle at Cana explains the devotion of Joanna to Jesus. The ministrations of these women shows the poverty of Christ and his apostles, and explains how they were able to give themselves so unremittingly to the work. Some of the apostles also may have had means enough to contribute somewhat to the support of the company, but in any event the support was meager enough, for Jesus was among the poorest of earth (*Lk 9:58 Mt 17:24 2Co 8:9*). We should note how Jesus began to remove the fetters of custom that bound women, and to bring about a condition of universal freedom (*Ga 3:28*).

Section 48

ACCUSATIONS OF BLASPHEMY

(Galilee, July, A.D. 30)

Mt 12:22-37; Mk 3:19-30; Lk 11:14-23

A. Event That Triggered the Attack (Mt 12:22-24; Mk 3:22-23; Lk 11:14-16).

(a) **22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a demon, blind and dumb: {(c) 14 And he was casting out a demon *that was dumb*.} (a) and he healed him, insomuch that (c) it came to pass, when the demon was gone out, (a) the dumb man spoke and saw.** [The man was brought because he could not come alone. While Luke does not mention the blindness, the similarity of the narratives makes it most likely that he is describing the same circumstances as Matthew and Mark, so we have combined the three accounts.] **23 And all the multitudes (c) marveled. (a) were amazed, and said, Can this be the son of David?** [It was a time for amazement, for Jesus had performed a triple if not a quadruple miracle, restoring liberty, hearing and sight, and granting the power of speech. It wakened the hope that Jesus might be the Messiah, the son of David, but their hope is expressed in the most cautious manner, not only being stated as a question, but as a question that expects a negative answer. The question, however, was well calculated to arouse the envious opposition of the Pharisees.] **(c) 15 But some of them said** [that is, some of the multitude. Who these "some" were is revealed by Matthew and Mark (*Mt 12:24 Mk 3:22*), thus:], **(a) 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they (b) 22 and the scribes that came down from Jerusalem said, (a) This man does not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of the demons. (b) He has Beelzebub, and, by the prince of the demons he casts out the demons.** [Beelzebub is a corruption of Beelzebub, *the god of the fly*. There was a tendency among the heathen to name [299] their gods after the pests that they were supposed to avert. How Beelzebub became identified with Satan in the Jewish mind is not known. In opposing the influence of Jesus and corrupting the public mind, these Pharisees showed a cunning worthy of the cultivated atmosphere, the seat of learning whence they came. Being unable to deny that a miracle was wrought, they sought to so explain it as to reverse its potency, making it an evidence of diabolical rather than divine power. Their explanation was cleverly plausible, for there were at least two powers by which demons might be cast out, as both were invisible, it might appear impossible to decide whether it was done in this instance by the power of God or of Satan. It was an explanation very difficult to disprove, and Jesus himself considered it worthy of the very thorough reply that follows.] **(c) 16 And others, trying him, sought of him a sign from heaven.** [These probably felt that the criticisms of the Pharisees were unjust, and wished that Jesus might put them to silence by showing some great sign, such as the pillar of cloud that sanctioned the guidance of Moses, or the descending fire that vindicated Elijah.] **(b) 23 And he called them unto him** [thus singling out his accusers]

B. Jesus' Logic (Mt 12:25-28; Mk 3:23-26; Lk 11:17-20).

(a) **25 And {(c) 17 But} (a) knowing their thoughts he said unto them, (b) in parables** [We shall find that Jesus later replied to those who sought a sign. He here answers his accusers in a fourfold argument. First argument:], **How can Satan cast out Satan? (a) Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house [family] divided against itself shall not stand: (b) 24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. (c) A house *divided* against a house falls. {(b) 25 And if a house be**

divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.} (a) 26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; (c) 18 And if Satan also is [300] divided against himself, (a) how then shall his kingdom stand? (b) 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. (c) because you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebub. [The explanation given by the Pharisees represented Satan as divided against himself; robbing himself of his greatest achievement; namely, his triumph over the souls and bodies of men. Jesus argues, not that Satan *could* not do this, but that he *would* not, and that therefore the explanation that supposes him to do it is absurd. We should note that Jesus here definitely recognizes two important truths: 1. That the powers of evil are organized into a kingdom with a head (Mt 13:29 25:41 Mk 4:15 Lk 22:31). 2. That division tends to destruction. Second argument:] 19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. [The sons of the Pharisees were not their children, but their disciples (2Ki 2:3 Ac 19:13,14). Josephus mentions these exorcists (The Antiquities of the Jews, 8.2,5, and The Wars of the Jews, 7.6,3), and there is abundant mention of them in later rabbinical books. Our Lord's reference to them was merely for the purpose of presenting an *argumentum ad hominem*, and in no way implies that they exercised any *real* power over the demons; nor could they have done so in any marked degree, else the similar work of Christ would not have created such an astonishment. The argument therefore is this, I have already shown you that it is against *reason* that Satan cast out Satan; I now show you that it is against *experience*. The only instances of dispossession that you can cite are those of your own disciples. Do they act by the power of Satan? They therefore shall be your judges as to whether you have spoken rightly in saying that Satan casts out Satan. Third argument:] 20 But if I with the finger {(a) by the Spirit} of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you. [The finger of God signifies the power of God [301] (Ex 8:19 31:18 Ps 8:3). [Jesus exercised this power in unison with the Spirit of God. Jesus here draws a conclusion from the two arguments presented. Since he does not cast out by Satan, he must cast out by the power of God, and therefore his actions demonstrated the potential arrival of the kingdom of God. The occasional accidental deliverance of exorcists might be evidence of the flow and ebb of a spiritual battle, but the steady, daily conquests of Christ over the powers of evil presented to the people the triumphant progress of an invading kingdom. It is an argument against the idea that there was collusion between Christ and Satan.]

C. The Parable (Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27; Lk 11:21-22).

Fourth argument:] (c) 21 When the strong *man* fully armed guards his own court, his goods are in peace: 22 but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he takes from him his whole armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. (b) 27 But no one can {(a) 29 Or how can one} enter into the house of the strong *man*, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong *man*? and then will he spoil his house. [Satan is the strong man, his house the body of the demoniac, and his goods the evil spirit within the man. Jesus had entered his house, and robbed him of his goods; and this proved that, instead of being in league with Satan, he had overpowered Satan. Thus Jesus put to shame the Pharisees, and caused the divinity of his miracle to stand out in clearer light than ever. The power of Jesus to dispossess the demon was one of his most convincing credentials, and its meaning now stood forth in its true light.]

D. A Warning (Mt 12:30-37; Mk 3:28-30).

(a) 30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathers not with me scatters abroad. [Jesus here addresses the bystanders. In the spiritual conflict between Jesus and Satan, neutrality is impossible. There are only two kingdoms, and every soul is either in one or the other, for there is no third. Hence one who fought Satan in the name of Christ was for Christ (Lk 9:50). In the figure of gathering and scattering, the people are compared to a flock of sheep that Jesus would gather into the fold, but that Satan and all who aid him (such as the Pharisees) would [302] scatter and destroy.] (b) 28 Verily (a) 31 Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy {(b) all their sins} shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies with which they shall blaspheme [Jesus here explains to the Pharisees the awful meaning of their

enmity. Blasphemy is any kind of injurious speech. It is the worst form of sin, as we see by this passage. This does not declare that every man shall be forgiven all his sins, but that all kinds of sin committed by various men shall be forgiven. The forgiveness is universal as to the sin, not as to the men]: **(a) but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak {(b) blaspheme} against the Holy Spirit has never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: (a) it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in what is to come. (b) 30 because they said, He has an unclean spirit.** [Blasphemy against the Son may be a temporary sin, for the one who commits it may be subsequently convinced of his error by the testimony of the Holy Spirit and become a believer (*1Ti 1:13*). But blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is in its nature an eternal sin, for if one rejects the evidence given by the Holy Spirit and ascribes it to Satan, he rejects the only evidence upon which faith can be based; and without faith there is no forgiveness. The difference in the two sins is therefore in no way due to any difference in the Son and Spirit *as to their degrees of sanctity or holiness*. The punishment is naturally eternal because the sin is perpetual. We see by Mark's statement that blasphemy against the Spirit consisted in saying that Jesus had an unclean spirit, that his works were due to Satanic influence, and hence wrought to [303] accomplish Satanic ends. We cannot call God Satan, nor the Holy Spirit a demon, until our state of sin has passed beyond all hope of reform. One cannot confound the two kingdoms of good and evil unless he does so maliciously and willfully. On unclean spirits, see on Mk 1:23.] **(a) 33 Either make the tree good, and its fruit good, or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit.** [The meaning and connection are: "Be honest for once; represent the tree as good, and its fruit as good, or the tree as evil, and its fruit as evil; either say that I am evil, and that my works are evil, or, if you admit that my works are good, admit that I am good also and not in league with Beelzebub."] **34 You offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.** [Realizing the hopelessness of this attempt to get an honest judgment out of dishonest hearts, Jesus plainly informs them as to the condition of their hearts. Their very souls were full of poison like vipers. Their sin lay not in their words, but in a condition of heart that made such words possible. The heart being as it was, the words could not be otherwise. "What is in the well will be in the bucket."] **35 The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.** [We have here a summary of the contrast given in *Mt 12:33,34*. The good heart of Jesus brought forth its goodness, as the evil hearts of the Pharisees brought forth their evil.] **36 And I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.** [It may have seemed to some that Jesus denounced too severely a saying that the Pharisees had hastily and lightly uttered. But it is the word inconsiderately spoken that betrays the true state of the heart. The hypocrite can talk like an angel if he be put on notice that his words are heard. Jesus here makes *words* the basis of the judgment of God. Elsewhere [304] we find it is *works* (*Ro 2:6 2Co 5:10*), and again we find it is *faith* (*Ro 3:28*). There is no confusion here. The judgment in its finality must be based upon our *character*. Our faith forms our character, and our words and works are indices by which we may determine what manner of character it is.]

Section 49

REPROOF FOR POTENTIAL FOLLOWERS

(Galilee)

Mt 12:38-45; Lk 11:29-36

A. Request for a Sign (Mt 12:38; Lk 11:29).

(c) **29 And when the multitudes were gathering together unto him, (a) 38 Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from you.** [Having been severely rebuked by Jesus, it is likely that the scribes and Pharisees asked for a sign that they might appear to the multitude more fair-minded and open to conviction than Jesus

had represented them to be. Jesus had just wrought a miracle, so that their request shows that they wanted something different. We learn from Mark (*Mk 8:11*) that they wanted a sign, not coming from him, but from heaven, such a sign as other prophets and leaders had given (*Ex 9:22-24 16:4 Jos 10:12 1Sa 7:9,10 12:16-18 1Ki 18:36-38 2Ki 1:10 Isa 38:8*). The request was the renewal of the one that had assailed him at the beginning of his ministry (*Jn 2:18*), and re-echoed the wilderness temptation to advance himself by vulgar display rather than by the power of a life of divine holiness.]

Discourse # 6
Sign Seekers
Mt 12:38-45; Lk 11:24-36

(c) 29 And when the multitudes were gathering together unto him, (a) 38 Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we want to see a sign from you. [Having been severely rebuked by Jesus, it is likely that the scribes and Pharisees asked for a sign that they might appear to the multitude more fair-minded and open to conviction than Jesus had represented them to be. Jesus had just wrought a miracle, so that their request shows that they wanted something different. We learn from Mark (*Mk 8:11*) that they wanted a sign, not coming from him, but from heaven, such a sign as other prophets and leaders had given (*Ex 9:22-24 16:4 Jos 10:12 1Sa 7:9,10 12:16-18 1Ki 18:36-38 2Ki 1:10 Isa 38:8*). In Jewish superstition it was held that demons and false gods could give signs *on earth*, but only the true God signs *from heaven*. The request was the renewal of the one that had assailed him at the beginning of his ministry (*Jn 2:18*), and re-echoed the wilderness temptation to advance himself by vulgar display rather than by the power of a life of divine holiness.] **39 But he answered and said unto them, {(c) he began to say,} This generation is an evil generation: it seeks after a sign; (a) An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign [305]** [While the Jews of that generation could well be accused literally of adultery, Jesus here evidently uses it in its symbolic sense as used by the prophets. They represented Israel as being married to God and as being untrue to him--*Ex 34:15 Jer 3:14,20*]; **and there shall no sign be given to it, (c) but the sign of Jonah. (a) the prophet** [They did not accept miracles of healing as a sign, and only one other kind of sign was given; namely, that of Jonah. Jonah was shown to be a true prophet of God, and Nineveh received him as such because he was rescued from the fish's belly, and Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead (*Ro 1:4*). Also see on Mt 16:4]: **40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights.** [Jesus was one full day, two full nights, and parts of two other days in the grave. But, as the Jews reckoned a part of a day as a whole day when it occurred at the beginning or end of a series, he was correctly spoken of as being three days in the grave. The Jews had three phrases, namely: "on the third day," "after three days," and "three days and three nights," which all meant the same thing; that is, three days, two of which might be fractional days. With them three full days and nights would be counted as four days unless the count began at sundown, the exact beginning of a day (*Ac 10:1-30*). For instances of Jewish computation of days, see *Gn 42:17,18 1Ki 12:5,12 Es 4:16 5:1 Mt 27:63,64*. The Greek word here translated "whale" is "sea monster." It is called in Jonah "a great fish" (*Jon 1:17*). Because of the supposed smallness of the whale's throat, many think that it was the white shark, which is still plentiful in the Mediterranean, and which sometimes measures sixty feet in length, and is large enough to swallow a man whole. But it is now a well-established fact that whales can swallow a man, and there are many instances of such swallowings on record. The expression "heart of the earth" does not mean its center. The Jews used the word "heart" to denote the interior of anything (*Eze 28:2*). The phrase is here [306] used as one that would emphatically indicate the actual burial of Christ.] **(c) 30 For even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.** [Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, situated on the Tigris River, and in its day the greatest city of the world. Jonah's preservation was a sign from heaven, because wrought without human instrumentality. The resurrection of Christ was such a sign to the Jews, but rejecting it, they continued to seek other signs--*1Co 1:22*.] **(a) 41**

The men of Nineveh shall stand up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. [Literally, "repented into the teaching of Jonah." The meaning is that they repented so that they followed the course of life that the preaching prescribed. The phrase, "stand up," refers to the Jewish and Roman custom that required the witness to stand up while testifying in a criminal case. The idea here is that the Ninevites, having improved the lesser advantage or privilege, would condemn the Jews for having neglected the greater. Nineveh's privilege may be counted thus: a sign-accredited prophet preaching without accompanying miracles, and a forty-day period of repentance. In contrast to this the Jewish privileges ran thus: the sign-accredited Son of God preaching, accompanied by miracles, in which many apostles and evangelists participated, a forty-year period in which to repent.] **42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: {(c) with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them:} for she came from the ends of the earth** [a Hebraism, indicating a great distance] **to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.** [The queen of Sheba is thought to be Arabia Felix, which lies in the southern part of the peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. But Josephus says she was from Ethiopia in Africa. Her testimony will also be based on the compared privileges, which [307] stand thus: notwithstanding the dangers and inconveniences, she came a great distance to be taught of Solomon, but the Jews rejected the teaching of the Son of God, though he brought it to them. The teaching of Solomon related largely to this world, but Christ taught as to the world to come.] **(a) 43 But the unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passes through waterless places** [places that are as cheerless to him as deserts are to man. On unclean spirits, see on Mk 1:23], **seeking rest, and does not find it.** [Rest is the desire of every creature. Jesus here gives us a graphic description of utter wretchedness.] **(c) and finding none, (a) 44 Then he says, I will return into {(c) turn back unto} my house** [he still claimed it as his property] **whence I came out. 25 And when he comes, he finds it (a) empty, swept, and garnished.** [It was empty, having no indwelling Spirit, swept of all righteous impressions and good influences, and garnished with things inviting to an evil spirit.] **(a) 45 Then** [seeing this inviting condition] **he goes, and takes with himself seven other spirits** [to reinforce and entrench himself] **more evil than himself** [while all demons are wicked they are not equally so], **and they enter in and dwell there** [take up their permanent abode there]: **and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation.** [In the application of this parable, we should bear in mind that it tells of *two* states or conditions experienced by *one* man, and the comparison is between these two states or conditions and not between the condition of the man and other men. Such being the parable, the application of it is plain, for Jesus says, "Even so shall it be unto this evil generation." We are not, therefore, to compare that generation with any previous one, as many do; for such would be contrary to the terms of the parable. It is simply an assertion that the last state of that generation would be worse than the first. The reference is to the continually increasing wickedness of the Jews, which culminated in the dreadful scenes that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. They were now like a man with one [308] evil spirit; they would then be like a man with seven more demons added, each of which was worse than the original occupant.] **(c) 33 No man, when he has lighted a lamp, puts it in a cellar, neither under a bushel, but on the stand, that they that come in may see the light. 34 The lamp of your body is your eye: when your eye is single, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is full of darkness.** [See on Mt 6:22-23.] **35 Look therefore whether the light that is in you be not darkness. 36 If therefore your whole body be full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining gives you light.** [This passage given in a slightly varying form is found in the Sermon on the Mount. See on Mt 5:15. It is here addressed to the Pharisees and reproves them for not using the light (his miracles) that was given to them. If they [309] had had an eye single to goodness, Christ's light would have enlightened their souls. But their eye was double; they desired wonders and spectacular signs.]

B. Outburst from an Enthusiast (Lk 11:27-28).

(c) 27 And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare you, and the breasts that you suckled. [This woman is the first on record to fulfill Mary's prediction (*Lk 1:48*). It is the only passage in the New Testament that even suggests the idolatry of Mariolatry, but it was far enough from it, being merely a womanly way of expressing admiration for the son by pronouncing blessings upon the mother who was so fortunate as to bear him.] **28 But he said, Yes rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.** [Jesus does not deny the fact that Mary was blessed, but corrects any false idea with regard to her by pointing to the higher honor of being a disciple that was attainable by everyone. Mary's blessing as a disciple was greater than her blessing as a mother; her moral and spiritual relation to Jesus was more precious than her maternal. Mary's blessings came through believing God's word (*Lk 1:45*).]

Section 50

JESUS AND HIS FAMILY

(Galilee)

Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8:19-21

A. Intention of his Family (Mt 12:46-47; Mk 3:31-32; Lk 8:19-20).

(a) 46 While he yet speaking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without seeking to speak to him. [Jesus was in a house, probably at Capernaum--*Mk 3:19 Mt 13:1*.] **(c) 19 and there came {(b) come} (c) to him his mother and (b) his brethren; (c) and they could not come at him for the crowd. (a) and, standing without, they sent unto him, calling him. 32 And the multitude was sitting about him** [We learn at *Mk 3:21*, that they came to lay hold of him because they thought that he was beside himself. It was for this reason that they came in a body, for their numbers would enable them to control him. Jesus had four brothers (*Mt 13:55*). Finding him teaching with the crowd about him, they passed the word in to him that they wished to see him outside. To attempt to lay hold of him in the midst of his disciples would have been rashly inexpedient. The fact that they came with Mary establishes the strong presumption that they were the children of Mary and Joseph, and hence the literal brothers of the Lord. In thus seeking to take Jesus away from his enemies Mary yielded to a natural maternal impulse that even the revelations accorded to her did not quiet. The brethren, too, acted naturally, for they were unbelieving--*Jn 7:5*.] **(a) 47 And one said {(b) they say} unto him, (c) 20 And it was told him, (a) Behold, your mother and your brothers (b) seek for you. (c) stand without, desiring to see you. (a) seeking to speak to you.** [310] [This message was at once an interruption and an interference. It assumed that their business with him was more urgent than his business with the people. It merited our Lord's rebuke, even if it had not behind it the even greater presumption of an attempt to lay hold on him.]

B. Jesus' Teaching (Mt 12:48-50; Mk 3:33-35; Lk 8:21).

(a) 48 But he answered {(b) 33 And he answered} (a) and said unto him that told him, (b) and said, {(c) and said unto them,} (a) Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? (b) 34 And looking round on them that sat round about him, (a) he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, {(b) said,} (a) Behold, my mother and my brethren! (c) My mother and my brethren are these that hear the word of God and do it. (b) 35 For whoever shall do the will of God, (a) my Father who in heaven, he {(b) the same} is my brother, and my sister, and mother. [In this answer Jesus shows that he brooks no interference on the score of earthly relationships, and explodes the idea of his subservience to his mother. To all who call on the "Mother of God," as Mary is blasphemously styled, Jesus answers, as he did to the Jews, "Who is my mother?" Jesus was then in the full course of his ministry as Messiah, and as such he recognized only spiritual relationships. Jesus admits three human relationships--"brother, sister, mother"--but omits the paternal relationship, since he had no Father, except God. It is remarkable that in the only two instances in which Mary figures in the ministry of Jesus prior to his crucifixion, she stands forth reprov'd by him (*Mt 12:50 Lk 8:21 Jn 2:4*). This fact not only rebukes those who worship her, but especially corrects the doctrine of her immaculate conception.] [311]

Section 51
DINING WITH A PHARISEE
(Galilee)
Lk 11:37-54

A. Criticism of a Pharisee (Lk 11:37-38).

(c) 37 Now as he spoke, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. [The repast to which Jesus was invited was a morning meal, usually eaten between ten and eleven o'clock. The principal meal of the day was eaten in the evening. Jesus dined with all classes, with publicans and Pharisees, with friends and enemies.] **(c) 38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not first bathed himself before dinner.** [The Pharisee marveled at this because the tradition of the elders required them to wash their hands before eating, and, if they had been in a crowd where their bodies might have been touched by some unclean person, they washed their whole bodies. Jesus then pronounced three woes on the Pharisees.]

B. Woe on the Pharisees (Lk 11:39-44).

(c) 39 The Lord said to him [Our Lord's speech is unsparingly denunciatory. To some it seems strange that Jesus spoke thus in a house where he was an invited guest. But our Lord never suspended the solemn work of reproof out of mere compliment. He was governed by higher laws than those of conventional politeness], **Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness. 40 You foolish ones, did not he that made the outside make the inside also?** [Since God made both the inner and the outer, a true reverence for him requires that both parts be alike kept clean.] **41 But give for alms those things that are within; and behold, all things are clean unto you.** [That is, give your inner life, your love, mercy, compassion, etc., to the blessing of mankind, and then your inner purity will make you proof [312] against outward defilement--*Mt 15:11 Tit 1:15 Ro 14:4.*] **42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb** [see on *Mt 23:23*], **and pass over justice and the love of God: but these you ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone.** [The Pharisees in paying the tenth part, or tithe, to God, were so exact that they offered the tenth part of the seed even of the spearmint, rue and other small garden herbs, and many contended that the very stalks of these plants should also be tithed. Jesus commends this care about little things, but nevertheless rebukes the Pharisees because they were as careless about big things, such as justice, and the love of God, as they were careful about herb seed. Rue was a small shrub about two feet high, and is said to have been used to flavor wine, and for medicinal purposes.] **43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for you love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces.** [They were vainglorious, loving the honors and attentions given by men (*Jn 5:44*). They loved on weekdays to be saluted in the marketplace, and on the Sabbath to sit in the semi-circular row of seats that were back of the lectern, or desk of the reader, and that faced the congregation. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39.*] **44 Woe unto you! for you are as the tombs that appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.** [According to the Mosaic law, any one who touched a grave was rendered unclean (*Nm 19:16*). That they might not touch graves and be made unclean without knowing it, the Jews whitewashed their graves and tombs once a year. But Jesus likens a Pharisee to graves that defiled men unawares. Their hypocrisy concealed their true nature, so that men were injured and corrupted by their influence without being aware of it. Jesus pronounces three woes upon the Pharisees for three sins, namely: 1. Hypocrisy, shown in pretending to be very careful when they were really extremely careless; 2. Vainglory (*Lk 11:43*); 3. Corruption of the public morals--*Lk 11:44.*]

C. Woe on the Lawyers (Lk 11:45-54).

(c) 45 And one of the lawyers answering says unto him, Teacher, in saying this you reproach us also. [Lightfoot supposes that a [313] scribe was one who copied the law of Moses, while a lawyer expounded the oral law or traditions of the elders. But it is more likely that the terms were used interchangeably. They leaned to the Pharisee party, and hence this one felt the rebuke that Jesus addressed to that party. The scribe intimated that Jesus had spoken hastily, and his speech is a suggestion to Jesus to correct or modify his unguarded words. But Jesus made no mistakes and spoke no hasty words.] **46 And he said, Woe unto you lawyers also! for you load men with burdens grievous to be carried, and you yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.** [We have seen in the traditions with regard to the Sabbath how these Jewish lawyers multiplied the burdens that Moses had placed upon the people. They were careful to lay these burdens upon others, but equally careful not to bear them themselves--no, not even to keep the law of Moses itself--*Mt 23:2,3*.] **47 Woe unto you! for you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. 48 So you are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers: for they killed them, and you build *their tombs*.** [Tombs were usually dug in the rock in the sides of hills or cliffs. To build them therefore was to decorate or ornament the entrance. Though their act in building the sepulchers was a seeming honor to the prophets, God did not accept it as such. A prophet is only truly honored when his message is received and obeyed. The lawyers were not in fellowship with the prophets, but with those who murdered the prophets: hence the Savior pictures the whole transaction from the killing of the prophets to the building of their sepulchers as *one act* in which all concurred, and all of which were guilty.] **49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send unto them prophets and apostles; and *some* of them they shall kill and persecute; 50 that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this [314] generation** [The phrase "wisdom of God" has been very puzzling, for the words spoken by Jesus are not found in any Old Testament book. Among the explanations the best is what represents Jesus as quoting the trend or tenor of several prophecies such as *2Ch 24:19-22 36:14-16 Pr 1:20-33*. It may, however, be possible that Jesus is here publishing a new decree or conclusion of God, for the words specifically concerned the present generation. If so, Jesus assents to the decree of the Father by calling it "the wisdom of God," and the language is kindred to that at *Mt 11:25,26*]; **51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary: yes, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.** [Abel is accounted a prophet because his form of sacrifice prefigured that of Christ. His murder is described at *Gn 4:1-8*, the first historical book of the Bible, while that of Zachariah is described at *2Ch 24:20-22*, in the last historical book of the Old Testament. From the record of one, therefore, to the record of the other embraces the entire catalog of the Old Testament martyrs. That generation sanctioned all the sins of the past and went beyond them to the crucifixion of the Son of God. The best comment on this passage is the parable at *Lk 20:9-16*. God made that generation the focus of the world's light and privilege, but the men of that time made it the focus of the world's wickedness and punishment. The punishment began about thirty-seven years later in the war with Rome, which lasted five years and culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.] **52 Woe unto you lawyers! for you took away the key of knowledge: you entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in you hindered.** [A true knowledge of the Scriptures was a key that opened the door to the glories of Christ and his kingdom. This the lawyer had given away by teaching not the contents of the book, but the rubbish and trifles of tradition. They did not open the door for themselves, and by their [315] pretentious interference they confused others in their efforts to open it.] **53 And when he had come out from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press upon *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things; 54 laying wait for him, to catch something out of his mouth.** [They plied him with many questions, hoping that they could irritate him into making a hot or hasty answer. For methods used to entrap Jesus see *Mt 22:15-17,23-28,34-36,46*.]

Section 52 A DISCOURSE BY JESUS

(Galilee)
Lk 12:1-59

Discourse # 7 Pharisaical Hypocrisy and Other Issues 12:1-59

A. Warnings and Encouragements (Lk 12:1-12).

(c) 1 In the meantime [that is, while these things were occurring in the Pharisee's house], **when the many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another** [in their eagerness to get near enough to Jesus to see and hear], **he began to say unto his disciples first of all** [that is, as the first or most appropriate lesson], **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.** [This admonition is the key to the understanding of the principal part of the sermon that follows. The spirit of Phariseeism was one that sought the honor of men, and feared men rather than God. It was a spirit that yielded to public opinion, and, though seemingly very religious, was really devoid of all true loyalty to God. There were trials and persecutions ahead of Christ's followers in which no Pharisaic spirit could survive. The spirit of hypocrisy works in two ways: it causes the bad man to hide his badness for fear of the good man, and the good man to hide his goodness for fear of the bad man. It is this latter operation against which Jesus warns, and the folly of [316] which he shows.] **2 But there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 3 Therefore whatever you have said in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and what you have spoken in the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.** [Many fearing the storm of persecution that was soon to come upon the disciples would attempt to conceal their faith, but the attempt would be vain, for one could not even trust his own family (*Lk 12:51-53*) to keep silent about what was said even in the inner chambers of the home. Bold speech would be best. The flat tops of Eastern houses were places from whence public proclamations were made.] **4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will warn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, who after he has killed has power to cast into hell; yes, I say unto you, Fear him.** [It would be a time of fear, but the fear of God must dominate the fear of man. (See on Lk 1:30.) The fear of God should cause them to speak out, though the fear of man bade them be silent--*Ac 4:18-21*.] **6 Are not five sparrows sold for two pence? and not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God?** [The Roman *as* here rendered "penny," was worth about four-fifths of a cent. Two sparrows were sold for a penny (*Mt 10:29*). For two pennies, an extra one was thrown into the bargain, yet even it, so valueless, was not forgotten of God.] **7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: you are of more value than many sparrows.** [These words assured them that whatever they might be called upon to undergo they would be at all times the objects of God's special care and providence--also see on Lk 1:30.] **8 Also I say unto you, Every one who shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: 9 but he that denies me in the presence of men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.** [These words were intended to strengthen those who loved honor or [317] feared disgrace. If the disgrace of being cast out of the synagogue tempted them to deny Christ, or the honors given by their fellowmen seemed too precious to be sanctified for Christ's sake, they were to remember that the confession or denial of Jesus involved eternal honor or disgrace in the presence of the angelic host.] **10 And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven.** [Persecution would urge them to blasphemy (*Ac 26:11*). In his hour of trial a disciple must remember the tender compassion of the Master against whom he is urged to speak, and the extreme danger of passing beyond the line of forgiveness in his blasphemy. For blasphemy against the Holy Spirit see on Mt 12:32.] **11 And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what you shall answer, or what you shall say** [on the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39]: **12 for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in**

that very hour what you ought to say. [The captive disciple planning his defense would be tempted to attempt hypocritical concealment or dissimulation. To prevent this, Jesus admonishes his hearers to rely upon the Holy Spirit for their utterance at such times. How fully such reliance was honored is shown in the apology of Stephen before the Sanhedrin (*Ac 7:2-53*), in Peter's defense before the tribunal (*Ac 4:8-20*), and in Paul's justification of his course, both before Felix (*Ac 24:10-21*) and Agrippa (*Ac 26:1-29*). See also *Mt 10:19 Mk 13:11*.]

B. Parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:13-21).

(c) 13 And one out of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. [Some one in the multitude, seeing the authority and justice of Jesus, thought it would be wise to appeal to him to assist him in getting his brother to rightly divide the inheritance.] **14 But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?** [Jesus laid down the general laws of justice and generosity, but he did not enforce these laws by any other power than love (*Jn 14:15*). If love toward Jesus did not move this brother to rightly divide the inheritance, the injured party must look to the state and not to Jesus for [318] assistance.] **15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness** [Jesus made the incident the text for an admonition. Covetousness made one brother say, "Divide," and the other one say, "No, I will not"; so Jesus warned against covetousness]: **for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses.** [A man's goods are no part of his life, and so they cannot preserve it. It is lengthened or shortened, blessed or cursed, at the decree of God. Covetousness is an inordinate desire for earthly possession. A clear view of the limitations of the power of property quenches covetousness; and Jesus gives such a view in the following parable.] **16 And he spoke a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully** [This man's sin was not theft or extortion. His wealth came to him honestly as a blessing from God]: **17 and he reasoned within himself, saying** [his words betray his sin--his covetousness], **What shall I do, because I have nowhere to put my fruits?** **18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I put all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have much goods** [*Pr 1:32*] **laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.** [It is a short speech, but it reveals character. The man's selfishness is shown in that he uses the pronoun "I" six times, and says nothing of anyone else. His covetous love of possessions is shown by the word "my," which he uses five times. Compare his words with those of Nabal at *1Sa 25:11*. In his speech to his soul he asserts his trust that his "abundance" is a guarantee of "many years" of happy life; but it did not guarantee one day. The Eastern barn is a pit or dry cistern built underground with an opening at the top. These the man proposed to enlarge by pulling down the walls or sides and extending them.] **20 But God said unto him** [God may be represented as saying what he does], **You foolish** [319] **one** [His folly was shown in several ways: 1. He hoarded his goods instead of using them for his fellowmen; 2. Ownership of goods deceived him into thinking that he owned time also; 3. He thought to satisfy the hunger of the soul with the food of the body; 4. In commanding his soul in such a way as to show that he forgot that God could command it also], **this night is your soul required of you** [the man said "many years" (*Lk 12:19*), but God said "this night"]; **and the things that you have prepared, whose shall they be?** [Death generally scatters possessions broadcast (*Ps 39:6 Ec 2:18,19*). For an echo of these words see *Jas 4:13-15*.] **21 So is he that lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.** [To be rich in character is to be rich toward God. But we may be rich towards him by making him the repository of our hopes and expectations.]

C. Teaching about Worry (Lk 12:22-34).

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what you shall eat; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. 23 For the life is more than the food, and the body than the raiment. 24 Consider the ravens, that they sow not, neither reap; which have no store chamber nor barn; and God feeds them: how much more value are you than the birds! 25 And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit

unto the measure of his life? 26 If then you are not able to do even what is least, why are you anxious concerning the rest? [If you cannot add one little moment to your life, why should you be anxious about the smaller concerns of property?] 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory [So 3:6-11] was not arrayed like one of these. 28 But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more shall he clothe you, O you of little faith? 29 And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, neither be of doubtful mind. 30 For all these things do the nations of the [320] world seek after: but your Father knows that you have need of these things. 31 Yet seek his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you. [This passage Lk 12:22-31 (excepting Lk 12:26) will be found almost verbatim at Mt 6:25-33.] 32 Fear not [see on Lk 1:30], little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell what you have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses that do not become old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief draws near, neither moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. [The latter part of this section will be found at Mt 6:20,21. The original for the words "little flock" is a double diminutive, indicating at once the extreme smallness of the band of disciples, and also the tenderness of the Master for them. They are exhorted to remember that they are the heirs of the heavenly kingdom, and that their treasures are there. They are told to sell their possessions and give, because their official position in the kingdom at that time required it. Compare 1Co 7:36. Purses were bound to the girdles, so that if a hole wore in them, their contents were lost.]

D. Exhortation to Watchfulness (Lk 12:35-48).

Having discussed the folly of amassing and trusting in earthly riches, and the wisdom of trusting in God, and amassing heavenly riches, Jesus passes to a new theme; namely: a watchful service and its rewards. He may have been led into this theme by some interruption, such as that given at Lk 12:13 or that at Lk 12:41, or it may have been suggested to him by his own words about the little flock and the kingdom. The kingdom was not to come in a day, and the little flock must watch patiently and serve faithfully before his coming--Lk 19:11-13.] 35 Let your loins be girded about [the long Oriental robe had to be lifted up and girded at the waist before the feet could step quickly--1Ki 18:46], and your lamps burning [this was needful; for Oriental weddings take place at night]; 36 and you yourselves be like unto men looking for their lord, when he will return from the marriage feast; that [321] when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open unto him. [Thus honoring him by a speedy welcome.] 37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he comes shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. [The apostles had a foretaste of this honor on the evening of the last Passover--Jn 13:4,5.] 38 And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants. [Originally the Jews had three watches (La 2:19 Jud 7:19 1Sa 11:11); but, following the Romans, they now had four watches. The second and third watches lasted from 9 P.M. to 3 A.M. The first watch is not mentioned because the marriage took place in it, and the fourth is not mentioned because in the latter part of it the day dawns and the virtue of watching was over--Lk 13:35.] 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be broken through. [Jesus illustrates watchfulness by a second figure. To some the coming of Jesus will be like that of a master whom they have served more or less faithfully. To others his coming will seem like that of a plunderer who comes in suddenly and deprives them of all they have. The Oriental houses were mostly made of mud or sun-dried bricks. Hence it was so easy to dig a hole in the wall than that the thief preferred to enter that way rather than to break open the door.] 40 Be also ready: for in an hour that you think not the Son of man comes. [These words of warning confront every generation.] 41 And Peter said, Lord, are you speaking this parable unto us, or even unto all? [Peter wished to know if the exhortation to watchfulness applied merely to the apostles or to all who heard.] 42 And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and wise

steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant, whom his [322] lord when he comes shall find so doing. [The answer of Jesus shows that he especially addressed the disciples, for a steward is distinct from the household. On him the whole burden and care of the domestic establishment rested. Thus Jesus showed that he meant the disciples, yet did not exclude any who heard from profiting by his discourse. Fidelity is the first requisite in a steward, and wisdom is the second. All Christians are stewards; preachers, elders, Sunday-school teachers, etc., are stewards of place and office. Rich men, fathers, etc., are stewards of influence and possessions.] **44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he has.** [As Pharaoh exalted Joseph--*Gn 39:4 41:39-41.*] **45 But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delays his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; 46 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he does not expect, and in an hour when he does not know, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the unfaithful.** [Cutting asunder was a punishment prevalent among ancient nations (*2Sa 12:31 Da 2:5 Heb 11:37*). The definite punishment is part of the drapery of the parable, and does not necessarily indicate the exact nature of the punishment that will be inflicted upon the wicked.] **47 And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.** [The greater the powers and opportunities entrusted to us, the larger the service that the Lord requires of us. Ignorance does not entirely excuse, for we are stewards, and it is the steward's duty to know his master's will. There is a guilt of ignorance as well as of transgression. The parable pointed to those who listened with delight to Jesus, but were careless about [323] knowing his meaning.]

E. Jesus Predicts Division (Lk 12:49-53).

Jesus passes on to set forth the severe tests to which the fidelity and vigilance of his disciples would be subjected in the times upon which they were about to enter.] **49 I came to cast fire [a firebrand] upon the earth; and what do I desire, if it is already kindled?** [The object of Christ's coming was to rouse men to spiritual conflict, to kindle a fire in the public mind that would purify the better part and destroy the worse. But the burning of this fire would excite men and stir up their passions and cause division and discord. The opposition of the Pharisees showed that this fire was already kindled. What therefore was left for Jesus to desire? His work as a teacher was practically accomplished. But there remained for him yet his duty as priest to offer himself as a sacrifice for the world's sin. To this work, therefore, he glances briefly forward.] **50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with [a flood of suffering; that is, the agony of the cross]; and how am I distressed [perplexed] till it be accomplished!** [The language here is broken, indicating the strong emotion of him who spoke it.] **51 Do you think that I have come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, No; but rather division: 52 for there shall be from now on five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.** [Jesus shows the hard plight of the disciple. If he were the young son he would find his father against him, and if he were the aged father he would be persecuted by the boy whom he had raised. Jesus came to conquer a peace by overcoming evil with good; a conflict in which the good must always suffer. His warfare was not, as the people supposed, a struggle against the heathen, but against the evil within them and around them. So long as evil abounded, these unhappy divisions would last.]

F. Interpreting the Times (12:54-59).

(c) 54 And he said to the [324] multitudes also, When you see a cloud rising in the west [the Mediterranean Sea lay in that quarter, and rains came from thence], immediately you say,

There comes a shower; and so it comes to pass. 55 And when *you see* a south wind blowing, you say, There will be a scorching heat; and it comes to pass. [The south winds of Palestine blew from the equator, crossed the intervening deserts and wildernesses, and were distressingly hot.] **56 You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the face of the earth and of the heaven; but how is it that you know not how to interpret this time?** [That is, this period that began with the ministry of John the Baptist. They could at once read the signs of nature so as to declare what kind of storm was coming (*Lk 12:54,55*). But with the political storm arising out of conflict with Rome impending over them, and with the spiritual storm that the teaching of Christ was bringing upon them, about to burst, they stood still in ignorant indifference, and made no provision for the times of trouble.] **57 And why even of yourselves do you not judge what is right?** [They had the warnings of both John and Jesus about matters and conditions that were so plain that they should have been able to see them without any warning whatever.] **58 For as you are going with your adversary before the magistrate, on the way, give diligence to be reconciled with him; lest perhaps he drag you unto the judge, and the judge shall deliver you to the officer, and the officer shall cast you into prison. 59 I say unto you, You shall by no means get out, till you have paid the very last mite.** [A mite (*lepton*,) was their smallest coin, being worth about two mills. For notes on this passage, see on Mt 5:25-26. The passage is an appeal to the people to avert the coming disasters. The Jewish rulers looked upon Jesus as their adversary. Accepting their valuation of him, Jesus counseled them to come to terms with him before it is too late.] [325]

Section 53

JESUS URGES REPENTANCE

Lk 13:1-9

A. Comments on Disasters (Lk 13:1-5).

(c) 1 Now there were some present at that very season [At the time when he preached about the signs of the times, etc. This phrase, however, is rather indefinite--*Mt 12:1 14:1*] **who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. (c) 2 And he answered and said unto them, Think you that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they have suffered these things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except you repent, you shall all in like manner perish.** [While Jesus spoke, certain ones came to him bearing the news of a barbaric act of sacrilegious cruelty committed by Pilate. It may have been told to Jesus by enemies who hoped to ensnare him by drawing from him a criticism of Pilate. But it seems more likely that it was told to him as a sample of the corruption and iniquity of the times. The Jews ascribed extraordinary misfortunes to extraordinary criminality. But the Jews erred in thus interpreting the event. Quantity of individual sin cannot safely be inferred from the measure of individual misfortune. It was true that the Galileans suffered because of sin, for all suffering is the result of sin. But it was not true that the suffering was punishment for unusual sinfulness. History, of course, says nothing of Pilate's act here mentioned. Pilate's rule was marked by cruelty towards Jews, and contempt for their religious views and rites.] **4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed [326] them, think you that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.** [Of this instance, also, there is no other historic mention. It, too was a small incident among the accidents of the day. The pool of Siloam lies near the southeast corner of Jerusalem. What tower this was is not known. As the city wall ran through the district of that fountain, it may possibly have been one of the turrets of that wall. This instance presents a striking contrast to the slaughter of which they had told him, for it was, 1. Inflicted upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and 2. It came upon them as an act of God. And Jesus therefore concludes that all shall likewise perish, he pronounces upon the entire people--Jews and Galilean alike--a punishment made certain by the decree of God. It is significant that the Jewish people did, as a nation, perish and lie buried under the falling walls of their cities, and the debris of their temple, palaces, and houses. But the word "likewise" is not to be pressed to cover this fact.]

B. Parable of the Barren Fig Tree (Lk 13:6-9).

(c) **6 And he spoke this parable** [this parable is closely connected with *Lk 13:3,5*, and *Lk 12:58,59*]; **A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found none. 7 And he said unto the vinedresser, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why does it also cumber the ground?** [It cumbered the ground by occupying ground that the vines should have had, and by interfering with their light by its shade, which is very dense.] **8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it** [a common method of treating the fig-tree to induce fruitfulness]; **9 and if it bear fruit henceforth, well: and if not, you shall cut it down.** [In this parable Jesus likened his hearers to a fig tree planted in a choice place--a vineyard, [327] the odd corners of which are still used as advantageous spots for fig-trees. There is no emphasis on the number three. It simply means that a fig-tree's failure to bear fruit for three years would justify its being cut down. Those to whom Jesus spoke had been called to repentance by the preaching both of John and of Jesus, and had had ample time and opportunity to bring forth the fruits of repentance, and deserved to be destroyed; but they would still be allowed further opportunity.]

Section 54 FIRST GREAT GROUP OF PARABLES (Beside Sea of Galilee) Mt 13:1-3; Mk 4:1-2; Lk 8:4

(a) **1 On that day Jesus went out of the house** [It is possible that Matthew here refers to the house mentioned at *Mk 3:19*. There are several indications in the Gospel narratives that these events transpired on the same day as those narrated in the previous lesson.], **and sat by the sea side. (b) 1 And again he began again to teach by the sea side.** [By the Sea of Galilee.] **And there is {(a) were} (b) gathered unto him a very great multitude, {(a) great multitudes,} (b) so that he entered into a boat, and sat in the sea** [that the multitudes might be better able to see and hear him]; **and all the multitude (a) stood on the beach. (b) were by the sea on the land. (c) 4 And when a great multitude came together, and they of every city resorted unto him, he spoke by a parable: (a) 3 And he spoke to them many things (b) 2 And he taught them many things in parables, and said unto them in his teaching, {(a) saying,} (b) 3 Hearken** [While Jesus had used parables [328] before, this appears to have been the first occasion when he strung them together so as to form a discourse. "Parable" comes from the Greek *paraballo*, which means, "I place beside" in order to compare. It is the placing of a narrative describing an ordinary event in natural life beside an implied spiritual narrative for the purpose of illustrating the spiritual.]

Discourse # 8 Seaside Sermon in Parables Mt 13:3-52; Mk 4:3-34; Lk 8:5-18
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A. Parable of the Sower (Mt 13:3-23; Mk 4:3-25; Lk 8:5-18).

(a) **Behold, (c) 5 The sower went forth to sow his seed** [Orientals live in cities and towns. Isolated farmhouses are practically unknown. A farmer may therefore live several miles from his field, in which case he literally "goes forth" to it]; **(b) 4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some seed {(a) seeds} fell by the way side, (c) and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of heaven (a) came and (c) devoured it up. {(a) them:}** [Palestine is an unfenced land, and the roads or paths lead through the fields. They are usually trodden hard by centuries of use. Grain falling on them could not take root. Its fate was either to be crushed by some foot, or to be carried off by some bird.] **(b) 5 And other {(a) others} fell upon the rocky places, (c) on the rock; (b) where it {(a) they} (b) had not much earth; and immediately it {(a) they} (b) sprang up, because it {(a) they} (b) had no deepness of earth: 6 and when the sun was risen, it was {(a) they were} (b) scorched; and because it {(a) they} (b) had no root, it {(a) they} withered**

away. (c) and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. [This seed fell upon a ledge of rock covered with a very thin coating of soil. Its roots were prevented by the rock from striking down to the moisture, and so under the blazing sun it died ere it had well begun to live.] (b) 7 And other {(a) others} (b) fell among {(a) upon (c) amidst} (b) the thorns, and the thorns grew up, (c) with it, (b) and [329] choked it, {(a) them:} (b) and it yielded no fruit. [Palestine abounds in thorns. Celsius describes sixteen varieties of thorny plants. Porter tells us that in the Plain of Gennesaret thistles grow so tall and rank that a horse cannot push through them.] 8 And others {(c) other} (b) fell into {(a) upon} (b) the good ground, (c) and grew, and brought forth a hundredfold, (b) and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. {(a) some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.} [Thirty-fold is a good crop in Palestine, but it is asserted that a hundred-fold has been reaped in the Plain of Esdraelon even in recent years. These four several conditions of soil may be readily found lying close to each other in the Plain of Gennesaret. A sowing like this described may have been enacted before the eyes of the people even while Jesus was speaking.] (c) As he said these things, he cried [a method of emphasis rarely employed by Jesus], (b) 9 And he said, (a) 9 He that {(b) Who} has ears to hear, let him hear. [A saying often used by Jesus (*Mt 11:15 13:9,43 Mk 4:9,23 7:16 Lk 8:8 14:35*). He intended it to prevent the people from regarding the parable as merely a beautiful description. It warned them of a meaning beneath the surface, and incited them to seek for it.] 10 And when he was alone [that is, after he had finished speaking all the parables. The explanation of the parable is put next to the parable to aid us in understanding it], (a) the disciples came, (b) they that were about him with the twelve (c) 9 and his disciples (b) asked him of the parables. (c) what this parable might be. (a) and said unto him, Why do you speak unto them in parables? [Their questions (*Mt 13:10 Lk 8:9*) show that as yet parables were unusual.] 11 And he answered and said unto them, Unto you is given to know the mysteries {(b) is given the mystery} (a) of the kingdom of heaven, {(b) of God:} (a) but to them (c) the rest (a) it is not given. [except] (c) in parables; (b) unto them that are without, all things are done in parables. [Jesus adapted his lessons to the condition of his pupils; hence his disciples might know what the multitude must not yet know (*1Co 2:6-11*). [330] Jesus already drew a line of demarcation between disciples and unbelievers; which line became more marked and visible after the church was organized at Pentecost. The word "mystery" in current language means what is not understood; but as used in the Scriptures it means what is not understood because it has not been revealed, but which is plain as soon as revealed. Bible mysteries are not unraveled by science, but are unfolded by revelation--*Col 1:26 1Ti 3:16 Mt 11:25,26 Re 17:5 Da 2:47*.] (a) 12 For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whoever has not, from him shall be taken away even what he has. [To understand this saying, we must remember that it was the teaching of Jesus that was under discussion. In the beginning of his ministry Jesus taught plainly, and all his hearers had equal opportunity to know his doctrine and believe in him. But from now on his teaching would be largely veiled in parables. These parables would enrich their knowledge and understanding of the believers; but they would add nothing to the store of unbelievers, and their efforts to understand the parables would withdraw their minds from the truths that they had already learned, so that they would either forget them or fail to profit by them. If we improve our opportunities, they bring us to other and higher ones; but if we neglect them, even the initial opportunities are taken away.] 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables: (b) 12 that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; {(c) that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.} (a) because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. (b) lest perhaps they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them. (a) 14 And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah [*Isa 6:9,10*], which says, By hearing you shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing you shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing. [331] And their eyes they have closed; Lest perhaps they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, and I should heal them. [The language here is an elaboration of the thoughts contained in *Mt 13:12*. The people saw Christ's miracles, but not in their true light; they heard his words, but not in their true meaning. Jesus could thus teach without hindrance, but, unfortunately for the unbelieving, they were hearing without obtaining any

blessing. In the original passage that Matthew quotes, Isaiah is apparently commanded to harden the hearts of the people. If read superficially, it might seem that God desired to harden their hearts. The true meaning is that God commanded Isaiah to teach, even though the people, by hardening themselves against his teaching, should be made worse rather than better by it. Thus, though rebellious, Israel might not be blessed by Isaiah's teaching; they might, by their example, waken a wholesome fear in their posterity, and cause it to avoid like a sin.] **16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.** [Jesus here addresses his disciples, who were a cheering contrast to the unbelievers.] **17 For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that you see, and saw them not; and to hear the things that you hear, and heard them not.** [Our Lord here gives us a glance into the very hearts of the prophets, and reveals to us their desire to be witnesses of Messiah's ministry. But knowing they were not to see their visions realized, they contented themselves with trying to understand the full meaning of their visions, that they might anticipate the days that were to come--1Pe 1:10-12.] **(b) 13 And he says unto them, Do you not know this parable? and how shall you know all the parables?** [This is a concession rather than a reproof. Parables could not be understood without a key; but a few examples of parables explained would furnish such a key.] **(a) 18 Hear then the parable of the sower. (c) 11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of [332] God. (b) 14 The sower sows the word. 15 And these {(c) those} (b) by the way side, where the word is sown; (a) are they that have heard; (b) and when they have heard,; (c) then (b) immediately Satan comes, (c) the devil, and takes away the word from their heart, (b) which has been sown in them. (c) that they may not believe and be saved. (a) 19 When any one hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the evil one comes, and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way side.** [The four soils are four hearts into which truth is sown. The first heart, represented by the wayside, is one that is too hardened for the Word to make any impression. It represents several classes of people, as: 1. Those whose hearts have been made insensible by the routine of meaningless rites and lifeless formalities. 2. Those who had deadened their sensibilities by perversity and indifference. 3. Those whose hearts were hardened by the constant march and countermarch of evil thoughts. God's word lies on the surface of such hearts, and Satan can use any insignificant or innocent passing thoughts as a bird to carry out of their minds anything that they may have heard. The preacher's voice has scarcely died away until some idle criticism of him or some careless bit of gossip about a neighbor causes them to forget the sermon.] **(b) 16 And these {(c) those} (b) in like manner are they that are sown upon the rocky places, {(c) rock} (b) who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it {(c) the word} with joy; (b) 17 and they {(c) these} (b) have no root in themselves, but endure {(c) who believe} for a while; (b) then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they stumble. (c) and in time of temptation fall away. (a) 20 And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that hears the word, and immediately with joy receives it; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while; and when tribulation or persecution arises because [333] of the word, immediately he stumbles.** [This shallow, rock-covered soil represents those who are deficient in tenacity of purpose. Those who receive the word, but whose impulsive, shallow nature does not retain it, and whose enthusiasm was as short-lived as it was vigorous. Any opposition, slight or severe, makes them partial or total apostates. As sunlight strengthens the healthy plant, but withers the sickly, ill-rooted one, so tribulation establishes real faith, but destroys its counterfeit.] **(b) 18 And others are they that are sown {(c) which fell} among the thorns, these are they that have heard, (b) the word, (c) and as they go on their way (b) the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. (c) they are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. (a) 22 And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that hears the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choked the word, and he becomes unfruitful.** [This third class represents those who begin well, but afterwards permit worldly cares to gain the mastery. These today outnumber all other classes, and perhaps they have always been so.] **(b) 20 And those are they that were sown upon {(c) 15 And that in} the good ground; these are such as in an honest and good heart, having heard {(b) hear} (c) the word, hold it fast, (b) and accept it, and bear (c) and bring forth fruit with patience. (b) thirtyfold, and sixtyfold,**

and a hundredfold. (a) **23 And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that hears the word, and understands it; who truly bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.** [Christianity requires three things: a sower, good seed or a pure gospel, and an honest hearer. All hearers are not equal in faithfulness. But we are not to take it that the diversity is limited to the three rates or proportions specified. Of the four hearts indicated, the first one hears, but heeds nothing (*Mk 4:4*); the second one heeds, but is checked by [334] external influences (*Mk 4:5,6*); the third heeds, but is choked by internal influences (*Mk 4:7*); the fourth heeds and holds fast until the harvest (*Mk 4:8*). Gallio exemplifies the first (*Ac 18:17*). Peter and Mark for a time exemplified the second (*Mk 14:66-72 Ac 12:25 13:13 15:37-39*). The rich ruler and Demas represent the third (*Mt 19:22 2Ti 4:10*), as does also Judas Iscariot. Cornelius and the Bereans (*Ac 10:33 17:11*) show us examples of the fourth.] (b) **21 And he said unto them, Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under a bed, and not to be put on the stand?** (c) **16 No man, when he has lighted a lamp, covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a bed; but puts it on a stand, that they that enter in may see the light.** [A passage similar to this is found at *Mt 5:15*.] (b) **22 For there is nothing hid, except that it should be manifested; {(c) that shall not be made manifest;} (b) neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light. {(c) that shall not be known and come to light.}** (b) **23 If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.** [This passage is often taken to indicate the exposure of all things on the day of judgment. While all things shall be revealed at the judgment, this passage does not refer to that fact. Jesus did not come to put his light under a bushel (*Mk 4:21*); that is, to hide his teaching. All inner instruction and private information was but temporary. Our Lord's design was to reveal, not conceal. What was now concealed was only to keep back that in the end it might be more fully known. Jesus covered his light as one might shelter a candle with his hand until the flame has fully caught hold of the wick.] **24 And he said unto them, (c) Take heed therefore how {(b) what} you hear: with what measure you use it shall be measured unto you; and more shall be given unto you. (c) for whoever {(b) he that} has, to him shall be given: (c) and whoever {(b) he that} has not, from him shall be taken away even what he has. {(c) which he thinks he has.}** [Most of this passage has been explained just [335] above. See on *Mk 4:12*. It warns us as to what we hear--things carnal or spiritual--and how we hear them, whether carefully or carelessly. As we measure attention unto the Lord, he measures back knowledge to us.]

B. Parable of the Seed Growing Itself (*Mk 4:26-29*).

(b) **26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; 27 and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knows not how.** [In the kingdom of grace, as well as in the kingdom of nature, we are laborers together with God. As preachers, teachers, or friends we sow the seed of the kingdom and God brings it to perfection (*1Co 3:6-9*). The seed here spoken of, being wheat or barley, needed no cultivation, and hence the planter let it alone, and did not know how it grew, whether fast or slow, or even whether it grew at all.] **28 The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he puts forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.** [Truth, spoken, lies hidden in the human breast, and we do not see its earliest stages of its development, but as it proceeds toward perfection, it becomes step by step more visible. In both fields the sower has little to do with the field between the time of sowing and reaping. In the spiritual field, however, it is well to keep sowing until the grain shows signs of sprouting.]

C. Parable of the Tares (*Mt 13:24-30*).

(a) **24 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that [336] sowed good seed in his field: 25 but while men slept [while they innocently rested, not while they were negligent], his enemy came and sowed tares [darnel, which closely resembles our cheat] also among the wheat, and went away.** [Though not common, there have been instances of such malignant mischief as is here indicated.] **26 But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.** [The difference between darnel and wheat does not become apparent until the two kinds of grain are nearly ripe.] **27 And the**

servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? why then does it have tares? 28 And he said unto them, An enemy has done this. The servants say unto him, Do you desire then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he says, No; lest perhaps while you gather up the tares, you root up the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. [The roots of wheat and darnel so intertwine that they cannot be separated without pulling up both. Jesus' explanation of this parable will be found below in Mt 13:36-43.]

D. Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven (Mt 13:31-35; Mk 4:30-34).

(a) 31 Another parable he set before them, saying, (b) 30 And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? [These questions are intended to emphasize the superior excellence of the kingdom. On the rhetorical plural "we," see on Jn 3:11.] 31 It (a) The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: (b) a grain of mustard seed, which, [337] when it is sown upon the earth, though (a) indeed (b) it be {(a) is} (b) less than all the seeds that are upon the earth [that is, the smallest of all the seeds that are sown in a garden], (a) but (b) 32 yet when it is sown, grows up, and (a) when it is grown, it is {(b) becomes} greater than all the herbs, and puts out great branches; (a) and becomes a tree [in Palestine it attains the height of ten feet], so that the birds of the heaven come and (b) can lodge under the shadow thereof. (a) in the branches thereof. [This parable sets forth the smallness of the beginning of the kingdom, and the magnitude of its growth.] 33 Another parable he spoke unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened. [In Oriental housekeeping, yeast is not preserved in a separate form. A piece of leavened dough saved over from the last baking is added to the new dough to ferment it. Three measures contained the quantity usually taken for one baking. Leaven represents the quickness, quietness, thoroughness, and sureness with which gospel truth diffuses itself through human society. A woman is named because baking was part of her household duty.] 34 All these things Jesus spoke in parables unto the multitudes; (b) 33 And with many such parables he spoke the word unto them, as they were able to hear it [that is, as they had leisure or opportunity to listen]; 34 and without a parable he did not speak {(a) nothing} unto them [that is, he used nothing but parables on that occasion, for both before and after this he taught without parables]: 35 that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through the prophet [at Ps 78:2 which is usually attributed to Asaph, who is called a seer (2Ch 29:30). His teaching typified that of Christ], saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world. [Jesus fulfilled this prophecy in a notable manner, being the only teacher in history distinguished in any marked degree by the use of parables.] (b) but privately to his own disciples he expounded all things. [338]

E. Parable of the Tares Explained (Mt 13:36-43).

(a) 36 Then he left the multitudes, and went into the house [probably Simon Peter's house]: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Explain unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 And he answered and said, He that sows the good seed is the Son of man; 38 and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, 42 and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that has ears, let him hear. [See on Mk 4:9. This parable and its explanation are sometimes urged as an argument against church discipline, but such a use of them is clearly erroneous. The field is not the church, but the world, and the teaching of the

parable is that we are not to attempt to exterminate evil men. Any who attempt to exterminate heretics in the name of Christ by physical force are condemned by this parable.]

F. Parables of Treasure, Pearl, and Net (Mt 13:44-53).

(a) 44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hidden in the field that a man found, and hid; and [339] in his joy he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. [The three parables in this section appear to have been addressed privately to the disciples. In the absence of banks and other trust repositories, the men of that day hid their treasures as best they could. The sudden death of the hider often resulted in the loss of all knowledge as to the whereabouts of the treasure. The parable speaks of such a lost treasure. Technically it belonged to the owner of the field, but practically it belonged to him who found it. Hence the finder conceals it again until he had made perfect his title to it by the purchase of the field. The gist of the parable does not require us to pass upon the conduct of the finder, which was certainly questionable.] **45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: 46 and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.** [In the preceding parable the treasure was found by accident; in this, the pearl was sought. Some find without seeking, as did the Samaritan woman (*Jn 4:28,29*); some only after diligent search, as did the eunuch--*Ac 8:27*.] **47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away. 49 So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, 50 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.** [Like the parable of the tares (*Mt 13:24-30*), this one indicates the continuance of the mixture of bad and good, and points to the final separation. The contents of a net cannot be sorted while it is being drawn. The tares indicate such evils as can be seen and as tempt us to uproot them. The net shows that in the dark and turbulent waters, and in the hurry-scurry of its teeming life, there are things that cannot be seen. The judgment shall be with care, as when men, in the broad light of day, on the [340] quiet beach, sit down to sort the fish. If the parable of the tares emphasizes the waiting, the parable of the net emphasizes the careful sorting.] **51 Have you understood all these things? They say unto him, Yes. 52 And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who has been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.** [As a householder graces his banquet with things already in the house, and with other things that have just been provided, so a religious teacher must refresh his hearers out of both his past and his present experiences and study. Old lessons must be clothed in new garments.] **53 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.** [He went from the house to the sea in the afternoon, and entering a boat a little later, he stilled the storm.]

Section 55

JESUS STILLS THE STORM

(Sea of Galilee)

Mt 8:18-27; Mk 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-35

A. Introduction (Mt 8:18; Mk 4:35; Lk 8:22).

(b) 35 And that day, {(c) one of those days,} (b) when the even was come [about sunset], (a) when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. {(b) he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side.} [Wearied with a day of strenuous toil, Jesus sought rest from the multitude by passing to the thinly settled district on the east side of Galilee.]

B. Overzealous Disciples (Mt 8:19-22).

(a) 19 And there came a scribe [Literally, "one scribe." The number is emphatic; for, so far as the record shows, Jesus had none of this class among his disciples], **and said unto him,**

Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. 20 And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes [caves, dens], and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of [341] man [Daniel's name for the Messiah--Da 7:10-13] does not have anywhere to lay his head. [This scribe had heard the wonderful parables concerning the kingdom. He, like all others, expected an earthly kingdom and sought to have a place in it. Jesus so replied as to correct his false expectations.] 21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and leave the dead to bury their own dead. [Let the spiritually dead bury the naturally dead. This was a very exceptional prohibition, intended to show not that it was ordinarily wrong to stop for burying the dead, but wrong when in conflict with a command from Jesus.]

C. The Crossing (Mt 8:23-24; Mk 4:36-38; Lk 8:22-24).

(c) 22 Now it came to pass that he entered into a boat, himself and his disciples; (a) 23 And when he was entered into a boat, his disciples followed him. (c) and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake: and they launched forth. (b) 36 And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat. [They took Jesus without any preparation for the journey. The crowd, doubtless, made it inconvenient to go ashore to get provisions.] And other boats were with him. [The owners of these boats had probably been using them to get near to Jesus as he preached. They are probably mentioned to show that a large number witnessed the miracle when Jesus stilled the tempest.] (c) 23 But as they sailed he fell asleep. [knowing his labors during the day, we can not wonder at this]: (b) 37 And there arose (c) and there came down (b) a great storm of wind, (c) on the lake; (a) 24 And, behold, [342] there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves: (b) and the waves beat into the boat, insomuch that the boat was now filling. (c) and they were filling *with water*, and were in jeopardy. [These storms come with great suddenness.] (b) 38 And {(a) but} (b) he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion [The cushion was the seat-cover, which was probably a sheepskin with the fleece, which, when rolled up, served as a pillow. The stern was the most commodious place for passengers.]:

D. Jesus' Power over the Sea (Mt 8:25-26; Mk 4:39-40; Lk 8:24-25).

(a) 25 And they came to him, and awakened him, {(b) they awakened him,} and say unto him, {(a) saying,} Save, Lord; we perish. (c) Master, master, we perish. (b) Teacher, do you not care that we perish? [There was a babble of confused voices, betraying the extreme agitation of the disciples.] 39 And he awoke, (a) Then he arose, and rebuked the winds, {(b) wind,} (a) and the sea; (c) and the raging of the water; (b) and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. (c) and they ceased, (b) And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. [In addressing the winds and waves Jesus personified them to give emphasis to his authority over them. The calm showed the perfection of the miracle, for the waves of such a lake continue to roll long after the winds have ceased.]

E. Reaction to the Miracle (Mt 8:27; Mk 4:41; Lk 8:25).

(c) 25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? (b) Why are you yet fearful? have you not yet faith? (a) O you of little faith? [They had little faith or they would not have been so frightened; but they had some faith, else they would not have appealed to Jesus.] (b) 41 And they feared exceedingly, (c) And being afraid they (a) the men marveled, (b) and said one to another, (c) saying one to another, (a) What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him? (c) Who then is this, that he commands even the winds, and the water, and they obey him? [Jesus' complete lordship over the realm of nature made his disciples very certain of his divinity.] [343]

Section 56 GADARENE DEMONIACS (Gergesa in Decapolis)

Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-21; Lk 8:26-40

A. Welcome Committee (Mt 8:28; Mk 5:1-5; Lk 8:26-27).

(b) 1 And they came to the other side of the sea [They left in the "evening" (Mk 4:35), an elastic expression. If they left in the middle of the afternoon and were driven forward by the storm, they would have reached the far shore several hours before dark], (c) 26 And they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee. (a) 28 And when he was come into the country of the Gadarenes. (c) 27 And when he was come forth (b) out of the boat, (c) upon the land [Midway between the north and south ends of the lake, and directly east across the lake from Magdala, was the little city of Gergesa. In front and somewhat to the south of this city Jesus landed. Some sixteen miles away and to the southeast, and seven miles back from the lake, was the well-known city of Gadara. Further on to the southeast, on the borders of Arabia, and at least fifty miles from Gergesa, was the city of Gerasa.], (b) immediately there met him out of the tombs (c) a certain man out of the city [Gergesa], (b) with an unclean spirit, (c) who had demons; (b) 3 who had his dwelling in the tombs: (c) and abode not in any house, but in the tombs. [The sides of the mountain near the ruins of Gergesa are studded with natural and artificial caves that were used as tombs.] (b) and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain; 4 because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and the [344] fetters broken in pieces: and no man had strength to tame him. 5 And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones. [The natural spirit of the man seeking to throw off the dominion of the demons would cry out in agony, and the demons themselves, in their own misery, would use him as a vehicle to express their own grief.] (c) and for a long time he had worn no clothes...

B. Conversation with the Demoniac (Mt 8:28b-29; Mk 5:6; Lk 8:28-30).

(b) 6 and when he saw Jesus from afar, (c) he cried out, (b) he ran (c) and fell down before him, (b) and worshipped him; 7 and crying out with a loud voice, he said, {(c) said,} What have I to do with you [on this phrase, see on Jn 2:4], Jesus, you Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, (b) I beg you by God, torment me no. (c) 29 For he was commanding the unclean spirit to come out from the man. [The demons showed the supremacy of Jesus not only by their cries to be let alone, but by the fact that they made no effort to escape from him. They ran to him, knowing that it was useless to do otherwise.] (b) 8 For he said unto him, Come forth, you unclean spirit, out of the man. (c) For often he had seized him: and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of the demon into the deserts. (b) 9 And he (c) Jesus asked him, What is your name? (b) And he said {(c) said} (b) unto him, My name is Legion: for we are many. (c) for many demons were entered into him. [It is likely that Jesus asked the *sufferer* his name wishing to assure him of sympathy, but the *demons* in him had the floor and continued to do the talking. A legion was a division of the Roman army containing from four to six thousand men. If Jesus asked the demon its name, he did so that he might disclose this fact to his disciples.] (b) 10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. [As one mouth entreated for many, Mark uses both the singular and the plural.] (c) 31 And they entreated him that he would not [345] command them to depart into the abyss. [The abyss or bottomless pit was the proper abode of the demons. It is mentioned nine times in Scripture: here and at Ro 10:7 Re 9:1,2,11 11:7 17:8 20:1,3. How these demons escaped from the abyss is one of the unsolved mysteries of the spirit world.] (a) 28b And there met him two possessed with demons, coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way. [Matthew tells of two (Mt 8:28), while Mark and Luke describe only one (Mk 5:2 Lk 8:27). They tell of the principal one--the one who was the fiercer. In order to tell of two, Matthew had to omit the name "legion," which belonged to one; and conversely, Mark and Luke, to give the conversation with one, did not confuse us by telling of two. On unclean spirits, see on Mk 1:23.] (29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with you, you Son of God? have you come here to torment us before the time? [The judgment-day, the time of punishment and torment--Mt 25:41 2Pe 2:4 Jude 1:6.]

C. Request of the Demons (Mt 8:30-31; Mk 5:11-12; Lk 8:31-32).

(b) 11 Now there was there (a) afar off from them (b) on the mountainside a great herd (a) of many swine feeding. 31 And the demons besought him, (c) and they entreated him that he would give them permission to enter into them. (a) saying, If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine. (b) that we may enter into them.

D. Demise of the Demons (Mt 8:32; Mk 5:13; Lk 8:33).

(b) 13 And he gave them permission. (a) 32 And he said unto them, Go. And they (b) the unclean spirits (c) the demons came out of the man, and entered (a) and went into the swine: and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, {(c) the lake,} (b) *in number* about two thousand; and they were drowned in the sea. (a) and perished in the waters. [346] Skeptics have censured Jesus for permitting this loss of property. God may recognize our property rights as against each other, but he nowhere recognizes them in the realm of nature. What was done to the swine was done by the demons, and the owners had no more right to complain than they would have had if the herd had been carried off by murrain, by flood, or by any other natural cause. All animals have a right to die, either singly or in numbers. The demons evidently did not intend to destroy the swine. Their desire to have live bodies to dwell in shows that they did not. But the presence of the demons in their bodies made the hogs crazy, as it had the demoniac, and they ran the way their noses were pointed at the moment.]

E. Reaction to the Incident (Mt 8:33-34; Mk 5:14-17; Lk 8:34-37).

(c) 34 And when they that fed them [there being no fences in Palestine, herds were invariably attended by herdsmen] saw what had come to pass, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. (a) and went away into the city, and told everything, and what had befallen them that were possessed with demons. 34 And, behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus: (b) And they came {(c) went out} (b) to see what it was that had come to pass. 15 And they come {(c) came} (b) to Jesus, (c) and found {(b) behold} (c) the man, (b) that was possessed with demons (c) from whom the demons were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, (b) *even* him that had the legion [a faint suggestion that there was another]: (c) at the feet of Jesus: and they were afraid. (b) 16 And they saw it [the herdsmen] declared unto them how it befell him that was possessed with demons, (c) 36 And told them how he that was possessed with demons was made whole. (b) and concerning the swine. (a) and when they saw him, (c) 37 All the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about asked him (b) 17 And they began to beseech {(a) besought} (b) him (a) that he would depart {(b) to depart} from their borders. (c) from them; for they were held with great fear [The loss [347] of the swine moved them to a fear a further loss of property. To them the loss of swine was more important than the recovery of a man.]: and he entered into a boat. (b) 18 And {(c) 38 But} (b) as he was entering into the boat, he that had been possessed with demons (c) the man from whom the demons were gone out prayed him {(b) besought him} that he might be with him. [As a frightened child newly wakened from a horrible dream clings to its parent, so the man clung to Christ.] (c) but he sent him away, (b) 19 And he did not permit him, but said {(c) saying,} (b) unto him, Go (c) 39 Return to your house, (b) unto your friends, and tell them (c) and declare how great things God (b) the Lord has done for you, and *how* he had mercy on you. [Jesus departed, but left behind him a witness whose very body was a living monument bearing testimony to Christ's compassion and power. Jesus revisited this locality some months later. See *Mk 7:31-37*.] (c) and he went his way, publishing throughout the whole city [Gergesa] how great things Jesus had done for him. (b) and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him [for the cities that constituted Decapolis, see on Mt 4:25.]: and all men marveled. 21 And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude had gathered unto him: and he was by the sea. (c) 40 And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed him; for they were all waiting for him. [They could see the sail of his boat as he started back.] (a) 1 And he came into his own city. [Capernaum.] [348]

Section 57
MATTHEW'S FEAST
(Capernaum)

Mt 9:10-17; Mk 2:15-22; Lk 5:29-39

A. Matthew's Soul Winning Effort (Mt 9:10; Mk 2:15; Lk 5:29).

(c) 29 And Levi [another name for the apostle Matthew] made him a great feast in his house: (b) 15 And it came to pass, that he was sitting {(a) as he sat} at meat in the {(b) his} (a) house, (c) and there was a great multitude of publicans [Matthew had invited his old friends. On publicans, see on Mt 5:46] and of others (b) and (a) behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. (b) for there were many, (c) that were sitting at meat with them. (b) and they followed him.

B. A Critical Question by the Pharisees (Mt 9:11; Mk 2:16; Lk 5:29-30).

(c) 30 And the Pharisees and their scribes {(b) the scribes of the Pharisees,} [that is, the scribes which were of their party or sect] when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, (c) murmured against his disciples, saying, {(a) they said} unto his disciples, (c) Why do you eat and drink with the publicans and sinners? (a) Why does your Teacher eat with the publicans and sinners? (b) How is it that he eats and drinks with publicans and sinners? [From their standpoint, the question was natural enough. No strict Jew could eat with a Gentile (Ac 11:3 Ga 2:12), and Matthew's guests were classed with the heathen. See on Lk 15:1.]

C. Jesus' Reply (Mt 9:12-13; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:31).

(a) 12 But {(b) 17 And} (a) when he (b) Jesus heard it, he (c) answering said {(b) said} unto them, They that are whole {(c) in health} have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. (a) 13 But go and learn what *this* means, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice [For an explanation of this passage, see on Mt 12:7. To mercifully help sinners to repent was more precious to God than sacrifice]: for (c) 32 I am not come {(a) I came not} to call the righteous, but sinners. (c) to repentance. [Being charged with recklessly consorting [349] with sinners, it was necessary for Jesus to vindicate himself, else his influence would be damaged; hence he presents three arguments: 1. His office being analogous to that of a physician, required him to visit the sin-sick. 2. God himself commended such an act of mercy, and preferred it to sacrifice; 3. As he came to call sinners to repentance, he must therefore go to the sinners. These arguments do not justify us in keeping company with bad people for any other purpose than to do them good--that is, as their soul's physician. When he used the word "righteous," Jesus did not mean to admit that any were so righteous as to need no Savior; he merely quoted the Pharisees at the value that they set upon themselves.]

D. A Question on Fasting (Mt 9:14; Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33).

(b) 18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: and they come {(a) 14 Then the disciples of John come to him,} (c) 33 And they said {(b) say} unto him, (a) saying, (c) The disciples of John fast often, and make supplications [single penitential prayers with their fasting]; likewise also the *disciples* of the Pharisees; but your disciples eat and drink. [As John the Baptist observed one almost continual fast, his diet being locusts and wild honey (Mk 1:6), his disciples naturally had great respect for that rite, and noted the lack of its observance by Jesus as an apparent defect in his character. They were honest inquirers, and Jesus answered them respectfully as such.] (a) Why do we and the Pharisees {(b) John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees} (a) fast often, but your disciples do not fast?

E. Jesus' Illustration (Mt 9:15; Mk 2:19-20; Lk 5:34-35).

(a) 15 And Jesus said unto them, (c) Can you make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, {(a) mourn}, as long as {(c) while} the bridegroom is with them? (b) as long as they have with

bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. [The bridegroom's friends were called "sons of the bride-chamber." They went with the bridegroom to the bride's house, and escorted her to her new home. Arriving at the bridegroom's house, a feast usually lasting seven days ensued (*Mt 22:4 Lk 14:8 Jn 2:8,9*). Mourning and fasting would therefore ill befit such an occasion.] **(c) 35 But the days will come; and when the bridegroom shall [350] be taken from them, (b) and then will they fast in that day. {(c) those days.}** [Jesus here foretells the removal of his visible presence from his disciples by his ascension. His words predict but do not command a fast. He prescribed no stated fasts, and the apostolic church kept none. History shows that prescribed fasts become formal and tend to Phariseeism.]

F. Jesus' Parable (Mt 9:16-17; Mk 2:21-22; Lk 5:36-39).

(c) 36 And he spoke also a parable unto them: No man rends a piece from a new garment and puts it upon an old garment, else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old. (a) 16 And no man puts {(b) sews} a piece of undressed cloth on {(a) upon} an old garment; for {(b) else} what should fill it up takes from it, {(a) from the garment,} (b) the new from the old, and a worse rent is made. [Jesus justifies the conduct of his disciples by an appeal to the principles of the new dispensation, by which they were governed. The disciples of John looked upon Jesus as a reformer of Judaism, but he corrects their false impressions. To tear the new dispensation to pieces to renovate or embellish the old would be to injure the new and to destroy the old. By the process of fulling or dressing, new cloth was cleansed and shrunk so as to become more compact. The new cloth, therefore, had in it, so to speak, a life-element, and in its movement while shrinking it would tear the weaker fiber of the old cloth to which it was sewed, and thus enlarge the rent. The new dispensation could have rites and forms of its own, but could not conform to the rites of the Pharisees. If the conduct of his disciples had made a rent in the rabbinical traditions with regard to fasting, Jesus could not so modify the conduct of his disciples as to patch the rent without injuring the moral sense of his disciples, and without making Phariseeism a more meaningless hypocrisy than ever.] **22 And no man puts {(a) 17 Neither do men put} new wine into old wineskins: (c) else the new wine will burst the skins, (a) and the wine (c) itself will be {(a) is} spilled, (b) and the wine perishes, and the skins: (a) burst, (c) and the skins will perish. (a) but they put new wine {(c) new [351] wine must be put} (b) into fresh wineskins. (a) and both are preserved.** [This parable is also an illustration of the principles set forth above. Wine was stored in casks of skin--usually hides of goats. Wineskins, newly made, were elastic, and would expand to accommodate the fermentation of the new wine within. But the old wine-skins were stiff and of little strength, and would burst if fermenting liquid were confined within them.] **(c) 39 And no man having drunk old wine desires new; for he says, The old is good.** [The thought here is that as wine should be put in skins suited for it, and as, at an entertainment, the different kinds of wine should be served in appropriate succession; so, fasting should be observed on suitable occasions--not, for instance, at a wedding.]

Section 58

JAIRUS' DAUGHTER AND AN INVALID WOMAN

(Capernaum)

Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:22-43; Lk 8:41-56

A. Request from a Jewish Leader (Mt 9:18-19; Mk 5:22-24; Lk 8:41-42).

(c) 41 And (a) 18 While he spoke these things unto them [while he talked about fasting at Matthew's table], **behold, there came, {(b) came} (c) a man named Jairus, {(b) Jairus by name;} (c) and he was a ruler {(b) one of the rulers} of the synagogue** [He was one of the board of elders that governed the synagogue at Capernaum. These elders were not necessarily old men--*Mt 19:16-22 Lk 18:18-23*], **and seeing him, (c) he fell {(b) fell} (c) down at Jesus' feet, (a) and worshipped him** [It was a very lowly act for the ruler of a synagogue thus to bow before the Man of Nazareth. But the ruler was in trouble, and his needs were stronger than his pride], **(c) and besought him to come into his house; 42 for he had an only daughter, about**

twelve years of age, and she was dying. (b) 23 and begged him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: (a) is even now dead [he left her dying, [352] and so stated his fears in the very strongest way]: but (b) please come and lay your hands on {(a) hand upon} her, (b) that she may be made whole, and live. (a) and she shall live. 19 And Jesus arose [From Matthew's table. Jesus did not fast for form's sake, but he was ever ready to leave a feast that he might confer a favor], and followed him, and so *did* his disciples. (b) 24 And he went him; and a great multitude followed him [The ruler, of highest social rank in the city, found Jesus among the lowliest, and they were naturally curious to see what Jesus would do for this grandee].

B. A Desperate Woman (Mt 9:20-21; Mk 5:25-29; Lk 8:43-44).

(b) and they {(c) But as he went the multitudes} thronged him. (a) 20 And, behold, a woman, who had {(c) having} an issue of blood twelve years, (b) 26 and had suffered many things of many physicians, and (c) who had spent (b) all that she had, (c) all her living upon physicians, (b) and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, (c) and could not be healed by any [Medicine was not a science in that day. Diseases were not cured by medicine, but were exorcised by charms. One in easy circumstances could readily spend all during twelve years of doctoring with such leeches.] (b) 27 having heard the things concerning Jesus [her faith rested on hearing rather than on sight], came in the crowd behind, (c) him, and touched the border of his garment: (a) 21 for she said within herself, If I do but touch his garment, {(b) garments,} I shall be made whole. [The nature of her disease made her unclean (Lv 15:26). Her consciousness of this made her, therefore, timidly approach Jesus from behind.] 29 And immediately {(c) immediately} (b) the fountain of her blood was dried up; (c) the issue of her blood ceased. (b) and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. [The feeble pulse of sickness gave way to the glow and thrill of health.]

C. A Compassionate Healer (Mt 9:22; Mk 5:30-34; Lk 8:45-48).

(b) 30 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power *proceeding* from him had gone forth, turned him about in the [353] crowd, and said, Who touched my garments? (c) Who is it that touched me? And when all denied, Peter and they (b) his disciples (c) that were with him, (b) said unto him, (c) Master, the multitude press you and crush you, (b) You see the multitude thronging you, and do you say, Who touched me? (c) 46 But Jesus said, Someone did touch me: for I perceived that power had gone forth from me. (b) 32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. (c) 47 And {(b) 33 But} (c) when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came (b) fearing and trembling [because being unclean, any rabbi would have rebuked her severely for touching him], knowing what had been done to her, came and fell {(c) falling} down before him (b) and told him all the truth. (c) declared in the presence of all the people for what cause she touched him, and how she was healed immediately. [To have permitted the woman to depart without this exposure would have confirmed her in the mistaken notion that Jesus healed rather by his *nature* than by his *will*. Hence he questions her, not that he may obtain information, but rather as a means of imparting it. By his questions he reveals to her that no work of his is wrought without his consciousness, and that it was himself and not his garment that had blessed her.] (a) 22 But Jesus turning and seeing her said, (c) unto her, (a) Daughter, be of good cheer [Faith gets a sweet welcome]; your faith has made you whole. (c) go in peace. (b) and be whole of your plague. [Be permanently whole: an assurance that relief was not temporal, but final.] (a) And the woman was made whole from that hour. [Faith healed her by causing her to so act as to obtain healing. Faith thus saves; not of itself, but by what it causes us to do. It causes us to so run that we obtain.]

D. Arrival at Jairus' House (Mt 9:23-24; Mk 5:35-40; Lk 8:49-53).

(b) 35 While he yet spoke, they come from {(c) there came one from} the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Your daughter is dead: (b) why trouble the Teacher any further? (c) trouble not the Teacher. [The delay caused by healing this woman must have sorely tried the ruler's patience, and the sad [354] news that followed it must have severely tested

his faith; but we hear no word of murmuring or bitterness from him.] **50 But Jesus hearing it, (b) not heeding the words spoken** [not succumbing to the situation], **(c) answered him, {(b) said unto the ruler of the synagogue,} Fear not, only believe. (c) and she shall be made whole.** [Thus, with words of confidence and cheer, Jesus revived the ruler's failing faith.] **(b) 37 And he did not permit any man to follow him** [into the house with him], **except Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.** [These three were honored above their fellows by special privileges on several occasions, because their natures better fitted them to understand the work of Christ.] **(c) 51 And when he came to the house, he did not permit any man to enter in with him, except Peter and John, and James, and the father of the maiden and her mother. (b) 38 And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; (a) 23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, (b) he saw a tumult, and many weeping and wailing greatly. (a) and saw the flute-players, and the crowd making a tumult, 24 he said, Stand aside** [Mourning began at the moment of death, and continued without intermission until the burial, which usually took place on the day of the death. Flute-players mingled the plaintive strains of their instruments with the piercing cries of those females who made mourning a profession]: **(c) 52 And all were weeping, and bewailing her: but he said, {(b) said} unto them, Why do you make a tumult, and weep? (c) Weep not; she (b) the child (a) the damsel is not dead, but sleeps.** [Jesus used this figurative language with regard to Lazarus, and explained by this he meant death--*Jn 11:14.*] **And they laughed him to scorn. (c) knowing that she was dead.** [His words formed a criticism as to their judgment and experience as to death, and threatened to interrupt them in earning their funeral [355] dues.]

E. Resurrection (Mt 9:25-26; Mk 5:41-43; Lk 12:54-56). [Miracle 16]

(a) 25 But when the crowd was put forth, (b) he, having put them all forth [because their tumult was unsuited to the solemnity and sublimity of a resurrection. They were in the outer room--not in the room where the dead child lay], **took the father of the child and her mother and them** [the three] **that were with him, and went in {(a) he entered in,} (b) where the child was.** [Jesus took with him five witnesses, because in the small space of the room few could see distinctly what happened, and those not seeing distinctly might circulate inaccurate reports and confused statements as to what occurred. Besides, Jesus worked his miracles as privately as possible in order to suppress undue excitement.] **(a) and took {(b) taking} the child {(c) her} by the hand, called, saying, {(b) said} unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, {(c) Maiden,} (b) I say unto you, Arise.** [Mark gives the Aramaic words that Jesus used. They were the simple words with which anyone would awaken a child in the morning.] **(c) 55 And her spirit returned (b) 42 And immediately the damsel rose up, {(a) arose.} (c) she rose up immediately: (b) and walked** [her restoration was complete]; **for she was twelve years old. (c) and he commanded that something (b) should be given her to eat.** [Her frame, emaciated by sickness, was to be invigorated by natural means.] **(c) 56 And her parents were amazed: (b) they were amazed immediately with a great amazement.** [Faith in God's great promise is seldom so strong that fulfillment fails to waken astonishment.] **43 And {(c) but} (b) he charged them much (c) to tell no man what had been done. (b) that no man should know this** [A command given to keep down popular excitement. Moreover, Jesus did not wish to be importuned to raise the dead. He never was so importuned]: **(a) 26 And the fame of it went forth into all that land.**

Section 59 HEALING THE BLIND AND DUMB (Probably Capernaum) Mt 9:27-34

A. Healing Two Blind Men (Mt 9:27-31). [Miracle 17]

(a) 27 And as Jesus passed by from there [If construed strictly, this phrase means, as he departed from Jairus' house. But the phrase is indefinite], **two blind men followed him, crying out, and saying, Have mercy on us, you son of David.** [This, among the Jews, was a common

and thoroughly recognized name for the expected Messiah.] **28 And when he had come into the house** [possibly Peter's. But the place is not important. The house is mentioned to show that the blind men persistently followed Jesus until he stopped], **the blind men came to him: and Jesus said unto them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yes, Lord.** [In the earlier stages of his ministry Jesus had worked his miracles with little or no solicitation; but now, as the evidences of his power were multiplied, Jesus demanded a fuller expression of faith; for faith was the fruitage for which the miracles were wrought.] **29 Then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. 30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus strictly [sternly] charged them, saying, See that no man know it. 31 But they went forth, and spread abroad his fame in all that land.** [Jesus might well speak severely when charging his beneficiaries to be silent (*Mt 9:30*), for apparently no one of them ever obeyed him.]

B. Healing the Dumb Man (Mt 9:32-34). [Miracle 18]

(a) 32 And as they went forth, behold, there was brought to him a dumb man possessed with a demon. (a) 33 And when the demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke: (a) and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. [Some regard this demoniac as being the victim of combined physical and spiritual maladies, but it is more likely that the dumbness was [357] caused by the demon, since in some instances they deprived men of reason (*Mk 5:15*), and in others they threw men into convulsions or distortions--*Mk 9:18 Lk 13:11,16.*] **34 But the Pharisees said, By the prince of the demons he casts out demons.** [If we are correct in our chronology, Jesus had already fully answered this charge. See on *Mt 12:26-29*. If he repeated any part of this answer at this time, Matthew is silent as to it.]

Section 60 HOMETOWN REJECTION (Nazareth) Mt 13:54-58; Mk 6:1-6; Lk 4:16-31

A. What Jesus Did in Nazareth (Mt 13:54; Mk 6:1-2; Lk 4:16-20).

(b) 1 And he went out from there [from Capernaum]; **and he came** {(a) And coming} **(b) into his own country; and his disciples followed him. (c) 16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up** [As to the early years of Jesus at Nazareth, see on *Lk 2:51*]: **(b) 2 And when the Sabbath came (c) he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.** [This does not mean that it had been the custom of Jesus when he was a young man in Nazareth to read in the synagogue. It means that after he entered his public ministry it was his custom to use the synagogue as his place of teaching on the Sabbath day (*Mk 1:39 3:1,2*).] **17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place** [*Isa 61:1,2*; but the quotation embraces other lines from Isaiah.] **where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor** [Anointing was the method by which prophets, priests, and kings were consecrated or set apart to their several offices. This prophecy says that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus because he was appointed to do [358] a work of divine helpfulness]: **He has sent me to preach release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.** [The prophecy set forth in physical terms what Jesus should perform in both the physical and spiritual realms. The prophecy closes with a reference to the jubilee year, which, being a time of liberation, forgiveness, and fresh starts (*Lv 25:10*), was a type of Christ's ministry and kingdom.] **20 And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant** [This officer corresponded to our sexton. Part of his duty was to take charge of the synagogue rolls], **and sat down** [Reader and congregation both stood during the reading; then, usually, both sat down to hear the passage explained. They stood out of reverence for God's word]: **and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him.** [They had heard of his miracles, and were curious to see what he would say and do. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*.]

B. What Jesus Claimed in Nazareth (Mt 13:54-57; Mk 6:2-3; Lk 4:21-22).

(c) 21 And he began to say unto them, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your ears. 22 And all bore him witness, and wondered at the words of grace that proceeded out of his mouth [The word "grace" refers rather to the manner than to the matter. The speech of Jesus flowed easily, and gracefully]: (a) 54 And he taught {(b) began to teach} (a) them in their {(b) the synagogue}: (a) insomuch that (b) many hearing him were astonished, (a) and said, {(b) saying,} Where did this man acquire these things? (a) this wisdom, and these might works? (b) and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and *what mean such mighty works done by his hands?* [They admitted his marvelous teaching and miraculous works, but were at a loss to account for them because their extreme familiarity with his humanity made it hard for them to believe in his divinity, by which alone his actions would be rightly explained. Twice in the early part of his ministry Jesus had been at Cana (*Jn 2:1 4:46*), within a few miles of Nazareth, and turning away from it had gone down to Capernaum. He did not call upon his townsmen to believe in him or his divine mission until [359] the evidences were so full that they could not deny them.] 3 Is not this the carpenter, (c) Joseph's son? (a) the carpenter's son? (b) the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? (a) is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all (b) here with us? [They brought forth every item of trade and relationship by which they could confirm themselves in their conviction that he was simply a human being like themselves. The question as to his identity, however, suggests that he may have been absent from Nazareth some little time.] (a) Where then did this man acquire all these things? 57 And they were offended in him. [His claims were too high for them to admit, and too well accredited for them to despise, so they sought refuge from their perplexity by getting angry at Jesus.]

C. What Jesus Suggested in Nazareth (Mt 13:57; Mk 6:4; Lk 4:23-27).

(c) 23 And he said unto them, Doubtless you will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal yourself: whatever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in your own country. [Jesus quoted a familiar proverb, the meaning of which is this: he was part of Nazareth, and hence the claims of Nazareth upon him were superior to those of Capernaum, and therefore Nazareth should have been blessed by his healing. But the expression was evidently used contemptuously, as if they said, "You can do big things at Capernaum, but you can not do them here. You cannot deceive us; we know you."] (a) But {(b) And} Jesus said unto them, (c) Verily I say unto you, (b) a prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. (c) No prophet is acceptable in his own country. [Jealousy forbids the countrymen of a prophet to honor him. Base as this passion is, it is a very common one, and is not easily subdued, even by the best of men. In Nazareth Jesus was no more than the son of a carpenter, and the brother of a certain very common young men and girls, while abroad he was hailed as the prophet of Galilee, mighty in word and deed (*Lk 24:19*)] 25 But of a truth I say unto you [Jesus [360] now proceeds to make two close applications of the proverb], There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land [*1Ki 17:1 18:1,2 Jas 5:17*]; 26 and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephas, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman [a Gentile] that was a widow. 27 And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet: and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. [Naaman also was a Gentile. The first instance cited by Jesus will be found at *1Ki 17:8-16*, and the second at *2Ki 5:1-14*. Palestine was filled with poor people even in times of plenty, so there must have been large numbers of hungry people during the long-continued period of famine. There has always been a large number of lepers in the land, and surely if any disease ought to prompt a man to lay aside his prejudices that he might obtain healing it was leprosy; but as Nazareth was now rejecting Jesus, so their ancestors had despised the two mighty prophets. Not one of all the hungry would have received bread from Elijah by an act of faith, nor did one of all the lepers ask healing from Elisha.]

D. What Jesus Escaped in Nazareth (Mt 13:58; Mk 6:5; Lk 4:28-30).

(c) **28 And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they heard these things** [The Nazarenes were jealous enough of the claims of Jesus when put in their most modest dress; but when Jesus placed himself alongside Elijah and Elisha, and likened his hearers to widows for want, and lepers for uncleanness, they were ready to dash him to pieces. On the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39]; **29 and they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him** [they evidently had hold of him] **unto the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong.** [Near the eastern end of Nazareth there is a cavern in the rock that forms a precipice down which, if a man were hurled, he would be killed. At the western end there is a perpendicular cliff about forty feet high, with a naked floor of rock at the bottom. To which place they led Jesus we can not decide.] **30 But he passing through the midst of them** [361] **went his way.** [A simple statement of a marvelous fact. Miracles are not explained in the Bible.] (b) **5 And he could there do no mighty work, (a) 58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. (b) except that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. 6 And he marveled because of their unbelief.** [As to this statement that Jesus felt surprised, see on Mt 8:10. Surprise at the obtuseness and unreasonableness of sin is constantly attributed to God by the prophets. The statement, therefore, is perfectly consonant with the divinity of Jesus.] (c) **31 And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.** [We have followed the chronology of Mark, according to which Jesus already had been living in Capernaum for some time. Luke tells of the rejection early in his narrative, and adds this line to show that from the earlier days of his ministry Jesus made Capernaum his headquarters.]

Section 61

THIRD TOUR OF GALILEE

Mt 9:35-38; 10:1, 5-42; 11:1; Mk 6:6-13; Lk 9:1-6

A. Summary Statement (Mt 9:35-38).

(b) **6 And he (a) Jesus (b) went about (a) all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner sickness and all manner of sickness.** [In the first circuit of Galilee some of the twelve accompanied Jesus as disciples (see on Mk 1:39); in the second the twelve were with him as apostles; in the third they, too, are sent forth as evangelists to supplement his work.] **36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. 37 Then said he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the [362] laborers are few. 38 Pray you therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.** [These verses contain the reasons why Jesus separated his apostles from himself, and scattered them among the people. The masses of the people of Galilee had been deeply stirred by the teaching and miracles of Jesus, but they knew not as yet what direction was to be given to this popular movement. They were in a bewildered state, like shepherdless sheep, scattered over the hills and faint from running. The twelve were to assist him as undershepherds in gathering these sheep. In the second figure Jesus likens the people to a ripened harvest, and he sends the apostles among them as reapers who shall garner them.]

B. Charge to the Twelve (Mt 10:1, 5-42; Mk 6:7-11; Lk 9:1-5).

Discourse # 9 Commission of the Twelve Mt 10:1, 5-42; Mk 6:7-11; Lk 9:1-5
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(b) **6 And he (a) Jesus (b) went about (a) all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner sickness and all manner of sickness.** [In the first circuit of Galilee some of the twelve accompanied Jesus as disciples (see on Mk 1:36); in the second the twelve were with him as apostles; in the third

they, too, are sent forth as evangelists to supplement his work.] **36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. 37 Then he says unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the [362] laborers are few. 38 Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.** [These verses contain the reasons why Jesus separated his apostles from himself, and scattered them among the people. The masses of the people of Galilee had been deeply stirred by the teaching and miracles of Jesus, but they knew not as yet what direction was to be given to this popular movement. They were in a bewildered state, like shepherdless sheep, scattered over the hills and faint from running. The twelve were to assist him as undershepherds in gathering these sheep. In the second figure Jesus likens the people to a ripened harvest, and he sends the apostles among them as reapers who shall garner them.] **1 And he called {(b) calls} (c) together (a) unto him his {(b) the} (a) twelve disciples, (b) and he gave them (c) power and authority over all demons, (a) over the unclean spirits [see on Mk 1:23], to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease {(c) to cure diseases.} (a) and all manner of sickness.** [At this point Matthew gives the names of the apostles, a complete list of which will be found at the note on Mt 10:2.] **5 These twelve Jesus sent forth (b) and he began to send them forth by two and two** [He sent them in pairs because: 1. Under the law it required two witnesses to establish the truth (*Dt 19:15 Mt 18:16 2Co 13:1 1Ti 5:19 Heb 10:28*). 2. They could supplement each other's work. Different men reach different minds, and where one fails another may succeed. 3. They would encourage one another. When one grew despondent the zeal and enthusiasm of the other would quicken his activities]; **(c) 2 And he sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. (b) 8 and he charged them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, except a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; 9 but *to go* shod with sandals; and, *said he*, put not on two coats. (a) and charged them, saying, Go not into *any* way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.** [This first commission *restricted* Christ's messengers to the Jewish people, and the parts of Palestine that they [363] inhabited, but his second commission *impelled* them to go everywhere and to preach to every creature (*Mk 16:15*). As Jesus himself was sent only to the Jews, so during his days on earth he sent his disciples only to them. Also see on Mt 15:24.] **7 As you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.** [It was set up about a year later, on the day of Pentecost, under the direction of the Holy Spirit--*Ac 2:1-4*.] **8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely you received, freely give.** [Here is the true rule of giving. Paul repeats it at *1Co 16:2*.] **(c) 3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, (a) 9 Take no gold, nor silver, (c) nor money; (a) nor brass in your purses; (c) neither staff, nor wallet, (a) for *your* journey, (c) nor bread, neither have two coats. (a) nor shoes, nor staff: for the workman is worthy of his food.** [The prohibition is against securing these things before starting, and at their own expense. It is not that they would have no need for the articles mentioned, but that "the laborer is worthy of his food" (*Mt 10:10*), and they were to depend on the people for whose benefit they labored, to furnish what they might need. This passage is alluded to by Paul (*1Co 9:14*). To rightly understand this prohibition we must remember that the apostles were to make but a brief tour of a few weeks, and that it was among their own countrymen, among a people habitually given to hospitality; moreover, that the apostles were imbued with powers that would win for them the respect of the religious and the gratitude of the well-to-do. The special and temporary commission was, therefore, never intended as a rule under which we are to act in preaching the gospel in other ages and in other lands.] **(b) 10 And he said unto them (a) 11 And into whatever city or village you shall enter, search out who in it is worthy; and there abide till you go forth.** [The customs of the East gave rise to this rule. The ceremonies and forms with which a guest was received were tedious and time-consuming vanities, while the mission of the apostles required haste.] **12 And as you enter [364] come into an house, greet it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.** [The form of salutation on entering a house was, "Peace to this house." The apostles are

told to greet each house, and are assured that the peace prayed for shall return to them if the house is not worthy; that is, they shall receive, in this case, the blessing pronounced on the house.] **(b) Wherever you enter into a house, there abide till you depart. {(c) 4 And into whatever house you enter, there abide, and there depart.} (b) 11 And whatever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not** [Jesus here warns them that their experiences would not always be pleasant], **(a) 14 And whoever (c) as many as (a) shall (c) receive you not, (a) nor hear your words, (b) as you go forth from that place, (a) out of that house or that city** [The word "house" indicates a partial and the word "city" a complete rejection], **{(c) when you depart from that city,} (b) shake off the dust that is under your feet {(a) of your feet.} (c) from your feet (b) for a testimony unto them. (c) against them.** [The dust of heathen lands as compared with the land of Israel was regarded as polluted and unholy (*Am 2:7 Eze 27:30*). The Jew, therefore, considered himself defiled by such dust. For the apostles, therefore, to shake off the dust of any city of Israel from their clothes or feet was to place that city on a level with the cities of the heathen, and to renounce all further intercourse with it.] **(a) 15 Verily 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.** [For comment on similar remarks, see on Mt 11:24. God judges all men with reference to their opportunities.] **16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be you therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.** [At this point Jesus passes from the first, or temporary, to the second, or final, commission of the apostles, for all the persecutions enumerated were encountered under the latter.] **17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to [365] the councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you** [Councils and synagogues were both Jewish powers. On the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39], **18 yes and before governors and kings shall you be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.** [The phrase "governors and kings" indicates Gentile powers, for most all governors and kings were then appointed by Rome.] **19 But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what you shall speak. 20 For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.** [For comment on similar words, see on Lk 12:11.] **21 And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death.** [Jesus here foretells the intense religious bigotry with which his ministers would be opposed. Having foretold persecution, he predicts actual martyrdom.] **22 And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake** [The term "all" is used in its general and not in its absolute sense. The apostles had some few friends among the unbelievers. Jesus gives the exact cause of the hatred. It would not be because of any personal faults or peculiarities, but simply because of adherence to Christ]: **but he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.** [Since the persecution was unto death, the endurance that would meet it must be to the end of life.] **23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, You shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.** [The apostles were not to meet obduracy with obduracy. Moving as swiftly as they could along the line of least resistance, they would not be able to evangelize all the Jewish cities before the time set for their desolation--before the Son of man should come in the demonstration of his judicial power and destroy the Jewish nationality.] **24 A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he should be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord.** [Jesus applied [366] similar words to the Jewish teachers. See on Lk 6:40.] **If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household!** [Jesus here warns the apostles that they can not expect better treatment than he himself received--no, not so good. Nor should they ask exemption from what he himself suffered.] **26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hidden, that shall not be known. 27 What I tell you in darkness, speak in the light: and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the house-tops. 28 And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.** [See on Lk 12:4.] **29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: 30 but the very hairs of**

your head are all numbered. **31 Fear not therefore** [See on Lk 1:30]: **you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.** [For comment on similar remarks see on Lk 12:8.] **34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.** [For comment on similar language see on Lk 12:53.] **37 He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.** [Love for the old religion would make the members of the Jewish and pagan families persecute those who apostatized from it to give their hearts to Christ. But if the Jew and the pagan thus held *their* religions at a higher value than the ties of kindred, much more should the Christian value his religion above these ties.] [367] **38 And he that does not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me.** [This is doubtless an allusion to the manner of his death, and being the first of the kind it must have been very puzzling to his disciples, unless explained by prior words of Jesus, of which we have no record. As such allusion its full meaning is this: "If I bear for each the vicarious cross and suffer for each the full measure of the divine displeasure, then each should be willing cheerfully to follow me that he may obtain the benefits of my sacrifice, and if the light cross of human displeasure deter him from this, he is not worthy of me."] **39 He that finds his life shall lose it; and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it.** [Jesus declares that all self-seeking is self-losing. He that makes his own life the chief object of his endeavor really fails the more he seems to succeed. He who saves and husbands his powers to expend them on those lower carnal joys that a sinner calls "life" shall lose those higher spiritual joys that God calls "life," and *vice versa*. For a comment on similar expression, see on Mk 8:35.] **40 He that receives you receives me, and he that receives me receives him that sent me.** [Having depicted in all their darkness the persecutions that awaited the apostles, Jesus proceeds to declare the honor of their apostleship in that they were representatives directly of Christ, and indirectly of the Father.] **41 He that receives a prophet in the name of [that is, because he is] a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward.** [Whoever honors a prophet, a righteous man, or a disciple, as such recognizes that person's relation to God as the ground of that act; and to that extent honors God in the act, just as he who performs a similar act in the name of a friend thereby honors that friend. A prophet's reward is not synonymous, however, with final salvation, for salvation is a matter of grace [368] and not of reward.]

C. Summary of the Mission (Mt 11:1; Mk 6:12-13; Lk 9:6):

(c) **6 And they departed, (b) 12 And they went out, (c) and went throughout the villages, (b) and preached that men should repent. (c) preaching the gospel, (b) 13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. (c) healing everywhere. (a) 1 And it came to pass when Jesus had finished commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.** [Oil was not used as a medicine. The Jews anointed their hair and their faces every day, especially when about to depart from the house to move among their fellows. This anointing was omitted when they were sick and when they fasted (2Sa 12:20 Mt 6:16,17). When an apostle stood over a sick man to heal him by a touch or a word, he was about to send him out of his sick chamber, and just before the word was spoken, the oil was applied. It was, therefore, no more than a token or symbol that the man was restored to his liberty, and was from that moment to be confined to his chamber no longer. Compare Jas 5:14.]

Section 62

HEROD'S GUILTY CONSCIENCE Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; Lk 9:7-9

A. Speculation about Jesus (Mt 14:1-4; Mk 6:14-16; Lk 9:7-9).

(b) 14 And (c) 7 Now (a) 1 At that season (b) King Herod [Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. See on Lk 3:1.] **(c) the tetrarch heard of all that was done (a) heard the report concerning Jesus, (b) for his name had become known: (c) and he was perplexed, because that it was said by some, that John was risen from the dead; 8 and by some, that Elijah had appeared; and by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.** [The work of Jesus impressed the people as prophetic rather than messianic, [369] for they associated the Messiah in their thoughts with an earthly kingdom of great pomp and grandeur. Jesus, therefore, did not appear to them to be the Messiah, but rather the prophet who should usher in the Messiah. Their Scriptures taught them that Elijah would be that prophet. But the Apocrypha indicated that it might be Isaiah or Jeremiah (*1 Macc. 14:41*). Hence the many opinions as to which of the prophets Jesus was. If he was Elijah, he could not be properly spoken of as risen from the dead, for Elijah had been translated (*2Ki 2:11*). For a comment on similar language, see on Mk 8:28.] **9 And Herod said, (a) unto his servants, (c) John I beheaded** [For the imprisonment of John, see on Lk 3:20. The mission of the twelve probably lasted several weeks, and the beheading of John the Baptist appears to have taken place about the time of their return. See on Mt 14:13]: **but who is this, about whom I hear such things? (a) This is John the Baptist; {(b) the Baptizer} (a) he is risen from the dead; and therefore do these powers work in him.** [John had wrought no miracle while living (*Mt 10:41*), but there was a prevalent idea among the ancients that departed spirits were endowed with superhuman powers, and Herod therefore supposed that the risen John had brought these powers with him from the spirit world.] **(c) And he sought to see him.** [Jesus purposely kept out of the reach of Herod, knowing the treacherous cunning of his nature (*Lk 13:32*), and Herod's curiosity was not gratified until the day of Christ's crucifixion (*Lk 23:8-12*), and then its gratification was without sanctification.] **(b) 15 But others said, It is Elijah. And others said, It is a prophet, even as one of the prophets. 16 But Herod, when he heard thereof, said, John, whom I beheaded, he is risen.** [Some thought that Elijah might have returned, as the Scripture declared, or that Jesus might be a prophet just like the great prophets of old. Matthew (*Mt 14:1,2*), by introducing what follows with the word "for," gives us the reason why Herod clung to this singular opinion of Jesus. He did so because this opinion was begotten in the morbid musings of a conscience stained with the blood of John.]

B. Arrest of John (Mt 14:5; Mk 6:17-20).

(b) 17 For Herod himself had sent forth [370] and laid hold upon John, (a) and bound him, and put him in prison the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. (b) for he had married her. [Herodias had married her uncle Herod Philip I, who was disinherited by Herod the Great, and who lived as a private citizen in Rome. When Herod Antipas went to Rome about the affairs of his tetrarchy, he became the guest of his brother Herod Philip I., and repaid the hospitality that he received by carrying off the wife of his host.] **18 For John said unto Herod, It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.** [The marriage was unlawful of three reasons: 1. The husband of Herodias was still living (see *Lv 18:16*); 2. The lawful wife of Antipas (the daughter of Aretas, king or emir of Arabia) was still living; 3. Antipas and Herodias, being nephew and niece, were related to each other within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity (*Lv 18:14*).] **19 And Herodias set herself against him, and desired to kill him; but she could not: 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was much perplexed, and he heard him gladly. (a) 5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.** [Herod feared both John and his influence. His fear of the man as a prophet caused him to shelter John against any attempts that his angry wife might make to put him to death, and led him to listen to John with enough respect to become perplexed as to whether it were better to continue in his course or repent. At other times, when the influence of Herodias moved him most strongly, and he forgot his personal fear of John, he was yet restrained by fear of John's influence over the people.]

C. Foolish Promise of Herod (Mt 14:6-8; Mk 6:21-25).

(a) 6 But when Herod's birthday came, (b) 21 And when a convenient day was come [A day suited to the purposes of Herodias. The phrase refers to *Mk 6:19*], **that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, and the high captains, and [371] the chief men of Galilee; 22 and when the daughter of Herodias herself** [the language seems to indicate that others had first come in and danced] **came in and danced, (a) in the midst, (b) she pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him** [This dancer was Salome, daughter of Herod Philip and niece of Herod Antipas. The dancing of the East was then, as now, voluptuous and indecent, and nothing but utter shamelessness or inveterate malice could have induced a princess to thus make a public show of herself at such a carousal]; **(a) 7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatever she should ask. (b) and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatever you will, and I will give it you. 23 And he swore unto her, Whatever you shall ask of me, I will give it you, unto the half of my kingdom.** [The rashness of the king's promise is characteristic of the folly of sin.] **24 And she went out, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask?** [She may have known beforehand what to ask. If so, she retired and asked her mother that the brunt of the king's displeasure might fall upon her mother.] **And she said, The head of John the Baptist. (a) 8 And she, being put forward by her mother, (b) came in immediately with haste unto the king** [she wished to make her request known before the king had time to put limitations upon her asking], **and asked, saying, {(a) said} (b) I will that you forthwith give me (a) here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.** [She asked for the prophet's head that she and her mother might have the witness of their own eyes to the fact that he was dead, and that they might not be deceived about it.]

D. Execution of John (Mt 14:9-12; Mk 6:26-29).

(a) 9 And the king was grieved; (b) was exceeding sorry [because the deed went against his conscience and his sense of policy as above stated--see on *Mk 6:20*]; **but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that {(a) which} sat at meat, (b) he would not reject her. (a) he commanded it to be given** [The oath alone would not have constrained Herod to grant Salome's request, for if left alone [372] he would rightly have construed the request as not coming within the scope of the oath. The terms of his oath looked to and anticipated a pecuniary present, and not the commission of a crime. But Herod's companions, being evil men, joined with the evil women against the man of God, and shamed Herod into an act that committed him forever to a course of guilt.]; **(b) 27 And immediately the king forth a soldier of his guard, (a) and beheaded John in the prison. (b) and commanded to bring his head: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, 28 and brought his head {(a) his head was brought} (b) on a platter, and gave it {(a) and given} (b) to the girl: and the girl (a) brought it (b) gave it to her mother.** [To the anxious, unrestful soul of Herodias this seemed a great gift, since it assured her that the voice of her most dangerous enemy was now silent. But as Herod was soon filled with superstitious fears that John had risen in the person of Christ (*Mt 14:2 Mk 6:14,16 Lk 9:7*), her sense of security was very short-lived.] **29 And when his disciples heard thereof, they came and took up his {(a) the} corpse, (b) and laid it in a tomb. (a) and buried him; and went and told Jesus.** [Herod had feared that the death of John would bring about a popular uprising, and his fears were not mistaken. As soon as they had decently buried the body of the great preacher, John's disciples go to Jesus, expecting to find in him a leader to redress the Baptist's wrongs. They knew the friendship of John for Jesus, and, knowing that the latter intended to set up a kingdom, they believed that this would involve the overthrow of Herod's power. They were ready now to revolt and make Jesus a king. See *Mt 12:13 Jn 6:1,2,15*. But Jesus would not aid them to seek the bitter fruits of revenge, nor did he intend to set up such a kingdom as they imagined.]

PART FOUR
YEAR OF OPPOSITION
A.D. 29

Section 63
APEX OF JESUS' POPULARITY
Mt 14:13-36; Mk 6:30-56; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-21

A. Movements of Jesus (Mt 14:13; Mk 6:30-32; Lk 9:10; Jn 6:1).

(b) 30 And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; (c) when they had returned, (b) and they told {(c) declared unto} (b) him all things that they had done, and that they had taught. [They had fulfilled the mission on which Jesus had sent them, and on returning each pair made to him a full report of their work.] 31 And he said unto them, Come apart into a desert place [an uninhabited place], and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. [Need of rest was one reason for retiring to the thinly settled shores east of the lake. Matthew proceeds to give us another reason for his retiring.] (a) 13 Now (d) 1 After these things (a) when Jesus heard *it* [Heard about John's death. The excitement caused by this event, and the efforts to use Jesus as a leader in revolt, as indicated at the close of the last section (see on Mk 6:29), constituted another reason why Jesus should withdraw from the multitude], (c) he took them [the apostles], and withdrew (a) from there (c) apart (b) 32 And they went away in the {(a) a} boat, (d) to the other side of the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea of Tiberias*. (c) to a city called Bethsaida. (b) to a desert place apart. [They sailed to the northeastern shore of the lake to a plain lying near the city of Bethsaida Julius.] [374]

B. Preparation for a Banquet (Mt 14:14-17; Mk 6:33-38; Lk 9:11-13; Jn 6:2-9)

(c) 11 But {(a) and} the multitudes heard *thereof* [heard of Jesus and his disciples crossing the lake], (b) 33 And they saw them going, and (c) perceiving it, (b) many knew *them*, (d) 2 And a great multitude followed him, because they beheld the signs that he did on them that were sick. (b) and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outran them. (a) 14 And he came forth, and saw a great multitude, and had compassion on them, (b) because they were as sheep not having a shepherd (c) and he welcomed them, (b) and he began to teach them many things. (c) and spoke unto them of the kingdom of God, (a) and healed their sick. (c) and them that had need of healing he cured. [Jesus probably set sail from near Capernaum, and from thence across the lake to the narrow, secluded plain where he landed is less than five miles. Seeing him start, the people followed him by running along the northern shore, and, though having a little farther to go, they traveled faster than the sailboat, and were waiting for him on the shore when he arrived.] (d) 3 And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. [The level plain did not afford a good platform from which to address the people.] 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. [This Passover is computed to have been held on April 16, A.D. 29. This statement as to the time of year prepares us for his further statement that there was much grass in the plain. It also explains in part the gathering of a multitude in this secluded region. Pilgrims on their way to the Passover would gladly go several miles out of their way to see the great Prophet perform a miracle. The excitement, due to the mission of the twelve and the death of the Baptist, also tended to swell the [375] crowd.] (c) 12 And the day began to wear away; (b) 35 And when the day was now far spent, (a) 15 And when even was come, (b) his disciples (c) the twelve (b) came unto him (c) and said unto him, {(a) saying,} (b) The place is desert, and the day is now far spent; (a) and the time is already past [the time to seek lodging and provisions had gone by, and therefore the multitude must act quickly]; (b) 36 send them (a) the multitudes {(c) multitude} away, that they may go into the villages and country around, and lodge, and get

provisions: (a) and buy themselves food. (b) something to eat. (c) for we are here in a desert place. [The apostles were the first to think of eating, and naturally enough, for they had started on empty stomachs, and their own discomfort made them anticipate the sad plight in which the multitude would soon find itself.] (a) 16 But Jesus said unto them, They have no need to go away; (d) 5 Jesus therefore lifting up his eyes, and seeing that a great multitude comes to him, said unto Philip, Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat? 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. [Jesus tested Philip to see which way he would turn in his weakness. Jesus asked where the bread might be bought, knowing that power to feed the multitude resided in himself (*Isa 55:1*), but Philip wondered where the money was to be had to buy it.] (b) 37 But he answered and said unto them, Give you them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give them to eat? [A Roman denarius was the usual payment for a day's labor (JES)] 38 And he said unto them, How many [376] loaves have you? go and see. (d) 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto him, 9 There is a lad here, who has five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are they among so many? (b) And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. (a) 17 And they say unto him, {(c) said,} (a) We have here but (c) no more than five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. 14 For they were about five thousand men. [When sent to see what was in their larder, it appears that they had nothing at all. Andrew reports the finding of the boy's lunch while it was as yet the boy's property (*Jn 6:8,9*). Some of the others, having secured it from the boy, report it now at the disposal of Jesus, but comment on its insufficiency. Eastern loaves were thin and small, like good-sized crackers, and around the Sea of Galilee, the salting and preserving of small fish was an especial industry. These fish, therefore, were about the size of sardines. The whole supply, therefore, was no more than enough for one hungry boy. But each loaf had to be divided between a thousand, and each fish between twenty-five hundred men.]

C. Five Thousand Fed (Mt 14:18-21; Mk 6:39-44; Lk 9:14-17; Jn 6:10-13). [Miracle 19]

(a) 18 And he said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down (c) And (d) 10 Jesus said, (c) unto his disciples, Make them (d) the people sit down. (c) in companies, about fifty each. 15 And they did so, and made them all sit down. (b) 40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. (d) Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. [By thus arranging them in orderly companies, Jesus accomplished several things. He saved his apostles much time and labor in distributing the food. He insured that each one should be fed, and that the reality of the miracle could not be questioned, and he ascertained definitely how many men were fed.] (c) 16 And (d) 11 Jesus therefore took (a) the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, (c) he blessed and brake them, (b) and brake the loaves; (d) and having [377] given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down; (a) and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. {(c) and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.} (d) likewise also of the fishes as much as they would. (b) and the two fishes divided he among them all. 42 And they all ate, (c) and were all filled. [He blessed the loaves and fishes by returning thanks for them. This and similar acts of Jesus are our precedents for giving thanks, or, "asking the blessing," at our tables]: (d) 12 And when they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the broken pieces that remain over, that nothing be lost. [Christ demonstrates the best stewardship (JES)] So they gathered them up, (c) and there was taken {(a) they took} (c) up what remained over to them of (a) the broken pieces, (d) and filled (a) twelve baskets full. {(b) basketfuls,} (d) with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten. (b) and also of the fishes. (a) 21 And they that did eat {(b) ate} the loaves were (a) about five thousand men, besides women and children. [Considering the distance from any town, the women and children would not likely be numerous. They form no part of the count, for Eastern usage did not permit the women to sit with the men. They, with the little ones, would stand apart.]

D. A Dangerous Prospect (Mt 14:22-23; Mk 6:45-46; Jn 6:14-15).

(d) 14 When therefore the people saw the sign that he did, they said, **This is of a truth the prophet that comes into the world.** [That is to say, this is the Messiah, the prophet promised at *Dt 18:15*. Their desire to avenge the death of John made them feverishly anxious for the appearance of the Messiah, but this faith was inconstant.] [378] **15** **Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain himself alone.** [Jesus had descended to the plain to feed the multitude, but, perceiving this mistaken desire of the people, he frustrated it by dismissing his disciples and retiring by himself into the mountain.] **(a) 22** **And immediately he constrained the {(b) his} (a) disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, (b) to Bethsaida [the suburb of Capernaum] (a) till he should send the multitudes {(b) while he himself sends the multitude} away.** [The obedience of the disciples in leaving him helped to persuade the multitude to do likewise.] **46** **And when he had taken leave of them, (a) 23** **And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up {(b) departed} (a) into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone.** [The news of John's assassination (*Mt 14:13*) was calculated to exasperate him in the highest degree, and also to deeply distress him. He needed the benefits of prayer to keep down resentment, and to prevent despondency. For this he started away as soon as he heard the news, but the people prevented him till night.]

E. Jesus Walks on Water (Mt 14:24-27; Mk 6:47-50; Jn 6:16-20).

(d) 16 **And when evening came, his disciples went down unto the sea; 17** **and they entered into a boat, and were over the sea unto Capernaum. (b) 47** **And when even was come, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. (d) and it was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.** [They evidently expected that he would follow. Possibly they skirted the shore, hoping that he would hail them and come on board.] **18** **And the sea was rising by reason of a great wind that blew. (a) 24** **But the boat [379] was now in the midst of the sea, distressed by the waves; for the wind was contrary.** [That is, it blew from the west, the direction toward which the disciples were rowing.] **(b) 48** **And seeing them distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary unto them, about {(a) in} (b) the fourth watch of the night [from 3 to 6 A.M.] he comes {(a) came} (b) unto them, (a) walking upon the sea. (d) 19** **When therefore they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs [that is, about three and a half miles, or about half way across the sea], they behold Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing near unto the boat: (b) and would have passed by them: (a) 26** **And {(b) 49 but} (a) when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, (d) and they were afraid. (b) they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; (a) saying, It is a ghost; and they cried out for fear. (b) 50** **For they all saw him, and were troubled.** [Their fears would probably have been greater if Jesus had approached the boat, for they were severe enough to make them cry out, even when he was seen to be passing by them.] **(a) 27** **But immediately Jesus spoke unto {(b) with} them, and said unto them, {(a) saying,} Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.** [There was no mistaking that voice.] **(d) 21** **They were willing therefore to receive him into the boat.** [Superstitious fears are not always so soon allayed. His voice brought great assurance.]

F. Peter Attempts to Walk on Water (Mt 14:28-31).

(a) 28 **And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be you, bid me come unto you upon the waters. 29** **And he said, Come. And Peter went down from the boat, and walked upon the waters to come to Jesus.** [This scene comports with the character of Peter, who had always a rash willingness [380] to go into danger, and a lack of steadfastness to hold out through it.] **30** **But when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me.** [So long as the attention of Peter was fixed upon the Lord's command he succeeded in his venture; but so soon as he let the power of the tempest distract his thoughts, his faith failed and he began to sink.] **31** **And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and took hold of him, and said unto him, O you of little faith, wherefore didst you doubt?**

G. Calming of the Storm (Mt 14:32-33; Mk 6:51-52; Jn 6:21).

(b) 51 And he went up unto them into the boat; (a) 32 And when they were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased. (b) and they were very amazed in themselves; 52 for they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened. (d) and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going. (a) 33 And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Of a truth you are the Son of God. [The disciples showed the hardness of their hearts in that the working of one miracle did not prepare them either to expect or to comprehend any other miracle that followed. They ought to have worshipped Jesus as the Son of God when they saw the five thousand fed, but they did not. But when he had done that, and had walked upon the water, and quieted the wind, and transported the boat to the land, they were overcome by the iteration of his miraculous power, and confessed his divinity--Mt 14:33.]

H. A Continuing Ministry (Mt 14:34-36; Mk 6:53-56).

(a) 34 And when they had crossed over, they came to the land, unto Gennesaret. (b) and moored to the shore. [The land of Gennesaret was a plain at the western end of the lake of Galilee.] (b) 54 And when they had come out of the boat, immediately *the people* knew him, (a) 35 And when the men of that place knew him... [Though the apostles had started their boat toward Capernaum, the storm appears to have deflected their course, and the language of the text suggests that they probably came to land at the south end of the plain, somewhere near Magdala, and made a circuit of the cities in the plain of Gennesaret on their way to Capernaum. (a) they sent into (b) and ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on [381] their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. (a) and brought unto him all that were sick; (b) 56 And wherever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, (a) 36 and they besought him that they might only touch (b) if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole. As he did not stop in these cities, the sick were laid in the street that they might touch him in passing through. Moreover, as they knew the course that he was taking, by running ahead they could anticipate his arrivals and have the sick gathered to take advantage of his presence. The story of the woman who touched the hem of his garment (Mk 5:25-34 Mt 9:20-22 Lk 8:43-48) had evidently spread far and wide, and deeply impressed the popular mind.]

Section 64

SERMON ON THE BREAD OF LIFE

(Synagogue at Capernaum)

Jn 6:22-71

A. Search for Jesus (Jn 6:22-25).

(d) 22 On the next day [the next day after Jesus fed the five thousand] **the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea** [on the east side, opposite Capernaum] **saw that there was no other boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not gone with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples had gone away alone** 23 (howbeit there came boats from Tiberias near unto the place where they ate the bread after that the Lord had given thanks): 24 when [382] **the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they themselves got into the boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.** [This sentence (Jn 6:22-24) is a complicated one, because it contains much in a condensed form. On the evening of the miracle the multitude had seen that there was but one boat, and that the disciples had gone away in it, leaving Jesus in the mountain. Jesus had dispersed the multitude, but many of them had not gone very far. The next day they came again to the scene of the miracle, and were perplexed at not finding Jesus. After some time they became convinced that he was not there, because if he had been, his disciples would have returned to seek him. In the meantime the keen-eyed boatmen about Tiberias, then the largest city on the lake, seeing the multitude on the farther shore, saw in their presence there an opportunity to earn a ferry fee, so they soon crossed the lake to accommodate the people. As Capernaum was the well-known headquarters of Jesus, the boatmen were directed to proceed thither that the multitude might find him.] **25 And when**

they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when did you come here? [They found him at Capernaum in the synagogue, having but lately arrived from the land of Gennesaret. Though their question relates only to the time when Jesus crossed, it implies and includes a desire to know the manner also.]

B. A Disturbing Sermon (Jn 6:26-59).

Discourse # 10
Sermon on the Bread of Life
John 6:26-59

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily [his answer was as serious as their question was flippant--see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, You seek me, not because you saw signs** [Jesus includes the healing of the sick as well as the feeding of the multitude], **but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled.** [They did not seek Jesus because they saw in him a divine Friend who could satisfy the deep needs of the soul, but as a wonder-worker who could fill their bodies with food when occasion required.] **27 Work not for the food that perishes** [bodily food], **but for the food that abides unto eternal life** [spiritual food], **which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, has sealed.** [In our land [383] a man consents to and makes a written instrument his own--an expression of his will--by signing it; but in the East he did this by affixing his seal to it (*1Ki 21:8 Es 3:12 8:10 Jer 32:10*). The meaning of Jesus' words, therefore, is that God the Father had commissioned him as Messiah, and had authenticated his mission as such by the works that he had given him to do--*Jn 5:36*.] **28 They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God?** [They wished to know what to do in order to earn the abiding food; that is, by what works they might so please God as to obtain it. Humanity, in seeking to answer this question, has invented pilgrimages, penances, fasts, mutilations and many other methods of self-punishment; not heeding the plain and decisive answer of Jesus.] **29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent.** [Belief in Jesus as the Son of God is the one all-comprehensive work that pleases God (*Heb 11:6*). Jesus reiterates this important truth several times in this discourse; see *Jn 6:35,36,40,47*, etc. and the doctrine contained in it is elaborated in the epistles of Paul.] **30 They said therefore unto him, What then will you do for a sign, that we may see, and believe you? what will you work?** **31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.** [See *Ex 16:4,15 Ps 78:24 105:40*. The trend of questions and answers in this discourse forms a close parallel to that at *Jn 4:1-42*, but with a different conclusion. There Jesus discoursed of life under the figure of water, and here under the figure of bread. There the woman vacillated between her good and evil impulses until her better nature triumphed. Here there was a like vacillation, terminating in opposite result. There the woman compared Jesus with Jacob, the well-digger (*Jn 4:12*); here the people compare him with Moses, the manna-giver--each comparing him unfavorably.] **32 Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily** [see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but [384] my Father gives you the true bread out of heaven.** **33 For the bread of God is what comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world.** [See *Jn 6:48,50*. In testing the claims of Jesus the Jews proceeded upon the hypothesis that the Messiah must be greater than all the prophets, and that this greatness must be authenticated or sealed by greater signs than those wrought by others. Proceeding under this method, they compared the miracle just wrought by Jesus with the fall of manna in the days of Moses and drew conclusions unfavorable to Jesus. They reason thus: "Moses fed many millions for forty years with bread from heaven, but Moses was less than Messiah. This man fed but five thousand for only one day and gave them barley bread. This man is even less than Moses, and consequently far less than the Messiah."] **34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.** [They readily recognized the insufficiency of manna and the possibility of God sending a better bread, and in a vague, wondering, half-credulous mood they asked for it just as the woman asked for water (*Jn 4:15*). In answer to each set of questions Jesus proceeded to

reveal himself, and to show that the blessings sought were not external to himself, but were in himself and were obtained by belief in him. When Jesus stood thus self-revealed, the Samaritan woman believed in him and was satisfied; but these Jews at Capernaum disbelieved and murmured.] **35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall not hunger, and he that believes on me shall never thirst.** [Compare *Jn 4:10, 13, 14.*] **36 But I said unto you, that you have seen me, and yet believe not.** [The personality of Jesus was the great proof of his divinity, but the Jews, though familiar with that personality, refused to consider it, and kept clamoring for a sign. Hence Jesus states the hopelessness of the situation. If one refuses to believe in the sun when he sees its light, feels its heat and witnesses its life-giving power, by what sign will you demonstrate to him the existence of the sun?] **37 All that the Father gives me shall come unto me; [385] and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out.** [These words of Christ arise naturally out of the situation. The Jews, having wavered between belief and disbelief, had settled in a proud disbelief that was about to be expressed in murmuring and scorn. They were complacently self-satisfied, and felt that they had displayed great wisdom in arriving at this decision. But Jesus strikes at their pride by informing them that they are not his because God has rejected them as unworthy to be given to him. There is no suggestion or hint that the Father acts arbitrarily in selecting whom he shall give to Christ. The Son of God *followed a prescribed course* in the winning of men. If this did not win them, it was the Father's decree that they were not his. If this course did win them, Jesus in nowise rejected them, no matter how lowly their station, or how vile their past record.] **38 For I am come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholds the Son, and believes on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.** [See *Jn 6:44, 54.* It was the purpose of God the Father to offer to the sons of men an eternal life through the life-giving power of Jesus Christ. The power that was to work in men a fitness for this exalted honor was a belief in the Son. How could signs and wonders be wrought contrary to the Father's will? They ought to have believed for the signs and wonders he had already wrought, instead of pretending that he had wrought none that were conclusive of his claims.] **41 The Jews therefore murmured concerning him, because he said, I am the bread that came down out of heaven. 42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, I am come down out of heaven?** [The Jews had entered with Christ upon a discussion as to whether he was a greater prophet than Moses, and as [386] they denied even this fact, it is not to be wondered that they murmured at the turn that the discussion had taken. In asserting that he came down from heaven, etc., he ascribed to himself a participation in the divine glory that entitled him to an absolute superiority over all men, prophets or others. This claim was to them insufferable, and they thought they had a sufficient answer to it in that they supposed themselves to be acquainted with his birth and parentage.] **43 Jesus answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44 No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him. And I will raise him up in the last day.** [See *Jn 6:40, 54.*] **45 It is written in the prophets [Isa 54:13 Jer 31:33, 34 Joe 3:16, 17], And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes unto me.** [Jesus rebukes their murmuring as out of place. They thought themselves offended by what they believed to be an intolerable assumption on his part. But they were really offended in him for an entirely different cause, namely: because they were not drawn by the Father. The Father had given the law as a tutor to draw to Christ (*Ga 3:24*), and he had also sent forth his prophets for the same purpose. Those who had availed themselves of this instruction, and had learned the Father's lessons, were ready to come to Christ. The sense of misery and desire of redemption begotten by the law drove one to Christ, and all the yearnings and aspirations inspired by the prophets attracted him thither. The Father had taught, but the people had not learned, just as their fathers had not learned; and Jesus accuses them in language kindred to the accusation of Moses when he says, "But Jehovah has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day" (*Dt 29:4*). In each case the people were to blame.] **46 Not that any man has seen the Father, except he**

that is from God, he has seen the Father. [The Jews might have construed the words of Jesus as indicating an immediate relation to the Father and of obtaining instruction directly from him. Such a doctrine would strike [387] at the mediation of Christ. Jesus therefore guards against this false apprehension by denying humanity's direct access to God the Father, and claiming it as his own exclusive right. The teaching of the Father that he spoke of was obtained through the Scriptures and (in earlier times) the prophets, who were the authors of the Scriptures.] **47 Verily, verily** [see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, He that believes on me has everlasting life. 48 I am the bread of life.** [Jesus here reasserts the proposition to which the Jews had objected. Having paused to speak of the cause of their objections, he now asserts the main propositions that he may enlarge upon them.] **49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.** [Manna did not prevent death. During the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness all the grown men who started from Egypt died except two (*Nm 26:65*).] **50 This is the bread that comes down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.** [He quietly condescends to contrast the two breads. Manna simply sustained the body like any other natural food; it did no more. Jesus is supernatural food; he sustains the spirit unto eternal life.] **51 I am the living bread that came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.** [He had declared himself to be the bread of life, but bread must be assimilated. The assimilation of natural bread requires eating, but Jesus, the spiritual bread, is assimilated by believing on him. But he was not then perfected as the bread of life. It was necessary that he should sacrifice himself for our sins before sins could be forgiven, and it was necessary for sins to be forgiven before men could have life with God. By his sacrifice on the cross he opened the fountain of forgiveness. By raising his humanity from the dead and by taking it with him in his ascension into heaven, he showed the results that men may expect to accrue to them by his death upon the cross.] **52 The Jews therefore strove one with another, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?** [They were not all of one mind with regard to Christ, and they [388] discussed from opposite sides the problem raised by these mysterious words.] **53 Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily** [see on Jn 1:51], **I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.** [He here expressed in words what he afterward expressed in symbols, when he gave the Lord's supper. The vital force of a disciple is proportioned to his belief in, remembrance of, and desire to assimilate the Christ.] **54 He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. And I will raise him up at the last day.** [See *Jn 6:40,44*.] **55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.** [The flesh to be eaten must be broken, and the blood, if it is to be drunk, must be poured out. Christ speaks of himself as the sacrifice given for the saving of the world, and one must appropriate to himself by faith this expiation and find in it reconciliation with God if he would live; but *Jn 6:56* enlarges the thought and shows that it includes more than the idea of expiation.] **56 He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.** [The thought of drinking blood was startling to the Jew, for he was forbidden to taste even the blood of animals, and the reason assigned was very pertinent--because the blood was the life of the animal (*Gn 9:4 Lv 17:10-14*). By insisting, therefore, on the drinking of his blood, Jesus has insisted that his very life be absorbed and assimilated. To be disciples of other teachers it is only necessary that we accept and follow their doctrine. But to be a disciple of Christ is to do more than this. His divinity permits us to have a spiritual communion and fellowship with him, an abiding in his presence, an indwelling of his Spirit, and a veritable assimilation of life from him. Were it otherwise he could not be food for the spirit--bread of life. He had started to show to the Jews that he was to the spirit what bread was to the body. It was difficult to bring home to their carnal minds so spiritual a thought, and therefore Jesus clothed it in carnal metaphors and made it as plain as possible. Christians today, being more spiritually minded, and more used to spiritual [389] language, are somewhat confused by the carnal dress in which Jesus clothed his thought.] **57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eats me, he also shall live because of me.** [The result of our union or abiding with Christ is a perfect life. The life of the Father enters the soul of the disciple through the mediatorship of the Son. The Father, who is the fountain of life, sent forth the Son that he might bestow it upon all who believe

in him and abide in him.] **58 This is that bread that came out of heaven: not as the fathers ate and died; he that eats this bread shall live for ever.** [Thus Jesus sums up the comparison that the Jews had thrust upon him between himself and the manna.] **59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.** [It was in the synagogue built by the centurion, which we have before mentioned (see on Lk 7:5). Pots of manna appear to have been engraved upon its walls, possibly upon the frieze.]

C. Reaction of the Disciples (Jn 6:60-62).

(d) **60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 But Jesus knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at this, said unto them, Doth this cause you to stumble? 62 *What* then if you should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before?** [If the prophecy of his sacrifice disturbed their dreams of a temporal kingdom, what would be the effect of his ascension on those dreams? The Book of Acts answers our Lord's question. In the very hour of the ascension the very apostles were still expecting the revival of the kingdom of David, with Jerusalem for its capital. But ten days later, at Pentecost, they had abandoned the earthly idea and looked upon Jesus as enthroned at the right hand of God--Ac 1:6 2:32-36.]

D. Further Testing of the Disciples (Jn 6:63-71).

(d) **63 It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I [390] have spoken unto you are spirit, are life.** [Jesus here tells them plainly that his words relate to the spiritual realm, and to life in that realm. It is his Spirit in our spirit that gives eternal life.] **64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, For this cause have I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it be given unto him of my Father.** [Jesus here distinguishes between those who were drawn to him by divine influences, and who were therefore ready to follow him as he really was, and those who were drawn to him by mistaken notions concerning him, and who would desert him as soon as they discovered that their conceptions of him were incorrect. He knew the reason that prompted each to become his disciple.] **66 Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.** [He had sifted them, for their false following could be of no benefit either to them or to his kingdom.] **67 Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, Would you also go away?** [Jesus had sifted the outer circle of his disciples, and the loss, though prophetically anticipated, was not without its pang. In this sixty-seventh verse he proceeds to sift the innermost circle, and his words are full of pathos. By giving them an opportunity to depart he called forth from them an expression of loyalty that bound them more closely to him.] **68 Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? you have the words of eternal life. 69 And we have believed and know that you are the Holy One of God. 70 Jesus answered them, Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71 Now he spoke of Judas *the son of Simon Iscariot*, [391] for he it was that should betray him, *being one of the twelve.*** [We have seen from Jn 6:64 that Jesus has already had the betrayer in his mind. Here he speaks of him openly. In a discourse that forecasted his passion it was natural that he should allude to his betrayer, especially, when his presence enforced remembrance. But there was another reason to mention him at this time. He was an illustration of the truth that no man could be a real follower of Jesus unless he became such by the drawing of the Father.]

Section 65

CRITICISM FOR DISREGARDING TRADITION

(Capernaum, Spring A.D. 29)

Mt 15:1-20; Mk 7:1-23; Jn 7:1

A. A Question from the Pharisees (Mt 15:1-3; Mk 7:1-5; Jn 7:1).

(d) **1 And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him.** [John told us in his last chapter that the Passover was

near at hand (*Jn 6:4*). He here makes a general statement that shows that Jesus did not attend this Passover. The reason for his absence is given at *Jn 5:18*.] **(a) 1 Then there come to Jesus from Jerusalem (b) 1 And there were gathered together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, 2 and had seen that some of his disciples ate their bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed, hands.** [Evidently several days intervened between the address of *Jn 6:22-40* and the events recorded here, for the Pharisees and scribes would not be likely to leave Jerusalem until after the Passover.] **(b) 5 And the Pharisees and scribes asked him, (a) saying, (b) Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? (a) 2 Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.** [Belief in the tradition of the elders was the fundamental peculiarity of the Pharisaic system. They held that these traditions, or oral expositions of and additions to the law, were revealed to Moses along with the law, and were communicated by him orally to the elders of the people, by whose successors they had been handed down through each successive generation. They regarded these traditions as equal in authority with the written word.] **(b) 3 (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders; 4 and when they come from the [393] market-place, except they bathe themselves, they eat not; and they observe many other things, which they have received to hold, washings of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels.)**

B. Address to the Pharisees (Mt. 15:3-9; Mk 7:6-13).

(a) 3 And he answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?(a) 7 You hypocrites, (b) Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites [*Isa 29:13*], (a) saying, (b) as it is written, This people [394] honors me with their lips, But their heart is far from me. 7 But in vain do they worship me, Teaching as *their* doctrines the precepts of men. 8 You leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. 9 And he said unto them, Full well do you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. [These Pharisees coming from Jerusalem could find nothing wherein Jesus or his disciples transgressed the law, so they eagerly grasped this transgression of the tradition as affording ground for an accusation. Jesus does not deny their charge, but justifies his disciples by attacking the whole traditional system, basing his attack upon a pointed prophecy that condemns it. It is hard for us to learn and apply the distinction between serving God as God wishes to be served, and serving him according to our own wishes and notions.] **(a) 4 For God {(b) Moses} said [that is, God said it through Moses], Honor your father and your mother; and, He that speaks evil of father or mother, let him die the death [see *Ex 20:12 Dt 5:16 Ex 21:17 Lv 20:9*]: (b) 11 but you say, If a man {(a) Whoever} shall say to his father or his mother, That with which you might have been profited by me (b) is Corban, that is to say, Given to God; (a) 6 he shall not honor his father. (b) 12 you no longer allow him to do anything for his father or his mother; (a) And you have made {(b) 13 making} void the word of God by {(a) because of} your tradition. (b) that you have delivered: and many such like things you do.** [Leaving for a moment the main question concerning uncleanness and washing, Jesus makes good his indictment against their tradition by giving an example of the mischievous way in which it set aside God's commandments. The law required the honoring of parents, and for any one to cast off his parents in their old age, thus subjecting them to beggary or starvation, was to do more than to speak evil of them. Such conduct was practically to curse them, and to incur the death penalty for so doing. But at this point the Pharisees interfered with their tradition, which taught that [395] a son could say of that part of his estate by which his parents might be profited, It is a gift; that is, a gift to God, and by thus dedicating that part to God, he would free himself from his obligation to his parents. Thus tradition undid the law. God's law leads to pure and acceptable worship, while human additions and amendments make worship vain, if not abominable. There is probably not one such addition or amendment that does not to a greater or less degree make some commandment void.]

C. Admonition to the Multitudes (Mt 15:10-11; Mk 7:14-15).

(b) 14 And he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them [Having been accused by the scribes and Pharisees of a breach of their tradition, Jesus points out to *them* generally the iniquity of tradition, for it lay within their power as leaders to remedy the whole system of things. Having done this, he turns to the *multitude* and answers before them as to the offense with which he is specifically charged. Thus he gives to the leaders general principles, and to the common people the single instance], **Hear me all of you, and understand: (a) 11 Not what enters into the mouth defiles a man; but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles a man. (b) 15 there is nothing from without a man, that going into him can defile him: but the things that proceed out of the man are those that defile the man. 17 And when he was entered into the house from the multitude...**

D. Conversation with Disciples (Mt 15:12-17; Mk 7:17-19).

(a) 12 Then came the disciples, and said unto him, Do you know that the Pharisees were offended, when they heard this saying? [The entire speech offended them. He charged them with hypocrisy. He showed that their tradition, which they revered as a revelation from God, led them into sin, and he disturbed their self-complacency by showing that the ceremonial cleanness, which was founded on tradition, and in which they prided themselves, was worthless in comparison with the moral cleanness required by God's law, which they had ignored. It grieved the disciples to see Jesus offend these reverend gentlemen from Jerusalem. Their respect for men counteracted their zeal for truth.] **(a) 13 But he answered and said, Every [396] plant that my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be up rooted up.** [God had planted the law with its doctrine: he had planted the Hebrew religion as given by Moses. He had not planted the tradition of the elders; so it, and the religion founded upon it, was doomed to be rooted up.] **14 Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit.** [Jesus teaches the lesson of patience. The words of Jesus are full of encouragement to those who adhere to the simple teachings of God; for they show that God guarantees that every error shall be uprooted, and that every teacher of error or false religion shall participate in the judgment that uproots, and shall fall into the pit of ruin; and his disciples, no matter how numerous, shall share his fate. In this particular instance, the destruction of Jerusalem was the pit. The Jewish leaders led their disciples into it, and God uprooted their system of tradition, that the pure gospel might be sowed in the room that they occupied.] **(a) 15 And Peter answered and said unto him, Declare unto us the parable.** [The word "parable" is used here in its looser sense to indicate an obscure saying.] **(b) his disciples asked of him the parable.** [They asked what he meant by the words contained in *Mk 7:15 Mt 15:11*.]

E. Explanation of a Parable (Mt 15:18-20; Mk 7:20-23).

18 And he said {(a) said,} (b) unto them, (a) Are you even yet (b) so without understanding also? [It was to be expected that the multitude, swayed by the teaching of the Pharisees, would be slow to grasp what Jesus said about uncleanness; but the disciples, having been so long taught of him, and having felt free to eat with unwashed hands, should have been more quick of understanding.] **(b) Do you not perceive, that whatever from without goes into the man, it cannot defile him; 19 because it goes not into his heart, but (a) passes into the {(b) his} belly, and goes out into {(a) and is cast out into} the [397] draught? (b) This he said, making all meats clean. 20 And he said, (a) 18 But the things that proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man. (b) What proceeds out of the man, that defiles the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, (a) come forth {(b) proceed,} (a) evil thoughts, (b) fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye [an envious eye] (a) false witness, railings: {(b) railing,} pride, foolishness: 23 all these evil things proceed from within, and (a) 20 these are the things that defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands, does not defile the man.** [Thus Jesus sets forth the simple doctrine that a man's moral and spiritual state is not dependent upon the symbolic cleanness of his physical diet, much less is it dependent on ceremonial observances in regard to things eaten, or the dishes from which they are eaten. Of course, Jesus did not mean at this time to abrogate the Mosaic law of legal uncleanness. These uncleannesses worked no *spiritual* defilement, but were merely typical of such; for the food in no

way touched or affected the mind or soul, the fountains of spiritual life, but only the corporeal organs, which have no moral susceptibility. In saying, therefore, that Jesus made all meats clean, Mark does not mean that Jesus then and there repealed the law. He means that he there drew those distinctions and laid down those principles that supplanted the Mosaic law when the kingdom of God was ushered in on the day of Pentecost.] [398]

Section 66

WITHDRAWAL FROM HEROD'S TERRITORY

Mt 15:21; Mk 7:24

(b) 24 And from there (a) Jesus (b) arose, and went (a) out (b) away (a) and withdrew into the parts {(b) borders} of Tyre and Sidon. [The journey here is indicated in marked terms because it differs from any previously recorded, for it was the first time that Jesus ever entered a foreign or heathen country. The use of "borders" does not mean that Jesus did not cross over the boundary, for *Mk 7:31* shows that the journey led through Sidon. Jesus withdrew to escape the opposition of his enemies and the mistaken movements of his friends. As he was not on a missionary tour, it was perfectly proper for him to enter heathen territory.]

Section 67

HEALING FOR A GENTILE

(Region of Tyre and Sidon)

Mt 15:22-28; Mk 7:24-30

A. Request of Faith (Mt 15:22; Mk 7:24-26).

(b) And he entered into a house, and did not want any man to know it [In addition to the reason already cite, Jesus, no doubt, desired an opportunity to impart private instruction to the twelve]; **and he could not be hidden.** [The fame of Jesus had spread far and wide, and he and his disciples were too well known to escape the notice of any who had seen them or heard them described.] **25 But {(a) 22 And} behold, (b) immediately (a) a Canaanitish woman (b) whose little daughter** [the word for "daughter" is a diminutive, such as often used to indicate affection] **had** [399] **an unclean spirit, having heard of him** [having formerly heard of his power and having recently heard of his arrival in her neighborhood], **(a) came out from those borders** [she came out of the very region *where Jesus then was*], **and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, you son of David** [Sympathy so identified her with her daughter that she asked mercy for herself. The title "son of David" shows that the Jewish hopes had spread to surrounding nations and that some, like this woman and the one at Jacob's well, expected to share in the messianic blessing]; **my daughter is grievously afflicted with a demon. (b) 26 Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by race.** [The Macedonian conquest had diffused Greek civilization throughout western Asia till the word *Greek* among the Jews had become synonymous with *Gentile*. The term *Canaanite* was narrower and indicated an inhabitant of Canaan--that is, a non-Jewish inhabitant of Palestine. The term *Syrophenician* was narrower still. It meant a Syrian in Phoenicia, and distinguished the Phoenicians from the other Syrians.] **And she besought him that he would cast forth the demon out of her daughter.**

B. Resolution of Faith (Mt 15:23-27; Mk 7:27-28).

(a) 23 But he answered her not a word. [God's unanswering silence is a severe test of our faith.] **And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she cries after us.** [The woman by her loud entreaties was drawing to Jesus the very attention that he sought to avoid. The disciples therefore counseled him to grant her request for his own sake--not for mercy or compassion, but merely to be rid of her.] **24 But he answered** [answered the disciples, not the woman] **and said, I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.** [Jesus had not refused [400] answering her prayers through lack of feeling, but from principle. It was part of the divine plan that his *personal* ministry should be confined to the Jewish

people. Divine wisdom approved of this course as best, not only for the Jews, but for the Gentiles as well. Variations from this plan were to be few and were to be granted only as rewards to those of exceptional faith. See on Mt 10:6] **25 But she came (b) and fell down at his feet. (a) and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.** [The narrative indicates that Jesus had left the house and was moving on, and that the woman obtruded herself upon his notice by falling in front of him and obstructing his way.] **26 And he answered and said, (b) unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not appropriate [suitable, becoming] to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs.** [By the use of the word "first" Jesus suggested that there would come a time of mercy for the Gentiles. He uses the diminutive for the word "dog," thus indicating a tame pet, and suggesting rather the dependence and subordinate position than the uncleanness of the dog. By so doing he gave the woman an argumentative handle that she was not slow to grasp.] **28 But she answered and said {(a) said,} (b) unto him, Yes, Lord; (a) for even the dogs (b) under the table eat of the children's crumbs. (a) that fall from their masters' table.** [Jesus had suggested that domestic *order* by which dogs are required to wait until the meal is over before they receive their portion; but with a wit made keen by her necessity, she replies by alluding to the well-known fact that dogs under the table are permitted to eat the crumbs *even while the meal is in progress*; intimating thereby her hope to receive and before all the needs of Israel had first been satisfied. By using the word "dogs" Jesus did not mean to convey the impression that he shared the Jewish prejudices against Gentiles.]

C. Reward of Faith (Mt 15:28; Mk 7:29-30).

(a) 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is your faith: (b) For this saying go your way; (a) be it done unto you even as you will. (b) the demon has [401] gone out of your daughter. [The woman's faith is shown in many ways: 1. She persisted when he was silent. 2. She reasoned when he spoke. 3. She regarded this miracle, though a priceless gift to her, as a mere crumb from the table of his abundant powers. It is noteworthy that the two most notable for faith--this woman (*Mt 15:28*) and the centurion (*Mt 8:10 Lk 7:9*)--were both Gentiles.] **(a) And her daughter was healed from that hour. (b) 30 And she went away unto her house, and found the child laying upon the bed, and the demon had gone out.** [The posture of the daughter indicated the physical exhaustion that would naturally succeed the intense nervous strain of demonic possession--especially the last paroxysms produced by the departing demon.]

Section 68 ANOTHER AVOIDING OF HEROD'S TERRITORY Mt 15:29; Mk 7:31

(b) 31 And (a) Jesus (b) again went out. (a) And departed from that place, (b) from the borders of Tyre, and came through Sidon, (a) and came near unto the sea of Galilee; (b) through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. (a) and he went up into a mountain, and sat down there. [From Tyre Jesus proceeded northward to Sidon and from there eastward across the mountains and the headwaters of the Jordan to the neighborhood of Damascus. Here he turned southward and approached the Sea of Galilee on its eastern side. Somewhere amid the mountains on the eastern side he sat down; that is, he ceased his journeying for some days. [402]

Section 69 MIRACLES ON THE MOUNTAIN (Near Borders of Decapolis) Mt 15:30-38; Mk 7:32-8:9

A. Healing of a Deaf Stammerer (Mk 7:32-37).

(b) 32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech [The man had evidently learned to speak before he lost his hearing. Some think that defective

hearing had caused the impediment in his speech, but *Mk 7:35* suggests that he was tongue-tied]; **and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. 33 And he took him aside from the multitude privately, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat, and touched his tongue** [He separated him from the crowd to avoid publicity (see *Mk 7:36*, below), and by signs indicating an intention to heal, Jesus gives him the assurance that in other cases he is accustomed to give by words. He evidently induced the man by signs to stick out his tongue. He then placed one finger of each hand in the man's ears, after which he spat. Where he spit is not said. He then touched with one or both his thumbs the man's tongue, and, speaking the healing word, the cure was accomplished]; **34 and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said unto him, Ephphasa, that is, Be opened.** [Jesus here, as in the healing of Jairus' daughter (*Mk 5:41*), spoke the Aramaic. Why he sighed is not said. It was doubtless an expression of sympathy, though Farrar thinks he did so because he thought of the millions there were of deaf and dumb who in this world never hear and never speak.] **35 And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.** [He was evidently not deaf from his birth, or he would not have known how to speak at all.] **36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it.** [Jesus was still seeking to [403] suppress excitement. A very little encouragement from him would have brought together a multitude, the very thing that he was journeying to avoid. He therefore cautioned the people to be silent, but by a common freak of human nature, his desire to avoid publicity made him more wonderful in the eyes of the people, and thereby inspired a greater eagerness on their part to tell about him.] **37 And they were beyond measure astonished** [Mark here coins a double superlative to express the boundlessness of their amazement], **saying, He has done all things well** [commendation upon the workman that had originally been bestowed upon his work--*Gn 1:31*]; **he makes even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.** [These were the people who had asked Jesus to depart from their coast on account of the loss of their swine (*Mk 5:17*). A complete change in their feelings had taken place since that day.]

B. Other Mountain Miracles (Mt 15:30-31).

(a) **30 And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them** [We have here an instance of the common difference between the narratives of Matthew and Mark. Where Matthew tends to mention the healing of multitudes, Mark picks out one of the most remarkable cases and describes it minutely. The hasty action of those who brought in the sick and returned to bring in others is indicated by the way in which they cast down their burdens at Jesus' feet]: **31 insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel** [The people whom Jesus healed were Jews, but daily intercourse with the heathen of Decapolis had tended to cool their religious ardor. The works of Jesus revived this ardor and caused them to praise the God whose prophet they esteemed Jesus to be.]

C. A Multiplication Miracle (Mt 15:32-38; Mk 8:1-9). [Miracle 23]

(a) **32 And (b) 1 In those days** [that is, while Christ was in Decapolis], **when there was again a great multitude, and they had nothing to eat, (a) Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, {(b) said,} unto [404] them, 2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: (a) And I would not send them away fasting, lest perhaps they faint on the way. (b) 3 and if I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint on the way: for some of them are come from far.** [When the five thousand had been caught in similar circumstances, the apostles had come with suggestions to Jesus (*Mk 6:35,36 Mt 14:15 Lk 9:12*), but now, being taught by experience, they keep silence and let Jesus manage as he will. The multitude had not been three days without food, but it had been with Jesus three days and was *now* without food.] **4 And his {(a) the} disciples say unto {(b) answered} him, Whence shall one be able to fill these men with bread here in a desert place? (a) Whence should we have so many loaves in a desert place as to fill so great a multitude?** [It seems strange that the apostles should ask such a question after having assisted in feeding the five thousand. But the failure to expect a miracle, despite previous experience, was

a common occurrence in the history of Israel and of the twelve (*Nm 11:21-23 Ps 78:19,20*). In this case the failure of the apostles to expect miraculous relief suggests that they had probably often been hungry and had long since ceased to look for supernatural relief in such cases.] **34 And Jesus said unto them, (b) 5 And he asked them, How many loaves have you? And they said, Seven. (a) and a few small fishes. 35 And he commanded {(b) commands} the multitude to sit down on the ground** [they were on the bleak mountain, and not in the grassy plain of Butaiha]: **and he took the seven loaves (a) and the fishes; and he gave thanks, (b) and having given thanks, he brake, and gave to his {(a) the} disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.** [405] **{(b) to set before them; and they set them before the multitude.} 7 And they had a few small fishes: and having blessed them, he commanded to set these also before them. (a) 37 And they all ate, and were filled: and they took up what remained over of the broken pieces, seven baskets full. 38 And they that did eat were (b) about (a) four thousand men, besides women and children. 39 And he sent away the multitudes.**

Section 70

RESPONSE TO SIGN-SEEKERS (Magadan, Summer A.D. 29) (Mt 15:39-16:12; Mk 8:10-21).

A. Public Response to the Leaders (Mt 15:39-16:4; Mk 8:10-13).

(b) 10 And immediately he entered into the boat with his disciples, (a) and came into the borders of Magadan. (b) into the parts of Dalmanutha. [It appears from the context that he crossed the lake to the west shore. Commentators, therefore, pretty generally think that Magadan is another form of the name Magdala, and that Dalmanutha was either another name for Magdala, or else a village near it.] **(a) 1 And the Pharisees and Sadducees (b) came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign (a) and trying him** [testing the strength of his miraculous power] **asked him to show them a sign from heaven.** [They rejected his miracles as signs of his messiahship, the Pharisees holding that such signs could be wrought by Beelzebub. See *Mk 3:22 Mt 12:24 Lk 11:15*. They therefore asked a sign from heaven such as only God could give, and such as he had accorded to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and Elijah, or such as Joel foretold (*Joe 2:31*). It is generally thought that the [406] Herodians were Sadducees of Galilee. If so, we note the beginning of their hostility recorded at *Mk 3:6*.] **(b) 12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit** [being grieved deeply at the sinful obduracy that demanded signs in the midst of overwhelming demonstrations of divine power], **(a) 2 He answered and said {(b) said,} (a) unto them, (b) Why does this generation seek a sign? (a) When it is evening, you say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. You know how to discern the face of the heaven; but you cannot discern the signs of the times.** [The signs of the times being fulfillments of prophecies, were better evidence of the period and presence of the Messiah than heavenly portents. It is useless to bestow new signs upon those who are blind as to the signs already existing.] **(a) 4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and (b) verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.** [that is, none such as was demanded] **(b) but the sign of Jonah.** [For comment on similar language, see on *Mt 12:39*. The resurrection or Jonah sign was a sign from heaven in the sense in which they used the words; that is, it was wrought directly by God, and not through man.] **(a) 13 And he left them, (b) And again entering into the boat departed to the other side.** [That is, from Magdala back again to the east shore, or rather, toward Bethsaida Julias, on the northeast shore.]

B. Warning to Disciples (Mt 16:5-12; Mk 8:14-21).

(a) 5 And the disciples came to the other side and forgot to take bread. (b) and they did not have in the boat with them more than one loaf. [This loaf was probably left over from the previous supply--*Mk 8:8*.] **(a) 6 Then Jesus said unto them, (b) 15 And he charged them, saying, (a) Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. (b) and the leaven of Herod.** [Leaven,

which answered to our modern yeast, was a symbol of a secret, penetrating, pervasive influence, usually of a corrupting nature. The [407] influence of the Pharisees was that of formalism, hypocritical ostentation, and traditionalism; that of the Sadducees was sneering rationalistic unbelief, free thought and cunning worldliness, manifesting itself among the Herodians in political corruption. **16 And they reasoned one with another, (a) among themselves, saying, We took {(b) have} no bread.** They thought that Jesus reproved them for their carelessness in forgetting to take bread, *since* that carelessness might lead them to be without bread on their journey. So his rebuke below indicates--*Mk 8:17.*] **(a) 8 And Jesus perceiving it said, {(b) said,} unto them, (a) O you of little faith, why reason you among yourselves, because you have brought no bread? 9 Do you not yet perceive, (b) neither understand? (a) neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets [*cophini*, probably traveling baskets] you took up? 10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets [*spurides*, probably grain baskets or hampers] you took up? 11 How is it that you do not perceive that I did not speak to you concerning bread? (b) have hardened your hearts? 18 Having eyes, do you not see? and having ears, do you not hear? and do you not remember? 19 When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets [*cophini*] full of broken pieces did you take up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20 And when the seven among the four thousand, how many basketfuls [*spurides*] of broken pieces did you take up? And they say unto him, Seven. 21 And he said unto them, Do you not yet understand? (a) But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?** [Jesus had resorted to metaphor because the word "leaven" better expressed his idea than did the word "teaching." The formulated dogmas of the Pharisees were not so bad, but the subtle influence of their spirit and example corrupted [408] without warning, like a concealed grave. There are those to-day who are too skillful to be openly convicted of heterodox statements, but whose teaching, nevertheless, in its very essence and spirit, tends to infidelity.] **(a) 12 Then understood they how that he asked them not to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**

Section 72

HEALING OF A BLIND MAN

(Bethsaida Julias, Summer A.D. 29)

Mk 8:22-26

(b) 22 And they came to Bethsaida. [Not the suburb of Capernaum, but Bethsaida Julias, a town on the east side of the Jordan, near where it flows into the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was proceeding northward toward Cæsarea Philippi--*Mk 8:27.*] **And they brought to him a blind man, and beseeched him to touch him. 23 And he took hold of the blind man by the hand, and brought him out of the village** [Jesus increased the sympathy between himself and the man by separating him from the crowd.]; **and when he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands upon him, he asked him, Do you see anything? 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men; for I behold *them* as trees, walking.** [The man's eyes were probably very, and Jesus made use of saliva to soften and soothe them. But it was our Lord's custom to give variety to the manifestation of his power, sometimes using one apparent auxiliary means, and sometimes another; and also healing instantly or progressively, as he chose, that the people might see that the healing was altogether a matter of his will. The man had evidently not been born blind, else he would not have been able to recognize men or trees by sight, for those not used to employ sight cannot by it tell a circle from a square.] **25 Then again he laid his hands again upon his eyes; and he looked steadfastly, and was restored, and saw all things clearly. 26 And he sent him away to his home, saying, Do not even enter into the village.** [The man, of course, lived in the village, and to send him home was to send him thither, but he was to go directly home and not spread the news through the town, for if he did the population would be at once drawn to Jesus, thus breaking up the privacy that he sought to maintain.] [409] **[Miracle 24]**

Section 73

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE TWELVE (Caesarea Philippi, Summer, A.D. 29) Mt 16:13-28; Mk 8:27-39; Lk 9:18-27

A. Peter's Good Confession (Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-21).

(b) 27 And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the villages of Caesarea Philippi [The city of Paneas was enlarged by Herod Philip I, and named in honor of Tiberias Caesar. It also bore the name Philippi because of the name of its builder, and to distinguish it from Caesarea, a city on the Mediterranean coast. This is the most northern city of the Holy Land visited by Jesus, and except Sidon, the most northern point of his travels]: (a) 13 Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, (c) it came to pass, (b) on the way (c) as he was praying apart, the disciples were with him: and he asked (b) his disciples, saying, unto them, (a) Who do men say that the Son of man is? (a) Who do men {(c) the multitude} say that I am? [Jesus asks them to state the popular opinion concerning himself as contrasted with the opinion of the rulers, Pharisees, etc.] 19 And they answering (b) told him, saying, {(c) said,} (a) Some say John the Baptist; (c) but {(b) and} (a) some, (b) others, Elijah; but {(c) and} others, (a) Jeremiah, or (c) that one of the old prophets is risen again. [It should be noted that popular opinion did not honor him as Messiah, but since it accepted him as a prophet, the people were therefore inexcusable in not receiving the statements that he made in regard to himself, and admitting the messianic claims that he set forth.] 20 And he said {(a) said} unto them, (b) 29 And he [410] asked them, But who say you that I am? [Jesus here first asks the disciples this question, having given them abundant time and opportunity in which to form a correct judgment.] (a) 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, {(c) answering (b) answers and said} unto him, You are the Christ. (c) of God. (a) the Son of the living God. [Peter asserts this as an assured fact and not as a mere opinion. This confession embraces two propositions: 1. The office of Jesus--the Christ; 2. The divinity of Jesus--the Son of God. The Christhood of Jesus implies his humanity, for as such he was to be the son of David. It also identifies him as the hero or subject of prophecy, the long-expected deliverer. In declaring Jesus to be the Son of God, Peter rose above the popular theories as to the personality of Messiah, for the Jews generally did not expect him to be divine. The term "living God" was used by prophets to express the contrast between dead idols and the supreme Being who is possessed of vitality, reason, and feeling. See *Ps* 42:2 84:2 *Isa* 37:4,17 *Jer* 10:10 23:36 *Da* 6:20,26 *Ho* 1:10.] (a) 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah [Jesus gives the full name to make his saying more personally emphatic]: for flesh and blood [The common words of contrast by which humanity was distinguished from divinity. See also *Ga* 1:16] has not revealed it unto you, but my Father who is in heaven. [Peter was blessed by having a revelation from God by which facts were made known that could not be discovered by the unaided human reason. God had revealed the truth to him in the words and works of Jesus, and this revealed truth was to him a source of happiness both temporal and eternal. Like confessions as to this truth had been made before (*Mt* 14:33 *Jn* 1:49), but they had been made under the pressure of miraculous display and strong emotion. Hence they were rather exclamatory guesses at the truth, and differed from this now made by Peter that was the calm expression of a settled conviction produced both by the character and by the miracles of Jesus.] (a) 18 And I say also unto [411] you, That you are Peter [*petros*, a noun masculine] and upon this rock [*Petra*, a noun feminine] I will build my church [The tense here is future. Christ had followers, but they were not yet organized, and hence had no such structural form as to suggest a similitude to a building]; and the gates of Hades [Hades was the name of the abode of the dead. Its gate symbolized its power because the military forces of an ancient city always sallied forth from its gates] shall not prevail against it. [Death shall neither destroy the organic church that is in the world, nor the members thereof that go down into the grave (*1Th* 4:15 *1Co* 15:54-56). No passage in the word of God has called forth more discussion than *Mt* 16:18,19, the first point in dispute being as to what is meant by the rock; that is, whether Christ or Peter or Peter's confession is the foundation of the church; the second point being as to the extent of the power and authority bestowed on Peter by the symbol of the keys. To aid us in reaching a correct conclusion we must note that Jesus speaks in metaphorical

language. He represents: 1. His kingdom as a city about to be built upon a rock. 2. Himself as a builder of the city. 3. Simon Peter as the one who holds the keys to the gates by which egress and regress is had to the city. 4. The gates or powers of the opposing city of Hades are not able to prevail against this kingdom city. Now, since Jesus himself occupies the position of builder in the metaphor, and Simon Peter the position of key-bearer, neither of them can properly be regarded as the foundation. The foundation must therefore be the confession that Peter has just spoken, since it is all that remains that is liable to such application. The case could present no difficulty at all were it not for the unmistakable allusion to Peter (*petros*, a loose stone) as in some way associated with *petra*, the bedrock or foundation. But in the light of other Scriptures this allusion presents no difficulty; for all the apostles were such stones, and were closely allied to the foundation (*Eph 2:19-22 Ga 2:9*). Compare also (*1Pe 2:3-8*). The Christian religion in all its redemptive completeness rests and can rest on no other [412] foundation than Christ (*1Co 3:11*). But the church or kingdom of Christ among men rests organically and constitutionally upon a foundation of apostolic authority, for the apostles were the mouthpieces of the Holy Spirit; but in this apostolic foundation the other apostles had equal rights, each one of them becoming a living foundation stone as soon as his faith led him to make a like confession with Simon Peter. Hence we find the apostle Paul asserting the superior authority of the apostles to all other Christian teachers and workers (*1Co 12:28*), and times without number asserting his apostolic office and authority (*1Co 9:1,2 2Co 12:12 13:1-4 Ga 1:1,8 Eph 3:1-6 Phm 1:8,9*.) **19 I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** [Continuing his metaphorical language, Jesus promised to Peter the keys; that is, the authority to lay down the rules or laws (under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, however) for admission to or exclusion from the kingdom or church. This office was, of course, given to Peter in a secondary sense, since it must ever belong to Christ in a primary sense (*Re 3:7*). The figure of key-bearer is taken from *Isa 22:22*. Peter used the keys on the day of Pentecost to open the church to the Jews, and about seven years afterward, at Caesarea Palaestinae, he used them again to admit the Gentiles. In fixing the terms of admission, he also fixed the terms of exclusion, for all who are not admitted are excluded. The keys as used by Peter have never been changed; that is to say, the terms of admission abide forever. Plurality of keys is merely part of the parabolic drapery, since cities were accustomed to have several gates, thus requiring a plurality of keys. The kingdom was not opened to Jews and Gentiles by different keys, since both were admitted on the same terms. The words "bind" and "loose" were commonly used among the Jews in the sense of forbid and allow. Abundant instances of this usage have been collected by Lightfoot. They relate to the binding and annulling of laws and rules. [413] In this sense the word for "loose," is used very many times in the New Testament, but it is translated by the word "break" or "broken" (*Mt 5:19 Jn 7:23 10:35*). The power here given to Peter was soon after extended to the rest of the apostles (*Mt 18:18*). The apostles were to lay down, as they afterward did, the organic law of the new kingdom, defining what things were prohibited and what permitted. Their actions in this behalf would of course be ratified in heaven, because they were none other than the acts of the Holy Spirit expressed through the apostles.] **(b) 30 And (a) 20 Then {(c) 21 But} (a) charged he the disciples (c) and commanded them to tell this to no man; (b) that they should tell no man of him. (a) that he was the Christ.** [The people were not ready to receive this truth, nor were the apostles sufficiently instructed to rightly proclaim it. Their heads were full of wrong ideas with regard to Christ's work and office, and had they been permitted to teach about him, they would have said what would have been necessary for them to subsequently correct, thus producing confusion.]

B. Passion Foretold (Mt 16:21-28; Mk 8:31-39; 9:1; Lk 9:22-27).

(a) 21 From that time [that is, from the time of Peter's confession, and about three-quarters of a year before the crucifixion] **Jesus began to show unto his disciples, (b) 31 And to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things** [Since the apostles, by the mouth of Peter, had just confessed Jesus as Christ (*Mk 8:29*), it was necessary that their crude messianic conceptions should be corrected and that the true Christhood--the Christhood of the atonement and the resurrection--should be revealed to them. In discourse and parable Jesus had explained the principles and the nature of the kingdom, and now, from this time forth, he taught the [414]

apostles about himself, the priestly King], **(a) that he must go up to Jerusalem, (b) and be rejected by (a) and suffer many things of the elders, and (b) the chief priests, and the scribes** [The Jewish Sanhedrin was generally designated by thus naming the three constituent parts.], **and be killed, (a) and the third day be raised up. {(b) and after three days rise again.} 32 And he spoke the saying openly. (c) 22 saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.** [Very early in his ministry Jesus had given obscure intimations concerning his death (*Jn 2:19-22 3:14 Mt 12:38-40*), but these had not been understood by either friend or foe. Now that he thus spoke plainly, we may see by Peter's conduct that they comprehended and were deeply moved by the dark and more sorrowful portion of his revelation, and failed to grasp the accompanying promise of a resurrection.] **(a) 22 And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from you, Lord: this shall never be unto you.** [Evidently Peter regarded Jesus as overcome by a fit of despondency, and felt that such talk would utterly dishearten the disciples if it were persisted in. His love, therefore, prompted him to lead Jesus to one side and deal plainly with him. In so doing, Peter overstepped the laws of discipleship and assumed that he knew better than the Master what course to pursue.] **(b) 33 But he turning about, and seeing his disciples. (a) turned, (b) rebuked Peter, and said, {(a) said} unto Peter, Get you behind me, Satan: you are a stumbling block unto me: for you mind not the things of God, but the things that be of men.** [Jesus withdrew from Peter and turned back to his disciples. By the confession of the truth Simon had just won his promised name of Peter, which allied him to Christ, the [415] foundation. But when he now turned aside to speak the language of the tempter, Peter receives the name Satan, as if he were the very devil himself. Peter presented the same temptation with which the devil once called forth a similar rebuke from Christ (*Mt 4:10*). He was unconsciously trying to dissuade Jesus from the death on which the salvation of the world depended, and this was working into Satan's hand.] **(b) 34 And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, (a) 24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, (c) 23 And he said unto all** [despite the efforts of Jesus to seek privacy, the people were still near enough at hand to be called and addressed], **If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily** [compare *Ro 8:36 1Co 15:31*] **and follow me** [The disciple must learn to say "no" to many of the strongest cravings of his earthly nature. The cross is a symbol for duty that is to be performed daily, at any cost, even that of the most painful death. The disciple must follow Jesus, both as to his teaching and example.] **24 For whoever would save his life shall lose it; (a) and {(c) but} whoever shall lose his life for my sake, (b) and the gospel's (c) the same shall (a) find it. (c) save it.** [Jesus here plays upon the two meanings of the word "life," one being of temporal and the other of eternal duration.] **(b) 36 For what does it profit a man, {(c) is a man (a) shall a man be profited,} if he shall gain {(b) to gain} the whole world, (c) and lose or forfeit his own self? {(a) his life? or {(b) 37 For} (a) what shall {(b) should} a man give in exchange for his life?** [Peter and the rest of the apostles had been thinking about a worldly messianic kingdom, with its profits and rewards. Jesus shows the worthlessness even of the whole world in comparison with the rewards of the true kingdom. It is the comparison between the things that are external, and that perish, [416] and the life that is internal, and that endures. External losses may be repaired, but a lost life can never be regained, for with what shall a man buy it back?] **38 For whoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words** [compare *Lk 12:9 2Ti 1:8,12 2:12*] **in this adulterous and sinful generation** [see on *Mt 12:39*], **the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him (c) when he comes in his own glory, and the glory of the {(b) his} (c) Father, and of {(b) with} the holy angels.** [Peter had just been ashamed of the words in which Christ pictured himself as undergoing his humiliation. Jesus warns him and all others of the dangers of such shame.] **(a) 27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall render unto every man according to his deed.** [The Father's glory, the angels, and the rendering of universal judgment form a threefold indication that Jesus here speaks of his final coming to judge the world.] **(b) 1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, (c) 27 But I tell you of a truth, (a) There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (c) till they see the kingdom of God. (b) come with power.** [The mention of his final coming suggested one nearer at hand that was to be accomplished during the life of most of those present, since none but Jesus himself and Judas were to die

previous to that time. The kingdom was to come and likewise the King. The former coming was literal, the latter spiritual. Those who refer this expression to the transfiguration certainly err, for no visible kingdom was established at that time. The expression refers to the kingdom that was organized and set in motion on the Pentecost that followed the resurrection of Jesus. It was set up with power, because three thousand souls were converted the first day (*Ac 2:41*), and many other gospel triumphs speedily followed.] [417]

Section 74 THE TRANSFIGURATION (Mount Hermon, Summer A.D. 29) Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13; Lk 9:28-36

A. Ascending the Mount (Mt 17:1; Mk 9:2; Lk 9:28).

(c) 28 And it came to pass about eight days {(a) six days} (c) after these sayings [Mark agrees with Matthew in saying six days. Luke qualifies his estimate by saying "about." But if we regard him as including the day of the "sayings" and also the day of the transfiguration, and the other two as excluding these days, then the three statements tally exactly. The "sayings" referred to were the words of Jesus with regard to his suffering at Jerusalem], **that (a) Jesus takes {(c) took} (a) with him Peter, and James, and John his brother** [These three, as leaders among the apostles, needed the special encouragement that was about to be given. For further comment, see on Mk 5:37], **and brings them {(c) went} (a) up into a {(c) the} (b) high mountain apart by themselves: (c) to pray.** [Mount Hermon is the highest mountain in Palestine, its elevation being 9,400 feet. It was Jesus' custom to withdraw for prayer by night (*Mt 14:23,24 Lk 6:12 21:37 22:39*) and the transfiguration took place at night.]

B. Scene on the Mount (Mt 17:2-8; Mk 9:2-8; Lk 9:29-36).

(c) 29 And as he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling. (a) 2 and he was transfigured [that is, transformed; the description shows to what extent] **before [418] them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. (b) glistening, exceeding white; so as no launderer on earth can whiten them.** [We may conceive of the body of Jesus becoming luminous and imparting its light to his garments. The Christian looks forward to beholding such a transfiguration and also to participating in it--*1Jo 3:2*.] **(a) 3 And, behold, there appeared unto them (c) two men, who were Moses and {(b) with} (c) Elijah; (b) and they were talking with Jesus.** [The three apostles could identify Moses and Elijah by the course of this conversation, though it is possible that miraculous knowledge may have accompanied miraculous sight.] **(c) 31 who** [that is, Moses and Elijah] **who appeared in glory, and spoke of his decease that he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.** [The word for "decease" is *exodus*, an unusual word for death. It means a *departure* and it includes the passion, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.] **32 Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep** [it being night]; **but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. 33 And it came to pass, as they were departing from him, (a) Peter answered and said {(b) answers and said} (a) unto Jesus, (b) Rabbi, (c) Master, (a) Lord, it is good for us to be here: (b) and let us make three tabernacles; (a) if you will, I will make here three tabernacles; one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. (c) not knowing what he said. (b) 6 For he knew not what to answer; for they became very afraid.** [Peter's fears overcame his discretion, but did not silence his tongue. Though he trembled at the fellowship of Moses and Elijah, he also realized the blessedness of it and could not let them depart without an effort to detain them, though the best inducement that he could offer was to build three booths, or arbors, made of the branches of trees, for their and Christ's accommodation. By thus speaking, Peter placed Jesus upon the same level with Moses [419] and Elijah--all three being worthy of a booth.] **(c) 34 And while he said these things, (a) 5 While he yet speaking, behold, (b) there came (a) a bright cloud (b) overshadowing them: {(c) and overshadowed them:} and they feared as they entered into the cloud.** [Clouds often roll against the sides of Mt. Hermon, but

the brightness of this cloud and the fear that it produced suggests that it was the Shekinah, or cloud of glory, which was the symbol of God's peculiar presence--*Ex 13:21,22 19:9,18 24:16 40:34,35 1Ki 8:10.* (a) and behold, (b) there came a voice out of the cloud, (a) saying, **This is my beloved Son, (c) my chosen: (a) in whom I am well pleased; hear you him.** [This command contains the chief significance of the entire scene. Spoken in the presence of Moses and Elijah, it gave Jesus that pre-eminence that a son has over servants. He is to be heard. His words have pre-eminence over those of the lawgiver and the prophet (*Heb 1:1,2*). Peter recognized Jesus as thus honored by this voice--*2Pe 1:16-18.*] (a) **6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were very afraid.** [As every man is who hears the voice of God.] **7 And Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and be not afraid.** [As mediator between man and God, Jesus removes fear.] (b) **8 And suddenly looking round about, (a) 8 And lifting up their eyes, (b) they saw no one any more, except Jesus only with themselves. (c) 36 And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone.** [Leaders and prophets depart, but Christ abides--*Heb 3:5,6.*]

C. Descending the Mount (Mt 17:9-13; Mk 9:9-13; Lk 9:36).

(b) **9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them, that they should tell no man what things they had seen, except when the Son of man should have risen again from the dead. (a) 9 And Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.** [The people were not ready for the publication of such an event. To have told it now would only have been to raise doubts as to their veracity.] (b) **10 And they kept the saying, [420] questioning among themselves what the rising from the dead should mean.** [Jesus spoke so often in parables and made so frequent use of metaphors that the apostles did not take his words concerning the resurrection in a literal sense. They regarded his language as figurative, and sought to interpret the figure.] (c) **And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things that they had seen. (a) 10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? (b) How is it that the scribes say that Elijah must first come?** [They were puzzled by the disappearance of Elijah. They looked upon him as having come to fulfill the prophecy of Malachi (*Mal 4:5,6*), but they marveled that, having come, he should so soon withdraw, and that they should be forbidden to tell that they had seen him, since the sight of him would be some sign of Jesus' messiahship.] (a) **11 And he answered and (b) said unto them, Elijah indeed comes first, and restores {(a) shall restore} all things** [this sentence leads some to think that Elijah will appear again before the second coming of our Lord, but the words are to be interpreted in connection with the rest of the passage]: (b) **and how it is written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things, and be set at naught?** [If the writings concerning Elijah perplexed the apostles, those concerning the Messiah perplexed them also. From one set of prophecies they might learn something about the other. Elijah came, but the Scriptures concerning him were so little understood that he was put to death. The Messiah also came, and the prophecies concerning him were so little understood that he, too, would be set at naught.] **13 But I say unto you, that Elijah is come, (a) already, and they knew him not, but did {(b) and they have also done} unto him whatever they would. Even as it is written of him. (a) Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them.** [Malachi used the name of Elijah figuratively to represent John the Baptist. [421] That there shall be a second coming of Elijah in fulfillment of this prophecy is hardly possible, for the office of Elijah is prophetically outlined as that of the restorer. But Elijah could not restore Judaism, for that dispensation had been done away with in Christ. He could hardly have chosen to restore Christianity, for even if it should need such a restoration, a Jewish prophet would be ill-suited to such an office. One of the apostles would be vastly preferable.] (a) **13 Then understood the disciples that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.**

Section 75

AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNT

(Mount Hermon, Summer, A.D. 29)

Mt 17:14-20; Mk 9:14-29; Lk 9:37-42

A. What Jesus Found (Mt 17:14-16; Mk 9:14-18; Lk 9:37-40).

(c) 37 And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, (b) 14 And when they came to the disciples [the nine apostles that had been left behind], they saw a great multitude about them [We last heard of the multitude at Mk 8:34. It had no doubt been with Jesus until he ascended the mount and had remained with his apostles until he came down], and scribes questioning with them. [These scribes had caught the apostles in one and perhaps the only case where they had failed to cure, and they were making full use of the advantageous opportunity to discredit Christ and his apostles before the people by asking sneering and sarcastic questions.] 15 And immediately all the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and running to him (c) a great multitude met him. (b) saluted him. [Why was the multitude amazed? [422] Undoubtedly the amazement was caused by the sudden and opportune return of Jesus. Those who urge that this was not enough to produce amazement show themselves to be poor students of human nature. The multitude had been listening to and no doubt enjoying the questions of the scribes. The unexpected appearance of Jesus therefore impressed them with the sudden sense of having been detected in wrongdoing that invariably leads to amazement. Moreover, those who remained loyal to Jesus would be equally amazed by his approach, since they could not but feel that an exciting crisis was at hand.] (a) 14 And when they were come to the multitude [that is, when Jesus and the multitude met], (b) he asked them, What are you discussing with them? [He surprised the scribes by this demand and they saw at once that he knew all and they felt rebuked for their unwarranted exultation, and so kept silent.] (c) 38 And, behold, (a) there came to him a man, (b) one of {(c) from} the multitude, (a) kneeling to him, (b) answered him, (c) cried, saying, (b) Teacher, (a) 15 Lord, (b) I brought unto you my son, who has a dumb spirit; (a) have mercy on my son: for he is epileptic, and suffers grievously; (c) I beseech you look upon my son: for he is my only child. 39 and behold a spirit takes him, and he suddenly cries out; (b) 18 and wherever it takes him, it dashes him down: (c) and it tears him that he foams, (b) and grinds his teeth, and pines away: (c) and it hardly departs from him, bruising him sorely. [When the scribes did not answer, the father of the demoniac boy broke the embarrassing silence by telling Jesus about the matter in question. His child was deaf, dumb, and epileptic, but all these physical ailments were no doubt produced by the demon or evil spirit that possessed him. The phrase "hardly departs from him" rather suggests the continual unrest in which the demon kept his victim rather than that the demon ever really relinquished his possession of him. Pauses in the delirium of agony were regarded as departures of the [423] demon.] (a) 16 And I brought him to your disciples, (b) and I spoke to your disciples that they should cast him out; (c) 40 And I besought your disciples to cast him out; and they could not. (b) they were not able. (a) and they could not cure him.

B. What Jesus Said (Mt 17:17-18; Mk 9:19-20; Lk 9:41-42a).

(a) 17 And Jesus answered and said, {(b) answered them and said,} (a) O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? (c) bring your son to me. (b) unto me. [As there was no reason to accuse the apostles of perversity, it is evident that the rebuke of Jesus is addressed generally to all and not particularly to the disciples. The perverse faithlessness and infidelity of the scribes had operated upon the multitude, and the doubts of the multitude had in turn influenced the apostles, and thus, with the blind leading the blind, all had fallen into the ditch of impotent disbelief. The disbelief of the people was a constant grief to Jesus, but it must have been especially so in this case, for it fostered and perpetrated this scene of weakness, mean-spiritedness, misery, and suffering that stood out in such sharp contrast with the peace, blessedness, and glory from which he had just come.] 20 And they brought him unto him: (c) 42 And as he was yet a coming, (b) when he saw him [saw Jesus], immediately (c) the demon dashed him down, and (b) the spirit tore him grievously; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. 21 And he asked his father, How long is it since this has come unto him? And he said, From a child. 22 And oft-times it has cast him both into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: {(a) he falls into the fire, and oft-times into the water.} [By causing the long-standing nature of the case and the

malignity of it to be fully revealed, Jesus emphasized the power of the cure] **(b) but if you can do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. 23 And Jesus said unto him, If you can! All things are possible to him that believes.** [Jesus echoed back the "if you can" that the man had uttered (*Mk 9:22*). If Jesus marveled at the faith of a Gentile that trusted the fullness [424] of his divine power, he also marveled at the disbelief of this Jew that thus coolly and presumptuously questions the sufficiency of that power. In the remainder of his answer Jesus shows that the lack of power is not in him, but in those who would be recipients of the blessings of his power, for those blessings are obtained by faith.] **24 Immediately the father of the child cried out, and said I believe; help my unbelief.** [He confessed his faith, but desired so ardently to have the child healed that he feared lest he should not have faith enough to accomplish that desire, and therefore asked for more faith.] **(b) 25 And when Jesus saw that the multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and enter no more into him.** [Jesus had found the multitude when he came down from the mountain, but the excitement in this multitude was evidently drawing men from every quarter, so that the crowd was momentarily growing greater. A longer conversation with the man might have been beneficial, but to prevent the gathering of any larger company Jesus acted at once and spoke the words of command. Since the demon was manifestly of a most daring, impudent, and audacious nature, Jesus took the precaution to forbid it attempting to re-enter its victim, a precaution that the conduct of the demon abundantly justified.] **26 And having cried out, and torn him much, he came out: and the boy became as one dead; insomuch that the more part said, He is dead.** [The malicious effrontery and obstinacy displayed by this demon stands in marked contrast to the cowed, supplicating spirit shown by the Gergesenes legion. See on *Mk 5:6-7*.] **27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up; and he arose. (c) But Jesus healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.** [For comment on similar conduct see on *Lk 7:15*.] **(a) and the demon went out of him: and the boy was cured from that hour. (c) 43 And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.** [The failure of the disciples had only emphasized the power [425] of the Master.]

C. What Jesus Taught (Mt 17:19-20; Mk 9:28-29).

(b) 28 And when he was come into the house, (a) 19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, (b) asked him privately, How is it that we could not we cast it out? (a) Why could not we cast it out? 20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your little faith [The failure of the disciples was not because of any insufficiency of power in Jesus, but was due to their own failure to appropriate that power by faith. The relation of belief and unbelief to miraculous power is fully illustrated in Peter's attempt to walk upon the waters. See on *Mt 14:30*: **for verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain [Mount Hermon] Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.** [The mustard seed was the proverbial type for the infinitely little (see on *Mt 13:32*). Faith has such power with God that even little faith becomes well-near omnipotent in an age of miracles.] **(b) 29 And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing, except by prayer.** [Prayer was the means of increasing faith. Demons, like spirits in the flesh, have different degrees of will force, some being easier to subdue than others, and this one, being particularly willful and obstinate, required more faith to expel it.]

Section 76

RETURN TO GALILEE

Mt 17:22-23; Mk 9:30-32; Lk 9:43-45

(b) 30 And they went forth from there [from the region of Caesarea Philippi], **and passed through Galilee** [on his way to Capernaum]; **and he would not that any man should know it.** [He was still seeking that retirement that began on the journey to Tyre. See on *Mk 7:24*. This is the last definite mention of that retirement, but we find it referred to again at *Jn 7:3,4*. See on *Jn 7:3-4*] [426] **(b) 31 For he taught his disciples** [the reason for his retirement is here given: he wished to prepare his disciples for his passion], **and said unto them, The Son of man is**

delivered up [the present tense is used for the future to express the nearness and certainty of the event] **into the hands of men, (a) 22 And {(c) But} (a) while they abode in Galilee, (c) while all were marveling at all the things that he did, (a) Jesus (c) said unto his disciples, 44 Let these sayings sink into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men.** [We have here two notes of time during which Jesus spoke of his passion. It was all the while he was in Galilee, between his return from Caesarea and his departure into Judea, for which see on Jn 7:2. The length of time suggests that the sad lesson was oft repeated, but was at a time when the marvels of his works strengthened the faith of the disciples so as to enable them to bear the instruction.] **(b) and they shall kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he shall rise again. {(a) and the third day he shall be raised up.}** [For comment on similar language see on Mt 12:40.] **And they were exceeding sorry.** [Peter's experience taught them not to attempt to correct Jesus while thus speaking, so there was nothing left for them but to grieve at his words.] **(c) 45 But they understood not this {(b) the} saying, (c) and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it** [What was told to them was not for their present but their future benefit, and therefore they were left to puzzle over the words of Jesus]; **and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.** [Not so much from any awe with which they regarded him, as from the delicacy of the subject itself, and their own sorrow, which shrank from knowing it more fully.] [427]

Section 77

JESUS ILLUSTRATES SUBMISSION

(Capernaum, Fall, A.D. 29)

Mt 17:24-27

(a) 24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received the half-shekel came to Peter, and said, Does your teacher not pay the half-shekel? [The law of Moses required from every male of twenty years and upward the payment of a tax of half a shekel for the support of the temple (*Ex 30:12-16 2Ch 24:5,6*). This tax was collected annually. We are told that a dispute existed between the Pharisees and Sadducees as to whether the payment of this tribute was voluntary or compulsory. The collectors of it may have thought that Jesus regarded its payment as voluntary, or they may have thought that Jesus considered himself exempt from it because he was so great a rabbi. Though this temple tax was usually collected in March, the payment of it was so irregular that its receivers kept two chests; in one of which was placed the tax for the current year, and in the other that for the year past. The demand was made upon Jesus at Capernaum because that was his residence, and it was not made sooner because of the wandering life that he led. It appears that since the first of April he had been in Capernaum only once for a brief period, probably no longer than a Sabbath day (*Jn 6:22-24*). The Jewish shekel answered to the Greek stater, which has been variously estimated as worth from fifty to seventy-five cents. The stater contained four drachmae, and a drachma was about equivalent to a Roman denarius.] **25 He said, Yes.** [Peter answered with his usual impulsive presumption. Probably he had known the tribute to be paid before out of the general fund held by Judas; or he may have assumed that Jesus [428] would fulfill this as one of God's requirements.] **And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke first to him** [without waiting for him to tell what he had said], **saying, What do you think, Simon? the kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? from their sons, or from strangers? 26 And when he said, From strangers, Jesus said unto him, Therefore the sons are free.** [The argument is this: If the sons of kings are free from the payment of tribute, I, the Son of God, am free from God's tribute. The half-shekel was regarded as given to God.] **27 But, lest we cause them to stumble** [lest we be totally misunderstood, and be thought to teach that men should not pay this tribute to God], **go to the sea [of Galilee], and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first comes up; and when you have opened its mouth, you will find a shekel: that take, and give unto them for me and yourself.** [Jesus paid the tribute in such a manner as to show that the whole realm of nature was tributary to him, and that he was indeed the Son of the great King. "For me and you," distinguishes between the exempted Son and the unexempted subject.] [429] **[Miracle 26]**

Section 78
INSTRUCTION IN HUMILITY
(Capernaum, Fall, A.D. 29)
Mt 18:1-35; Mk 9:33-50; Lk 9:46-50

A. An Egotistical Question (Mt 18:1; Mk 9:33-34; Lk 9:46-47).

(c) 46 And there arose a discussion among them, which of them was the greatest. (b) 33 And he came to Capernaum: (c) 47 But when Jesus saw the reasoning of their heart, (b) and when he was in the house [probably Simon Peter's house] he asked them, **What were you discussing on the way? 34 But they held their peace: for they had disputed one with another on the way, who was the greatest.** [The Lord with his disciples was now on his way back to Galilee from Caesarea Philippi, where, some ten days before, he had promised the keys of the kingdom to Peter (*Mt 16:19*), and where he had honored Peter and the sons of Zebedee by a mysterious withdrawal into the mount (*Mt 17:1 Mk 9:2 Lk 9:28*). These facts, therefore, no doubt started the dispute as to which should hold the highest office in the kingdom. The fires of envy thus set burning were not easily quenched. We find them bursting forth again from time to time down to the very verge of Christ's exit from the world--*Mt 20:20-24 Lk 22:24.*] **35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and he said unto them, If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.** [The spirit that proudly seeks to be first in place thereby consents to make itself last in character, for it reverses the graces of the soul, turning love into envy, humility into pride, generosity into selfishness, etc.] **(a) 1 In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?** [Not comprehending our Lord's answer (*Mk 9:34*) and wishing to have him definitely point out the honored person, they now come asking this question. Had Jesus wished to teach the primacy of Peter, no better opportunity [430] could have been found.]

B. Jesus' Response to the Question (Mt 18:2-4; Mk 9:36-37; Lk 9:47-48).

Discourse # 11 Humility and Forgiveness Mt 18:2-35; Mk 9:35-50; Lk 9:47-62

(a) 2 And he called to him a little child (b) 36 And he took a child, (c) and set him by his side, (b) and set him in the midst of them: and taking him in his arms, he said unto them, (a) Verily I say unto you, Except you turn, and become as little children, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. [Jesus told them plainly that they must turn from their sin of personal ambition or they could not be his disciples--part of his kingdom--and he pointed them to a little child as the model in this particular, because the humble spirit in which the child looks up to its parents stood out in sharp contrast with their self-seeking, self-exalting ambition.] **(a) 5 And (b) 37 Whoever shall receive one of such little children {(c) this little child} in my name, receives me: and whoever shall receive {(b) receives} me, receives not me, but (c) receives him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same is great.** [Greatness does not consist in place. Disciples who receive those of a childlike spirit and disposition that they may thereby honor the name of Christ are honored of Christ as the greatest. The words "in my name" probably suggested to John the incident that follows.] **42 And {(a) 6 but} (b) whoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if {(a) it is profitable for him that} (b) a great millstone [the word indicates a large millstone that was turned by an donkey] were {(a) should be} (b) hanged about his neck, and he were {(a) that he should be} (b) cast into the sea. (a) sunk in the depth of the sea.** [Character depends upon small things. If a small act of goodness receives its reward, an act of evil, made apparently small by the trifling insignificance of the person against

whom it is committed, receives just as inevitably its punishment. In short, there is no smallness in good and evil that men may rely upon, for heavy penalties may be meted out for what the world judges to be light sins. Those who cause the weak to lapse into unbelief through their ecclesiastical arrogance have a heavy reckoning for which to answer. Greeks, Romans and Egyptians were punished by such millstone drowning. But the fate of one who, by striving for place, causes others to sin, will be worse than that. From offenses caused by a proud spirit Jesus now passes to discuss offenses or sins caused by any spirit of evil.] **7 Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion comes!** [The depravity of man makes sin inevitable, but nevertheless it does not remove or reduce the personal responsibility of him who tempts to or [432] causes to sin.] **(b) 43 And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off: it is good for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having your two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire. 45 And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off: it is good for you to enter into life lame, rather than having your two feet to be cast into hell. {(a) the eternal fire.}** [We see from this that "hell" and "eternal fire" are interchangeable terms, and stand in contrast to eternal life.] **9 And if your eye causes {(b) cause} (a) you to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from you: it is good for you to enter into life {(b) the kingdom of God} with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast (a) into the hell of fire. (b) 48 where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.** [It is better to deny ourselves all unlawful pleasures, even if the denial be as painful and distressing as the loss of a member. The image of the worm is taken from *Isa 66:24*, and refers to those worms that feed upon the carcasses of men. The fire and worm can hardly be taken literally, for the two figures are incompatible--worms do not frequent fires. The two figures depict hell as a state of decay that is never completed and of burning that does not consume. Some regard the worm as a symbol of the gnawings of remorse, and the fire as a symbol of actual punishment.] **49 For everyone shall be salted with fire.** [At this point many ancient authorities add, "and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."] **50 Salt is good: but if the salt has lost its saltiness, with what will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another.** [We have here one of the most difficult passages in the Bible. If the word "fire" were found in an isolated text it might be taken as a symbol either of purification or of punishment. But the context here determines its meaning, for it has just been taken twice as a symbol of punishment (*Mr 9:43,47*). Salt is a symbol of what preserves from decay. Now, Jesus has just been talking about the future state, with its two conditions or states [433] of bliss and punishment. In both of these states the souls of men are salted or preserved. Every one of the wicked is preserved by a negative or false salt--a worm that feeds but does not die, and a fire that consumes but refuses to go out. Though this state is a condition of life, it is such a negative and false condition that it is elsewhere termed a second death (*Re 2:11 20:6,14 21:8*). It is therefore rightly called a "salted" or preserved condition, yet it contradicts the symbolic idea of saltiness. As we understand it, the difficulty of the passage lies in this contradictory sense in which the term "salt" is used--a contradiction in which the term "eternal life" also shares, for eternal life is the constant contrast to life in hell, though that life also is spoken of as eternal. The true Christian--the man who offers his body as "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (*Ro 12:1*)--is preserved by the true salt or element of preservation, which is a divinely begotten life of righteousness within him. This is the good state of preservation that a man is counseled to obtain, and not to lose, since it will not be restored to him. The passage summarizes and contrasts the two states of future preservation, one being the salt of eternal life that preserves a man to enjoy the love of God in heaven, and the other being the salt of fire that preserves him in hell to endure the just punishment of God. The "everyone" in *Mk 9:49* refers to the sufferers mentioned in *Mr 9:48*.] **(a) 10 See that you do not despise one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.** [Jesus resumes his warning against that pride that exalts itself and despises the humble; disclosing the fact that the ministration of angels is not only general but special, certain angels being entrusted with the care of certain individuals, and all of them supplementing their own wisdom and power by direct access to the presence of God.] **12**

What do you think? if any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek the one that has gone astray? 13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, [434] he rejoices over it more than over the ninety and nine that have not gone astray. 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. [Those who have led highly moral lives have a tendency to despise those who have been defiled by gross sin. This truth is abundantly illustrated by the conduct of the Pharisees, but that such little ones should not be despised Jesus speaks this warning parable. See on Lk 15:3-7. Though the sheep in the fold and the one that is lost have, as individuals, the same intrinsic value, yet this even balance of value is somewhat modified by the sentiments and emotions incident to loss and recovery. Moreover, the anxiety and trouble caused by the sheep's wandering do not *depreciate* but rather *enhance* the value of that sheep, because the heart of the Shepherd is so replete with goodness that the misbehavior of the sheep prompts him to feel pity and compassion, rather than to cherish resentment and revenge. Sin does not add to a man's intrinsic value in God's sight--on the contrary, it detracts from it; but it excites in the heart of God pity, compassion, and other tender emotions that make it extremely dangerous for those who hinder his reformation and imperil his soul by despising him.] **(a) 15 And if your brother sins against you, go, show him his fault between you and him alone: if he hear you, you have gained your brother.** [Having warned against giving offense, Jesus now shows how to act when offense is received. The fault is to be pointed out to the offender, but for the purpose of gaining him--not from a desire to humiliate him. The offended is to seek the offender, [435] and the offender is likewise to seek the offended (*Mt 15:23,24*), and neither is to wait for the other.] **16 But if he does not hear you, take with you one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established.** [Reconciliation is still to be sought, but witnesses are now to be called in preparatory to the next step, which is the hearing before the church, wherein their testimony will be needed.] **17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto you as the gentile and the publican.** [As the Savior was giving preparatory instruction, he was compelled to thus speak of the church by anticipation before it actually existed. The word *church* means "assembly," and the apostles knew that there would be some form of assembly in the kingdom about to be set up. When Matthew wrote his Gospel, churches were already in existence. One who will not hear the church is to be regarded as an outsider. This implies that such a one is to be excluded from the church.] **18 Verily I say unto you, Whatever things you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever things you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** [The binding and loosing here mentioned is limited by the context or the subject of which Jesus now treats. Binding represents exclusion from membership; loosing, the restoration to fellowship in cases of repentance. The church's act in thus binding or loosing will be recognized in heaven if performed according to apostolic precept or precedent. Hence it is a most august and fearful prerogative.] **19 Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.** [These two verses illustrate the sublime power of the church that has just been suggested by its right of excommunication. A small church of two or three can prevail with God in prayer [436] (in matters not wholly at variance with his will) and can be honored by the very presence of the Christ.] **21 Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?** [Peter, seeing that the language of Jesus called for large forbearance, asked the Lord to fix the bounds. If we accept the Talmud as probably representing the ideals of forgiveness that prevailed among the Jews of that age, we find that Peter was striving to be liberal, for the Talmud limits forgiveness to three times.] **22 Jesus says unto him, I say unto you, Not until seven times; but, until seventy times seven.** [Jesus here plays upon the words so as to show that there is no numerical limitation. To keep track of four hundred ninety offenses one would have to open a set of books with his neighbor, which would be ridiculous. Forgiveness, prayer, and charity know no arithmetic. Peter's question brings to mind the forgiveness of God and calls

forth the following parable.] **23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a reckoning with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, that owed him ten thousand talents.** [Assuming that the silver talent is meant (\$1,600), the debt was \$16,000,000, which would render the debtor hopeless enough. If it was a gold talent, it would be nearly twenty times as much.] **25 But inasmuch as he had nothing with which to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.** [The law of Moses allowed such a sale--*Lv 25:39-47 2Ki 4:1.*] **26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all. 27 And the lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.** [Seeing the man's apparent willingness to pay, and knowing the hopelessness of his offer to do so, the lord compassionately decided not to sell him and forgave him the whole debt.] **28 But that [437] servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him an hundred denarii** [The denarius was worth about seventeen cents. The debt was, therefore, about \$100]: **and he laid hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what you owe.** [This frenzy to collect might have been somewhat pardonable had the lord still been demanding his debt, but, that debt being forgiven, such harsh conduct was inexcusable.] **29 So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay you.** [Compare this conduct with that depicted in *Mt 18:26* above.] **30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay what was due.** [Prison life was far worse than slavery. The Roman law permitted such a punishment, and it was practiced in this country until after the beginning of the last century.] **31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.** [They were sorry for the sin of the one and the suffering of the other. Human nature rarely grows so wicked that it fails to resent sin in others.] **32 Then his lord called him unto him, and said to him, You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you besought me: 33 should you not also have had mercy on your fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on you?** [God's forgiveness places us under obligation to be forgiving. The lord does not call the servant wicked because he had contracted a debt that he could not pay, but because of the merciless, unforgiving spirit that he had manifested toward his fellow-servant. Thus God freely forgives sin against himself, but the sin of refusing to forgive our fellow-man is with him an unforgivable sin. No doctrine of the Bible is more plainly taught than this.] **34 And his lord was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due.** [The picture is to be interpreted by the usages of the East, where even at the present day torture is used to compel debtors to confess the [438] possession of property that they suspected of hiding. Thus the man had escaped being sold into slavery only to receive sentence of death by torture.] **35 So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if you forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts.** [Jesus reminds us that God is a Father unto him whom we have refused to forgive. The key to the parable is introduced by the words, "So shall also." God will so deliver to the tormentors the unforgiving. Incidentally the parable draws comparisons between the forgiving spirit of God and the revengeful spirit of man, and the magnitude of our debt to him and the insignificance of our debts to each other. The retraction of forgiveness is merely a part of the parabolic drapery, but it is nevertheless true that those who are delivered from sin come to a worse state than ever if they return to it--*2Pe 2:20-22.*]

C. A Sectarian Question (Mk 9:38-41; Lk 9:49-50).

(c) **49 And John answered and said, Master, (b) Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in your name; and we forbade him, (c) because he follows {(b) followed} (c) not with us.** [Was not one of our immediate company. This man's actions had excited the jealousy of John. But Jesus shows that one who knows enough of him to use his power is not apt to dishonor him.] **50 But Jesus said unto him, (b) Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. 40 For he that is not against us is for us. (c) for he that is not against [431] you is for you.** [The converse of this statement is found at *Mt 12:30*. The two statements taken together declare the impossibility of neutrality. If a

man is in no sense against Christ, then he is for him; and if he is not for Christ, he is against him.] **(b) 41 For whoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, because you are Christ's, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.** [Jesus here returns to the discussion of greatness, and reasserts the doctrine that the smallest act of righteousness, if performed for the sake of the King, shall be honored in the kingdom.]

Section 79

A CHALLENGE FROM HIS BROTHERS

(Probably Capernaum, Fall, A.D. 29)

Jn 7:2-9

A. Chronological Note (Jn 7:2).

(d) 2 Now the feast of the Jews, the feast of tabernacles, was at hand. [Jn 7:1 tells us that Jesus kept away from Judea because the Jews sought for his life. This keeping away or seclusion began at the Passover season, and led Jesus not only to keep away from Judea, but even to hover upon the outskirts of Galilee itself. We now turn back to take up with John the narrative that tells how, after his six months' retirement, Jesus prepared to appear once more in Judea. The Feast of Tabernacles began on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, which answers to our September-October, and consequently came six [439] months after and six months before the Passover. It was the most joyous of the two great feasts, and not only commemorated the time when Israel dwelt in the wilderness in tents, but also celebrated the harvest home. It was, therefore, a thanksgiving both for permanent abodes and for the year's crops. As the people dwelt in booths, the feast partook much of the form and merriment of a picnic.]

B. Challenge of the Brothers (Jn 7:3-5).

(d) 3 His brothers therefore said unto him, Depart from here, and go into Judea, that your disciples also may behold your works that you do. 4 For no man does anything in secret, and seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, manifest yourself to the world. [When we consider how Jesus had withdrawn into the regions of Tyre, Sidon, Decapolis, and Caesarea Philippi, and with what assiduity he had avoided crowds and concealed miracles, these words become very plain. The twelve had been instructed sufficiently to confess his messiahship, but thousands of his disciples had not seen a miracle in six months. To his brothers such secrecy seemed foolish on the part of one who was ostensibly seeking to be known. They were not disposed to credit the miracles of Jesus, but insisted that if he could work them he ought to do so openly.] **5 For even his brothers did not believe on him.** [This verse explodes the idea that the parties known in the New Testament as our Lord's brothers were the sons of Alphaeus and cousins to Jesus. The sons of Alphaeus had long since been numbered among the apostles, while our Lord's brothers were still unbelievers. As to his brothers, see on Mk 3:18 and Mk 6:3.]

C. Jesus' Response to this Challenge (Jn 7:6-8).

(d) 6 Jesus therefore said unto them, My time has not yet come: but your time is always ready. [Jesus is answering a request that he manifest himself. The great manifestation of his cross and resurrection could not properly take place before the Passover, which was still six months distant. But his brothers, having no message and no manifestation, could show themselves at Jerusalem any time.] **7 The world cannot hate you; but it hates me, because I testify of it, that its works are evil.** [The world cannot [440] hate you because you are in mind and heart a part of it, and it cannot hate itself. It hates those who are not of it, and who rebuke its sins and oppose its ways.] **8 You go up unto the feast: I will not go up unto this feast; because my time has not yet been fulfilled. 9 And having said these things unto them, he abode still in Galilee.** [He did go to the feast, but he did not go up to manifest himself, as his brothers asked, and hence, in the sense in which they made the request, he did not go up. Six months later, at the Passover, he manifested himself by the triumphal entry somewhat as his brothers wished.]

Section 80
PRIVATE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM
(Samaria, Fall, A.D. 29)
Lk 9:51-62; Jn 7:10

A. Rejection by the Samaritans (Lk 9:51-53).

(d) 10 But when his brethren were gone up unto the feast, then he went up also, not publicly, but as it were in secret. [The secrecy of this journey consists in the fact that Jesus did not join the caravans or pilgrim bands, and that he did not follow the usual Perea route, but went directly through Samaria.] (c) 51 And it came to pass, when the days were well-near come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. [Taken in its strictest sense, the expression "received up" refers to our Lord's ascension, but it is here used to embrace his entire passion. Though our Lord's death was still six months distant, his going to Jerusalem is described as attended with a special effort, because from that time forth Jerusalem was to occupy the position of headquarters, as Capernaum had done, and his [441] withdrawals and returns would be with regard to it. The presence of the twelve alone is sufficient to account for the messengers. He did not wish to overtax the fickle hospitality of the Samaritans by coming unannounced.] 53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem. [Had Jesus come among them on a missionary tour he would doubtless have been received. But when he came as a Jew passing through to Jerusalem, and using their highway as a convenience, they rejected him.]

B. Indiscretion by Disciples (Lk 9:54-56).

(c) 54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, do you desire that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? 55 But he turned, and rebuked them, 56 And they went to another village. [Refusing to receive a religious teacher was considered a rejection of his claim. This rejection roused the ire of the two sons of thunder and prompted them to suggest that the example of Elijah be followed (2Ki 1:9-12), but Jesus was a Savior and not a destroyer, so he passed on to another village.]

C. Hesitation by Auditors (Lk 9:57-62).

(c) 57 And as they went on the way [the way through Samaria to Jerusalem], a certain man said unto him, I will follow you wherever you go. 58 And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head. 59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said unto [442] him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but you go and preach the kingdom of God. [For comment upon similar language see on Mt 8:20-22.] 61 And another also said, I will follow you, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house. 62 But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. [Comparing Luke with Matthew, as indicated above (Lk 9:57-62 and Mt 8:19-22), we find that Matthew gives two and Luke three proposals to follow him, and that they differ widely as to the time. It is likely that the first instance occurred where Matthew places it, and the last two occurred where Luke places them, and that each Evangelist borrowed an item from another period and joined it to his incident because of the similarity of the subject. But as such proffers of discipleship may have been very common, the incidents may be entirely different.]

Section 81
FEAST OF TABERNACLES
(Jerusalem, October, A.D. 29)

Jn 7:11-52

A. Speculation by the Jerusalemites (Jn 7:11-13).

(d) 11 The Jews therefore sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? [His fame and prolonged obscurity made his enemies anxious for him to again expose himself in their midst. John here used the word "Jews" as a designation for the Jerusalemites, who, as enemies of Christ, were to be distinguished from the multitudes who were in doubt about him, and who are mentioned in *Jn 7:12*.] **12 And there was much murmuring [443] among the multitudes concerning him: some said, He is a good man; others said, Not so; but he leads the multitude astray.** [The use of the plural, "multitudes," suggests that the vast crowd disputed as groups rather than individuals. The inhabitants of some towns were disposed to unite in his defense, while those from other towns would concur in condemning him.] **13 Yet no man spoke openly of him for fear of the Jews.** [They would not commit themselves upon a question so important until the Sanhedrin had given its decision.]

B. Circumstances of his Appearance (Jn 7:14-15).

(d) 14 But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. [As the feast lasted eight days, the middle of it would be from the third to the fifth day. Though Jesus had come up quietly to prevent public demonstrations in his favor, he now taught boldly and openly in the very stronghold of his enemies. His sudden appearance suggests the fulfillment of *Mal 3:1*.] **15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, How does this man know letters, having never learned?** [The enemies of Christ were content to know but little about him, and now when they heard him they could not restrain their astonishment at his wisdom. By "letters" was meant the written law and the unwritten traditions that were taught in the great theological schools at Jerusalem. The same word is translated "learning" at *Ac 26:24*. No one was expected to teach without having passed through such a course.]

C. Explanation of his Teaching (Jn 7:16-19).

(d) 16 Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. [Seeing the Jews inquiring as to the source of his wisdom, Jesus explains that it was given him of God, and was therefore not derived from any school.] **17 If any man wills to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself.** [Those who would test the divinity of the doctrine of Christ cannot do so by rendering a [444] mere mechanical obedience to his teaching. A willing, heartfelt obedience is essential to a true knowledge of his doctrine.] **18 He that speaks from himself seeks his own glory: but he that seeks the glory of him that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.** [Those who bear their own message seek their own glory. Those who bear God's message seek God's glory, and such seeking destroys egotism.] **19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you does the law? Why do you seek to kill me?** [The point he makes here is, that their seeking to kill him was proof that they were not keeping the law.]

D. Interruption and Response (Jn 7:20-24).

(d) 20 The multitude answered and said, You has a demon: who seeks to kill you? [The multitude had sought to kill him at his last visit (*Jn 7:1*), and it now attempts to deny it. Wild notions and extraordinary conduct indicated insanity, and insanity was usually attributed to demonic possession. Compare *Mt 11:18*. Their meaning therefore was that the words of Jesus were insanely preposterous, and their words savored more of roughness and irreverence than of malignant unkindness.] **21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I did one work, and you all marvel because thereof.** [Jesus declines to speak further as to the plot to murder him, knowing that time would reveal it; but refers to the miracle performed on the Sabbath day at Bethesda, which gave rise to the plot to murder him (*Jn 5:16-18*). A reference to the excitement at that time would recall to the thoughtful the evidence and bitter hostility that the Jerusalemites had then manifested.] **22 Moses has given you circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers); and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, that the law of Moses may not be broken; are you angry with me, because I**

made a man every bit whole on the Sabbath? 24 Judge not [445] according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment. [The law that said that no work must be done on the Sabbath day was in conflict with the law that said that a child must be circumcised on the eighth day, whenever that eighth day happened to fall on the Sabbath. It was a case of a specific command making *exception* to the general law (*Ex 20:10 Lv 12:3*). Circumcision was great because it purified legally a portion of the body. But the healing worked by Jesus was greater, for it renewed the whole man. If the act of Christ in healing a man were judged as a mere act, it might be considered a breach of the Sabbath. But if the nature of the act be taken into account and all the laws relative to it be considered--in short, if it be judged righteously in all bearings--it would be amply justified.]

E. Speculation about Jesus' Freedom (Jn 7:25-32).

(d) 25 Some therefore of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? 26 And lo, he speaks openly, and they say nothing unto him. Can it be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ? [Thus, by referring to the miracle at Bethesda, Jesus not only brought to mind the former opposition of the Jewish rulers, but he started the people of Jerusalem (who were acquainted with the present temper of the hierarchy) to talking about the intention to kill him, thus warning the people beforehand that they would be called upon to assist in his crucifixion. The men of Jerusalem spoke more freely because the present boldness of Jesus led them to think that maybe the rulers were changing their attitude toward him.] **27 However, we know this man where he is from: but when the Christ comes, no one knows where he is from.** [Jerusalem shared the prejudice of its rulers: its citizens felt sure that the rulers could not accept Jesus as Christ because his manner of coming did not comply with accepted theories. Prophecy fixed upon Bethlehem as the birthplace and the line of David as the family of the Christ, but the Jews, probably influenced by *Isa 63:8*, appear to have held that there would be a mystery attached to the immediate and actual parentage of the Messiah. Surely there could have been no greater mystery than the real origin [446] of Jesus as he here outlines it to them, and as they might have fully known it to be had they chosen to investigate the meaning of his words.]

F. Jesus Response and Crowd Reaction (Jn 7:28-32).

(d) 28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, You both know me, and you know where I am from; and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not. 29 I know him; because I am from him, and he sent me. [Our Lord here asserts their ignorance as to his divine origin. Since he came from God, and they did not know God, they consequently did not know where he was from. As they expected a Messiah who would be supernaturally sent, they ought to have been satisfied with Jesus. But they had no eyes with which to discern the supernatural.] **30 They sought therefore to take him** [because they understood his language as referring to God and were incensed that he should so openly declare them ignorant of God]; **and no man laid his hand on him, because his hour was not yet come.** [Because it was not the will of God that he should be arrested at this time.] **31 But of the multitude believed on him; and they said, When the Christ shall come, will he do more signs than those that this man has done?** [Their question was an argument in favor of the messiahship of Jesus.] **32 The Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring these things concerning him; and the chief priests and the Pharisees** [that is, the Sanhedrin, described by its constituent classes] **sent officers to take him.** [When the Sanhedrin heard the people expressing their faith in Jesus they felt that it was time to take action.]

G. Speculation about his Predictions (Jn 7:33-39).

(d) 33 Jesus therefore said, Yet a little while am I with you, and I go unto him that sent me. [Knowing their attempt to arrest him, Jesus tells them that it is not quite time for them to accomplish this purpose.] **34 You shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, you cannot come.** [They would soon destroy Jesus; after which they would seek him in vain. Their violence would result in his return to his Father. In the dark days that were about to come, the Jews would [447] long for a Messiah, for the Christ whom they had failed to recognize in Jesus. They, too, would desire the heavenly rest and security of a better world, but their lack of faith

would debar them from entering it. See comment at Jn 8:21.] **35 The Jews therefore said among themselves, To what place will this man go that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? 36 What is this word that he said, You shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, you cannot come?** [The words of Jesus were plain enough, but the assertion that he would return to God, and that such a return would be denied to them was, in their ears, too preposterous to be entertained. They therefore made light of it by construing it nonsensically. They asked if he would go among the Jews who had been dispersed or scattered by the captivity and who had never returned to Palestine, and if, when so doing, he would teach the heathen among whom these dispersed were scattered, assuming that such teaching would certainly frustrate and render absurd his claims to be a Jewish Messiah. They little suspected that Jesus, through his apostles, would do this very thing and thereby vindicate his claim as the true Messiah of God.] **37 Now on the last day** [the eighth day], **the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.** [If we may trust the later Jewish accounts, it was the custom during the first seven days for the priests and people in joyful procession to go to the pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher and bring water thence to pour out before the altar, in commemoration of the water that Moses brought from the rock and that typified the Christ (1Co 10:4). If this is so, it is likely that the words of Jesus have some reference to this libation, and are designed to draw a contrast between the earthly water that ceases and the spiritual water that abides, similar to the contrast that he presented to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.] **38 He that believes on me, as the scripture has said.** [in such passages as *Isa 58:11 Zec 14:8*, [448] etc.] **from within him shall flow rivers of living water.** [For comment on similar expressions see on Jn 4:13.] **39 But this he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.** [The first and second chapters of the Book of Acts are the best comment upon this passage. When Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father and was glorified, he sent forth the Spirit upon his apostles on the day of Pentecost, and the apostles in turn promised the gift of the Spirit to all who would believe, repent, and be baptized.]

H. Speculation about Jesus' Ministry (Jn 7:40-44).

(d) 40 Some of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, This is of a truth the prophet. 41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, What, does the Christ come out of Galilee? 42 Has not the scripture said that the Christ comes of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was? 43 So there arose a division in the multitude because of him. [Some of the well-disposed toward Jesus, seeing the boldness with which he proclaimed himself, asserted that he was the prophet spoken of by Moses (*Dt 18:15*), which prophet was thought by some to be the Messiah himself, and by others to be no more than the Messiah's forerunner. Still others of the multitude went further and asserted that he was the Christ. These latter were confronted by those who contended that Jesus was not born in the right place nor of the right family (see *2Sa 7:16 Isa 11:1 Jer 23:5 Ps 89:36 Mic 5:2*). These did not know that he had satisfied the very objections that they named.] **44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.** [We note here that the enmity of the rulers that had been taken up by the men of Jerusalem (see *Jn 7:30*) had now reached a faction even of the multitude, so that it desired his arrest, but was restrained from acting.] **45 The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees** [that is, to those that had sent them--*Jn 7:32*]; **and they said unto them, Why did you not bring him?** [These officers were temple police or Levites, under direction of the chief priests. The words suggest [449] that the Sanhedrin was assembled and waiting for the return of the officers. An extraordinary proceeding for so great a day, but no more extraordinary than that assembly at the feast of the Passover that met and condemned Jesus six months later.] **46 The officers answered, Never man so spoke.** [Their report has passed into a saying, which is as true now as when first spoken.] **47 The Pharisees therefore answered them, Are you also led astray? 48 Has any of the rulers believed on him, or of the Pharisees? 49 But this multitude that do not know the law are accursed.** [This rebuke to the officers may be paraphrased thus: You are to respect the authority of the officers and the judgment of the Pharisees, but you have permitted yourselves to be influenced by a multitude that rests under a curse because of its ignorance.] **50 Nicodemus said**

unto them (he that came to him before, being one of them) [therefore able to speak from a position of equality--see on Jn 3:1], **51 Does our law judge a man, except it first hear from him and know what he does?** [Nicodemus bids these proud rulers note that they were breaking the very law that they extolled--Dt 1:16 Ex 23:1.] **52 They answered and said unto him, Are you also of Galilee? Search, and see that out of Galilee no prophet arises.** [They laid the lash to the pride of Nicodemus by classing him with the Galileans who formed the main body of Jesus' disciples, thus separating him from the true Jews. There is no clear evidence that any of the prophets except Jonah was from the district at this time called Galilee, and this fact would justify the hasty demand of the objectors, who were not very scrupulous as to accuracy.] [450]

Section 82 JESUS AND THE ADULTERNESS (Jerusalem) Jn 7:53-8:11

A. A Woman Charged with Adultery (Jn 7:53-8:6a).

[This section is lacking in nearly all older manuscripts, but Jerome (A.D. 346-420) says that in his time it was contained in "many Greek and Latin manuscripts," and these must have been as good or better than the best manuscripts we now possess. But whether we regard it as part of John's narrative or not, scholars very generally accept it as a genuine piece of history.] **(d) 53 And they went every man unto his own house** [confused by the question of Nicodemus, the assembly broke up and each man went home]: **1 but Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.** [Probably crossing the mountain to the house of Lazarus and sisters.] **2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down** [as an authoritative teacher did--see on Mt 5:1], **and taught them. 3 And the scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery; and having set her in the midst, 4 they say unto him, Teacher, this woman has been taken in adultery, in the very act.** [The woman had probably been brought to the rulers for trial, and they had seen in her case what appeared to be a promising means of entrapping Jesus. In the presence of the woman and the form of their accusation we see their coarse brutality. The case could have been presented to Jesus without the presence of the woman, and without a detailed accusation.] **5 Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such** [It was a case under Dt 22:22. Stoning was the legal method of capital punishment]: **what then do you say of her? 6 And this they said, trying him, that they might have something of which to accuse him.** [They were placing Jesus in a dilemma. They reasoned that he [451] could not set aside the law of Moses and clear the woman without so losing the confidence and favor of the people as to frustrate his claim to be Messiah. They thought he would therefore be compelled to condemn the woman. But if he ordered her to be put to death, he would be assuming authority that belonged only to the Roman rulers, and could therefore be accused and condemned as a usurper.]

B. A Crowd Charged with Hypocrisy (Jn 8:6b-8).

(d) But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. [His act was intended to make them vehement, and to give his answer greater effect. What he wrote is unimportant and immaterial, and hence was not told.] **7 But when they continued asking him** [they insisted on an answer, hoping that he would so explain away the seventh commandment (Ex 20:14) as to encourage them in breaking the sixth--Ex 20:13], **he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.** [Under the law (Dt 17:7), the witnesses were to cast the first stone. Jesus maintained and vindicated the law, but imposed a condition that they had overlooked. The one who executed the law must be free from the same crime, lest by stoning the woman he condemn himself as worthy of a like death. There is no doubt that the words of Jesus impressed upon them the truth that freedom from the outward act did not imply inward purity or sinlessness--Mt 5:27,28.] **8 And again he stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.** [Thus giving them the opportunity to retire without the embarrassment of being watched.]

C. End of the Incident (Jn 8:9-11).

(d) **9 And they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last** [the oldest was first to be convicted of his conscience, because his experience of life's sinfulness was necessarily the fullest]: **and Jesus was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst.** [That is, in the midst of the court, where the crowd had been.] **10 And Jesus lifted up himself, and said unto her, Woman, where are they? did no man condemn you?** [This question is asked to pave the way for the dismissal of the woman.] **11 And she said, No man, Lord.** ["Lord" is ambiguous; it [452] may mean "Master" or simply "sir."] **And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you: go your way; from now on sin no more.** [The woman did not ask forgiveness, so no words of pardon are spoken. Compare this case with *Lk 12:14*. Jesus did not come as an earthly judge; neither did he come to condemn, but to save (*Jn 3:17*). The narrative shows how Jesus could deal with malice and impurity in a manner so full of delicacy and dignity as to demonstrate the divine wisdom that dwelled within him.]

Section 83 ATTEMPT TO STONE JESUS (Jerusalem, October, A.D. 29) Jn 8:12-59

Discourse #12
The Sermon of Great Claims
John 8:12-59

(d) **12 Again therefore Jesus spoke unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.** [The metaphor of light was common, and signified knowledge and life; darkness is opposed to light, being the symbol of ignorance and death.] **13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, You bear witness of yourself; your witness is not true.** [They perhaps recalled the words of Jesus at *Jn 5:31*.] **14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Even if I bear witness of myself, my witness is true; for I know where I came from, and where I go; but you know not where I come from, and where I go.** [No man can bear testimony of his own nature, for he knows neither its origin nor its end. The Jews could not judge as to Christ's nature--that he was the source of light and life, because of their ignorance as to him. But Jesus, having complete knowledge as to his eternal existence, was qualified to testify. These are truths about Deity to which Deity alone can testify, and as to the truth of which [453] Deity alone is fully competent to judge.] **15 You judge after the flesh** [that is, carnally, superficially, according to appearances. Carnal tests are not suited to spiritual truth]; **I judge no man. 16 Yea and if I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.** [He contrasts his spirit with theirs. They came upon him eager to condemn, but he had come not to condemn, but to save (*Jn 3:17*). As an exception to his general course he might at intervals condemn a sinner; but should be do so the sentence would be just, for it would be the judgment of the Father, and hence devoid of any personal resentment or other biasing, perverting influence; the Father being lifted above and removed from the heats of argument in which the Son engaged.] **17 Yes and in your law it is written, that the witness of two men is true. 18 I am he that bears witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me.** [Jesus here returns to the point raised in *Jn 8:13*. He cites the law as to two witnesses, found at *Dt 19:15*, and calls the law *their* law because they had arrogantly claimed possession of it (*Jn 7:49*). The Father had borne witness to the Son by the prophets, including John the Baptist, by his voice at the baptism and transfiguration, by the works wrought by Jesus, and by the very nature of the life manifested by our Lord throughout his entire ministry. If the witness of two *men* establishes truth, much more the witness of the two divine voices--that of the Father and of the Son.] **19 They said therefore unto him, Where is your Father?** [They evidently thought that Jesus referred to the testimony of some earthly parent (see

Jn 8:27), and appeal to him to produce this absent, unseen witness. It was according to their carnal or fleshly judgment to thus think.] **Jesus answered, You know neither me, nor my Father: if you knew me, you would know my Father also.** [If they had really known the Son they would have recognized in him the Father, and *vice versa*--*Jn 14:6,8*.] **20 These words he spoke in the treasury, as [454] he taught in the temple and no man took him; because his hour had not yet come.** [The treasury, or place where the chests for offerings were placed, was in the court of the women, the most public part of the Jewish temple. It was near the hall Gazith, where the Sanhedrin met. Though he taught in a place so suited to his arrest, he was not taken. There is evidently a pause after *Jn 8:20*, but probably not a very long one.] **21 He said therefore again unto them, I go away, and you shall seek me, and shall die in your sin: where I go, you cannot come.** [See comment on *Jn 7:34*. Seeking their Messiah as an earthly and not as a spiritual deliverer, they would not find him, and hence would die unforgiven, and therefore could not come to the land where Jesus went, since the unforgiven cannot enter there.] **22 The Jews therefore said, Will he kill himself, because he says, Where I go, you cannot come? 23 And he said unto them, You are from beneath; I am from above: you are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I said therefore unto you, that you shall die in your sins: for except you believe not that I am *he*, you shall die in your sins.** [Jesus had made *their* sins the ground of separation between him and them, but they assumed that they could go wherever he went, unless he went *some place* for self-murder. Thus they adroitly attempt to make *his sin* the cause of the separation. To this Jesus replies that they are even now separated from him by their origin and nature, and that theirs is the sinful nature, and that they shall die in it unless delivered from it through faith in him.] **25 They said therefore unto him, Who are you? Jesus said unto them, Even what I have also spoken unto you from the beginning.** [His bold call to them to believe in him leads them to make a counter demand that he confess himself to them, but Jesus had all along confessed himself to them as the Son of the Father, the bread and water of life, the light of the world, etc., and had no new confession to make.] **26 I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you: howbeit he [455] that sent me is true; and the things that I heard from him, these speak I unto the world.** [Up to this point Jesus had sought to reveal himself; from this point on he would reveal his enemies also, and though the revelation would be displeasing, it was from the Father, and hence would be spoken.] **27 They perceived not that he spoke to them of the Father. 28 Jesus therefore said, When you have lifted up the Son of man, then shall you know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as the Father has taught me, I speak these things. 29 And he that sent me is with me; he has not left me alone; for I do always the things that are pleasing to him.** [The words that he was about to speak would seem to them to be prompted by personal malevolence. Misconstruing his words as spoken in this spirit, the Jews would crucify him; but when their rage had accomplished his death and spent itself, they would look back upon his life--especially the closing scenes of it--and see that his soul contained no bitterness toward them, that what he had said was true, and was spoken at the dictation of his Father. At the day of Pentecost and the season that followed it, the repentance of the Jews amply fulfilled this prophecy.] **30 As he spoke these things, many believed on him.** [The tender manner in which Jesus spoke these words convinced many that he was filled with the spirit of loving good will, and they believed him. Among these converts were some of the Jewish hierarchy, which had been but even now opposing him. The succeeding verses show how Jesus tried to correct their false views of his messiahship, and to raise their faith to a higher level, and how their faith utterly broke down under the test.] **31 Jesus therefore said to those Jews [those of the hierarchy] that had believed him [the words indicate a less faith than the "believed on him" of *Jn 8:30*], If you abide in my word, *then* are you truly my disciples** [Discipleship is an abiding condition--a life, not an act. The prejudices and preconceived notions of these Jews would prevent them from believing on him]; **32 and you shall [456] know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** [Freedom consists in conformity to what, in the realm of intellect, is called truth, and in the realm of morality, law. The only way in which we know truth is to obey it, and God's truth gives freedom from sin and death.] **33 They answered unto him, We are Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any**

man: how do you say, You shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily [see on Jn 1:51], I say unto you, Every one that commits sin is the bondservant of sin. [Jesus shows that the freedom of which he spoke was spiritual--a relief from the distress mentioned in Jn 8:21,24.] 35 And the bondservant abides not in the house forever: the son abides forever. 36 If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. [For light on this passage read Ga 4:19-21. Slaves have no permanent relationship to a house, and may be changed at will. God was about to dismiss the Jews as unfaithful slaves (Lk 20:16-19). Sons, on the contrary, have a permanent relationship to the house, and if a son take one into fraternal adoption, he communicates to such a one his own perpetuity--Ro 8:2.] 37 I know that you are Abraham's seed; yet you seek to kill me, because my word does not have free course in you. [Outwardly and carnally you are Abraham's seed, but you are not so inwardly and spiritually, for he was the friend of God (Jas 2:23), but you are the enemies of God's Son, even seeking to kill him because you are so corrupt that his words are distasteful to you, and you resist them.] 38 I speak the things that I have seen with my Father: and you also do the things that you heard from your father. [An introductory statement leading up to Jn 8:44. In the discourse that follows, Jesus discloses two households, two sets of children, and two styles of language or thought--one divine, the other diabolic.] 39 They answered and said unto him, Our father is Abraham. [Seeing that he was distinguishing between his parentage and their parentage, they reassert for themselves [457] the fatherhood of Abraham, leaving him to find a better one if he could.] Jesus said unto them, If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham. [Jesus here asserts that true descent is spiritual--a common nature manifesting itself in a similarity of works. According to this standard, the works of the Jews disproved their claim to be derived from Abraham.] 41 You do the works of your father. [This refers back to Jn 8:38, and shows that in distinguishing between his and their parentage Jesus had not allotted them the parentage of Abraham that they so glibly claimed.] They said unto him, We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. [Perceiving that he spoke of spiritual parentage, and recognizing the fact that he had shattered their claim of spiritual derivation from Abraham, they fell back upon the citadel of Jewish confidence and pride--spiritually they were begotten of God; they were not begotten of an idolatrous but of a godly stock. Fornication is here used as the common symbol for idolatry--Ex 34:15,16 Ho 1:2 2:4.] 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, you would love me: for I came forth and came from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me. [If you were God's children, you would recognize me as of the same household, and love me accordingly, for I am both God-derived and God-sent. Thus their hatred destroyed this claim also.] 43 Why do you not understand my speech? Even because you cannot hear my word. [By "speech" here Jesus means the outward form or expression of an idea; by "word" he means the inner thought or substance--the idea itself. Throughout this whole dialogue the Jews had failed to understand the verbiage of Jesus, because his thoughts were so utterly unfamiliar that no words could make them plain. Minds filled with ideas of the devil find it difficult to comprehend the thoughts of God, no matter how plainly expressed.] 44 You are of your father the devil, [458] and the lusts [wishes, desires] of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof. [By your hatred of the truth and your desire to commit murder, which are notable lusts of the devil, you show that you are spiritually derived from him. He was a murderer in the very beginning, for he brought sin into the world, which caused death (Ro 5:12). He shrinks from the truth as you do, because it meets no response in his heart. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own offspring, for he is a liar and the father of lying.] 45 And because I tell [you] the truth, you believe me not. [As children of Satan they were used to his flattering speech; hence they rejected the word of Jesus because it was the bitter truth, and convicted them of sin.] 46 Who of you convicts me of sin? If I say truth, why do you not believe me? [If you cannot convict me of sin, then what I say must be true. Why, then, do you not believe me?] 47 He that is of God hears the words of God: for this

cause you hear *them* not, because you are not of God. [The word "hear" is used in the sense of receive. Children of God love the honesty of God, but children of the devil prefer to be deceived. The saying is akin to *Jn 3:20,21.*] **48 The Jews** [the same mentioned in *Jn 8:31*] **answered and said unto him, Are we not right when we say that you are a Samaritan, and have a demon?** [They present this piece of scorn as though it were a current saying; but it was probably suggested by the distinction in parentage that Jesus had just made. See *Jn 8:38.* He had shown they were no true sons of either Abraham or God, and they retaliate by calling him a Samaritan, swayed by diabolical influences. Jesus had visited Samaria (*Jn 4:5*), and had just come through Samaria to this feast (*Lk 9:52*); these things, coupled with his bitter charges against the sons of Abraham, were sufficient to suggest the slanderous accusation.] **49 Jesus answered, I do not have a demon; but** [459] **I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.** [He did not deny the charge of being a Samaritan, not choosing to recognize the difference that they attached to race--*Jn 4:39-42 Lk 10:33 17:16.*] **50 But I seek not my own glory: there is one that seeks and judges.** [I do not mind your abuse, for I do not seek my own glory. My Father seeks it, and judges those in whom he finds it not--*Jn 5:23.*] **51 Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, If a man keeps my word, he shall never see death.** [Jesus here re-states the thought in *Jn 8:31,32.* "To keep" means to cherish and obey. Sin is bondage, and its wages is death. The fleshly body of the Christian dies, but the spirit within him does not. His eternal life begins in this world--*Jn 5:24.*] **52 The Jews said unto him, Now we know that you have a demon.** [They thus construed his words as a confirmation of their former accusation--*Jn 8:48.*] **Abraham died, and the prophets; and you says, If a man keeps my word, he shall never taste of death. 53 Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? and the prophets died: whom do you make yourself?** [The argument is this: God's word spoken to Abraham and the prophets had not preserved their lives, yet you claim power of life for your words greater than God's, yet surely you will not claim even to be as great as Abraham. Such wild talk is mere raving. They expected Jesus to disclaim the high position to which he seemed to have exalted himself.] **54 Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing** [he prefaces his answer by showing that his words are not spoken in a spirit of self-exaltation, but in accordance to the will of his Father]: **it is my Father that glorifies me; of whom you say, that he is your God; 55 and you have not known him: but I know him; and if I should say, I know him not, I would be like unto you, a liar** [referring back to *Jn 8:44*]: **but I know him, and keep his word.** [Jesus makes plain as sunlight his entire discourse by showing that he has used the word "Father" where they would have used the word "God." [460] There is a distinction, too, between the "known" and the "know" used by Jesus. The first represents knowledge that is acquired. The Jews had not acquired a knowledge of God from their Scriptures. The second, "know," indicates what is grasped intuitively, by direct personal cognition.] **56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.** ["My day" means the mediatorial manifestation of Messiah. Abraham saw it by faith in the promised seed.] **57 The Jews therefore said unto him, You are not yet fifty years old, and has you seen Abraham?** [They continue to persist in a literal interpretation, and even wrest the words of Jesus; for Abraham might well have seen him as the seed of promise, without his fleshly eyes ever seeing Abraham. Fifty years indicated the prime of life. It had been two thousand years since the time of Abraham, and Jesus was not yet a mature man as estimated by years.] **58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am.** ["I was" would simply have expressed priority, but "I am" marks timeless existence. It draws the contrast between the created and the uncreated, the temporal and the eternal. Compare *Ex 3:14.*] **59 They took up stones therefore to cast at him.** [judging him to be a blasphemer]: **but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple.** [He doubtless drew back into the crowd and was concealed by his friends.]

Section 84 CONTENTION OVER THE MAN BORN BLIND (Jerusalem)

Jn 9:1-41

A Healing of a Blind Man (Jn 9:1-7).

[Some look upon the events in this and the next section as occurring at the Feast of Tabernacles in October, others think they occurred at the Feast of Dedication in December, deriving their point of time from *Jn 10:22*.] **(d) 1 And as [461] he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth.** [The man probably sought to waken compassion by repeatedly stating this fact to passers-by.] **2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?** [They assumed that all suffering was retributive, and asked for whose sins this man suffered, regarding it as a case of extreme hardship, for to be born blind is uncommon, even in the East. **3 Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.** [Jesus found a third alternative to their dilemma. The man's parents were sinners, but neither their sin nor the beggar's own sin had caused this calamity. It had come upon him as part of God's plan for his life; it was part of the providential arrangement by which God governs the world.] **4 We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night comes, when no man can work.** [As to the duration of his earthly works, Jesus classifies himself with his disciples, for his humanity, like ours, had its season of activity, or day, which was practically terminated by the night of death. After his resurrection, Jesus performed no miracles of healing.] **5 When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.** [In the spiritual sense, Christ is ever the light of the world, but while he lived among men, even the privileges of physical light were imparted to him.] **6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay. 7 and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (that is by interpretation, Sent).** [Jesus probably used the clay to aid the man's faith. His so doing gave the Pharisees a chance to cavil at Jesus for breaking the Sabbath. If later rabbis report correctly, the traditions of that day, clay might be put on the eyes for pleasure on the Sabbath, but not for medicine, nor might the eyes be anointed with spittle on that day. As [462] to the pool of Siloam, see on Lk 13:4. It was probably called *Sent* because its waters are sent to it from the Virgin's Fountain through a tunnel cut through the hill Ophel. For the Virgin's Fountain, see on Jn 5:2.] **He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing.** [He did not come back to Jesus, but came to his own house.] **[Miracle 27]**

B. Attempts to Discredit the Miracle (Jn 9:8-23).

(d) 8 The neighbors therefore, and they that saw him before when he was a beggar, said, is not this he that sat and begged? 9 Others said, It is he: others said, No, but he is like him. [The conclusion of the neighbors is very natural. Such a cure would slightly change his appearance, but in any event the impossibility of the cure would raise doubts as to the identity of the cured.] **He said, I am he. 10 They said therefore unto him, How then were your eyes opened?** [They question as to the manner, not as to the fact.] **11 He answered, The man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went and washed, and I received sight.** [He speaks of Jesus as one well known. He had learned who sent him before he went to Siloam. We shall note how opposition enlarges the faith and the confession of this man.] **12 And they said unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. 13 They bring to the Pharisees him that previously was blind.** [They wanted to see how the Pharisees would deal with Jesus' miracles.] **14 Now it was the Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.** [Such conduct on the Sabbath raised legal questions of which the Pharisees were also the recognized judges.] **15 Again therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he received his sight. And he said unto them, He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see.** [The Pharisees ascertained no more than the neighbors had learned--*Jn 9:11*.] **16 Some therefore of the Pharisees said, This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath. But others said, How can a man that is a sinner do [463] such miracles? And there was division among them.** [The cause for division is apparent. One party laid stress upon the Jewish tradition and judged Jesus a sinner because he had violated them. The other party laid stress upon the sign or miracle and argued that one who could do such things could not be a violator of God's laws.] **17 They [both parties]**

say therefore unto the blind man again, What say you of him, in that he opened your eyes? [Each party asked the opinion of the blind man, hoping to get something to aid their side of the argument--one party trusting to the man's gratitude, and the other to his fear of the rulers.] **And he said, He is a prophet.** [A far more pronounced confession than what he gave in *Jn 9:11*.] **18 The Jews therefore did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. 19 and asked them, saying, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? how then does he now see?** [The man's advocacy of Jesus as prophet suggested to those cunning diplomats that there was collusion between Jesus and the man, and that the cure was fraudulent. They therefore denied the cure and sent for the parents, to whom they put the threefold question as to sonship, blindness and cure.] **20 His parents answered and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind** [thus they answer clearly as to the first two points]: **21 but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know: ask him; he is of age; he shall speak for himself.** [The emphasis in this verse lies in the pronouns. Thus the parents timidly declined to answer the third point, alleging that their son is old enough to answer for himself.] **22 These things said his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed** [informally] **already, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.** [The parents, having heard the unrestrained, freely spoken account given by their son as to his healing, had [464] no doubt in their own minds as to who effected that healing. They therefore declined to speak because of fear, and not through lack of knowledge.] **23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.**

C. Attempts to Intimidate the Witness (Jn 9:24-34).

(d) 24 So [following the suggestion of the parents, and because a miracle could not now be denied] **they called a second time the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give glory to God: we know that this man is a sinner.** [Taken in their English sense, these words would mean, "praise God and not Jesus for what has been done," but the phrase "give God the praise" is, in Hebrew usage, an adjuration to a criminal to confess his guilt (*Jos 7:9 1Sa 6:5*). The idea may then be paraphrased thus: confess that you and Jesus have conspired to work a pretended miracle. It is your best course, since we know all about the frauds of Jesus and will soon unearth this one.] **25 He therefore answered, Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.** [As to the doings of Jesus, whether fraudulent or not, he could not answer, but he could say that there was no sham or deception about his eyesight.] **26 They said therefore unto him, What did he do to you? how did he open your eyes? 27 He answered them, I told you even now, and you did not hear; wherefore would you hear it again? would you also become his disciples?** [Perceiving that their boasted knowledge as to the frauds of Jesus was untrue, and that they were even then questioning him to obtain material to be used against Jesus, he declines to repeat his statement. He shows them that he understands their sinister motive in questioning him by ironically asking them if they wished to become disciples of Jesus.] **28 And they reviled him, and said, You are his disciple; but we are disciples of Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken unto Moses: but as for this man, we do not know where he is from.** [In Jewish estimation, Moses stood next to God. To forsake Moses for another prophet was to be an apostate. Such reviling was a severe test, but the man stood it.] **30 The man answered and [465] said unto them, Why, herein is the marvel, that you know not whence he is, and yet he opened my eyes.** [The man answers contempt with contempt; with biting irony he declares that the miracle of his healing is no wonder at all when compared with the fact that such wonderfully learned men should be totally ignorant of so great a miracle-worker as Jesus. Thus he scorned their superlative claim to infallible knowledge, expressed in *Jn 9:24,29*.] **31 We know** [he takes up their style of speech] **that God does not hear sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, him he hears.** [Such was the teaching of the Old Testament--*Pr 15:29 Isa 1:15 Mic 3:4 Jas 5:16,17*.] **32 Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind.** [The Old Testament contains no record of such a miracle; the case stood alone as a marvel of power.] **33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.** [He draws the same conclusion that the better element of the Pharisees had drawn. See *Jn 9:16*.] **34 They answered and said unto him, You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?** [They give the Jewish answer to

the question asked in *Jn 9:2*. Do you, so stamped a sinner from birth, presume to teach us, the heads of Israel? They had been denying that he had been blind; they now inconsistently taunt him with blindness as an evidence of his sin.] **And they cast him out.** [This is not an expulsion from the building, but an excommunication. His expulsion from a hall would not be important enough to occasion notice.]

D. Consolation for the Victim (*Jn 9:35-38*).

(d) 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out [His was a sad plight, indeed. To be put out of the synagogue [466] was to be put on a level with the heathen, and to be left without a country or a religious fellowship]; **and finding him, he said, Do you believe on the Son of God?** [Being cut off from all that came through Moses, Jesus was leading him into all that came through the Son of God.] **36 He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?** [The form of the man's question showed that he regarded a knowledge of the Son of God as a privilege beyond all hope or expectation, and the reply of Jesus is suited to this idea.] **37 And Jesus said unto him, You have both seen him, and he it is that speaks with you. 38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.**

E. Illustration of Jesus' Mission (*Jn 9:39-41*).

(d) 39 And Jesus said [not addressing anyone in particular, but rather as summing up the whole incident], **For judgment came I into this world, that they that see not may see; and that they that see may become blind.** [The life course of Jesus attracted the needy and repelled the self-satisfied, and was therefore a continuous judgment. Those conscious of their deficiencies and ready to ask for light received it (*Jn 9:36-38*), while those satisfied with their own opinion became daily more blinded by their bigotry. See *Jn 9:24,34* and *Mt 11:25*.] **40 Those of the Pharisees who were with him** [not as disciples, but for curiosity's sake] **heard these things, and said unto him, Are we also blind? 41 Jesus said unto them, If you were blind, you would have no sin: but now you say, We see: your sin remains.** [If you were conscious of your spiritual darkness, and sought light, you either find it or not be blamed for your failure to do so. They could see if they would, and were responsible for their blindness.] [467]

Section 85 MISSION OF THE SEVENTY (Probably Judea, A.D. 29) Lk 10:1-24

A. Commission of the Seventy (*Lk 10:1-16*).

(c) 1 Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others [that is, other messengers in addition to the twelve apostles], **and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, where he himself was about to come.** [Luke has told us of the journey through Samaria to Jerusalem (*Lk 9:52*), and John has told us what occurred at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem (*Jn 7:2*). We learn from John also that Jesus was at the Feast of Dedication (*Jn 10:22*). The first feast was in October and the latter in December. Jesus evidently spent the time between these feasts in Judea, making a tour of that province and sending the seventy before him, thus thoroughly evangelizing it as he had Galilee, by sending out the twelve.]

Discourse #13 Charge to Evangelists Luke 10:2-16

(c) 2 Therefore he said unto them, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. [See on *Mt 9:37-38*.] **3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4 Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes; and greet no man on the way.** [This

last was probably a common direction in cases of haste (*2Ki 4:29*). Eastern salutations were tedious and overburdened with ceremony. Those in haste were excused from them.] **5 And into whatever house you shall enter, first say, Peace be to this house. 6 And if a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: but if not, it shall turn to you again.** [See on Mt 10:13.] **7 And in that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give** [they were not to give trouble and waste time by asking for better food]: **for the laborer is worthy of his hire.** [See *1Ti 5:18*.] **Go not from house to house. 8 And into whatever city you enter, and [472] they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: 9 and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come near unto you. 10 But into whatever city you enter, and they receive you not, go out into the streets thereof and say, 11 Even the dust from your city, that cleaves to our feet, we wipe off against you: nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.** [For comment, see on Mk 6:6-13.] **12 I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. 13 Woe unto you, Chorazin! woe unto you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have long ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment, than for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, shall you be exalted unto heaven? you shall be brought down unto Hades.** [For comment on a similar passage, see on Mt 11:21-24.] **16 He that hears you hears me; and he that rejects you rejects me; and he that rejects me rejects him that sent me.** [For comment, see on Mt 10:40.]

B. Return of the Seventy (Lk 10:17-20).

(c) **17 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in your name.** [The report of the seventy is more joyous than that of the twelve, for the sayings of the latter on their return were overshadowed by the news of John the Baptist's death--*Lk 9:10*.] **18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven.** [This may be translated "I was beholding Satan fallen as lightning falls from heaven." The sense indicates that the words refer to the victories over the unclean spirits just reported by the seventy. In their successes Jesus saw Satan falling from the lofty heights with the swiftness of lightning. The overthrow of Satan was then in progress--*Jn 16:11 12:31*.] **19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall [473] in any way hurt you.** [While the messengers of Christ were, no doubt, literally protected from the poisons of reptiles, etc. (*Ac 28:3-6*), serpents and scorpions are to be taken an emblematic of the powers of evil.] **20 Nevertheless in this do not rejoice, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.** [Your joy in visible and temporal success, and in the subjection to you of the powers of evil, is not to be compared to the joy that you have the prospect of heaven.]

C. Prayer of Jesus (Lk 10:21-22).

(c) **21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you hid these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them unto babes: yes, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in your sight. 22 All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knows who the Son is, except the Father; and who the Father is, except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal him.** [For comment, see on Mt 11:25-27.]

D. Jesus' Blessing (Lk 10:23-24).

(c) **23 And turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see. 24 for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things that you see, and saw them not; and to hear the things that you hear, and heard them not.** [For comment, see on Mt 13:16-17.] [474]

Section 86 PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

(Probably Judea)
Lk 10:25-37

A. A Lawyer's Challenge (Lk 10:25-37).

(c) 25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? [For the term "lawyer" see on Mk 1:22 and see on Lk 11:45. The lawyer wished to make trial of the skill of Jesus in solving the intricate and difficult question as to how to obtain salvation. Jesus was probably teaching in some house or courtyard, and his habit of giving local color to his parables suggests that he was probably in or near Bethany, through which the road from Jerusalem to Jericho passes. The lawyer stood up to attract attention to himself, and thus give emphasis to his question and its answer.] **26 And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how read you?** [Looking upon Jesus as a Sabbath-breaker and a despiser of tradition, the lawyer no doubt expected that Jesus would lay down some new rule for obtaining salvation. If so, he was surprised to be thus referred to the law of Moses for his answer.] **27 And he answering said, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.** [Dt 6:4,5 Lv 19:18. Having made himself conspicuous by standing up, the lawyer had to give the best answer he knew or sully his own reputation for knowledge. He therefore gives the two great laws that comprise all other laws.] **28 And he said unto him, You have answered right: this do, and you shall live.** [The lawyer had asked his question simply as a test. With him the law was simply matter for speculation and theory, and the word "do" was very startling. It showed the difference between his and the Master's views of the law. He had hoped by a question to expose Jesus as one who set aside the law, but [475] Jesus had exposed the lawyer as one who merely theorized about the law, and himself as one who advocated the doing of the law.] **29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?** [He could justify his conduct if permitted to define the word "neighbor." He asked his question, therefore, in the expectation of securing such a definition of the word as would enable him to maintain his public standing and quiet his conscience.]

B. Parable (Lk 10:30-35).

(c) 30 Jesus made answer and said, A certain man [evidently a Jew, for otherwise the nationality would have been specified] **was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.** [The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is eighteen miles long, and descends about thirty-five hundred feet. About two miles from Jerusalem it passes through the village of Bethany, and for the rest of the eighteen miles it passes through desolate mountain ravines without any habitation except the inn, the ruins of which are still seen about half way to Jericho. This district from that time till the present has been noted for robberies.] **31 And by chance a certain priest was going down that way** [a very natural thing for a priest to do, for there was a very large priestly settlement at Jericho]: **and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.** [He did this although the law commanded mercy and help to a neighbor--Ex 23:4 Dt 22:1-4.] **32 And in like manner a Levite also** [A temple minister. The tribe of Levi had been set apart by God for his service], **when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side.** [In the priest and Levite the lawyer saw the picture of his own life, for he saw in them those who knew the law, but did not practice it. There may have been many excuses for this neglect of the wounded man: danger, hate, dread of defilement, expense, but Jesus does not consider any of them worth mentioning.] **33 But a certain Samaritan** [the hereditary enemy of the Jew--Jn 4:9], **as he journeyed, came** [476] **where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, 34 and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine** [the ordinary remedies for wounds--Isa 1:6]; **and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii** [the denarius represented the price of a day's labor], **and gave them to the host** [the inn-keeper], **and said, Take care of him; and whatever you spend more, I, when I come back again, will repay you.** [The compassion of the Samaritan bore full fruitage. However heterodox he was, he was after all a worshiper of Jehovah and more orthodox at heart than either the priest or the

Levite. Though it was not customary for an innkeeper to furnish food either for man or beast, he could do so if he chose out of his own stores. The scant cash left by the Samaritan indicates a poverty that made his charity the more praiseworthy. His eye and heart and hand and foot and purse were all subservient to the law of God.]

C. Application (Lk 10:36-37).

(c) 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers? [Instead of answering didactically, "Everybody is your neighbor," Jesus had incarnated the law of neighborliness in the good Samaritan, and had made it so beautiful that the lawyer could not but commend it even when found in a representative of this apostate race. He showed, too, that the law was not for casuistry but for practice.] **37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him.** [The lawyer avoided the name Samaritan so distasteful to his lips. Jesus gave countenance to no such racial prejudice, even though the Samaritans had rejected him but a few weeks before this--Lk 9:53.] **Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do likewise.** [477]

Section 87 IN THE HOME OF MARY AND MARTHA (Bethany, near Jerusalem, December A.D. 29) Lk 10:38-42

(c) 38 Now as they went on their way [he was journeying through Judea, attended by the twelve], **he entered into a certain village** [It was the village of Bethany (*Jn 11:1*), which was on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, less than two miles from Jerusalem]: **and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word.** [Sitting at the feet was the ancient posture of pupils (*Ac 22:3*). Martha honored Christ as a *Guest*, but Mary honored him as a Teacher.] **40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving** [she was evidently preparing an elaborate repast, and was experiencing the worry and distraction that usually accompanies such effort]; **and she came up to him, and said, Lord, do you not care that my sister left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.** [Martha so forms her appeal to Christ as to make it a covert insinuation that Mary would not listen to *her* requests.] **41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things** [By thus repeating the name, Jesus tempered the rebuke. See also *Lk 22:31 Ac 9:4*]: **42 but one thing is needful** [That is, one duty or privilege is pre-eminent. Bread for the body may be important, but food for the soul is, after all, the one thing needful]: **for Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.** [The expression "good part" is an allusion to the portion of honor sent to the principal guest at a banquet. Its use shows that Jesus had food in mind when he used the [478] expression "one thing is needful," and that he was contrasting spiritual nourishment with physical. The description of the two sisters tallies with that given at *Jn 12:2,3*, for there Martha serves and Mary expresses personal devotion. Our Lord's rebuke is not aimed at hospitality, or at a life full of energy and business. It is intended to reprove that fussy fretfulness that attempts many unneeded things, and ends in worry and faultfinding.]

Section 88 TEACHING ON PRAYER (Probably Judea Fall, A.D. 29) Lk 11:1-13

A. Request and Response (Lk 11:1-4).

(c) 1 And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. [Jesus already had taught his disciples how to pray in the Sermon on the Mount (*Mt 6:5-15*). This disciple probably thought that the prayer already taught was too brief to be

sufficient, especially as Jesus often prayed so long. It was customary for the rabbis to give their disciples forms of prayer, and the Baptist seems to have followed this practice, though the prayer taught by him appears soon to have been forgotten.] **2 And he said unto them, When you pray, say, Father, Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread 4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.** [The form given by Matthew is fuller [479] than this. See on Mt 6:9-13. The variation of the two prayers is an evidence of the independence of the two Gospels.]

B. Parables and Applications (Lk 11:5-13).

(c) **5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight [a most unseasonable hour], and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him** [In the summer Orientals often travel by night to avoid the heat of the day, and the customs of the land then made hospitality so obligatory that the greatest inconvenience and deepest poverty did not excuse one from practicing it. The occasion here described would call for three loaves, that the host and the guest might each have one, and that there might be one in reserve as an evidence of liberality]; **7 and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give you?** [The man within does not use the word "friend." His answer is blunt and discouraging. In the house of a laboring man, the family all slept in one room. The pallets, or thin mattresses, are spread upon the divan, or raised platform, which passes around the room next to the wall. Where there was no divan they were spread upon the floor. For a father to rise and grope about in the dark that he might unbolt the door and find the required bread was indeed no slight trouble. He would be apt to step upon, or otherwise disturb, the sleeping children.] **8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needs.** [Friendship should have prompted the man to supply his friend. It failed, however; yet the bread was given [480] to get rid of a noisy beggar, to be rid of whom all the bread in the house would be willingly sacrificed if necessary.] **9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10 For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. 11 And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent? 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?** [The substance of this passage is recorded by Matthew as a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. See on Mt 7:7-11. *Lk 11:12* is peculiar to Luke, and in *Lk 11:13* Matthew has "good things" (*Mt 7:11*) where Luke has "Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the best of all gifts, being as necessary to the soul as food to the body. The white scorpion, when rolled up, closely resembled an egg.] [481]

Section 89 A SABBATH HEALING AND TEACHING (Probably Perea) Lk 13:10-21

A. A Healing Miracle (Lk 13:10-13). [Miracle 28]

(c) **10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day.** [Our Lord's habit of teaching in the synagogue, which had been for some time interrupted by his retirement, had probably been revived during the mission of the seventy. On the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39.] **11 And behold, a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up.** [The use of the word "spirit" in this verse indicates that the curvature of the spine that afflicted this woman was attributed to demonic agency.] **12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her, Woman, you are**

loosed from your infirmity. **13 And he laid his hands upon her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.**

B. Repercussions (Lk 13:14-21):

(c) 14 And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days [quite enough] in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the Sabbath. [There is no evidence that the woman came with any intention of being healed, nor was the ruler angry at her, but at Jesus. Too cowardly to openly rebuke Jesus, the ruler fell to reprimanding the people, and thus indirectly censuring the Lord.] **15 But the Lord answered him, and said, You hypocrites, does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his donkey from the stall, and lead him away to watering?** [The word "hypocrite" was among the strongest ever used by our Lord. He here applies it to the whole class [482] to whom the ruler belonged and for whom he was the spokesman--the class who are mentioned as "adversaries" in *Lk 13:17*. Their hypocrisy appears in two ways: 1. They were disguising their hatred toward Christ under a pretended zeal for the Sabbath. 2. Their zeal for the Sabbath was at no time sincere, for they favored indulgence where their own interests were involved, but applied their Sabbath rules sharply where others were concerned. It was their tradition and not the Sabbath that Jesus had broken, and he attempts no other justification of himself than to show that he is guiltless under a fair application of their own precedents.] **16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the Sabbath?** [Taking their own conduct on the Sabbath day as the basis for his justification, Jesus presents three contrasts, each of which made his action better than theirs: 1. He had blessed the woman instead of an ox. 2. He had loosed from a disease instead of from a comfortable stall. 3. He had relieved a waiting of eighteen years' standing instead of one of some few hours' duration--the brief time since the watering of the morning. He mentions the woman's descent from Abraham because, according to their ideas, it made her worthy of every consideration. In attributing the infirmity to Satan he acknowledges the action of the demon as Satan's agent. Disease is frequently ascribed to Satan and the demons--*Ac 10:38 2Co 12:7*.] **17 And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.** [The people rejoiced not only in the miracle, but in that wisdom that silenced the narrow-minded rulers. The triumph that they rejoiced in was but a slight foretaste of the victories to come, and to point out the nature of those victories the Lord spoke the two parables that follow.] **18 He said therefore, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and unto what shall I liken it? 19 It is like unto a grain of [483] mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof.** [For comment, see on *Mk 4:30-32*.] **20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.** [For comment, see on *Mt 13:33*.]

Section 90
DISCOURSE ON THE GOOD SHEPHERD
(Jerusalem, December A.D. 29)
Jn 10:1-21

Discourse #14
Shepherd and the Sheep
John 10:1-21

(d) 1 Verily, verily [see on Jn 1:51], I say to you [unto the parties whom he was addressing in the last section], He that enters not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. [In this section Jesus proceeds to contrast his own care for humanity with that manifested by the Pharisees, who had just cast out the

beggar. Old Testament prophecies were full of declarations that false shepherds would arise to the injury of God's flock (*Eze 34:1-6 Jer 23:1-6 Zec 11:4-11*). But other prophecies spoke of the true shepherding of God and his Messiah (*Ps 23:1-6 77:20 80:1 95:7 Jer 31:10 Eze 34:31 Mic 7:14 Isa 43:11*). The Pharisees were fulfilling the first line of prophecies, and Jesus was fulfilling the second. The sheepfolds of the East are roofless enclosures, made of loose stone, or surrounded by thorn bushes. They have but one door. Jesus, the true shepherd, came in the proper and appointed way (and was the proper and appointed Way), thus indicating his office as shepherd. A thief steals by cunning in one's absence; a robber takes by violence from one's person. The Pharisees were both. They stole the sheep in Messiah's absence, and they slew Messiah when he came. They did not come in the ways ordained of God.] **2 But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter opens; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.** [Several small flocks were sometimes kept in one field. The door was fastened from the inside with sticks or bars by the porter, who remained with the sheep during the night, and opened for the shepherds in the morning. The fold is the church, Christ is the door, the sheep [468] are the disciples, and the shepherd is Christ. The porter is probably part of the drapery of the parable. If he represents anybody, it is God, who decides who shall enter through the door.] **4 When he has put forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.** [In the East, sheep are not driven, but led, and each sheep has and knows its name. Disciples also are led. There is no rough road or thorny path that the feet of Jesus have not first trod. The Pharisees had put forth the beggar to be rid of him; the true shepherd puts forth to feed.] **5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.** [The mingled flocks are separated by the calling voices of the several shepherds. The control of the Pharisees was not of this order. The authority of the synagogues had passed into their hands, and their rule was about the same as when thieves and robbers gained possession of the sheepfold. The people were disposed to flee from them--*Mt 9:36*.] **6 This parable Jesus spoke unto them: but they did not understand what things they were that he spoke unto them.** [The idea of loving care was so foreign to the nature of the Pharisees that they could not comprehend the figures that clothed such a thought. The word translated "parable" is not the word *parabole*, which John never uses, but the word *paroimia*, which the Synoptists never use. *Paroimia* means, literally, "beside the way," that is, speech not of the common or direct form, that is, a similitude or allegory.] **7 Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.** [Seeing that they did not understand the allegory, Jesus gives a twofold explanation of it found in *Jn 10:7-10* and *Jn 10:11-16*.] **8 All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.** [He speaks of the past, and refers to false Messiahs.] **9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture.** [The door is spoken of with [469] reference to the *sheep*, and hence becomes a symbol of entrance into protection and shelter, or exit to liberty and plenty.] **10 The thief comes not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.** [Through the life of Jesus, as through a heavenly portal, men have entered upon true civilization, with its schools, colleges, railroads, telegraph, telephone, and innumerable privileges and liberties.] **11 I am the good shepherd** [The relations of Christ to his people are so abounding and complex as to overburden any parable that seeks to carry them. He is not only the passive doorway to life, but also the active, energizing force that leads his people through that doorway into life]: **the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** [The verses *Jn 10:11-14* set forth the perfect self-sacrifice through which the blessings of Christ have been obtained for us. The world-ruling spirit blesses itself through the sacrifice of the people; the Christ-spirit blesses the people through the sacrifice of self.] **12 He that is an hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not** [shepherds were not, as a rule, owners of the sheep, but they were expected to love and care for them by reason of their office as shepherds], **beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them** [the perils of the Oriental shepherd accord with the picture here given--*Gn 13:5 14:12 31:39,40 32:7,8 37:33 Job 1:7 1Sa 17:34,35*]:

13 he flees because he is a hireling, and does not care for the sheep. [He flees because he loves his wages rather than the flock.] **14 I am the good shepherd; and I know my own, and my own know me, 15 even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father** [Our Lord's relationship to his flock is one of mutual knowledge and affection, and is far removed from the spirit of hire. The knowledge existing between disciple and Master springs from mutual acquaintanceship and love. Thus it is the same *kind* of knowledge that exists between Father and Son, though it is not of the [470] same *quality*, being infinitely less full and perfect]; **and I lay down my life for the sheep.** [The sacrifice of the good shepherd to shield his sheep has never been in vain.] **16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.** [Jesus was speaking to the Jews, who had been frequently spoken of in Scripture as God's flock. The other sheep were Gentiles. They are spoken of as scattered sheep, and not as flocks, because with them there was no unity. Here, as everywhere, the truth breaks through, revealing Christ as the world's Redeemer, who would break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and cause all true worshipers to have a common relationship to one Master.] **17 Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.** [Jesus did not permit his life to be sacrificed so as to become cast away, but to be raised again as an earnest of the resurrection of all flesh.] **18 No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from my Father.** [This shows that his death was voluntary, and with the resurrection that followed, it was in full and perfect accordance with his original commission or commandment from the Father.] **19 There arose a division again among the Jews because of these words.** [The word "again" refers to *Jn 7:43* and *Jn 9:16*.] **20 And many of them said, He has a demon, and is mad; why hear you him?** [The theory that demons could produce supernatural effects (*Mt 12:24*) formed a handy device for explaining away the miracles of Christ.] **21 Others said, These are not the sayings of one possessed with a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?** [These defenders refer to the well-remembered cure of the man born blind, and argue, as he did, that a demoniac could not work such a miracle (*Jn 9:33*). They fail, however, to make a positive confession of faith in Jesus.] [471]

Section 91

JESUS IN DANGER IN JERUSALEM (Jerusalem, December A.D. 29) Jn 10:22-42

A. Specific Question (Jn 10:22-24).

(d) 22 And it was the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem: 23 it was winter; and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. [The feast of dedication was one of eight days' duration and began upon the twenty-fifth of Chisleu, which fell upon the nineteenth or twentieth of December, A.D. 29. The feast was kept in honor of the renovation and purification of the temple in the year 164 B.C., after it had been desecrated by the Syrians under Antiochus Epiphanes. As this feast was commemorative of national deliverance, the rulers considered it an opportune time to tempt Jesus to declare himself to be the Messiah, or coming Deliverer from the present Roman oppression. We are told that it was winter, that we may understand why Jesus walked under cover in Solomon's porch (*Jn 10:23*). This was a colonnade on the east side of the temple court.] **24 The Jews therefore came round [484] about him [as if to detain him until he answered], and said unto him, How long do you hold us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.** [The previous conduct and temper of the questioners, together with the context (which includes an attempt to stone, followed by an effort to arrest), shows that this question was asked for the purpose of committing Jesus to an open declaration that might be used as an accusation against him.]

B. Jesus' Answer (Jn 10:25-30).

(d) 25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and you believe not: the works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me. [Jesus was the Christ of the Old Testament, but not the Christ of Pharisaic hopes. Had he assumed to himself in their presence the *title* of Christ, it would have led them to false expectations. By his declarations and works Jesus had repeatedly published and proved to all his claims to be the true Messiah. He had, at the feast of tabernacles, set himself forth as the Good Shepherd (*Jn 10:11,14*), and on other occasions as the Son of God, etc. (*Jn 5:19 8:36,56*). Had they understood or received the Old Testament ideal of the Messiah, they could not have failed to understand his claims.] **26 But you believe not, because you are not of my sheep.** [Failure to be Christ's sheep was not the cause, but the evidence of their unbelief.] **27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.** [The thought here is similar to that set forth at *Jn 10:7-16*.] **29 My Father, who has given them me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.** [This passage is taken by Calvinists as asserting the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy. It is certainly a strong assurance that the Christian may expect to succeed in fighting the good fight. It may be taken in connection with *Ro 8:38,39*; but both passages must be interpreted in the light of *Heb 6:4-8*. We cannot be taken from God against our will; but our will being free, we may choose to leave him. We cannot be [485] protected against ourselves in spite of ourselves. If that were so, no one could be lost.] **30 I and the Father are one.** [This assertion as to the unity of power residing in the hand brings forward the idea of the general unity that exists between the Father and the Son. This unity Jesus asserts fully, without limitation or restriction; the unity of interest, design, and essence are all included.]

C. Reaction to Jesus' Answer (*Jn 10:31-33*).

(d) 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. [They prepared to act on *Lv 24:14-16*, and a precedent as to it found at *1Ki 21:10*; though the right to stone for blasphemy was now abrogated by the Roman dominion. The word "again" refers back to *Jn 8:59*.] **32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from the Father; for which of those works do you stone me? 33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we do not stone you, but for blasphemy; and because that you, being a man, make yourself God.** [Jesus, conscious that he was living the divine life, endeavored to arouse the Jews to a consciousness of that life by asking them to point out what part of it offended them. It was a demand that his claim to be divine be tested and judged by his *life*. But the Jews insisted upon judging him by his *words* without in any way taking his life into account. Jesus urged that a divine claim was made good by a divine life, but they replied that a divine claim issuing from a human body was blasphemy.]

D. Jesus Answers the Charge of Blasphemy (*Jn 10:34-38*).

(d) 34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law [*Ps 82:6*. The whole Old Testament not infrequently is thus designated as the "law"], I said, You are gods? 35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), 36 say you of him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, You blaspheme; because I said, I am the Son of God? [Since the civil rulers of a land are ordained of God (*Ro 13:1-7* [486] *1Sa 24:6,7*), they were regarded as God's delegates or ministers, and as such the inspired Psalmist addresses them, calling them gods. Compare also *Ex 22:28*. If it was not blasphemy to call those gods who so remotely represented the Deity, how much less did Christ blaspheme in taking unto himself a title to which he had a better right than they, even in the subordinate sense of being a mere messenger. The expression "word of God" is equivalent to "commission from God." The Jews regarded the Scripture as final authority. Jesus asserted this view by stating that the Scripture could not be broken; that is, could not be undone or set aside. We may regard Jesus as here ratifying their view, since he elsewhere concurred in it--see *Mt 5:19*.] **37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. 38 But if I do them, though you do not believe me, believe the works: that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.** [Having set aside their false judgment that was based upon his mere words, Jesus again bids them to consider his works or manner of life.]

E. Reaction to Jesus' Words (Jn 10:39).

(d) 39 They sought again to take him; and he went forth out of their hand. [The calm reasoning of Jesus cooled their violence, and so far changed their evil designs that they now sought to arrest him that they might bring him before the Sanhedrin. The word "again" refers back to *Jn 7:30,32,44.*]

F. Strategic Withdrawal from Judea (Jn 10:40-42).

(d) 40 And he went away again beyond the Jordan into the place where John was at first baptizing; and there he abode. [The word "again" either refers to *Jn 1:28*, or else it refers to some former escape beyond the Jordan not recorded by John, but by one of the other evangelists. The supplementary nature of John's Gospel makes this latter view somewhat plausible.] **41 And many came unto him; and they said, John indeed did no sign: but all things whatever John spoke of this man were true.** [John at first baptized "in the wilderness of Judea" (*Mt 3:1,6*), and afterwards at Bethany and Aenon (*Jn 1:28 3:23*). The presence of Jesus in this place recalled to the [487] minds of the people the work of the Baptist and his testimony concerning Jesus. They had held John to be a prophet, yet when they searched for his credentials as a prophet, they found them inextricably intertwined with the claims of Jesus. John had failed to prove himself a prophet by miracles and signs--the accustomed credentials. But he had done so by his predictions that had come true, and all of these predictions related to Jesus.] **42 And many believed on him there.** [The word "there" stands in contrast to Jerusalem, which rejected Jesus.]

PART FIVE
PERIOD OF PERSECUTION
January-March
A.D. 30

Section 92
PEREAN TEACHING
(January, A.D. 30)
Lk 13:22-15

A. Warning: Few will be Saved (Lk 13:22-30).

(c) **22 And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem.** [This verse probably refers back to *Lk 13:10*, and indicates that Jesus resumed his journey after the brief rest on the Sabbath day when he healed the woman with the curvature of the spine.] **23 And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved?** [It is likely that this question was asked by a Jew, and that the two parables illustrating the smallness of the kingdom's beginning suggested it to him. The Jews extended their exclusive spirit even to their ideals of a world to come, so that they believed none but the chosen race would behold its glories. The questioner wished Jesus to commit himself to this narrow Jewish spirit, or else to take a position that would subject him to the charge of being unpatriotic.] **And he said unto them, 24 Strive** [literally, "agonize"] **to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto [488] you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.** [Jesus answers that *many* shall be excluded from the kingdom, and that the questioner, and all others who hear, need to exercise themselves and give the matter their own personal attention lest they be among that many. The passage should be compared with that in *Mt 7:13*. There one enters by a narrow gate upon a narrow road, indicating the strictness of the Christian life. Here one enters by a narrow door upon a season of festivity, indicating the joyous privileges of a Christian life.] **25 When once the master of the house has risen up, and has shut to the door, and you begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I do not know you or where you come from** [This verse gives the reason why one should strive to enter in. The *time* for entrance is limited, and he must get in before it expires; for when the limited time has passed, he cannot enter, no matter how earnestly he may seek or strive. Our Lord pictures a householder who refuses to receive any guest that has shown contempt for his feast by coming late. The strict spirit of the Lord in giving his invitation is indicated by the phrase "narrow door," but the phrase includes more than this, for those who would strive must not only be prompt to act, but must be painstaking so as to act intelligently, and of obedient spirit so as to act acceptably]; **26 then you shall begin to say** [in answer to the Lord's statement that he does not know them], **We did eat and drink in your presence, and you taught in our streets** [Thus they idly urged their privileges to him who was condemning them for having neglected to make a proper use of those privileges. Had these privileges been valued and improved, the clamoring outcasts would have been inside and not outside the door]; **27 and he shall say, I tell you, I do not know you or where you are from; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.** [Thus pleading does not avail. The door would not be narrow if it opened to excuses.] **28 There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and [489] Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast without.** [See on *Mt 8:11, 12*.] **29 And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.** [See on *Mt 8:11*.] **30 And behold** [little as you may think it], **there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last.** [A familiar proverb of Christ's (*Mt 19:30 20:10*), to be interpreted by such passages as *Mt 21:31* and *Ro 9:30,31*. The Jew who

thought the Gentile had no hope at all, and that he himself was sure of salvation, would be surprised to find that his opinion was the very reverse of the real fact as time developed it.]

B. Warning: Jerusalem's Destruction (Lk 13:31-35).

(c) 31 In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get out, and go away: for Herod wants to kill you. [This shows that Jesus was in the territory of Herod Antipas, and hence probably in Perea. The Pharisees, no doubt, wished to scare Jesus that they might exult over his fright. We might suppose, too, that their words were untrue, were it not that Jesus sends a reply to Herod. Herod long desired to see Jesus (*Lk 9:9 23:8*), but it was not likely that he desired to put him to death. He was, doubtless, glad enough to get Jesus out of his territory, lest he might foment an uprising, and to this end he employed this strategy of sending messengers to warn Jesus under the guise of friendship.] **32 And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox** [that is, say to that crafty, sly fellow. The fox is a type of craftiness and treachery. We have no other instance where Jesus used such a contemptuous expression; but Herod richly merited it. An Idumean by his father, a Samaritan by his mother, a Jew by profession, and a heathen by practice, he had need to be foxy by nature. And he was even now playing the fox by sending these messengers], **Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected.** **33 Nevertheless** [although I know what lies before me] **I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following: for** [490] **it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.** [Three days are thus sometimes used proverbially to designate a short time (*Ho 6:2*), and they are unquestionably so used here. The meaning then is this: "For a little while I liberate and heal and abide in your territory to disturb your peace. But in a few days I shall be perfected in my office as a liberator and healer, after that I shall be seen no more in your territory. And though I understand these plots against me, I must fill up my time and go on my course till I suffer martyrdom at Jerusalem, which has the gruesome honor of being the prophet-slaying city." John the Baptist having perished at Machaerus in Perea is regarded as an exception to this rule that the prophets die at Jerusalem.] **34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered your children** [inhabitants] **together, even as a hen gathers her own brood under her wings, and you would not!** [Jesus repeated these words again as recorded in *Mt 23:37-39*. With such beautiful imagery does Jesus set forth his tender love for the people of that city that he knew would soon embrace his death.] **35 Behold, your house** [temple] **is left unto** [491] **you desolate** [he was about to withdraw from the temple, which for centuries to come was to be visited by no heavenly messenger whatever]: **and I say unto you, You shall not see me, until you shall say, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.** [These words refer to the triumphal entry for their fulfillment (*Mt 21:9*) (JES)]

Section 93 A MEAL, A SABBATH HEALING (Probably Perea) Lk 14:1-24

A. Dining with a Pharisee (Lk 14:1-4a).

(c) 1 And it came to pass, when he went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a Sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching him. [The Pharisees were an unorganized party, hence their rulers were such not by *office*, but by influence. Those who were members of the Sanhedrin, or who were distinguished among the rabbis, might fitly be spoken of as rulers among them. The context favors the idea that Jesus was invited for the purpose of being watched--a carrying out of the Pharisaic purpose declared at *Lk 11:53,54*. Bountiful feasts on the Sabbath day were common among the Jews; the food, however, was cooked the previous day in obedience to the precept at *Ex 16:23*.] **2 And behold, there was before him a certain man that had the dropsy.** [The phrase "let him go" of *Lk 14:4* shows that the man was not a guest, but [492] rather one who seems to have taken advantage of the freedom of an Oriental house to stand among the lookers-on. He may have been there purely from his own choice, but the evil

intention with which Jesus was invited makes it highly probable that the man's presence was no accident, but part of a deep-laid plot to entrap Jesus.] **3 And Jesus answering** [replying to their unspoken thoughts, in which they were assuming that he would heal the sick man] **spoke unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not? 4 And they held their peace.** [They evidently expected Jesus to act on the impulse, and were confused by his calm, deliberate question. If they declared it lawful, they defeated their plot, and if they said otherwise, they involved themselves in an argument with him in which, as experience taught them, they would be humiliated before the people. Hence, they kept silence, but their silence only justified him, since it was the duty of every lawyer to pronounce this act unlawful if it had been so.]

B. A Healing and a Question (Lk 14:4b-6).

(c) **And he took him, and healed him, and let him go. 5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have an donkey or an ox fallen into a well, and will not immediately draw him up on a Sabbath day? 6 And they could not answer again unto these things.** [Jesus again asserts that the Sabbath law did not forbid acts of mercy. See on *Mt 12:7,8* and *Mt 12:12*. Though silenced, the Pharisees relented not, either as to their bigotry or their hatred.]

C. A Parable (Lk 14:7-14).

(c) **7 And he spoke a parable unto those that were invited, when he saw how they chose out the chief seats** [The *triclinia*, or Grecian table, then in use had three sections that were placed together so as to form a flat-bottomed letter U. The space enclosed by the table was not occupied. It was left vacant that the servants might enter it and attend to the wants of the guests who reclined around the outer margin of the table. The central seats of each of these three sections were deemed a place of honor.]; [493] **saying unto them, 8 When you are invited of any man to a marriage feast** [Jesus mentions another kind of feast than the one in progress, that he may not be needlessly personal], **sit not down in the chief seat; lest perhaps a more honorable man** [*Php 2:3*] **than you has been invited by him, 9 and he that invited you and him shall come and say to you, Give this man place; and then you shall begin with shame to take the lowest place.** [Because when ousted from the top he would find every place full except the bottom.] **10 But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place; that when he that has invited you comes, he may say to you, Friend, go up higher: then shall you have glory in the presence of all that sit at meat with you.** [The words here used by our Lord teach how to avoid earthly shame and to obtain worldly honor. But they form a parable that is intended to teach the great spiritual truth that true humility leads to exaltation.] **11 For everyone that exalts himself shall be humbled; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.** [This is one of our Lord's favorite maxims (*Lk 18:14 Mt 23:12*). Both man and God look upon humiliation as the just punishment of pride; but it is a pleasure to every right-minded spirit to give joy to the humble by showing him respect and honor.] **12 And he said to him also that had invited him, When you make a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends, or your brethren, or your kinsmen, or rich neighbors; lest perhaps they also invite you again, and a recompense be made you. 13 But when you make a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14 and you shall be blessed; for they have nothing with which to recompense you: for you shall be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.** [According to the Oriental mode of speech Jesus here emphatically commands one course of action by prohibiting a contrary course. But his prohibition is not to be construed strictly. He does not forbid the exercise of social hospitality, but [494] discountenances that interested form of it that seeks a return. His teaching is positive rather than negative, and should constrain us to live more for charity and less for sociability. Some think that this verse teaches that there shall be two resurrections, but the contrast is not between two *times*, but rather between two *parties* or divisions of one resurrection. If one has part in the resurrection of the just, he may expect recompense for his most trivial act. But if he be resurrected among the unjust, he need expect no reward, even for the most meritorious deeds of his whole life.]

D. Comment and Another Parable (Lk 14:15-24):

(c) **15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.** [The language of Christ implied that God himself would feast those who feasted the poor, and this implication accorded with the Jewish notion that the kingdom of God would be ushered in with a great festival. Inspired by this thought, and feeling confident that he should have been part of the festivities, this guest exclaimed upon the anticipated blessedness.] **16 But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper; and he invited many: 17 And he sent forth his servant at suppertime to say to them that were invited, Come; for all things are now ready.** [The custom of sending a second invitation at the supper hour is a very old one (*Es 5:8 6:14*).] **18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it; I beg you let me be excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I beg you let me be excused. 20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.** [These three excuses show: 1. That the guests had made their engagements, either for business or pleasure, without the least regard for the hour of the banquet; 2. That they set little value upon either the friendship or the feast of the one who had invited them. Moreover, the excuses progress in disrespect, for the first excuse is on [495] the ground of necessity, the second simply offers a reason, and the third is almost impudent in its bluntness. Viewing the excuses spiritually, we note that each one contains an element of *newness*--new field, new oxen, new wife. Thus the things of the earth seem new and sweet in comparison with the gospel invitation.] **21 And the servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and maimed and blind and lame. 22 And the servant said, Lord, what you commanded is done, and yet there is room. 23 And the lord said to the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.** [We have a preliminary or general invitation followed by three special invitations. We may regard the general invitation as given by Moses and the prophets in the ages before the feast was prepared. Then the first special one would be given by John the Baptist and Christ to the Jewish nation in the first stages of Christ's ministry. The second special invitation was given by Christ, the twelve and the seventy, and came more especially to the poor and outcast, the publicans and sinners, because the leading men of the nation spurned the invitation. The third invitation was begun by the apostles after the Lord's ascension and is still borne forward by those who have come after them and includes all nations. The three conditions of Jew, outcast and Gentiles are indicated by the three orders of guests: 1. The honorable citizens of the city (*Lk 14:17*); 2. Those who [496] frequent the streets and lanes, but are still in and out of the city (*Lk 14:21*); 3. Those who live without the city and are found upon the highways and in the hedgepaths of the vineyards and gardens (*Lk 14:23*). The second and third classes are depicted as needing to be constrained. This would be so, because they would hold themselves unworthy of the invitation. But they were to be constrained by moral and not by physical means (*Mt 14:22 2Co 12:11 Ga 2:14*). Physical constraint would have been contrary to all custom, as well as impossible to one servant. Incidentally the parable shows the roominess of heaven and the largeness of divine hospitality.]

Section 94 COST OF DISCIPLESHIP (Probably Perea) Lk 14:25-35

A. Shocking Assertions (Lk 14:25-27).

(c) **25 Now there went with him great multitudes** [he had hitherto spent but little time in Perea, and the people were availing themselves of this opportunity to see and hear him]: **and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man comes unto me, and hates not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.** ["Hates," as used here, is an example of phenomenal speech, or

speaking from appearances. In the cases supposed, the person would *appear* to hate those whom he abandoned for Christ. It is like repent, anger, etc., when spoken of God. To construe the passage literally as enjoining hatred would be contrary to the fifth commandment as re-enacted at *Eph 6:1-3* and *Col 3:20*; and also contrary to our Lord's own example (*Jn 19:25-27*). Seeing the number of those adherents that now surrounded him, Jesus made use of this striking statement that he might startle each hearer, and impress upon him the wide difference between a [497] mere outward appearance upon him and a real, disciple-like adhesion to him. The latter requires that we be ready to sacrifice all in so far as it tends to separate from Christ--*Ro 12:11 Ac 20:24.* **27 And whoever does not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.** [Christ must be followed and imitated even to the extremity of suffering. The costliness of discipleship is illustrated in the two brief parables that follow.]

B. Powerful Illustrations (Lk 14:28-32).

(c) 28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has sufficient resources to complete it? 29 Lest perhaps, when he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock him, 30 saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. [Discipleship is character-building, and shame awaits him who attempts to be a Christian and fails to live up to his profession. The parable is not intended to discourage anyone from attempting to be a disciple. It is meant to warn us against attempting so great an undertaking with the frivolity of spirit and lack of determination that insure failure.] **31 Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends envoys, and asks conditions of peace.** [Is the adversary here God or the devil? As warring against God is no part of discipleship, it might seem that the conflict was with Satan. But the case supposed is that of a man who, after counting the cost, is about to decline taking up his cross--about to rebel against the claims of God. But while in this rebellious state he sees a superior force coming against him. This superior force cannot be the devil's, for Jesus could not counsel any to make peace with him, as the parable advises. The superior force, then, is God's, and the lesson here is that however [498] fearful the task of being a disciple may be, it is not so dreadful as to fight against God. As soon as the hesitating man takes in his thought, he will immediately take up the cross that he was about to refuse.]

C. Final Warning (Lk 14:33-35).

(c) 33 So therefore whoever does not renounce all that he has, he cannot be my disciple. [The tower cannot be built by him who spends his time or squanders his money on other enterprises, nor can the peace be maintained by one who does not fully renounce his rebellion.] **34 Salt therefore is good: but if even the salt has lost its savor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill: men cast it out.** [Our Lord twice before used such language. See on *Mt 5:13* and *Mk 9:50*. Salt is here used as a symbol of perseverance. The condition of those who begin the Christian life and fail to persevere is dangerous in the extreme--*Heb 6:4-12 10:26-39.*] **He that has ears to hear, let him hear.** [See on *Mk 4:9.*]

Section 95 SECOND GREAT GROUP OF PARABLES (Probably Perea) Lk 15:1-17:10

(c) 1 Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him to hear. 2 And both the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receives sinners, and eats with them. [For publicans see on *Lk 3:12*, and for eating with them see on *Mk 2:16*. The Pharisees classed as "sinners" all who failed to observe the traditions of the elders, and especially their traditional rules of purification. It was not so much the wickedness of this class as their legal uncleanness

that made it wrong to eat with them. Compare *Ga 2:12,13*. In answer to their [499] murmuring, Jesus spoke three parables, in which he set forth the yearnings of redemptive love. Having thus replied to the Pharisees, Jesus continued his discourse, adding two other parables, concerning the right employment of worldly goods, and ending with some teaching concerning offenses, etc.]

Discourse #15
Parables Addressed to Pharisees
Luke 15:1-16:18

A. Parable of the Lost Sheep (Lk 15:3-7).

(c) **3 And he spoke unto them this parable** [Jesus had spoken this parable before. See on Mt 18:12-14.] **saying, 4 What man of you** ["man" is emphatic; it is made so to convey the meaning that if man would so act, how much more would God so act], **having an hundred sheep** [a large flock], **and having lost one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness** [the place of pasture, and hence the proper place to leave them], **and go after what is lost, until he find it?** [The ninety-nine represent the Jewish respectability, and the lost sheep stands for a soul that has departed from that respectability.] **5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.** [A touch suggesting the weakness of the sheep and the willing affection of the shepherd.] **6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me** [*Heb 12:2*], **for I have found my sheep that was lost.** [The call implies that the loss was known to the neighbors, and that they felt concerned about it. Had the Pharisees been neighbors to the spirit of Christ, they would have sympathized with him in his joy; but they were false undershepherds--*Eze 34:1-6*.] **7 I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance.** [How little Jesus thought of external morality may be seen by his words at [500] *Lk 18:9*, but he quoted the Pharisees at their own valuation to show that even when so doing, God's love for the sinner was the paramount love.]

B. Parable of the Lost Coin (Lk 15:8-10).

(c) **8 Or what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, does not light a lamp** [because Oriental houses are commonly without windows, and therefore dark], **and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece that I had lost.** [The *drachma*, or piece of silver, corresponded to the Latin *denarius*, and was worth about seventeen cents. The woman, having only ten of them, was evidently poor. Such small coin have been for centuries worn by Oriental women as a sort of ornamental fringe around the forehead. The phrase "until she find it," which is practically repeated in both parables (*Lk 15:4*), is a sweet source of hope; but it is not to be pressed so as to contradict other Scripture.] **10 Even so, I say unto you, there is joy** [*Eze 33:11*] **in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.** [By thus reaffirming the heavenly joy (*Lk 15:7*), Jesus sought to shame the Pharisees out of their cold-blooded murmuring--*Lk 15:2*.]

C. Parable of the Lost Sons (Lk 15:11-32).

(c) **11 And he said, A certain man had two sons** [These two sons represent the professedly religious (the elder) and the openly irreligious (the younger). They have special reference to the two parties found in *Lk 15:1,2*--the Pharisees, the publicans and sinners]: [501] **12 and the younger of them** [the more childish and easily deceived] **said to his father, Father, give me the portion of your substance that falls to me.** [Since the elder brother received a double portion, the younger brother's part would be only one-third of the property--*Dt 21:17*.] **And he divided unto them his living.** [Abraham so divided his estate in his lifetime (*Gn 25:1-6*); but the custom does not appear to have been general among the Jews. God, however, gives gifts and talents to us all, so the parable fits the facts of life--*Ps 145:9 Mt 5:45 Ac 10:34*.] **13 And not many days after** [with all haste], **the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country.** [He yearned for the spurious liberty of a land where he would be wholly independent of his father. Thus the sinful soul seeks to escape from the authority of God]; **and there he**

wasted his substance with riotous living. [Sin now indulges itself with unbridled license, and the parable depicts the sinner's course: his season of indulgences (*Lk 15:12,13*); his misery (*Lk 15:14-16*); his repentance (*Lk 15:17-20*); his forgiveness (*Lk 15:20-24*). On the phrase "riotous living," see *Lk 15:19* below.] **14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want.** [Sooner or later sinful practices fail to satisfy, and the sense of famine and want mark the crises in our lives as they did in the life of the prodigal. The direst famine is that of the word of God--*Am 8:11-13 Jer 2:13*.] **15 And he went and joined [literally, "glued"] himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed [literally, "to pasture" or "tend"] swine.** [This was, to the Jew, the bottom of degradation's pit. They so abhorred swine that they refused to name them. They spoke of a pig as *dabhar acheer*; that is, "the other thing."] **16 And he long to fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.** [The master upon whom he had forced himself did not deem his services worthy of enough food to sustain life; so that he would gladly have eaten the husks or pods of the carob bean, which are very similar to our [502] honey-locust pods, if they would have satisfied his hunger.] **17 But when he came to himself** [his previous state had been one of delusion and semi-madness (*Ec 9:3*); in it his chief desire had been to get away from home, but returning reason begets a longing to return thither] **he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight: 19 I am no more worthy to be called your son: make me as one of your hired servants.** [The humility of his confession indicates that the phrase "riotous living" (*Lk 15:13*) means more than merely a reckless expenditure of money. But vile as he was he trusted that his father's love was sufficient to do something for him.] **20 And he arose, and came to his father.** [Repentance is here pictured as a journey. It is more than a mere emotion or impulse.] **But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him** [being evidently on the lookout for him], **and was moved with compassion** [seeing his ragged, pitiable condition], **and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.** [Giving him as warm a welcome as if he had been a model son.] **21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight: I am no more worthy to be called your son.** [The son shows a manly spirit in adhering to his purpose to make a confession, notwithstanding the warmth of his father's welcome; in grieving for what he had done, and not for what he had lost; and in blaming no one but himself.] **22 But the father said to his servants** [interrupting the son in his confession], **Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet** [none but servants went barefooted]: **23 and bring the fatted calf** [which, according to Eastern custom, was held in readiness for some great occasion (*Gn 18:7 1Sa 28:24 2Sa 6:13*)], **and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry** [the robe, [503] ring, etc., are merely part of the parabolic drapery, and are so many sweet assurances of full restoration and forgiveness, and are not to be pressed beyond this]: **24 for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.** [The condition of the impenitent sinner is frequently expressed in the Bible under the metaphor of death--*Ro 6:13 Eph 2:1 5:14 Re 3:1*.] **And they began to be merry.** [Having thus finished his account of the openly irreligious, Jesus now turns to portray that of the professedly religious; that is, he turns from the publican to the Pharisee. He paints both parties as alike children of God, as both faulty and sinful in his sight, and each as being loved despite his faultiness. But while the story of the elder son had a present and local application to the Pharisees, it is to be taken comprehensively as describing all the self-righteous who murmur at and refuse to take part in the conversion of sinners.] **25 Now his elder son was in the field** [at work]: **and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.** [He heard evidences of joy, a joy answering to that mentioned at *Lk 15:7,10*; the joy of angels in seeing the publicans and sinners repenting and being received by Jesus--the joy at which the Pharisees had murmured.] **26 And he called to him one of the servants, and inquired what these things might be. 27 And he said unto him, Your brother is come; and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound. 28 But he was angry, and would not go in** [he refused to be a party to such a proceeding]: **and his father came out, and entreated him.** [In the entreating father Jesus pictures the desire and effort of God then and long afterwards put forth to win the proud, exclusive, self-righteous spirits that filled the Pharisees and other Jews--*Lk 13:34 Ac 13:44-46 28:22-28*.] **29 But he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I**

serve you [literally, "I am your slave"], **and I never transgressed a commandment of yours** [He speaks with the true Pharisaic spirit [504] (*Lk 18:11,12 Ro 3:9*). His justification was as proud as the prodigal's confession was humble]; **and yet you never gave me a kid** [much less a calf], **that I might make merry with my friends** [he reckons as a slave, so much pay for so much work, and his complaint suggests that he might have been as self-indulgent as his brother had he not been restrained by prudence]: **30 but when this your son** [he thus openly disclaims him as a brother] **came, who has devoured your living with harlots** [and not decent friends such as mine], **you has killed for him the fatted calf. 31 And he said unto him, Son, you are ever with me** [a privilege that the elder brother had counted as naught, or rather as slavery], **and all that is mine is yours.** [See *Ro 9:4,5*. The younger brother had the shoes, etc. (*Lk 15:22*), but the elder still had the inheritance.] **32 But it was appropriate to make merry and be glad** [*Ac 11:18*]: **for this your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found.** [Here the story ends. We are not told how the elder brother acted, but we may read his history in that of the Jews who refused to rejoice with Jesus in the salvation of sinners. At the next Passover they carried their resentment against him to the point of murder, and some forty years later the inheritance was taken from them. Thus we see that the elder brother was not pacified by the father. He continued to rebel against the father's will till he himself became the lost son. A comparison of the three preceding parables brings out many suggestive points, thus: The first parable (*Lk 15:3-7*) illustrates Christ's compassion. A sentient, suffering creature is lost, and it was bad for *it* that it should be so. Hence it must be sought, though its value is only one out of a hundred. Man's lost condition makes him wretched. The second parable (*Lk 15:8-10*) shows us how God values a soul. A lifeless piece of metal is lost, and while it could not be pitied, it could be valued, and since its value was one out ten, it was bad for the *owner* that it should be lost. God looks upon man's loss as his impoverishment. The first two parables depict the efforts of Christ in the salvation of man, or that [505] side of conversion more apparent, so to speak, to God; while the third (*Lk 15:11-32*) sets forth the responsive efforts put forth by man to avail himself of God's salvation--the side of conversion more apparent to us. Moreover, as the parabolic figures become more nearly literal, as we pass from sheep and coin to son, the values also rise, and instead of one from a hundred, or one from ten, we have one out of two!]

D. Parable of the Unrighteous Steward (Lk 16:1-18).

(c) 1 And he said also unto the disciples [If we remember that many publicans were now taking their stand among Jesus' disciples, we will more readily understand why Jesus addressed to them a parable about an unjust man. They would be more readily affected by such a story], **There was a certain rich man, who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods.** ["Wasting" of this verse and "wasted" of *Lk 15:13* are parts of the same verb. The attitude of the two brethren to their father's estate, as set forth in the previous parable, introduced thoughts as to the proper relation that a man bears to his possessions, and these relations Jesus discusses in this parable. While no parable has been so diversely explained, yet the trend of interpretation has been in the main satisfactory. In *Lk 16:8* the Lord himself gives the key to the parable, which is that the children of light, in the conduct of their affairs, should emulate the wisdom and prudence of the children of the world in the conduct of their affairs. The difficulty of the parable is more apparent than real. The whole parabolic machinery is borrowed from worldly and irreligious life, where dishonest cunning and rascality are freely tolerated. The child of light is equally shrewd and wise in the management of his affairs; *using, however, only those means and methods that are permissible in his sphere of action.* God's word, of course, nowhere teaches the absurdity [506] that sinful methods are permitted to him whom it calls to lead a sinless life. While the steward's conduct teaches valuable lessons, the steward himself is condemned as an "unrighteous" man in *Lk 16:8*.] **2 And he called him, and said unto him, What is this that I hear of you?** [an indignant expression of surprise arising from abused confidence] **render the account of your stewardship; for you can no longer be steward.** [Ordinarily the stewards were slaves; but this was evidently a free man, for he was neither punished nor sold, but discharged.] **3 And the steward said within himself, What shall I do, seeing that my lord takes away the stewardship from me? I have not strength to dig** [Being too weak in body because of my luxurious living. Digging refers generally to agricultural labor]; **to beg I am ashamed.** [Being too strong in pride because of my exalted manner of life.] **4**

I am resolved what to do [a way of escape comes to him in a sudden flash of discovery], **that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they** [my lord's debtors] **may receive me into their houses.** **5 And calling to him each of his lord's debtors, he said to the first, How much do you owe unto my lord? 6 And he said, A hundred measures of oil.** [The measure mentioned here is the Hebrew *bath*, which corresponded roughly to a firkin, or nine gallons.] **And he said unto him, Take your bond** [literally, "writings"], **and sit down quickly and write fifty.** [The amount remitted here--four hundred fifty gallons of olive oil--represented a large sum of money. Such a reduction would put the debtor under great obligation to the steward.] **7 Then he said to another, And how much do you owe? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat.** [The measure is the Hebrew *cor*, which contains ten baths, or ephahs, or, more exactly, eighty-six and seven-tenths gallons.] **He says unto him, Take your bond, and write fourscore.** [The amount remitted was about two hundred sixty-seven bushels, and the debtor himself altered the writing, that he might be in no uncertainty about it. Scholars disagree as to whether these debtors were tenants or traders; that is, [507] purchasers of produce who had given their bonds or notes for the same. Meyer, Trench, Godet, and others favor this latter view, but the language used and the customs of the land rather indicate that the former is correct. In the East rents are in proportion to the crop, and hence they vary as it varies. It was natural, therefore, that the steward should ask the amount of the rent; and also natural, since rents were thus payable in kind, that the tenant should answer as to the very thing owed. A trader would have been held, not for the *purchase*, but for the *price*, and would rather have specified the money due than the quantity or thing bought. Since the price of produce varies, it has been the immemorial custom everywhere to fix the amount to be paid for it at the very time it is purchased, and this amount becomes the debt.] **8 And his lord commended the unrighteous steward because he had done wisely** [shrewdly]: **for the sons of this world are for their own generation** [their own clan or class] **wiser than the sons of light.** [That is to say, the steward, a worldly-minded rascal, knew better how to deal with a worldly-minded master above him and dishonest tenants beneath him, than a son of light knows how to deal with the God over him and his needy brethren about him. The verse contrasts the sons of two households: the children of the worldly household exercise more forethought and prudence in gaining among their brethren friends for the day of need, and in expending money to that end, than do the children of the light. The "devil's martyrs," in their skillful prudence, often shame the saints. If the latter showed a wisdom in their affairs analogous to what the unjust steward employed in his affairs, God would commend them as the lord commended the steward.] **9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness** [see on Mt 6:24]; **that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.** [Worldly possession are the Christian's stewardship. If he has been wasting them in self-indulgence, he must take warning from the parable and so employ them in deeds of [508] usefulness and mercy that, when the stewardship is taken from him, he may have obtained for himself a refuge for the future. But how can those whom the Christian has befriended receive him into heaven? The key to the difficulty is found at Mt 25:35-40, where our Lord altogether identifies himself with his poor and unfortunate disciples, and returns on their behalf a heavenly recompense for any kindness that has been shown them on the earth. Only in this secondary and subordinate sense can those whom the Christian has benefited receive him into heaven. Nor does the passage teach that there is any *merit* in almsgiving, since the thing given is already the property of another (*Lk 16:12*). Almsgiving is only a phase of the fidelity required of a steward, and the reward of a steward is not of merit but of grace--*Lk 17:7-10 Mt 25:21*.] **10 He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much.** [God does not judge by the magnitude of an act, but by the spiritual principles and motives that lie back of the act. A small action may discover and lay bare these principles quite as well as a large one. In the administration of small properties entrusted to us on the earth we reveal our disposition and temper as stewards quite as well as if we owned half the universe.] **11 If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?** [The word "unrighteous" is here used to mean "deceitful," as opposed to "true." Worldly riches deceive us by being temporal and transitory, while the true riches are eternal--*2Co 4:18*.] **12 And if you have not been faithful in what is another's, who will give you what is your own?** [We are all God's stewards, and the perishing possessions of earth are not our own, (*1Ch 29:14*), but what is given us *forever* is *our own*--*1Co 3:22*.] **13 No**

servant can serve two masters [*Ga 1:10 Jas 4:4*]: **for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and** [509] **mammon.** [See on Mt 6:24] **14 And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things; and they scoffed at him.** [They derided him with open insolence (*Lk 23:35*). This was a new phase of their opposition, and showed that they no longer feared Jesus as formerly, being assured that he aimed at no earthly dominion. Because of his poverty they may have regarded him as prejudiced against wealth. At any rate, they regarded themselves as living contradictions of this to them ridiculous statement that a man could not be rich and yet religious.] **15 And he said unto them, You are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knows your hearts: for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.** [The Pharisees lived in such outward contrast to the publicans and made such pretensions and claims that men esteemed them righteous, but they were none the less abominable in God's sight. God approves righteousness when *inward*, but despises the mere outward show of it.] **16 The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man enters violently into it.** [See on Mt 11:12.] **17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than one tittle of the law to fall.** [See on Mt 5:18. The law and the prophets had been used of God to set up the old dispensation, and it had been so perverted and abused that in it the Pharisees could pass for righteous men, though abominable according to its true standard. Since the days of John the old dispensation has been merging into the new, and this also has been subjected to violence. But despite all the changes made, approved, and justified by men, the God-given law had never changed. Its smallest letter could no more be eliminated than the universe could be obliterated. But of course the Lawgiver could with notice modify his law.] **18 Every one that puts away his wife, and marries another, commits adultery: and he that marries one that is put away from a husband commits adultery.** [See on Mt 5:32. This precept is inserted here as [510] an illustration of a flagrant violation of the law of God both countenanced and practiced by these Pharisees.]

E. Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31).

[The parable (? JES) we are about to study is a direct advance upon the thoughts in the previous section. We may say generally that if the parable of the unjust steward teaches how riches are to be used, this parable sets forth the terrible consequences of a failure to so use them.] **(c) 19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day** [For convenience' sake, this rich man has been commonly called Dives, which is simply Latin for *rich man*, and is therefore not truly a name, for it is not fitting to name him whom the Lord left nameless. Along the coast of Tyre there was found a rare shell-fish (*Murex purpurarius*) from which a costly purple dye was obtained, each little animal yielding about one drop of it. Woolen garments dyed with it were worn by kings and nobles, and idol images were sometimes arrayed in them. This purple robe formed the outer, and the linen the inner garment. The *byssus*, or fine linen of Egypt, was produced from flax, which grew on the banks of the Nile. It was dazzlingly white, and worth twice its weight in gold (*Gn 41:42 Ex 26:31-33 28:5 1Ch 15:27 Eze 27:7*). The mention of these garments and a continual banqueting indicates a life of extreme luxury.] **20 and a certain beggar** [literally, "one who crouches." It is used thirty-four times in the New Testament, and is everywhere translated "poor" except here and at *Ga 4:9*. In the last stages of life Lazarus had become an object of charity, but there is nothing to indicate that he had been an habitual beggar] **named Lazarus** [This is the only [511] name that occurs in our Lord's parables.] **was laid at his gate** [in the East the gates of the rich are still the resorts of the poor.] **full of sores, 21 and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yes, even the dogs came and licked his sores.** [The contrast here is sharp. Lazarus is naked and clothed with sores instead of rich apparel, and desires crumbs instead of a banquet. That he limited his desire to crumbs suggests a freedom from both worldly lust and envy. Whether he got the crumbs is not stated. His sufferings may have been as unmitigated on earth as those of the rich man were in Hades (*Lk 16:24*), and it is certain that even if he received the crumbs they did not count as a gift, being mere refuse, utterly worthless in the sight of the rich man. The very point of the parable is that the rich man gave him nothing. The dogs also suggest a contrast. The rich man is surrounded by loyal brethren and attentive servants, while Lazarus is the companion of dogs, the scavengers of the streets, who treat him with rude compassion as

one of their number, soothing his sores with their saliva.] **22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom** [it is the office of angels to minister to the heirs of salvation—*Mt 24:31 Mk 13:27 Heb 1:14*]; **and the rich man also died, and was buried.** [In death as well as in life the two men stand in contrast. The rich man passes from view with the pomp and pageantry of a burial (*2Ch 16:13,14*), an earthly honor suited to a worldly life. But Lazarus passes hence with the angels, a spiritual triumph suited to one accepted of God.] **23 And in Hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw** [*Re 14:10*] **Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.** [Hades (Greek), or Sheol (Hebrew), was the name given to the abode of the dead between death and the resurrection. In it the souls of the wicked are in torment, and those of the righteous [512] enjoy a paradise (*Lk 23:43*). The joys of Paradise were conceived of as those of a feast, and the expression "Abraham's bosom" is taken from the custom of reclining on couches at feasts. As a guest leaned upon his left arm, his neighbor on his left might easily lean upon his bosom. Such a position of respect to the master of the house was one of special honor, and indicated great intimacy (*Jn 1:18 13:23*). What higher honor or joy could the Jew conceive of than such a condition of intimacy and fellowship with Abraham, the great founder of their race?—*Mt 8:11*.] **24 And he cried** [in earnest entreaty] **and said, Father Abraham** [the claim of kindred is not denied, but it is unavailing—*Lk 3:8*], **have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.** [The smallness of the favor asked indicates the greatness of the distress, as it does in *Lk 16:21*, where crumbs are desired. There is a reciprocity also between the desired *crumbs* and the prayed-for *drop*, which contains a covert reference to *Lk 16:4,5*. Had the rich man given more he might now have asked for more. The friendship of Lazarus might have been easily won, and now the rich man needed that friendship, but he had neglected the principle set forth in *Lk 16:9*, and had abused his stewardship by wasting his substance upon himself. Again, the former condition of each party is sharply reversed. Lazarus feasts at a better banquet, and the rich man begs because of a more dire and insatiable craving. Thus the life despised of men was honored by God, and (*Lk 16:15*) the man who was exalted among men is found to have been abominable unto God.] **25 But Abraham said, Son** [a tender word—*Jos 7:19*], **remember** [*Pr 5:11-14*] **that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here** [where a different order pertains from that of the earth] **he is comforted and you are in anguish.** [The woes received by Lazarus are not spoken of as *his*. He neither earned nor deserved them (*Re 7:13-17*). His was the stewardship of suffering [513] (*1Co 4:9 2Co 4:7*), and in its small details he had shown great faithfulness. The rich man had the stewardship of wealth, with its accompanying obligation of generosity. This obligation he had esteemed as too contemptibly small to deserve his notice; but in neglecting it, he had inadvertently been unfaithful in much. See *Lk 16:10*. This has been the sin of omission on the part of the rich man, and his sin of commission answered as a complement to it, for he had been guilty of that money-loving self-indulgence that was condemned by Jesus and justified by the Pharisees (*Lk 16:14,15*). No other crime is charged against the rich man, yet he is found in torment. But the rich man during his lifetime had been so deceived by his wealth that he had failed to detect his sin. Moreover, as he indicates in *Lk 16:28*, a like deception was now being practiced upon his brethren.] **26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.** [We have here a clear statement of the separation that parts the good from the evil in the future state. But it has been urged that the coloring and phraseology of this parable is derived from rabbinical teaching, that our Lord made use of a current but erroneous Jewish notion to teach a valuable lesson, and that therefore it is not safe to draw any inferences from the narrative relative to the future state. But it should be observed that the parables of Jesus never introduce fictitious conditions, nor do they anywhere violate the order and course of nature. It is hardly possible that he could have made this an exception to his rule, especially since it is in a field where all the wisdom of the world is insufficient to make the slightest correction. Moreover, it is certainly impossible that he could exaggerate the differences between the states of the lost and saved in the hereafter. Nor can the teaching of the parable be set aside on the ground that it represents merely the intermediate and not the final condition of things. If the [514] intermediate condition of things is fixed and established, the final condition must, *a fortiori*, be more so. The passage therefore confirms the doctrine that the righteous are

neither homeless nor unconscious during the period between death and the resurrection (*Php* 1:23), and refutes the doctrine of Universalism, for the gulf is, 1, fixed, and, 2, can not be passed or bridged.] **27 And he said, I pray you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house** [The double attempt of the rich man to use Lazarus as his servant shows how hard it was for him to adjust himself to his new condition]; **28 for I have five brothers** [there is no typical significance in the number]; **that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.** [Deceived by his wealth, the rich man looked upon his earthly possessions as real and substantial, and, like rich sinners of today, had simply disregarded the affairs of the future life. Aroused by the sudden experience of the awful realities of the future state, he desires to make it as real to his brethren as it had now become to him. In endeavoring to carry out his desire he proceeds on the theory that the testimony of the dead in reference to the realities of the future state are more trustworthy and influential than the revelations of God himself, given through his inspired spokesmen. This dishonoring of God and his law was to be expected from one who had made mammon his real master, even though professing (as the context suggests) to serve God. The singleness of his service is shown in that he, though practically discharged by one master—mammon, cannot even now speak respectfully of God. Some commentators make much of the so-called repentance of the rich man, manifested in this concern for his brethren; but the Lord did not count kindness shown to kindred as evidence of goodness, [515] much less of repentance (see on *Lk* 6:32-35). Besides the natural feeling for his brothers, he knew that their presence in torment would add to his own. His concern for his brethren is not told to indicate repentance. It is mentioned to bring out the point that the revealed will of God of itself and without more makes it inexcusable for a man to lead a selfish life.] **29 But Abraham said, They have Moses and the prophets** [that is, the entire Old Testament]; **let them hear them.** [*Jn* 1:45 5:39-46 *Lk* 24:27. The Scriptures are a sufficient guide to godliness—*2Ti* 3:16,17, and a failure to live rightly when possession them is due to lack of will, and not to lack of knowledge.] **30 And he said, No, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.** [With the spirit of a true Pharisee, he sought a sign for his brothers. See on *Mt* 12:38. But the guidance of Scripture is better than any sign.] **31 And he said unto him, If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.** [These words might sound like an overstatement of the obduracy of unbelief were they not amply verified by the literal facts. Jesus already had raised at least two from the dead as witnesses to his divine power, and he was about to raise a third, who, with startling suggestiveness, would bear this very name of Lazarus. But despite all these witnesses the majority of the Jews disbelieved and continued to disbelieve in him. They even went so far as to seek the death of Lazarus that they might be rid of his testimony (*Jn* 12:10). This is also a reference to Jesus' own resurrection. It is true that he did not appear in person to those who disbelieved in him, but they had clear knowledge of his resurrection (*Mt* 28:11-15), and it was considered as proved to all men—*Ac* 17:31.] [516]

F. Offenses, Faith, Service (Lk 17:1-10).

(c) **1 And he said unto the disciples** [Jesus here ceases to speak to the Pharisees, and begins a new series of sayings addressed to the disciples, which sayings are, however, pertinent to the occasion, and not wholly disconnected with what he has just been saying], **It is impossible** [in a world where Pharisees abound, etc.--*1Co* 11:19] **but that occasions of stumbling will come; but woe unto him, through whom they come!** [See on *Mt* 18:7.] **2 It were well for him if a millstone** [not the large millstone mentioned by Matthew and Mark (*Mt* 18:6 *Mk* 9:42), but the small one that was turned by hand] **were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones** [beginners in the faith, or weaklings--*Ro* 14:1] **to stumble.** [See on *Mk* 9:42.] **3 Take heed to yourselves** [our dangers are not overpassed when we avoid giving offenses, for it is also required of us that we should forgive the evils that we receive]: **if your brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.** [Righteousness has its obligation to rebuke as well as love has to forgive.] **4 And if he sin against you seven times in the day** [a general expression indicating a great number of times], **and seven times turn again to you, saying, I repent; you shall forgive him.** [See on *Mt* 18:21,22. The passage differs from that in Matthew in that the repentance of the sinner is required as a condition precedent to forgiveness.] **5 And the apostles said unto the Lord,**

Increase our faith. [The apostles asked for faith that they might be able to fulfill the great moral requirements that Jesus had just revealed. Our Lord sanctions the wisdom of their prayer by showing the greatness of faith.] **6 And the Lord said, If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you might say unto this sycamore tree, Be rooted up, and be [517] planted in the sea; and it would obey you.** [See on *Mt 17:20*. The sycamore tree is the well-known black mulberry tree, which belongs to the same natural order as the fig-tree, and is a tree distinguished for being deeply rooted.] **7 But who is there of you, having a servant plowing or keeping sheep, that will say unto him, when he comes in from the field, Come immediately and sit down to meat; 8 and will not rather say unto him, Make ready something that I may eat, and gird yourself, and serve me, till I have finished eating and drinking; and afterward you may eat and drink? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded? 10 Even so you also, when you shall have done all things that are commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done what was our duty to do.** [In this passage, which is in the nature of a parable, Jesus teaches that duty is coextensive with ability, and explodes the doctrine that it is possible for a man to do "works of supererogation." Since in God's sight no man can even do his full duty (*Ps 143:2*), it is impossible that he can do *more* than his duty. We may be rewarded for the discharge of our duty, but the reward is of grace and not of merit. When one's faith endows him with great gifts he need not consider himself as an unusually profitable servant for he can do no more than it is his duty to do. The paragraph is a fitting close to a discourse so much of which relates to Phariseism.]

Section 96 RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS (Bethany February A.D. 30) John 11:1-46

A. Jesus Learns of a Sick Friend (Jn 11:1-6).

(d) **1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.** [For Bethany and the sisters, see on *Lk 10:38,39*.] **2 And it was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair [Jn 12:3], whose brother Lazarus was sick.** [The anointing had not yet taken place, as John himself shows. For a similar anticipation see *Mt 10:4*. There are five prominent Marys in the New Testament: those of Nazareth, Magdala and Bethany (*Mt 1:18 27:56 Lk 10:39*); the mother of Mark (*Ac 12:12*), and the wife of Clopas (*Jn 19:25*).] **3 The sisters therefore sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick.** [The message and its form both indicate the close intimacy between this family and Christ. They make no request, trusting that Jesus' love will bring him to Bethany.] **4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.** [The sickness of Lazarus was for the purpose or design of a resurrection, so that death was a mere preceding incident. By this resurrection the Son of God would be glorified by manifesting more clearly than ever before that death came under his messianic dominion, and by gathering believers from among his enemies. In all this the Father would also be glorified in the Son.] **5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.** [In this passage we have two Greek words for "love." In *Jn 11:3,36* we have *philein*, which expresses natural affection such as a parent feels for a child. In this verse we have *agapan*, an affection resulting from moral choice, loftier and less impulsive. We are told of the Lord's love that we may understand that his delay was not due to indifference.] **6 When therefore he heard that he was sick, he abode at that time two [519] days in the place where he was.** [It is urged that the exigencies of his ministry delayed Jesus in Perea. But the import of the texts is that he kept away because of his love for the household of Lazarus and his desire to bless his disciples. He delayed that he might discipline and perfect the faith of the sisters and disciples. He withheld his blessing that he might enlarge it.]

B. Jesus Determines to Go to Bethany (Jn 11:7-16).

(d) 7 Then after this he said to the disciples, Let us go into Judea again. [The word "again" refers back to *Jn 10:40*. Jesus does not propose to them to return to Bethany, where he has friends, but to go back to Judea, the land of hostility. In so doing he caused them to think of his death, of which he had for some time been seeking to accustom them to think.] **8 The disciples say unto him, Rabbi, the Jews were recently seeking to stone you.** [*Jn 10:31*]; **and are you going there again?** **9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If a man walk in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.** [This parabolic expression resembles that at *Jn 9:4*. See on *Jn 9:4*. In this passage, "day" represents the allotted season of life that was to be terminated by what Jesus called "his hour" (*Jn 2:4 7:30 8:20 13:1*). Until this "hour" came, Jesus felt no fear. He did not thrust himself into danger, thus tempting God; but he feared not to go where his duty and the Spirit led him. As yet it was still day, but the evening shadows were falling, and the powers of darkness were soon to prevail (*Lk 22:53*), and then the further prosecution of the work would lead to death, for death was part of the work, and had its allotted time and place.] **11 These things he spoke: and after this he said unto them, Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, [520] that I may awaken him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleeps, he shall do well. 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death: but they thought that he spoke of taking of rest in sleep.** [Jesus had before this spoken of death under the figure of sleep (see on *Lk 8:52*), and the disciples might have understood him to mean death in this case had they not misunderstood his promise given at *Jn 11:4*. As it was, they looked upon the mentioned sleep as marking the crisis of the disease, as it so often does in cases of fever. They were glad to urge it as an evidence of complete recovery, and thus remove one of the causes of the dreaded journey into Judea.] **14 Then Jesus therefore said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.** [Had Jesus been present during the sickness of Lazarus, he would have felt constrained to heal him, and so would have lost the opportunity of presenting to his disciples a more striking proof of his divine power, a proof that has been the joy of each succeeding age. The disciples were soon to learn by sad experience how little belief they really had--*Mk 14:50 16:11 Lk 24:11,21,25*.] **16 Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus [see on *Mt 10:3*], said unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.** [That is, die with Christ, see *Jn 11:8*. This mention of Thomas is closely connected with the thought in *Jn 11:15*. Jesus was about to work a miracle for the express purpose of inducing his disciples to believe in him, especially as to his power over death. In this despairing speech Thomas shows how little faith he had in Christ's ability to cope with death. Thomas sadly needed to witness the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus, and even after seeing it, it proved insufficient to sustain his faith in the ordeal through which he was about to pass--*Jn 20:25-29*.]

C. Jesus with the Bereaved (Jn 11:17-37).

(d) 17 So when Jesus came, he found that he had been in the tomb four days already. [If Lazarus was buried on the [521] day he died, as is the custom in the East, and in hot climates generally (*Ac 5:6,10*), he probably died on the day that the messengers brought word to Jesus about his sickness. If so, Jesus set forth for Bethany on the third day and arrived there on the fourth. The resurrections wrought by Jesus are progressive manifestations of power. Jairus' daughter was raised immediately after death (*Mk 5:41 Lk 8:54*), the young man of Nain was being carried to his grave (*Lk 7:12*), and Lazarus was buried four days. All these were preparatory to that last and greatest manifestation of resurrection power--the raising of his own body.] **18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off** [the furlong, or stadium, was six hundred feet, so that the distance here was one and seven-eighths of a mile]; **19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.** [These Jews were present four days after the death because Jewish custom prolonged the season of mourning (*Gn 1:3,10 Nm 20:29 Dt 34:8 1Sa 28:13*). The Mishna prescribed seven days for near relatives, and the rules as laid down by rabbis, required seven days' public and thirty days' private mourning for distinguished or important personages.] **20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary still sat in the house.** [Jesus evidently paused on the outskirts of the town. He probably wished to avoid the noisy conventional wailing,

the hypocrisy of which was distasteful to him (*Mk 5:40*). It comports with the businesslike character of Martha as depicted by Luke to have heard of our Lord's arrival before Mary. She was probably discharging her duty towards the guests and new arrivals, as was her habit. See on *Lk 10:38-42*.] **21 Martha therefore said unto Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 And even now I know that, whatever you shall ask of God, God will give you.** [We might take it that Martha confidently expected the Lord to raise Lazarus, were it not for the subsequent conversation and especially *Jn 11:39*. We must therefore look upon her hope as more vague than her [522] words would indicate. Such vague and illusive hopes are common where a great expectation, such as she had before indulged, had but lately departed.] **23 Jesus said unto her, Your brother shall rise again. 24 Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes on me, though he die, yet shall he live; 26 and whoever lives and believes on me shall never die. Do you believe this?** [Instead of saying "I will raise Lazarus," Jesus uses the wholly impersonal phrase "your brother shall rise again," for it was this very impersonal feature of faith that he wished to correct. Martha assents to it at once. The doctrine of a resurrection was commonly held by all the Jews except the Sadducees. It was in their view, however, a remote, impersonal affair, a very far distant event powerless to comfort in bereavement. From this comparatively cheerless hope, Jesus would draw Martha to look upon *himself* as both resurrection and life. Where he is there is life, and there also is resurrection at his word without limitation. No mere man, if sane, could have uttered such words. They mean that Jesus is the power that raises the dead and bestows eternal life--*Jn 6:39-54 10:28*.] **27 She said unto him, Yes, Lord: I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God, even he that comes into the world.** [She could not say she believed it, for Lazarus had believed in Jesus and yet he had died. So, evading the question (*Jn 11:26*), she confessed her faith in him. Believing him, she accepted whatever he might say.] **28 And when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Teacher is here, and calls you.** [She called Mary secretly, for she wished that Mary might have a private word with Jesus such as she had just had.] **29 And she, when she heard it, arose quickly** [moved by ardent [523] feeling], **and went unto him. 30 (Now Jesus was had not yet come into the village, but was in the place where Martha met him.) 31 The Jews then who were with her in the house, and were consoling her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she was going unto the tomb to weep there.** [Rather, to wail (*Mt 2:18 Mk 5:38*). According to Eastern custom, the Jews followed her as friends, to assist in the demonstration of mourning. This frustrated the effort of Martha to keep secret the Lord's coming, and caused the miracle to be wrought in the presence of a mixed body of spectators.] **32 Mary therefore, when she came where Jesus was, and saw him, fell down at his feet** [in grief and dependence, but with less self-control than Martha], **saying unto him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** [That both sisters used this phrase (*Jn 11:21*), shows that it is an echo of the past feelings and conversations of the sisters. It is clear that they felt hurt at his not coming sooner, as he could have done.] **33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled** [The verb translated "groaned" carries in it the idea of indignation. But the fact that sin had brought such misery to those he loved was enough to account for the feeling], **34 and said, Where have you laid him?** [This question was designed to bring all parties to the tomb; it was not asked for information. See on *Mk 5:30* and *Jn 6:5*.] **They** [the sisters] **say unto him, Lord, come and see. 35 Jesus wept.** [This is not the verb for wailing, but for shedding tears. On another occasion, when Jesus saw with prophetic eye a vast city, the center of God's chosen nation, sweeping on to destruction, he lamented aloud (*Lk 19:41*), but here, as a friend, he mingled his quiet tears with the two broken-hearted sisters, thus assuring us of his sympathy with the individual grief of each lowly disciple (*Ro 12:15*). Nor did the nearness of comfort prevent his tears. They were tears of sympathy.] [524] **36 The Jews therefore said, Behold how he loved him! 37 But some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?** [Knowing the miracle that he had performed upon a blind man (*Jn 9:1-13*), they could therefore see no reason why he should not have performed one here.]

D. Jesus at the Tomb (Jn 11:38-44). [Miracle 29]

(d) **38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.** [These stones were frequently in the shape of large grindstones resting in a groove, so that they could be rolled in front of the door of the tomb. Tombs had to be closed securely to keep out jackals and other ravenous beasts.] **39 Jesus said, Take away the stone.** [Miracles only begin where human power ends.] **Martha, the sister of him that was dead, said unto him, Lord, by this time the body decays; for he has been dead four days.** [She evidently thought that Jesus wished to see the remains of his friend, and her sisterly feeling prompted her to conceal the humiliating ravages of death. Her words show how little expectation of a resurrection she had.] **40 Jesus said unto her, Did I not say unto you, that, if you believe, you would see the glory of God?** [Jesus reminds her of his words that are recorded in *Jn 11:25,26*, and of the message that he sent, found in *Jn 11:4*, thus removing her objections.] **41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank you that you heard me. 42 And I know that you hear me always: but because of the multitude that stands around I said it, that they may believe that you sent me.** [Jesus, dwelling in constant communion with the Father, knew that the Father concurred in his wish to raise Lazarus. He therefore makes public acknowledgment, and offers a prayer of thanksgiving, for the Father's gracious answer to this and all his petitions. He states, too, that the prayer is publicly made [525] that it may induce faith in the bystanders. He wished all present to know that the miracle about to be wrought is not the work of some independent wonder-worker, but is performed by him as one commissioned and sent of God. In other words, the miracle was wrought to prove the concord between the Son and the Father, the very fact that the Jews refused to believe. The prayer shows that it is not uttered by Jesus to draw admiration to himself as a praying man, but to induce faith unto salvation in those who heard.] **43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.** [The loud cry emphasized the fact that the miracle was wrought by personal authority, and not by charms, incantations, or other questionable means. His voice was as it were an earnest of the final calling that all shall hear (*Re 1:5 Jn 5:28,29 1Th 4:16*). It has been happily said he called Lazarus by name, lest all the dead should rise.] **44 He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go.** [It is thought by some that Lazarus walked forth from the tomb, and the fact that the Egyptians sometimes swathed their mummies so as to keep the limbs and even the fingers separate is cited to show that Lazarus was not so bound as to prevent motion. But the grave-clothes were like a modern shroud, wrapped around arms and legs, and mummies also were thus wrapped after their limbs were swathed. It was part of the miracle that Lazarus came out bound hand and foot, and John puts emphasis upon it.]

E. Reactions to the Miracle (Jn 11:45-46).

(d) **45 Many therefore of the Jews, who came to Mary and beheld what he did, believed on him. 46 But some of them** [some of the class mentioned in *Jn 11:37*] **went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done.** [By the miracle Jesus had won many from the ranks of his enemies, but others, alarmed at this deflection, rush off to tell the Pharisees about this new [526] cause for alarm. The way in which the Evangelist separates those who report to the Pharisees from the believers of *Jn 11:45*, stamps their action as unquestionably hostile.]

Section 97 STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL (Ephraim in Judea) John 11:47-54

A. Fear of the Pharisees (Jn 11:47-48).

(d) **47 The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council** [called a meeting of the Sanhedrin], **and said, What can we do?** [Thus they reproach one another for having done nothing in a present and urgent crisis. As two of their number (Nicodemus and Joseph of

Arimathea) were afterwards in communications with Christians, it was easy for the disciples to find out what occurred on this notable occasion.] **for this man does many signs.** [They did not deny the miracles, therefore their conduct was the more inexcusable.] **48 If we let him alone, all men will believe on him** [they found that despite the threat of excommunication, Jesus was still winning disciples under the very shadow of Jerusalem]: **and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.** [The course of Jesus seemed to undermine Judaism, and to leave it a prey to the innovations of Rome. It is likely that "place" refers to their seats in the Sanhedrin, which they would be likely to lose if the influence of Jesus became, as they feared, the dominant power. They [527] feared then that the Romans would, by removing them, take away the last vestige of civil and ecclesiastical authority, and then eventually obliterate the national life.]

B. Recommendation of Caiaphas (Jn 11:49-53).

(d) **49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year** [that notable, fatal year; he was high priest from A.D. 18 to A.D. 36], **said unto them, You know nothing at all, 50 Nor do you account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.** [His words are a stinging rebuke, which may be paraphrased thus: "If you had any sense you would not sit there asking, 'What do we?' when there is but one thing to do; namely: Let Jesus die and save the people." Expediency, not justice, is his law.] **51 Now this he said not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation; 52 and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together into one [Ga 3:28 Col 3:1] the children of God that are scattered abroad.** [The expression "not of himself" is a very common Hebrew idiom for "not of himself only." God had a meaning in his words different from his own. In earlier, better days the high priest had represented the divine headship of the nation, and through him, by means of the Urim and Thummin, the inspired oracles and decisions had come. This exalted honor had been lost through unworthiness. But now, according to the will of God, the high priest prophesies in spite of himself, as did Balaam and Saul, performing the office without the honor.] **53 So from that day forth they took counsel that they might put him to death.** [Thus, acting on the advice of Caiaphas the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus without a hearing and sought means to carry their condemnation to execution. Quieting their consciences by professing to see such political dangers as made it necessary to kill Jesus for the public welfare, they departed utterly from justice, and took the course that brought upon them the very evils that they were professedly seeking to avoid.]

C. Precautionary Move by Jesus (Jn 11:54).

(d) **54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but departed [528] into the country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there he tarried with the disciples.** [Ephraim was about sixteen miles northeast of Jerusalem and five miles east of Bethel. It was on the borders of a wilderness. Here Jesus remained till shortly before his last Passover.]

Section 98

TEN LEPERS; KINGDOM QUESTION

(Borders of Samaria and Galilee)

Lk 17:11-37

A. The Lepers Incident (Lk 17:11-19).

(c) **11 And it came to pass, as they were on their way to Jerusalem, that he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee.** [If our chronology is correct, Jesus passed northward from Ephraim about forty miles, crossing Samaria (here mentioned first), and coming to the border of Galilee. He then turned eastward along that border down the wady Bethshean that separates the two provinces, and crossed the Jordan into Perea, where we soon find him moving on toward Jericho in the midst of the caravan of pilgrims on the way to the Passover.] **12**

And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off. [The law required lepers to keep away from the rest of the people (*Lv 13:45,46*). The rabbis are said to have prescribed a fixed distance at which lepers must keep, but authority varies as to this distance, some giving it as [529] a rod, and others as high as a hundred paces]: **13 and they lifted up their voices** [such as they had, for the leper's bronchial tubes are dry, and the voice is harsh and squeaky], **saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.** [Considering their condition, their prayer was definite enough.] **14 And when he saw them** [the disciples about him probably at first obstructed the Lord's view], **he said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests.** [See on *Mt 8:4*.] **And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed.** [They received the blessing when they showed their faith by their obedience.] **15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back** [like Naaman--*2Ki 5:15*], **with a loud voice** [made strong by health and gratitude] **glorifying God;** **16 and he fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.** [On his way to the priests at Mt. Gerizim the Samaritan turned back to express his thanks. Apparently nine of the lepers were Jews. A Samaritan was among them because they were along the border of his country, and because the fellowship of affliction and disease obliterated the distinctions of race. **17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine?** [The Lord publicly noted the indifference and ingratitude of the nine and the thanksgiving of the tenth.] **18 Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, except this stranger?** [It sometimes happens that we receive most where we expect least. Though the Samaritan's religion was partly Jewish, yet by blood he was a foreigner, as the word "stranger" means.] **19 And he said unto him, Arise, and go your way: your faith has made you whole.** [Thus Jesus emphasized the fact that the blessing came through faith, encouraging the man to seek [530] higher blessings by the same means.]

B. Question about the Kingdom (Lk 17:20-21).

(c) **20 And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God comes, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God comes not with observation: 21 neither shall they say, Lo here! or, There! for, lo, the kingdom of God is within you.** [*Ro 14:17*. The question of the Pharisees was doubtless a covert criticism. More than three years before this Jesus had begun to say that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (*Mt 4:17*); and they thought that after all this preparation it was high time that the kingdom should commence. They were looking for some manifestation of the sovereignty of God in the realm of the civil and the external, which would raise the Jewish nation to conspicuous supremacy, but they are told that the work of the kingdom is internal and spiritual (*Jn 3:8 18:36 Ro 10:8 Col 1:27*), and that its effects are not such as can be located in space. Some have thought it strange that Jesus should say "within you" when addressing the Pharisees, but the word "you" is used generally and indefinitely.]

C. Related Teaching for the Disciples (Lk 17:22-37).

(c) **22 And he said unto his disciples** [giving them instructions suggested by the question of the Pharisees], **The days will come, when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and you shall not see it. 23 And they shall say to you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away, nor follow after them: 24 for as the lightning, when it streaks out of the one part under the heaven, shines unto the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of man be in his day.** [*Ac 26:13 2Th 2:8*. If the Pharisees looked eagerly for a sensuous external messianic kingdom, so also would the disciples be tempted in the days to come to cherish a somewhat similar yearning. Knowing that Jesus was to come again to rule in power and in great glory, they would, under the stress of persecution, hunger to see one of the days of his rule. This longing for the coming of the Christ is frequently expressed (*Php 4:5 Tit 2:13 Jas 5:7-9 Re 22:20*). In their restless eagerness the [531] unwary disciples would be tempted to follow the false Messiahs who excited widespread admiration and attention. Against all this Jesus warns them, telling them that when the kingdom of heaven does at last assume a visible shape in the manifestation of its King, that manifestation will be so glorious, universal and pronounced as to be absolutely unmistakable.] **25 But first must he suffer many things and be rejected of this generation.** [Thus when he speaks of his glory Jesus is careful to mention the humiliation and suffering that

precedes it, that the faith of his disciples may not be weakened by false expectations and misunderstandings. The day of glory was not for that generation, since it would reject him.] **26 And as it came to pass in the days of Noah** [*Gn 7:11-23*], **27 They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.** **28 Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot** [*Gn 19:15-28 Eze 16:46-56 Jude 1:7*]; **they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;** **29 but in the day Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all:** **30 after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed.** [Our Lord here gives us two historical incidents of the false security of the ungodly, and in doing so he endorses them as real history. The antediluvians and the citizens of Sodom discharged the business of the day and laid their plans for tomorrow and had no thought of evil or anticipation of trouble down to the very moment that the bowls of wrath were poured upon them. Despite all warnings, they were taken by surprise when completely off their guard. The coming of Christ shall be a like surprise to the people of the last day (*Mt 24:44 Lk 12:39 1Th 5:2 2Pe 3:10 Re 3:3 16:15*), and it shall be a day of like punishment--*2Th 1:6-10*.] **31 In that day, he that shall be on the housetop.** [the flat roofs of Oriental houses [532] are used much the same as we use porches], **and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away: and let him that is in the field likewise not return back.** **32 Remember Lot's wife.** [*Gn 19:26 Lk 9:62*.] **33 Whoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.** [See on *Lk 9:24*.] [It seems strange that the terrors of the last day should be accompanied by any thought or concern for property, but such is the plain intimation of the text. If our hope has been centered upon earthly things, we will be found seeking them even in that hour.] **34 I say unto you, In that night there shall be two men on one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** **35 There shall be two women grinding together** [making meal or flour with the little stone hand-mills, as they still do in the East]; **the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** [Day and night exist simultaneously upon the earth, and the Lord's coming will be at noon to some and at midnight to others. His saints will be found mingled with the rest of the people and engaged in duties befitting the hour. But the Lord will receive them to himself as his own (*Jn 14:3 1Th 4:17*), and they will be ready to be detached from their worldly ties that they may go to meet and welcome the bridegroom at his coming--*Mt 25:6,7*.] **37 And they answering say unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Where the body is, there will the eagles also be gathered together.** [The disciples desired to know where this manifestation and division would take place, looking upon it as a local prediction. Jesus gave a proverbial answer, the meaning of which is that sin courts and draws to itself punishment and destruction just as a carcass draws winged [533] scavengers. Applying his words, we may say that as the corruption of the antediluvians drew upon them, the devastation of the flood, and as the crimes of the Sodomites called down upon them, the fires from heaven, and as the unbelief of the Jews of Christ's day caused the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of the nation, so the wickedness of the men of the last times will result in the ending of the world. The word translated "eagles" is generic, and included the vultures also. A passage similar to the latter part of this section is found at *Mt 24:17-41*.]

Section 99

PARABLE OF IMPORTUNATE WIDOW (Uncertain Location) Lk 18:1-8

A. The Parable (Lk 18:1-5).

(c) **1 And he spoke a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint;** **2 saying, There was in a city a judge, who did not fear God, and did not regard man** [an utterly abandoned character]; **3 and there was a widow in that city; and she came often unto him, saying, Avenge me of [rather, Do justice to me as to] my adversary.** [In Scripture language widowhood is symbolic of defenselessness (*Ex 22:22-24 Dt 10:18 27:19 Mal 3:5 Mk 12:40*).] **4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself,**

Though I do not fear God, or regard man; 5 yet because this widow troubled me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming. [The point of this soliloquy is this: Though the high motives such as accountability to God for my office and my good name and respect [534] among men do not lead me to do this woman justice, yet will I do it simply to be rid of her importunity.]

B. Application of the Parable (Lk 18:6-8).

(c) 6 And the Lord said [this expression indicates that the Lord paused for a moment, that the parable might be fully grasped before he made the application], **Hear what the unrighteous judge said. 7 And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night** [The application is an argument *a fortiori*, and presents a triple antithesis: 1. In the petitioned--a just God and an unrighteous judge. 2. In the petitioners--a despised widow and the beloved elect. 3. In the petition--the frequent visits of the one, and the continual cries of the many], **and yet he is longsuffering over them? 8 I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth?** [Though a beloved people cry continually unto a just God, yet will he in mercy be longsuffering to their enemies, and because of the longsuffering he will seem to delay his answer, but the delay will not be extended a moment longer than necessary. When the season of repentance is past, and the measure of iniquity is full (*Gn 15:16*), then the Lord's answer will be speedy, immediate. But despite this admonition to pray without discouragement, and this promise to answer with all speed, God's patience with the wicked, and his consequent delays in answering the prayers of the just, will prove such a trial to his people as to leave it questionable whether any of them will have faith enough to pray until the coming of the Lord. We find an echo of this passage at *2Pe 3:1-13*. Compare also *Mt 24:12,13*. The parable resembles that of the friend who came at midnight (see on *Lk 11:5-10*), but there the petitioner asked a gift, and here the request is for justice and deliverance. And this parable also teaches that the saints must be patient in prayer until the Lord's return.] [535]

Section 100 PARABLE OF TWO WORSHIPERS (Uncertain Location) Lk 18:9-14

(c) 9 And he spoke also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others aside [It is commonly said that this parable teaches humility in prayer, but the preface and conclusion (see *Lk 18:14*) show that it is indeed to set forth generally the difference between self-righteousness and humility, and that an occasion of prayer is chosen because it best illustrates the point that the Lord desired to teach. The parable shows that the righteousness in which these parties trusted was devoid of that true charity or heart-love toward God and man without which our characters are worthless in the sight of God--*Pr 30:12,13 Isa 65:5 1Co 13:1-3*]; **10 Two men went up into the temple to pray** [The temple was the appointed place for Jewish prayer. To it the Jew went if near at hand, and towards it he prayed it afar off. The stated hours of prayer were 9 A.M. and 3 P.M., but men went there to pray whenever they felt like it]; **the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.** [The two represent the extremes of Jewish social and religious life--see on *Mt 3:7* and *Lk 3:12*.] **11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself** [This may mean that he stood alone, withdrawing from the contamination of others, but it seems rather to mean that he prayed having himself, rather than God, uppermost in his thoughts], **God, I thank you, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.** [His prayer is more a boast as to himself than an expression of worship toward God (*Re 3:17,18*), and he makes the sinful record of the publican a dark background on which to display the bright contrast of his own character--a character for which he was thankful, and apparently with reason.] **12 I fast twice in the week** [the law appointed one fast in the year, [536] namely: on the Day of Atonement (*Lv 16:29,30*), but the Pharisees fasted on Mondays and Thursdays of each week]; **I give tithes of all that I get.** [I give

the tenth part of my income. The law required that tithes be given from the corn, wine, oil, and cattle (*Dt 14:22,23*), but the Pharisees took account of the humblest herbs of the garden, and gave a tenth of their mint, anise, and cummin (*Mt 23:23*). Thus he confessed his virtues rather than his sins.] **13 But the publican, standing afar off** [remote from the Holy Place], **would not lift up so much as his without unto heaven** [*Ps 123:1,2 40:12 Ezr 9:6*], **but smote his breast** [as if to remind himself of the stroke of God that he so richly deserved--*Na 2:7 Lk 23:48*], **saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.** [He makes full confession of his sin without excuse or justification, and without offset of righteousness. Moreover, he petitions for no temporal blessings, but simply asks for mercy--*1Ti 1:15*.] **14 I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other** [we are taught here, as in the parable of the prodigal son (*Lk 15:11-32*), that the penitent unrighteous are more acceptable to God than the righteous who make no confession of their sins]: **for everyone that exalts himself shall be humbled; but he that humbles himself shall be exalted.** [See on *Lk 14:11*. The Pharisee was an example of the first, and the publican of the second.]

Section 101

DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

(Perea)

Mt 19:1-12; Mk 10:1-12

A. Question from the Pharisees (Mt 19:1-2; Mk 10:1-2).

(a) **1 And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words** [the words contained in *Mt 18:15-35*, which are the last teachings in Galilee recorded by any of the Evangelists.] **he departed from Galilee** [Having come into the borders of it again from Ephraim. It seems likely that [537] Matthew takes in at one view both departures from Galilee, namely: that mentioned at *Jn 7:9*, and that at *Lk 17:11*, for Matthew records none of the intervening events and Jesus spent no time in Galilee between the two journeys, merely returning to the border of the land and making a second journey thence to Jerusalem. He now left Galilee to return thither no more until after the resurrection--*Mt 28:16,17 Jn 21:1*], **(b) 1 And he arose from thence, and comes {(a) came} (b) into the borders of Judea and beyond the Jordan** [The land beyond the Jordan was called Perea. See on *Mt 4:25*. It was no part of Judea, but belonged to the tetrarchy of Herod. It and the river Jordan bordered Judea on the east]: **(a) 2 and multitudes (b) came together unto him again; (a) followed him; (b) and, as he was accustomed, he taught them again. (a) and he healed them there.** [No doubt bands of pilgrims on their way to the Passover helped to swell the multitudes that now surrounded the Lord.] **(b) 2 And there came unto him Pharisees, and asked him, (a) saying, (b) Is it lawful for a man (a) to put away his wife for every cause?** [That is, for every cause satisfactory to the husband.] **(b) trying him.** [Knowing that Jesus had modified the law of Moses, the Pharisees asked this question, seeking to entrap him. If he had reaffirmed his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (*Mt 5:32*), they hoped to make it appear that he despised the authority of Moses. But if he ratified the law of Moses, then they would show that he was contradicting his former teaching, and hence too inconsistent to be worthy of credit. For the Lord's teaching concerning divorce see on *Mt 5:31,32*.]

B. Jesus References Old Testament Teaching (Mt 19:3-6; Mk 10:3-4).

(b) 3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? 4 And they said, Moses permitted us to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. (a) 4 And he answered and said, Have you not read, that he who made *them* from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh? 6 So [538] that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder. [Jesus went back to the original law propounded by God and recorded by Moses, and shows from it: 1. That marriage is a fundamental principle of social order, God having it in view from the creation, and hence making them male and female (*Mk 10:6*). 2. That the relation of marriage is superior even to the parental relation (*Mk 10:7*). 3. That by it the pair become one flesh, so that a

man is as much joined to his wife as he is to his own body (*Mk 10:8*). Now, since a man can only be separated from his parental relations or from his own body by death, which is an act of God, so it follows that the superior or similar relation of marriage can only be dissolved by the act of God. Thus Jesus draws the conclusion that no man or body of men, whether acting in private, civil, or ecclesiastical capacity, can dissolve marriage otherwise than according to the decrees of God.]

C. Jesus' Response to a Follow-up Question (Mt 19:7-9; Mk 10:3-9).

(a) 7 They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put *her* away? [Seeing that Jesus reaffirmed his former teaching, the Jews proceed to show that he is in conflict with the law of Moses, apparently failing to note that Jesus has merely cited Scripture, and that therefore the issue is really Moses against Moses.] **(b) 5 But Jesus said {(a) said} unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart (b) wrote you this commandment. (a) permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it has not been so. (b) 6 But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them.** [Thus Jesus replies that Moses did not *command* but permitted (the word "commandment" used by Mark having reference not to the matter but the manner; that is, commanding it to be done by giving a writing) men to put away their wives because at the time when the law was given the wickedness of men made such a concession beneficial. Had the law propounded at creation been re-enacted by Moses, many would have refused to marry at all, preferring an illicit life to the hazard of matrimony under a stringent law, and others finding themselves unhappily married would have secretly murdered their wives to gain their [539] liberty. As a choice of two evils, God therefore temporarily modified the law out of compassion for women. It was expected that as the hearts of men softened they would recognize the wisdom, justice and wholesomeness of the original law, and cease to take advantage of their permission to evade it. But men had not done this, and Christ himself had brought this concession to an end, and since then it has been the most daring interference with the divine prerogative, for men to venture on a continuance of the same concession, as though they were possessed of divine authority.]

D. Jesus' Response to Disciples' Concerns (Mt 19:11-12; Mk 10:10-11).

(b) 10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of this matter. 11 And he said unto them, (a) 9 And I say unto you, Whoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: (b) against her; (a) and he that marries her when she is put away commits adultery. 12 and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she commits adultery. [Thus Jesus reaffirms the teaching at *Mt 5:32*.] **(a) 10 The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry.** [The disciples illustrate not only the hardness of heart of which Jesus spoke, but also the wisdom of allowing divorce under the law of Moses.] **11 But he said unto them, Not all men can receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs, that were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, that were made eunuchs of men: and there are eunuchs, that made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.** ["This saying" is the saying that Jesus himself had just uttered concerning divorce (*Mt 19:9*): and his teaching is that the prohibition of divorce does not apply to eunuchs. If a woman finds herself married to a eunuch, she is not bound to him. So with a man married to a hermaphrodite.

Section 102 JESUS AND CHILDREN (Perea)

Mt 19:13-15; Mk 10:13-16; Lk 18:15-17

A. Parents Bring Children to Jesus (Mt 19:13-14; Mk 10:13; Lk 18:15).

(a) 13 Then there were brought (b) 13 And they were bringing (a) unto him little children, {(c) also their babes,} that he should touch them: (a) that he should lay his hands on them,

and pray [Children were often brought to the presidents of the synagogue in order that they might pray over them. The prayers of a good man in our behalf always have been regarded as a blessing; no wonder, then, that the mothers of these children desired the prayers of Jesus in behalf of their little ones. It was customary to put the hand upon the person prayed for, probably following the patriarchal precedent (*Gn 48:14,15*). Compare *Ac 6:6*: **(c) but {(a) and} (c) when the disciples saw it, they** [541] **rebuked them.** [The disciples wished to protect Jesus from what appeared to them to be an unseemly intrusion and annoyance, and possibly, as the context suggests, they thought it was beneath the dignity of the Messiah to turn aside from the affairs of the kingdom of heaven (*Mt 19:12*) to pay attention to children.]

B. Jesus' Intervention (Mt 19:14-15; Mk 10:14-15; Lk 18:16-17).

(b) 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and (c) called them unto him, saying, {(b) said} unto them, (c) Permit the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: (a) for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. {(b) of God.} Jesus was indignant at their officious interference, and directed that the children be brought to him, declaring at the same time that the kingdom of heaven be composed, not of little children, but of such as are childlike in their nature.] **17 Verily I say unto you, Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.** [See on *Mk 9:37*.] **(b) 16 And he took them up in his arms, (a) 15 And he laid {(b) laying} (a) his hands on {(b) upon} (a) them, (b) and blessed them, (a) and departed from there.** [They were [542] brought that he might lay his hands on them and bless them, and that is what he did for them. The command therefore that they be permitted to come to him should not be perverted into a precept directing that they be brought for other purposes. Those who have construed this as commanding or even permitting either infant baptism or an infant church membership, have abused the text. They are indebted for these ideas, not to the Bible, but to their creeds. The incident told in this section is a fitting sequel to the discourse on divorce. The little children, the offspring of happy wedlock, and a source of constant joy and pleasure to faithful husbands and wives, serve by their presence to correct false impressions as to supposed inconvenience of an indissoluble marriage bond. The sight of them in the arms of Jesus could not fail to leave a good impression with reference to the married life.]

Section 103 RICHERS AND REWARDS (Perea)

Mt 19:16-20:16; Mk 10:17-31; Lk 18:18-30

A. Question and Response (Mt 19:16-19; Mk 10:17-19; Lk 18:18-21).

(b) 17 And when he was going forth into the way, (a) behold, (b) there ran {(a) came} (b) one (c) a certain ruler (b) to him, and kneeled to him, and asked (a) and said, {(c) saying,} (b) Good Teacher, (a) what good thing shall I do, that I may have {(b) may inherit (c) to inherit} eternal life? [The action of this young man in running and kneeling shows that he was deeply anxious to receive an answer to his question, and also that he had great reverence for Jesus. He seemed to think, however, that heaven could be gained by performing some one meritorious act. He made the mistake of thinking that eternal life is a reward for *doing* rather than for *being*, a mistake from which the Roman Catholic Church [543] developed the doctrine of "works of supererogation."] **19 And Jesus said unto him, Why do you call me good? none is good except one, even God: (a) Why do you ask me concerning what is good? One there is who is good** [To the *address* of the young man, namely: "Good Master" (*Mk 10:17*), Jesus replies, "Why call," etc., and to his *question*, "What good thing," etc. Jesus replies, "Why ask," etc. The ruler using the inconsiderate, conventional language of the thoughtless, had taken an unwarrantable freedom with the word "good." Jesus shows that if his language had been used sincerely it would have committed him to a declaration of great faith, for he had addressed Jesus by a title that belongs only to God, and he had asked Jesus the question concerning that of which God alone was fitted to speak. As the ruler had not used this language sincerely Jesus

challenged his words. The challenge showed the ruler that he had unwittingly confessed the divinity of Jesus, and thus startled him into a consideration of the marvelous fact that his own mouth had stated. This is done because the young man would need to believe in the divinity of Jesus to endure the test to which he was about to be subjected--*1Jo 5:5.*] **but if you would enter into life, keep the commandments.** [By referring the ruler to the commandments, Jesus not only answered the question as to obtaining life, but he emphasized the confession of his divinity contained in the question, "Why ask," etc. God, who knows what is good, had revealed that good in the commandments that he had given. Yet the ruler had asked Jesus to be wise above God's revelation, and to propound a law or rule of goodness in addition to that already given, and of such a nature as to more fully insure the attainment of life by obeying it. The ruler's question reveals that common weakness in man that prompts him to look to his fellowmen for religious and moral instruction; forgetting that only God can propound the absolute standards of goodness. We should note, too, that the young man, being under the law given through Moses, was bidden to attain life by keeping the law. After the death of Christ a new law [544] was given. Had the man waited until that time, he would have been directed to this new law, and obedience to it would have been required. Compare *Ac 2:37,38 2Th 1:8*, etc.] **18 He said unto him, Which? And Jesus said, (c) 20 You know the commandments, Do {(a) You shall} (c) not commit adultery [Ex 20:14 Dt 5:18], Do {(a) You shall} (c) not kill [Ex 20:13 Dt 5:17], Do {(a) You shall} (c) not steal [Ex 20:15 Dt 5:19], Do {(a) You shall} (c) not bear false witness [Ex 20:16 Dt 5:20], (b) Do not defraud [Ex 20:17 Dt 5:21], (a) 19 Honor your father and your mother [Ex 20:12 Dt 5:16]; and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. [Lv 19:18.** The ruler still sought for some prominent commandment, but was referred to the last six of the Decalogue, these being at that time more frequently violated than the first four. For the last commandment, "You shall not covet," Jesus substitutes its equivalent, "Do not defraud," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," the last being a summary of all the six--*Ro 13:9.*]

B. Second Question and Response (Mt 19:20-21; Mk 10:20-21; Lk 18:22).

(b) 20 And he (a) 20 The young man said {(b) said} unto him, Teacher, (c) All these things have I observed from my youth up. (a) what do I yet lack? [He had kept these commandments as far as he knew his heart and as far as he understood their import.] **(b) 21 And Jesus (c) when he heard it, (b) looking upon him** [gazing earnestly and searchingly at him] **loved him** ["*agapan.*" See on *Jn 11:5.*], **and said unto him, (c) One thing you lack yet** [a direct answer to the direct question, "What lack," etc.] **(a) if you would be perfect** [that is, in keeping the commandments and in securing eternal life--*Jas 2:10*], **go, sell what you have, (c) sell all (b) whatever you have, (c) and distribute {(b) give} (c) unto {(a) to} the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.** [The command to sell all is not a general one, but a special precept needed in this case, 1. To dispel the ruler's self-deception. On the negative side his character was good, but on the positive it was deficient. He had done his neighbor no harm, but he had also done him very little good. 2. To show impartiality. The invitation of Jesus shows that the ruler desired to be in some manner a disciple, and hence he is subjected to the same [545] test that the other disciples had accepted, and of which Peter soon after speaks (*Mk 10:28*). Paul also was rich in self-righteousness like this man, but cheerfully sacrificed all, that he might follow Christ (*Php 3:6-9*). Moreover, the reference to treasure in heaven and the invitation to follow Christ tested the ruler's obedience to the first four commandments of the Decalogue as condensed in the great summary or first commandment. (*Mt 22:37,38.*) Though the ruler perhaps did not fully realize it, those who heard the conversation must afterwards have been impressed with the great truth that the ruler was called upon to make his choice whether he would love Christ or the world, whether he would serve God or mammon. The whole scene forms an illustration of the doctrine expressed by Paul, that by the law can no flesh be justified (*Ro 3:20*), for perfection is required of those who approach God along that pathway; those, therefore, who have done all, still need Christ to lead them.]

C. Response of the Young Ruler (Mt 19:22-26; Mk 10:22-27; Lk 18:23-27).

(a) 22 But when the young man heard that saying, {(c) these things} (b) his countenance fell at the saying, (c) he became exceeding sorrowful; (b) and he went away sorrowful: (c)

for he was very rich. (b) he was one that had great possessions. [He was not offended at the extravagance of Jesus' demands, for he was not one of the most hardened of the rich. He belonged to that class that hold Christ and their wealth in nearly an even balance. The narrative shows us how uncompromisingly Jesus held to principle. Though the ruler was sorry to turn away, and though Jesus loved him, yet the Lord did not modify his demand by a hair's-breadth to gain an influential disciple.] **(c) 24 And Jesus seeing him (b) looked round about, and said {(a) said} unto his disciples, (b) How hard it is those that have riches to enter into the kingdom of God! (a) Verily I say unto you, It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.** [1Ti 6:9,10,17-19. It should be remembered that Judas heard these words only a few days before he sold his Lord.] **(b) 24 And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answered again, and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in [546] riches to enter into the kingdom of God!** [The possession and use of riches is permitted to the Christian, but their possession becomes a sin when the one who owns them comes to trust in them or in any way suffers them to interfere with his duties toward or relations to God.] **(a) 24 And again I say unto you, (c) 25 For it is easier for a camel to enter in {(b) to go} through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.** [The needle's eye here is that of the literal needle, and the expression was a proverbial one to indicate what was absolutely impossible. Lord George Nugent (1845-6) introduced the explanation that Jesus referred to the two gates of a city, the large one for beast of burden, and the small one for foot-passengers. This smaller one is now called "The Needle's Eye," but there is no evidence whatever that it was so called in our Savior's time. In fact we have every reason to believe that this smaller gate received its name in late years because of the efforts of those who were endeavoring to soften this saying of Jesus.] **(a) 25 And when the disciples heard it, they were astonished exceedingly, (c) 26 And they that heard it said, {(b) saying} unto him, (a) Who then {(b) Then who} can be saved? (a) 26 And Jesus (b) looking upon them said, {(c) 27 But he said,} (b) With men this is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God. (c) The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.** [The Jews were accustomed to look upon the possession of riches as an evidence of divine favor, and the heads of the apostles were filled with visions of the riches and honors that they would enjoy when Jesus set up his kingdom. No wonder, then, that they were amazed to find that it was impossible for a rich man to enter that kingdom, and that, moreover and worse than all, riches appeared to exclude from salvation itself: that even this virtuous rich man, this paragon of excellence, could not have eternal life because he clung to his riches. But they were comforted by the assurance of Jesus that though the salvation of some men might present more difficulties than the salvation of others [547] --might, as it were, require a miracle where others only required simple means, yet the gracious, mighty God might still be trusted to overcome the obstacles. It is impossible for any man to save himself, so that in every case of salvation God is called upon to assist man in accomplishing the impossible. God can so work upon the rich man's heart as to make him a dispenser of blessings.]

D. Peter's Question (Mt 19:27; Mk 10:28; Lk 18:28).

(a) 27 Then answered Peter (c) 28 And (b) began to say unto him, {(a) and said unto him,} (b) Lo, we have left all, {(c) our own,} (b) and have followed you. (a) what then shall we have? [The negative conduct of the rich man reminded the disciples of their own positive conduct when confronted with a similar crisis (*Lk 5:11*), and the "all" that they had left was by no means contemptible, though perhaps none of them could have been said to have held great possessions. The mention of treasure in heaven (*Mk 10:21*), therefore, set Peter to wondering what manner of return would be made to them to compensate them for their sacrifice.]

E. Promise to the Apostles (Mt 19:28).

(a) 28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [By the term "regeneration," Jesus in this case means the period in which the process of regenerating men would be in progress; that is, the period of the mediatorial reign. After his ascension Jesus sat upon his throne (*Ac 2:33-35*)

Heb 1:13 Mt 25:31 1Co 15:24-28). And on the day of Pentecost next following (*Ac 2:1*), he began this process of regeneration. Having enthroned himself, Jesus enthroned the apostles also, not as kings but as judges, having jurisdiction over all questions of faith and practice in the earthly kingdom. During their personal ministry, they judged in person; and since then they judge through their writings. True, we have written communications from only a part of them, but judgments pronounced by one of a bench of judges with the known approval of all, are the judgments of the entire bench. Moreover, the passage must be construed metaphorically, for the apostles are [548] judges in the church of Christ--the true Israel--and not over the literal twelve tribes of Jacob. And again, the twelve who then heard Jesus speak were not all enthroned, Judas having fallen from his position before the day of enthronement (*Ac 1:16-18*), and Matthias and Paul were afterwards added to the group (*Ac 1:26 9:17-19*). Jesus here causes the number of the judges to correspond to the number of the tribes, to indicate that there will be a sufficiency of judgment commensurate to the need.]

F. Promise to All Disciples (Mt 19:29-30; Mk 10:29-31; Lk 18:29-30).

(a) 29 And every one {(b) There is no man that} (a) has left houses, {(b) house,} (c) or wife, or brethren, (b) or sisters, or mother, or father, (c) or parents, (b) or children, or lands, for my sake, {(a) my name's sake,} (b) and for the gospel's sake, (c) for the kingdom of God's sake, 30 who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the world to come eternal life. (b) 30 but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come (a) shall inherit eternal life. [The rewards of Christian self-denial are here divided into two parts--the temporal and the eternal. The earthly joys--the rewards "in this time"--shall outweigh the sacrifices made for the kingdom. The return, of course, will not be in kind, houses for house, and fathers for father, etc., but spiritual relationships and blessings that compensate abundantly for whatever has been resigned (*Mt 12:49 1Ti 4:8*). But these joys shall be mingled with the bitterness of persecution, for no pleasure is perfected in this world, but only in the inheritance that lies beyond--*1Pe 1:4*.] **30 But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last. (b) 31 But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.** [The promise of large recompense that Jesus had just given was apt to tempt some to labor not for love, but for the rewards that might be reaped thereby. Jesus corrects this spirit by the statement, and the parable that follows in Matthew (*Mt 20:1-16*) that illustrates it, and that ends with the same sentiment. See on *Mt 20:16*.]

G. A Parable about Jealousy (Mt 20:1-16).

(a) 1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that was a householder, [549] who went out early in the morning to hire laborers. [He rose early, because the working day began with the rising of the sun.] **2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day [see on *Mk 6:37*], he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour [The Jews divided the time between sunrise and sunset into twelve hours, so that the first hour would be about six o'clock, the third about nine, the sixth noon, the ninth about three, and the twelfth about six. As the length of the days differed, the lengths of the hours differed. The longest day in Palestine is fourteen hours and twelve minutes; the shortest, nine hours and forty-eight minutes; so it would follow that an hour on the longest day would be seventy-one minutes; and on the shortest it would be only forty-nine minutes. None of the hours, therefore, would correspond exactly to ours except the sixth or noon hour], and saw others standing in the marketplace idle; 4 and to them he said, Go also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said unto them, Why do you stand here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man has hired us. He said unto them, Go also into the vineyard. 8 And when evening was come [the time of settlement--*Lv 19:13 Dt 24:15*], the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward [his overseer], Call the laborers, and pay them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.** [Thus following the order indicated by *Mt 19:30*. The lord paid the last first that he might make conspicuous the fact that these received as much wages as those who had labored all day.] **9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received**

every man a denarius. 10 And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more [seeing the lord's liberality to those who [550] had worked only one hour, they expected that they would be recipients of a like liberality proportioned to their hours of service]; **and they likewise received every man a denarius. (a) 11 And when they received it, they murmured against the householder, 12 saying, These last have spent *but* one hour, and you have made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat. 13 But he answered and said to one of them** [the answer given to one is taken as an example of what he said to them all], **Friend, I do you no wrong: did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take up what is yours, and go your way** [do not stop to argue]; **it is my will to give unto this last, even as unto you. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good?** [The evil eye is a synonym for jealousy. It originated with the malicious leer with which jealousy regards its object (*Mk 7:22 1Sa 18:9 Pr 23:6-8 28:22 Dt 15:9*). The lord had done no wrong to those who had labored longest, for he had paid them what they had bargained for and earned. If he chose to be generous with those whose misfortune had prevented them from being hired earlier in the day, no one had any just cause to murmur.] **16 So the last shall be first, and the first last** [The meaning of this parable has often been misunderstood by those who fail to note the maxim with which Jesus begins and ends it. This maxim acts as a safeguard in the interpretation of it; the parable also in turn guards against misunderstanding the maxim. The maxim cannot be applied to Judas; for, though he then stood high in honor and afterwards fell into disgrace, yet he stands outside the pale of the maxim as interpreted by the parable, for in the parable both the first and the last were received and rewarded by their master, while Judas was rejected of Christ and received no reward. The term "last," therefore, must be applied to those who were included among the accepted laborers, and not those who were excluded from that class. In the parable, the *denarius* or denarius stands for the gift of [551] eternal life. The vineyard represents the Lord's field of work in the world. The evening is the close of the Christian dispensation, and the coming of Christ to judgment. The parable as it unfolds and develops suggests that in no case was the reward earned by the inherent merits and toil of the laborers, but was rather bestowed because of a desire on the part of the householder to that effect, just as eternal life is bestowed, not by merit, but by covenant grace (*Ro 2:6,7 4:3-5 5:16-21*). The main object of the parable is to show that longer labor does not necessarily, as the apostles and others might think, establish a claim to higher reward. Degrees of difference there no doubt will be, but they form no account in the general covenant of grace in which the one great gift is offered to us all. As the gift can be *no less than eternal life*, there must of necessity be a difference in the ratio of service that is rendered for it, since it will be bestowed on the octogenarian and the child, upon Paul who made good the confession of his faith through years of toil, and the dying thief who passed to his reward while his voice of confession was, as it were, still ringing in the ears of those who heard it (*1Co 15:8-11 2Ti 4:6-9*). The murmuring and envy of those who had labored longest is merely part of the parabolic drapery, introduced to bring out the answer of the householder, and to make plain the point to be illustrated. There will be no envy among those who inherit eternal life. By thus speaking of the envy, however, and showing how ineffectual it was, Jesus warns us to be prepared not to cherish it. The parable is not intended to teach that the characters of men will be exactly similar in the world to come. Paul will not be Peter, nor will Martin Luther be identical with Hugh Latimer and John Knox. God may award eternal life to the character that we are forming, but we should be careful what kind of character we bring to receive the gift. The lesson is that works are valued *qualitatively* and not *quantitatively*. Nor may the parable be rightly used to encourage hope in death-bed repentance. It certainly does teach that, however little the labor that a man does in the Lord's vineyard, he will receive the final reward if only he [552] be really in the vineyard; that is, if he be really a child of God. But whether a man who repents on his death-bed actually becomes a child of God is a different question, and is not touched by the parable. Certainly the eleventh-hour laborer who had stood idle all day only because no man had hired him, and who came into the vineyard as soon as he was called, cannot represent the man who has been called by the gospel every hour of his life, but has rejected every call until his sun has sunk so low that he knows he can do but little work when he comes. In order to represent this class of sinners, the eleventh-hour men should have been invited early in the morning, and should have replied, "No, it is too early; we will not go now." Then they should have been invited at the third, the sixth, and the ninth

hours, and should have made some equally frivolous excuse each time, then, finally, at the eleventh hour, they should have said, "Well, as you pay a man just the same for an hour's work as for a day's work, and as we are very anxious to get your money, we believe we will now go." Had they acted thus, it is not likely that they would have found the vineyard gates open to them at all. Yet such is the sharp practice that some men attempt in dealing with God.]

Section 104

FORETELLING SUFFERING; REBUKING AMBITION (Perea or Judea near Jordan) Mt 20:17-28; Mk 10:32-45; Lk 18:31-34

A. Events in Jerusalem (Mt 20:18-19; Mk 10:33-34; Lk 18:31-33).

(b) 32 And they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem [Jesus had been going up to Jerusalem ever since he started in Galilee, and he may now have still been in Perea. The parable of the vineyard (*Mt 20:1-16*) that [553] closed the preceding section was likely to have been spoken before he crossed the Jordan, for Perea abounded in vineyards]; **and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid.** [When Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem, his disciples dropped behind and hung back. The outer circle of his disciples knew enough not to be fearful of the consequences, and the inner circle, fully acquainted with the dangers, were amazed that he would dare to go thither. A short while before this they had despaired of his life when he had proposed to go even into Judea (*Jn 11:7-16*), and his going at that time had not bettered the situation, but had, on the contrary, greatly increased the enmity and danger (*Jn 11:47-57*). Notwithstanding all this, Jesus was now on his way to Jerusalem itself, and was speaking no reassuring word as he formerly had done--*Jn 11:9,10.*] **(a) 17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took (b) again (c) unto him (a) the twelve disciples apart** [He separated them from the throng of pilgrims on the way to the Passover, and from the outer circle of the disciples, for it was not expedient that these should hear what he was about to reveal concerning his death. Such a revelation might have spurred his Galilean friends to resist his arrest, and might have resulted in riot and bloodshed], **(b) and began to tell them the things that were to happen unto him, (a) and on the way he said unto them, 18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and (b) the (a) scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, 19 and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: (b) 34 and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon, and shall scourge him, and shall kill him; and three days he shall rise again. {(a) and the third day he shall be raised up.} (c) and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man. 32 For he shall be delivered up unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon: 33 and they shall scourge and kill him: [554] and the third day he shall rise again.** [This was the third and by far the clearest and most circumstantial prophecy concerning his death. For the other two see on *Mt 16:21 Mk 8:31* and *Mt 17:22,23 Lk 9:44*. The details are minute even to the complicated arrangement by which the Jewish authorities pronounced sentence (*Mt 26:66*) and forced Pilate to confirm the sentence (*Lk 23:24*). Since the evangelists honestly record an actual prediction, we may well pause to note how remarkable it is in that it gives seven details as follows: 1. Delivery or betrayal by Judas. 2. Condemnation. 3. Delivery to the Gentiles. 4. Mocking and the manner of it. 5. Scourging. 6. Death by crucifixion. 7. Resurrection on the third day. The announcement of these sufferings was made for the purpose of checking any materialistic hopes that the apostles might entertain as to the glories, honors, and offices of the messianic reign. That such hopes were present is shown by the ambitious request that immediately follows. Moreover, to prepare them that they might not be crushed either by the announcement or the accomplishment of his death he gives them the clear promise of his resurrection.]

B. Failure to Understand (Lk 18:34).

(c) 34 And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hidden from them, and they did not perceive the things that were said. [So fixed and ineradicable was their false

conception of the messianic reign that they could not believe that what Jesus said could be literally true (*Mt 16:22*). Only later did the full significance of his saying dawn upon them--*Jn 12:16-14:26*.]

C. A Selfish Request (*Mt 20:20-24; Mk 10:35-41*).

(b) 35 And there (a) 20 Then came {(b) come} near unto him (a) the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, (b) James and John, (a) worshipping *him*, [giving him homage as a coming ruler, not worshipping him as a divine being], and asking a certain thing of him. (b) saying unto him, Teacher, we would that you should do for us whatever we shall ask of you. [Zebedee's wife was Salome. See on *Mk 15:40*. They were ashamed of the selfish ambition of their request, and betrayed that fact by desiring Christ to grant it without hearing it. For a similar petition, see *1Ki 2:19,20*. They asked [555] through their mother (*Mt 20:20*), thinking that Jesus would be more likely to favor her than themselves.] **(a) 21 And he said unto her, {(b) them,} (a) What do you want? (b) What would you that I should do for you?** [Though Jesus knew what they wished, he required them to state it plainly and specifically, that their self-seeking might be clearly exposed and properly rebuked.] **(a) She said unto him, Command that these my two sons may sit, one on your right hand, and on your left hand, in your kingdom. (b) 37 And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on your right hand, and one on your left hand, in your glory.** [In the previous section Jesus had spoken about the thrones to be occupied by the apostles (see on *Mt 19:28*). The sons of Zebedee, presuming on their high standing among the apostles, and their near relationship to Jesus, were emboldened to ask for special seats of honor among the promised thrones--the seats to the right and left of the sovereign being next to his in dignity and consideration; thus Josephus represents Saul as seated with Jonathan on his right hand and Abner on his left. The terms "kingdom" and "glory" are here used synonymously. Despite the fact that Jesus was now telling them plainly of his death, these apostles could not rid their minds of the delusion that he was about to ascend the earthly throne of David.] **(a) 22 But Jesus answered and said, (b) unto them, You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink? {(a) that I am about to drink?} (b) or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?** [The word "cup" among the Hebrews meant a *portion assigned* (*Ps 16:5 23:5*), whether of pleasure or of sorrow. But the idea of sorrow usually predominated (*Mt 26:39,42 Re 14:10 16:19 18:6 Ps 75:8 Isa 51:17 Jer 25:15*). To be baptized with suffering means to be overwhelmed with it, a metaphorical use of the word arising from the fact that it means an immersion. This metaphorical use of baptism aids us to understand the meaning of that word, for neither sprinkling nor pouring could have suggested the overpowering force that the metaphor implies. Alford distinguishes [556] between "cup" and "baptism," making the former refer to inward spiritual suffering, and the latter to outer persecution and trial.] **39 And they said {(a) say} unto him, We are able. (b) And Jesus said {(a) said} unto them, My {(b) The} cup that I drink (a) indeed you shall drink: (b) and with the baptism that I am baptized so shall you be baptized** [They probably thought that Jesus referred to some battle or conflict that would attend the ushering in of the kingdom, and as they were not wanting in physical courage, they were ready enough to pledge themselves to endure it. They spoke with unwarranted self-confidence, but Jesus rebuked them very gently, as he foreknew what suffering they would indeed endure. James was the first apostolic martyr (*Ac 12:2*), and John's spirit was sorely troubled with the conflict of error, as his epistles show, and his last days were darkened by the shadow of persecution--*Re 1:9*]: **40 but to sit on my right hand or {(a) and} on my left hand, is not mine to give; (b) but *it is for them for whom it has been prepared. (a) of my Father.*** [Future rewards are indeed meted out by the hand of Christ (*2Ti 4:8 Re 2:10,17,26,28 3:12,21*, etc.), but they are not distributed according to caprice or favoritism, but according to the will of the Father and the rules that he has established. Jesus proceeds to set forth the principles by which places of honor are obtained in his kingdom.] **24 And when the ten heard it, they were {(b) began to be} (a) moved with indignation concerning the two brethren. (b) James and John** [The ten, sharing the same ambition as the two, jealously resented their efforts to take unfair advantage of [557] the Lord's known affection for them.

D. Jesus' Teaching Regarding Greatness (*Mt 20:25-28; Mk 10:42-45*).

42 And {(a) but} Jesus called them unto him, and said {(b) said} unto them, You know that they who are accounted to rule over {(a) the rulers of} the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. 26 Not so shall it be {(b) 43 But it is not so} among you: but whoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; 44 and whoever would be first among you, (a) shall be your servant: (b) shall be servant of all. [To restore peace among them, and to correct their false views, he draws the distinction between the worldly greatness to which they aspired, and the spiritual greatness that they ought to have sought. In an earthly kingdom honor and authority measure greatness, but in Christ's kingdom it is measured by humility and service. Jesus added power to his rebuke by showing them that their spirit was not even Jewish, but altogether heathenish.] **45 For {(a) 28 even as} (b) the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.** [He enforces this lesson by his own example in that he came to serve men and not to have them serve him. Jesus could ever refer to himself as the best example of the virtues that he taught. Since honor consists in being like the King, the highest honor consists in being most like him. The closing words state the vicarious nature of Christ's suffering as plainly as language can express it. The ransom is offered for all (*1Ti 2:6*), and will be efficacious for as many as accept it. The words are nearly a reproduction of the words of Isaiah--*Isa 53:12*.]

Section 105 OPENING BLIND EYES (Jericho)

Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:35-43

(c) 35 And it came to pass, as he drew near to Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: 36 and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. 37 And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. [Jesus came from the Jordan, and was entering Jericho by its eastern gate. As the crowd following Jesus passed by, Bartimaeus asked its meaning and learned of the presence of Jesus. Jesus on this last journey went in advance of the crowd, and hence he already had entered Jericho before the sounds of the following multitude roused [558] the beggar to question its meaning. Knowing that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem, he resolved to avail himself of the opportunity to be healed by him before he left the neighborhood. Not knowing how long Jesus would remain in Jericho, and not being sure of his ability to find him if he entered the city, he appears to have passed around the wall till he came to the southern gate, by which Jesus would depart on his way to Jerusalem. Here he stationed himself and waited patiently for the coming of Jesus. The persistency with which he cried when Jesus again appeared goes far to corroborate this determined preparation and fixed expectation of the beggar. While he waited at the southern gate the events narrated in the following section. occurred (see on *Lk 19:1*). But to avoid confusion we omit them for the present, that we may finish the story of Bartimaeus.] **(b) 46 And they came to Jericho: and as he {(a) they} (b) went out from Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, (a) a great multitude followed him.** [Being so near the Passover season, great crowds would be on their way to Jerusalem, and all the multitudes coming from Galilee and from Perea would pass through Jericho on their way to the capital. Jesus, as we have just seen, had entered the city with a multitude (*Lk 18:35,36*), and as he spent some little time there, he would leave with even a larger crowd, for it would be augmented by those who had arrived at Jericho during his stay there and citizens of Jericho itself. Few would leave Jericho alone while they might have the pleasure and excitement of going with the crowd.] **(b) The son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus** [*Bar* is the Aramaic form for "son." It is likely that both Timaeus and Bartimaeus were well known in apostolic days, but all memory of them is now lost except that contained in this passage], **a blind beggar** [blindness and beggary form an awful combination, and when coupled with the general poverty then prevailing in Palestine, they suggest a fullness of suffering], **was sitting by the way side. (a) 30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside** [Here Matthew tells of two, while Mark and Luke tell only of one (*Mk 10:46 Lk 18:35*)--the principal one. They vary here as in the account of the two demoniacs, and for similar reasons. See on *Mt 8:28*], **when [559] they {(b) he} (a) heard (b) that it was Jesus**

the Nazarene, (a) that Jesus was passing by {(b) he} began to cry {(a) cried} out, (b) and say, {(a) saying,} Lord, (b) Jesus, you son of David, (a) have mercy on us, {(c) me.} [The title "son of David" was the popular Jewish designation for the Messiah, and Bartimaeus thus confessed his faith in the messiahship of Jesus. Blind as he was, he saw more than those who spoke of the Lord as Jesus of Nazareth, thus making Jesus differ from other men merely in the matter of his residence.] **39 And they that went before** [they that came out of the city just ahead of Jesus] {(b) many (a) the multitude} rebuked them, {(c) him} (a) that they {(b) he} (a) should hold their {(b) his} peace: (a) but they {(c) he} cried out the more a great deal, (a) saying, Lord, have mercy on us, {(b) me.} (a) you son of David. [Various motives influenced the multitude to silence the beggar's cries. Some regarded his clamor as indecorous, distracting the thoughts and interrupting conversation. Others did not like to hear Jesus thus confessed as Messiah. Others still, believing that Jesus was about to be crowned king, thought that it was high time that he should cease paying so much attention to beggars and begin to assume the dignities of royalty. But Bartimaeus was filled with the spirit of Jacob. The more resistance he met, the more strenuously he wrestled to obtain the blessing--*Gn 32:24-26.*] (a) **32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, (c) and commanded him to be brought unto him: (b) and said, Call him. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good cheer: rise, he calls you.** [The multitude had rebuked the cry, but Jesus stood still to hear and answer it. He is no respecter of persons (*Ac 10:34,35*). Rich rulers and blind beggars received his attention and care without respect of station. He died for every man.] **50 And he, casting away his garment, sprang up, and came to Jesus.** [He cast off his outer garment or *pallium*, which was like a large shawl thrown over the shoulders, and is elsewhere called a cloak (see on *Mt 5:40*). It probably represented more than half the beggar's wealth, but he valued his eyesight more than it, and cast it aside because it hindered him in reaching Jesus [560] through the crowd. Many today would come to Jesus, but their steps are impeded by some trifling obstacle (*Isa 64:6*). In the race to win the presence of Christ on high, Christians are advised to lay aside every weight--*Heb 12:1,2.*] (c) **and when he had come near, (b) Jesus answered him, (c) asked him, (b) and said, (a) What will you {(c) will you} (a) that I should do unto you? {(b) you?}** (a) **33 They say {(b) And the blind man said} (a) unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. (c) Lord, (b) Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.** [Bartimaeus had cried for mercy without specifying what mercy, and he had asked this mercy of Christ as the Messiah. The Lord therefore in his royal majesty asked Bartimaeus to name the mercy, thus suggesting to him the fullness of the treasury of power and grace, to which he came. He was not to blame for this.] (a) **34 And Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched their eyes; (b) 52 And Jesus said unto him, Go your way; (c) Receive your sight: your faith has made you whole.** [We can see in this instance what faith really is. It caused Bartimaeus to cry out, to come to Jesus and to ask for sight. Thus we see that faith saves by leading to proper actions.] **43 And immediately (a) immediately they {(c) he} (a) received their {(b) his} sight, (a) and followed him. (b) in the way. (c) glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.** [Being a beggar, it would have been natural for him to hunt first for means of livelihood, but faith and gratitude prompted him to follow Jesus.] [561]

Section 106

ZACCHAEUS AND PARABLE OF THE POUNDS (Jericho) Lk 19:1-28

A. The Sinner (Lk 19:1-4).

(c) **1 And he entered and was passing through Jericho.** [This was about one week before the crucifixion. Jericho is about seven miles from the Jordan and about seventeen and a half from Jerusalem.] **2 And behold, a man called by name Zacchaeus; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich.** [On publicans, see on *Lk 3:12*. It is probable that Zacchaeus was a sub-contractor under some Roman knight who had bought the privilege of collecting taxes at Jericho, or perhaps the privilege of all Judea. As the Jordan separated between the provinces of Judea

and Perea, and as Jericho was the border city between these two provinces, the custom duties of the place were apt to be considerable. The famous balm of Gilead was cultivated in Perea, and probably added considerably to the trade that passed through Jericho. Herod the Great had raised Jericho to opulence, and to be rich in such a city was no small matter. Zacchaeus had not consented to become a social outcast without reaping his reward.] **3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.** [Jericho had been filled with reports about Jesus, and great excitement existed among the people. Zacchaeus shared this excitement.] **4 And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore-fig tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.** [This tree differs from the sycamore, and grows only in those parts of Palestine where the climate is warmest. It is the wild fig, and because of its low trunk and spreading branches it is very easy to climb. The sycamore that grows along our streams is the "buttonwood," and is in no way related to the fig family.]

B. The Savior (Lk 19:5-7).

(c) **5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at your house.** [This is the only instance where Jesus invited himself to be any man's guest. He knew the feeling of Zacchaeus toward him as well as he knew his name, and hence had no doubt as to his welcome. Jesus says, "I must." Love constrained him to pause in Jericho that he might save the house of Zacchaeus.] **6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.** [Glad that he had obtained not only the wished-for sight of Jesus, but a favor that he had not dared to hope for. To be thus honored of the Messiah was balm indeed to the outcast's heart.] **7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner.** [See on *Mk 2:16* and *Lk 15:1*. The "all" in this case did not include Jesus' disciples. Jesus was a constant disappointment to those who were seeking to make him an earthly king and who therefore desired him to manifest a kingly pride.]

C. The Saved (Lk 19:8-10).

(c) **8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted anything of any man, I restore fourfold.** [Zacchaeus stood to give emphasis and publicity to his words. He does not mean that he is in the habit of giving half his goods to the poor, but that he does so now, immediately, on the spot, without delay. He does not merely promise to do so hereafter, or to make such a provision in his will. The laws of restoration in cases of theft or fraud will be found at *Ex 22:1-4 Nm 5:7*. The proposition of Zacchaeus to restore fourfold suggests that the bulk of his wealth had not been gained in dishonest ways, for if so he would not have been able to make such a restitution.] **9 And Jesus said unto him, Today has salvation come to this house, inasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.** **10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save what was lost.** [The visit of Jesus had converted Zacchaeus and brought salvation to his house. Though as yet Jesus was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (*Mt 15:24*), and was not proclaiming [563] salvation to the Gentiles, yet he could consistently receive Zacchaeus, for, though an outcast publican, he had not so forfeited his sonship in Abraham as to bar him from this right. He was one of the "lost sheep," the very class to which Jesus was sent--see on *Mt 10:6*.]

D. Parable of the Pounds (Lk 19:11-28).

(c) **11 And as they heard these things, he added and spoke a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear.** [The opening words show that the parable that follows was spoken in the house of Zacchaeus. So far as the record shows, this was the first time in his ministry that Jesus ever approached Jerusalem with a crowd. By thus approaching Jerusalem with a multitude it seemed to the people that Jesus was consenting to be crowned. And they were filled with those dreams and expectations that a few days later resulted in the triumphal entry. All things pointed to a crisis, and the people were eagerly looking for honors and rewards under the new ruler. Jesus corrected these false views by a parable that showed that there must be patient waiting and faithful work before there could be any season of reward.] **12 A certain nobleman went into a far country,**

to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. [Those present were looking for the crowning of Jesus at Jerusalem, but he was to ascend into that far country called heaven and was there to receive the kingdom of the earth (*Ac 2:32,33 Mt 28:18*), and his return in earthly majesty is yet to take place--*1Co 11:26*. For comparison with the parable of the talents in Matthew, see on *Mt 25:14*.] **13 And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten minas, and said unto them, Trade with this till I come.** [To each of the servants he gave a mina, which was equal to about seventeen dollars of our money. It was a paltry sum for a nobleman and suggests a state of poverty and humiliation such as would give small incentive to any to remain faithful to his service.] **14 But his citizens hated him, and sent envoys after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us.** [In addition to the servants, this nobleman had citizens, or subjects who owed him respect and reverence pending the confirmation of his kingdom, and [564] homage and obedience after that confirmation. But their hatred of him led them to oppose his confirmation, saying, "We will not," etc. These citizens represented the Jews. The Jews came near to repeating these very words of rejection when they said to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar . . . Write not, The King of the Jews"--*Jn 19:15,21*.] (c) **15 And it came to pass, when he had come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading.** **16 And the first came before him, saying, Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.** [Thus Jesus shall call us to account for our stewardship (*2Co 5:10*), and some, despite the long absence of their Lord, and the rebellion of the citizens, will be found to have been faithful. As to this servant's answer, he modestly attributes this to his lord's money, and not to his own work.] **17 And he said unto him, Well done, you good servant: because you were found faithful in a very little, have you authority over ten cities.** [Thus by small faithfulness we are proved worthy of great trust (*2Co 4:17*). We should note that while the bounty is royal, yet it is proportionate. It suggests the difference in estate between the nobleman who departed and the king who returned.] **18 And the second came, saying, Your mina, Lord, has gained five minas.** **19 And he said unto him also, You shall be also over five cities.** [The faithful servants are promoted to be rulers (*2Ti 2:1,2*). The nobleman, having been of low estate himself, could sympathize with his servants and delight in promoting them--*Php 2:7*.] (c) **20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is your mina, which I have kept laid up in a napkin** [Having no banks in which to store money, such as we have, the men of Palestine usually concealed it. At the present time the people of that land are accustomed to bury their money in the ground within their houses]: **21 for I feared you, because you are an austere man: you take up what [565] you laid not down, and reap what you did not sow.** [He impudently criticizes his lord, saying that he was one hard to please and one who expected others to do all the work and let him reap all the gain. The injustice of his criticism had just been exposed beforehand by the king's treatment of the two preceding servants. This servant represents those who make the labors and difficulties of the Christian life an excuse for doing nothing.] **22 He said unto him, Out of your own mouth will I judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I am an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I did not sow; 23 then why did you not put my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest?** [The king patiently grants for argument's sake all that is urged, but shows that even so, the conduct of this servant could not be justified. Thus no argument can justify the sinner who contends against God. The word here translated "bank" means the table of the money-changer and is so translated at *Mt 21:12 Mk 11:15, and Jn 2:15*. It would appear from this passage that the money-changers were willing to borrow and pay some rate of interest. The bank, therefore, was not a thing incorporated and watched by the government, but merely an individual with whom money might be secure or not, according to his personal honesty.] **24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the mina, and give it unto him that has ten minas.** **25 And they said unto him, Lord, he has ten minas.** **26 I say unto you, that unto everyone that has shall be given; but from him that has not, even what he has shall be taken away from him.** [See on *Mk 4:25*. The meaning here is that every one who makes use of what he has shall increase his powers, a rule that applies to all the affairs of life.] **27 But these my enemies, that did not want me to reign over them [566] bring here, and slay them before me.** [See *Lk 19:14*. A reference in the first instance to the Jews who were citizens of Christ's kingdom and who were justly destroyed for rejecting him when he ascended his throne. A reference in the second

instance to all the inhabitants of the globe who are all in his kingdom and who shall be destroyed at his coming if they have rejected him. It is a fearful thing to contemplate the destruction of sinners, but it is more fearful to think of sin, rebellion and uncleanness being tolerated forever.] **28 And when he had thus spoken, he went on before, going up to Jerusalem.** [The crowd had paused, waiting for Jesus, and he now leads on toward Jerusalem.] [567]

Section 107

FEASTING IN BETHANY

Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9; Jn 11:55-57; 12:1-11

A. Jesus a Guest at a Feast (Mt 26:6; Jn 11:55-12:1-2).

(d) 55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand: and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves. [These Jews went up before the Passover that they might have time to purify themselves from ceremonial uncleanness before the feast. They were expected to purify before any important event (*Ex 19:10,11*), and did so before the Passover (*2Ch 30:13-20*), for those who were ceremonially unclean were excluded from it--*Jn 18:28.*] **56 They sought therefore for Jesus, and spoke one with another, as they stood in the temple, What do you think? That he will not come to the feast? 57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him.** [The decree of the Sanhedrin ordering the arrest of Jesus led the people to question as to whether he would dare to approach the city. But this mention of it and the stir and question that it created have a dark significance. It shows that the Jews generally were forewarned of the evil purpose of the Sanhedrin, and the dangers that surrounded Jesus. They were not taken unawares when their rulers told them to raise the cry "Crucify him!" And they raised it after they had due notice and time [568] for deliberation.] **1 Jesus therefore six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus raised from the dead.** [The word "therefore" refers to the decree and consequent dangers just mentioned. Because his "hour" had come, Jesus went to face these dangers (compare *Jn 2:4*). We are told that he came to the house of Lazarus and that he kept near Lazarus because these facts emphasized the great miracle that roused the hatred of the Jews, and caused them more earnestly to seek the death of Christ (*Jn 11:53*). Jesus appears to have arrived in Bethany Friday afternoon, March 31, A.D. 30. It is likely that he spent the Sabbath day at that place, and that the supper mentioned below was given him after sunset on Saturday, which, according to Jewish reckoning, would be the beginning of Sunday. This supper is mentioned later by Matthew and Mark, but without any note of time to show that it belongs specifically where they put it (*Mt 26:6-13 Mk 14:3-9*). But John does give us a note of time. *Jn 12:12* shows that it was the night before the triumphal entry, and therefore we follow the chronology of John.] **2 So (a) 6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, (d) they made him a supper there: (a) in the house of Simon the leper, (d) and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat with him.** [Who Simon the leper was is not known. It is not unlikely that he was one whom Jesus had healed, and that he united with the household of Lazarus in a joint effort to show gratitude unto the Lord for his goodness to this group of his friends.]

B. Jesus an Object of Adoration (Mt 26:6-9; Mk 14:3-5; Jn 12:3-6).

(b) 3 And while he was [there] as he sat at meat, there came (a) unto him a woman {(d) 3 Mary} (a) having an alabaster cruse of exceeding precious ointment, (b) of pure nard very costly; (d) 3 Mary therefore took a pound [a *litra*, a Greek weight containing nearly twelve ounces avoirdupois] of ointment of pure nard, very precious [Nard was a liquid perfume distilled from some odorous plant or plants and mingled with oil. It was sealed in flasks or alabaster boxes and imported from the far East], (b) and she brake the cruse, and poured it over {(a) upon} (b) his head. (a) as he sat at meat. (d) and anointed [569] the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair [The cruse seems to have been a long-necked flask sealed with wax so tightly as to necessitate it being broken to extract the nard. These flasks were tasteful and costly objects such as women delight to possess. Many of them were so delicate that Pliny

compares them to closed rosebuds, and the same writer, speaking of nard, reckons it as an instance of excessive luxury to anoint the feet or ankles with it]: **and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.** [Thus the liberality of Mary contributed to the pleasure of all the guests. The odor of a good deed is generally diffusive.] **(d) 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, that would betray him [see on Mt 10:4], said, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred denarii, and given to the poor? 6 Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein. (a) 8 But when the disciples saw it, they {(b) there were some that} had indignation among themselves, (a) saying, To what purpose is this waste? (b) To what purpose has this waste of the ointment been made? 5 For this ointment might have been sold (a) for much, (b) for above three hundred denarii, and given to the poor. And they murmured against her.** [It seems very likely that this murmuring was started by Judas Iscariot, for the murmurers fall in with his notions that the price of the ointment should be deposited in the poor fund. It is a singular thing that Jesus permitted a thief to occupy the office of treasurer. It is probable that Judas was honest when he was called to serve, but that same management and spirit of economy that made him fit for the place ruined him when he got it. Thus our strong points are often our weakest. The price of the pound of nard would be about fifty-one dollars of our money, but the purchasing power of money was then nearly ten times as great as it is now. The price here named agrees almost exactly with the figures at which Pliny rates the most costly nard.]

C. Jesus a Gracious Guest (Mt 26:10-13; Mk 10:6-9; Jn 12:7-8).

(a) 10 But Jesus perceiving it, (d) therefore said, (a) unto them, (b) Let her [570] alone; (a) Why trouble you the woman? for she has performed a good work upon me. (d) It was meant that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. (a) 12 For in that she poured this ointment upon my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. (b) 8 She has done what she could; has anointed my body beforehand for the burying. [The words of Jesus about the ointment (*Mt 26:10-12 Mk 14:6-8 Jn 12:7,8*) taken as a whole may be construed thus: "The sorrows of my coming passion oppress me (*Mt 26:38*), and Mary, conscious of that sorrow, wishes to cheer me with the evidence of love and gratitude. She sympathizes with me as I approach the shadow of death, and anoints me beforehand for the burial. You do not begrudge what is given to the dead. You do not censure as extravagant what is spent for the embalming of a dear one. You yourselves would be ready enough to anoint me in this same manner after I am dead. So do not censure her because in the fullness of her sympathy she has anticipated the coming catastrophe and has anointed me beforehand."] **(d) 8 For the poor you always have with you [*Dt 15:11*]; (b) and whenever you desire you can do them good: but me you do not always have.** [There would be plenty of opportunities in which to do good to the poor, but the time for conferring a personal benefit upon Christ in the flesh was now limited to seven days. Thereafter gifts could only be given to Christ by bestowing them upon the poor.] **9 And verily I say unto you, Wherever the {(a) this} gospel shall be preached in {(b) throughout} the whole world, what this woman has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.** [Jesus here makes [571] prominent the different estimates that God and man place upon the same acts. What the disciples had censured as a waste and what they had regarded as worthy of rebuke was in his sight an action fit to be kept in everlasting remembrance as a model for the conduct of future generations throughout the whole earth, and he accordingly decreed that it be so kept in mind.]

D. Jesus a Popular Prophet (Jn 12:9-11).

(d) 9 The common people therefore of the Jews learned that he was there [in Simon's house]: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead, 10 But the chief priests took counsel that they might put Lazarus also to death; 11 because by reason of him many of the Jews went away [withdrew from the party headed by the Jewish rulers], and believed on Jesus. [The presence of the resurrected man and the Christ who had resurrected him both at one table greatly excited the curiosity of the multitudes who had come up to Jerusalem to attend the Passover. When word of

this supper spread among the people it was natural that they should slip out to Bethany to see the sight, and it was equally natural that seeing it they should believe in Jesus. This defection of the common people gave a keener venom to the hatred of the rulers.]

PART SIX
PERIOD OF PASSION
April 2-8, A.D. 30

Section 108
TRIUMPHAL ENTRY
(Sunday, April 2, A.D. 30)

Mt 21:1-12, 14-17; Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:29-44; Jn 12:12-19

A. Preparation (Mt 21:1-7; Mk 11:1-7; Lk 19:29-35; Jn 12:12a).

(c) 29 And (d) 12 The next day [after the feast in the house of Simon the leper] **(c) it came to pass, when he drew near unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, (a) 1 And when they came near unto [572] Jerusalem, and came unto Bethphage unto {(b) at} (a) the mount of Olives** [The name, Bethphage, is said to mean "house of figs," but the derivation is disputed. Some think that the region on the eastern slope of Olivet was called Bethphage, and that Bethany was located in it. If it was a village, all trace of it has long since vanished, and it is not worthwhile to give the guesses and surmises of commentators as to its location. But it was evidently near Bethany], **then Jesus sent {(b) sends} two of his {(c) the} disciples, (b) 2 and said {(a) 2 saying} unto them, (c) Go your way into the village** [probably Bethphage, for Jesus started from Bethany] **(a) that is over against you, (b) and immediately as you enter into it, (a) you shall find an donkey tied, and a colt (b) tied, (a) with her: (b) whereon no man ever sat; loose him, {(a) them,} (b) and bring him. {(a) them} unto me.** [Numerous Scripture references show that the donkey was held in high estimation in the East. The sons of the judges used them, and David's mule was used at the coronation of Solomon (*Jud 10:4 1Ki 1:33*). It is specifically stated that no man had ever sat upon this colt, for if the colt had been used by men it would have been unfit for sacred purposes--*Nm 19:2 Dt 21:3 1Sa 6:7*.] **3 And if any one say anything unto you, 31 (c) And if any one ask you, {(b) say unto you,} Why do you this? (c) Why do you loose him? thus shall you say, The Lord has need of him. {(a) them;} (b) and immediately he will send him. {(a) them.} (b) back here.** [The owner of the donkey was no doubt a disciple or well-wisher of Jesus, and therefore readily consented to respond to the Master's need. Such a well-wisher might readily be found in a multitude ready to lay their garments in the road to honor Christ. The words "send him back" are usually construed to be a promise on the part of Christ that he would return the colt when through with him. But such a promise seems rather out of keeping with the dignity of the occasion. We prefer to construe the words as referring to the movements of Christ's two messengers from the neighborhood of Bethany to Bethphage and back again, or to a backward [573] movement along the caravan's line of march.] **6 And the disciples {(c) they} that were sent away, (a) and did even as Jesus appointed them, (c) and found even as he had said unto them (b) a colt tied at the door without in the open street** [the streets being narrow, one would very seldom see an donkey tied in one]; **and they loose him. (c) 33 And as they were loosing the colt, (b) certain of them that stood there (c) the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose you the colt? (b) What are you doing, loosing the colt? 6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go. (a) 7 And they bring {(a) brought} the donkey, and the colt, {(c) him} (b) unto Jesus, (a) and put on them their garments** [The garments were the loose cloaks worn over the tunics or shirts. The unbroken colt would of course have no saddle, and these loyal disciples lent their cloaks to supply the deficiency, and to do Jesus royal honor. Compare the enthronement of Jehu (*2Ki 9:13*). They prepared both beasts, not knowing that he would choose to ride]; **(c) and they threw {(b) cast} (c) their garments upon the colt, and set Jesus thereon. (a) and he sat thereon. {(b) upon him.} (a) 4 Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through the prophet, saying, 5 Tell you the daughter of Zion**

[the poetical name for the city of Jerusalem], **Behold, your King comes unto you, Meek, and riding upon an donkey, And upon a colt the foal of an donkey.** [The prophecy is a combination of *Isa 62:11* and *Zech 9:9*. This is the only instance in which Jesus rode. He entered in meekness, for the donkey was a symbol of peace as the horse was of war (*Job 39:19-25*), but there was nothing degrading about riding such a beast. The Eastern donkey is smaller, but livelier, and better framed than the specimens found in our country. They constituted a chief asset in the property of the wealthy--*Gn 12:16 30:43 Job 42:12 1Ch 27:30 1Ki 1:38*.]

B. Procession (Mt 21:8-16; Mk 11:8-10; Lk 19:36-40; Jn 12:12b-19).

(d) a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to [574] Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went forth to meet him [Palm-trees were never abundant in Palestine, but there were many around Jericho, through which city these Galilean pilgrims had so recently come. They were date palms, the leaves of which were often ten feet in length. They are now comparatively rare. The palm branch is emblematic of triumph and victory--*Lv 23:40 Re 7:9 1 Macc. 13:51 2 Macc. 10:7*], **and cried out, Hosanna: Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel** [The shouting appears to have been started by those who came out of Jerusalem; it is evident, therefore, that the apostles who were approaching the city with Jesus had nothing to do with inciting this praise.] **14 And Jesus having found a young donkey, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, your King comes, sitting on an donkey's colt. 16 These things his disciples did not understand at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.** [The apostles were not conscious that the prophecies were being fulfilled nor did they understand that Jesus was approaching a heavenly rather than an earthly coronation. But after Jesus was glorified, their understandings were spiritually illuminated (*Jn 16:13*). They not only remembered the prophecy, but saw in what sense it was that Jesus was king, and how badly mistaken they had been when they expected him to antagonize the Romans. The greatness of her king would have removed all cause for fear if Jerusalem had but accepted him.] **17 The multitude therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, bore witness.** [The two parts of the miracle--the calling and the raising (*Jn 11:43,44*)--are both mentioned as alike impressive, sublime, and wonderful.] **18 For this cause also the multitude went and met him, for that they heard that he had done this sign.** [It is evident from this that the testimony of those who [575] witnessed the raising of Lazarus had enthused the pilgrims in Jerusalem and had sent a large band of them forth charged with that ardent admiration that produced the shouting of the triumphal entry.] **19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Behold how you prevail nothing: lo, the world is gone after him.** [Again, as at *Jn 11:47-49*, we notice the self-confessed impotency of the Pharisees, but the Sadducees, under the determined and more resolute leadership of Caiaphas, did not participate in this despair. The Pharisees speak of the world as if its acquisition by Jesus was their loss.] **(c) 36 And as he went, (a) the most part of the multitude {(b) many}** [Matthew would have us know that the demonstration was no small affair, but was well-near universal. Josephus estimates that the number present at one Passover was three million, or about one-half the population of Judea and Galilee. The language of the Pharisees in *Jn 12:19*--"the world"--shows that there must have been indeed an immense multitude. The people had always been ready to acknowledge Jesus as king, and, seeing that he had now an evident disposition to accept their homage, they hastened to render it] **spread their garments {(a) in} (b) the way; and others (a) spread (b) branches, (a) in the way. (b) that they {(a) cut} (b) had cut from the fields. {(a) trees,}** [It has been the custom of all lands to bestrew in some manner the pathway of those who are thought worthy of the highest honor. When Lafayette visited our fathers after the Revolution, the roads over which he approached our cities were strewn with flowers. Thus over flowers Alexander entered Babylon, and Xerxes crossed the bridge of the Hellespont over a myrtle-strewn pathway. Monier tells of a Persian ruler who in modern times made his honored progress over a road for three miles covered with roses. But it is more natural to contrast the entry of Jesus with the Roman triumphs so popular in that day. The wealth of conquered kingdoms was expended to insure their magnificence. We find none of that tinsel and specious glitter in the triumph of Christ. No hired multitudes applaud him; no gold-broidered banners [576] wave in his

honor. There is nothing here but the lusty, honest shout of the common people, and the swaying of the God-made banners of the royal palms. The rich in purse, the learned in schoolcraft and the high in office were, as usual, not there--*1Co 1:26*.] **(c) 37 And as he was now drawing near, even at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen** [John has shown us just above (*Jn 12:17,18*) that the raising of Lazarus was most prominent in their thoughts]; **(a) 9 The multitudes that went before him, and that followed** [Jesus approached the city leading a multitude of pilgrims, and we have seen from John's account (*Jn 12:12,13*) that another multitude came out of the city to meet him: Jesus approached the city between two great multitudes.] **cried, saying, (b) Hosanna** [This is the Greek form or spelling of two Hebrew words, *Hoshiah-na*, which means, "Save now," or, "Save, I pray," *na* being a particle of entreaty added to imperatives. The two words are taken from *Ps 118:25*, which was recognized as the messianic Psalm. The shout "Hosanna" was customarily used at the feast of the tabernacles and the other festivals. It was a shout of exaltation about equivalent to "Salvation"]; **(a) Hosanna to the Son of David** [see on *Mt 9:27*]; **blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord** [*Ps 118:26*]; **(c) blessed is the King that comes in the name of the Lord: (b) 10 blessed is the kingdom that comes, the kingdom of our father David: (c) peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. (a) Hosanna in the highest.** [This phrase is taken to mean in the highest degree or highest strains or in the highest heavens. It is likely they were calling upon heaven to participate in glorifying and to ratify their shouts of salvation. The Evangelists give us the various cries of the multitude, for they did not all cry one thing (*Mk 11:9,10 Mt 21:9 Lk 19:38 Jn 12:13*). The cries, if seriously construed, were a fore-recognition of the messiahship of Jesus, but popular cries are soon caught up and are as fickle as the impulses that beget them. But the public recognition of the messiahship of Jesus gave [577] weight to the accusation made by Simon Peter on the day of Pentecost that they had slain the Messiah--*Ac 2:36*. Compare *Ac 3:14,15*.] **(c) 39 And some of the Pharisees from the multitude** [not a committee sent from Jerusalem for that purpose] **said unto him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples.** [It is possible that these may have been moved with an honest fear that the enthusiasm of the people would call down the vengeance of the Romans (*Jn 11:48*), but it is more likely that they were prompted solely by envy.] **40 And he answered and said, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.** [The expression is probably proverbial (*Hab 2:11*). The meaning is that the occasion of the great King's visit to his city (*Mt 5:35*) was so momentous that, if man withheld his praise, inanimate nature would lend its acclamations.]

C. Prediction over Jerusalem (Lk 19:41-44).

(c) 41 And when he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, If you had known in this day, even you, the things that belong unto peace! but now they are hidden from your eyes. [The summit of Olivet is two hundred feet higher than the nearest part of the city of Jerusalem and a hundred feet higher than its farthest part, so that the Lord looked upon the whole of it as one looks upon an open book. As he looked upon it he realized the difference between what his coming might mean to it and what it did mean to it; between the love and gratitude that his coming should have incited and the hatred and violence that it did incite; between the forgiveness, blessing and peace that he desired to bring it and the judgment, wrath and destruction that were coming upon it. The vision of it all excited strong emotion, and the verb used does not indicate silent tears, but audible sobbing and lamentation. The day then passing was among the last before the crucifixion, which would present to the Jews a strong motive for repentance. Had Jerusalem hearkened unto Jesus then, he would have saved her from that self-exaltation that proved her ruin. But bigotry and prejudice blinded her eyes.] **43 For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies shall cast up a bank about you, and compass you round, [578] and keep you in on every side.** [from where Jesus then stood he could see the houses that were to be thrown down, he could locate the embankments that would be built, and he could trace almost every foot of the line of the wall by which Titus in his anger girdled the city when his embankments were burned--Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 5.6.2; 11.4-6; 12.1,2], **44 and shall dash you to the ground, and your children within you** [the city is figuratively spoken of as a mother, and her citizens as her children--see *Lk 13:34*]; **and they shall not leave in you one stone upon another; because you knew not the time of your visitation.** [The term

"visitation" usually refers to a season of judgment, but here, as elsewhere also (*Ex 4:31*), it means a season of grace. To not leave one stone upon another is a proverbial expression descriptive of a complete demotion, but in the overthrow of Jerusalem it was well-near literally fulfilled. Thus, while the people rejoiced in the present triumph, the prophetic eye and ear of our Lord beheld the judgments that were coming upon the city, heard the bitter cry of the starved defenders during the siege, the screams of the crucified left to perish upon their crosses after its capture, all ending in the final silence of desolation when not one stone was left upon another.]

D. Entrance into Jerusalem (Mt 21:10-12, 17; Mk 11:11).

(b) 11 And he entered into Jerusalem [his route led him down the steep face of Olivet, past Gethsemane, across the stone bridge that spans the Kedron, and up the slope of Moriah to the eastern gate of the city], **(a) 10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, Who is this? 11 And the multitude said, This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee. (a) 12 And Jesus entered into the temple of God** [here Matthew tells of the cleansing of the temple, which evidently occurred the next day], **(b) and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now evening.** [a general expression covering the period both before and after sunset], **(a) he left them, and went forth out of the city (b) unto Bethany with the twelve (a) and lodged there.** [Having inspected the temple as his Father's house, Jesus withdrew from it, for in the present state of rancor that fermented within his enemies it was not safe for him to spend the night within Jerusalem.]

Section 109 GREAT DAY OF AUTHORITY (Monday, April 3, A.D. 30) Mt 21:18-19, 12-13; Mk 11:12-18; Lk 19:45-48

A. Cursing of the Fig Tree (Mt 21:19; Mk 11:12-14).

(b) 12 And (a) 18 Now (b) on the morrow [on the Monday following the triumphal entry], **(a) in the morning (b) when they were come out from Bethany, (a) as he returned to the city** [Jerusalem], **he hungered.** [Breakfast with the Jews came late in the forenoon, and these closing days of our Lord's ministry were full of activity that did not have time to tarry at Bethany for it. Our Lord's hunger implies that of the disciples also.] **19 And seeing a fig tree by the way side, (b) afar off having leaves, (a) he came to it, (b) if perhaps he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, [580] he (a) found nothing but leaves only; (b) for it was not the season of figs.** [The summer fig tree ripens its main crop in August, but its later fruitage often hangs on all winter when the weather is mild, dropping off when the new spring leaves come. As the fruit usually appears before the leaves, the leaves were a promise that fruit might be found, and the fruit, though not perfectly ripe, is considered edible when the leaves are developed. Though it was too early for fruit, it was also too early for leaves. The tree evidently had an unusually favorable position. It seemed to vaunt itself by being in advance of the other trees, and to challenge the wayfarer to come and refresh himself.] **14 And he answered and said {(a) said} unto it, Let there be no fruit from you henceforward forever. (b) No man eat fruit of you henceforth forever. And his disciples heard it. (a) And immediately the fig tree withered away.** [The disciples did not pause to watch the effect of Christ's words upon the tree (*Mt 21:19*). But from the degree to which it had shriveled when they saw it next day it became evident to them that it had begun to wither as soon as Christ had finished uttering its sentence. Our Lord performed a miracle of judgment unlike any other of his wonderful works. The reader can hardly fail to note how perfectly this fig-tree, in its separation from the other trees, its showy pretensions, its barrenness of results and its judgment typifies the Jewish people. In fact, Christ's treatment of it appears in some respects to be a visible and practical application of the principles that he had formerly set forth in a parable (*Lk 13:6-9*). But we must not too confidently make such an application of the parable since Jesus himself gave [581] no hint that he intended us so to apply it.]

B. Second Cleansing of the Temple (Mt 21:12-16; Mk 11:15-17; Lk 19:45-48).

(b) 15 And they come to Jerusalem: and he entered into the temple, and began to cast out (a) all them that sold (b) and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold the doves [three years before, Jesus had thus cleansed the temple at the first Passover of his ministry, for an account of which see on *Jn 2:13-25*]; **16 and he would not permit that any man should carry a vessel through the temple.** [The temple space being level and roomy tempted the people of Jerusalem to use it as a thoroughfare, or short-cut from one part of the city to another, but Jesus did not permit them to carry any sack, bag, jug, pail, basket, parcel or such like thing through the sacred enclosure. The Greek word *skeuos* that is here translated "vessel" embraces all kinds of household furniture. It is translated "goods" at *Mt 12:29* and *Lk 17:31*.] **17 And he taught, and said {(a) said} (c) 46 Saying unto them, It is written** [the prophecy cited is a combination of *Isa 56:7* and *Jer 7:11*], **{(b) Is it not written,} (c) And my house shall be {(b) shall be called} a house of prayer for all the nations? but you have made {(a) you make} it a den of robbers.** [The caves in certain sections of Palestine have been immemorably infested with robbers, and Jesus, because of the injustice of extortion practiced by the merchants, likens the polluted temple to such a den. The dickering and chafing and market talk were probably not unlike the grumbling and quarreling of thieves as they divide the booty.] **(a) 14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children that were crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; (a) they were very displeased, 16 and said unto him, Hear what [579] these say? And Jesus said unto them, Yes; did you never read [*Ps 8:2* as rendered by the Septuagint], Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have perfected praise?** [Matthew mingles this scene with events that apparently occurred on Monday, but the enthusiasm and the Hosanna cry evidently belonged to the triumphant Sunday. The presence of our Lord in the temple should, indeed, have been heralded with joy, for as that was the day in which the paschal lamb was presented and set apart, it was fitting that Christ our Passover should be presented there amidst rejoicing.] **(b) 18 And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, (c) 47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him: 48 and they could not find what they might do; for the people all hung upon him, listening (b) for all the people was astonished at his teaching.** [Overawed by the magnitude [582] of the popular demonstration made on Sunday, the Jewish rulers feared to attempt any violent measures in dealing with Jesus. But they neglected no opportunity by appeals to Jesus himself, by treacherous questions, etc., to divert the popular favor from the Lord that they might put him to death.]

Section 110

FINDING THE WITHERED FIG TREE

(Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)

Mt 21:20-22; Mk 11:19-26; Lk 21:37-38

A. Reaction of the Disciples (Mt 21:20; Mk 11:20; Lk 21:37-38).

(c) 37 And every day he was teaching in the temple [Jesus was there Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, but he seems to have spent Wednesday and Thursday in Bethany]; **and every night {(b) evening} he went forth out of the city. (c) and lodged in the mount that is called Olivet.** [As Bethany was on the Mount of Olives, this statement leaves us free to suppose that he spent his nights there, but it is not likely that he retired to any one house or place continuously, for had he done so the rulers could easily have ascertained his whereabouts and arrested him.] **38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.** [The enthusiasm of the triumphal entry did not die out in a day: Jesus was still the center of observation.] **(b) 20 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots.** [It was completely withered--dead root and branch. We have observed before (see on *Lk 19:41,42*), that one coming into Jerusalem from Bethany is apt to come down the steep side of Olivet, and that one returning to Bethany is apt to take the easier grade, though longer way,

around the south end of the mountain. This fig-tree was apparently on this short road, and was sentenced Monday morning. The disciples, returning by the other or longer road to Bethany or its vicinity, did not see the tree Monday evening, but they saw it Tuesday morning, when they again came back by the short [583] road. From these facts argue a method of coming and going, from which it may be fairly inferred that Jesus, on the day of his triumphal entry, approached Jerusalem by the short road.] **(a) 20 When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, How did the fig tree immediately wither away?** [Jesus had simply condemned it to fruitlessness, but his condemnation involved it in an evil that it justly deserved. The judgment of God reveals; and what is dead in fact is made dead in appearance also.]

B. Teaching of Jesus (Mt 21:21-22; Mk 11:21-26).

(b) 21 And Peter calling to remembrance said unto him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree that you cursed [devoted to death] is withered away. [Peter is surprised both at the suddenness and at the fullness of the judgment. Since the miracles of Jesus, heretofore, had been only those of mercy, Peter boldly invited the Lord to discuss this miracle, hoping for more light on its meaning.] **22 And Jesus answering said {(a) answered and said} unto them, (b) Have faith in God. 23 Verily I say unto you, (a) If you have faith, and doubt not, you shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if you {(b) whoever} shall say unto this mountain [Olivet], Be taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said comes to pass; he shall have it. (a) it shall be done. 22 And (b) 24 Therefore I say unto you, All things whatever you pray and ask for, {(a) you shall ask in prayer,} (b) believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. {(a) believing, you shall receive.}** [Jesus lays down the broad general rule in the application of which we must be guided by other Scriptures. The rule is, indeed, liberal and gracious, and the limitations are just and reasonable. We must not expect to obtain what it is unlawful for us to desire (*Jas 4:2,3*), or which it is unwise for us to seek (*2Co 12:7-9*), nor must we selfishly run counter to the will of God (*Lk 22:42 1Jo 5:14,15*), nor must we expect that God shall perform a miracle for us, for miracles have ceased--in short, we [584] must pray to God in full remembrance of the relationship between us, we must consider that he is the Ruler and we his subjects, and are not to think for one moment that by faith we can alter this eternal, unchangeable relation. The disciples whom Jesus addressed were very soon to enter upon a task that would seem to them as difficult as the removal of mountains. The license and immorality of paganism, and the bigotry and prejudice of Judaism, would seem insurmountable obstacles in their pathway to success. They needed to be assured that the power of faith was superior to all these adverse forces, and that the judgments of God could accomplish in a moment changes that apparently could not be wrought out in the tedious course of years. As we today look back upon this promise of Christ we can see that the mountains then standing have, indeed, been removed; and what seemed vigorous and flourishing has been blasted in a day.] **(b) 25 And whenever you stand [a customary attitude--*Lk 18:13*] praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.** [Forgiveness has already been enjoined (see on *Mt 6:12*). Here our Lord emphasizes the need of forgiveness because he had just performed a miracle of judgment, and he wished his disciples to understand that they must not exercise their miraculous gifts with a vengeful, unforgiving spirit. They must experience evil and not retaliate with miracles of judgment.] [585]

Section 111

DEFENSE OF JESUS' AUTHORITY

(Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)

Mt 21:23-22:14; Mk 11:27-12:12; Lk 20:1-19

A. Jesus' Authority Questioned (Mt 21:23; Mk 11:27-28; Lk 20:1-2).

(c) 1 And it came to pass, on one of the days, (b) they [Jesus and the disciples] come again to Jerusalem: (a) 23 And when he was come into the temple, (b) and as he was walking in the temple [The large outer court of the temple, known as the court of the Gentiles, was thronged

during the feasts, and was no doubt the part selected by Jesus and his apostles when they taught or preached in the temple. We thrice find them on that side of it where Solomon's porch was located--*Jn 10:23 Ac 3:11 5:23*], **(c) as he was teaching the people and preaching the gospel** [namely, "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you"--*Mk 1:15*], **there came upon him {(b) come (a) unto him} (b) the chief priests and the scribes, and {(c) with} the elders; {(a) of the people}** [the Sanhedrin (see on *Mk 8:31*). This committee of that august tribunal came in formal state and with a great show of authority, hoping to make it apparent to the people that Jesus was an unauthorized, self-appointed meddler in matters over which they had exclusive control.] **(c) 2 and they spoke, (b) 28 and they said {(c) saying} unto him Tell us: By what authority you do these things? (a) and {(c) or} who is he that gave you this authority? (b) to do these things?** [To regulate and control the affairs of the temple belonged unquestionably and exclusively to the priests and Levites. Knowing that Jesus had no authority from [586] any priest or any scribe, they boldly challenged his right to cleanse the temple or to teach in it, feeling sure that to defend himself he would be forced to publicly declare himself as the Messiah and thus to give them the matter for accusation that they had long sought--*Jn 10:24*.]

B. Jesus' Answer (Mt 21:24-25a; Mk 11:29-30; Lk 20:3-4).

(a) 24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, (c) I also will ask you a {(a) one} question, which if you tell me, (b) and answer me, (a) I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John, whence was it? (b) Was it from heaven, or from men? answer me. [The question that Jesus asked was intimately and inseparably connected with the question that they had asked. Jesus, of course, did not derive his authority from John the Baptist, but John had testified plainly to the messiahship of Jesus, and had, in no uncertain terms, designated Jesus as immeasurably greater than himself. Now, if the Pharisees admitted that John was a heaven-sent messenger or witness (of which fact his baptism was propounded as a test, since it was a religious ordinance introduced on his authority), then John had already answered the Sanhedrin that Jesus derived his authority from his messiahship, and hence, all that the Sanhedrin had to do to satisfy their minds was simply to *believe* John. But if, on the other hand, the Pharisees rejected John's pretensions and claims as a heaven-sent messenger in the face of the almost universal popular conviction, then what was there for Jesus to present his claims to so blind, bigoted, and unreasoning a body?]

C. Reaction of the Challengers (Mt 21:25b-27a; Mk 11:31-33a; Lk 20:5-7).

(b) 31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, (a) unto us, Why then did you not believe him? [When he testified to the messiahship of Jesus (*Jn 1:7,15,34 3:26-36 10:40-42*). The Sanhedrin could not admit that the messenger was heaven-sent and yet deny his testimony.] **26 But if we shall {(b) should we} say, From men-- (c) all the people will stone us: (a) we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet. (c) for they are persuaded that John was a prophet. (b) they feared the people: for all verily held John to be a prophet. 33 And they answered [587] Jesus (c) that they did not know where it was from. (a) and said, {(b) say,} We know not.** [It should be noted in their consultation there was no effort either to ascertain or to speak the truth. The question as to whether John really was or was not a prophet was in no sense the subject of their investigation. They were merely deciding what to say. They were seeking for the most expedient answer, and as neither truthful answer was expedient, they resolved to falsely deny any knowledge of the case. Men of such brazen dishonesty could not be dealt with openly and fairly as could sincere seekers after truth.] **And Jesus, (a) also said {(b) said} unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.** [Their spoken lie was, "We know not," but their inward and true answer was, "We will not tell," and Jesus answered the suppressed truth saying, "Neither tell I." How readily the subtle minds of the Jewish people would justify Jesus in thus declining to submit the question of his authority to judges who at that very moment publicly confessed their inability to even hazard an opinion, much less render a decision, as to the authority of John the Baptist, who claims were in popular estimation so obvious. It was plain that however well these men might judge human credentials, the divine testimonials of a prophet or of the Messiah were above their carnal sphere. Thus Jesus put his enemies to confusion in the first of many conflicts

of that perilous Tuesday. But we may well imagine that they were rendered more bitter by the evidence of a wisdom so much beyond any that they possessed.]

D. Parable: Authority Neglected (Mt 21:28-32).

(a) 28 But what think you? [By these words Jesus put them on notice that he was about to propound something that would require an answer, and therefore demanding the [588] strictest attention.] **A man had two sons** [the two sons stand for the Jewish rulers and the Jewish common people]; **and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in the vineyard. 29 And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went.** [The common people made no special pretension to religious excellence, and the rulers regarded them as very careless about the will or law of their Father, God, and made disparaging contrasts between their own conduct and that of the people (*Jn 7:48,49*). But this very same common people repented and did the will of God when they heard the preaching of John the Baptist--*Mt 3:5,6*.] **30 And he came to the second** [the rulers], **and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.** [The rulers, though all the while professing to be very zealous for the will of God, utterly refused to enter the kingdom or to work therein as God bade them to by the voice of John the Baptist--*Mt 3:7-9*.] **31 Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first.** [They gave the true answer and did not perceive that in so doing they confirmed a parable that condemned themselves.] **Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots** [the very worst representatives of the common people] **go into the kingdom of God before you.** [Rather than you.] **32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness** [The term "righteousness" seems used in a half-technical sense, as expecting the aspect of righteousness that the Pharisees themselves recognized (*Mt 6:1*), and that includes, as its three great elements, the almsgiving, fasting, and prayer that were so conspicuous both in the life and the teaching of the Baptist. Surely they could have had no true preacher of righteousness who could have presented its demands in a form more acceptable to the Jewish rulers], **and you believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and you, when you saw it, did not even repent yourselves afterward, that you might believe him.** [The parable of this subdivision is [589] the outgrowth of the preceding subdivision. These rulers had demanded that Jesus show his authority for his assumption of right as teacher, prophet, etc. The parable is an indirect response to this demand, as if Jesus said, "It is in vain for me to tell you that I act under the authority of the Father, for despite all your great profession to the contrary, you really and actually, in your persistent rejection of another (the Baptist), who also acted under it, repudiate utterly his authority; though in so doing you see yourselves condemned by the conduct of even the publicans and harlots, who have felt the force of the Father's authority, and have repentantly obeyed it." The situation must have given great force to the parable; for the rulers in their private conversation had just admitted to each other that the people recognized and obeyed the divine authority of John, while they, the rulers, rejected it.]

E. Parable: Authority Rejected (Mt 21:33-46; Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19).

(b) 1 And he began to speak unto them (c) the people [not the rulers] **(b) in parables. {(c) this parable:}** **(a) 33 Hear another parable: There was a man that was a householder** [this party represents God], **who planted a vineyard** [this represents the Hebrew nationality], **and set a hedge about it, and dug a (b) pit for the (a) winepress in it** [The winepress consisted of two tub-shaped cavities dug in the rock at different levels, the upper being connected with the lower by an orifice cut through from its bottom. Grapes were placed in the upper cavity, or trough, and were trodden by foot. The juice thus squeezed from them ran through the orifice to the trough below, from which it was taken and stored in leather bottles until it fermented and formed wine], **and built a tower** [a place where watchmen could be stationed to protect the vineyard from thieves as the grapes ripened for the vintage], **and let it out to husbandmen** [the rulers are here [590] represented; and the rental was, as usual, a part of the fruits], **and went into another country. (c) for a long time.** [Jesus frequently refers to this withdrawal of the visible presence of God from the world, always bringing out the point that the withdrawal tests faithfulness. God had come down upon Mt. Sinai, given the law and established the Hebrew nation, after which he had withdrawn. That had indeed been a long time ago; and for four hundred years before the

appearance of John the Baptist, God had not even sent a messenger to demand fruit. Some think the hedge refers to the manner in which Palestine was protected by sea and desert and mountain, but the hedge and the winepress and the tower are mere parabolic drapery, for every man who planted a vineyard did all three.] **(a) 34 And when {(c) at} the season (a) of the fruits drew near, (c) he sent unto the husbandmen a servant, {(a) his servants}** [that is, the prophets] **(c) that they should give him {(b) that he might receive (a) to receive from the husbandmen} of the {(a) his} (b) fruits of the vineyard.** [*Lk 3:8*--He expected the children of Israel to bring forth joy, love, peace, and all the other goodly fruit of a godly life. And he looked to those in authority to bring forth such results, and the prophets were sent to the rulers to encourage them to do this.] **3 And {(c) but} the husbandmen (b) took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty, 4 And again he sent unto them (c) yet another servant: him also they beat, (b) wounded in his head, and handled shamefully. (c) and sent him away empty. (b) 5 And he sent (c) yet (b) another; (c) a third: and him also they wounded, (b) and him they killed: (c) and cast him forth. (b) and many others; beating some, and killing some. (a) 35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them in like manner.** [For the treatment of the prophets, see such passages as *1Ki 18:13 22:24-27 2Ki 6:31 2Ch 24:19-22 36:15,16*. For a summary of the treatment of the prophets or messengers of God, [591] see *Heb 11:35-38*.] **37 But (b) 6 He had yet one, a beloved son: (a) afterward (b) he sent him last unto them, (c) 13 And the lord of the vineyard said, {(b) saying,} (c) What shall I do? [*Isa 5:4*.] I will send my beloved son; it may be they will reverence him. (b) They will reverence my son.** [The lord of the vineyard was thoroughly perplexed. The conduct of his husbandmen was outrageous beyond all expectation. He had no better servants to send them unless his only son should take upon him the form of a servant and visit them (*Php 2:5-8*). Being tender and forgiving, and unwilling to resort to extreme measures, the lord of the vineyard resolved to thus send his son, feeling sure that the son would represent the person, authority and rights of the father so much better than any other messenger (*Heb 1:1-5 2:1-3*), that it would be well-near impossible for the husbandmen to fail of reverence towards him. In striking contrast, however, with this expectation of the Father, the rulers, or the husbandmen, had just now harshly demanded of the Son that he tell by what authority he did anything in the vineyard--*Mk 11:28*.] **(a) 38 But the {(b) those} (a) husbandmen, when they saw {(c) him} (a) the son, (c) they reasoned one with another, (a) said among themselves, {(c) saying,} (a) This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and take his inheritance. (c) that the inheritance may be ours. (b) and the inheritance shall be ours.** [In thus bringing the story down to the immediate present, and stating a counsel that his enemies had just spoken privately in each other's ears (*Mk 11:18*), Jesus must have startled them greatly. He showed them, too, that those things that made them deem it necessary to kill him were the very things that proved his heirship. They regarded the Jewish nation as their property, and they were plotting to kill Jesus that they might withhold it from him (*Jn 12:19 11:47-50*). That men might hope by such high-handed lawlessness to obtain a title to a vineyard seems incredible to us who have always been familiar with the even-balanced justice of constitutional government; but in the East the looseness of governments, the selfish apathy and lack [592] of public spirit among the people, and the corrupt bribe-receiving habits of the judges makes our Lord's picture even to this day, though rather exceptional, still true to life. At this point Jesus turns from history to prophecy.] **8 And they took him, (c) 15 And they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him.** [After two intervening days the Jews would fulfill this detail by thrusting Jesus outside the walls of Jerusalem and crucifying him there.] **(a) 40 When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those husbandmen? 41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their seasons. (c) 16 [Jesus said] He will come and destroy these {(b) the} husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. (c) And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.** [Part of the multitude, hearing only the story, pronounced unhesitatingly the judgment that ought to be inflicted upon such evil-doers, and Jesus confirmed their judgment (*Lk 20:17,18*). But others, perceiving the meaning underlying the parable, shrank from accepting what would otherwise have been to them a very proper ending, and said, *Mee genoito*, which means literally, "Be it not so," and might properly be paraphrased by our emphatic "Never!"] **17 But he looked upon them**

[Thus emphasizing the fact that they had repudiated a most just decree. His look, doubtless, resembled that of a parent surprised at the outspoken rebellion of his children].

F. An Ominous Prophecy (Mt 21:42-46; Mk 12:10-12; Lk 20:17-18).

and (a) 42 Jesus said {(c) said,} (a) unto them, (c) What then is this that is written, (b) 10 Have you not read even this scripture: (a) Did you never [593] read in the scriptures, (c) The stone that the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner? (a) This was from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes? [The quotation is from *Ps 118:22,23*, which is here by Jesus applied as a prophecy to the Pharisees, who, in their treatment of him, were like unskilled builders who reject the very corner-stone of the building that they seek to erect. The Pharisees were eager enough in their desire to set up a messianic kingdom, but were so blindly foolish that they did not see that this kingdom could not be set up unless it rested upon Christ Jesus, its cornerstone. They blundered in constructing their theory of the coming kingdom, and could find no room for one such as Jesus in it.] (a) 43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. 44 And he {(c) 18 Every one} (a) that falls on this {(c) that} (a) stone shall be broken to pieces: but on whomever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust. [The stone, of course, represents Jesus, and the two fallings set forth his passive and active state. In the day when he passively submitted to be judged, those who condemned him were broken (*Mt 27:3-5 Lk 23:48 Ac 2:37*); but in the great day when he himself becomes the acting party and calls his enemies to judgment, they shall prefer, and pray, that a mountain fall upon them--*Re 6:15-17*.]

G. Aftermath of the Authority Issue (Mt 21:45-46; Mk 12:12; Lk 20:19).

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees, (c) 19 And the scribes (a) heard his parables, they (c) sought to lay hands on him in that very hour, (b) for they perceived that he (a) spoke of them. (b) spoke the {(c) this} parable against them. (a) 46 And when they sought to lay hands on him, (c) they feared the people: {(b) multitude; (a) multitudes,} because they took him for a prophet. (b) and they left him, and went away. [Despite the warning that Jesus gave them that they were killing the Son and would reap the consequences, and despite the fact that he showed that the Psalm that the people had used so recently with regard to him foretold a great rejection that would prove to be a [594] mistake (see on *Mt 21:9*), yet the rulers persisted in their evil intention to take his life. They were only restrained by fear of the people, many of whom were Galileans, men of rugged courage, ready to draw swords on Jesus' behalf. Since they could neither arrest nor answer him, they withdrew as a committee, but returned again in the person of their spies.]

H. Parable of the Royal Marriage (Mt 22:1-14).

(a) 1 And Jesus answered and spoke again in parables unto them, saying, 2 The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son, 3 and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage feast: and they would not come. 4 Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them that are invited, Behold, I have made ready my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come to the marriage feast. 5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise; 6 and the rest laid hold on his servants, and treated them shamefully, and killed them. 7 But the king was angry; and he sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8 Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they that were invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore unto the partings of the highways, and as many as you shall find, invite to the marriage feast. 10 And those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was filled with guests. [This parable is very [595] much like the one given in *Lk 14:16-24*. (a) 11 But when the king came in to behold the guests, he saw there a man [this one man is a type of many--see *Mt 22:14*] who had not on a wedding-garment: 12 and he said unto him, Friend, how did you come in here not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless. [We are of the opinion that the king furnished upper garments to his guests. But the antiquity of this custom is disputed. However, the fact is

immaterial, for the man was speechless--without excuse--which shows that he could have had a garment from some source had he chosen to wear it.] **13 Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot** [the phrase suggests the impossibility of escaping from divine judgment], **and cast him out into the outer darkness** [the outdoor darkness: wedding feasts were usually held at night]; **there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.** **14 For many are called, but few chosen.** [Many guests are invited, but few are accepted; because some neglect and despise the invitation, and others cast dishonor upon the one who invites, by the self-willed and irreverent way in which they accept his invitation. In this parable the first parties invited represent the Jews; the city of murderers is Jerusalem; the persons called from the highways are the Gentiles; the entrance of the king is the coming of the Lord to final judgment; and [596] the man without the wedding-garment is anyone who will be found in the church without a suitable character. The character of Christ is our wedding-garment, and all the regenerated must wear it--*Eph 4:24 Col 3:10 Ga 3:27 Jn 3:5 Re 19:8,9.*]

Section 112

ATTEMPTS TO ENTRAP JESUS

(Temple Court, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)
Mt 22:15-46; Mk 12:13-37; Lk 20:20-44

A. Question about Tribute (Mt 22:15-17; Mk 12:13-14; Lk 20:20-22).

(a) **15 Then the Pharisees went, and took counsel how they might ensnare him in his talk.**
(c) **20 And they watched him, and sent forth {(b) send unto him} (a) their disciples, (b) certain of the Pharisees and of {(a) with} (b) the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk.** [Perceiving that Jesus, when on his guard, was too wise for them, the Pharisees thought it best to speak their cunning through the mouths of their young disciples, whose youth and apparent desire to know the truth would, according to their calculation, take Jesus off his guard. Having no ancient statement giving us the tenets or principles of the Herodians, we are left to judge them solely by their name, which shows that they were partisans of Herod Antipas. Whether they were out-and-out supporters of the Roman government, or whether they clung to Herod as one whose intervening sovereignty saved them from the worse fate of being directly under a Roman procurator (as Judea and Samaria then were), would not, as some suppose, affect their views as to the payment of tribute. If they accepted Herod merely for policy's sake, policy would also compel them to favor the tribute, for Antipas, being appointed [597] by Rome, would have to favor the tribute, and could count none as his adherents who opposed it.] (c) **spies, who pretended to be righteous** [sincere seekers after truth], **that they might take hold of his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor.** [Pontius Pilate was the governor. We are not surprised at the destruction of Jerusalem when we see the religious teachers of the nation employing their young disciples in such a work as this. To play detective and entrap a rogue in his speech and thus become a man-hunter is debasing enough; but to seek thus to entrap a righteous man is simply diabolical.] (b) **14 And when they had come, they said unto him, {(c) saying,} Teacher, we know that you say and teach rightly, (b) we know that you are true, and do not care for anyone; for you regard not the person of men, (c) and accept not the person of any, but of a truth teach the way of God: (a) in truth** [The meaning of their preface is this: "We see that neither fear nor respect for the Pharisees or the rulers prevents you from speaking the plain, disagreeable truth; and we are persuaded that your courage and love of truth will lead you to speak the same way in political matters, and that you will not be deterred therefrom by any fear or reverence for Caesar." Fearless loyalty to truth is indeed one of the noblest attributes of man. But instead of honoring this most admirable quality in Jesus, these hardened reprobates were endeavoring to employ it as an instrument for his destruction], **17 Tell us therefore, What do you think? (c) 22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? (b) 15 Shall we give, or shall we not give?** [The Jews were required to pay annually a large sum of money to the Roman government as an acknowledgment of their subjection. About twenty years before this Judas of Galilee had stirred up the people to resist this tribute, and the mass of the Jews was bitterly opposed to it. To decide

in favor of this tribute was therefore to alienate the affection and confidence of the throng in the temple who stood listening to him--an end most desirable to the Pharisees. If, [598] on the other hand, Jesus said that the tribute should not be paid, the Herodians were present to hear it, and would be witnesses sanctioned by Herod, and therefore such as Pilate would be compelled to respect. What but divine wisdom could escape from so cunningly devised a dilemma!

B. Response to Tribute Question (Mt 22:18-22; Mk 12:15-17; Lk 20:23-26).

(a) 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, (c) craftiness, (b) knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, {(a) and said} Why do you make trial of me, you hypocrites? [Thus, before answering, Jesus exposes the meanness and hypocrisy in their question, thereby emphasizing the important fact that he did not dodge, but answered it.] **19 Show me the tribute money. (c) 24 Show me a denarius. (b) bring me a denarius, that I may see it.** [Religious dues and tributes had been paid in shekels or old Jewish coin, but the tribute to Rome was paid in Roman coin of which the denarius was a sample.] **(a) And they brought unto him a denarius.** [See on *Mk 6:37*.] **20 And he said unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? (c) Whose image and superscription has it?** [The little silver coin had the head of the emperor stamped upon it, and the superscription TICAESARDIVIAVGFAVGVSTVS, which stands for the words *Tiberias Caesar, Divi Augusti Filius Augustus*; that is, Tiberius Caesar, the August Son of the Divine Augustus.] **And they said, {(a) say} unto him, Caesar's. (b) 17 And (a) Then (b) Jesus said {(a) said} (b) unto them, (c) Then render (a) therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.** [Each nation uses its own coin. Had the Jews not been under Roman sovereignty, they would not have been using Roman money; but the coin that they brought to Jesus bore witness against them that the Roman sovereignty was established in their land, and that tribute to it was therefore justly due; for whoso uses Caesar's coin must pay Caesar's tribute. This part of the answer satisfied the Herodians; and the last part "and unto God," etc., satisfied the people, for it asserted, in a manner that carried conviction with it, that the payment of enforced tribute was not inconsistent with maintaining complete allegiance of God. [599] God was no longer, as of old, the civil ruler of his people, and hence the payment of tribute to a temporal sovereign is in no sense incompatible with his service, but is enjoined as a Christian duty--*Ro 13:1,7*.] **(c) 26 And they were not able to take hold of the saying before the people: (a) 22 And when they heard it, they marveled, (b) greatly at him. (c) at his answer, and held their peace. (a) and left him, and went away.** [They were amazed to find how far his wisdom transcended that of the teachers in whom they had such supreme confidence.]

C. Question about Resurrection (Mt 22:23-28; Mk 12:18-23; Lk 20:27-33).

(a) 23 On that day there came {(b) come} unto him (c) certain of the Sadducees, they that {(b) who} say there is no resurrection [As to the Sadducees, see on *Mt 3:7*. We may regard their attitude toward Christ as expressed by their leader Caiaphas, see on *Jn 11:49*]; **and they asked him, saying, 19 Teacher, Moses wrote unto us** [See *Dt 25:5,6*. The object of this law was to preserve families. But the custom was older than the law--*Gn 38:6-11*], **(c) that (b) If a man's brother die, (c) having a wife, and he be childless, {(b) and leave a wife behind him, and leave no child,} that his brother should take his {(c) the} wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. (a) Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25 Now there were (c) therefore (a) with us seven brethren: and the first (c) took a wife, (a) married and deceased, (b) and dying left no seed; {(c) and died childless;} (a) and, having no seed left his wife unto his brother: (b) 21 And (a) 26 In like manner the second also, (b) took her, and died, leaving no seed behind him; and the third likewise: (c) took her; (a) unto the seventh. (c) and likewise the seven also left no children, {(b) left no seed.} (c) and died. 32 Afterward [600] (b) Last of all (a) 27 And after them all, (b) the woman also died. (a) 28 In the resurrection therefore whose wife shall she be of the seven? {(b) of them?} for the seven (a) all had her. (b) to wife.** [This was evidently a favorite Sadducean argument against the resurrection. On the assumption that the marital state is continued after the resurrection, it makes the doctrine of a resurrection appear

ridiculous, because, seemingly, it involves difficulties that even brothers could hardly settle amicably, and that even God would have in a sense to settle arbitrarily.]

D. Response to Question (Mt 22:29-32; Mk 12:24-27; Lk 20:34-38).

(c) 34 And {(a) 29 But} Jesus answered and said unto them, You do not err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. (b) Is it not for this cause that you err, that you know not the scriptures, nor the power of God? [The relevancy of these statements will be discussed in the treatment of *Lk 20:38* below.] **(a) 30 For (c) the sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage: 35 but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: (b) 25 For when they shall rise from the dead, (a) in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven. (c) 36 for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection.** [This favorite argument of the Sadducees could not be successfully answered by the Pharisees because they could not refute the assumption that marriage is continued in the future world. But Jesus does refute it on his own authority.] **(a) 31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, (c) that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in *the place concerning* the Bush, when he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, (b) have you not read in the book of Moses, (a) what was spoken unto you by God, (b) how God spoke unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? [Ex 3:6.] (c) 38 Now (a) God is not (c) the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. (b) you do [601] greatly err.** [The disbelief of the Sadducees manifested itself in a triple form, for they denied the resurrection and the existence of angels and spirits (*Ac 23:8*), but the basic principle of their infidelity was the denial of spirits. It was, as it were, the tree trunk from which their other errors sprang as branches. If there were such things as spirits, it was not worthwhile to deny that there was an order of them known as angels. If man had a spirit that could survive his body, it was reasonable to believe that God, having so fashioned him that a body is essential to his activity and happiness, would in some manner restore a body to him. Jesus therefore does not pursue the argument until he has *proved a resurrection*; but rests when he has proved that man has a spirit. Jesus proves that man has a spirit by a reference from the Pentateuch, that part of Scripture that the Sadducees accepted as derived from God through Moses. The reference shows that God was spoken of and spoke of himself as the God of those who were, humanly speaking, long since dead. But the Sadducees held that a dead man had ceased to exist, that he had vanished to nothingness. According to their view, therefore, God had styled himself the God of nothing, which is absurd. The Sadducees could not thus have erred had they known or understood the significance of this Scripture, and they could not have doubted the resurrection had they known the absolute power with which God deals with material such as that of which the body is formed. See *Mk 12:24* and *Lk 20:39* above.] **(a) 33 And when the multitude heard it, they were astonished at his teaching. (c) 39 And certain of the scribes answering said, Teacher, you have well said.** [Some of the scribes of less bitter spirit could not refrain from expressing their admiration at the ease with which Jesus answered an argument that their own wisdom could not refute--see also *Mk 12:32*.] [602]

E. Question about the Law (Mt 22:34-36; Mk 12:28-34).

(a) 34 But the Pharisees, when they heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, gathered together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, (b) one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, (a) asked him a question, trying him [he was evidently deputed by those who counseled to ask this question]: **36 Teacher, what is the great commandment in the law? (b) What commandment is the first of all?** [According to the statement of Jewish writers, there had been an old and interminable dispute among the rabbis as to which was the greatest commandment. Some held that it was the law that commanded sacrifices (*Nm 28:3*); others, what commanded the wearing of phylacteries (*Nm 15:38,39 Dt 22:12*); others contended for those about purification (*Lv 10:10*, etc.); others, for those about the great feasts (*Ex 12:15-18*, etc.). But as they reckoned the commandments of Moses as numbering over six hundred, there was plenty of room for argument. On this

memorable day the answers of Jesus had hitherto been of such a nature as to put his questioners to silence. Therefore, in asking this question, they hoped to get an answer about which they could at least find room to wrangle, and thus discredit the wisdom of Jesus.]

F. Response to Law Question (Mt 22:37-40; Mk 12:29-31).

(b) 29 Jesus answered, (a) 37 And said unto him, (b) The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: 30 And (a) You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. (b) and with all your strength. (a) 38 This is the great and first commandment. [Dt 6:4-9. This command is first because it is the foundation of the entire law of God. It is greatest (Mt 22:38), because, in a sense, it includes all the other laws. Polytheism, atheism, idolatry, and all sins against God are forbidden by it. All sins against man are likewise, in [603] a sense, prohibited by it; for sin against man is sin against God's image, and against the objects of God's love. Those who truly love God cannot consistently sin against man (1Jo 4:20). The curious may make metaphysical distinctions in the analysis of this required fourfold love, but the sum of it is that we are to love God with our whole being.] 39 And a {(b) 31 The} second (a) like unto it (b) is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. [Lv 19:18. Love is the cure for sin, for we cannot sin against those whom we truly love. Where we love, we desire to bless. But sin always carries with it a willingness to injure or to curse.] There is none other commandment greater than these. (a) 40 On these two commandments the whole law hang, and the prophets. [The generic nature of the law of love is also noted by Paul (Ro 13:8-10); but love without law is not sufficient. Love begets a desire to bless, but the law guides to the accomplishment of that desire. Perfect righteousness is the result of wisdom as well as affection. Love without law is power without direction, and law without love is machinery without a motor--1Co 13:1-3.] (b) 32 And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Teacher, you have well said that he is one; and there is none other but he: 33 and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. [Here, as in the preceding subdivision (see on Lk 20:39), the answer of Jesus was so clearly right that it enforced admiration.] 34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, You are not far from the kingdom of God. [Prejudice is the great obstacle to entering the kingdom. In proportion as we overcome it we draw near to God.] And no man after that dared {(c) 40 For they dared not any more} ask him any question. [They found it expedient to keep silence when their questions only exposed their own shallowness, and made more conspicuous the supreme wisdom of Jesus.] [604]

G. Question for the Critics (Mt 22:41-46; Mk 12:35-37; Lk 20:41-44).

(a) 41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, (b) as he taught in the temple, (a) Jesus asked them a question [They had questioned him seeking to expose his lack of wisdom, but the question of Jesus was devoid of retaliation. It was asked to teach a most important lesson], (b) 35 And Jesus answered and said, {(a) 42 saying,} (c) unto them, (a) What do you think of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. [The answer was true, but it was not *all* the truth as the Scriptures themselves showed. And this additional truth was what the opposers of Jesus needed to learn.] (a) 43 He said unto them, (b) How say {(c) they} (b) the scribes that the Christ is the son of David? {(c) David's son?} (a) How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, (c) 42 For David himself said {(b) said} in the Holy Spirit, (c) in the book of Psalms, {(a) saying,} (b) The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand, Till I make your enemies the footstool of your feet. {(a) Till I make your enemies underneath your feet?} 45 If (b) 37 David himself therefore (a) then calls him Lord, how (b) and whence is he his son? [The quotation is from Ps 110:1. The context here shows that the rabbis of that day accepted this Psalm as written by David and as messianic in meaning. Since then the Jews have denied that the Psalm is messianic, and that it was written by David; some saying that Abraham, and others that Hezekiah, wrote it. This Psalm speaks of the Messiah as the Lord of David, and other Scriptures call him David's son. So also the Scriptures describe Christ as conquering yet suffering, as divine yet human, as dying yet living, as judged yet judging, etc. The Jewish rulers seem able to grasp only one side of the character of Christ as revealed

either in his life or in the Scriptures, and hence they [605] stumbled.] **(a) 46 And no one was able to answer him a word, neither dared any man from that day forth ask him any more questions. (b) And the common people heard him gladly.** [By all their questioning, the Jews had not been able to weaken public confidence in Christ.]

Section 113
LAST PUBLIC DISCOURSE
(Temple Courts, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)
Mt 23:1-39; Mk 12:38-40; Lk 20:45-47

Discourse #16
Denunciation of the Pharisees
Mt 23:1-39; Mk 12:38-40; Lk 20:45-47

(a) 1 Then Jesus spoke (b) 38 And in his teaching (c) in the hearing of all the people he said unto (a) the multitudes, and to his disciples [he spoke in the most public manner], **2 saying, (c) 46 Beware of the scribes, (a) The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: 3 all things whatever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not do after their works: for they say, and do not.** [As teachers of the law of Moses the scribes and Pharisees were the only religious guides whom the people had, so they were obliged to follow them as expounders of that law, but they were no means to look to them as living exemplification of that law.] **4 Yes, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their fingers.** [The law itself was a heavy yoke (*Ac 15:10*), but these teachers added to the burden of it a vast volume of traditions, but they themselves did not keep these traditions, excusing themselves by inventing subtle distinctions like those in reference to the Corban (*Mt 15:4-6 Mr 7:11*) and to oaths (*Mt 15:16-22*). See on Lk 11:46.] **5 All their works they do to be seen of men** [what laws and traditions they did keep were not kept privately and sincerely, but publicly that they might secure to themselves a reputation for [606] sanctity]: **for they make broad their phylacteries** [Literally, "preservatives" or "remembrances." They were probably so called because they were designed to aid the wearer in remembering his obligations to the law. They were strips of parchment on which were written four passages of the law, namely: *Ex 13:3-10 11-16 Dt 6:4-9 11:13-21*. These were enclosed in a leather case and were fastened to the forehead and left arm. The authority for wearing them was purely traditional, and the practice seems to have arisen from a literal interpretation of *Ex 13:9, 16 Dt 6:8 11:18*. The Pharisees made the leather case large, that their righteousness might be more conspicuous], **and enlarge the borders of their garments** [These were the fringes mentioned in *Nm 15:38,39*. But the Pharisees offended again, even in their obedience, by wearing broader fringes than other people, that they might appear more religious], **(c) who desire to walk in long robes** [This robe was a professional dress, as marked as that worn by priests and kings. It showed that its wearer was professionally religious], **(a) 6 and love the chief places at feasts** [see on Lk 14:7], **and chief seats in the synagogues** [on the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39], **7 and (c) love (a) the salutations in the marketplaces** [see on Lk 11:43], **and to be called of men, Rabbi.** [The term "Rabbi" means "master" or "teacher."] **(c) 47 who {(b) 40 they that} devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.** [It is doubtful in what way the Pharisees devoured widows' houses, or property. Perhaps they extorted presents under pretense of interceding for them in their prayers; or maybe they got the goods of widows by the management of their estates as judges. According to the later rabbinical teaching it is urged that a rabbi should pray one hour, and that he should meditate for an hour before and an hour after prayer. On days when they carried out this rule and the other rule that required three seasons of prayer a day, they would spend nine hours in prayer. But this was no doubt one [607] of the cases where they said and did not (*Mt 23:3*). For thus making their religion a cloak for their vices they would be more severely punished. As to the particular

blackness of the crime of robbing widows, see *Ex 22:22-24 Dt 27:19.*] **(a) 8 But be not you called Rabbi: for one is your teacher [Christ], and all you are brethren. 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven. 10 Neither be you called masters: for one is your Master, even the Christ. 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. [See on Mk 10:44.] 12 And whoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whoever shall humble himself shall be exalted. [See on Mt 18:4, Lk 14:11, 18:14. Thus Jesus reproves those who make religion a matter of praise-seeking ostentation, whether they do so by seeking position, or by peculiarity of dress, or by assuming or accepting titles of honor or distinction. This sin of ostentation was the first enumerated sin of the Pharisees.] 13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you enter not in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering in to enter. [Our Lord's language is figurative and presents the kingdom of God as a house around the door of which the Pharisees have gathered, not entering in themselves, and blocking the way against those who would enter. This they did by their opposition to Jesus. For a similar charge see on Lk 11:52.] 15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, you make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves. [Proselytes here meant are not those converted from heathenism to worship God, but Jews converted to Phariseeism. These become worse than their instructors, because each generation drifted farther from the law and became more zealously and completely devoted to the traditions.] 16 Woe unto you, you blind guides [Jesus above denounced them for their hypocrisy, but this woe is pronounced upon them for their [608] ignorance and folly--see on Mt 15:14], that say, Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. [The word "debtor" is here meant to describe one who owes it to himself and to God to keep his oath. The Pharisees graduated oaths according to their own foolish conceptions of the sanctity of the object invoked, so that if the object by which a man swore was not sacred enough, he was not forsworn if he did not keep his oath. Esteeming the gold of the temple more sacred than the temple itself, they held that an oath by the former was binding while an oath by the latter was not. The gold meant is probably the golden ornaments on the temple.] 17 You fools and blind: for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that has sanctified the gold? 18 And, Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is a debtor. 19 You blind: for which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 He therefore that swears by the altar, swears by it, and by all things thereon. 21 And he that swears by the temple, swears by it, and by him that dwells therein. 22 And he that swears by the heaven, swears by the throne of God, and by him that sits thereon. [Our Lord designed to teach that all oaths were binding. See on Mt 5:37.] 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these you ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. [See on Lk 11:42. The anise was used for medical purposes and also for culinary seasoning. Cummin also was a condiment and a medicine, the bruised seed mixed with wine being used as a styptic, especially after circumcision. It was also used as an ingredient for salves and plasters such as were applied to the ulcers of cattle produced from the bites, grubs, etc., of insects.] 24 You blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and [609] swallow the camel! [A proverbial expression, indicating care for little faults and a corresponding unconcern for big ones.] 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. [Jesus here compares the Pharisees to a woman who washes the outside of her dishes and leaves the inside unclean. But in describing that inner uncleanness he passes from the figure to the reality, and specifies that it consists of extortion and self-indulgence. They made their outside clean by traditionary ablutions. See on Mk 7:3.] 26 You blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also. [Here again the literal peeps through the figurative: a pure inner life makes clean outward conduct.] 27 Woe unto you, scribes and**

Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like unto whitened sepulchers, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. [Luke records Jesus as having taught this lesson by an exactly opposite figure. See on Lk 11:44. There men were contaminated by the touch of a grave because there was nothing outside to notify them of its presence. Here men are contaminated by the same thing because the outside is rendered so white and beautiful that men are deceived into thinking that the inside is harmless.] **29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and garnish the tombs of the righteous, 30 and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore you witness to yourselves, that you are sons of them that slew the prophets. 32 Fill you up then the measure of your fathers.** [See on Lk 11:47-48.] **33 You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how shall you escape the judgment of hell?** [See on Lk 3:7.] **34 Therefore, behold, I send unto you [610] prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall you kill and crucify; and some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues** [on the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39], **and persecute from city to city: 35 that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah, whom you slew between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.** [See on Lk 11:49-51.] **37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you, You shall not see me anymore, till you shall say, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.** [See on Lk 13:34-35.]

Section 114

TEMPLE TREASURY OBSERVATIONS

(Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)
Mk 12:41-44; Lk 21:1-4

(b) 41 And he sat down opposite the treasury [It is said that in the court of the women there were cloisters or porticos, and under the shelter of these were placed thirteen chests with trumpet-shaped mouths into which offerings might be dropped. The money cast in was for the benefit of the Temple. An inscription on each chest showed to which one of the thirteen special items of cost or expenditure the contents would be devoted; as, for the purchase of wood, or gold, or frankincense, etc.], **and beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury** [We should remember this calm inspection of our Lord when we are about [611] to make an offering to his work. He is by no means indifferent as to our actions]: **and many that were rich cast in much. (c) 1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury. (b) 42 And there came (c) 2 And he saw a certain poor widow casting in (b) and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing.** [The *lepton* or mite was worth one-fifth of a cent. It was a Greek coin, and the *kodrantes* or farthing was a Roman coin. It is suggested that she might have retained one of the coins, since she had two.] **(b) 3 And he called unto him his disciples** [he had found an object-lesson that he wished them to see], **and said unto them, Verily (c) Of a truth I say unto you, (b) This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury: 44 for they {(c) these} (b) all did cast in of their abundance; (c) unto the gifts; (b) but she of her poverty did cast in all that she had, even (c) all the living that she had. {(b) all her living.}** [We are disposed to measure the value of actions quantitatively rather than qualitatively. Moreover, we are better judges of actions than of motives, and can see the outward conduct much clearer than the inward character. God, therefore, in his word, constantly teaches us that he looks rather upon the inward than the outward. In this case, the value of the woman's gift was measured, not by quantity, but its quality; in quantity it was two mites, in quality it was the

gift of all she had. From considering the corrupt character of the Pharisees, Jesus must have turned with pleasure to look upon the beautiful heart of this devout widow.] [612]

Section 115
JESUS AND SOME GREEKS
(Temple, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)
Jn 12:20-50

A. Request of Some Greeks (Jn 12:20-26).

(d) 20 Now there were certain Greeks among those that went up to worship at the feast [The language indicates that they were Greek converts to Judaism, such as were called proselytes of the gate. It is also noted that as Gentiles came from the east at the beginning of Jesus' life, so they also came from the west at the close of his ministry]: **21 these therefore came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee** [See on *Jn 1:44*. They were possibly drawn to Philip by his Greek name], **and asked him, saying, Sir** [the dignity of the Master elevates the disciple], **we would see Jesus.** [Jesus was evidently still in the court of the women, where the treasury was, and this court, being part of the sanctuary, no Gentile was permitted to enter it.] **22 Philip comes and tells Andrew** [Philip wished another to share the responsibility of the situation]: **Andrew comes, and Philip, and they tell Jesus. (d) 23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come, that the Son of man should be glorified.** [The humble seeking of these Gentiles formed a striking contrast to the persistent rejection of the Jews. And the occasion forcibly suggested that the gospel invitation, which had hitherto been confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, should be extended to the vast throng of waiting Gentiles. But, according to the counsel of God, this extension was not to take place until Jesus had been glorified by his death, resurrection, and enthronement. The demand for extension, therefore, suggested the advisability of a speedy glorification, which accorded with the plans of God.] **24 Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*; with these emphatic words Jesus prepares for a hard saying], **I say unto you, Except a grain of [613] wheat fall into the earth and die, it abides by itself alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit.** [As the germ of life in the grain of wheat can only pass into other grains by departing from the original grain and leaving it dead, so the life that was in Christ Jesus could only pass into his disciples by his death.] **25 He that loves his life loses it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.** [Though Jesus had his own death in view, yet he shows himself governed by a principle that he already had declared to be of universal application. See on *Mt 10:39*. If a grain of wheat saves itself, it remains but one grain until it rots; but if it yields up its life-germ as a sacrifice to the law of growth, it multiplies itself thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold and continues its multiplication through an innumerable posterity.] **26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will the Father honor.** [Jesus here recommends to his disciples that they follow him in fruit-bearing self-sacrifice, promising them the joy of being with him and the honor of the Father. The joy of being with Christ is the chief expectation of the Christian--*2Co 5:8 Php 1:23 Re 21:3 22:20*.]

B. Prayer of Jesus (Jn 12:27-33).

(d) 27 Now is my soul troubled [Thus Jesus admits that it was difficult for him to live up to the principle of sacrifice that he had just enunciated. Had it not been thus difficult for him, he would hardly have been a fitting example for his disciples; for certainly it is and has always been difficult for them]; **and what shall I say?** [In his trouble Jesus raises the question as to what prayer he shall offer to the Father.] **Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause** [for this purpose of imparting life through a sacrificial death] **I came unto this hour.** [Thus Jesus proposes a prayer for deliverance, but repudiates it as contrary to the very purpose of his life.] **28 Father, glorify your name.** [Having refused to ask for deliverance, Jesus prays that he may glorify the Father by suffering according to his original statement contained in *Jn 12:23,24*. Two prayers are counterparts to the two offered in Gethsemane [614] (*Lk 22:42*). The prayer here is the climax of the thought begun at *Jn 12:23*. We are first shown that nature is glorified by sacrifice (*Jn 12:24*).

Then that discipleship is so glorified (*Jn 12:25,26*) and this prayer shows that our Lord himself is glorified by the same rule.] **There came therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.** [The Father had glorified his name in the Son. By words of commendation at his baptism (*Mt 3:17*) and at his transfiguration (*Mt 17:5*), and by the performance of miracles (*Jn 11:40*), and he would glorify it again by the preaching of the universal gospel, and by making Jesus head over all to the church and the final judge of all men.] **29 The multitude therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it had thundered: others said, An angel has spoken to him.** [Those who thought it thundered were nervous persons who were so startled as not to distinguish the words.] **30 Jesus answered and said, This voice has not come for my sake, but for your sakes.** [The voice was not spoken to encourage Jesus in his hour of suffering, but to aid the Jews to believe on him, and to warn them of the coming judgment that would follow their disbelief, and make them partakers in the condemnation of Satan.] **31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.** [The Greek word for "judgment" survives in our English word "crisis," but conveys much more meaning, since it embraces also the idea of final settlement and adjudication. The crucifixion of Jesus was the crisis in the contest between Satan and [615] God. See *Gn 3:15*. In the long conflict that had hitherto been carried on, Satan had earned for himself the name "prince of this world," and it was no empty title (*Mt 4:8,9 2Co 4:4 Eph 6:12*); but by his approaching death Jesus would break down the power of Satan, and cast him out, not suddenly, but by the advancing power of a superior kingdom. The kingdom of darkness recedes before the kingdom of light as the night withdraws before the rising sun.] **32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.** **33 But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die.** [Jesus thrice speaks of his death as a lifting up, a euphemism for being crucified (*Jn 8:28*). While the distinctions between the three statements are not to be insisted upon, yet they suggest that the first is a saving sacrifice, a priestly work (*Jn 3:14*); the second is mentioned as the convincing credential that he is the prophet sent from God, speaking the message of God (*Jn 8:26-28*); and in the passage before us, he is evidently the king who shall wrest his kingdom from the usurping Satan.]

C. Question from the Multitude (*Jn 12:34-36*).

(d) **34 The multitude therefore answered him, We have heard out of the law that the Christ abides forever: and how say you, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?** [The term "law" is used loosely for the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures (see on *Jn 10:34*). The people were persuaded by certain passages such as *Isa 9:6,7 Ps 89:36 110:4 Da 7:13,14 Eze 37:25*, etc. that the Messiah would abide forever. They knew that Jesus in his triumphal entry had received honors that they thought belonged to the Messiah, but when they hear him use words indicating that he should die, and thus (as they construed) *not* abide forever, they felt that he was openly disavowing all claim to messiahship. Having heard him style himself the Son of man (*Jn 12:23*), they now catch at it as if Jesus had used it to distinguish himself from the true [616] Messiah, and ask with more or less contempt, "Who is this Son of man?" Thus blinded by their preconceived opinions and misconstructions of Scripture, the people wavered in their loyalty to Jesus. This question came midway between the 'Hosanna' of the entry into Jerusalem and the 'Crucify him' of the trial.] **35 Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the light among you.** [The phrase "little while" stands in contrast with "abides forever"--*Jn 12:34*.] **Walk while you have the light, that darkness does not overtake you: and he that walks in the darkness knows not where he goes.** **36 While you have the light, believe on the light, that you may become sons of light.** [Jesus did not reply to their question, because it was asked contemptuously and not seriously, and because any effort to make their carnal mind grasp the idea that he could be lifted up, and yet still abide, would have resulted in more contempt. He therefore speaks a solemn warning to them, counseling them to make use of his presence while they had it, even if his fleshly abiding with them was but brief; and promises that a proper use of the light then given them would make them sons of light.]

D. Conclusion (*Jn 12:36-50*).

(d) **These things spoke Jesus, and he departed and hid himself from them.** [This was his last public appeal to the people. He now retired, probably to Bethany, and they saw him no more

until he was a prisoner in the hands of his enemies.] **37 But though he had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on him.** [the multitude had long oscillated between belief and unbelief, but, despite all his past miracles and the marvelous wisdom shown on this the day of hard questions, they settled down in unbelief]: **38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet [Isa 53:1] might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again [Isa 6:10], 40 He has blinded their eyes, and he hardened their heart; lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should turn, and [617] I should heal them.** [See on *Mt 13:15*. The quotation from Isaiah is not exact, for there God enjoins on the prophet the duty of hardening the people's hearts, while here it is spoken of as God's own act. Had God, however, hardened their hearts by a direct act and without any reference to their moral or spiritual condition, they could not have been held morally responsible for their disbelief. But this God did not do. He hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes by the manner in which he approached them through the person of his Son, Christ Jesus. Jesus so came, so loved, and so taught that those who hunger for godliness are drawn to him and enlightened by him, while those who despise the grace and love of God are repelled and blinded. John here recognizes that the type (Isaiah) should be fulfilled in the antitype (Christ). If Isaiah was to preach that the wicked would be blinded, then Christ in his ministry should likewise so teach and preach as to produce similar results.] **41 These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory; and he spoke of him. 42 Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God.** [These members of the Sanhedrin believed with the head rather than with the heart (*Ro 10:10*); their hearts already being occupied with the love of praise or man-glory. Their disbelief accorded with the words of Jesus (*Jn 5:44*). As to expulsion from the synagogue, see on *Jn 9:22*. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*.] **44 And Jesus cried and said** [These words were of course spoken before the departure mentioned in *Jn 12:36*. They are placed here to bring out in stronger light the final unbelief of the Jews and the patient, persistent effort that Jesus had made to win those who were the better inclined], **He that believes on me, believes not on me, but on him that sent me. 45 And he that beholds me beholds him that sent me. 46 I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes on me may not abide in the darkness. 47 And if any man hear my sayings, and keep [618] them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.** [See on *Jn 3:17* and *Jn 8:16*.] **48 He that rejects me, and receives not my sayings, has one that judges him: the word that I spoke, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49 For I spoke not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he has given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life eternal: the things therefore that I speak, even as the Father has said unto me, so I speak.** [The Father had sent the Son into the world to bring life and immortality to light in the gospel. Jesus therefore declared that men will be tried by the gospel law and that some will be saved and some condemned by it.]

Section 116

THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

(Mount of Olives, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30)

Mt 24:1-25:46; Mk 13:1-23; Lk 21:5-24

A. Occasion of the Discourse (Mt 24:1-3; Mk 13:1-4; Lk 21:5-7).

(a) **1 And Jesus went out from the temple** [leaving it to return no more], **and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him (b) as he went forth (a) to show him the buildings of the temple. (b) one of his disciples said unto him, Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings!** (c) **5 And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said** [The strength and wealth of the temple roused the admiration of the Galileans. The great stones in its fortifications promised safety from its enemies, and the goodly offerings bespoke the zeal of its friends. According to Josephus, some of the

stones were nearly seventy feet in length, twelve feet in height, and eighteen feet in breadth. The same historian tells us of the gifts or offerings that adorned it: crowns, shields, goblets, chain of gold present by Agrippa, and a golden vine with its vast clusters that was the gift of Herod. The temple was built of [619] white limestone, and its beauty and strength made it admired of all nations. It took forty-six years to finish, and ten thousand skilled workmen are said to have been employed in its construction.] **{(a) 2 But (b) Jesus (a) answered and said unto them, (b) him,} Do you see these great buildings? (a) Do you not see all these things? (c) 6 As for these things that you behold, (a) verily I say unto you, (c) the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that {(b) which} shall not be thrown down.** [In the very hour when the disciples exulted in the apparent permanency of their glorious temple, Jesus startled them by foretelling its utter destruction, which, within forty years, was fulfilled to the letter. The emperor Vespasian, and his son Titus, after a three years' siege, took Jerusalem and destroyed its temple, A.D. 70. Of the temple proper not a vestige was left standing, but the vast platform upon which it stood, composed partly of natural rock and partly of immense masonry, was for the most part left standing. The destruction of the city and temple, however, was so complete that those who visited it could hardly believe that it had ever been inhabited--Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 7.1.] **3 And as he sat on the mount of Olives, opposite the temple** [he was in the middle portion of the mountain, for that is the part that is opposite the temple], **(a) the disciples (b) Peter and James and John and Andrew** [on this occasion Andrew was in company with the chosen three when they were honored by a special revelation, but is put last as being the least conspicuous of the four] **(a) came unto him privately, (b) asked him privately, (a) saying, (c) Teacher, (b) 4 Tell us, when (c) therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass? {(b) to be accomplished?} (a) and what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?** [Dismayed by the brief words that Jesus had spoken as he was leaving the temple, these four disciples asked for fuller details. Their question is fourfold. 1. When shall the temple be destroyed? 2. What shall be the signs that precede its destruction? 3. [620] What shall be the sign of Christ's coming? 4. What shall be the sign of the end of the world? Jesus had said nothing of his coming nor of the end of the world; but to these four disciples the destruction of the temple seemed an event of such magnitude that they could not but associate it with the end of all things.]

Discourse #17
The Olivet Discourse
Mt 24:1-25:46; Mk 13:1-23; Lk 21:5-24

B. Destruction of Jerusalem (Mt 24:4-35; Mk 13:5-31; Lk 21:8-33).

4 And Jesus answered and said {(b) began to say} unto them, Take heed that no man lead you {(c) that you be not led} astray: for many shall come in my name [claiming my name], **saying, I am he; (a) I am the Christ; (c) and, The time is at hand: (b) and shall lead many astray. (c) do not go after them.** [The first sign of approaching destruction would be the appearance of false Christs. These would boldly claim the title, and assert that the time for the setting up of the eternal kingdom had arrived. We have no direct history of the appearance of such persons, the nearest approach to it being the parties mentioned by Josephus (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.5.1; 8.6.10; *The Wars of the Jews*, 2.13.4,5). But as these men left no institutions or followers, it is quite natural that they should be overlooked or dropped by historians. Nothing is more natural, however, than that the excitement attendant upon the ministry of Jesus should encourage many to attempt to become such a Christ as the people wanted. The Gospels show so widespread a desire for a political Christ that the law of demand and supply would be sure to make many such.] **(a) 6 And (b) when (a) you shall hear of wars (c) and tumults, (a) and rumors of wars; see that you (b) be not troubled: (c) be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; (a) but the end** [the destruction of the temple] **is not yet. {(c) immediately.} 10 Then said he unto them, (b) 8 For (c) Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom** [Wars and rumors of wars would be the second sign, but Christians in Jerusalem could rest there in safety until a more definite token bid them depart. Of course the wars here mentioned were only such as threatened particularly to affect the Jews, for the trouble

coming upon the Jews was the [621] subject of discourse. History records three threats of war made against the Jews by as many Roman emperors and three uprisings of Gentiles against Jews in which many thousands of the latter perished]; **11 and there shall be great earthquakes, (b) in various places; (c) and in various places (b) there shall be (c) famines and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven.** [Great natural disturbances would constitute the third sign. That these preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, there is abundant historic evidence. History records the following earthquakes: 1. A great earthquake in Crete, A.D. 46 or 47. 2. One at Rome when Nero assumed the manly toga, A.D. 51. 3. One at Apamea in Phrygia, mentioned by Tacitus, A.D. 53. 4. One at Laodicea in Phrygia, A.D. 60. 5. One in Campania, A.D. 62 or 63. There were an indefinite number of famines referred to by Roman writers, and at least one pestilence during which thirty thousand perished in Rome alone. All these signs are mentioned by unbelieving writers such as Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Philostratus, and Seneca, who speak of them because of their importance and not with any reference to the prophecy of Christ.] **(a) 8 But all these things are the beginning of travail. (c) 12 But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. (b) 9 But take you heed to yourselves: for (a) 9 Then shall they deliver you up (b) to councils; (a) unto tribulation, and shall kill you: (b) and in synagogues shall you be beaten; (a) and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.** [See on Mt 10:22.] **(b) and before governors and kings shall you stand for my sake, for a testimony unto them. (c) 13 It shall turn out unto you for a testimony.** [A fourth sign that they needed to heed particularly would be an outbreak of persecution. The Book of Acts furnishes an abundant evidence of the fulfillment of these details. The civil and ecclesiastical authorities [622] (synagogues and kings) united to oppress the church. See *Ac 4:3 5:18,40 7:59 8:3 12:1,2 14:19 16:19-24 22:30 24:1 25:2,3*. Peter, James the elder and James the younger, and Paul, and doubtless many more of the apostles suffered martyrdom before the destruction of the temple. Tacitus bears testimony to the hatred and blind bigotry of the age when he speaks of Christians as "a class of men hated on account of their crimes" (*Annals*, 15.44). See also Suetonius (*Lives of the Caesars*, "Nero," 16), and Pliny (*Epistles*, 10.97). For comments on a similar passage see on Mt 10:17-18. On the synagogue, see on Mk 1:39.] **(b) 10 And the gospel must first be preached unto all the nations.** [Paul says that this was done (*Col 1:23*). Of course the language of both Jesus and Paul must be understood with reference to the geography of the earth as then known. Paul's declaration was written about the year A.D. 63, or seven years before the destruction of Jerusalem. His meaning is not that every creature actually had heard the gospel, but that each had been given an opportunity to hear because the gospel had been so universally preached.] **11 And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what you shall speak: (c) 14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer: 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay. (b) but whatever shall be given you in that hour, that speak you; for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Spirit.** [See on Lk 12:11-12. This is the third time Jesus has given this promise. See on Mt 10:19-20.] **(a) 10 And then shall many stumble** [persecution always causes a deflection of the faint-hearted, see on Mt 13:21], **and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another.** [Apostates have ever been among the most bitter enemies of the church.] **11 And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray.** [This refers to the false teachers that arose in the church. The apostles bear abundant testimony to their appearance--*2Co 11:13-15 Ga 2:1-4 1Ti 1:3-7,19,20 2Ti 3:8,9 Tit 1:10,11* [623] *2Pe 2:1-3 Jude 1:4,8,10,12,16,19*.] **12 And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold.** [The prevalence of sin tempts and encourages the feeble to commit it.] **(c) 16 But you shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; (b) 12 And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. (c) and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.** [Hatred against Christianity would prove stronger than all family ties--see on Mt 10:21.] **17 And you shall be**

hated of all men for my name's sake. [See on Mt 10:22.] **18 And not a hair of your head shall perish.** [The previous verses show that this promise is spiritual. The destruction of a saint's body would work no real injury to him.] **(b) but he that endures to the end** [that is, to his death], **the same shall be saved.** [See on Mt 10:22.] **(c) 19 In your patience you shall win your souls.** [The Christian's battle is won by endurance and not by violence, and he that can patiently hold out unto the end can, by the grace of God, save his soul.] **(a) 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.** [See on Mk 13:10 given above. Jerusalem, the seat of the old dispensation, was not removed until the new dispensation was sown throughout the then known world.] **(c) 20 But when you see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. (b) 14 But (a) 15 When therefore you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet [Da 4:11], standing in the holy place (b) where he ought not** [for comment, see end of the paragraph at Mt 24:21 below] **(let him that reads understand)** [Matthew also gives a similar parenthesis (*Mt 24:15*). If the words in parentheses were spoken by our Lord, they would constitute an exhortation to understand the prophecy of Daniel, and would be unnecessary, since our Lord's application of the prophecy explains it. The words are, therefore, exhortations by the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, [624] bidding their readers take heed to this part of the prophecy (which constituted the last sign, and, therefore, the final warning) that they might not share in the bitter fate impending over Jerusalem and Judea if they chanced to be in either in the hour of judgment], **then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains. (c) and let them that are in the midst of her** [Jerusalem] **depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein. (b) 15 and let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, (a) to take out the things that are in {(b) to take anything out of} his house** [see on Lk 17:31]: **16 and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. (c) 22 For** [this word introduces the reason for such hot haste] **these are days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled.** [*Dt 28:49-57 Da 9:26,27 12:1,11 Joe 2:2.*] **(b) 17 But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days!** [because their condition would impede their flight] **(c) for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people.** [The city of Jerusalem was divinely sentenced to punishment for her sins.] **24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations** [According to Josephus, one million one hundred thousand perished during the siege, and ninety-seven thousand were taken captive (*The Wars of the Jews*, 6.9.3.). Of these latter, many were tortured and slain, being crucified, as he tell us, till "room was wanted for the crosses, and crosses wanted for the bodies": **and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.** [By comparing this passage with *Ro 11:1-36*, we find that the times of the Gentiles signify that period wherein the church is made up of Gentiles to the almost exclusion of the Jews. The same chapter shows that this period is to be followed by one wherein the Jew and the Gentile unite together in proclaiming the gospel. This prophecy, therefore, declares that until this union of the Jew and the Gentile takes place, the city of Jerusalem shall not only be controlled by the Gentiles, [625] but shall be trodden under foot--that is, oppressed--by them. The history of Jerusalem, to this day, is a striking fulfillment of this prophecy.] **(b) 18 And pray you that it (a) your flight (b) be not in the winter.** [Because the flight will be so precipitate that it would necessitate much exposure to the weather, sleeping under the open heaven, etc.] **(a) neither on a sabbath** [Jewish tradition limited travel on the Sabbath day to a distance of seven furlongs. The early training of many Christians led them to have scruples about breaking the Sabbath. It is possible that Jesus had these scruples in view, but by no means conclusive, for in fleeing they would need the support and friendship of their Jewish brethren, who would be apt, not only to hinder, but even in those troublous and turbulent days, to show violence to any who openly disregarded the Sabbath. For it must be remembered that the Jews, not being guided by the admonitions of Christ, would regard the sudden flight of the Christians as unnecessarily hasty]: **21 for then {(b) those days} (a) shall be great tribulation, (b) such as there has not been the like from the beginning of the creation {(a) the world} (b) that God created until now, and never, {(a) no, nor ever} shall be.** [These words spoken

before the event are strikingly verified by the statements of Josephus written after it. "No other city," says he, "ever suffered miseries, nor did any age, from the beginning of the world, ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was." And again: "If the miseries of all mankind from the creation were compared with those that the Jews then suffered, they would appear inferior." The promise that there shall be no days like it of course excludes the terrors and miseries of the judgment day, since it belongs to celestial rather than terrestrial history. Having now the whole paragraph before us, we are ready to discuss the phrase "abomination of desolation" mentioned in Mt 24:15 (above). Taking it in connection with the entire paragraph, we can readily see, 1. That it was a sign practically simultaneous with the compassing of Jerusalem by the Roman army. 2. That it was a clearly marked sign that was to be followed by [626] immediate flight, even if the day of its appearing should chance to be the Sabbath--a flight so sudden that a man must not stop to enter his house or get his coat. Now, some translate the phrase "abomination of desolation" (or "abomination that causes desolation," for it may be so translated) as referring to the crimes of the zealots, a faction in Jerusalem, who took possession of the temple and profaned its sanctuary by using it as a fort, thus making themselves an abomination in the eyes of the Jews by polluting God's house and entering where they had no right to enter. But a long interval intervened between this evil deed of theirs and the coming of the Romans, during any day of which a Christian might have taken his departure after the most leisurely manner. Others take the phrase as referring to the entrance of the triumphant Roman army upon the temple courts; but as this was one of the last scenes of the prolonged siege, it could not properly be coupled with the encompassing Roman army. Some take the position that there were *two* flights prescribed by Jesus, one from *Jerusalem* at the time when the Romans appeared, and the other from *Judea* at the time when the temple fell. But the language used by Luke (*Lk 21:20,21*) forbids us to make the flight from Judea subsequent to the flight from Jerusalem, for both flights were to begin when the Romans appeared. Again it should be noted that the phrase "the holy place" is apt to mislead, especially when coupled with Mark's "where it ought not." The words when seen in English cause us to think of some person or thing polluting the sanctuary of the temple by standing in its holy place. But it is evident that the words do not refer to the temple at all. When the New Testament speaks of the holy place in the temple it styles it *en too hagioo* ("in the holy"), while the words here are *en topoo hagioo* ("in a place holy"). Moreover, after a careful perusal of the Septuagint, we are persuaded that they used the two terms to distinguish between the holy place in the sanctuary and other holy places (*Lv 6:16,26,27*, etc.). As none but priests could enter [627] *the* holy place, it is evident that another is meant at *Ps 24:3*; but in this place the Septuagint gives us *en topoo hagioo*. We, therefore, conclude that in this place Matthew uses the term "holy place" to designate the holy territory round about the Holy City, and that the combined expression of Matthew and Mark signifies the investiture of the city by the Roman armies and is equivalent to the plainer statement made by Luke. The Roman armies were fittingly called the abomination of desolation, because, being heathen armies, they were an abomination to the Jews, and because they brought desolation upon the country. The sight of them, therefore, became the appointed sign for Christians to quit the city.] **22 And except those days had been shortened, (b) 20 And except the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved** [since the Lord is speaking to the Jews, this means that if God had not shortened the siege and restrained the Romans, they would have exterminated the Jewish race]; **but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days. (a) those days shall be shortened.** [since the term "elect" in *Mr 13:22,27* evidently means *Christians*, it doubtless means that here, though it may mean that God spared a remnant of the Jewish people because he had covenanted with the patriarchs that they should be his *chosen* people, for the Jews are also God's elect (*Ro 11:28,29*). Moreover, it should be noted that there were few, if any, Christians remaining in the city, and that those who were spared were spared as Jews without discrimination.] **(b) 21 And then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; (a) or, Here; (b) or, Lo, there; believe it not: 22 for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show (a) great signs and wonders; so as to {(b) that they may} lead astray, if possible, (a) even the elect.** [For accounts of these lying prophets who appeared

before and during the siege, see Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 4; 5; 6. Christ warns his followers: 1. Not to be deceived by spurious Christs. 2. Not to believe that he himself has again appeared. This latter warning is further enforced by what follows--*Mt 24:26-28*.] **(b) 23 But take [628] heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand. (a) 26 If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning comes forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man.** [The coming of Christ would be an event needing no herald; every man would see it for himself. See on *Lk 17:24*.] **28 Wherever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.** [See on *Lk 17:37*.] **(b) 24 But in those days, (a) immediately after the {(b) that} (a) tribulation of those days.** [Since the coming of Christ did not follow close upon the destruction of Jerusalem, the word "immediately" used by Matthew is somewhat puzzling. There are, however, three ways in which it may be explained: 1. That Jesus reckons the time after his own divine, and not after our human, fashion. Viewing the word in this light, the passage at *2Pe 3:4-9* may almost be regarded as an inspired comment with reference to this passage. 2. The terrible judgment upon Jerusalem and the corresponding terror of the judgment day have between them no intervening season of judgment in any way worthy to be compared to either of them. The two periods, therefore, stand with regard to each other in immediate connection. 3. The tribulation that came upon the Jewish people merely began with the destruction of Jerusalem, other woes followed *at once*, and, coming down through all the centuries of wandering and dispersion, they were yet unfulfilled and incomplete. See *Dt 28:58-68*] **the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall {(b) shall be falling} from heaven, (a) and the powers of [629] {(b) that are in} the heavens shall be shaken.** [The language is that of the ancient prophets. See *Am 8:9 Joe 2:30,31 Eze 32:7,8*. Compare also *Re 6:12-14*. Some regard the language as metaphorical, indicating the eclipse of nations and the downfall of rulers, but there are many similar passages of Scripture that constrain us to regard the language here as literal rather than figurative. See *2Pe 3:10 Heb 1:12 Re 20:11*.] **(c) 25 And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows [We can conceive of nothing that would produce greater mental distress or perplexity than changes in the position or condition of the heavenly bodies. Such changes will be followed by corresponding commotions on our planet, as, for instance, great tidal waves and vast agitation in the ocean]; 26 men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things that are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. (a) 30 and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven [The coming and the sign are the same thing. The word "sign" is used in connection with the coming of Christ to indicate that the nature of the coming (that is, the manner of its manifestations) will be fully commensurate with the importance of the event. His first coming in the manger was not so]: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn [The coming will occasion universal mourning in the unprepared, and apparently the majority of people will be in that condition. The term "all" is not, however, to be construed as including all individuals--*1Th 4:15-17*], (b) 26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in {(a) on the} clouds {(c) in a cloud} (a) of heaven (b) with great power (a) and great glory. (b) 27 And then shall he send forth the {(a) his} angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one of heaven to the other. (b) from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.** [To the Jews the trumpet would naturally be [630] associated with the assembling of the people, for silver trumpets were used to call Israel together (*Nm 10:1-4 Ex 19:13,16,19 Ps 81:3-5*). We are not told why angels are used on this occasion, but they appear to be employed in all the great operations of Providence (*Mt 13:41*). The phrases "four winds," etc., indicate that the angelic search shall extend over the entire globe. The language is what was then used when one desired to indicate the whole earth. It is based upon the idea that then prevailed that the earth is flat, and that it extends outward in one vast plain until it meets and is circumscribed by the overarching heavens.] **(c) 28 But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draws near.** [The preliminary death-throes of this present

physical universe, which will strike terror to the souls of those who have limited themselves to material hopes, will be to the Christian a reassuring sign, since he looks for a new heaven and a new earth.] **29 And he spoke to them a parable: (a) 32 Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near; (c) Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: 30 when they now shoot forth, you see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now near. 31 Even so you also, when you see (a) all (c) these things coming to pass, know you that the kingdom of God is near. (a) know you that he is near, even at the doors.** [As the change of the season in the natural world has its preliminary signs, so the change of conditions in the spiritual realm has its premonitory symptoms. When men see the symptoms that Jesus has described, they will recognize that changes are coming as to the nature of which they can only guess. But the Christian is informed that these changes indicate the coming of the Son of God--a change from a worse to a better season.] **34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, (b) until all things be accomplished.** [Commentators differ widely as to the import of these words. Some think [631] they refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, and have been misplaced by the Evangelist. Others give a dual significance to all that our Lord has said concerning his coming, so that our Lord in one narrative speaks *figuratively* of a coming in the power of his kingdom before, during, and right after the destruction of Jerusalem, and *literally* of his final coming at the end of the world. But this perplexing expression under this theory refers exclusively to the figurative and not to the literal sense of the passage. The simplest solution of the matter is to take the word "generation" to mean the Jewish family or race--and the word does mean race or family--*Lk 16:8*. Thus interpreted, the passage becomes a prophecy that the Jewish people shall be preserved as such until the coming of Christ. The marvelous and almost miraculous preservation of the racial individuality of the Jews, though dispersed among all nations, might well become the subject of prophecy, especially when Jesus had just spoken of an event that threatened their very extermination.] **31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.** [The disciples had regarded the temple as so permanent that they found it hard to conceive that Christ's words could be fulfilled with regard to it; but he assures them that his predictions and prophecies are the stable and imperishable things. That even the more permanent structure of the heavens is not so abiding as his utterances.]

C. Second Coming (Mt 24:36-51; Mk 13:32-37; Lk 21:34-36).

(a) 36 But of that day and (b) or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in (a) of heaven, neither the Son, (b) but the Father. (a) only. [These words indicate the profound secrecy in which God has concealed the hour of judgment. It is concealed from all people, that each generation may live in expectation of its fulfillment, and we are to watch for the signs, though we may not fully know the times. They also indicate that either by reason of his assumption of our human nature, or by a voluntary act on his part, the knowledge of Jesus became in some respects circumscribed. They also suggest that it is not only idle, but also presumptuous, for men to strive to find out by mathematical calculation and expositions of [632] prophecy what the Son of God did not know.] **37 And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. 38 For as in those days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, 39 and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. [See on Lk 17:26-30.] 40 Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: 41 two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left. [See on Lk 17:35.] 42 Watch therefore: for you know not on what day your Lord comes. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. 44 Therefore be you also ready; for in an hour that you think not the Son of man comes. [See on Lk 12:40.] (c) 34 But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: 35 for so shall it come upon all them that dwell**

on the face of all the earth. [The image of a snare is that of a net that suddenly encloses a covey of birds as they feed in seeming safety. The warnings here given are applicable to our appearing before Christ whether he comes to meet us, or we depart from this life to meet him. The result is the same, *whether he comes and finds us unprepared or whether we go hence without preparation.*] **(a) 45 Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord has set over his household, to give them their food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he has. 48 But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarries; 49 and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken; [633] 50 the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he does not expect, and in an hour when he knows not, 51 and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. [See on Lk 12:42-46.] (c) 36 But watch you at every season, making supplication, that you may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.** [The revealed presence of God is represented as such an overpowering event that sinners are crushed to the earth by it. Only the godly are able to stand in his presence--*Ps 1:5 Mal 3:2.*] **(b) 33 Take you heed, watch and pray: for you know not when the time is. 34 It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch.** [Under the figure of the householder and the thief, Jesus appealed to the sense of danger. Under the figure of the servant he appealed to the sense of duty, and under this figure of the porter he appealed to the sense of loyalty. The porter's desire to honor his lord was to make him so vigilant that he would open the door at once upon his lord's appearing.] **35 Watch therefore: for you know not when the lord of the house comes, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning** [The night was then divided into four watches. See on Lk 12:38. Jesus may here refer either to the duration of the world or to the life of the individual. He divides either period into four sections, in accordance with the night watches that were so fully associated with watchfulness]; **36 lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.** [This warning message was not for the apostles alone, but for all disciples.]

D. Final Judgment (Mt 25:1-46).

(a) 1 Then [that is, at the time of the Lord's coming. Jesus is still emphasizing the lesson of watchfulness, and proceeds to enforce it by two parables] **shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten** [probably the usual number on such occasions] **virgins, who took their lamps** [small earthenware vessels, with flax wicks, and without glass chimneys], **and went forth to meet the bridegroom.** [The Oriental wedding began with a feast in the house of the bride's father. After this the bridegroom led the bride to his own home, and it was the duty of his servants and household (of whom the ten virgins in this case were part) to honor him and the bride with an enthusiastic welcome.] **2 And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3 For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.** [The foolish showed their folly in failing to provide for their lord's *delay*. The oil in their lamps would only burn till about midnight. But the wise had provided an additional supply to burn from then till daylight.] **5 Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.** [Rather, "nodded and slept." They did not lie down to regular slumber, but took such innocent rest as their office permitted. Others were on the lookout, and would give the warning; so these were permitted to sleep, but only in such a posture that they would be ready to arise and go at once when apprised of their lord's approach.] **6 But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come you forth to meet him. 7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. [635] 8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out.** [The signal-call roused all ten, and each group of five prepared by trimming the lamps, etc. But then became apparent the difference between them. All had made some preparation, but that of the foolish five had been insufficient. Their glory began to depart, and their light waned into darkness at the approach of the bridegroom.] **9 But the wise answered, saying,**

Perhaps there will not be enough for us and you: go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. [There will be no borrowed righteousness on the day of the Lord's coming, for no one will have any to spare. The Roman Catholic confidence in saints, and the trust of some Protestants in pious parents, are alike unavailing: each soul must see to its own lamp. Those who had the oil to sell are merely part of the drapery of the parable, put in to bring out the point that it was then *too late* to secure any oil. The oil of God's grace is given without money and without price, but in the hour of the Lord's appearing it will be too late to seek for it.] **10 And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut.** [The feast in the bridegroom's house was considered the most important part of the marriage, and certainly for those of the lord's own household it was the only feast. To be shut out from it was to be deprived of all participation in the marriage joy. All the wisdom and shrewdness of Universalism can never open this shut door.] **11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.** **12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.** [The verb "know" is here used, according to the Jewish idiom, for favorable knowledge (Mt 7:23). It signified that these virgins, on account of their remissness, were no longer counted even as acquaintances, much less as part of the household.] **13 Watch therefore, for you know not the day nor the hour.** [Thus Jesus makes his own application of the parable.] **14 For it is as when a man, going into [636] another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.** **15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey.** **16 Immediately he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents.** [The parable of the virgins represented watchfulness displaying itself in *waiting* for the Lord, while it is here displayed in *working* for him. There it was inward spiritual life, here it is external activity.] **17 In like manner he also that received the two gained other two.** **18 But he that received the one went away and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money.** **19 Now after a long time the lord of those servants comes, and makes a reckoning with them.** [We have here one of the Lord's intimations that the day of judgment would not come at once. The word for "servants" is *douloi*, which means "slaves." They were the property of the master and he might dispose of them as he pleased. The reckoning is as sure as the trust; judgment is as sure as life. A man who had entrusted a talent (from \$1,600 to \$1,800) would surely not forget to ask a settlement, nor will God fail to demand an accounting from all those to whom he had entrusted the riches and privileges of this wonderful human life that he has given us, though many of us may lightly esteem it.] **20 And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, you delivered unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents.** **21 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: you has been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things; enter you into the joy of your lord.** [The joy of the lord was doubtless some festival in celebration of his return, and it stands for the joy of Christ in the Father's house.] **22 And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord, you delivered unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents.** **23 His lord said unto him, Well done, [637] good and faithful servant: you has been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things; enter you into the joy of your lord.** [The second servant, having done well proportionately as the first, received the like precious commendation--Mt 25:21.] **24 And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you didst not sow, and gathering where you didst not scatter; 25 and I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth: lo, you have your own.** **26 But his lord answered and said unto him, You wicked and slothful servant, you knew that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; 27 you ought therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest.** **28 Take you away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that has the ten talents.** **29 For unto every one that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that has not, even what he has shall be taken away.** **30 And cast out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.** [See on Mt 8:12.

This parable is much like that of the pounds (*Lk 19:11-27*), but differs in several particulars. There the *same amount* was entrusted to each one, but the returns were *different*, and the rewards were different. Here *different* amounts were entrusted, the returns were in proportion to the trust, and the rewards were the same.] **31 But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory** [Christ's judgment throne is called his throne of glory because in the day that he sits upon it his glory will be exhibited to men more brightly than ever before; for in the decisions of that hour his mercy, justice, and righteousness will most fully appear, and all the obscure things in the past administration of his government will be made clear]; **32 and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he [638] shall separate them** [not the nations, but the individuals that compose them] **one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats** [It was the custom for the shepherd to let the sheep and goats feed together during the day and to separate them at night. This custom is placed in the parable because it is analogous to the present commingling and final separation of men. Goats are employed to represent the evil class of men, because goats have to be *driven* while sheep follow the shepherd]; **33 and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.** [The right hand is always represented as the place of honor and preferment. The Jews in their traditions say that when criminals were tried by the Sanhedrin those who were acquitted were placed on the right hand, and those who were condemned on the left.] **34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit** [take possession of as rightful heirs] **the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world** [God's purpose designed such a kingdom from the beginning (*Eph 1:9-14*), and we may conceive of it as in process of preparation ever since--*Jn 14:2*]; **35 for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; 36 naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came unto me.** [The acts enumerated indicate more than a mere outlay of money. They are not such as are the offspring of impulse, but such as call for the sacrifice of time, strength, sympathy, etc., and clearly demonstrate the fullness of the Christian life. Moreover, Jesus does not mean to teach that mere works of benevolence are a sufficient ground for salvation. The meaning is that none can be saved *without* these fruits of faith and love. The passage must be construed in the light of other Scriptures that teach the further necessity of forgiveness on the part of God and of obedience on the part of man.] **37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you? or athirst, and gave you [639] drink? 38 And when did we see you as a stranger, and take you in? or naked, and clothed you? 39 And when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come unto you? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, you did it unto me.** [This conversation is the drapery of the narrative. Such words will not be actually spoken at the judgment, but they are introduced for the twofold purpose of illustrating the beautiful unconsciousness of merit and that characterizes the noblest of deeds and the more important fact that anything done for his sake is the same as done for his person--*Mt 10:42 Mr 9:41*.] **41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels** [The two preparations stand in contrast. God prepared a kingdom of joy and designed that man should be with him in it. He also prepared a place for punishment for Satan and his angels, and man can cast his lot there and share that punishment if he wills to do so]; **42 for I was hungry, and you did not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you took me not in; naked, and you clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and you visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we you hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it not unto one of these least, you did it not unto me.** [The neglect or abuse of Christ's disciples is a direct affront to his person--*Ac 9:4*.] **46 And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.** [This verse contains two important truths: 1. That the doom of the wicked is as durable as the reward of the

righteous. 2. That the doom of the wicked is a punishment. The word "punishment" expresses misery and suffering purposely inflicted.] [640]

Section 117
BETRAYAL OF JESUS
(Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30)
Mt 26:1-5, 14-16; Mk 14:1-2, 10-11; Lk 22:1-6

A. Prediction of Betrayal (Mt 26:1-2; Mk 14:1a; Lk 22:1).

(c) 1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew near, which is called the Passover. {(b) 1 Now after two days was the feast of the Passover and the unleavened bread:} (a) 1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these words, he said unto his disciples, 2 You know that after two days the Passover comes, and the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified. [We may regard Jesus as having entered the temple Tuesday morning, and as having taught there until the evening. He then retired to the slopes of Olivet and delivered the Olivet discourse. The discourse finished, it is likely that he arose about or a little after sunset (which the Jews reckoned as Wednesday) and proceeded on his way to Bethany, where he remained until late Thursday afternoon. On his way to Bethany he spoke the words of this section. The two days mentioned are Wednesday and Thursday. The Passover was eaten Thursday night after sunset, that the Jews reckoned as Friday.]

B. Plots by the Jewish Leaders (Mt 26:3-5; Mk 14:1b-2; Lk 22:2).

(a) 3 Then were gathered together the chief priests, and the elders of the people, unto the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas; 4 and they took counsel together (c) 2 And [641] sought (b) how (a) that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and (c) how they might put him to death; {(a) kill him.} [This council may have begun on the evening of Tuesday and continued until the beginning of Wednesday, Jewish time. It seems to have been a formal rather than an informal conference. The court where they met was the open space enclosed by the palace of the high priest. Caiaphas had been appointed high priest in A.D. 26 by the Procurator Valerius Gratus and was deposed A.D. 38. Ishmael, Eleazar, and Simon held the office between the deposition of Annas and the appointment of Caiaphas (Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.2.2). Also see on *Lk 3:2*.] **5 But {(b) 2 for} they said, Not during the feast, lest perhaps there shall be a tumult (a) arise among {(b) of} people. (c) for they feared the people.** [They knew that there were many at the feast from Galilee, and other sections of the country where Jesus ministered; and, judging by the demonstration made at the triumphal entry, they felt that there were plenty to take arms in Jesus' behalf. The sense of their council, therefore, seemed to be that if Jesus could be taken by subtlety--that is, arrested privately--he might be taken during the feast. But if he had to be arrested publicly, then it was better to postpone his apprehension until after the feast. The treachery of Judas caused them to adopt the former course. At this place Matthew and Mark insert the account of the supper given to Jesus in the house of Simon the leper (*Mt 26:6-13 Mk 14:3-9*). They do this because the treacherous determination of Judas was formed at it and dates from it. The rebuke of the Lord then administered, or the desire to reimburse himself for the price of the ointment, which Mary expended, and which he felt that he ought to have had, or some other reasons, evidently induced him at that time to decide upon our Lord's betrayal. Since then he had been seeking opportunity to betray the Master.]

C. Plot by Judas (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:11-12; Lk 22:3-6).

(c) 3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. {(b) he that was one of the twelve,} [See on *Mt 10:4* and *Jn 6:71*.] **(a) 14 Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, (b) went away unto the chief priests, that [642] he might deliver him unto them. (c) and negotiated with the chief priests and captains, how he might deliver him unto them. (a) 15 and said, What are you willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you?** [It is probable that the proposal to sell his Master was made by Judas to

individual members of the Sanhedrin (*Lk 22:4*), and that this proposal was one of the moving causes leading to the assembling of the council. The language at *Mt 26:15* implies that Judas appeared before the council and bargained openly with it.] **(b) 11 And they, when they heard it, were glad, and promised (c) and covenanted to give him money. (a) And they weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver.** [There had been coined shekels since the time of Simeon, or 143 B.C., before that the money was weighed. It is likely that the term "weighed" survived the practice and became a synonym or equivalent for "paid." The amount paid him was about fifteen dollars of our money. It was indeed a low price for so base a deed, but from the language used it may be fairly implied that it was but the earnest money of a larger sum. But Judas evidently hardened himself, and shut out all thought as to anything except the *actual labor involved*. Viewed thus, his task was neither difficult nor dangerous.] **(c) 6 And he consented, (a) 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him (b) how he might conveniently deliver him unto them. (c) in the absence of the multitude.** [He soon found his opportunity. He bargained on Tuesday night and fulfilled his contract on Thursday night. Or, as the Jews reckoned time, he agreed in the beginning of Wednesday and fulfilled his covenant on the beginning of Friday.] [643]

Section 118

PASSOVER PREPARATIONS

(Thursday Afternoon, April 6, A.D. 30)
Mt 26:17-20; Mk 14:12-17; Lk 22:7-13

(c) 7 And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed. [See on *Lk 2:43*. Leaven was to the Jew a symbol of corruption and impurity, because it causes bread to become stale. The feast of unleavened bread began properly on the fifteenth of Nisan, and lasted seven days, but this was the fourteenth Nisan, the day on which the paschal lamb was slain. However, it was common to blend the slaying of the Passover, the Passover feast and the feast of the unleavened bread, and to look upon all three as one great festival, and to use the names Passover and unleavened bread interchangeably to describe the entire eight days. This appears from the writings of Josephus, who sometimes reckons the feast as beginning on the fifteenth (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.10.5) and again as beginning on the fourteenth (*The Wars of the Jews*, 5.3.1). He also sometimes reckons the feast as lasting seven days (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.10.5), and again he reckons it as lasting eight days (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.15.1). The rabbis say that all the leaven was carefully removed from the houses on the evening before the fourteenth Nisan. To the present day leaven is removed from the houses of the Jews on the night between the thirteenth and fourteenth. Hence the day could be very fittingly called "the first day of unleavened bread."] **(b) 12 And (a) 17 Now (b) on the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Passover, his {(a) the} disciples came to Jesus** [as the head of the household], **saying, {(b) say} unto him, Where do you desire that we go and make ready (a) for you to eat {(b) that you may eat} the Passover?** [It [644] required considerable preparation. The lamb must be slain in the temple, roasted, and unleavened loaves, wine, and bitter herbs, etc., must be provided (*Ex 12:8*), and a room for the feast must be secured.] **(b) 13 And he sends {(c) sent} Peter and John, (b) two of his disciples, (c) saying, Go and make ready for us the Passover, that we may eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where do you desire that we make ready? 10 And he said {(b) said} unto them, Go into the city, and (c) Behold, when you are entered into the city, there you shall meet a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house into which he goes. (b) 14 and wherever he shall enter in, say to {(c) 11 And you shall say unto} the master of the house, {(a) Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him,} (c) The Teacher said unto you, (a) My time is at hand; I keep the Passover at your house with my disciples. (c) Where is the {(b) my} guest-chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** [It was customary for the residents of Jerusalem to open their houses for guests during this feast, and therefore Jesus might have presumed on the hospitality of almost anyone; but the probability is that the man to whom he sent this message was an acquaintance and a friend. It is not improbable that Jesus let Peter and John (*Lk 22:8*)

thus find the place that Judas might not know its whereabouts in time to bring the officers of the Sanhedrin so as to interrupt the feasts that meant so much to him and to his people.] **15 And he will himself show you a large upper room furnished and ready: and there make ready for us. 16 And the disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. (a) 19 And the disciples did as Jesus appointed them; and they made ready the Passover.** [The law required that the paschal lamb should be slain "between the evenings." The Jews reckoned the two evenings as from three o'clock to sunset, and from sunset to nine o'clock, which was the end of the first watch. But [645] Josephus tells us that the lambs were killed from the ninth to the eleventh hours, or between the hours of three and five. It would take some time to dress the lamb and to roast it.]

Section 119

PASSOVER OBSERVANCE

(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:20; Mk 14:17; Lk 22:14-18; Jn 13:1-20

A. Opening Comments by Jesus (Mt 26:20; Mk 14:17; Lk 22:14-18).

(b) 17 And (a) 20 Now when evening was come, {(b) when it was evening} he comes with the twelve [It must have been about sundown or shortly afterward when Jesus and his disciples sat down to the feast.] **(c) 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him. 15 And (a) he was sitting at meat with the twelve disciples; 21 and (c) he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: 16 for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.** [Jesus had desired to keep with his disciples this last type that stood so close to the thing typified. It was a feast commemorating a great deliverance from death through the sacrifice of a lamb, and the real sacrifice and deliverance of which it was typical were about to be fulfilled in the unfolding of the kingdom of God.] **17 And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18 for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.** [Luke brings out the parallelism between the Passover and the Lord's supper. Each consisted in eating followed by drinking, and the closeness of the parallel is emphasized by the use of almost the same words with regard to the cup (*Lk 22:16,18*). The Passover was typical of the Lord's suffering *before* the event, and the Lord's supper is typical of the same thing *after* the event.]

B. Contention among the Disciples (Lk 22:24-30).

(c) 24 And there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest. 25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. 26 But you shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that does serve. 27 For which is greater, he that sits at meat, or he that serves? is not he that sits at meat? but I am in the midst of you as he that serves. [In sending to secure the room in which [646] the paschal supper was being eaten, Jesus had said, "My time is at hand." Such expressions were falsely construed by the apostles. They thought that Jesus was about to set up his kingdom, and began at once to contend for the chief places. Jesus rebukes this false ambition in much the same manner as he had previously. See on *Mk 9:34* and *Mk 10:40-44*.] **28 But you are they that have continued with me in my temptations; 29 and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, 30 that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** [The word "temptations" is here used to mean "trials" (*Jas 1:2,3*). For the rest of the passage compare the remarks on *Mt 19:28*. The words concerning eating and drinking at the Lord's table refer to the ancient custom of thus bestowing honor and distinction (*2Sa 9:7 19:28*), and indicate that the apostles, being about to participate in the Lord's condemnation and suffering, should in the end share his exaltation and its attendant joys.]

C. Demonstration of Humility (Jn 13:1-20).

(d) 1 Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto his Father, having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end. [Since the second century a great dispute has been carried on as to the apparent discrepancy between John and the Synoptists in their statements concerning the Passover. The Synoptists, as we have seen in the previous section, clearly represent Jesus as having eaten the Passover at the proper time, and as having been arrested on the same night, while John [647] here and elsewhere (*Jn 13:29 18:28 19:14,31*, compared with *Jn 18:1-14*) seems to represent Jesus as being arrested *before* the Passover. Our space does not permit us to enter upon a discussion of this difficulty. The simplest solution of the difficulty is to attribute the apparent discrepancy to that loose way of speaking of the feast that we mentioned in the last section (see on *Lk 22:7*). When the Synoptists speak of the Passover they refer to the *actual paschal supper*; when John speaks of the feast of the Passover, or the Passover, he refers to *the seven days' feast of unleavened bread* that followed the actual paschal supper. Jesus was put to death on the first day of this latter feast, and therefore John here uses the festival to designate the time of the Lord's suffering and death. The meaning, then, is that Jesus, having loved his disciples prior to this great trial or crisis of his life, was not deterred from loving them by its approach, but continued to give the most precious and unmistakable evidences of his love down to the very hour of its arrival, being neither driven from such a course by the terrors of his coming hour nor wooed from it by the glorious prospects of returning to his Father. These words form a preface to the remainder of John's Gospel in which John enumerates the tokens and evidences of that love that manifested itself throughout the entire passion, and continued until the hour of ascension; and that, by so doing, gave sweet assurance that it continues still.] **2 And during supper** [This was the paschal supper proper. It accords with the supplementary nature of John's Gospel to thus mention it as a meal thoroughly familiar to his readers.] **the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him** [see on *Lk 22:3*], **3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all the things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and goes unto God** [Being about to narrate an act of loving humility, John prefaces it by stating that it was done in full knowledge of his threefold glory; namely: 1. That all [648] authority was committed to him (*Mt 28:18*); 2. That by nature he was divine (*Jn 1:1,14*), and, 3. That he was about to return to the divine exaltation that for our sakes he had laid aside--*Php 2:5-11*.] **4 rises from supper, and lays aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself. 5 Then he pours water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.** [John narrates in detail each of these acts: to him they seem as so many successive steps leading down to the depth of humility. The whole formed a striking but wholesome contrast to the self-seeking and ambitious spirit that the disciples had just manifested--*Lk 22:24*.] **6 So he comes to Simon Peter. He said unto him, Lord, do you wash my feet?** [The others were awed into silence by the strange conduct of their Master; but it accorded with the bold impulsiveness of Peter to challenge the act.] **7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do you know not now; but you shall understand hereafter.** [It was no mere feet-washing; or Jesus would not have so spoken. It was at once an example of humility and a symbol of the purification that the Lord accomplished for us by reason of his humiliation. The full meaning of the act was afterward revealed to them by the Holy Spirit.] **8 Peter said unto him, You shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash you not, you have no part with me. 9 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.** [Since Jesus spoke of the act as in some sense a license or token of permission to have "part" with him (*Jn 13:8*), Peter desired that his head and hands also might be included, that he might in his entire man have part with Christ.] **10 Jesus said to him, He that is bathed needs not except to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and you are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew him that should betray him; therefore said he, You are not all clean.** [The language implies that the disciples had bathed before leaving Bethany, and that only their feet, soiled [649] by the journey to Jerusalem, needed to be rewashed. The saying is spiritually true as well, for one who has been washed thoroughly by baptism needs not to be re-baptized. After that general cleansing the particular sins are removed by confession (*1Jo 1:7-9*). But there is no efficacy in any ordinance when the heart and will do not accord with the purposes for which it is administered. Hence it was that Judas,

though he had done all that the others had done, was still as foul as ever.] **12 So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and sat down again, he said unto them, Know you what I have done to you? 13 You call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and you say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily [see on Jn 1:51], I say unto you, a servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.** [Since a servant is not greater than his lord, he should not be ashamed to do what his lord does. It is well known that many, by a literal construction of this passage, have esteemed it to be their duty to wash each other's feet in their churches. But it should be noted that in the entire New Testament there is no command for this, nor is there any passage that recognizes any such church ordinance or practice. Jesus did not *institute* foot-washing; he found it already a *familiar* custom of the land, and merely used it as a most appropriate way of showing the proper spirit of humble service. Hence he does not say, "Do *what* I have done," but "Do as I have done," which requires us to do something *similar* to what Christ had done, but necessarily the very *same* thing. The washing of feet as an act of courtesy or hospitality was never a custom among Western people, and to adopt it because of these words of Christ is to entirely miss his meaning. What he did was a natural daily act of hospitality. But what we would do if we followed his words literally would be to [650] introduce a strange, outlandish practice, which would put a guest to great embarrassment and inconvenience.] **18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled: He that eats my bread lifted up his heel against me. [Ps 41:9.] 19 From henceforth I tell you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, you may believe that I am he. 20 Verily, verily [see on Jn 1:51], I say unto you, he that receives whomever I send receives me; and he that receives me receives him that sent me.** [The meaning of the above passage may perhaps be brought out more easily if we paraphrase it as follows: "I do not speak of blessing to you all, for there is one who shall never be blessed. His conduct does not deceive or surprise me, for I know those whom I have chosen whether they be good or bad. His choosing is in accordance with the prophecy contained in the Book of Psalms (*Ps 41:9*). Hitherto I have held my peace about him, but henceforth I shall point out his course, that my foreknowledge of his actions may strengthen your faith in my messiahship, and not leave you in that condition of hopelessness and despair in which the consequences had come upon me unawares. Do not let his treachery shake your confidence in me, for verily I say unto you that in being my messengers you are indeed the messengers of the Most High."]

Section 120 BETRAYALS PREDICTED (Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:21-25, 31-35; Mk 14:18-21, 27-31; Lk 22:21-23, 31-38; Jn 13:21-38

A. Jesus Predicts Judas' Betrayal (Mk 14:18; Lk 22:21; Jn 13:21).

(b) **18** And (d) **21** When Jesus had thus said, (b) as they sat and were eating, (d) he was troubled in the spirit, and (b) Jesus (d) testified, and said, Verily, verily [see on Jn 1:51], I say [651] unto you, that one of you shall betray me. (b) *even he that eats with me.* (c) **21** But behold, the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table. [The foreknowledge of Judas' crime did not relieve the Lord from the sting of it. By the use of the word "betray" Jesus revealed to Judas that he had perfect knowledge of the peculiar crime that he was about to commit. To induce repentance the enormity of the crime is pointed out in two ways: 1. It was the act of one, an act in which no other could be found willing to have a part. 2. It was the act of one whose hand rested on the table, who was admitted to the closest intercourse and fellowship.]

B. Reaction (Mt 26:22-23; Mk 14:19-20; Lk 22:23; Jn 13:22-26).

(d) 22 The disciples looked one on another [in startled amazement], **doubting of whom he spoke.** **(a) 22 And they (b) began to be {(a) were} exceeding sorrowful** [that the Lord should be betrayed was sorrow enough, but that one of the twelve should do the deed was an added grief], **(c) 23 And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. (b) and (a) began (b) to say unto him one by one, (a) every one, Is it I, Lord?** [The form of the question in the Greek indicates that it expects "No" for an answer, so that it may be rendered, "Surely it is not I?"] **23 And he answered and said, (b) unto them, It is one of the twelve, (a) He that dipped {(b) dips} (a) his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.** [According to Oriental custom, knives and forks were not used. One dish served to hold the sop for several people, that they might dip their bread into it. In so large a company, two or three bowls would be used for convenience' sake. The words of Jesus, therefore, limited the circle of accused ones from twelve to four or five, and also further emphasized the tender and close intimacy between the traitor and the Master.] **(d) 23 There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.** [John thus speaks of himself. His couch was in front of that of the Lord, so that when he laid his head back it rested upon Jesus' bosom. See on *Lk 16:23*.] **24 Simon Peter therefore beckons to him, and said unto him, Tell us who it is of whom he speaks. 25 He leaning back, as he was, on Jesus' breast [see *Jn 21:20*] said unto him, Lord, who is it? 26 Jesus therefore answered, He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him.** [It was a mark of special respect and courtesy to thus dip a sop and hand it to a guest.] **So when he had dipped the sop, he takes and gives it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.** [Thus Jesus advanced in his disclosure from twelve to three or four, and from three or four to one, and that one a friend most highly honored. But Judas was neither to be warned nor wooed from his purpose.]

C. A Warning to Judas (Mt 26:24; Mk 14:21; Lk 22:22).

(b) 21 For the Son of man goes, (c) as it has been determined: (b) even as it is written of him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born. [Jesus was following with unfaltering step the path of suffering marked out by the prophets. [652] But this fact in no way exculpated the authors of his death. The prophecies referred to are many. As examples, see *Ps 22:1 Isa 53:1-12*. The woe pronounced upon Judas was no vindictive or vengeful wish; it is the solemn announcement of the divine judgment. The words of Jesus stop the mouths of the apologists for Judas. When the judge thus speaks in condemnation, who shall presume to argue in extenuation?]

D. Actions of Judas (Mt 26:25; Jn 13:27-30).

(a) 25 And Judas, who betrayed him, answered and said, Is it I, Rabbi? He said unto him, You have said. [It seems strange that the disciples showed no resentment toward Judas, and made no effort to interfere with this course, but their conduct is plain if we regard them as viewing the predictions of Jesus as referring to the indefinite future, and not the immediate present.] **(d) 27 And after the sop, then entered Satan into him.** [Exposure only hardened Judas and made him resign himself more fully to the influence of the devil.] **Jesus therefore said unto him, What you do, do quickly.** [Jesus does not command the deed, but since it has already been determined upon, he dismisses Judas from his presence with words that fix the manner in which the deed should be done. Judas was still [653] under divine command in a limited sense, for Satan himself is not beyond divine authority.] **28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spoke this unto him.** [Jesus had not fully and openly revealed Judas as the traitor. To have done so in the presence of the fiery Galileans might have resulted in violence to the person of the betrayer.] **29 For some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy what things we have need of for the feast** [the feast on the evening of the first day of the festival of unleavened bread appears to have been both joyful and very bountiful]; **or, that he should give something to the poor.** [Probably to aid them in preparing for this feast.] **30 He then having received the sop went out immediately: and it was night.** [Though this expression, "it was night," is merely one that marks the time of day, nearly all commentators feel the weird force of it (*Lk 22:53*)]

E. Prediction of Other Betrayals (Jn 13:31-38).

(d) **31** When therefore he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; **32** and God shall glorify him in himself, and immediately shall he glorify him. [The departure of Judas was the first step in the progress of the Lord's Passion, and in this moment of its beginning Jesus exults in the prospect of its end. Having just condemned the false pride and glory of men by washing his disciples' feet, Jesus rejoices that the true glory of God is about to be immediately manifested in himself--the glory of humility, charity, service, and self-sacrifice, which was realized to the utmost in the person of Jesus.] **33** Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews [see on *Jn 7:34*], Where I go, you cannot come; so now I say unto you. **34** A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another. [In the term of tenderness "my little children," with which [654] Jesus opens this paragraph, we see one of the marks of love referred to by John (*Jn 13:1*). It is found nowhere else in the Gospels. In the light of his near separation Jesus looked upon his apostles as about to be made orphan children. As to this new commandment, love had been commanded before (*Lv 19:18*), but the Christian love here commanded is different from what the Jew was bade to feel for the Jew, just as the affection of a loving family differs from the mere broad and kindly spirit of neighborliness. A love that had Christ's heart as the standard would of necessity be new, and would distinguish those who possessed it from all men.] (b) **27** And (a) **31** Then said Jesus unto them, All you shall be offended in me this night: for it is written [*Zech 13:7*], I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. **32** But (b) **28** Howbeit, after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee. [The scattering would take place after the return of the apostles to Galilee, and there after his resurrection, Jesus would gather them together as their shepherd.]

F. Peter Dialogue (Mt 26:33-35; Mk 14:29-31; Lk 22:31-34; Jn 13:36-38).

(d) **36** Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, where going you? Jesus answered, Where I go, you cannot follow now; but you shall follow afterwards. **37** Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow you even now? I will lay down my life for you. [Peter, grieved at the prospect of separation, can see no reason why he should not follow, since he is willing to pass even through the portal of the grave that he may do so. Though perhaps prevented by no moral inability, he was prevented by the plan of life that God had designed for him. It was not in accordance with the divine will that he should die at this time.] (d) **38** Jesus answered, Will you lay down your life for me? (c) **31** Simon, Simon [see on *Lk 10:41*], behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: **32** but I made supplication for you, that your faith fail not [The language here suggests a repetition, in some degree, of Satan's conduct in the case of Job. See *Job 1:1-2:10*. Jesus, having insight into what was going on in the spirit world, made supplication that Peter [655] might be enabled to endure the trial]; and do you, when once you have turned again, establish your brethren. [The language sadly intimates that Satan's test would leave him in need of repentance. As the one who perhaps exercised the strongest influence over the other ten apostles, Peter is exhorted to use his own bitter experience for their benefit and strengthening.] **33** And he said unto him, Lord, with you I am ready to go both to prison and to death. (a) **33** But Peter answered and said unto him, (b) Although, {(a) If} all shall be offended in you, (b) yet will not I. (a) I will never be offended. [Thus Peter repudiates the idea that he could not stand the test.] (b) **30** And Jesus said {(a) said} unto him, Verily I say unto you, (c) I tell you, Peter, (b) that you today, even this night, before the cock crow twice, (c) you shall thrice deny that you know me. (d) Verily, verily [see on *Jn 1:51*], I say unto you, The cock shall not crow, (c) this day, (d) till {(c) until} (d) you have denied me thrice. [Mark speaks of two cock-crowings and shows that the denial of Peter occurred between them (*Mk 14:68-72*). But Matthew, Luke, and John speak of but one cock-crowing and place the denial before it (*Mt 26:74 Lk 22:60 Jn 18:27*). The discrepancy is not an important one. Luke and John look upon the night in its entirety and speak of the cock-crowing at three in the morning, the signal of the dawning day. Mark looks at the night in its details, and shows that the denials of Peter began at midnight, the time of the first cock-crowing, and were finished before the last, or

about three in the morning. Peter appears to have been thunderstruck at this prediction, which showed the nature, the details, and the nearness of his sin. He lapsed into silence, and we hear no more from him during the discourses that followed. But he did not yield without one final protest, as the sequel shows.] **(b) 31 But (a) Peter (b) spoke exceedingly vehemently, (a) said unto him, Even (b) If I must die with you, I will not deny you. And in like manner {(a) Likewise} also said all the disciples.** [According to Matthew's account these accusations of our Lord and protestations of Peter were taken up again after [656] Jesus left the upper room and was on his way to Gethsemane.

G. Jesus' Warning for all the Disciples (Lk 22:35-38).

(c) 35 And he said unto them, When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, did you lack anything? [See on Lk 9:2,3.] And they said, Nothing. 36 And he said unto them, But now, he that has a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that has none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword. 37 For I say unto you, that this which is written [Isa 53:12] must be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors: for what concerns me has fulfillment. 38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. [In this passage our Lord draws a contrast between the favor with which his messengers had been received on their *former* mission and the trials and persecutions that awaited them in their *future* course. If they had prepared then to be received with joy, they were to prepare now to be opposed with bitterness; for the utter rejection of the Master would be followed by the violent persecution of the servants. The apostles took the words of Jesus literally, and showed two swords, and the Lord, for their future enlightenment, said, "It is enough," thus intimating that he did not mean a literal arming with carnal weapons, for had he done so, two swords would not have sufficed for twelve men.]

Section 121

LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED

(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:19-20

A. Explanation of the Bread (Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; Lk 22:17-19).

(a) 26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave it to {(b) blessed,} (a) and he [657] gave to the disciples, and said, (b) Take you: (a) Take, eat; this is my body. (c) given for you: this do in remembrance of me. [As only unleavened bread was eaten during the paschal supper, that kind of bread must have been used by our Lord, and it is fitting that it should still be used by us in keeping the Lord's Supper, not only for propriety's sake, but because that bread that is emblematic of purity is most suitable to represent the body of the sinless Christ. The Catholics and some few others take our Lord's words literally when he says, "This is my body." On this they found the doctrine of transubstantiation, that is, that the bread and the wine become literal body and blood when blessed by the priest. There are many weighty arguments *against* such a doctrine, but the main one *for* it is found in the words of our Lord. But Jesus could not have meant them literally, for his body was untouched and his blood unshed on this occasion when he spoke them. Moreover, in *Mk 14:25*, Jesus calls the wine "the fruit of the vine," when, according to the theory of transubstantiation, it had been turned into blood and hence was not wine at all.]

B. Explanation of the Cup (Mt 26:27-28; Mk 14:23-24; Lk 22:20).

(b) 23 And he took a {(c) the} cup in like manner (c) after supper [Luke distinguishes between the cup taken during (see on *Lk 22:17*) and that taken after supper. The first belonged to the Passover, this to the Lord's Supper. Wine, mingled with water, was drunk during the paschal supper. Jesus took a cup of this for his new institution. But the word "wine" is nowhere used in any of the accounts of the Lord's Supper, the terms "cup" and "fruit of the vine" being employed in its stead. Those, therefore, who choose to use unfermented grape juice are guilty of no irregularity.] **(a) and gave thanks, and (b) when he had given thanks, he gave to them: 24**

And he said {(a) saying} (b) unto them, (a) Drink you all of it ["All" refers to the persons and not to the wine. It was important that all the disciples participate in the cup, but not that all the wine should be used]; **28 for this is my blood of the covenant, (c) This cup is the new covenant in my blood** [*Jer 31:31-34*. It was the practice of Eastern [658] peoples to use blood in making any pact or covenant (*Ex 24:6-8*). Christ represents himself as the victim from whence the blood was to be taken to ratify or seal the new covenant, and he makes the cup the symbol of that blood. A full discussion of the old and new covenants will be found in the Book of Hebrews. We may, however, sum them up by saying that the old covenant promised the land of Canaan and Christ in the flesh to the Israelites, while the new covenant promises heaven and Christ in glory to the Christian], **(b) which is poured out for many**. [It is explicitly stated elsewhere that Christ died for *all* (*Heb 2:9 2Co 5:14,15*), and the word "many" is used, not to contradict, but to emphasize the fact. When the persons included are contemplated individually, the term *many* is employed on account of the vast number of them; for no man can number the individuals for whom Christ died. But when they are contemplated under the feebler conception of the whole, the term *all* is employed.] **(a) unto remission of sins. (c) even what is poured out for you**. [The prime object of Christ's death is here declared. It was to accomplish the forgiveness of sins. All other purposes that it served are subordinate to this, and all other blessings that it secures are consequent upon this--*Jn 1:29 Eph 5:2 Heb 7:27 1Jo 2:2 4:10 Isa 53:10 Ro 8:2 1Co 15:3*.]

C. Prediction Regarding the Future (Mt 26:29; Mk 14:25).

(a) 29 But (b) 25 Verily I say unto you, I shall no more drink {(a) shall not drink henceforth} (b) of the {(a) this} fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in (b) the kingdom of [659] God. (a) my Father's kingdom. (b) and they all drank of it. [In speaking of this future drinking of the fruit of the vine Jesus does not mean literal wine, for he does not drink literal wine with his disciples in the kingdom as it now is, nor will he do so in the eternal kingdom. The term "drink," therefore, is used figuratively for that communion that Jesus has with his disciples while they are drinking the wine of the Lord's Supper. The term *new* is most naturally understood as modifying *wine*, but as the wine of the supper is not necessarily *new* wine, we think it rather indicates the *new method* of drinking wine just described.]

Section 122 FAREWELL DISCOURSE TO DISCIPLES (Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30) Jn 14-16

<p>Discourse #18 Farewell to the Disciples John 14-16</p>
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(d) 1 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. [That one should betray him and one should deny him, that all should be offended, and that the Lord should depart, raised anxieties that Jesus here seeks to quiet. That they should go out as homeless wanderers without the presence of their Lord and be subjected to persecution, was also in their thoughts. But Jesus sustains their spirits by appealing to them to trust in the unseen Father, and his yet present self. As to the two verbs "believe," both may be either indicatives or imperatives.] **2 In my Father's house are many mansions** [Many abiding places or homes. They were not to be homeless always]; **if it were not so, I would have told you** [That is to say, if heaven had been of such limited capacity that there was little or no hope that you could follow me, I should have dealt plainly with you, and should have disabused your mind of all vain hopes. But there is room (*Lk 14:22*), and you may follow--*Jn 13:36*]; **for I go to prepare a place for you**. [We are familiar with the thought that the going, or death, of Jesus prepared a way for [660] us by providing a fountain for the cleansing of our sin, and by rending the veil of the temple, "thus signifying that the way into heaven is now open." But the thought here is different. Jesus departed to prepare places for his own in the Father's house.] **3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again,**

and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also. [The cause for the departure becomes the assurance of the return.] **4 And where I go, you know the way.** [My manner of life leads to the Father's house, and as you know that manner of life, you know the way.] **5 Thomas says unto him, Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?** [Thomas looked for a way wherein one might walk with his feet.] **6 Jesus says unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes unto the Father, but by me.** [God is not approached by physical motion. Being spirit, we must draw near to him by spiritual simplicity, and this is revealed to us fully in the person of Christ, and an energizing power is imparted by Christ to enable us to attain unto it.] **7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also** [the unity of nature and of character is so perfect that to know the Son is to know the Father also]: **from henceforth you know him, and have seen him.** [This saying is the outgrowth of what is said in *Jn 14:6*. Since we can only come to the Father's likeness by the imitation of Jesus, then the truth here uttered follows; namely: that to see Jesus is to see the Father.] **8 Philip says unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it will satisfy us.** **9 Jesus says unto him, Have I been so long with you, and do you not know me, Philip? he that has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, Show us the Father?** [As Thomas asked for a physical instead of a spiritual approach to God (*Jn 14:5*), so Philip asked for a physical instead of a spiritual revelation of him. The answer of Jesus tenderly rebukes Philip. The excellence of God is not physical, but spiritual. Righteousness, truth, love, holiness, etc. are all spiritual. A physical revelation of God, if such a [661] thing had been practicable or even possible, would have been of little or no benefit to the apostles. All the physical demonstrations at Mt. Sinai did not prevent the manufacture and worship of the golden calf.] **10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I do not speak from myself: but the Father abiding in me does his works.** [The question of Jesus is a mild rebuke because Philip had been so slow to learn and to believe what the Lord had taught; namely: his unity with the Father (see on *Jn 10:30*), and that he did and taught by the will of his Father and not of himself--see on *Jn 8:26*.] **11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.** [To ask Jesus to reveal the indwelling Father was much the same as to ask a man to reveal his own soul. Therefore Jesus asks Philip to take his word for the great fact, or, if that were not deemed sufficient, to believe it because of the works that Jesus wrought. Divine works testify to the presence of a divine spirit and power.] **12 Verily, verily** [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.** [Jesus while in the world manifested sufficient supernatural power to give credibility to the statement that the Father worked through him. But he here declares that his return to the Father will be followed by yet fuller tokens and evidences of his union with the Father. The first of these evidences enumerated is the larger sphere of power granted to the believer. By this the Lord does not mean the disciples shall perform greater miracles, but that they shall produce moral and spiritual revolutions that are intrinsically more divinely wonderful than miracles. For instance, at his death Jesus had converted about five hundred disciples (*1Co 15:6*), but at Pentecost the apostles converted three thousand in one day (*Ac 2:41*). The converts of Paul also greatly outnumbered those of Christ's own ministry.] **13 And whatever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** **14 If you shall ask** [662] **anything in my name, that will I do.** [The second token of Christ's union with the Father would be manifested in the efficacy of prayer made in his name. Hitherto prayer had not been thus made (*Jn 16:24*). God would glorify himself through Christ by answering prayer thus made.] **15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments.** **16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, 17 even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholds him not, neither knows him: you know him; for he abides with you, and shall be in you.** [The third token of Christ's union with the Father would be the sending of the Holy Spirit (*Ac 2:33*). Since, however, the worldly-minded could neither receive nor behold the Spirit, the promise to send him to the disciples is prefaced by an appeal to them to keep his commandments, and thus avoid a worldly spirit such as would be compatible with the reception of the Holy Spirit. The word "Comforter" does not fully translate the Greek word *Paraklete*; no English word does. The word "Advocate" may be used, and "Helper" is as good if not better than "Comforter." He is called the Spirit of truth because of his many relationships to the truth (*Jn*

17:19 1Co 2:4 1Th 1:5 Ac 2:4 5:32 Heb 2:4). That the gift of the Holy Spirit is conditioned upon belief and obedience is also taught elsewhere (*Jn 7:38 Ac 2:38 5:32*). We should observe that by the use of the word "another" Jesus shows that he himself had been and would be a *Paraklete*. But earthly fellowship with him was about to be cut short, and therefore the Holy Spirit would come, with whom fellowship would never be interrupted. We should note, too, the distinction between the present "abides with you," and the future "shall be in you." The Spirit, being present in the person of Christ, had been abiding with the apostles who followed him. Hereafter the intimacy of the relation would be increased, and the Spirit would abide within them.] **18 I will not leave you desolate** [Literally, "orphans." The expression breathes the spirit of a father, as at *Jn 13:33*: [663] **I come unto you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world beholds me no more** [the next day the world crucified him and sealed him in the tomb, and since then has seen him no more]; **but you behold me** [the present tense here indicates a continued vision; it cannot therefore refer to the appearances of Christ after the resurrection, for the terminated at the end of forty days]: **because I live, you shall live also. 20 In that day** [we may take this either as the day of Pentecost, or the period that began on that day] **you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.** [The fourth and all-convincing token of Jesus' union with the Father would be his return in the spirit that is here described. It was not his temporary return after the resurrection, as is shown at *Jn 14:19*, neither was it his final return to judgment, because it was one in which the world would not behold him, and at his final return "every eye shall see him" (*Re 1:7*). Jesus, therefore, speaks of his return in the spirit, and his inward manifestation of himself to his disciples wherein he energizes them with his own life. A coming, however, which, like that of the Holy Spirit, is conditioned upon the loving obedience of the disciples. The writings of Paul abound with expressions illustrating the nature of this coming of Christ. It is not to be confused with the coming of the Holy Spirit, though doubtless wholly concurrent with it.] **22 Judas (not Iscariot)** [who had gone out. This Judas was also known as Thaddaeus. See on Mt 10:4.] **says unto him, Lord, what is come to pass that you will manifest yourself unto us, and not unto the world?** [The form of his question betrays the apostle's bewilderment. Expecting that Jesus would soon be an earthly king, he could not imagine how Jesus could so have changed his plans as to thus withdraw himself utterly from the world. The answer of Jesus gave Judas but little present light.] **23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will** [664] **keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that does not love me does not keep my words: and the word that you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.** [Jesus contents himself by pointing out to Judas the fact that loving obedience is the means by which the blessed indwelling is obtained. It was better that Judas should busy his heart and will about the *means* of blessing rather than his head about the mysterious and incomprehensible *manner* of it.] **25 These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. 26 But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.** [The word "spoken" of *Jn 14:25* stands in contrast with the word "teach" of *Jn 14:26*. Jesus had uttered the truth, but because of the divine plan of salvation through the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord was yet incomplete, all the words that he had spoken were but dimly understood, since they were related to and founded upon this incomplete plan. When the plan was completed the Holy Spirit would reveal or teach the meaning of the words by bringing them to remembrance after full comprehension of the plan to which they related.] **27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.** [This legacy of peace is by no means to be confined to the period of doubt and fear that accompanied the crucifixion; in fact, it seems to overstep that period, and to begin after it, and continue throughout all the trouble ministry of the apostles. The breadth of the legacy also to be noted: 1. The quality of it; it was not the absolute unshaken peace of God, but the peace that Jesus himself possessed while upon the earth--peace with all things except the devil and his powers. 2. The nature of it; it was not peace from without, but from within. It was not such as promised to pacify and quell the persecutors, but a promise of [665] inner calm amidst the storm. 3. The manner of it; it was no stinted, measured store such as the world bestows, but a full, free gift from the overflowing bounty of God.] **28 You**

heard how I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you. If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I go unto the Father: for the Father is greater than I. [The departure of Jesus was not wholly a humiliation, as it might appear to them; but a real exaltation at which they might well rejoice, and that the more readily and freely since it would not mean to them the total separation that they anticipated, because he would return in the spirit. The word "greater" as here used does not refer to any difference in the nature or essence of the Son as related to the Father. It may well be true that there has been a certain subordination of the will of the Son to the will of the Father from all eternity, but even that, if it exists, is not referred to here. Jesus has in mind the utter humiliation to which his mediatorial office had brought him, and to even lower depths to which it was about to bring him. From all this his departure to the Father would in a large measure free him, restoring him in some degree to that state of equilibrium in glory, power and authority from which he had descended--*Php 2:6*.] **29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, you may believe.** [Jesus had told them fully of his return to the Father, that when they received the subsequent manifestation of it they might firmly believe it.] **30 I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of the world comes: and he has nothing in me; 31 but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.** [In a few hours the earthly teaching of Jesus would be interrupted by the coming of Satan and would never be resumed except in occasional fragments. Satan would come in the persons of his servants and emissaries, but he would find nothing in Christ that would give him either right or reason to exercise power over him. The sorrows and sufferings of Christ would be entered upon of his own free will because by [666] enduring them for our sakes he would please the Father and carry out his commandments, and thus manifest to the world the love that he bore the Father.] **Arise, let us go hence.** [Some think that Jesus then left the room, and that the next three chapters of John's Gospel contain matters spoken on the way to Gethsemane. But it is likely that the words of these chapters were spoken in the upper room after they had risen from the table and prepared to depart, and that *Jn 18:1* marks the leaving of the upper room as well as the crossing of the Kidron.]

15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that does no bear fruit, he takes it away: and every branch that bears fruit, he cleanses it [by pruning], **that it may bear more fruit.** [The use of the word "true" shows that Jesus refers to a typical vine. The Jewish people had been such a vine (*Isa 5:1 Ps 80:8-16 Jer 2:21*). Yet it was but "a figure of the true" (*Heb 9:24*). God had now in Christ planted the true vine, and would dis sever and cast off all that did not derive life from him, and would prune all that did. This vital connection with Christ is set forth by Paul under the figure of a body and its head (*Eph 5:23 Col 2:19*). The fact that Jesus had just given them the fruit of the vine to drink as the symbol of his blood made the transition to this figure easy and natural, for the branches derive their juices from the vine.] **3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken unto you.** [It is God in Christ who cleanses the soul, but this cleansing is effected through hearing, believing and obeying the Word. The Word tells us what to do that we may be cleansed and saved--*Eph 5:26 Jas 1:18*.] **4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can you, except you abide in me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit: for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If a man abide [667] not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.** [The whole parable is intended to teach us Christ's relationships. 1. Toward the Father--Husbandman and Vine. 2. Toward man--Vine and branches. 3. Toward good works--Vine, branches, and fruit. 4. The negative condition, or *lack* of relationship--the Vine, the dis severed branches, the fire.] **7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also: from henceforth you know him, and have seen him.** [Though this verse stands somewhat in contrast to the warning in *Jn 15:6*, it is rather a statement of causation than a promise of reward. If by communion and the study of the word we abide in Christ, our prayers will be of such a nature that it will fully accord with the divine counsel to answer them, for they will be prayers tending toward fruitfulness.] **8 Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; and so shall you be my disciples.** [The spirit of Christ leads to those deeds that cause men to glorify God (*Mt 9:8 Lk 17:15*), and whoso does those deeds causes such glorification (*Mt 5:16*). Moreover, the spirit of Christ leads to abundant

fruitfulness, and he who has it, not only performs charitable deeds, but converts the sinner and begets a spirit of goodness in those about him (*Mt 13:8-26 Php 4:17*); and this fruitfulness becomes an evidence or demonstration of true discipleship.] **9 Even as the Father has loved me, I also have loved you: abide you in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.** [From the *outward* evidence of union with Christ, shown by the fruit, Jesus now turns to that *inward* bond of union that is the cause of fruitfulness. That bond is love. Love is, as it were, the sap that passes back and forth between the Vine and branch, and that love is kept active and vital by the most practical of means--obedience to commandments, a means that the Lord himself does not hesitate to describe as efficient between himself and the Father, only claiming for [668] himself the love of the Father because of a like obedience to what he prescribed.] **11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.** [He had spoken the words of this discourse that the disciples might have a joy corresponding to his own. By perfect obedience he enjoyed a consciousness of the Father's presence and approval. By a like obedience the disciples might have a like sense of his presence and approval, and hence a like joy.] **12 This is my commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.** [Jesus gives, as his supreme commandment, this law of love. The disciples are to love *one another* as intensely as Jesus loved them, and the measure of the intensity of his love is prophetically set forth by an allusion to his death on their behalf. But he died for his enemies as well as for his friends--*Ro 5:6*.] **14 You are my friends, if you do the things that I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants; for the servant does not know what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father, I have made known unto you.** [The commandments of Jesus were not to be obeyed in the spirit of bondmen, but in that of friends. Jesus had shown his friendship by receiving his apostles into confidence as to the things that he had heard from his Father.] **16 You did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.** [Jesus shows the stability of the friendship existing between him and the disciples in that origin of it lies in himself and not in them. For he chose them as friends before they chose him, gave them their high places as apostles without their solicitation, prepared them to bring forth lasting fruits, and gave them the privilege of supplementing their [669] personal deficiencies by prayer made effective through his name.] **17 These things I command you** [this includes all the precepts from the beginning of the thirteenth chapter], **that you may love one another. 18 If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you.** [While teaching the fullness and richness of love that is to exist within the circle of discipleship, Jesus warns them that in opposition to it the outer circle of unconverted and sensual--that circle known as the world--would manifest a spirit of hatred. Since this world-spirit hated him, the disciples need not be surprised to find that it hated them when manifesting his spirit.] **19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. [Jn 13:16.] If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also.** [The apostles could rest assured that the messengers would receive like treatment with him who sent them. When, therefore, they found the world rejecting their message they could cheer themselves with the expectation that a few at least would receive it, since a few had always received the words of the Master.] **21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.** [Christians in the early ages were persecuted for bearing the name of Christ by those who were ignorant of God. But this name, hateful to the world, was sweet to the disciples. For opposition to the name, see *Ac 5:28 1Pe 4:14 Re 3:8*. For joy in it see *Ac 5:41 2Co 12:10 Ga 6:17*.] **22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He that hates me hates my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works that none other did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this comes to pass, that the word [670] may be fulfilled that is written in their law [Ps 35:19 69:4], They hated me without a cause.** [Though the great proof of the hatred of Christ was yet to come, it is spoken of as if it had passed. Jesus does not mean to say

that the world would have committed no sin at all if he had kept away from it. The meaning is that it would not have been guilty of the sin of rejecting Jesus. They would have been excusable.] **26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall bear witness of me: 27 and you also bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.** [Ac 1:21,22. One of the principal offices of the Spirit is to testify of Christ (*Jn 16:13-15*). The Spirit testified through the apostles and other messengers (*Ac 2:4*), so that in a sense the apostles were double witnesses. They themselves could testify as to what they had seen and heard. The Spirit could aid them to testify accurately, and with a full intelligence as to the real meaning of things. The Spirit also gave attention to apostolic testimony by enabling the apostles to work miracles.]

16:1 These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be caused to stumble. [Jesus warned his disciples of coming persecutions in order that those persecutions might not shake their faith.] **2 They shall put you out of the synagogues** [see on *Jn 9:35*. On the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*]: **yes, the hour comes, that whoever kills you shall think that he offers service unto God.** [Persecutors would not only take away religious privileges, but even life itself, and they would do this as a religious act, esteeming Christians such enemies of God that God would take pleasure in their death. Paul gives us an illustration of this fanatical zeal--*Ac 26:9 Ga 1:13,14*.] **3 And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4 But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, you may remember them, how that I told you. And these things I said not unto you from the beginning, because I was with you.** [The disciples being but few, and finding the vast majority of the nation against them, and being but unlearned [671] Galileans, and finding the leaders--the wise, the cultured, the mighty--against them, would be tempted to doubt the correctness of their course, and to ask, "May we not, after all, be mistaken: may not those who know more be better judges in this matter than we who are so ignorant?" To forestall and prevent such questioning, Jesus asserts that the ignorance is with the rulers. Knowledge of himself and of his Father is the great and supreme knowledge, and the apostles having this were wiser than those with all other learning. It would also strengthen their faith to remember that the Lord's divine wisdom had foreseen all this trouble.] **And these things I did not say unto you from the beginning, because I was with you.** [While he was with his disciples they were in no danger, for he himself bore the brunt of persecution. In the beginning, therefore, of his ministry he did not deem it expedient to dishearten his disciples by foretelling trials that were then remote. When he began to announce his approaching death, then he also began to declare that the disciple must be willing to lose his life if he would find it. See on *Mk 8:31-38*. Some think that *Mt 5:10-12* forms a contradiction to our Lord's statement here. While the words in Matthew were spoken early enough to be classified as "from the beginning," their import is to general to permit of their being brought into contrast with this direct and personal prediction of persecution.] **5 But now I go unto him that sent me; and none of you asks me, Where are you going? 6 But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.** [The disciples had asked the Lord where he was going (*Jn 13:36 14:5*), but their question had a very different meaning from what Jesus here suggests to them. They asked it to ascertain whether his departure would involve a separation or whether it would be a withdrawal from the world in which they could accompany him. The question that he suggests [672] has reference to the place to which he was about to journey, that place being the home and presence of his Father. The question asked was selfish, as if the apostles had asked, "What will your departure mean to us?" The question suggested was generous, intimating that the apostles should have asked, "What will this departure mean to you?" Viewing his departure from a selfish standpoint filled their hearts with sorrow; but viewing it from a generous standpoint would have filled them with sympathetic joy, because of the supreme happiness that it would bring to their Master (*Jn 14:28*). But even from a selfish standpoint the apostles would have had reason to rejoice because of the advantage that would accrue to them through the Lord's departure, for that departure would result in the advent of the Holy Spirit. Space does not permit us to discuss why the Spirit could not come until the Lord had departed, but the verses that follow give us one good and sufficient reason, for they show that his work had

to do with the conviction of human hearts through the preaching of a completed gospel, and the ascension or return of Christ to heaven, and his enthronement in glory there, are essential parts of that completed gospel.] **8 And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment** [It would be the work of the Holy Spirit to take the truths respecting Christ, and, using the apostles as mouthpieces (*Ac 2:1-37*), to convince the world as to these truths. This convincing work was entirely in relation to Christ, the sin of disbelieving him, the righteousness revealed in him, and the power of judgment conferred upon him]: **9 of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you behold me no more; 11 of judgment, because the prince of this world has been judged.** [Sin, righteousness, and a day of judgment with its reward upon one and its punishment upon the other, are three cardinal doctrines of the gospel. The Spirit convinces the world that disbelief in Christ is its fatal sin, for belief in Christ leads to forgiveness, and to the unbelieving there is no forgiveness. The least sin is a sin unto death, and [673] is a sin eternal unless forgiven. The greatest sin, if forgiven, becomes harmless and is as if it had never been. Until the world is convinced of this great truth it feels no need of a gospel. Again, Christianity teaches that righteousness is prerequisite to the attainment of the presence of God. Without righteousness we can never behold him, nor can we ever hope to stand before him. But this required righteousness was found in Jesus, for he returned to the Father, and abides with the Father, being seen by us no more. The Holy Spirit convinces the world that those who are found in Christ, having his righteousness, shall attain unto the presence of the Father (*Php 3:3-14*). Lastly, the Spirit convinces the world that Jesus is commissioned as its judge. Our Lord's resurrection is the assurance of this fact (*Ac 17:31*). The resurrection is such an assurance because it is an evidence of the judgment and condemnation of Satan, the head and leader in sinful rebellion against God, and he that has power to judge the head thereby shows he has power to judge the body. Satan held the power of death over humanity, but Jesus judged him and brought him to naught by taking away this power (*Heb 2:14,15*). The cross of Christ as the source of life asserted his superiority over all other powers (*Col 2:14,15*), which implies an ability to judge them.] **12 I have yet many things unto say to you, but you cannot bear them now.** [The doctrines of the gospel were necessarily obscure and largely incomprehensible to the apostles until time had developed the gospel facts. Jesus, therefore, forbore to speak of many things at this time, lest by doing so he should confuse the minds of his followers.] **13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatever things he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.** [The Holy Spirit was to bring no absolutely new teaching. The Son of God here claims for himself all that the Spirit taught even to the declaration of things to come. [674] The Spirit would bring to mind and republish in the *minds* of the apostles all the words that Jesus had spoken, and would add those things that, being now in the mind of Jesus, were really part of his teaching, but that he at this present forbore to utter, the apostles not being able to bear them.] **15 All things whatever the Father has are mine: therefore said I, that he takes of mine, and shall declare it unto you.** [The Son's unity of interest with the Father made him possessor of all the Father's truth, as well as all the Father's counsel as to the future. As Jesus, therefore, might at this time have uttered all that the Holy Spirit subsequently taught, he rightfully claimed all the teaching of the Spirit as his.] **16 A little while, and you behold me no more; and again a little while, and you shall see me.** [Having finished his digression about the Holy Spirit, Jesus here returns to his point of departure, the theme of *Jn 16:5*. Of course the apostles would see Jesus after his resurrection, but the seeing here spoken of refers more especially to that spiritual communion with him previously mentioned--*Jn 14:19-23*.] **17 Some of his disciples therefore said one to another, What is this that he says unto us, A little while, and you behold me not; and again a little while, and you shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? [Jn 14:28.] 18 They said therefore, What is this that he says, A little while? We do not know what he says.** [Having been unable to entertain the idea of our Lord's burial and resurrection, no wonder the apostles were mystified by these allusions to it.] **19 Jesus perceived [by his divine insight--*Jn 2:24,25 6:61 Mt 9:4*] that they were desirous to ask him, and he said unto them, Do you inquire among yourselves concerning this, that I said, A little while, and you behold me not, and again a little while, and you shall see me? 20 Verily, verily [see on Jn**

1:51], **I say unto you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.** [The death of Jesus *truly* brought gladness to his enemies (*Lk 22:5*), and sorrow to [675] his friends (*Jn 20:11*), but the sorrow was indeed turned to joy--*Mt 28:8*.] **21 A woman when she is in travail has sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world.** [The simile here is very apropos, according with Scriptural ideals--*Col 1:18 Re 1:5*.] **22 And you therefore now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one takes away from you.** [*Lk 24:52,53*. The joyful hopes that come to us through the resurrection of Jesus are beyond the reach of the despoiling hand of man.] **23 And in that day you shall ask me no question.** [The coming of the Spirit would make all things clear, and the mysteries about which the apostles now questioned would then be fully explained.] **Verily, verily** [these two words give emphasis and introduce a new thought--see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, if you shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name.** **24 Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name: ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full.** [Having spoken of his departure, and of what the Spirit would do during his absence, he now speaks of the work that he would himself do while absent. He entered heaven as our high priest (*Heb 9:24*), and part of his priestly office is to make intercession for his people (*Heb 7:24,25*). The use of Christ's name for intercessory purposes was new to the apostles, since it was only thus employed after his ascension.] **25 These things have I spoken unto you in dark sayings: the hour comes, when I shall no more speak unto you in dark sayings, but shall tell you plainly of the Father.** [This closing discourse was full of dark sayings that the disciples did not understand, but when the gospel facts were completed and when the Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, then Christ through the Spirit made all things plain to them.] **26 In that day you shall ask in my name** [fullness of knowledge would lead them to look readily to Christ as intercessor]: **and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father** [676] **for you; 27 for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father. 28 I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father.** [Birth and death are alike beyond our control. That Jesus had a divine as well as a human nature is shown by the fact that his entrance into and exit from the world were both governed by his own violation, as was also his resurrection (*Jn 10:17,18*). While the apostles did not believe in the voluntary exit of Jesus, it having not yet taken place, they did believe that he had come into the world as a divine being, and for this belief the Father loved them, and this love of the Father was not to be lost sight of in considering the mediatory work of Christ. In short, the Father must be looked upon as one who does not need to be interceded with because of a lack of love. Though, according to the divine plan and order, Jesus is intercessor (*1Ti 2:5 1Jo 2:1,2*), yet the office is not self-assumed for the purpose of counteracting any spirit of severity in the Father, but is, on the contrary, undertaken by direct appointment of the Father, made because of the Father's love (*Jn 3:16*). Failing to recognize the Father as the fountain and source of grace, love and mercy has led the Roman Church into gross errors. The Father being suspected of undue rigor, a like suspicion arose also as to the Son because of his nearness to the Father. Therefore the Virgin Mary was called in to intercede with and soften the obduracy of the Son. Since the deification of the Virgin Mary in 1853, she also has been looked upon with growing distrust, and the tendency has been to call upon Joseph to intercede with Mary to intercede with the Son to intercede with the Father. Thus that wonderful love of God that passes all understanding is made less than that of mere mortals who never manifested a measure of philanthropy above what is common. Against such errors Jesus guards us by causing us to understand that, if the love of the Father alone were to be considered, there would be no need for him to intercede at all.] **29 His disciples say, Lo, now you speak** [677] **plainly, and do not speak a dark saying.** [They now clearly understood that as Jesus came from heaven so would he return to heaven, but they did not understand the process by which this return would be effected.] **30 Now we know that you know all things, and need not that any man should ask you: by this we believe that you came forth from God.** [The miraculous manner in which he had just read their thoughts caused them to boldly declare their faith in his divinity.] **31 Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? 32 Behold, the hour comes, yes, is come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.** [He contrasts the faith that his

disciples then professed with that utter lack of it that they would manifest in a few hours. All their confidence in his divinity would vanish when they saw him arrested, etc., and they would seek their own safety, leaving him to his fate. Much as he would feel their desertion, he would not be left utterly comfortless, because the Father would be with him. Paul speaks in a similar strain--*2Ti 4:16-18*.] **33 These things have I spoken unto you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.** [Christ's return to the Father and his throne is the Christian's source of peace. As none of the accumulations of evil that came upon Christ prevented him from attaining his goal, so the Christian feels that in the conquering power of Christ, he too shall rise superior to all his troubles, and this feeling brings him peace.] [678]

Section 123 HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER OF JESUS (Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30) Jn 17

A. Glorification for Himself (Jn 17:1-5).

(d) 1 These things spoke Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to heaven [the action marked the turning of his thoughts from the disciples to the Father], **he said, Father, the hour is come** [see on *Jn 2:4* and *Jn 7:6*]; **glorify your Son, that the son may glorify you: 2 even as you gave him authority over all flesh, that to all whom you have given him, he should give eternal life.** [The Son here prays for his glorification, namely: resurrection, ascension, coronation, etc., that through these he may be perfected as a Savior and be enabled to give that eternal life unto millions, the bestowal of which will redound unto the glory of the Father. Moreover, the glorification of Christ revealed his divine nature, and the Father was glorified by its thus becoming apparent that he had bestowed upon the world so priceless a gift. The gift of authority was bestowed after the resurrection (*Mt 28:18*). All humanity was given into his hands that he might give life to that part of it that yielded itself to him in true discipleship.] **3 And this is life eternal, that they should know you the only true God, and him whom you sent, even Jesus Christ.** [God is revealed in Jesus Christ: Jesus had just prayed for his glorification that the Father may be fully revealed in him. The revelation of God is the first step toward the attainment of eternal life. The inner reception of that revelation by a daily conformity to it is the second step. As we actually live God's life we come to know him; but we cannot attempt to live his life without a revelation.] **4 I glorified you on the earth, having accomplished the work that you have given me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me with your own self with the glory that I had with you before the world was.** [679] [As the hour for finishing his work had arrived, Jesus speaks of it as already finished. As he had finished that for which he had emptied himself of his glory and entered the world, he asks that now, on his departure from the world, he may be reinstated and permitted to assume again what he had laid aside. Paul's words are commentary on these two verses (*Php 2:5-11*). Thus Jesus ends the first division of his prayer that is a petition for himself, for the glory of the Father, and the good of the world. The second division that follows is a fourfold plea for the disciples that he then had, followed by petitions in their behalf.]

B. Preservation for his Disciples (Jn 17:6-13).

(d) 6 I manifested your name unto the men whom you gave me out of the world: yours they were, and you gave them to me [As a first plea or reason why the Father should bless the disciples of the Son, the Son urges that they are his property by gift of the Father. The Father is possessor of all humanity as the Creator; the Son by gift from the Father possesses the believing portion of humanity as its redeemer]; **and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that all things whatever you have given me are from you: 8 for the words that you gave me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from you, and they believed that you sent me.** [As a second reason for blessing the disciples Jesus pleads their reception and retention of the truth that the Father had sent him to reveal, and the

resulting knowledge and faith. The truth revealed by Jesus was so palpably divine that the disciples could know that its bearer came from heaven. But whether that bearer came of his own volition or as a commissioned messenger of the Father they could not know. But where knowledge was impossible, they trusted to Jesus and believed.] **9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom you have given me; for they are yours: 10 and all things that are mine are yours, and yours are mine: and I am glorified in them.** [As a third plea he urges the joint possession that the Father held with [680] him in the disciples, and the further fact that the Son was glorified in the disciples.] **11 And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to you.** [As a last plea he urges the necessity of the Father's care over the disciples since the Son will be no longer in the world to care for them.] **Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are.** [Our Lord's first petition grows out of his last plea. His departure would tend to scatter the disciples; they had been united by faith in the name of Christ, that is, by the divine power given of God and revealed in Christ (*Ex 23:21 Isa 9:6 Jer 23:6*), and Jesus asks that they may be still so kept, and that their unity may be as perfect as that subsisting between the Father and the Son.] **12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name that you have given me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition** [literally, "son of perishing"]; **that the scripture might be fulfilled.** [*Ps 41:9.* Jesus emphasizes the fervency of his petition by urging his own conduct as to what he asks. He asks the Father to care for those for whom he had himself been so painstakingly careful that not one had been lost, except him whom it was impossible to save, and whose loss the Scripture had predicted--a loss in no way chargeable against the loving fidelity of the Good Shepherd.] **13 But now I come to you; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves.** [Being about ready to depart from the world, Jesus had taught and prayed for his disciples that they might be brought into a oneness with the Father similar to what he himself enjoyed, and the consequent joy that filled his own life might in some measure fill theirs also. This also was part of his care for them.]

C. Sanctification for his Disciples (Jn 17:14-19).

(d) 14 I have given them your word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. [An additional reason for the Father's care is presented. The reception of the Father's word had brought upon them the hatred of the world, thereby increasing their need of a [681] heavenly blessing, as a counter-balance to the curse of the world. Jesus as advocate gives potency to his petitions as to the sufferings of his disciples by suggesting that he has himself shared them--*Heb 2:10-18.*] **15 I pray not that you should take them from the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one.** [The care that he asks in protection in, and not removal from, the world. It is best both for the Christian and for the world that he should remain in it. The world is blessed by the Christian's presence (*Mt 4:14-16*), and abiding in the world affords the Christian an opportunity of conquest and reward--*Ro 8:37 Re 2:26 3:21.*] **16 They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth: your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.** [To sanctify means to set apart to a holy use. As Jesus himself had been set apart as God's messenger to the world, so he had set apart the apostles as his messengers to it. This setting apart was not a formal, empty act, but was accomplished by God's imparting or developing a fitness in the one sanctified to perform the duties for which he was set apart. Fitness in this case would be imparted by imbuing the apostles with the Spirit of truth. Jesus had set himself apart (*Heb 9:14*), that the apostles might follow his example--*2Co 5:14-17* (and also the church--*Php 2:5 Ro 12:1,2*), that thereby the world might be saved. Our Lord's prayer as to the apostles (*Jn 17:1-19*) is, therefore, a threefold petition, namely: that they may be kept in unity, kept from the world and the devil, and that they may be set apart and equipped for the gospel service. We come now to the third division of the prayer wherein he asks for blessings upon future believers.]

D. Unification for his Church (Jn 17:20-26).

(d) 20 Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that you sent [682] me. [Here again the first petition is for unity, and again the unity subsisting between the Father and the Son is designated as the kind desired. That future disciples may understand the nature of this unity, Jesus sets it forth in an amplified statement, which reveals the fact that he does not ask for a unity similar to that subsisting between the Father and the Son, but for that very unity itself enlarged and extended so as to become a triple instead of a dual unity by the comprehension of the disciples within its compass. As a reason why the Father should bring about this unity (and a reason also why all Christians should work for it), our Lord states that its attainment will result in the conversion of the world to the Christian faith.] **22 And the glory that you have given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one** [Jesus here states that to bring about the unity that he here prays for he has bestowed upon the disciples the glory that the Father had bestowed upon him. The glory mentioned was that of being the Son of God (*Mt 3:17 Jn 1:14 Heb 1:5 3:6*), which glory Jesus imparts to his followers (*Jn 1:12 1Jo 3:1*). In other words, he made us his brethren that we might be united in one great household (*Ro 8:29 Eph 1:10 2:19 1Jo 3:9,10 4:8,16*). A true comprehension of the Fatherhood of God and our brotherhood in Christ must result in unity]; **23 I in them, and you in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that you sent me, and love them, even as you love me.** [The perfect unity of the church and the putting forth of its power in harmonious effort to convert the world will be equivalent to a demonstration of the truth of his divine mission. *Jn 17:21* asserts that the initial stages of unity will produce faith in the world, and this verse adds that the perfection of that unity will lead the world beyond faith into the realm of actual knowledge as to the divine mission of Christ. The context suggests that this unity will result in gracious manifestations of the Father's love. Possibly these manifestations may be of such a nature as to aid in bringing about [683] the state of knowledge mentioned.] **24 Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, that you have given me: for you loved me before the foundation of the world.** [While Jesus prays that his disciples may enter the heavenly state, that state is not expressed as the end desired. He wishes them to be in that state that they may behold his glory. The glory of Christ is his Sonship, and the love that accompanies that relationship. To behold this is the height of spiritual exaltation. To know God is life eternal, and to behold God is joy ineffable. God is truly beheld subjectively. We must be like him to see him as he is (*1Jo 3:2*). The second petition of Jesus, therefore, in no way savors of a vainglorious desire that his disciples may behold him to lead them to admire him, but a wish that they may participate in the heavenly state, and know the Sonship of Jesus and all its attendant blessedness by, in some measure, participating in it.] **25 O righteous Father, the world did not know you, but I knew you; and these knew that you sent me; 26 and I made known unto them your name, and will make it known; that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them.** [In these closing sentences Jesus blends his present and his future disciples. To his present disciples he had made known the Father's name, and to the future ones he would make it known. The knowledge that he had of the Father had been imparted to the disciples, and they had received it, and had thereby been in some measure fitted for the revelation of the glory for which he had just prayed. The world, on the contrary, had rejected Christ's revelation, and had refused to know God, and had thus become unworthy of the privilege here asked for the disciples. Jesus had revealed the Father while on earth that men might attain to the revelation of God in the hereafter, thus participating in the love that the Father has for the Son because the Son is spiritually in them. It is a significant fact that the two of the five petitions of this prayer are for Christian unity. It may be said generally of all [684] the petitions that they ask the Father to complete what the Son has already begun and completed to the limit of his present circumscribed power.]

Section 124
GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE
(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:30, 36-46; Mk 14:26, 32-42; Lk 22:39-46; Jn 18:1

A. Instructions in the Garden (Mt 26:36; Mk 14:32; Lk 22:40; Jn 18:1).

(d) 1 When Jesus had spoken these words [the words contained in *Jn 14:1-17:26*], (a) 30 And when they had sung a hymn [the shadow of the cross did not quench the spirit of praise in Christ], they went out (c) 39 And he came out, and (d) he went forth with his disciples (c) as his custom was, (d) over the brook Kidron, (a) into {(b) unto} the mount of Olives. (d) where there was a garden, into which he entered, he and his disciples. {(c) and the disciples also followed him.} (a) 36 Then comes Jesus with them (b) 32 And they come unto a place that was named {(a) called} Gethsemane [The name Gethsemane means a *place of oil-presses*, and hence it accords well with the name of the mountain at whose base it was situated. But the place was now a garden. It was about half a mile from the city, and from what Luke says here and elsewhere (*Lk 21:37*), it seems that Jesus often resorted to it while in Jerusalem at the festivals. Compare also *Jn 18:2*], (c) 40 And when he was at the place, he said {(a) said} unto his disciples, Sit here, while I pray. (c) Pray that you enter not into temptation. [As the hour of trial and temptation came upon Jesus he fortified himself against it by prayer. And he bade his disciples do likewise (*Lk 22:40*), for his arrest would involve them also in temptations that he [685] foresaw that they would not be able to withstand.]

B. Sorrow in the Garden (Mt 26:37; Mk 14:33-34).

(a) 37 And he took {(b) takes} with him Peter (a) and the two sons of Zebedee, (b) James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, (a) sorrowful and very troubled. [While seeking heavenly aid in this hour of extremity, our Lord also manifested his desire for human sympathy. All the eleven apostles were with him in the garden, and the three most capable of sympathizing with him were stationed nearer to him than the rest.]

C. Prayer in the Garden (Mt 26:38; Mk 14:35-36; Lk 22:41-44).

(c) 41 And he was parted from them about a stone's cast [one hundred fifty to two hundred feet]; (b) 34 And (a) 38 Then said he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: (b) abide you here, and watch. (a) with me. [The sequel shows that the phrase "even unto death" was no figure of rhetoric. The nervous prostration of Jesus was such as to endanger his life, and the watching of the apostles may have been doubly needful. Not only did he require their sympathy, but he may also have looked to them to render him assistance in the case of a physical collapse.] 39 And he went forward a little, (c) and he kneeled down (b) and fell on the face, (a) and fell on his face, and prayed, (b) that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. [This posture was expressive of the most intense supplication.] 36 And he said, {(a) saying,} (b) Abba, (a) My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: (b) all things are possible unto you; (c) if you be willing, remove this cup from me: (b) howbeit (a) nevertheless, not as {(b) what} I will, (a) but as {(b) what} you will. (c) not my will, but your, be done. [Much of mystery is found in all life, so it is small wonder if the dual nature of Jesus presents insoluble problems. It perplexes many to find that the divine in Jesus did not sustain him better during his trial in the garden. But we must remember that it was appointed unto Jesus to die, and that the divine in him was not to interfere with this appointment, or the approaches to it. For want, therefore, of a better expression, we may say that from the time Jesus entered the garden until he expired on the cross, the human in him was in the [686] ascendant; and "being found in fashion as a man" (*Php 2:8*), he endured these trials as if wholly human. His prayer, therefore, is the cry of his humanity for deliverance. The words "if it is possible" with which it opens breathe the same spirit of submissive obedience that is found in the closing words. Reminding the Father of the limitless range of his power, he petitions him to change his counsel as to the crucifixion of the Son, if his gracious purposes can be in any other way carried out. Jesus uses the words "cup" and "hour" (*Mk 13:35*) interchangeably. They are both words of broad compass, intended to include all that he would undergo from that time until his resurrection. They embrace all his mental, moral, physical, and spiritual suffering that we can discover, together with an infinite volume of a propitiatory and vicarious nature that lies beyond the reach of our understanding. The submission of Jesus was no new fruitage of his character; the prayer of the

garden had been the inner purpose of his entire life--*Jn 5:30* and *Jn 6:38*.] **43 And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.** [Commentators give instances of bloody sweat under abnormal pathological conditions.]

D. Disappointment in the Garden (Mt 26:40-46; Mk 14:37-42; Lk 22:45-46).

(c) **45 And when he rose up from his prayer, he came {(a) comes} unto the disciples, and finds {(c) found} them sleeping for sorrow, 46 and said unto them, Why do you sleep? rise and pray, that you enter not into temptation.** [The admonition that had at first been addressed to all the eleven (*Lk 22:40*) is now spoken to the chosen three] (a) **and said unto Peter, (b) Simon, why are you sleeping? could you not watch one hour? (a) What, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.** [Peter, having boasted of his loyalty (*Mk 14:29*), has his weakness pointed out and is further warned to be on his guard, since the weakness of his nature will not stand the coming strain. The slumber of the disciples was not through indifference; but was [687] caused by the prostration of grief. When we remember the excitement that they had endured that night, the tender words spoken by Jesus, the sadness of which was intensified by the atmosphere of mystery that pervaded them, the beautiful and touching prayer, and lastly this agony in the garden, it is not to be wondered at that the apostles, spurred by no sense of danger, should succumb to the long-borne tension and fall asleep. Had they comprehended how much the Lord needed their *wakeful* sympathy as he came again and again seeking for it, they would probably have kept awake.] (b) **39 And again (a) a second time he went away, and prayed, (b) saying the same words. (a) saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, your will be done.** [Jesus speaks of draining the cup. The "cup" was a common Hebrew figure used to denote one's divinely appointed lot or fortune--*Ps 23:5 75:8 Isa 51:17,22 Eze 23:31-33*.] **43 And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were (b) very heavy; and they knew not what to answer him.** [They were ashamed of the stupor that had come upon them and knew not what apology to make for it.] (a) **44 And he left them again, and went away, and prayed a third time, saying again the same words. (b) 41 And (a) 45 Then he came to the disciples, (b) the third time, and said unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough; (a) behold, the hour is at hand, {(b) the hour is come;} (a) and (b) behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Arise, let us be going: behold, he that betrays me is at hand.** [Our Lord's words are paradoxical. In our judgment the saying is best understood by regarding the first part of it as spoken from the Lord's viewpoint, while the latter part is spoken from the disciple's viewpoint. It is as if he said, "So far as I am concerned, you may sleep on and take your rest, for the time to be of comfort or assistance to me has wholly passed. But so far as you yourselves are concerned, you must arise and be going, because Judas with his band of temple police is upon us."] [688]

Section 125

ARREST IN THE GARDEN

(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53; Jn 18:2-11

A. Preparation of Judas (Jn 18:2-3).

(d) **2 Now Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus often resorted there with his disciples.** [See on *Lk 21:37* and *Lk 22:39*.] **3 Judas then, having received the band of soldiers, and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns and torches and weapons.**

B. Approach of the Mob (Mt 26:47; Mk 14:43; Lk 22:47).

(b) **43 And immediately, while he yet spoke, (a) lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, {(b) comes,} (a) and with him a multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests (b) and**

the scribes and the elders. (a) of the people. (c) behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, went before them [The presence of Judas is mentioned by each Evangelist. His treachery made a deep impression upon them. The arresting party that accompanied Judas consisted of the band of officers and men from the temple guard or Levitical police, Pharisees, scribes, servants, chief priests, captains of the temple and elders. They were well supplied with lights, for while the Passover is always held when the moon is full, the moon at this time of night would be near setting, and the valley of the Kidron, in which Gethsemane lay, would be darkened by the shadow of the adjoining mountain.]

C. Initial Confrontation (Jn 18:4-8).

(d) 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom do you seek? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When therefore he said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground. 7 Again therefore he asked them, Whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus of [689] Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I told you that I am *he*; if therefore you seek me, let these go their way: 9 that the word might be fulfilled that he spoke, Of those whom you have given me I lost not one. [See on *Jn 17:12*. John mentions the foreknowledge of Jesus to remind us that he could have avoided the arrest had he chosen to do so. Even the foreknowledge of Elisha was difficult to deal with (*2Ki 6:8-12*). Jesus asked, "Whom seek you?" (1) To openly and manfully declare his identity; (2) to make the Jewish rulers fully conscious that they were arresting him, an innocent man; (3) to confine the arrest to himself and thus deliver his disciples. The older commentators regard the falling to the ground as a miracle, but modern scholars look upon it as a result of sudden fear. Jesus merely manifested his dignity and majesty, and the prostration followed as a natural result.]

D. Betrayal of Judas (Mt 26:48-50; Mk 14:44-45; Lk 22:47-48).

(a) 48 Now he that betrayed him gave {(b) had given} them a token, (a) a sign, saying, Whomever I shall kiss, that is he: take him. (b) and lead him away safely. (c) and he drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, do you betray the Son of man with a kiss? (b) 45 And when he was come, (a) immediately he came to Jesus, and said {(b) said,} (a) Hail, Rabbi; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, do that for which you have come. [Some place this event before *Jn 18:2-9*. It comports better with the fitness of things to place it here. Jesus made Judas feel his utter nothingness, and his worthlessness even as a betrayer. Before Judas can in any way identify Jesus, the Lord had twice declared himself to be the party whom they sought (*Jn 18:6,8*). On the betrayal kiss, also see on *Lk 7:45*. When he approaches to carry out his contract, the Lord's question exposes him before all as a betrayer, and not a disciple as he wished to appear to be (for kissing was the common mode of salutation between men, especially between teacher and pupils), and when Judas brazenly persists in completing the sign, Jesus bids him do it, not as a friend, but as a traitor. Little did the betrayer think that the kiss of Judas would become a proverb in every nation.] Then they came [690] and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. [The sight of Judas touching him no doubt reassured them, and they laid hands on Jesus.]

E. Reactions of the Disciples (Mt 26:51; Mk 14:47; Lk 22:49; Jn 18:10).

(c) 49 And when they that were about him saw what would follow, they said, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? (b) 47 But {(a) 51 And} behold, (d) 10 Simon Peter (b) a certain one of them that stood by (a) that were with Jesus (d) therefore having a sword (a) stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and smote {(d) struck} (a) the servant of the high priest, and struck {(d) cut} off his right ear. [We have seen that the apostles were but scantily armed, there being only two swords in their possession (*Lk 22:38*). Peter evidently carried one of these, and stood ready to make good his boast that he would suffer, and, if need be, die in his Lord's service (*Mk 14:31*). He evidently struck a downward blow at Malchus' head, and Malchus would have been killed had he not dodged.] Now the servant's name was Malchus. [John knew the

household of the high priest (*Jn 18:16*). He knew Malchus by name, and he also knew his kindred--*Jn 18:26*.]

F. Words of Jesus to his Disciples (Mt 26:52-54; Lk 22:51; Jn 18:11-12).

(c) 51 But Jesus answered and said, No more of this. And he touched his ear, and healed him. [Some think that Jesus spoke these words to those who held him, asking them to loose him sufficiently to enable him to touch the ear of Malchus. Jesus addresses his disciples, commanding them not to interfere with those who were arresting him, making it a general statement of the idea that the Lord addressed specifically to Peter in the next sentence--*Mt 26:52*.] **(a) 52 Then (d) 11 Jesus therefore said {(a) said} (d) unto Peter, (a) Put up again your {(d) the} sword into the sheath: (a) its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. (d) the cup that the Father has given me, shall I not drink it?** [By the healing of Malchus' ear and the words spoken to Peter, Jesus shows that the sword is not to be used either to defend the truth or to advance his kingdom. Had he not thus spoken and acted, Pilate might have doubted his words when he [691] testified that his kingdom was not of this world (*Jn 18:36*). While we know better than to rely upon the aid of the sword for the advance of truth, we are often tempted to put undue trust in other "carnal weapons" that are equally futile. Wealth and eloquence and elaborate church buildings have but little saving grace in them. It is the truth that wins. By using the word "cup" John gives us an echo of the agony in Gethsemane, which suggests that he expects his readers to be conversant with the other Gospels (see *Mt 26:39 Mk 14:36 Lk 22:42*). The other Evangelists, having shown that Jesus was fully resolved to drink the cup, do not regard it as necessary to repeat these words.] **(a) 53 Or think you that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then should the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?** [Jesus still addresses Peter. Had it accorded with the divine purpose that Jesus should resist this arrest, angels and not men would have been his proper and infinitely more effective rescuers. But, on the contrary, it was God's purpose that he should be arrested, as the Scripture had foretold.]

G. Words of Jesus to the Mob (Mt 26:55-56a; Mk 14:48-49; Lk 22:52-53).

(a) 55 In that hour (b) Jesus answered and said unto them (a) the multitudes, (c) the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders, that were come against him, Are you come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves? (a) to seize me? (c) 53 When (a) I sat {(b) was} daily with you in the temple teaching, (c) you stretched not forth your hands against me: (b) and you took me not: (c) but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. (a) 56 But all this is come to pass, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. [The party that came to arrest Jesus was large (*Lk 22:52*). The word "band" used by John (*Jn 18:3*) to describe part of it is *speira*, which is the Greek name for the cohort, a division of the Roman army that in the time of Augustus contained five hundred fifty-five men. Ten cohorts, or a legion, were usually quartered in the castle Antonia, at the northwest corner of the temple enclosure. That the whole cohort was present is not likely (*Mt 27:27*), but there was a large enough body to represent it. The [692] Evangelists therefore properly style it a great multitude (*Mt 26:47 Mk 14:43 Lk 22:47*). Moreover, it was a motley crowd. Its strength and diversity suggest the fear that Jesus might miraculously defend himself. Each part of the crowd found courage in the strength possessed by the other part, the priests relying upon the solidity of the soldiers, the soldiers superstitiously trusting to some spiritual power residing in the priests, etc. Now, because of these fears, the preparation was as great as if some band of robbers was to be taken. The questions of Jesus, therefore, show two facts: 1. By their extensive preparation the rulers bore an unintentional testimony to his divine power. 2. By their failure to arrest him openly in the temple (*Mk 14:49*), they bore witness to his innocence. With his divinity and his innocence, therefore, Jesus challenges them, referring to their own conduct for testimony thereto. In conclusion, he cites them to the Scriptures that they were fulfilling (*Psa 22:6 Isa 53:7*). Our Lord's dual reference to the Old Testament at this sacred time should cause us to handle them with awe and reverence.]

H. Flight of the Disciples (Mt 26:56; Mk 14:50-52).

(b) 50 And (a) Then all of the disciples left him, and fled. (b) 51 And a certain young man followed with him, having a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked body: and they lay hold on him; 52 but he left the linen cloth, and fled naked. [All the predictions of Jesus had failed to prepare the apostles for the terrors of his arrest. Despite all his warnings, each apostle sought his own safety. The young man who fled naked is usually presumed to be Mark himself, and it is thought that he thus speaks impersonally after the manner of Matthew and John. The manner of his description shows that he was not an apostle. As Mark's mother resided in Jerusalem (*Ac 12:12,25*), Canon Cook advances the theory that the Lord's Supper was eaten in the upper room of her house, and that when the disciples retired with Jesus from thence to Gethsemane, Mark slipped from his bed, threw his sindon about him, and followed after them. The sindon, or linen vestment, was very costly, not being worn even by the middle classes: no apostle would be thus attired.] [693]

Section 126
TRIAL BEFORE ANNAS
(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)
Mt 26:57; Mk 14:53; Lk 22:54; Jn 18:12-14, 19-23

(d) 12 So the band and the chief captain, and the officers of the Jews, seized Jesus and bound him, 13 and led him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. [For confusion in the priesthood, etc., see on *Lk 3:2* and *Jn 11:49*.] **14 Now Caiaphas was he that gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.** [See on *Jn 11:49*. John restates this fact to remind the reader that Jesus was about to be tried by those who had prejudged him and decided upon his death.] **19 The high priest therefore asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his teaching.** [We should note that John calls Annas high priest. The high priesthood was a life office. According to Moses, Annas was high priest, but the Romans had given the office to Caiaphas, so that Annas was high priest *de jure*, but Caiaphas was so *de facto*. As high priest, therefore, and as head of the Sadducean party, the people looked to Annas before Caiaphas, taking Jesus to him first. The influence of Annas is shown by the fact that he made five of his sons and sons-in-law high priests. Annas is said to have been about sixty years old at this time. He questioned Jesus for the purpose of obtaining, if possible, some material out of which to frame an accusation.] **20 Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world; I ever taught in synagogues** [on the synagogue, see on *Mk 1:39*], **and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and in secret spoke I nothing. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask them that have heard me, what I spoke unto them: behold, these know the things that I said.** [Jesus indeed spoke some things privately (*Mt 13:10,11*), but he did not do so for [694] the purposes of concealment (*Mt 10:27*). Jesus was the light of the world; addressing his teachings to all flesh, he chose the most public places to utter them--places, however, dedicated to the worship of the true God. He who had said that heaven and earth would pass away, but that his word would not pass away (*Lk 21:33*), did not suffer his teaching to be held in contempt; he did not permit it to be made matter for cross examination. On the contrary, it was to be taken cognizance of among the things universally known and understood. The very officers who had arrested him could tell about it--*Jn 7:45,46*.] **22 And when he had said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, Do you answer the high priest this way? 23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you smite me?** [Jesus was then under arrest, and as the trial had not yet opened there was ample time to add new matter to the charges against him. If, in addressing the high priest, he had just spoken words worthy of punishment, the officer who struck him should, instead, have preferred charges against him and had him punished in a legal manner. If the officer could not do this (and the point is that he could not), he was doubly wrong in striking him. Thus the Lord calmly rebuked the wrong-doer. Compare his conduct with that of Paul under somewhat similar circumstances (*Ac 23:1-3*). Jesus exemplified his teaching at *Mt 5:39*.] [695] **24 Annas therefore sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.** [Foiled in his attempted examination of Jesus, Annas sends him to trial.] **(b) and**

there come together with him all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. (a) 57 And they that had taken Jesus led him away to *the house of Caiaphas the high priest*, (c) and brought him into the high priest's house. (a) where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. [It is very likely that Annas had apartments in the same palace with Caiaphas, and that from these apartments Jesus was led into some hall large enough to hold the Sanhedrin, which was now convened. But this was not its formal session as a court; it was more in the nature of a caucus, or committee of the whole.]

Section 127
TRIAL BEFORE CAIAPHAS
(Thursday Night, April 6, A.D. 30)
Mt 26:58-68; Mk 14:53-65; Lk 22:63-65

(b) 55 Now the chief priests and the whole council sought (a) false witness against Jesus, (b) to {(a) that they might} put him to death; 60 and they found it not, though many false witnesses came. (b) 56 For many bore false witness against him, and their witness agreed not together. (a) But afterward came (b) 57 And there stood up certain, (a) two, (b) and bore false witness against him, (a) 61 and said, {(b) saying,} (a) This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. (b) 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands. 59 And not even so did their witness agree together. [What Jesus [696] had really said will be found at *Jn 2:19-22*. Though his words were misunderstood at that time, being applied, not to his body, but to Herod's temple, yet it is not unlikely that the Jewish rulers, hearing our Lord's prediction that he would rise from the dead after three days (*Mt 27:62,63*), came to understand the import of his words. If so, the record itself shows the willingness of the Sanhedrin to receive false witnesses against Christ (*Mt 26:59 Mk 14:55*), for its judges received testimony that they knew to be utterly immaterial if rightly construed. The accounts of the two Evangelists, moreover, show how the witnesses failed to agree (*Mt 26:60 Mk 14:56*). A man could only be condemned on the testimony of two witnesses as to some fact or facts constituting a ground for condemnation--*Dt 17:6 19:15*.] (a) 62 And the high priest stood up, (b) in the midst, and asked Jesus, (a) and said unto him, {(b) saying,} Do you answer nothing? what is it that these witness against you? (a) 63 But Jesus held his peace. (b) and answered nothing. [While the testimony then before the court might be used to show that Jesus was recklessly boastful, it was insufficient to justify a sentence of blasphemy. A threat to destroy the temple might be thus construed (*Jer 26:9-11 Ac 6:13,14*); but a promise to rebuild the temple, if destroyed, was altogether different. The high priest, knowing this, sought to extort from Jesus some additional evidence. With great cunning and effrontery he assumes that the testimony is all that could be possibly desired, and demands of Jesus what he has to say in answer to it. But our Lord did not suffer himself to seem so easily deceived. He gave no explanation, since the future would explain his meaning, and speak the real truth to all who had ears to hear it.] (a) And (b) Again the high priest asked him, and said {(a) said} unto him, (b) Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? (a) I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. [Seeing that Jesus was not to be lured into an answer, and well knowing his perfect frankness, Caiaphas resolved, in his desperation, to question Jesus plainly and [697] bluntly. His question is twofold: 1. Are you Christ? 2. Are you the Son of God? The latter of these would constitute blasphemy, and the former, by showing a boastful spirit, would tend to confirm the charge. Perhaps, too, Caiaphas anticipated the future, and foresaw how useful this claim to be the Messiah would prove when a hearing was had before Pilate (*Lk 23:2*). Originally the Messiah was recognized as the Son of God (*Ps 2:7*), but if the Jews had ever generally entertained such an idea, they had lost it before Jesus' day, The Messiah might of course be called the Son of God in that secondary sense in which Adam was thus called (*Jn 1:49 Lk 3:38*). But Jesus had used the term in an entirely different sense, and his usage had been extremely offensive to the Jews (*Jn 5:17,18 10:30-39 Mt 22:41-46*). Caiaphas evidently wished Jesus to answer this question in that new sense that the Lord had given to the words. Caiaphas had no

legal right to ask either of these questions. No man can be compelled to testify against himself, but he knew the claims of Jesus, and realized that if Jesus repudiated them he would be shamed forever, and if he asserted them he could be charged with blasphemy. Taking advantage, therefore, of the situation, Caiaphas put the question with the usual formula of an oath, thus adding moral power to it, for, under ordinary circumstances, one was held guilty if he refused to answer when thus adjured (*Lv 5:1*). When their own witnesses failed, these rulers called the "faithful witness"--*1Ti 6:13 Re 1:5*.] **(b) 62 And Jesus said, {(a) said} unto him, You have said: (b) I am: and (a) nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth you shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on {(b) with} the clouds of heaven.** [Jesus freely confessed the truth that his church is called upon to confess. "Right hand of Power" was commonly understood to mean the right hand of God. By the words "nevertheless" and "henceforth" Jesus brings the present state of humiliation into contrast with his future state of glory. Hard as it might be for them to believe it, the day would come when he should [698] sit in judgment and they should stand on trial before him.] **(b) 63 And (a) 65 Then the high priest rent his garments, {(b) clothes,} and said, {(a) saying,} He has spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now you have heard the blasphemy: 66 what do you think?** [Though Jesus had given the very answer that the high priest was longing to hear, yet he hypocritically pretends to be shocked at it, and rends his clothes and feigns horror. Evidently he feared the effect of the clear, calm answer of Jesus and sought to counteract its influence on his colleagues.] **They answered and said, He is worthy of death. (b) And they all condemned him to be worthy of death.** [This was not the final, formal sentence, but the mere determination of the council at the preliminary hearing.] **(c) 63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and beat him. (b) 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, (a) 67 Then did they spit in his face and buffet him: (c) 64 And they blindfolded him, (a) and some smote him with the palms of their hands, (a) 68 saying, {(b) and [began] to say unto him,} (a) Prophecy unto us, you Christ: who is he that struck you? (b) and the officers received him with blows of their hands. (c) 65 And many other things spoke they against him, reviling him.** [To spit in the face has been an insult in all ages and in all lands. See *Nm 12:14 Dt 25:9 Job 30:10*. Jesus, having stood out for examination, is now given back to the officers to be led away into the council chamber. These officers received Jesus with many indignities. They seek to make his high claims contemptible, and to make it appear that instead of being divine he is hardly worthy to be regarded as human.] [699]

Section 128

PETER'S DENIALS OF CHRIST

(Before Dawn Friday, April 7, A.D. 30)

Mt 26:58, 69-75; Mk 14:54, 66-72; Lk 22:54-62; Jn 18:15-18, 25-27

A. First Denial (Mt 26:58, 69-70; Mk 14:54, 66-68; Lk 22:55-57; Jn 18:15-18).

(a) 58 But {(d) 15 And} Simon Peter followed Jesus [leaving Jesus in the palace of the high priest, we now turn back to the garden of Gethsemane at the time when Jesus left it under arrest, that we may follow the course of Simon Peter in his threefold denial of the Master], **and so did another disciple.** [This other disciple was evidently the apostle John, who thus speaks of himself impersonally.] **Now that disciple was known unto the high priest, and entered in with Jesus into the court of the high priest** [John's acquaintanceship appears to have been with the household as well as with the high priest personally, for we find that it is used as a permit at the doorway. It is likely that the high priest knew John rather in a business way--*Ac 4:13*]; **(b) 54 And Peter had followed him afar off, (a) unto the court of the high priest, 16 but Peter was standing at the door without. So the other disciple, who was known unto the high priest, went out and spoke unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. (b) even within, into the court of the high priest** [For courts of houses see on *Mk 2:2*. It is still customary to have female porters at the houses of the great and rich. See *Ac 12:13*. John would have shown a truer kindness to Peter had he let him stay out]; **(d) 17 The maid therefore that kept the door said unto Peter, Are you also one of this man's disciples? He said, I am not. (a) and [Peter]**

entered in [The doorkeeper evidently recognized John as a disciple, and was therefore suspicious of Peter. The cowardly "I am not" of Peter is a sad contrast to the strong "I am he" of Jesus--*Jn 18:8*], [700] **(d) 18 Now the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a fire of coals; for it was cold; and they were warming themselves: and Peter also was with them** [they were gathered around a little smokeless charcoal fire--*Jn 18:18*], **(c) 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court, and had sat down together, Peter (a) sat with the officers, (c) in the midst of them. (a) to see the end.** [Though his faith in Christ was shaken, he still loved him enough to see what would become of him.] **(b) and he was sitting with the officers, and warming himself in the light of the fire. (c) 56 And (a) 69 Now (b) as (d) Simon Peter (a) was sitting {(d) standing} (a) without (b) beneath in the court, there comes {(a) came} unto him, (c) a certain (b) one of the maids of the high priest; 67 and seeing Peter (c) as he sat in the light of the fire, (b) warming himself, she looked {(c) and looking} steadfastly upon him, said, {(b) said, (a) saying,} You also were with Jesus the Galilean. (b) the Nazarene, even Jesus. (c) This man also was with him. (a) 70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what you say. (b) I neither know, nor understand what you say: (c) Woman, I know him not. (d) They said therefore unto him, Are you also one of his disciples? He denied, and said, I am not. (b) and he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.**

B. Second Denial (Mt 26:71-72; Mk 14:69-70; Lk 22:58; Jn 18:25).

(a) 71 And when he had gone out into the porch, (c) after a little while another saw him, and said, You also are one of them. But Peter said, Man, I am not. (b) 69 And (a) another (b) the maid saw him, and began again to say {(a) said} unto them that were there, (b) that stood by, This is one of them. (a) This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth. (b) 70 But {(a) 72 And} again he denied (b) it. (a) with an oath, I know not the man. [Peter's second denial was of a quadruple nature. He denied to four different parties (*Mt 26:69-72 Mk 14:66-69 Lk 22:56-58 Jn 18:25*), but in such quick succession that the event is regarded as one.]

C. Third Denial (Mt 26:73-75; Mk 14:70b-72; Lk 22:59-62; Jn 18:26-27).

(a) 73 And after a little (c) after the space of about one hour another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a [701] truth this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean. 60 But Peter said, Man, I know not what you say. (b) Again they that stood by (a) came and said to Peter, Of a truth you also are one of them; (b) for you are a Galilean. (a) for your speech makes you known. And immediately, while he yet spoke, the cock crew. (d) 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, Did not I see you in the garden with him? (b) 70 But (d) 27 Peter therefore denied again: (a) 74 Then began he to curse and to swear, I know not the {(b) this} (a) man. (b) of whom you speak. 72 And immediately (c) immediately, while he yet spoke, (b) the second time the cock crew. [Exasperated by the repeated accusations, Peter loses his temper and begins to emphasize his denial by profanity. Desire to make good his denial is now supreme in his thoughts and the Lord whom he denies is all but forgotten.] **(c) 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered (b) And Peter called to mind the word, (c) of the Lord, (a) that Jesus had said, (b) how that he said unto him, (a) Before the cock crow, (b) twice, (c) this you shall deny me thrice. 62 And he went out, (b) And when he thought thereon, he wept. (c) bitterly.** [When Peter remembered the loving tenderness of Jesus manifested when he foretold Peter's crime it formed a background against which the sin appeared in all its hideous enormity.]

Section 129

TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

(After Dawn Friday, April 7, A.D. 30)

Mt 27:1-2; Mk 15:1; Lk 22:66-23:1; Jn 18:28a

(a) 1 Now when morning was come, (c) 66 And as soon as it was day, (b) immediately (c) the assembly of the [702] elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests

and scribes; and they led him away into their council, (a) all the chief priests and {(b) with} the elders (a) of the people (b) and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and (a) took counsel against Jesus to put him to death [Since blasphemy was by no means a criminal offense among the Romans, the Sanhedrin consulted together and sought for some charge of which the Romans would take notice. As we follow their course it will become evident to us that they found no new ground of accusation against Jesus, and, failing to do so, they decided to make use of our Lord's claim to be the Christ by so perverting it as to make him seem to assert an intention to rebel against the authority of Rome]: (c) saying, **67 If you are the Christ, tell us. But he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe** [as experience had already proven--*Jn 8:59 10:31*]: **68 and if I ask you, you will not answer.** [Thus Jesus protests against the violence and injustice of his trial. His judges were asking him whether he was the Christ without any intention of investigating the truth of his claim, but merely for the purpose of condemning him by unwarrantedly assuming that he was not the Christ. They therefore asked in an unlawful spirit as well as in an unlawful manner. Jesus had a good right to ask them questions tending to confirm his Christhood by the Scripture, but had he done so they would not have answered--*Mt 22:41-45*. Jesus appeals to them to try the question as to who he was, but they insist on confining the inquiry as to who he claimed to be, assuming that the claim was false.] **69 But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God.** [See on *Mk 14:62*.] **70 And they all said, Are you then the Son of God? And he said unto them, You say that I am.** [The Hebrew mode of expression, equivalent to "You say it, because I am."] **71 And they said, What further need have we of witness? for we ourselves have heard from his own mouth.** [Thus they unconsciously admit their lack of evidence against Jesus.] [703] **(b) 1 And the whole company of them rose up, (a) 2 and they bound (b) Jesus, and carried {(a) led} him away, (d) 28 They lead Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Praetorium: (c) and brought him before Pilate. (b) and delivered him up to Pilate. (a) the governor. (d) and it was early;** [The Sanhedrin could try and could condemn, but could not put to death without the concurring sentence of the Roman governor. To obtain this sentence, they now lead Jesus before Pilate in the early dawn, having made good use of their time.]

Section 130
FIRST TRIAL BEFORE PILATE
(Friday, April 7, A.D. 30)
Mt 27:11-14; Mk 15:2-5; Lk 23:2-5; Jn 18:28-38

A. Initial Accusations (Lk 23:2; Jn 18:28b-32).

(d) and they themselves entered not into the Praetorium, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover. [See on *Mk 14:1*.] **29 Pilate therefore went out unto them, and said, What accusation do you bring against this man? 30 They answered and said unto him, If this man were not an evildoer, we should not have delivered him up unto you.** [The Jewish rulers first attempt to induce Pilate to accept their verdict and condemn Jesus upon it, and execute him without a trial. If they had succeeded in this, Jesus would have been put to death as a blasphemer. But as Pilate had insisted upon trying Jesus, and as blasphemy was not a capital offense under the Roman law, Jesus was condemned and executed as the King of the Jews.] **31 Pilate therefore said unto them, Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law. The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: 32 that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke, signifying by what manner [704] of death he should die.** [As the Jews insisted on their own verdict, Pilate bade them pronounce their own sentence, declining to mix jurisdictions by pronouncing a Roman sentence on a Sanhedrin verdict. But the Jews responded that it is not in their power to pronounce the sentence for which their verdict called, since they could not put to death. Jesus could only be sentenced to death by the Roman court, and crucifixion was the mode by which its death sentence was executed. Jesus had predicted all this in the simple statement that he should die by crucifixion (*Jn 12:33,34*), but he also gave the details of his trial--*Mt 20:18,19 Mk 10:33,34*.] **(c) 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to**

Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king. [The Jews now profess to change their verdict into a charge, they themselves becoming witnesses as to the truth of the matter charged. They say "We found," thereby asserting that the things that they stated to Pilate were the things for which they had condemned Jesus. Their assertion was utterly false, for the three things that they now mentioned had formed no part whatever of the evidence against Jesus in their trial of him. The first charge, that Jesus was a perverter or seducer of the people, was extremely vague. The second, that he taught to withhold tribute from Caesar, was a deliberate falsehood. See on *Mk 12:17*. The third, that he claimed to be king, was true, but this third charge, coupled with the other two, was intended to convey a sense that was maliciously false. Jesus was a spiritual King, and claimed to be such, and as such was no offender against the Roman government. But the rulers intended that Pilate should regard him as claiming to be a political king, which he had constantly refused to do--*Jn 6:15*.]

B. Interrogation by Pilate (Mt 27:11; Mk 15:2; Lk 23:3; Jn 18:33-35).

(d) 33 Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and called Jesus, (a) 11 Now Jesus stood before the governor [Jesus is called from the guards who have him in custody and stands alone before Pilate that the governor may investigate his case privately]: **(b) 2 And Pilate (a) the governor [705] asked him, (d) and said unto him, {(a) saying,} Are you the King of the Jews?** [The Gospels are unanimous in giving this question as the first words addressed by Pilate to Jesus. The question expresses surprise. There was nothing in the manner or attire of Jesus to suggest a royal claimant. The question was designed to draw Jesus out should he chance to be a fanatical or an unbalanced enthusiast.] **And Jesus (b) answering said {(c) answered him and said,} (b) unto him, You say. (d) Do you say this of yourself, or did others tell it you concerning me?** [Using the Hebrew form of affirmative reply (see on *Mk 14:62*), Jesus admits that he is a king, but asks a question that forms the strongest negation that he is a king in the sense contained in the Jewish accusation. Had he been a king in that sense, Pilate would have been the one most likely to know it. The question also, by an indirect query as to the accuser, reveals to Pilate's mind that no Roman had accused him. He was accused of the Jews, and when he had that restless, rebellious people ever found fault with a man who sought to free them from the galling Roman yoke?] **35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?** [The strong, practical mind of the Roman at once caught the drift of Christ's question, and perceived that the title "King of the Jews" had in it a double meaning, so that it might be construed in some apolitical sense. What this sense was he could not tell, for he was not a Jew. The mysteries of that nation were of no interest to him except where his office compelled him to understand them.] **Your own nation and the chief priests delivered you unto me: what have you done?** [Pilate concedes that the accusation against Jesus comes from an unexpected and suspicious source, and he asks Jesus to tell him plainly by what means he had incurred the enmity of the leaders of his people.]

C. Explanation by Jesus (Lk 23:4; Jn 18:36-38).

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from here. [Jesus answers Pilate's question indirectly. He had done something to incur [706] the enmity of the rulers, and that was to have authority with and exercise influence over the people (*Jn 12:19*). They objected to his kingly claims (*Mt 21:15,16 Lk 19:38,39*), but Jesus shows Pilate that these kingly claims, however distasteful to the Jews, were no offense to or menace against the authority of Rome. Further than this, Jesus did not define his kingdom, for Pilate had no concern in it beyond this. It was sufficient to inform him that it made no use of physical power even for purposes of defense. Such a kingdom could cause no trouble to Rome, and the bare fact stated by Jesus proved that it was indeed such a kingdom.] **37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Are you a king then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king.** [See on *Mk 14:62*.] **To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hears my voice.** [Jesus here enlightens Pilate as to the nature of his kingdom. He, the King, was the incarnation of truth, and all those who derive the inspiration of their life from truth were his subjects. For the purpose of

thus bearing witness to and revealing truth Jesus had been born, thus entering a new state of being, and he had come into the world in this changed condition, thus entering a new sphere of action. The words clearly imply the pre-existence of Christ and no doubt aroused that state of uneasiness or fear that was increased by the words of the Jewish rulers--*Jn 19:7,8*.] **38 Pilate said unto him, What is truth?** [This question has been regarded as an earnest inquiry, the inquiry of one who despaired, a scoffing question, etc. But it is evident that Pilate asked it intending to investigate the case of Jesus further, but, suddenly concluding that he already knew enough to answer his purpose as a judge, he stifles his curiosity as a human being and proceeds with the trial of Jesus, leaving the question unanswered.] **And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, (c) unto the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no fault in this man. (d) no crime in [707] him.** [The pronoun "I" is emphatic; as if Pilate said, "You, prejudiced fanatics, demand his death, but I, the calm judge, pronounce him innocent."]

D. Accusation by the Priests (Mt 27:12-14; Mk 15:3-5; Lk 23:5).

(b) 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things. (a) 12 And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. [When Pilate left the Praetorium to speak with the Jewish rulers, it is evident that Jesus was led out with him, and so stood there in the presence of his accusers.] **(b) 4 And (a) 13 Then (b) Pilate again asked him, {(a) said unto him,} (b) saying, Answer you nothing? behold how many things they accuse you of. (a) Hear you not how many things they witness against you? (b) 5 But Jesus no more answered anything; (a) 14 And he gave him no answer, not even to one word: (b) insomuch that Pilate (a) the governor (b) marveled. (a) greatly.** [Pilate was irritated that Jesus did not speak in his own defense. He had already seen enough of our Lord's wisdom to assure him that it would be an easy matter for him to expose the malicious emptiness of these charges--charges that Pilate himself knew to be false, but about which he had to keep silent, for, being judge, he could not become our Lord's advocate. Our Lord's silence was a matter of prophecy (*Isa 53:7*). Jesus kept still because to have successfully defended himself would have been to frustrate the purpose for which he came into the world--*Jn 12:23-28*.] **(c) 5 But they were the more urgent, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place.** [The Jews cling to their general accusation of sedition, and seek to make the largeness of the territory where Jesus operated overshadow and conceal the smallness of their testimony as to what his operations were.] [708]

Section 131 TRIAL BEFORE HEROD (Friday, April 7, A.D. 30) Lk 23:6-12

(c) 6 But when Pilate heard it [when he heard that Jesus had begun his operations in Galilee], **he asked whether the man were a Galilean. 7 And when he knew that he was of Herod's jurisdiction** [Herod was tetrarch of Galilee--*Lk 3:1*], **he sent him unto Herod, who himself also** ["also" includes both Pilate and Herod, neither of whom lived at Jerusalem] **was at Jerusalem in these days.** ["These days" refers to the Passover season. Pilate had come up from his residence at Caesarea to keep order during the Passover, and Herod had come from Tiberias to keep in favor with the Jews by showing his respect to their festival. Hearing that Jesus was a citizen of Herod's province, Pilate saw an opportunity to do two things: first, by sending Jesus to Herod he would either shift or divide the grave responsibility in which he was placed; second, he would show a courtesy to Herod that might help to remove Herod's enmity toward him, a courtesy that perhaps might be the reverse of the discourtesy that likely caused the enmity--*Lk 13:1*.] **8 Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him.** [As to Herod's previous knowledge of Christ, see *Lk 9:7-9*.] **9 And he questioned him in many words; but he answered him nothing. 10 And the chief priests and the scribes stood,**

vehemently accusing him. [The rulers felt that their case had well-near failed before Pilate, so they became the more urgent in the presence of Herod, since Herod had less reason to fear them than Pilate. In the midst of this, Jesus stood silent, answering [709] neither question nor accusation. Herod, as sated ruler, adulterer, and murderer, wished Jesus to turn juggler for his amusement; but the Son of God had nothing but silence for such a creature. The only contemptuous word that Jesus is recorded to have spoken had reference to this ruler--*Lk 13:31,32.*] **11 And Herod with his soldiers ridiculed him, and mocked him, and arraying him in gorgeous apparel sent him back to Pilate.** [Herod took vengeance upon the silence of Christ by treating him with abusive contempt. But finding nothing in Jesus worthy of condemnation, he returned him to Pilate.] **12 And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day: for before they were at enmity between themselves.** [Thus Pilate gained but half his desire: Herod was now his friend, but the case of Jesus was still on his hands.]

Section 132
SECOND TRIAL BEFORE PILATE
(Friday, April 7, A.D. 30)
Mt 27:15-30; Mk 15:6-19; Lk 23:13-25; Jn 18:39-19:16

A. Background (Mt 27:15-16; Mk 15:6-8).

(a) 15 Now at the feast [the Passover and unleavened bread] **the governor was accustomed** **{(b) used to} release unto them (a) the multitude one prisoner, whom they would. {(b) whom they asked of him.}** [No one knows when or by whom this custom was introduced, but similar customs were not unknown elsewhere, both the Greeks and Romans being wont to bestow special honor upon certain occasions by releasing prisoners.] **(a) 16 And they had then (b) 7 And there was (a) a notable prisoner, (b) one called Barabbas, lying bound with them that had made insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed murder.** [710] [Josephus tells us that there had been an insurrection against Pilate's government about that time caused by his taking money from the temple treasury for the construction of an aqueduct (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.3.2). This may have been the affair here referred to, for in it many lost their lives.] **8 And the multitude went up and began to ask him to do as he was accustomed to do unto them.** [It was still early in the morning, and the vast majority of the city of Jerusalem did not know what was transpiring at Pilate's palace. But they came thither in throngs, demanding their annual gift of a prisoner. Pilate welcomed the demand as a possible escape from his difficulties.]

B. Proposal (Mt 27:17-18; Mk 15:9-10; Lk 27:13-19).

(c) 13 And Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people [He did not wish to seem to take advantage of our Lord's accusers by releasing him during their absence. Possibly he knew of the triumphal entry the Sunday previous, and thought that the popularity of Jesus would be such that his release would be overwhelmingly demanded, and so called the rulers that they might see that he had released Jesus in answer to popular clamor. If he had such expectations, they were misplaced], **(b) 9 And (a) 17 When therefore they were gathered together, (b) Pilate answered them, saying, {(c) 14 and said} unto them, (b) Will you that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (c) You brought unto me this man, as one that perverts the people: and behold, I having examined him before you, found no fault in this man touching those things of which you accuse him: 15 no, nor yet Herod: for he sent him back unto us; and behold, nothing worthy of death has been done by him. (d) 39 But you have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: (c) 16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him. (d) Do you want therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (a) Whom will you that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? 18 For he knew {(b) perceived} (a) that for envy they (b) the chief priests had delivered him up.** [Though Jesus had been declared innocent on the joint finding of himself and Herod, [711] Pilate did not have the courage to deliberately release him. He sought to please the rulers by scourging him, and the multitude by delivering him to them as a popular favorite, and

himself by an adroit escape from an unpleasant situation. But he pleased nobody.] **(c) 18 But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:-- 19 one who for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder, had been cast into prison.** [We see from Matthew's account that though the people had a right to name their prisoner (*Mt 27:15*), Pilate took upon himself the liberty of choosing which one of two it should be. By doing so he complicated matters for the Jewish rulers, asking them to choose between Jesus, who was held on an unfounded charge of insurrection, and Barabbas, who was notoriously an insurrectionist and a murderer and a robber as well. But the rulers were not to be caught in so flimsy a net. Without regard to consistency, they raised their voice in full chorus for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus.]

C. Warning (Mt 27:19).

(a) 19 And while he was sitting on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. [This message of Pilate's wife suggests that the name and face of Jesus were not unknown to Pilate's household. Pilate would be much influenced by such a message. The Romans generally were influenced by all presages, and Suetonius tells us that both Julius and Augustus Caesar attached much importance to dreams.]

D. Decision (Mt 27:20-21; Mk 15:11-14; Lk 23:20-22).

(b) 11 But (a) 20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded {(b) stirred up} the multitude, {(a) multitudes} (b) that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. (a) that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 But the governor answered and said unto them, Which of the two will you that I release unto you? And they said, Barabbas. (d) 40 They cried out therefore again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. (c) 20 And Pilate spoke unto them again, desiring to release Jesus; [712] (b) 12 And Pilate again answered and said {(a) said} unto them, What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ? (b) him whom you call the King of the Jews? (c) 21 but {(b) 13 and} they cried out {(c) shouted} (b) again, (c) saying, Crucify, crucify him. (a) They all say, Let him be crucified. (b) 14 And Pilate said unto them, (c) the third time, Why, what evil has this man {(a) he} done? (c) I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and release him. (a) But they cried out exceedingly, saying, (b) Crucify him. (a) Let him be crucified. [Finding the mob cruelly persistent, Pilate boldly declines to do its will and turns back into the Praetorium declaring his intention to release Jesus. But he retires with the demands of the multitude ringing in his ears.]

E. Jesus Scourged (Jn 19:1-3).

(d) 1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. [Carrying out the program that he proposed, Pilate had Jesus removed from the Praetorium to the place of scourging, and inflicted that punishment upon him. We learn from Josephus and others that the law required that those about to be crucified should first be scourged. But Pilate hoped that scourging would suffice. He believed that the more moderate would take pity upon Jesus when they viewed his scourged body, for scourging was so cruel a punishment that the condemned person often died under its infliction. The scourge was made of thongs loaded at the extremity with pieces of bone or metal. The condemned person was stripped and fastened to a low post, this bending the back so as to stretch the skin. Blood spurted at the first blow.] **2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple garment; 3 and they came unto him, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they struck him with their hands.** [The soldiers had no special malice against Jesus, but the Roman military system made men hard of heart. The occasion gave to these foreign legionaries a much-enjoyed opportunity to show their contempt for the Jews by mocking Jesus as their King. It is not known which one of the many thorny plants of Palestine [713] was used to form the Lord's crown. See on *Mk 4:7*. The robe was designed to give Jesus a mock appearance of royalty, and it was likely some cast-off military coat or state garment of Pilate's. Pilate winked at the conduct of his soldiers since it favored his plan. If Jesus

could be made sufficiently pitiable and contemptible, his enemies might relent. But Pilate little understood the venom of those enemies: they mocked and taunted Jesus upon the cross.]

F. Jesus Presented to the Mob (Jn 19:4-5).

(d) 4 And Pilate went out again, and said unto them, Behold, I bring him out to you, that you may know that I find no crime in him. [Those having our modern sense of justice would have said that Pilate brought Jesus out thus *because he had found no crime in him*. But scourging was little thought of in that place and day (*Ac 22:24*). If Pilate had found Jesus guilty, he would have condemned him at once. As it was, he sought to return Jesus to the Sanhedrin as having committed no crime of which the Roman law could take note.] **5 Jesus therefore came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And Pilate said unto them, Behold, the man!** [It was Pilate's original proposition to scourge Jesus and let him go (*Lk 23:16*). Having already scourged him, he now hoped to effect his release. Presenting our Lord in this state of abject humiliation, he feels that he has removed him from every suspicion of royalty. He speaks of Jesus as no longer a king, but a mere man. Pilate's words, however, have a prophetic color, somewhat like those uttered by Caiaphas (*Jn 18:14*). All those of subsequent ages have looked and must continue to look to Jesus as the ideal of manhood. The "Ecce Homo" of Pilate is in some sense an echo of the words of the Father when he said, "This is my Son, my chosen: hear you him" (*Mt 17:5 Mk 9:7 Lk 9:35*). In Jesus we behold the true man, the second Adam--*1Co 15:45*.]

G. Choice of the Crowd (Jn 19:6-7).

(d) 6 When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him! [Thus Pilate's expectation came to naught, for not one of the Jewish rulers ever wavered in their demand for crucifixion.] **Pilate said unto them, Take him yourselves, and crucify him: for I find no [714] crime in him.** [In this sentence, "you" and "I" are both emphatic; for Pilate wishes to draw a contrast between himself and the Jewish rulers. His words are not a permission to crucify, but a bit of taunting irony, as if he said: "I the judge have found him innocent, but you seem to lack the wit to see that the case is ended. If you are so much superior to the judge that you can ignore his decision, proceed without him; crucify him yourselves."] **7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.** [Perceiving that Pilate was taunting them, and practically accusing them of attempting to put an innocent man to death, they defended themselves by revealing the fact that in addition to the charges that they had preferred against Jesus, they had found him clearly guilty and worthy of death on another charge; namely: that of blasphemy (*Lv 24:16*). They had made no mention of this fact because Pilate was under no obligation to enforce their law; but they mentioned it now to justify their course. They probably felt sure that Jesus himself would convince Pilate of the truth of this latter accusation if Pilate questioned him.]

H. Private Interrogation of Jesus (Jn 19:8-11).

8 When Pilate therefore heard this saying, he was the more afraid [The words of Jesus at *Jn 18:37* and the message from his wife already had filled Pilate with fear, and this saying added to it because the Roman and Grecian mythologies told of many incarnations; and, influenced by the calm presence of Jesus, Pilate readily considered the possibility of such a thing]; **9 and he entered into the Praetorium again** [taking Jesus with him for private examination], **and said unto Jesus, Where did you come from? But Jesus gave him no answer.** [Pilate sought to know whether Jesus were of heaven or of earth; but Jesus did not answer, for the motive of the question was not right. Pilate did not wish an answer that he might give or withhold worship; but that he might know how strenuously he should defend Jesus. But innocent life is to be defended at all hazards, and it matters not whether it be human or divine. Pilate, therefore, already knew enough to enable him to [715] discharge his duties.] **10 Pilate therefore said unto him, Do you not speak unto me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and have power to crucify you?** [Pilate intimates that Jesus should treat his questions with more courtesy since his good will and favor are not to be despised. But the words lay bare the corrupt heart of Pilate, and

form a prophecy of the sin that he committed. Judges must hear and give sentence according to truth, uninfluenced by good will or favor. But Pilate, to please the Jews, crucified Jesus, reversing the sentence that he here suggests that he might render to please Jesus.] **11 Jesus answered him, You would have no power against me, except it were given you from above: therefore he [Caiaphas] that delivered me unto you has greater sin.** [Judas is spoken of as having delivered Jesus--*Jn 18:2,5* (the same word being translated both "betrayed" and "delivered"), but Judas did not deliver to Pilate, so Caiaphas as the representative of the Sanhedrin is here meant; and Pilate's sin is contrasted with that of the rulers. Both of them sinned in abusing their office (the power derived from above--*Ps 75:6,7 Isa 44:28 Ro 13:1*); but Pilate's sin stopped here. He had no acquaintance with Jesus to give him the possibility of other powers--those of love or hatred, worship or rejection. The members of the Sanhedrin had these powers that arose from a personal knowledge of Jesus, and they abused them by hating and rejecting him, thereby adding to their guilt. Pilate condemned the innocent when brought before him, but the Sanhedrin searched out and arrested the innocent that they might enjoy condemning him.]

I. Efforts to Release Jesus (Lk 23:23; Jn 19:12-15).

(d) 12 Upon this Pilate sought to release him [As we have seen, Pilate had before this tried to win the consent of the rulers that Jesus be released, but what John here indicates was probably an actual attempt to set Jesus free. He may have begun by unloosing the hands of Jesus, or some such demonstration]: **but the Jews cried out, saying, If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend: every one that makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.** [716] [Whatever Pilate's demonstration was it was immediately met by a counter one on the part of the rulers. They raise a cry that the politic Pilate cannot ignore. Taking up the political accusation (that they had never abandoned), they give it a new turn by prompting Pilate to view it from Caesar's standpoint. Knowing the unreasoning jealousy, suspicion and cruelty of the emperor, Pilate saw at once that these unscrupulous Jews could make out of the present occasion a charge against him that would cost him his position, if not his life.] **13 When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment-seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.** [Pilate had already again and again declared Jesus innocent. He now mounts the judgment-seat that he may formally reverse himself and condemn him. The apostle as an eye-witness fixes by its two names the exact spot where this awful decision was rendered.] **14 Now it was the Preparation of the Passover** [see on *Jn 13:1*]: **it was about the sixth hour.** [It is likely that John uses the Roman method of counting time, and means 6 A.M. See on *Jn 4:6*. John notes also the exact hour day and hour.] **And he said unto the Jews, Behold, your King!** [As he had tried to waken their compassion by saying, "Behold, the man!" (*Jn 19:5*), so he now made a final attempt to shame them by saying, "Behold, your King!"] **15 They therefore cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him! Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.** [Carried away by the strong emotions of the moment, the official organs of the Jewish theocracy proclaimed Caesar to be their only king, thus yielding with Jesus their claims to independence and their hopes in a Messiah. This is a most significant fact. When their ancestors rejected Jehovah as their king (*1Sa 12:12*), their faithful prophet, Samuel, warned them what the king of their choice would do, and what they should suffer under him. Thus Jesus also foretold what this Caesar of their choice would do to them (*Lk 19:41-44 23:27-31*). They committed themselves to the [717] tender mercies of Rome, and one generation later Rome trod them in the winepress of her wrath.] **(c) 23 But they were urgent with loud voices, asking that he might be crucified. And their voices prevailed.** [They overcame Pilate's weak resistance by their clamor.] **(a) 24 So when Pilate saw that he prevailed nothing, but rather that a tumult was arising, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see you to it. 25 And all the people answered and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.** [Pilate's act was symbolic, intended to show that he regarded the crucifixion of Jesus as a murder, and therefore meant to wash his hands of the guilt thereof. The Jewish law made the act perfectly familiar to the Jews (*Dt 21:1-9*). Had the Jewish rulers not been frenzied by hatred, the sight of Pilate washing his hands (*Mt 27:24*) would have checked them; but in their rage they take upon themselves and their children all the responsibility. At the siege of Jerusalem they answer in part for the blood of Christ, but God alone determines

the extent of their responsibility, and he alone can say when their punishment shall end. But we know that it ends for all when they repentantly seek his forgiveness. The punishments of God are not vindictive, they are the awards of Justice meted out by a merciful hand.]

J. Crucifixion Permitted (Mt 27:26; Mk 15:15; Lk 23:24-25; Jn 19:16).

(b) 15 And Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, (c) gave sentence that what they asked for should be done. (a) 26 Then he released unto them Barabbas; (c) him that for insurrection and murder had been cast into prison, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will. (d) 16 Then therefore (b) Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified [Mark mentions the scourging to show that it preceded the crucifixion, but we see from John's account that the scourging took place somewhat earlier in the proceeding--*Jn 19:1*], **(b) he delivered him unto them to be crucified.** [Pilate delivered Jesus to their punishment, but not into their hands; he was led forth and crucified by Pilate's soldiers, who first mocked him, as the next paragraph shows.]

K. Mocked by the Soldiers (Mt 27:27-30; Mk 15:16-19).

(b) 16 And [718] (a) 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus, (b) led him away within {(a) into} the court, which is the Praetorium; and they called together (a) and gathered unto him the whole band. 28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. (b) 17 And they clothe him with purple, (a) 29 And they platted {(b) plating} a crown of thorns, [and] they put it on him; (a) upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and they kneeled down before him, and mocked him, (b) 18 and they began to salute him, (a) saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spat upon him, and took the reed (b) 19 And they smote his head {(a) and smote him on the head.} (b) with a reed, and spat upon him [see on *Mk 14:65*], **and bowing their knees worshipped him.** [After the sentence of death the soldiers take Jesus back into the Praetorium, and renew the mockeries and indignities that had been interrupted that Pilate might exhibit Jesus to the people, as John shows us (*Jn 19:4-8*). Moreover, the whole band, or cohort, are now gathered, where at first but a few took part. It is likely that the mock robe and crown were removed when Jesus was brought before Pilate to be sentenced, for it is highly improbable that a Roman judge would pronounce the death sentence while the prisoner was clothed in such a manner.]

Section 133 REMORSE AND SUICIDE OF JUDAS (Friday, April 7, A.D. 30) Mt 27:3-10

(a) 3 Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned [Judas, having no reason to fear the enemies of Jesus, probably stood in their midst and witnessed the entire trial], **repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, I have sinned in that I betrayed [719] innocent blood.** [There are two Greek words that are translated "repented," the one properly so translated, *metanoeo*, which means literally "to know after" and which therefore means a change of mind or purpose; and the other, *metamellomai*, which is used here and which means literally "to care after," indicates a sorrow for the past. The first should be translated "repent"; the second, "regret." Trench draws the distinction thus: "He who has *changed his mind* about the past is in the way to change everything; he who has an *after care* may have little or nothing more than a selfish dread of the consequences of what he has done." Considering the prophecy that had been uttered with regard to Judas' act (*Mt 26:24*), he had good reason to fear the consequences. While he testifies as to the innocence of Jesus, he expresses no affection for him.] **But they said, What is that to us? you see to it.** [The rulers did not share with Judas the wish to undo what had been done. They have been censured for not receiving the testimony that Judas gave as to the innocence of Jesus. But as they condemned Jesus upon his own testimony, any evidence that Judas might give would be, from their standpoint, irrelevant and immaterial. Could Judas testify that Jesus was indeed the Son of

God? If our Lord's own testimony to this effect was regarded as blasphemy, nothing that Judas could say would change the case. But the testimony of Judas, in the free, untechnical court of public opinion, is of vast weight and importance. It shows that one who had every opportunity of knowing Jesus, and who was sordid enough to betray him, was yet forced for conscience' sake to admit that there was no reason why he should have done so.] **5 And he cast down the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, and departed** [Judas found the chief priests in the sanctuary. Having obtained from Pilate the condemnation of Jesus, they hastened back to the temple to discharge their morning duties. This gave the soldiers time to mock Jesus, and Pilate time to order and prepare the crucifixion. And so, though Jesus was sentenced at six o'clock in the morning (*Jn 19:14*), he was not crucified [720] until the third hour, or nine o'clock (*Mk 15:25*). Thus the priests were enabled to be present at the crucifixion, or at least very soon after the crosses were erected. Judas, finding that they would not receive his money, cast it down before them that his hands might be no longer burnt by holding it]; **and he went away and hanged himself. (a) 6 And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood.** [The law of God made no provision as to the uses of blood money; it was the tradition of the elders that thus forbade to put it into the treasury. There was a strange conscience indeed, which could take out the Lord's money (and, under the then existing Jewish theocratic government, all public money was the Lord's money) and spend it for blood, but when it was so spent they could not put it back! Moreover, theirs was a strange admission. If the money given to Judas was properly expended for the arrest of a real criminal, it was justice money, and not blood money at all.] **7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.** [That is, the foreigners who died in Jerusalem. Whether rich or poor, they were not wanted in Jewish graveyards. The potter's field, being excavated for clay, would be of little value, and would sell cheap.] **8 Wherefore that field was called, the field of blood, unto this day.** [This mark of time shows that Matthew's Gospel was written a good many years after the crucifixion.] **9 Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was priced, whom certain of the children of Israel did price; 10 and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.** [This quotation is not found in any writings of Jeremiah that we have, and as there are no other indications of lost writings of that prophet, it is reasonable to suppose that Matthew refers to *Zech 11:12,13*; and that early transcribers miscopied the name, which, in the Greek, could be done by changing only two letters; namely: "i" for [721] "z" and "m" for "r." The prophecy is one of the third class described at *Mt 2:17*.]

**Section 134
VIA DOLOROSA
(Friday 9:00 A.M.)**

Mt 27:31-35; Mk 15:20-23; Lk 23:26-33; Jn 19:17

A. Simon Carries the Cross (Mt 27:31-32; Mk 15:20-21; Lk 23:26; Jn 19:17).

(a) 31 And when they had mocked him, they took off from him the (b) purple, (a) robe, and put on him his garments [This ended the mockery, which seems to have been begun in a state of levity, but which ended in gross indecency and violence. When we think of him who endured it all, we can not contemplate the scene without a shudder. Who can measure the grace of God or the depravity of man?], **(d) 17 They took Jesus therefore: (b) And they lead him out to crucify him. (a) and led [722] him away to crucify him. (d) and he went out, bearing the cross for himself, (a) 32 And as they came out, (c) when they led him away, (a) they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: (b) one passing by, coming from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, (a) him they (c) laid hold upon {(b) compel (a) compelled} to go with them, that he might bear his cross. (c) and laid on him the cross, to bear it after Jesus.** [Cyrene was a flourishing city in the north of Africa, having in it a large Jewish population, and Simon shows by his name that he was a Jew. The Cyreneans had one or more synagogues in Jerusalem (*Ac 2:10 6:9 11:20*). There were many Cyreneans afterwards engaged in spreading

the gospel (*Ac 13:1*), and since the sons of this man are spoken of as well known to Mark's readers it is altogether likely that Simon was one of them. This Rufus may be the one mentioned by Paul (*Ro 16:13*). The Roman soldiers found Simon entering the city, and because he was a stranger and they needed a man just then, they impressed him after the manner mentioned at *Mt 5:41*.]

B. Jesus Addressed a Group of Sorrowing Women (Lk 23:27-32).

(c) 27 And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. [Only the women bewailed him. They were not Galileans, but women of Jerusalem--*Lk 23:28*.] **28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.** [Some of these women, and the children of others, would survive till the terrible siege of Jerusalem and suffer in it. Jesus bore his own suffering in silence, but his pity for those upon whom these days of anguish would come caused him to speak.] **29 For behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck.** [The proper blessedness of a matron is motherhood, but the horrors of the siege would reverse even so fixed a law as this.] **30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.** [This language is figurative, describing one in extreme terror seeking impossible [723] refuge. But there is a touch of literalness in the fulfillment, for Josephus tells us that at the end of the siege those in Jerusalem hid themselves in the subterranean recesses of the city, and that no less than two thousand of them were buried alive under the ruins of these hiding-places--*The Wars of the Jews*, 6.9.4.] **31 For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?** [The language here is obscurely proverbial. Here, as elsewhere (*Lk 19:43 Mt 24:15*), Jesus refers to the sorrows that the Romans were to bring upon the Jews, and the meaning may be, If the fiery persecution of Rome is so consuming that my innocence, though again and again pronounced by the governor himself, is no protection against it, what will that fire do when it envelopes the dry, guilty, rebellious city of Jerusalem? Or we may make the present and the future grief of the women the point of comparison, and interpret thus: If they cause such sorrow to the women while the city is like a green tree, how much more when, like a dry, dead tree, it is about to fall.] **32 And there were also two others, criminals, led with him to be put to death.** [See on *Mk 15:27*.]

C. Assistance Rejected (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Jn 19:17).

(b) 22 And they bring him unto the place (d) that is called in Hebrew, Golgotha: (b) that is, being interpreted, {(a) that is to say,} The place of a skull [Where this place was, or why it was so called, are matters of conjecture. All that we know certainly is that it was outside of, yet near, the city--*Heb 13:12 Jn 19:20*].

Section 135

CROSS: THE FIRST THREE HOURS

(Friday 9:00-Noon)

Mt 27:35-44; Mk 15:24-32; Lk 23:33-43; Jn 19:18-27

A. Mocked By Romans (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-27; Lk 23:33; Jn 19:18-22).

(b) 24 And they crucify him, (d) 23 The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part [A quaternion or band of four soldiers did the work of the actual crucifixion. The Roman law awarded them the garments of the condemned as their perquisites]; **(b) and part {(a) parted (c) parting} (b) his garments among them, casting {(c) they cast} lots.** [725] **(b) upon them, what each should take.** [The sandals, girdle, outer robe, head-dress, etc., of Jesus were divided into four parts and lots were cast of the parts.] **(d) and also the coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.** [This was the tunic or undergarment. It reached from the shoulders to the knees. Ordinarily it was in two pieces, which were fastened at the shoulders by clasps; but Josephus tells us that the tunic of the high priest was an exception to this rule, being woven without seam

(*The Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.7.4). Thus in dividing the Lord's garments, they found a suggestion of his high priesthood.] **24 They said therefore one to another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which said, They parted my garments among them, And upon my vesture did they cast lots.** [See *Ps 22:18*.] **25 These things therefore the soldiers did.** [Even their small part was the subject of minute prophecy.] **(a) 36 and they sat and watched him there.** [They were on guard to prevent any attempt at rescue.] **(d) 19 And Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross. (c) over him, (a) 37 And they set up over his head (b) the {(c) a} superscription (b) of his accusation written, (a) And there was written, (c) THIS IS (a) JESUS (d) OF NAZARETH, (b) THE KING OF THE JEWS.** [It was a well-established Roman custom to thus place a writing above the heads of the crucified to indicate the cause for which they died. Pilate writes the accusation so as to clear his own skirts before Caesar and so as to show his contempt for the Jewish people. They had forced him to crucify an innocent man, and he retaliates by giving to that man the title that his enemies accused him of professing.] **(d) 20 This title therefore many of the Jews read, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city; and it was written in Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek.** [These three languages were respectively those of religion, law and philosophy; but Pilate made use of them because all three were spoken by people then in Jerusalem.] **(b) 25 And it was the third hour** [see on *Mt 20:3*], **and (c) there {(d) 18 where} (c) they crucified him. (b) 27 And (a) 38 Then are there crucified {(b) they crucify} (a) with him (d) two others, (c) the criminals, (a) robbers, one on the right hand, and one {(c) the other} on the {(b) his} left. (d) on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.** [These were doubtless robbers of the class of Barabbas. See *Mk 15:7*. They were those who, led on by fanatical patriotism, had become insurrectionists and then outlaws. Large numbers of them were crucified during the Jewish wars (Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 13.2.3). These two may have been crucified at this time for convenience' sake, but the fact that Jesus was placed between them suggests that they were crucified with him to heighten his shame and indignity. For, though Pilate had no personal ill will toward Jesus, he wished to show contempt for Judah's King.] **(c) 33 And when they came unto the place that is called The skull, (a) 34 they gave {(b) offered} him wine (a) to drink mingled with gall: {(b) myrrh;} but {(a) and} when he had tasted it, he would not drink. (b) he received it not.** [This mixture of sour wine mingled with gall and myrrh was intended to dull the sense of pain of those being crucified or otherwise severely punished. The custom is said to have originated with the Jews and not with the Romans. Jesus declined it because it was the Father's will that he should suffer. He would not go upon the cross in a drugged, semi-conscious condition.] [724] **(d) 21 The chief priests of the Jews therefore said to [726] Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. 22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.** [The rulers smarted under this title that Pilate had tauntingly written. They had insisted that Jesus' kingship was dangerous enough to justify his crucifixion; but now (if politically and temporally interpreted) they admit that his kingship was an idle claim, a mere matter of words.]

B. First Saying: a Prayer (Lk 23:34).

(c) 34 And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. [Our Lord's prayer here reminds us of the word at *Isa 53:12*. It accords with his own teachings (*Mt 5:44*), and it was echoed by Stephen (*Ac 7:59,60*). Peter and Paul both speak of the Jewish ignorance (*Ac 3:17 1Co 2:8*). Ignorance mitigates, but does not excuse, crime.]

C. Mocked by Passers-by (Mt 27:39-40; Mk 15:29-30; Lk 23:35a).

(c) 35 And the people stood beholding. [The scene had an awful fascination that they could not resist.] **(a) 39 And they that passed by [Jesus was evidently crucified near the highway] railed on him, wagging their heads, 40 and saying, (b) Ha! You that destroys the temple, and builds it in three days, 30 save yourself, (a) if you are the Son of God, (b) and come down from the cross.**

D. Mocked by Leaders (Mt 27:41-43; Mk 15:31-32a; Lk 23:35b-37).

(b) 31 In like manner also the chief priests (c) And the rulers also scoffed at him, (b) mocking *him* among themselves with the scribes (a) and elders, said, {(c) saying,} He saved others; (b) himself he cannot save. (c) let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen. (a) He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him. (b) 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. (a) 43 He trusts on God; let him deliver him now, if he desires him: for he said, I am the Son of God. (c) 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, offering him vinegar, 37 and saying, If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself. [Thus one and all unite in mocking Jesus, using both word and gesture. They bring forth echoes from the trial of Jesus and take other incidents from his life, little dreaming the deep significance of what they utter. They reminded Jesus of his words about destroying the temple (*Jn 2:19-22 Mk 14:58*), when they were committing that very act. They speak of his building it again when Jesus was about to die that he might rise. They taunted him with saving others, yet being unable to save himself, which is the great truth of the atonement that the Lord [727] was then making. They promised to believe if he will come down from the cross, yet his being lifted upon the cross was the very act that would convince them--*Jn 8:28*.]

E. Mocked by Tormented Robbers (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32b; Lk 23:39-41).

(a) 44 And the robbers also that were crucified with him (b) reproached him. (a) cast upon him the same reproach. (c) 39 And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Are not you the Christ? save yourself and us. 40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Do you not even fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man has done nothing amiss. [It seems that at first both robbers reviled Christ, but one repenting spoke in his favor and prayed to him.]

F. Second Saying: a Promise (Lk 23:42-43).

(c) 42 And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom. 43 And he said unto him, Verily I say unto you, Today shall you be with me in Paradise. It is not likely that this robber had any conception of the spiritual kingdom of Jesus, but he somehow arrived at the conclusion that Jesus was the Messiah, and would come into his kingdom despite his crucifixion. Jesus answered his prayer by a solemn promise that they would, that day, be together in that portion of the invisible world where those who are accepted of God await the resurrection. Many thoughtlessly make this dying robber the model of death-bed repentance, arguing that others may also be saved in this irregular manner. But Christ had not yet died, and the new testament or covenant was not sealed. Jesus then could change its terms to suit the occasion. It is therefore no evidence whatever that after his death and in his present glorified state our Lord will in any way change the covenant so as to do away with a single one of the terms required for obtaining remission of sins (*Heb 9:15-18*). Moreover, the example of the penitent robber is a difficult one to follow; he professed faith in Christ and his kingdom when there was no other voice in the whole wide world willing to do such a thing. Any one having such a faith in Christ will not put off his confession until the hour of [728] death.]

G. Third Saying: a Directive (Jn 19:25-27).

(d) But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. [For comment on these four women, see on *Mt 10:3* and *Mk 15:41*.] 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold your son! 27 Then said he to the disciple, Behold, your mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own *home*. [By using the title "woman" Jesus addressed his mother at the end of his ministry with the same word that he had used at its beginning (*Jn 2:4*). Thus he cut her off from all parental authority over him. In this last hour our Lord bestows upon his helpless mother the disciple whom he loved, who was then in the flower of his manhood.]

Section 136

CROSS: LAST THREE HOURS
(Friday, 12:00-3:00 P.M.)

Mt 27:45-56; Mk 15:33-41; Lk 23:44-49; Jn 19:28-30

A. Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lk 23:44-45).

(c) 44 And it was now about the sixth hour, (b) 33 And (a) 45 Now (b) when the sixth hour was come, there was (c) a darkness came (a) over all (b) the whole land (a) from the sixth hour (b) until the ninth hour. [See on Mt 20:3.] (c) 45 the sun's light failing [The darkness lasted from noon until three o'clock. It could not have been an eclipse, for the moon was always full on the first day of the Passover. Whether the darkness was over the whole world, or simply all of Palestine, is uncertain, as, according to the usage of Bible language, the words would be the same]:

B. Fourth Saying: Word of Loneliness (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-35).

(b) 34 And at {(a) about} the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli {(b) Eloi, Eloi,} lama sabachthani? which is, {(a) that is,} [729] (b) being interpreted, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? [We can imagine what it would mean to a righteous man to feel that he was forsaken of God. But the more we feel and enjoy the love of another, the greater our sense of loss at being deprived of it. Considering, therefore, the near and dear relationship between the Son and Father, it is evident that we can never know or fathom the depth of anguish that this cry expressed. Suffice it to say, that this was without doubt the most excruciating of all Christ's sufferings, and it, too, was a suffering in our stead. The words of the cry are found at Ps 22:1. "Eli" is Hebrew, "Eloi" Aramaic for "My God." The former would be used by Jesus if he quoted the Scripture, the latter if he spoke the language of the people.]

C. Fifth Saying: a Need (Mt 27:48-49; Mk 15:35-36; Jn 19:28-29).

(b) 35 And some of them that stood by, {(a) this man} when they heard it, said, (b) Behold, he {(a) this man} calls Elijah. (d) 28 After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, said, I thirst. 29 There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: (a) 48 And immediately one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with {(b) and filling a sponge full of} vinegar, (a) and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. (d) so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth. (b) saying, {(a) 49 And the rest said,} Let be; let us see whether Elijah comes (b) to take him down. (a) to save him. [Jesus had now been upon the cross for six hours, and fever and loss of blood and the strain upon the muscles of his chest had rendered his articulation difficult and indistinct. For this reason some of those who stood by, though perfectly familiar with the language, misunderstood him and thought that he called upon Elijah. Immediately afterwards Jesus speaks of his thirst (Jn 19:28), and vinegar is given to him to remove the dryness from his throat. Those who give the vinegar and those who stand by (Mt 27:49), unite in saying "Let be." This phrase has no reference to the vinegar; it is a general expression, meaning, "Let us do nothing to prevent him from calling upon Elijah, or to prevent Elijah from [730] coming."]

D. Sixth Saying: a Declaration (Mk 15:37; Jn 19:30).

(b) 37 And (d) 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, (a) Jesus cried again with {(b) uttered} a loud voice, (d) he said, It is finished [He had come, had ministered, had suffered, and had conquered. There now remained but the simple act of taking possession of the citadel of the grave, and the overthrowing of death. By his righteousness Jesus had triumphed in man's behalf and the mighty task was accomplished].

E. Seventh Saying: a Prayer (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lk 23:46; Jn 19:30).

(c) 46 And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commend my spirit [Ps 31:5]: and having said this, (d) he bowed his head, and gave up {(a) yielded up} (b) the ghost. (a) his spirit. [None of the Evangelists speaks of Jesus as dying; for he yielded up his spirit voluntarily--Jn 10:18.]

Section 137
THE BURIAL
(Friday, 3:00-6:00 P.M.)
Mt 27:57-66; Mk 15:42-47; Lk 23:50-56; Jn 19:31-42

A. Fulfillments (Jn 19:31-37).

(d) 31 The Jews therefore, because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross upon the Sabbath (for the day of that Sabbath was a high day), asked of Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. [According to rabbinical writing a few hours before the Sabbath were called the Preparation; but afterwards the term was applied to the entire day preceding the Sabbath. The Romans left the bodies of criminals hanging upon the cross until beasts and birds of prey, or putrefaction, removed them. But the Jewish [733] law forbade that a body should hang over night; for a dead body was accursed, and so the day following might be polluted by the curse that attached to it (*Dt 21:23 Jos 8:29 10:26*; Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 4.5.2). The context suggests that the Jews had grown lax with regard to this law on account of the trouble of obtaining the consent from the Romans required to carry it out. But as the Sabbath in this instance was that of the Passover week, and as they were ready enough to do anything to show that Jesus was an extraordinary criminal, they asked Pilate that their law might be observed. Instead of killing the criminals, they broke their legs, which rendered recovery impossible, since putrefaction almost immediately set it.] **32 The soldiers therefore came, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him: 33 but when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not his legs: 34 howbeit one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side [to insure death in case they might be mistaken], and immediately there came out blood and water. 35 And he that has seen has borne witness, and his witness is true: and he knows that he said true, that you also may believe.** [Many able men have argued learnedly that this flow of blood and water was evidence that Jesus died of a ruptured, or literally broken, heart; but they confess themselves involved in difficulties, for it is hard to reconcile the idea that Jesus died a voluntary death with the idea that he died of any natural cause whatever. Can anything be at once natural and supernatural? However, John's asseveration that he was an eyewitness of this shows that he attached importance to it. To him the body of Jesus gave evidence that it differed from other dead bodies. We enter with hesitancy the realm of symbolism, knowing how flagrantly it is abused, but we offer this as a suggestion. Jesus died for our sins, and his death was therefore to provide a means for the cleansing of sin. But, under the terms of his gospel, sins are visibly and physically washed away by water, and invisibly and spiritually by blood (*Heb 10:22*). Now, since both these means were seen [734] by a faithful witness to issue from the side of our crucified Lord, contrary to the ordinary law and course of nature, we have additional reason to believe that things out of the course of nature, namely, the cleansing of sin, etc., were accomplished by his crucifixion.] **36 For these things came to pass, that the scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. [Ps 34:20.] 37 And again another scripture said, They shall look on him whom they pierced. [Zech 12:10.** Even after his death divine power went on fulfilling the prophecies concerning Jesus. He hangs upon the cross as one of a group of three, yet, in the twinkling of an eye, he is separated from the other two by the fulfillment of a brace of prophecies that point him out as the chosen of God.]

B. Signs (Mt 27:51-53; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:46b).

(a) 51 And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two (c) in the midst. (b) from the top to the bottom. [The veil was the heavy curtain that hung between the holy and the most holy places in the sanctuary. By shutting out from the most holy place all persons except the high priest, who alone was permitted to pass through it, and this only once in the year, it signified that the way into the holiest--that is, into heaven--was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing (*Heb 9:7,8*). But the moment that Jesus died, thus making the way manifest, the veil was appropriately rent in twain from top to bottom, disclosing the most holy place to the priests who

were at that time offering the evening incense in the holy place.] **(a) and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; 52 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.** [The earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and the consequent opening of the graves (*Mt 27:51,52*), occurred at the moment Jesus died, while the resurrection and visible appearance in the city of the bodies of the saints occurred "after his resurrection," for Jesus himself was the "first-born from the dead" (*Col 1:18*). Matthew chooses to mention the last event here because of its association with the rending of [731] the rocks, which opened the rock-hewn sepulchers in which the saints had slept. There has been much speculation as to what became of these risen saints. We have no positive information, but the natural presumption is, that they ascended to heaven. These resurrections were symbolic, showing that the resurrection of Christ is the resurrection of the race--*1Co 15:22*.]

C. Witnesses (Mt 27:54-56; Mk 15:39-41; Lk 23:48-49).

(b) 39 And when the centurion, who stood by (a) watching Jesus, (b) over against him, saw that he so gave up the spirit, (a) saw the earthquake, and the things that were {(c) what was} done, he glorified God, saying, {(b) he said,} (c) Certainly this was a righteous man. (a) 54 Now the centurion, and they that were with him feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this (b) man was the Son of God. [The conduct of Jesus upon the cross and the disturbances of nature that accompanied his death (*Mt 27:51,52*) convinced the centurion that Jesus was a righteous man. But knowing that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and this claim was the real cause for which the Jews were crucifying him, he concludes, since he concedes that Jesus is righteous, that he is also all that he professed to be--the Son of God. There is no just reason for minimizing his confession, as though he had said, "A son of the gods"; for he said nothing of that kind, and those err as to the use of Scriptural language who think so. Like the centurions of Capernaum (*Mt 8:10*) and Caesarea (*Ac 10:1,2*), this Roman surpassed in faith those who had better opportunities. But in this faith he was not alone.] **(c) 49 And all his acquaintance, (a) 55 And many women (b) also (a) were there beholding (c) the women that {(a) who} had followed (c) with (a) Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: (c) stood afar off, (a) beholding from afar, (c) seeing these things. (b) among [732] whom were both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (a) the mother of the sons of Zebedee. (b) 41 who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women that came up with him unto Jerusalem.** [John has already mentioned this group of women (see *Jn 19:25*), and has shown that he stood with them. The women, being unable to bear arms in an insurrection, had little to fear. They were not likely to be complicated in the charges against Jesus. But the men were conspicuously absent. They appear to have stood quite close to the cross at one time just before the darkness. Probably they feared violence in the darkness, and so withdrew and viewed from afar off the scene as lighted by the torches that the Roman soldiers would be obliged to procure in order to effectually guard their prisoner (*Ac 16:29*). The Synoptists, who make mention of the women toward the close of the crucifixion, do not mention the mother of Jesus as any longer among them. It is likely that she had withdrawn with John, being unable longer to endure the sight. As to the ministering of these women, see on *Lk 8:3*.] **(c) 48 And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things that were done, returned smiting their breasts.** [The people who had acted under the influence of the priests now yielded to superior influences and began to experience that change of sentiment that led so many to repent and confess Christ at Pentecost--*Ac 2:37-41*.]

D. Burial (Mt 27:57-58; Mk 15:42-45; Lk 23:50-52; Jn 19:38-42).

(d) 38 And after these things (b) when even was now come, because it was the Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, (c) behold, (a) there came a rich man from Arimathea, (c) a city of the Jews, (a) named Joseph, (b) of Arimathea, (c) who was a councilor, (b) of honorable estate, (c) a good and righteous man 51 (he had not consented to their counsel and deed), (b) who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God; (a) who also himself was Jesus' disciple: {(d) being a disciple of Jesus,} but secretly for fear

of the Jews [*Jn 12:42,43*], (a) 58 this man (b) boldly went in unto Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. (d) asked of Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus [Joseph's town has been variously identified with Ramleh in Dan, Ramathaim in Ephraim (*1Sa 1:1*), and Ramah in Benjamin (*Mt 2:18*). It was a fulfillment of prophecy that the one who buried Jesus should be rich (*Isa 53:9 Mt 27:57*). It is strange that those who were not afraid to be disciples were afraid to ask for our Lord's body, yet he who was afraid to be a disciple feared not to do this thing--*Jn 19:38*]: (b) 44 And Pilate marveled if he were already dead [instances are cited where men lived one whole week upon the cross, and men rarely died the first day]: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while [735] dead. 45 And when he learned it of the centurion, (a) Then Pilate (b) granted the corpse to Joseph. (a) commanded it to be given up. (d) and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took away his body. (d) 39 And there came also Nicodemus, he who at the first came to him by night [*Jn 3:2*], bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. [Myrrh was a resin and the aloe was pulverized wood. Both were aromatic--*Ps 45:8*.] (a) 59 And Joseph (b) bought a linen cloth [a sindon--see on *Mk 14:51,52*], (c) 53 And he took (a) the body, (c) down, (b) and taking him down, wound him in the linen cloth, {(a) and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,} (d) 40 So they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. [As to the swathing of dead bodies, see on *Jn 11:44*, also *Ac 5:6*. The spices were wrapped between the folds of the linen in order to partially embalm the body. Thus two members of the Sanhedrin unite to bury Jesus, each showing his reverence in his own way: Joseph by buying a sindon instead of cheaper cloth (*Mk 15:46*), and Nicodemus by a wonderful wealth of spices--twelve hundred ounces (*Jn 19:39*). Possibly the heart of Nicodemus smote him for his tardiness in honoring Christ, and he desired to appease his conscience by giving the Lord a royal burial--*2Ch 16:14*.] 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden [belonging to Joseph]; and in the garden a {(a) his own} new tomb that he had {(c) that was (b) which had been} (c) hewn in stone, (b) out of a {(a) the} rock: (d) wherein was never man yet laid. {(c) where never man had yet lain.} [To the sindon Joseph adds the honor of a burial in his own tomb. The unused state of the tomb is mentioned to show that there is no shadow of doubt as to whose resurrection opened it.] 54 And it was the day of the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. (d) 42 There then because of the Jews' Preparation (for the tomb was near at hand) they laid Jesus. (a) and he rolled a great stone to {(b) against} the door of the tomb. (a) and departed. (c) 55 And the [736] women, who had come with him out of Galilee, followed after, and beheld the tomb, and how his body was laid. (a) 61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, (b) the *mother* of Joses (a) sitting over against the sepulcher. (c) and beheld the tomb, (b) where (c) and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment. [As Jesus died about three o'clock in the afternoon, and as all work had to stop at sunset, which was the beginning of the Sabbath, Joseph was much hurried in his efforts to bury Jesus. The context, therefore, shows that our Lord was not completely embalmed by him. The body of Jesus might have been kept elsewhere until after the Sabbath; but because the tomb was near it appears to have been used temporarily, and the preparation of spices by the women shows that even that part of the burial was not, in their estimation, completed. This unfinished burial led the women back to the tomb early on the first day of the week, and thus brought to the disciples the glad news of the resurrection without any needless delay.]

E. Precautions of Enemies (Mt 27:62-66).

(a) 62 Now on the next day, which is *the day* after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together unto Pilate [This was not the whole Sanhedrin, but members of it. When did they come to Pilate? Some say that the Greek word translated "on the next day" precludes any other idea than it was after daylight Saturday morning; but probably they came Friday night. As the Jewish day began at sunset, we know of no other Greek adverb by which Matthew could have expressed the beginning of a day. Had it been the Sabbath morning there is no reason why Matthew should not have said so. By mentioning, instead, the Preparation, he draws the mind back to what we would call Friday night. It is highly improbable that the Jews would leave the tomb of Jesus unguarded for one whole night. Their gathering thus

to Pilate in the shades of evening presents a gruesome picture], **63 saying, Sir, we remember [737] that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I rise again.** [For this saying, see *Jn 2:19; Mt 12:39,40.*] **64 Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day** [Had the phrase "after three days" meant three full days to them, they would have said "until the fourth day." For the Jewish method of counting days see on *Mt 12:40*], **lest perhaps his disciples come and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error will be worse than the first.** [The marvelous signs accompanying the death of Jesus appealed to men's fear rather than to their love, and were, therefore, calculated to make a far deeper impression upon his enemies than upon his friends. We find, therefore, these Jewish rulers full of active interest in the dead Christ while his apostles and friends are listless in despair. They, of course, did not think it possible that Jesus could indeed rise, but, seeing the profound impression that the portents attending the crucifixion had made upon the multitude (*Lk 23:48*), and judging the disciples of Jesus by themselves--full of all subtlety and cunning--they grasped at once the idea that the disciples could make a great stir among the people by stealing the body and proclaiming the predicted resurrection. The apostles, on the other hand, when the actual resurrection had taken place, did not learn for fifty days what use to make of it, thus showing they could not have planned a pretended resurrection.] **65 Pilate said unto them, You have a guard** [The Greek may be the indicative or the imperative; it is clearly the latter. If the Jews had possessed a guard, they would not have asked for one. Pilate consents to their request by saying, "Have you a guard:" thereby fully sanctioning their idea]: **go, make it as sure as you can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them.** [They sealed the stone by drawing a string or tape across it and fastening the ends with wax or clay to the surface of the rock on either side. If either seals were broken, that fact would show that the tomb was entered from without.] [738]

PART SEVEN
PERIOD OF TRIUMPH
April 9-May 18, A.D. 30

Section 138
THE EMPTY TOMB
(Sunday Morning, April 9, A.D. 30)
Mt 28:1-8; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-8, 12; Jn 20:1-10

A. Announcement to the Women (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-8; Jn 20:1).
(c) 1 But (a) 1 Now late on the Sabbath day, (b) 1 And when the Sabbath was past, (c) on the first day of the week, {(a) as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week,} (c) at early dawn, (d) while it was yet dark, comes {(a) came} (d) Mary Magdalene early (a) and the other Mary (b) the *mother* of James, and Salome, (c) unto the tomb, bringing {(b) brought} (c) the spices that they had prepared. [Lk 23:56.] (a) to see the sepulcher. (b) that they might come and anoint him. (a) 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. 3 His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow: (a) 4 and for fear of him the watchers [the Roman soldiers on guard] did quake, and became as dead men. [The angel sat upon the stone that the Roman guards might make no attempt to re-close the tomb.] (b) 2 And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen. 3 And they were saying among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb? (c) 2 And they found the stone rolled away from [739] the tomb. (b) 4 and looking up, they see {(d) [Mary Magdalene] sees} (b) that the stone is rolled back: {(d) taken away from the tomb.} for it was exceeding great. (c) 3 And they (b) entering into the tomb, {(c) entered in,} and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. [John mentions Mary Magdalene alone, though she came with the rest of the women. As she was the one who reported to John and Peter, he describes her actions, and makes no mention of the others.] (d) 2 She runs therefore, and comes to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him. [Though Mary came with the other women, she departed at once, while the others tarried, as the sequel shows. The narrative proceeds to tell what happened to the other women after Mary had departed.] (c) 4 And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel: (b) they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe; and they were amazed. (c) 5 and as they were frightened and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, {(b) he (a) the angel} answered and said unto the women, Fear not [see on Lk 1:30]; (c) Be not amazed: (a) for I know that you seek Jesus, (b) the Nazarene, who has been crucified: (c) Why seek you the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but {(a) for} he is risen, even as he said. (c) remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. 8 And they remembered his words [For the words referred to, see Mt 17:22,23. The angel continues his speech as follows], (a) Come, (b) behold, the place where they laid him! (a) see the place where the Lord lay. [Here is a double wonder, that men should put the Son of God in a grave, and that he should consent to be put there.] (b) 7 But {(a) 7 And} go quickly, and tell his disciples, [740] (b) and Peter, (a) He is risen from the dead; and lo, he goes before you into Galilee; there shall you see him: (b) as he said unto you. (a) lo, I have told you. [The women were told to hasten, for the disciples were not to endure their sorrow a moment longer than was needful. Peter was mentioned by name that he might know that he was not cast off for his denial. The Lord appeared to some

chosen few in Judea, but the large body of his disciples was to see him in Galilee. Jesus had appointed a place of meeting; but we are not told where it was nor when he appointed it.] **8 And they departed quickly (b) 8 And they went out, and fled from the tomb; (a) with fear and great joy** [fear, because of the heavenly messengers; joy, because of their message], **and ran to bring his disciples word. (b) for trembling and astonishment had come upon them: and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid.** [They told none whom they met, but reserved the message for the apostles.]

B. Discovery of Peter and John (Lk 24:12; Jn 20:3-10).

(c) 12 But Peter (d) therefore (c) arose, (d) went forth, and the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. (c) and ran unto the tomb [John shows that he and Peter started for the tomb as soon as they received the message of Mary Magdalene (*Jn 20:2*), but Luke is less exact, blending her message with that of the other women]; **(d) 4 And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter** [it is generally accepted that John was younger, and hence more active than Peter], **and came first to the tomb; 5 and stooping and looking in, he sees the linen cloths lying; yet entered he not in. 6 Simon Peter therefore also comes, following him, and entered into the tomb; (c) and stooping and looking in, he sees (d) and he beholds the linen cloths lying; (c) by themselves; (d) 7 and the napkin, that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself. (c) and he departed to his home, wondering at what was come to pass.** [The impulsive, thoroughgoing nature of Peter was not content with a [741] mere look; he entered the tomb, neither reverence nor awe keeping him out. The sight that he saw puzzled him. Why should those who removed the body pause to unswathe it? why should they unswathe it at all? why should they fold the napkin and place it aside so carefully? But Peter left the tomb with these questions unsolved.] **(d) 8 Then entered in therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, and he saw, and believed. 9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.** [Assured that the grave was now empty, and emboldened by the example of Peter, John now entered it, and as he looked upon its evidences of quietude and order, the truth flashed upon his mind that Jesus himself had removed the bandages, and had himself departed from the tomb, as the firstborn from the dead. Here, then, was the first belief and the first believer in the resurrection; it is important to note that the Scripture did not suggest the fact, but the fact illumined the Scripture. *Ps 16:10* and *Isa 53:10*, and many other passages set forth the resurrection of our Lord; his own words, too, had plainly foretold it, yet among the disciples it was so much beyond all expectation that the prophecies had no meaning until made clear by the event itself. Yet these are the men whom the Jews accused of inventing the story of a resurrection!] **(d) 10 So the disciples went away again unto their own home.**

Section 139

FIRST RESURRECTION APPEARANCES

(Sunday Morning, April 8, A.D. 30)

Mt 28:9-10; Mk 16:9-11; Lk 24:9-11; Jn 20:11-18

A. Appearance to Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:9-11; Lk 24:9; Jn 20:11-18).

[The women, having received the message of the angels, and remembering that the message accorded with the words [742] of Jesus himself (*Lk 24:8*), made haste.] **(c) 9 and returned from the tomb, (b) 9 Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.** [Mark agrees with John that Mary separated from the other women (*Jn 20:2*). As to Mary Magdalene, see on *Lk 7:37* and *Lk 8:2,3*. After telling Peter and John about the empty tomb, Mary followed them back to it, and evidently reached it after they had left it. She found no one at the tomb.] **(d) 11 But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping: so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; 12 and she beholds two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.** [This picture is intensely natural. The Lord's death had been sorrow enough, but to be deprived of the poor privilege of embalming the body seemed a

veritable sorrow's crown of sorrow; and so Mary wept. But it suddenly occurs to her that in her haste she had not yet looked into the tomb at all, having jumped to the conclusion that it was empty because she saw it open; she therefore looks in. Her grief at the loss of the Lord is so great that she forgets to be frightened at the angels; just as a mother in her anxiety for the sick child forgets to fear its fever, no matter how virulent. The angels were placed like cherubim upon the ark (*Ex 25:19,20*), as though the grave of Christ was a new mercy seat, which indeed it was.] **13 And they say unto her, Woman, why do you weep? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14 When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and beholds Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.** [Before the angels can speak the glad news to Mary, Jesus himself becomes his own messenger. That Mary did not recognize him may be due to her grief, for tears blind our eyes to many of the tender providences of God; but to reason by analogy it seems more likely that her eyes "were held" (*Lk 24:16*), lest the shock of his sudden appearance might be too much for her, as it was for even his male disciples [743] (*Lk 24:37*). Conversation with him assured her that he was not a disembodied spirit.] **15 Jesus said unto her, Woman, why do you weep? whom do you seek? She, supposing him to be the gardener, said unto him, Sir, if you have taken him from here, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.** [Christ's first question expressed kindly sympathy; the second suggested that he knew the cause of her grief, and might be able to help her find what she sought. Thus encouraged, Mary at once assumes that the gardener himself had removed the body, probably under instructions from Joseph, and hope lightens her heart. In her effort to remove the body, she doubtless counts upon the help of her fellow-disciples.] **16 Jesus said unto her, Mary.** [Her eyes and ears were no longer held; she knew him. It was the same way he used to speak, the same name by which he used to call her. The grave had glorified and exalted him, but had not changed his love.] **She turned herself, and said unto him in Hebrew, Rabboni; which is to say, Teacher.** [Seasons of greatest joy are marked by little speech. Jesus and Mary each expressed themselves in a single word.] **17 Jesus said to her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.** [This passage is one of well-known difficulty. We would explain it by the following paraphrase: "Do not lay hold on me and detain yourself and me; I have not yet ascended; this is no brief, passing vision; I am yet in the world, and will be for some time, and there will be other opportunities to see me; the duty of the moment is to go and tell my sorrowing disciples that I have risen, and shall ascend to my Father." Jesus does not say "our Father." Our relation to God is not the same as his. While, however, our Lord's language recognizes the difference between his divine and our human relationship to the Father, his words are intended to [744] show us our exaltation. We have reason to believe that next to our Lord's title as Son our title as sons of God by adoption is as high in honor as any in the universe.] **(d) 18 Mary Magdalene comes and tells (b) went and told (d) the disciples, (b) them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.** [The poignancy of the disciples' grief, even after the intervention of the Sabbath day, explains why the Lord and his angels were so eager to bring them word of the resurrection.] **I have seen the Lord; and that he had said these things unto her. (b) 11 And they, when they heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, disbelieved.** [It is likely that Mary brought the first word, for we shall see below that Luke places her first in the catalogue of witnesses (*Lk 24:10*). The narrative now turns back to take up the account of the other women.]

B. Appearance to Other Women (Mt 28:8-10; Mk 16:8; Lk 24:9-11).

(a) 8 And they departed quickly (b) 8 And they went out, and fled from the tomb; (a) with fear and great joy [fear, because of the heavenly messengers; joy, because of their message], **and ran to bring his disciples word. (b) for trembling and astonishment had come upon them: and they said nothing to anyone; for they were afraid.** [They told none whom they met, but reserved the message for the apostles.] **(a) 9 And behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.** [This was a customary salutation. But the old formula took on new significance, for it means "rejoice."] **And they came and took hold of his feet, and worshipped him.** [This delay, permitted to them, and denied to Mary (*Jn 20:17*), probably explains why she became the first messenger, though the other women were first to leave the tomb.] **10 Then said Jesus unto them, Fear not** [see on *Lk 1:30*]: **go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there**

shall they see me. [The repetition may be due to the reticence of the women remarked by Mark in the last section by the key words "and they said nothing to any one" (*Mk 16:8*). The women may have been hesitating whether they should tell the disciples. Thus Jesus reiterates the instruction already given by the angel (*Mt 28:7*). This is the first time the word "brethren" is applied by our Lord to his disciples.] **(c) and [they] told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest. 10 Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: and the other women with them told these things unto the apostles. 11 And these words appeared in their sight as idle talk; and they disbelieved them.** [The very incredulity on the part of the apostles enhances the value of their [745] testimony to *the fact* of the resurrection. They were not expecting it; they were no visionary enthusiasts, prepared to welcome and credit any story that might be told them; nor would they be satisfied with any proof short of palpable and ocular demonstrations.]

Section 140 GUARDS AND LEADERS (Jerusalem) Mt 28:11-15

(a) 11 Now while they were going [while Joanna and the group of women with her were on their way to tell the apostles that they had seen Jesus--*Mt 28:9*], **behold, some of the guard** [not all] **came into the city, and told unto the chief priests all the things that had come to pass.** [Esteeming it folly to guard an empty tomb, the soldiers went to their barracks, while their officers returned to those who had placed them on guard to report what had happened. They rightly judged that the plain truth was their best defense. They could not be expected to contend against earthquakes and angels. Their report implies that they saw Jesus leave the tomb, and after the angel opened it.] **12 And when they** [the chief priests] **were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave much money unto the soldiers, 13 saying, Say, His disciples came by** [746] **night, and stole him away while we slept.** [This was evidently not a full, but a select, council of the Sanhedrin hastily summoned. They willfully shut their eyes to the fact that Jesus had risen, and proceed to purchase a lie to subvert the truth. Unrepentant, despite the many evidences that they had done wrong, they proceed to further invoke the wrath of God. Their lie is doubly apparent upon its face. 1. It would have been practically impossible for men to have rifled such a tomb without waking a guard set to protect it. 2. It is absolutely impossible for men to have known what had occurred while they were asleep.] **14 And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and rid you of care.** [It was a capital offense for a Roman soldier to sleep while on guard; therefore, if Pilate heard that they had done this thing, it would require "persuasion" to make him overlook the offense. Possibly the Jews thought that Pilate was sufficiently involved with them to be ready to aid them to hush the story of the resurrection, especially if they confessed to him that they themselves had invented the lie that the soldiers told.] **15 So they took the money, and did as they were told** [the lesson was short and simple; the reward, large and desirable]: **and this saying was spread abroad among the Jews, and continues until this day.** [The words seem to indicate that it was published more largely than simply within the walls of Jerusalem. In his dialogue with Trypho, which was written about A.D. 170, Justin Martyr says that the Jews dispersed the story by means of special messengers sent to every country. The fear that they expressed to Pilate (*Mt 27:64*), lends credibility to this statement.] [747]

Section 141 THIRD AND FOURTH APPEARANCES (Sunday Afternoon) Mk 16:12-13; Lk 24:13-35

A. Appearance on the Road to Emmaus (Mk 16:12-13; Lk 24:13-35).

(b) 12 And after these things he was manifested in another form [that is, another manner] **unto two of them, as they walked, on their way into the country. (c) 13 And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus** [Several sites have been suggested, but the village of Emmaus has not yet been identified beyond dispute. **which was seven miles from Jerusalem. 14 And they communed with each other of all these things that had happened. 15 And it came to pass, while they talked and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were held that they should not know him.** [Jesus himself designedly restrained their vision, that, unlike John (*Jn 20:8,9*), that might see the resurrection of Jesus in the Scriptures before they saw it in reality. Also see on *Jn 20:14.*] **17 And he said unto them, What conversations are these that you have one with another, as you walk? And they stood still, looking sad.** [Our Lord's abrupt question brought them to a standstill. We may well imagine that they considered his interruption very unwelcome. But his kindly mien won their confidence and they tell him all.] **18 And one of them, named Cleopas, answering said unto him, Do you alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things that have come to pass there in these days?** [Of Cleopas nothing further is known. It has been suggested that the other disciple was Luke himself. [748] This is possible, for the other Evangelists mention themselves thus impersonally. The preface to Luke's Gospel (*Lk 1:1-4*) in no way forbids us to think that he had a personal knowledge of parts of Christ's ministry. Cleopas marveled that there could be a single man in Jerusalem who had not heard concerning the crucifixion, etc.] **19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we hoped that it was he who would redeem Israel.** [To Cleopas, redeeming Israel meant freeing the nation from the Roman yoke.] **Yes and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass. 22 Moreover certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb; 23 and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.** [Rationalists might see their own reflection in these two disciples, who suppressed the statement of the women that they had seen the Lord as too idle to be repeated, and told the least marvelous part of their story--that about the angels--as too visionary to be credited. But these two men on the way to Emmaus had no use for feminine hallucinations. But in the end they believed in the resurrection because they themselves had substantial evidence of it.] **24 And certain of them that were with us** [Peter and John--*Lk 24:12 Jn 20:3*] **went to the tomb, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.** [The last clause unconsciously suggests the omitted fact that the women had professed to see Christ.] **25 And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not appropriate for the Christ to suffer these things,** [749] **and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.** [The counsel of the Father revealed in the Scriptures shows that Jesus should enter into his glory through suffering. The books of Moses foretell Christ largely in types, such, as the Passover, the rock in the wilderness, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the day of atonement, etc., but the prophets show him forth in clear-cut predictions and descriptions. Jesus evidently applied both these divisions of Scripture to himself, making it plain to these two who were both thoughtless in mind and slow in heart. Those lacking in a knowledge of the Christology of the Old Testament are slow to believe in it. Those who know that Christology, and yet doubt the Old Testament, do so because they lack faith in the Christ therein portrayed.] **28 And they drew near unto the village, where they were going: and he made as though he would go further. 29 And they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent.** [They did not wish to part with this delightful stranger who by his wonderful use of the Scriptures revived their failing faith and hope in Jesus.] **And he went in to abide with them. 30 And it came to pass, when he had sat down with them to meat, he took the bread and blessed; and breaking *it* he gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.** [While he was breaking the bread to supply their bodies he opened their eyes and revealed to them that it was he also who had just been feeding their hungry hearts with the truth

and consolation of the divine word.] **32 And they said one to another, Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?** [Thus they admit to each other that the joy of beholding the risen Lord was but the consummation of a joy already begun through a right understanding of the truth contained in Scripture. The sight of the Lord was sweeter because it was preceded by faith that he ought [750] thus to rise.] **33 And they rose up that very hour ...**

B. Appearance to Cephas (Mk 16:13; Lk 24:34-35).

(b) 13 And they went away (c) and returned to Jerusalem [their news was too precious to keep. They could not sit still till the disciples in Jerusalem knew it], **and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them** [the women and some of the one hundred and twenty--*Ac 1:15*], **34 saying, The Lord is risen indeed** [his resurrection is not an hallucination of the women], **and has appeared to Simon.** [Paul and Luke both mention this appearance, but we have none of the details of it.] **35 And they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.** [This does not mean that they knew Jesus because of any peculiar way in which he broke the bread; it means that he was revealed at the time when he broke it--*Lk 24:30,31*.] **(b) neither believed they them.** [They now believed that Jesus had risen, but they did not believe that these two had walked and talked with him without recognizing him.]

Section 142

FIFTH APPEARANCE OF JESUS

Jerusalem, Sunday Evening

Mk 16:14; Lk 24:36-43; Jn 20:19-25

(b) 14 And afterward (c) as they spoke these things [while the two from Emmaus were telling their story], **(b) he was manifested unto the eleven themselves as they sat at [751] meat; (d) 19 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus (c) himself (d) came and stood in the midst, (c) of them, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. (c) 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed that they beheld a spirit.** [His entrance through a bolted door (*Jn 20:19*) lent weight to their idea that he had no corporeal body. They knew nothing of the possibilities of a resurrected body.] **(b) and he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart** [here, as in the previous section, Jesus shows that the heart has much to do with the belief--see on *Lk 24:25-27*], **because they believed not them that had seen him after he was risen.** [They had had the testimony of three men and perhaps a half dozen women; they had not lacked evidence.] **(c) 38 And he said unto them, Why are you troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart? 39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as you behold me having. 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. (d) and his side.** [These members not only showed that he was not a disembodied spirit, but they served to identify his body with what they had seen crucified, and hence the person who now spoke was the Jesus whom they had known and lost--see also *Jn 20:20*.] **(c) 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have you here anything to eat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. 43 And he took it, and ate before them.** [Thus at last satisfying them that he was not a ghost.] **(d) The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you: as the Father has sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive you the Holy Spirit: 23 whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose sins you retain, they are retained.** [Now that the apostles [752] knew their Master, he repeats his blessing (*Jn 20:19*), and as the New Testament is now sealed in his blood according to the commission under which he came, he, in turn, commissions the twelve to go forth and proclaim its provisions. Symbolic of the baptism that they were to receive at Pentecost, he breathes upon them, and, having thus symbolically qualified them, he commissions

them to forgive or retain sin, for this was the subject-matter of the New Testament.] **24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus** [see on *Mt 10:3*], **was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.** [The apostles had undoubtedly seen and talked with someone, but the question was, Who? They said that it was Jesus, and Thomas, holding this to be impossible, thought that it must have been someone else whom they mistook for Jesus. But *he* would not be deceived; he would thoroughly examine the wounds, for these would identify Jesus beyond all doubt--if it were Jesus.]

Section 143
SIXTH APPEARANCE
(Jerusalem, Sunday, April 16, A.D. 30)
Jn 20:26-31

(d) 24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus [see on *Mt 10:3*], **was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.** [The apostles undoubtedly had seen and talked with someone, but the question was, Who? They said that it was Jesus, and Thomas, holding this to be impossible, thought that it must have been someone else whom they mistook for Jesus. But *he* would not be deceived; he would thoroughly examine the wounds, for these would identify Jesus beyond all doubt--if it were Jesus.] **26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus comes, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.** [He came in the same manner and with the same salutation as formerly (see *Jn 20:19*), giving Thomas a like opportunity for believing.] **27 Then said he to Thomas, Reach here your finger, and see my hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.** [753] [Thomas had proposed an infallible test, and Jesus now cheerfully submits to it.] **28 Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.** [We have here the first confession of Christ as God. It should be said in Thomas' favor that if his doubts were heaviest, his confession of faith was fullest. He had more doubts as to the resurrection because it meant more to him; it meant that Jesus was none other than God himself.] **29 Jesus said unto him, Because you have seen me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.** [Thus, while rejoicing in the belief of Thomas, Jesus pronounces a beatitude upon the countless numbers of believers in his resurrection, who are not witnesses of it.] **30 Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in his name.** [This sounds like an ending to the Gospel, but it is like some of Paul's apparent but not real endings. Starting it with the proposition that Jesus, as the Word, was God, he comes here to the climax of Thomas' confession that Jesus is God, and the beatitude of Jesus upon those of a like faith. He then declares that he has written his book that men might have this faith, and the eternal life to which it leads.]

Section 144
SEVENTH APPEARANCE
(Sea of Galilee)
Jn 21:1-25

A. Introduction to the Episode (Jn 21:1-3).

(d) 1 After these things Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and he manifested *himself* on this wise. 2 There was together Simon Peter, and

Thomas called Didymus [see on *Mt 10:3*], and **Nathanael of Cana in Galilee** [see on *Jn 1:45*], and the **sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.** **3 Simon** [754] **Peter said unto them, I am going fishing.** [As usual, Peter was the leader.] **They say unto him, We also will come with you. They went forth, and entered into the boat; and that night they took nothing.** [These apostles, thinking that their apostleship had terminated, had returned to their old like as fishermen.]

B. Recognition of Jesus (Jn 21:4-7).

(d) 4 But when day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach: yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. **5 Jesus therefore said unto them, Children, have you anything to eat?** [Jesus does not use the affectionate *teknia*--"children," but the familiar and colloquial *paidia*--"boys." His question was like that of a stranger, or neighbor, who wished to buy fish.] **They answered him, No.** [Their brevity bespeaks their disappointment at having a purchaser, but nothing to sell him.] **6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fish.** [The movements of large bodies of fish in the waters of Galilee are frequently visible to one standing on the shore. Supposing that the stranger thus saw fish upon the right side of the boat, the disciples readily obeyed his command, without suspecting who it was that gave it.] **7 That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord.** [Even the wonderful draught of fishes did not at once arouse all the disciples to realize that a miracle had been wrought, and that Christ stood upon the shore. But John, having believed in the resurrection of Jesus even before [755] he had seen the risen Lord, may rightly be presumed to have had a livelier expectation of meeting him in Galilee, and this expectation made him more alert for signs of the Lord's presence. During the night he had probably thought much of that other night when they took nothing, and of the day that followed and on which the Lord filled their nets for them. At any rate, the similarity of the two occasions now flashed through John's mind, and he recognized that it was Christ who had but now bade them cast the net.] **So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea.** [The arduous task of fishing had caused Peter to lay aside his upper garment; but as he prepares to meet the Lord he puts it on, moved by reverence and respect for the Master, though it encumbered him greatly in his efforts to swim.]

C. Breakfast with the Lord (Jn 21:8-13).

(d) 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits off), dragging the net full of fishes. [The other disciples restrained their emotions, and attended to the duties of the hour. They were about a hundred yards from the land.] **9 So when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.** [The sight gave a new meaning to the Lord's question in *Jn 21:5*; he had not come to buy, but to supply.] **10 Jesus said unto them, Bring of the fish that you have now taken.** **11 Simon Peter therefore went up, and drew the net to land, full of great fish, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, the net was not rent.** [Peter, being already wet, could lend material assistance in bringing the net to shore. John tells us the exact number of the fishes to show the magnitude of the miracle, both as to the catch and as to the unbroken nets. The latter form a sharp contrast to the broken nets of *Lk 5:6*. Possibly when the hour approached when they would become fishers of men, Jesus meant to show them that a greater and fuller miraculous power would attend and bless their efforts.] **12 Jesus said unto them, Come and** [756] **break your fast. And none of the disciples dared inquire of him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord.** [It was not, as some suppose, because they stood in a new and special awe of him, that they dared not question him, but it was the nature of the question itself. They feared a mild rebuke like that once administered to Philip--*Jn 14:9*.] **13 Jesus comes, and takes the bread, and gives them, and the fish likewise.** [Thus he gave to them when he fed the multitude and thus it may be hundreds of times he had given to them when they sat at meat together--*Lk 22:17-20 Jn 13:26*.] **14 This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.** [It was his seventh appearance, but his third appearance to a *group* of disciples, and the third appearance witnessed

by John. John counts as follows: 1. An appearance to the apostles without Thomas (*Jn 20:19*); 2. an appearance to them with Thomas (*Jn 20:26*); 3. this appearance.]

D. Reinstatement of Peter (Jn 21:15-19).

(d) 15 So when they had broken their fast [after the eating of a meal together had calmed and quieted the excitement of the disciples, and made them susceptible of teaching], **Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?** [Jesus here means: Do you love me more than these fishes and this fishing business?] **He said unto him, Yes, Lord; you know that I love you. He said unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? He said unto him, Yes, Lord; you know that I love you. He said unto him, Tend my sheep.** [For if you love me [757] [better than fishing, you are a fisherman no longer, but a shepherd.] **17 He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Do you love me? And he said unto him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.** [The Greek here has subtle shades of meaning that the English does not express. In the first two questions addressed to Peter (*Jn 21:15,16*) our Lord uses the strong verb *agapan*, and Peter replies by the weaker verb *philein*. See on *Jn 11:5*. Peter, as we have seen, had professed the most unparalleled devotion for the Master, but when the Lord now asks him if he has that devotion, he humbly describes his love as of a far weaker order--a mere instinctive affection or strong attachment, but nothing approaching adoration. In his third question, Jesus drops the *agapan* and takes Peter's own word--*philein*: as if he said, "Peter, are you even sure that you have a high regard for me?" It grieved Peter to have the Lord thus apparently doubt that he had even a tender regard for him, and he appealed to Christ himself as a searcher of hearts to bear witness that, poor and meager as his love was, it was at least as intense as he had represented it to be. In response to each of Peter's professions of love Jesus lays a command on him, as if he had said, "If you love me as you say, prove it thus." These three commands also contain subtle linguistic distinctions that, however, are fairly represented by the English. Lambs and sheep are to be fed, and sheep are to be tended. The former means that young and old in the church are to be provided for, and, since the word "tends" mean to be shepherd unto, the latter may mean that Peter is to play the shepherd to the wandering and the erring, bringing them into the fold. Before leaving this scene, we should note that it has close relationship to other incidents in the life of Peter: 1. Jesus here calls him by the name [758] by which he had first called him, noting the more honorable name that he had given him. 2. Jesus recalls Peter under circumstances very similar to his first call. Compare *Jn 21:1-14* with *Lk 5:1-11*. 3. In a group around a fire of coals Peter here thrice professes his love for Christ, thus revoking the threefold denial that he had made under similar circumstances--*Lk 14:54*.]

E. Prediction about Peter (Jn 21:18-19).

(d) 18 Verily, verily [see on *Jn 1:51*], **I say unto you, When you were young, you gird yourself, and walk where you would** [Peter had just shown this freedom by girding himself and plunging into the sea--*Jn 21:7*]: **but when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you where you would not.** [Thus our Lord, by delicate but unmistakable suggestion, shows Peter that the freedom that he now enjoyed would be taken from him, and that he would lift his hands to permit others to bind him that they might lead him to martyrdom to which his flesh (though not his spirit) would go unwillingly.] **19 Now this he spoke, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God.** [John, who wrote after Peter's death, tells us what the words of Christ meant. His words show that tradition is true in saying that Peter suffered martyrdom, but it is no voucher that tradition is true as to the time (about thirty-four years after this), place (Rome), or manner (crucified head downward) of Peter's death. There is certainly no trustworthy evidence that Peter was ever at Rome.] **And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, Follow me.** [This saying bore the usual double sense in which Jesus employed it. Peter was to follow him now (and he did arise and follow), and he was also to follow Jesus to a violent death and a glorious immortality.]

F. Words Regarding John (Jn 21:20-25).

(d) 20 Peter, turning about, sees the disciple whom Jesus loved [John] following; who also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrays you? [Jn 13:25.] 21 Peter therefore seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? [Peter and John were near friends (Ac 3:1), and understanding that the [759] Lord had prophesied a violent death for himself, Peter was naturally interested in the fate of his dear companion.] 22 Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to you? Follow me. [It was none of Peter's business whether John's earthly lot was easier or harder than his own; his business was to be faithful in the pathway where the Lord led him.] **23 This saying therefore went forth among the brethren, that that disciple would not die: yet Jesus did not say unto him, that he would not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to you?** [Our Lord's words were a puzzle when John wrote his Gospel, and to many they are a puzzle still. There is no question that John died. The site of his grave at Ephesus was well known to early Christians. The coming of the Lord for which he tarried was that in the isle of Patmos, of which he tells us in the Book of Revelation. This passage, therefore, shows that John wrote his Gospel before his exile in Patmos.] **24 This is the disciple that bears witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true. 25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written.** [Since the "we know" differs from the "he knows" of *Jn 19:35*, most of the critics hold that this verse was added by the elders of Ephesus to whom John committed his Gospel, and that it is the attestation of the church there to the truth and authenticity of the Gospel. But the first person singular, "I suppose," of *Jn 21:25* is hard to account for such an hypothesis. Besides, none of the elders at Ephesus could suppose any such thing. Only an eye-witness who saw the fullness of our Lord's ministry would be led to pen these words. We find in the first Epistle of John a condition of affairs similar to these two verses. The first chapter opens with and continues to use the editorial plural, [760] while the second chapter drops in the first person singular. We think, then, that John finished his own book. Considering the wilderness of literature that has accumulated around the sayings and doings of our Lord contained in the brief Gospels, it is little wonder that John thought a full record of the Lord's life would fill the world with books.]

Section 145 EIGHTH APPEARANCE (Mountain in Galilee) Mt 28:16-20

A. The Setting (Mt 28:16-17).

(a) 16 But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped *him*; but some doubted. [Though Matthew speaks of only eleven being present at this appearance, yet as it was the oft-promised meeting by appointment and as the women and disciples generally shared in the promise (*Mt 28:7-10*), we have no doubt that it was the meeting mentioned by Paul in *1 Co 15:6*. As to the doubts, we may explain them in three ways: 1. Among so large a number as five hundred (*1Co 15:6*) some would likely be skeptical. 2. It would take Jesus some time to draw near enough to all to convince each one of his identity. Some, therefore, would doubt until they were thus convinced by Jesus coming to them and speaking to them, as the first clause of the next section (*Mt 28:18*) shows that he did. 3. Matthew records no other appearance to the apostles except this one, and it seems to us reasonable to think that he here notes the doubts of Thomas (*Jn 20:24,25*), and connects them with the appearance of Jesus generally. He could not well say "*had* doubted," for he records no other appearance where they had opportunity to doubt. The history of the eleven sustains this view, for there [761] were no doubters among them at Pentecost. According to Paul, many of these brethren were still alive when he wrote his epistle to the Corinthians, which is commonly accepted to have been in the spring of A.D. 57.]

B. The Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20).

(a) 18 And Jesus came to them and spoke unto them, saying, All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth. [The word "authority" adequately translated Christ's word. It means all the right of absolute authority, and all the force of absolute power. It is a most transcendent claim that Jesus utters here. All authority in heaven! Paul's qualification of these words, or their counterpart in *Ps 8:6 (1Co 15:27,28)*, magnifies instead of detracting from their wonderful import, for he deems its necessary to state that the Father himself is not subject to the Son. Surely in connection with this marvelous celestial power, his dominion over our tiny earth would not need to be mentioned if it were not that we, its inhabitants, are very limited in our conception of things, and require exceedingly plain statements. **19 Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: 20 teaching them to observe all things whatever I commanded you:** [The first word of the commission is significant, and should be remembered. We have no right to wait for sinners to come and hear the gospel; we must carry it to them (see on *Mt 10:6*). The "therefore" with which it opens shows that Jesus rests this command on his divine authority (*Mt 28:18*). [762] The command calls for the Christianizing of all nations. If we realized better that authority with which Christ prefaces his commission (*Mt 28:18*), the conquest of the nations in his name would seem to us a small matter indeed, and we should set about it expecting to witness its speedy accomplishment. The structure of the sentence in the original Greek shows that it is the disciples and not the nations who are to be baptized; according to the commission, therefore, one must be made a disciple before he can be baptized. Baptism brings us into divine relation to God. Being a part of the process of adoption, it is called a birth (*Jn 3:5*). The baptized Christian bears the name into which he is baptized (*Ro 2:24 Jas 2:7*). Luke sums up the whole commission by recording the words of Christ, wherein he states that he suffered that it might be preached to all nations that if men would repent, God could now forgive (*Ro 3:26*). From Luke's record we also learn that the preaching of these glad tidings was to begin at Jerusalem.] **and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.** [This is a promise not of bare companionship, but of full sympathy and support (*Isa 43:2 Ex 33:15 Jos 1:5*). The duration of this promise shows that it is intended for all disciples.]

Section 146 NINTH APPEARANCE (Jerusalem) Mk 16:14-18; Lk 24:44-49

A. Reproof and Commission (Mk 16:14-18).

(b) And afterward he was manifested unto the eleven themselves as they sat at meat; and he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them that had seen him after he was risen. 15And he said unto them, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieves shall be condemned. but he that disbelieves shall be condemned. 17And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

B. Instruction (Lk 24:44-49).

(c) 44 And he said unto them, These are my words that I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. [That is, these recent events are simply what I told you should come to pass according to the Scriptures, but you did not understand. The phrase, "while I was yet," etc., shows that in the mind of Jesus, he was already parted from them, and his presence was the exception and not the rule.] **45 Then he opened their mind, that they might [764] understand the scriptures** [some think that this illumination was of a miraculous nature, and confound it with what the Lord is said to have done at *Jn 20:22*, but *Lk 24:46*

suggests that he did it by discourse, just as he had done it already to the two on the way to Emmaus--Lk 24:27]; **46 and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day** [Both the written prophecy and the unwritten nature of things required that Christ should do as he had done. The saying forms an important credential for the Book of Jonah; where else have we the period of three days fixed as the time between our Lord's burial and resurrection?--Mt 12:38-40]; **47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.** [See on Lk 24:47.] **48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high.** [765]

Section 147
THE ASCENSION
(Mount of Olives)
Mk 16:19-20; Lk 24:50-53

(b) 19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, **(c)** he led them out until *they were over against Bethany*: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. **51** And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them [it is significant that our Lord's gesture, when last seen of men, was one of blessing], and **(c)** carried **(b)** received} **(c)** up into heaven. **(a)** and a cloud received him out of their sight. **(b)** and [he] sat down at the right hand of God. **(c)** **52** And they worshipped him, **(c)** with great joy; **53** and were continually in the temple, blessing God. **(b)** **20** And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.

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5	1-48	84		23-28	78		23-38	33	7	1	153
6	1-34	84	3	1-6	80	4	1-13	33		2-9	172
7	1-29	84		7-12	81		14	58		10	173
8	1	101		13-19	82		14-15	58		11-52	174
	2-4	66		19-30	112		16-31	138		53	177
	5-13	101		31-35	117		31-37	62	8	1-11	177
	14-17	64	4	1-34	125		38-41	64		12-59	178
	18-27	130		35-41	130		42-44	65	9	1-41	182
	28-34	131	5	1-21	131	5	1-11	60	10	1-21	190
9	1	90		22-43	135		12-16	66		22-42	192
	2-8	68	6	1-6	138		17-26	68	11	1-46	206
	9	71		6-13	140		27-28	71		47-54	209

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	18-26	135		30-56	145	6	1-5	78	12	1-11	227
	27-34	137	7	1-23	153		6-11	80		12-19	230
	35-38	140		24	155		12-16	82		20-50	246
10	1	140		25-30	155		17-49	84	13	1-20	260
	2-4	82		31	157	7	1-10	101		21-38	263
	5-42	140		32-37	157		11-17	103	14	1-31	267
11	1	140	8	1-9	157		18-35	104	15	1-27	267
	2-30	104		10-21	158		36-50	108	16	1-33	267
12	1-8	78		22-26	160	8	1-3	111	17	1-26	274
	9-14	80		27-39	160		4	125	18	1	277
	15-21	81	9	1	160		5-18	125		2-11	279
	22-37	112		2-13	163		19-21	112		12-14	281
	38-45	114		14-29	165		22-25	130		15-18	283
	46-50	117		30-32	167		26-40	131		19-23	281
13	1-53	125		33-50	168		41-56	135		24	282
	54-58	138	10	1-12	214	9	1-6	140		25-27	283
14	1-12	143		13-16	215		7-9	143		28	285
	13-36	146		17-31	216		10	146		28-38	285
15	1-20	153		32-45	220		11-17	146		39-41	288
	21	155		46-52	223		18-21	160	19	1-16	288
	22-28	155	11	1-11	230		22-27	161		17	294
	29	157		12-18	233		28-36	163		18-27	295
	30-38	157		19-26	234		37-43	165		28-30	297
	39	158		27-33	235		43-45	167		31-42	298
16	1-12	158	12	1-12	235		46-50	168	20	1-10	302
	13-28	160		13-37	240		51-62	173		11-18	303
17	1-13	163		38-40	244	10	1-24	185		19-25	307
	14-20	165		41-44	246		25-37	186		26-31	308
	21-23	167	13	1-37	249		38-42	187	21	1-25	308
	24-28	168	14	1-2	258	11	1-13	188			
18	1-35	168		3-9	227		14-23	112			
19	1-12	214		10-11	258		24-36	114			
	13-15	215		12-17	259		37-54	117			
	16-30	216		18-21	263	12	1-59	119			
20	1-16	216		22-25	265	13	1-9	124			
	17-28	220		26	277		10-21	189			
	29-34	223		27-31	263		22-35	194			
21	1-12	230		32-42	277	14	1-24	195			
	12-13	233		43-52	279		25-35	197			
	14-17	230		53	281	15	1-32	198			
	18-19	233		54	282	16	1-31	198			
	20-22	234		55-65	282	17	1-10	198			
	23-46	235		66-72	283		11-37	210			
22	1-14	235	15	1	285	18	1-8	212			
	15-46	240		2-5	285		9-14	213			
23	1-39	244		6-19	288		15-17	215			
24	1-51	249		20-23	294		18-30	216			
25	1-46	249		24-32	295		31-34	220			
26	1-5	258		33-41	297		35-43	223			
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	17-20	259		9-11	303		45-48	233			
	21-25	263		12-13	305	20	1-8	235			
	26-29	265		14	307		9-19	235			
	30	277		15-18	312		20-40	240			
	31-35	263		19-20	313		41-44	240			
	36-46	277					45-47	244			
	47-56	279				21	1-4	246			
	57	281					5-37	249			
	58	283					37-38	234			
	59-68	282				22	1-6	258			
	69-75	283					7-18	260			
27	1-2	285					19-20	265			
	3-10	293					21-38	263			
	11-14	285					39-46	277			
	15-30	288					47-53	279			
	31-34	294					54	281			
	35-44	295					54-62	283			
	45-56	297					63-65	282			
	57-66	298					66-71	285			
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	9-10	303					2-5	285			
	11-15	305					6-12	288			
	16-20	311					13-25	288			
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							33-43	295			
							44-49	297			
							50-56	298			
						24	1-8	302			
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