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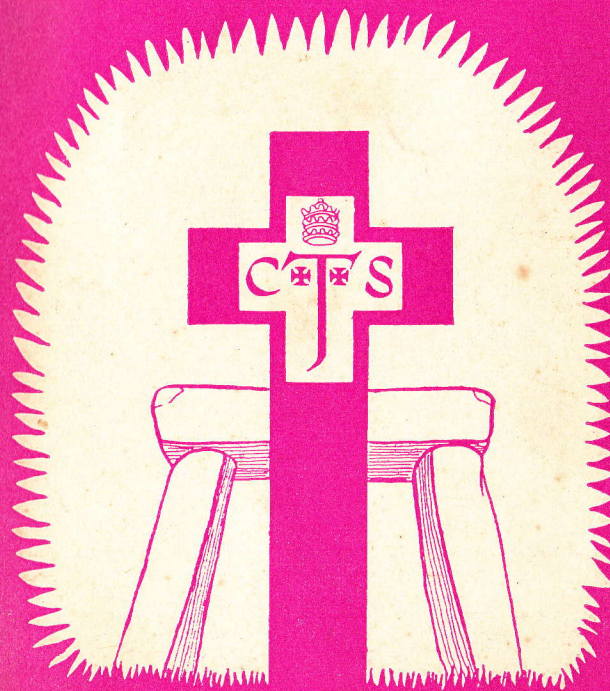
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JESUS OF NAZARETH

C. C. Martindale S.J.



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JESUS OF NAZARETH

By Rev. C. C. Martindale, S.J.

I

EARLIER essays have traced the history of Hebrew Religion since the beginning. Enough to recall that the Hebrews believed themselves uniquely chosen by God for a tremendous destiny. The materialistic version of this belief was that God would raise up a Messiah, His Anointed and Consecrated King, who should "rescue" the people from all enemies and establish himself as king in Jerusalem. As their sufferings progressively spiritualised their ideals, the Jews looked forward to a world-wide everlasting reign of righteousness, and a Messiah who should establish peace, mercy, and justice amongst all men. During the last pre-Christian century or so, "apocalyptists" had emphasised the mystical value of concrete events, and even a supernatural aspect of this Messiah—he pre-existed his earthly advent and "stood before God" always. But the prophetic voice had been silent for 400 years: the mass of the people was fiercely nationalist; only a minority, the "poor and humble of heart," awaited the coming of God's day without thought of violence or worldly ambitions.

Their religious leaders, however, were themselves divided. The Sadducees, mostly members of the powerful priestly families, wished to bring their exclusivist culture into touch with general world-culture, and had no belief in personal immortality. At the opposite extreme, the Essenes preached solitude, poverty, and celibacy, while the Zealots, inspired by a fierce mood rather than by definite ideas, were ready to revolt almost at any time.¹

¹Neither Essenes nor Zealots played any real part in Our Lord's life. There is no foundation for the idea that He was brought up amid the former; nor need we assume that His apostle Simon "the Zealot" actually belonged to a technically Zealot party.

The Scribes were "religious lawyers" who codified the enormous mass of ritual custom that overlay the Law of Moses: the Pharisees, "Separates," professed to observe these accurately. We dare not blacken them as a class: still, their profession tended to make them hypocritical (for few enough really could observe all those regulations, even allowing for their elaborate casuistry, which provided them with escapes); or else scornful of those who lived a rough-and-ready religious life. They may not have been numerous: it cost money to be a successful Pharisee. And they lived chiefly in the sophisticated atmosphere of Jerusalem, where the Temple was, rather than in simpler, north-country Galilee.

Meanwhile Herod the Great, of Idumæan stock, and no true Jew, was king in Jerusalem under Roman tutelage. He had amassed vast wealth, and was building a Temple of unparalleled grandeur, which kept for him the favour of the Jews, and was also skilful enough to preserve that of Rome, even when Cleopatra wanted to be queen of Palestine. But by now his fear of assassination was almost a monomania: he killed off half his family lest it should plot against him: Augustus said it was better to be Herod's pig than Herod's son.¹ He bequeathed his kingdom to various persons, of whom two concern us—Herod Archelaus, who ruled in Jerusalem till his monstrous cruelties forced the Jews themselves to appeal for a Roman procurator to govern Judea; and the quieter Herod Antipas, who governed Galilee in the north.

In this distracted yet rigidly-organised world, John the Baptist suddenly appeared towards the end of the reign of Herod the Great. Sun-scorched, haggard with long fasting, resuming the ancient camel-hide dress of prophets, he stood by the southern caravan-routes, crying that men must repent, for the Triumph of God was imminent. Crowds flocked from all over the country: he made them plunge into the Jordan, coming out symbolically cleansed from past sins, and prepared to

¹A double pun. "Pig" and "Son" sound rather alike in Greek; and—the Jews did not eat pork.

observe his simple ethic—let the rich share with the poor; tax-collectors be no more extortioners; soldiers no more violent. Pharisees and Sadducees came to examine his credentials. "Who has warned *you* to fly from the imminent Wrath? Do not invoke your descent from Abraham! From these very stones God can raise up sons to Abraham. As for you—the barren tree is about to be cut down: the chaff separated from the grain—and the chaff shall be burnt up."

But John always insisted that he was but the herald of one stronger than he—*He* should baptise with God's Holy Spirit and with Fire; *His* sandals John was not worthy to carry. That "fire" meant that the new baptism should be more drastically purifying than his own, as fire exceeded water.

At last, when the whole land knew of John, Jesus came from Nazareth in the north and asked to be baptised. "I have need," said John, awe-struck, "to be baptised by Thee—and comest Thou to me"? Jesus insisted; and John, having baptised Him, heard the divine voice, approving Him, and saw the Spirit resting upon Him. Such was the "official seal" of His Messiahship. But Jesus at once withdrew into the desert.

II

We have not space fully to set out the evidence for the credibility of the Christian tradition. The first sort of evidence is that of the Community itself which, well before 150, was world-wide, thinking alike, and ready to die rather than apostatise from Christ, whom they adored as God (Pliny, Ep. x. 97: 111 A.D.). Though we learn the earliest tradition from documents, it was the Christian Community which created these, not *vice versa*. Four of these documents were held unique—the "Gospel" of Jesus, His Message, transmitted by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and their authority was absolute. No Christian would have dared to mutilate them: "heretics" had to do so, if they wished to appeal to them. The reading of them during the public liturgy would have sufficed to "crystallise" them. Their nature is such that they *could* have been written by those only who knew Palestine intimately and at first hand: archæology is constantly justifying them in minute details; the whole background of their thought and diction is Aramaic. Anyone can at once see the difference between these documents and what was written later or elsewhere. Thus we hold that the first

three documents were all in existence before 70 (the sack of Jerusalem): that Matthew wrote very early, in Aramaic, perhaps even in 55 A.D.; afterwards, this was translated into Greek: that Mark at least noted down the material of his "gospel" before the death of St Peter (64) and published it soon afterwards. St Luke wrote his before he wrote the *Acts*, and wrote these towards the end of St Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, 62-63 A.D.; and since he seems to have used Mark's document, and also the Greek version of St Matthew, therefore we may consider Matthew to have started collecting his material almost at once; to have published his Aramaic "gospel" between 50 and 55; and Mark to have noted down Peter's teaching over a space of years and have got it into shape about 60; and that Luke was thus able to use not only Mark but a Greek version of Matthew before his publication in about 62. As for St John, he may have written as late as 100 A.D., though nothing prevents his having done so earlier. The reason the authenticity of the "Fourth Gospel" has been so much disputed is really that, if it were authentic, Christ would have proclaimed His own divinity in the full sense, whereas critics want that doctrine to have been a slow development. Far from St John relating mere allegories, he insists on the objective truth of his account: his emphasis, no doubt, is on the spiritual truth enshrined in the historical incident: but he was a true historian, the more because of his deeper perspective. We say that we understand the war better now than we could, even ten years ago (see below, p. 17). Add that many of St Paul's epistles were written before any of the fourfold narrative was published; that he was recognised as conflicting in no way with the doctrine of the Twelve; and that even his earliest extant letter (i. Thess.: 51 A.D.), contains a complete Christology. Historically, therefore, obscurities in the Gospels should be cleared up in terms of the belief witnessed to by Paul and the earliest Church.

It is worth comparing the New Testament documents, and the fourfold gospel in particular, with those other documents which we call "apocryphal." By this word we here mean documents falsely purporting to have been written by Scriptural authors, and in particular the "Christian" apocrypha, not the Jewish, which were written on the whole during the two pre-Christian centuries. Note that when an author prefixed some sacred or important name to what he wrote, he at first did so by a quaint convention, without intent to deceive. Thus you might write a collection of wise sayings and head them "Solomon's Wisdom." But already in Jewish times such books had an increasing element of the fantastic in them, and are on a lower plane compared with, say, the prophets. Christian apocryphal books were written on the whole to fill what the imagination felt as gaps in the gospel narrative—hence, e.g., the Protoevangelium, or gospel of the Infancy, said to be by James, brother of the Lord; and the (fourth c.?) Latin gospel of Matthew. There was another allegedly by St John, relating the death of Mary; and other documents amplifying the histories of Pilate or Joseph of Arimathea. There were, too, plenty of "gospels" strongly tinged

with Judaism or Gnosticism (see Essay 16), written in order to read the ideas proper to their authors back into the earliest times—e.g., the gospel according to the Egyptians, or according to the Hebrews, or that of St Thomas. The writers of these can hardly be acquitted of the desire to deceive. It is unnecessary to speak of the apocryphal Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses that came into being. Of all this literature it can be said, first, that the Church never accepted it as authentic, though in some degree it provided just what the "imagination" of simpler folks demanded—i.e., appeared to tell them details they would have liked to know, and pandered to their taste for the marvellous. Indeed, this literature is in itself a proof of the authenticity of the fourfold gospel, so grotesque is the material with which it fills the gaps, and of which it fashions its portents. Apart from its complete lack of the simplicity and manifest sincerity that characterise the genuine Scriptures, it lacks too their intimate Palestinian colouring, and contains none of those references to contemporary facts which archæology day by day is proving accurate.¹ In a word, a schoolboy would detect the difference in nature between the apocryphal literature and the fourfold gospel.

None of this "Fourfold Narrative" professes to be a "biography," but "the Message" of Jesus Christ, as told by each evangelist. Nothing, then, save this "Message" needed to be told. But Matthew and Luke prefix to it "childhood stories," dear to us and influential in our liturgy (the hymns of Mary, Zachary, and Simeon), and of corroborative value in that Jesus was born as He is said to have been. Neither the evangelists, nor the Church, ever deduce Christ's divinity from the Virgin Birth: but, being Himself different, it was fitting that He should be born differently. Moreover, these narratives make it incredible that the evangelists, or the contemporary Church, thought that Our Lord's Messiahship began, as later critics have argued, with the Baptism. That event revealed Him to John as Messiah: it did not make Him so. In this essay, however, which seeks to describe, precisely, the "Gospel" preached by Our Lord, only the minimum of biographical matter will be provided.

¹An instance or two. St John writes of the Probatia pool as having "five porches." Nothing of the sort had been discovered till recently, when the foundations of such a pool were unearthed, showing that it had colonnades on each side, and one across the middle, solving thus the problem as to how "five porches" or colonnades could have been disposed. Again, St Luke says that when Our Lord began His ministry, Lysanias was ruler in Abilene. Only one "Lysanias" used to be known—he had ruled 30 years B.C. St Luke, they said, was wrong by 60 years. Excavations in Abilene have shown that there were several persons of that name, one holding power precisely about 30 A.D. He also says that the officials at Thessalonika were "politarchs": it used to be denied that this title ever existed. But it now appears on inscriptions at Thessalonika itself, and often in papyri.

The Birth of Jesus took place at Bethlehem, because Augustus, wishing to take a census of his empire so as to regulate taxation, used a far from unknown system in the East, and caused people to register in their ancestral town, which was Bethlehem, where David, ancestor of Mary and Joseph, had been born. After the ritual Presentation in the Temple, and the superb declaration of Simeon that this Child was to be a Light for the Pagans no less than the glory of the Jews, the Holy Family returned to Bethlehem and there remained till the arrival of certain men from the East, who had deduced from the stars that a King was to be born in Palestine. Their question: "Where is he who is *born* king of the Jews"? terrified the Idumæan Herod, who determined to discover and destroy the Child. But the orientals eluded him, and Joseph and Mary fled over the frontier into Egypt. There they will have been among folk of their own language and customs; nor need they have stayed there long, as Herod died almost at once. They meant to return to Bethlehem; but hearing that the hateful Archelaus was king in Judæa, Joseph went back to Nazareth where his original work had been. Here they lived until Jesus was twelve years old.¹

Then, while they were on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Jesus stayed behind, and only after two days was found under the Temple colonnades, where Rabbis held "school": He amazed them by the wisdom of His answers to their catechism. To His sorrowing parents He said: "Did you not realise that I could not *but* be in My Father's House"? (Maybe, "about My Father's business.") Thus He declared that God was His true Father; God's House, His home; God's work, His own true work. He returned then to Nazareth, and remained there till the Baptist's preaching became notorious. There is no excuse for assigning these Childhood stories,

¹Nazareth was not a place of idyllic calm. It stood above roads filled with commerce and military movement: also, Galilee was turbulent; the Romans burned Sepphoris, four miles from Nazareth, because of a raid on Antipas's armoury there, and crucified 2,000 men of the environs. Men dying on crosses were familiar spectacles to Jesus and His Mother.

so perfectly Palestinian and Messianic at all points, to any period later than that of the rest of the "gospel." Indeed, it is hard to believe that Luke, at any rate, had any other source than Mary; so fresh and sweet is their simplicity. Only a desire to eliminate the miraculous from the Life of Jesus accounts for their rejection.

Jesus, having spent some weeks alone in the bleak south-land desert, returned to Galilee by the place where John was still baptising, and still undergoing an inquisition as to his authority. Was He Elias come to life? the prophet, due to appear before the world ended? Nay—was he the Messiah? To all this he said No; but this time could point to Jesus, and say: "That is He"! But Jesus did no more than welcome the companionship of a few of John's disciples, and go northward with them. They were Andrew and another, whom we think to have been John; Andrew introduced his brother Simon; and on arriving in Galilee Jesus met also Philip, from the fishing village of Bethsaida whence came also Andrew and Simon. Philip introduced Nathaniel, from Cana over the hills on the way to Nazareth, whither Jesus now returned and effaced Himself anew in His trade.¹

The Baptist, however, was seized and imprisoned by Herod Antipas, because he rebuked that king for taking his brother's wife, though she was not even divorced. The "Voice" was now silenced; the Baptist had fulfilled his vocation. Jesus then stepped into His Galilean publicity—yet how quietly! He went to His local synagogue on a sabbath, and asked (as any Jew who could read Hebrew might) to explain the Scriptures. He chose for text Isaiah lxi. 1, and what follows: "The Spirit of

¹Presumably it was Nathaniel who, on the way home, took Our Lord to the wedding where His mother already was, and where He turned water into wine. This miracle was worked, at her request, definitely "out of due time." He did not work "Messianic signs" before He began His actual preaching. It is impossible in these few pages to give reasons for every opinion advanced in them, especially about order of events. Hence I cannot here say why I hold that what follows did not occur till the Baptist was arrested.

the Lord is upon me He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor to proclaim a Time of Graciousness from God." Afterwards He went to Capharnaum¹ by the Lake, preached in its synagogue, and began those "mighty works," or "signs," which should rivet attention to Him. They wished Him to remain there; but He was "owed" to all the other towns of Galilee.

A difference in "tone" had at once been felt between His preaching and that to which His hearers had been accustomed: but He preached no new doctrine. Suspicion, however, grew up more because of His deeds than of His words. He touched a leper, and thus became ritually unclean. He had visited and even eaten with a tax-collector, Levi—a tainted association. He kept no ritual fasts, yet He had picked wheat-ears by the path-side on the Sabbath—equivalent, they held, to reaping on that day; and had cured sick men on Sabbaths, though the casuists said you might not even pour water on sprained limbs upon the Sabbath. Finally, His words did become enigmatic, even scandalous. In regard of Levi, He said: "I am come to call, not the righteous, but sinners." Rebuked for not fasting, He said that while the Bridegroom was with them, His disciples could not fast: when He should be taken away, then would they do so. But "He who is to come," and the Bridegroom, were alike Messianic titles, and had been used by the Baptist (Jn. iii. 29). Moreover, when the paralytic was let down through the roof, He had horrified His listeners by saying: "Thy sins are forgiven thee," and had followed this up by healing him, "that you may know that the 'Son of Man' hath power on earth to forgive sins." The expression was a vague one: it might just mean "man," human man: but it was, also vaguely, associated with the Messiah: yet here Jesus seemed to

¹We hold that Lk. iv. 21-30, which suggests that Our Lord had preached and worked miracles there before the inauguration of His ministry at Nazareth, is chronologically displaced; Mark gives the right order of events. We cannot, clearly, discuss such details here: see commentators.

be using it of Himself. Worst, maybe, was the incident of the pagan officer who begged that Jesus would cure his sick servant. The officer must have felt that Jesus was some emissary of the gods, with power over illnesses and the like, and bluntly said that he too was like that—a man under authority, but with power over inferiors, to whom he issued orders that they obeyed. Let Jesus do the like! Our Lord exclaimed: "I have not found such faith—no, not in Israel!" This was shattering to His critics—a pagan preferred to *them*? No wonder that it was clear He would not for long be unmolested, and it was now, I think, that He definitely called His twelve apostles, whom He should train and then send to carry on His work when He should be no more there. He took them, therefore, up into a mountain, where the crowds could not follow Him, and gave them a preliminary explanation of what He was, and was not, doing: and of His true attitude towards all that had preceded Him.¹

Hitherto Our Lord had preached no new doctrine: even on the Mount He was hardly to mention that Kingdom of God for which the Jews were sighing, and not at all its King—save by implication. All this while, He had been trying to effect that "change of heart" without which none of the rest of His doctrine would be intelligible, let alone accepted. The first change was to be, from exterior to interior state of conscience. You must not kill, nor commit adultery, nor be insulting—but you must not even entertain the mood of hate, lust, or scorn. Again, you must not live according to accurate retaliation—eye for eye: kindness for kindness: injury for injury. You must not merely *not* break the

¹It is known that St Matthew often brings incidents or sayings of the same sort together, and I think he does so in his "Sermon." Thus, while chapter 5 seems to me all of a piece, and mostly to represent what Our Lord said *then*, I should hesitate to say the same for what follows. Thus I think the Our Father is in its right setting in St Luke. On this early occasion, I hold that Our Lord spoke first to the apostles alone, and high up the hill; and then descended to where the crowds had been able to follow, and spoke to them at large.

law—you must seek to please your heavenly Father, and be like Him, who does good even to the wicked and ungrateful. If we do otherwise, and do good to those only who do it to us, "how are you better than the pagans? Even they do that"! He then applies this doctrine to almost every relationship imaginable between man and man, man and God. The doctrine, He owns, is hard: narrow is the gate; narrow the path. But he who so builds his house has built it on a rock. All else would be swept away.

Observe three points. The idea of "God" is definitely displayed as that of a Father, loving His children far better than they love Him. The nationalist idea of God is superseded wholly: even His power and holiness, while never denied by Jesus, are caught up into a realm of tender-mercy and loving-kindness shown towards each single soul. Second, the refrain: "You have heard that it was said to them of old But I say to you" Who were these men of old? All the patriarchs; Moses; all the prophets. Who spoke to them? God Himself. "*But I say to you . . .*" Well might they even now ask: "Whom makest Thou Thyself"? Finally, He makes it clear that the Twelve have a vocation and a *mission*. They are a city on a hill; a lamp on a lamp-stand; the salt of the earth. Thus the universal kingdom, and its divine King, are definitely foreshadowed.

III

Our Lord now concentrated on "The Kingdom," and spoke "by means of parables." A parable is a story, short or long, set alongside of some other fact or situation, to illustrate this. It does so, massively and in the rough, with no minute correspondence of details, as in allegories. You illustrate the less-known by the better-known; and Our Lord illuminated spiritual truths—here, always, the nature of the divine Rule and its effects, by concrete examples from men's ordinary life. He did so, because the Jews enjoyed this method; because had He said

outright that the nationalist hopes of the people were doomed to defeat He would have been stoned; and because He wished to give no handle to those who were already hostile to Him. In any case, *they* would have shut their minds to His true meaning: the common people, though they understood but vaguely, "heard Him gladly."¹ The effect on His words depended always in part on the hearers—on "the ears of their hearts." The grain, says the "covering parable" of the Sower, fell on the trampled path—souls wholly irresponsive: in rock-crevices with but a pinch of soil in them—shallow sentiments, that might respond for a moment, and then wither: decent earth, but choked with brambles—minds whose material preoccupations gave the word no chance: and into rich prolific soil that gave much produce.

The Kingdom began, seemingly, insignificant as mustard-seed, which yet became a tree; invisible, at first, even as it grew, like the seed within the earth (Mk. iv. 26), and as it worked, like yeast in dough. It was a definite *thing* like a treasure in a field, or a pearl, to buy which you should sell whatever else you had: yet, until this earth's history should end, it would contain imperfections—the Net held fish both sound and poisonous: the Field, weeds as well as wheat.

Herein, certainly, there is no hint of nationalist, materialist prosperity; no incitement to revolt. Those who "heard Him gladly" were they whose minds corresponded to the "quiet" souls—the "meek and gentle"—the kindly and merciful—the pure, and those who hungered for yet greater purity—nay, those on whom the powerful bore hardly and still were patient—those for whom the "Beatitudes" were spoken that St Matthew places at the head of the discourse on the Mountain, like a grand and comprehensive "overture."

Yet the Kingdom was to begin *now*. In the "Our Father" itself, we are told to ask that God may be worshipped, that His kingdom may come and His will

¹In Mk. iv. 1-9, but not Mk. xiii. 1-15, Jesus seems to say that He speaks in parables in order that His critics might not understand. On this paradox, see approved commentaries.

be done, on earth, not alone in heaven. Jesus therefore means that God's triumph is to be begun here, though consummated hereafter: is to be forthwith accomplished in each individual soul, and gradually manifested in general social life: it is to be both visible and invisible; temporal and eternal.

Finally, if this doctrine was "obscure," Christ insisted that it should not always remain so: the lamp was not lit, forthwith to be covered up: the Apostles were already having the sense of His words explained privately to them: He spoke, at first, in parables to the people, because such was the measure of their understanding; but "take heed *how* you listen"! For, if they refused to attend to the growing light, even their initial apprehension would become clouded: and if their interior eye turned into darkness—"what darkness"! Meanwhile, He was emphasising His doctrine by Miracles. Miracles cannot be eliminated from the gospels (unless it be decided beforehand that they *cannot* happen), if only because even critics, who think they can reach to an "original nucleus" of the documents, find miracles there already, like the multiplication of bread.

Our Lord, then, claimed to do "works that no other man did," through the power of God, yet of His own volition ("I will; be thou clean"!): they included cures of paralytics, the blind, deaf, and dumb, and leprous: usually instantaneous, they might be gradual (the man born blind, who first saw "men, like trees—only walking . . .," and then saw clearly): they might be worked by touch, or be done at a distance (the centurion's servant). They could occur when their subject did not expect them, or was, even, antagonistic (demoniacs); they might be worked on inanimate matter—water; the sea; bread; or even on the dead.

These events occurred usually in full publicity, in the continual presence of the Apostles, and often of hostile critics who did not deny that they happened, but invented fantastic reasons to explain them ("He casts out devils by the help of the chief of devils"). They therefore occurred. At our distance we cannot, obviously,

pass a scientific judgment on, *e.g.*, the nature of the paralysis cured by Our Lord: but the miracles on inanimate nature, or the dead, clearly stand outside of "natural law." Anyhow, the miracles must be treated as a whole. Our Lord offered them as "signs" and as exceptional even in His ministry: they pointed to a further, general conclusion, *e.g.*, that God was "with Him," approving Him and His doctrine. It was, too, part of the Messianic tradition that when the Messias should arrive, "the eyes of the blind shall see," and so forth; and when the Baptist sent to enquire whether really Our Lord were the Messias, Jesus pointed to the "signs" that He was working, adding significantly that "the Poor" were having the good news preached to them. Doubtless Isaias himself (whose prophecy was quoted) attached primarily a spiritual meaning to what he said: but Our Lord could urge that He was verifying even the physical element in the prophecy; to a human judgment, it will always seem "harder" to raise the dead than to say: "Thy sins are forgiven thee."¹

Now the Apostles were to rely on "prophecy" much more than on miracles (save the Resurrection) as "proof" of the Messiahship of Jesus. "Prophecy" was not only "prediction," though it could include it. It was often a statement about some contemporary, or imminent, event (like the sack of a city) which found "fulfilment" on a more general or higher plane, concerned with right and wrong; and with God. Now the Jews thought of their history as an organic unit, and wholly Providential. It was always pointing them to something *better*, in fact, towards the Day of God, and the advent of Messias. Thus it was *all* "prophetic"—the books of Josue, Samuel, Kings, were ranked as "prophetic" books, though there is next to no "prediction" in them. Now

¹As for "possession," doubtless men used too easily to assign any disaster to the direct action of an evil spirit: still, we are now even readier to put illnesses down to the action of "mind on matter"; and no one can prove that there are *not* discarnate minds, able to influence men's minds, and so their bodies. Physical science, then, can never disprove the possibility of the direct or indirect effect of evil, discarnate minds upon men.

this prophet or that had foreseen the Messiah in different ways—a glorious king; a “suffering servant”: as descended from David; as a mysterious other-worldly apparition. Jesus claimed that *all* the prophecies found in Him their *adequate* fulfilment. He recapitulated in Himself *all* the providential history of Israel. So the Apostles came to see it: in the Acts they are found recapitulating the whole of the people’s history before asserting that “Jesus is the Christ.”¹ Both miracles and prophecy, then, have to be thought of “organically,” *i.e.*, in connection with the personal Character of Jesus—sublime, simple; lovable, austere; utterly human, altogether holy: and with the character of His incomparable preaching: and of His claims. He offered Himself as containing all that was good in the past, yet as leading it forward to something infinitely better still, and as possessing at all points the sanction of God Himself.

Our Lord, by His emphasis on the moral conditions requisite for entering the Kingdom, had aroused bitter hostility in those whom He appeared to be—and, indeed, was—rebuking: from His account of that Kingdom He had omitted all reference to nationalist glory, and this, too, was bitter disappointment to many. His own Nazareth was antagonistic to Him—He had said He could work miracles in Capharnaum, but not *there*. Those who had seen Him as child and labouring-lad could not rise above that memory. He generalised: *No* prophet found honour in his own country. Who, in the past, had recognised Elias and Eliseus? the widow from Sarepta, and the pagan Syrian, Naaman. There could, then, be pagans spiritually preferable to Jews: perhaps the Jews, indeed, would reject Him, and God’s favour would be transferred to those very pagans.

¹A “prophecy” might be fulfilled just as it stood (the birth at Bethlehem): as better applicable to Jesus than, *e.g.*, to David or Isaias (“they persecuted Me without a cause”): with a fulness of meaning maybe not suspected by the prophet himself (the Emmanuel prophecies of Isaias): or, again, the application may seem purely verbal (“Out of Egypt have I called My Son”). The point is, that the fragmentary, disconnected, seemingly contradictory prophecies of old were harmonised, and made fully intelligible, in the person of Jesus.

Furious, they tried to seize Him and hurl Him down their cliff. But He escaped: and as the first period ended with the vocation of the Twelve, so does this second one close with His sending them out on their first experimental missionary journey, having explained in detail the detachment that the true Apostle would need.

It was now, I think (not all, probably, will agree exactly with any one arrangement of events), that Herod executed the Baptist. Thereafter, he could not but attend more closely to the new Prophet, especially as people were telling him that Jesus was John come to life again. Maybe because of this (Mt. xiv. 13), but also because the Apostles had returned exhausted from their mission, He took them across the Lake into the territory of Philip, to rest there undisturbed. But the crowd followed them; out of pity, He multiplied bread for them: wild with enthusiasm, they now tried to seize Him and make Him king. It was almost inevitable that He must now explain to them *Himself*, what He was, and was not. This third part of His preaching is, then, concerned with His own Kingship. Having returned across the Lake, He found the crowds awaiting Him. He cried that they had come because of the bread He gave them. Let them work, not for bread that perished in the using, but for eternal, heavenly bread.” “Moses gave that to us! the manna!” No, not even that could give them eternal life. But *He* could. *He* was the true Bread, coming down from heaven, and giving life to the world; and the Bread that He would give was “His Flesh.” Shocked, they could not believe Him. He re-emphasised His claim. “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life: he that eateth and drinketh not, hath no life in him.” It was too much: the crowds melted: only the Twelve remained loyal—Simon answering for them. In seeming desertion and defeat, the first half of Our Lord’s ministry ended.

The above discourse was of a kind not yet used by Jesus in public; to Nicodemus He had mentioned the “heavenly” things which it were idle yet to speak of

if even he, "the master in Israel," could not assimilate "earthly ones," Christ's normal teaching: true, to the woman of Samaria He had acknowledged His Messiahship, and had stayed some time in her town; but Messiahship was not Divinity; and He hardly ever went into Samaria.¹

We have seen that at the outset Our Lord spoke very little about *Himself*. Even when He began to do so, had He said: "I am true God, true man—two natures in one Person," He would have been using terms derived from Greek philosophy, and have been unintelligible to Jews. Had He said: "I am Jehovah," He would have been stoned for blasphemy. Even when sending the Apostles on their first mission, He never told them to speak about Himself. He had moved very slowly—speaking, first, "as never man spoke," tenderly, yet with authority, not as the scribes (who quoted or interpreted the opinions of *others*): using strange expressions of Himself—He that was to Come: the Bridegroom, Son of Man; but not yet "Son of God," though the demoniacs used it (Mk. iii. 11-12, v. 7, etc.); and even had He done so, it could not be taken in our full theological sense as a matter of course; for anyone highly favoured, any Israelite as opposed to pagans, could be called a "son of God": even Mary (Lk. i. 34) thought the Messiah should be born of human parents. Perhaps that expression "But I say unto you," is the most significant thing yet said: in it He places Himself, as authority, above Moses and all the divine history of Israel: and His way of speaking of *My* Father and (afterwards) of Himself as *the* Son is quite different from that in which He speaks of the general Fatherhood of God and sonship of man. There is here no hint that His own consciousness as to Messiahship underwent development: the thing is wholly

¹St John v. 17-47 has its own difficulties. The Jews were angry because He broke the Sabbath, but more, because He said that "God was His own special Father, making Himself equal to God." Apart from the possibility that this chapter should follow, not precede, chapter vi., it is so full of Our Lord's favourite ambiguities and affirmations of His subordination, as man, to the Father, that the Jews may well have departed angry and puzzled, yet feeling that after all He was not claiming what they thought He had claimed.

concerned with His method of unfolding His doctrine to the Jews.

It is impossible, in an essay of this size, to enter into the discussion of the historical nature of the fourth gospel, and of its discourses in particular, to a famous one of which we have alluded above. We can, however, insist that the whole point of St John's gospel is its *witness* to Christ as true God, true man, having lived amongst men for their salvation. In fact, he piles up different sorts of witnesses to Christ—the Baptist, prophecy, miracles, the nature of Christ's preaching and personality, and his own eye-witness. Not only the whole point, we repeat, of the book would be lost were it not to be true to fact, but its writer would have to be called a liar, so urgently does he insist on the value of his witness, as, too, he does in chapter i. of his first Epistle. It is true that, as we said above, he always chooses the incidents he relates because of their *doctrinal bearing* (this is why we are bound to regard the incident, for example, of the Peter's triple confession and Our Lord's commission given to him, that he should shepherd the entire flock, as conveying both a historical fact and a doctrine): but he would not so much as be proving a doctrine at all were the illustrating incident not to be historical. As for the Discourses, they are said to contain a doctrine that is more "mystical" than is found in the Synoptists; that the hearers would not have understood it; and that they are written in St John's own recognisable style. To this we reply that Our Lord at first, at any rate, adapted Himself to His hearers, though in proportion as His ministry advanced He declared Himself more fully even in public: that it is explicitly stated that the hearers did *not* understand Him—in the Discourse on the Bread of Life, mentioned above, it seems clear that Our Lord began to speak it in the open air, and in moderately simple terms; that after the preliminary outburst of hostile criticism He entered a synagogue and continued to speak to a smaller and presumably more "learned" audience; and that *still* they could not assimilate what He was saying. That Our Lord often said what ordinary people ought to have been able to understand is no reason for declaring that He shall not have had anything to say that even the educated Jew could not grasp. That would be equivalent to asserting that He in no way transcended even His own generation. As for the "style" in which John reports Our Lord's discourses, observe that *all* the evangelists "condense" them. What occupies but a page in a book can have taken several hours to say. Now everyone condenses in his own way. If two reporters condense, quite faithfully, a speech, the personality of the reporter can often easily be guessed from the version he provides of what was said. Hence there is no contradiction at all between the discourses of Our Lord being faithfully transmitted by St John, and yet bearing quite definitely the mark of John's own personality. It is worth remembering, as a principle, that the evangelists were quite determined to tell accurately the substance of what was said, even though they

did not, or could not, supply the exact words in which it was said. Thus we do not know with verbal accuracy even the title on the Cross, nor the form in which Our Lord consecrated the bread and wine at the last Supper, nor even the Lord's Prayer. But we should be perverse in the extreme if we refused to acknowledge the facts in any of these cases: we know what happened, the essence of what was said, and what was meant.

IV

After this it becomes much harder to arrange the incidents of Our Lord's life in an order, partly because He was so often in flight from His enemies, and outside of Galilee. Much time was spent instructing His Apostles, to whom He emphasised the universality of the Kingdom, which implied an ultimate rupture with the Jews, and this in its turn His death and the redemption it should effect, and the detachment needed in anyone who should "follow" Him. This again provoked the question of the fate of the Jews, and so of the imminent sack of Jerusalem, and even of the ending of the world.

This paper is not a "life" of Christ nor, we said, do the "gospels" profess to give us one, but His doctrine. We can, then, concentrate more on ideas than events. Even His education of the Apostles seized its opportunities from casual incidents (Mt. xvi. 5-12; Mk. viii. 14-21, etc.), and seems not to have followed an exact plan. But Our Lord's appointment of St Peter as His successor was a *structural incident*.

Our Lord asked the Apostles whom men said He was? They gave various answers. "Whom do you say I am"? They kept silence. Then Simon exclaimed: "Thou art the Christ, Son of the Living God" (Mt. xvi. 18; Mk. viii. 27; Lk. ix. 18-21). Our Lord cried that it was from no human source that Simon knew that, but by revelation, and added: "And I say to thee that thou art Rock, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. And to thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth

shall be loosed in heaven."¹ Add what St Luke records (xxii. 32): Jesus says to Simon that Satan, the Adversary, has wished to scatter the Apostles like grains of wheat: "but (he shall not do so), for "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," and Peter, for his part, was to give stability, coherence, unity, in short, to his brethren. Again, St John (xxi. 15) relates how Peter was constituted shepherd of the entire flock. St John, we saw, always relates incidents in view of their dogmatic content, not for their own pathetic sake: Peter's universal shepherdhood is therefore rightly seen here. Our Lord, then, definitely took over three great divine, and also Messianic, titles from the Old Testament, appropriated them, and handed them on, so far as human nature could receive them, to St Peter. It is important to see Our Lord constructing His Church during His lifetime, and implementing His promises by bringing it to life at Pentecost.

When Simeon sang the Nunc Dimittis, he saw the Child as Saviour of the Gentiles no less than of the Jews. Our Lord gave His best to the Samaritan woman: of ten lepers healed, the one who returned to praise God was a Samaritan (Lk. xvii. 12-19): the parable of the Good Samaritan showed that these scorned people could be nearer to God than the Jews—even than their priesthood (Lk. x. 25-37): the first place visited by the Apostles after Pentecost was Samaria. But neither were the pagans outside His scope, though personally He was sent only to the "lost sheep" of the Israelites. He cured the pagan officer's boy: and the daughter

¹Each sentence is purely Palestinian in origin, and could not have been invented later on. At last Our Lord explains why He had called Simon "Cephas" long ago (Jn. i. 42): such "surnames" betokened what a man was or what he did. Simon was to be and act as "rock." On it the *Church*—not part of it, nor for a time—was to be founded. The Apostles remembered that the house *not* on a rock was on sand, and doomed to fall. Against *this* building the "opposing forces of destruction" should never prevail—it should never be destroyed. The "keys" were entrusted by householder, king, etc., to his representative, in his absence. Such a delegate had power to dispense the contents of the strongbox, treasury, house, city. But it is of the *Kingdom* itself that the King hands the Keys to Peter.

of the Tyrian woman (Mt. xv. 21-28; Mk. vii. 24-30): many should come from distant east or west and inherit that from which the technical heirs of the kingdom were cast out (Mt. viii. 11): the ultimate mission of the Church is "to all nations" (Mt. xxviii. 19).

Many, if not most, of His later parables deal with this: the Prodigal Son and his elder brother: the parables of the Supper, to which those who should have been the host's friends did not come, so that the very by-ways were ransacked to fill the banquet. The Pharisees recognised all too clearly the bearing of the parable about the Vineyard whose guardians consistently maltreated the inspectors sent by its owner: finally, He sent His Son—"Surely they will respect My Son"?—but they killed Him. Our Lord said that the Vineyard should be taken away from them, and given to others. "God forbid" answered they, shuddering. Most tragic of all was Our Lord's farewell to the Cities of the Lake. Woe to them! It would be more tolerable for pagan Tyre and Sidon at the Judgment than for them! Had *they* seen His miracles they would "long ago" have repented. "And thou, Capharnaum, wouldst thou exalt thyself high as heaven? Thou shalt be made to go down even unto hell. For if the mighty works done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would be standing even to this day" (Mt. xi. 20-24; Lk. x. 13-15).

Immediately after appointing St Peter as His visible successor, Our Lord definitely prophesied His Own Passion (Mt. xvi. 21-23; Mk. viii. 31-33; Lk. ix. 22). The Son of Man "must" suffer—the word marks an inevitability more than mere suitability and even than "duty." The very enthusiasm surrounding Him concentrated malignant attention upon Him. Soon He renewed His prophecy—"The Son of Man is being betrayed into human hands, and they shall kill Him" (Mt. xvii. 22; Mk. ix. 30-35; Lk. ix. 43-45): much later He foretold in detail His arrest, betrayal to the priests, maltreatment, condemnation; His being mocked, scourged, spat upon, and crucified (Mt. xx. 17-19; Mk. x. 32-34; Lk. xviii. 31-34). Through this thunder-cloud of misery looming up over the horizon,

the light of the Resurrection, always promised, could not shine. Peter protested vehemently against the prophesied tragedy, and was no less vehemently rebuked: and after the third prophecy Our Lord "set His face" towards Jerusalem, walking so fast that the Apostles found it hard to keep up with Him. Simeon had said (Lk. ii. 31) that the Child should be a "sign that produced contradiction": something outstanding and challenging, and not agreed about. Later on (Mt. xvi. 1-4; Mk. viii. 11-13; cf. Mt. xii. 38-42; Lk. xii. 49-53), His enemies demanded a sign in the sky, or from it—hail; lightning: He refused it; He was Himself the "sign," but one that should create divisions even within one's household, three against two, two against three: father and son should be at variance (Mt. x. 43-36; Lk. xii. 49-53). After all, He who blessed the peace-makers brought a sword. The very "humanity" of His service was His offence. He came to seek and save the lost: to serve, not to be served (Lk. xix. 10; Mk. x. 45): the episode of the washing of the feet and what Our Lord said after it; and all that He said about being less rather than greater, and what follows below should be read in connection with the passages in Isaias dealing with the Suffering Servant of the Lord. Even if the Jews did not thrust such passages from their minds, at most they will have seen in them a prophecy of the woes of the People, not of a suffering Messias. Even the Apostles could not admit that prospect. Yet, looking back, we cannot deny that all that Isaias says about suffering and even death should be connoted by the term "Servant."

Moreover, the expression recorded in Mk. x. 45, that the Son of Man is come to give His life for the "ransom" of many (cf. the true shepherd "gives His life for" the sheep) is very often used in both Old and New Testaments of "ransom" explicitly, as of a field (Lk. v. 24, 51); or of a slave or captive. Nor may the Last Supper, when Our Lord said that His blood was to be shed "for the remission of sins" (Mt. xxvi. 28), be dissociated from the ancient sacrifices, especially that described in Exodus xxiv. 4-8, when the shed blood inaugurated the Great

Covenant between God and man now reconciled. Our Lord expressly says: "This is the *new* covenant," brought about by and ratified in His Blood: all three synoptists, and St Paul, recognise this.

No wonder, then, in proportion as the Passion approaches, that Our Lord insists more than ever on detachment from this-world things. From the beginning He blessed the "poor in heart," and by His example and directions to the Apostles had praised actual poverty, especially when a man would follow Him closely. To one candidate He said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their nest: but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head": another, called personally by Jesus to follow Him, asked leave first to bury his father. "Leave the dead," was the answer, "to bury their dead." A third asked leave to go back, first, to say goodbye: no—one who had put hand to plough should not look back . . . (Mt. viii. 19-22; Lk. ix. 57-62).¹ And though the story of the "rich young man," asked to sacrifice all his wealth and so to follow Christ, is an individual incident, yet it suggests that the following of Jesus must anyhow be costly. The doctrine that followed on it, moreover, so appalled the Apostles that they asked, if the rich could enter the kingdom only with so much difficulty, "who then *could* be saved"? The question is strange. It implies that if the rich cannot, much less can the poor. In a world where riches were held to be a mark of God's favour, the notion was not impossible: moreover, the rich could give costly sacrifices, and pay up when they committed ritual faults: the poor, not so. Our Lord, of course, meant that riches give a man a sense of self-sufficiency, so that he disregards God; and that interior, and total, abnegation was what He asked, and if "with men" this was not possible, "with God all things are possible," and He *could* inspire this self-sacrificial mind. "Well," said Peter, "*we have* given up everything, and followed Thee." Our Lord agreed, and emphasised the spiritual reward that should be theirs: and by His

¹If these answers seem *too* austere, remember that the evangelists give us none of the "setting" nor the psychology of the incident: only the sentence spoken by Our Lord.

own example made it clear that human association with His relatives, and even with His Mother, might have to be postponed to the spiritual work in hand. I need but allude to the parable of the Widow's Mite, and the terrible one about Dives and Lazarus, which definitely looks forward to Our Lord's own death and resurrection—even the latter could not *force* men to believe.

Had, then, Our Lord a "social theory"? At least He preached no "programme of reform." Had He done so, within 50 years it would have been out of date. The universal "reform" would come, and would come only, through that "change of heart." Thus Peace will never exist because of international pacts or police ensuring mere "non-fighting": in any circumstances, men will be ambitious, and cheat that they may "get," unless their heart be changed. And the changed heart can be at peace even in the battle. Therefore, while He bequeathed "peace" to man, it was "His" peace, not the world's. Again, His "political" doctrine reposed, first, on His concern for the Family. He said but little about sexual purity, yet what is sweeter than the atmosphere of His gospel? He could rigorously condemn impurity even in the mind; yet who more tender to the sinner? He wholly forbade divorce: He loved and was loved by children: yet He did not disown that celibacy which is undertaken for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven.

As to the State, again He propounded principles, not theories. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but to God the things that are God's," certainly announces a dualism—the "things of Cæsar" and of God do not coincide: in His words to Pilate—"Thou couldst have no power at all against Me unless it were given thee from above"—He announces a subordination—civic power, like all else, flows from God and must not infringe His paramount rights. It will be observed that Our Lord behaved with strict accuracy during His own "trials," in regard of Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, according to the jurisdiction they severally possessed—or rather, before Herod who had *no* jurisdiction, He remained quite silent.

From His doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the

brotherhood of *all* men in Him descend every kind of philanthropy—the lot of women, slaves, the weak generally, and children, was changed from within, as it never will be while men start “in the middle,” from sensitive pity merely, or the material advantage of the State which requires, *e.g.*, healthy citizens, or even from the “nature of man” as such. That Providence watches over the least bird, causes us to see the animals too as God’s creation, and to reverence them accordingly: and the artist is justified by Our Lord’s ecstasy of delight, so to call it, over the wild-flowers, clothed in beauty by God as never was Solomon.

We return to the topic that preoccupied Our Lord, naturally, towards the end. After a terrible indictment of those who were responsible for the current travesty of religion, He had cried that He would send them many an authoritative messenger, whom they would persecute, scourge, and kill, so that the blood of every just man, from Abel on, might fall back upon *their* heads: “In solemn truth I tell you—all that shall fall back upon this generation”! And He lamented that He would—how often!—have cherished the City, as a hen her fledglings, but she would not. “Now is thy house left unto thee desolate”! The Apostles, simple Galileans, having no architecture comparable with Jerusalem’s, exclaimed at its stupendous edifices. “Not one stone shall be left upon another”! And Our Lord passes on to that discourse related in Mt. xxiv. 1-36; xxv. 31-46; see also x. 17, 18; 21-23; Mk. xiii. 1-32; Lk. xxi. 5-33.

All admit that He spoke in it of the imminent sack of Jerusalem, and of the Coming of Messias at the end of the world. Many non-Catholics hold that He thought this End was imminent—the verses that suggest this to them are Mk. viii. 39; Mt. xxiv. 34; Lk. xxi. 32. Others hold that the evangelists wove together sentences spoken by Our Lord separately on each of the above topics, on grounds of verbal similarity. The thing is possible: the evangelists do sometimes “group” sentences thus. But this hypothesis assumes that Our Lord was

always thinking, and speaking, of *one* event *only* on each occasion. But this would be to isolate this discourse from “prophecy” in general. Prophets constantly saw *in* one concrete contemporary or imminent event deeper, more spiritual, more ultimate truths: thus, in one siege and restoration, the battle between right and wrong and the triumph of the former; and even in the final catastrophe, when creation falls to pieces, the Day and Victory of God. We are bound thus to connect Our Lord’s discourse with the general flow of “eschatological” prophecy, if only because He consistently uses its “dialect”: for centuries, certain metaphors had been familiar—the moon turned to blood; the stars fallen from the ruined skies—and they were still used in the middle ages over the death, for example, of some locally important Jew. What is proper to Our Lord is the complete emancipation of His forecast from any nationalist triumph. God’s day is wholly one of righteousness. No doubt He insists on its unexpectedness. The Jews could not see what everyone else could—their inevitable doom, rapidly approaching. The “when” of the final consummation was no part of His message: “of that day and hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father (only)” (Mk. xiii. 32). At least, Jesus foreshadows a long period of growth for His Church: the mustard seed; the leaven; the long journey of the king who goes to seek confirmation for his rule (Lk. xix. 11-27).

It is alien to the psychology of Jewish prophecy to see in it a *materialistic* minimum. Our Lord spoke of the ending of the Jewish era, when Jerusalem was sacked: He spoke also of the Ending of human earthly history: but He never spoke merely in terms of “end,” or death. The true end was a “consummation,” when all the prophecies were fulfilled, all the promises kept, and all things should have come “to a head” in Himself.

V

The last words, though from St Paul, were justified, if only because Paul wrote before the gospels were published, yet St Mark, who was Peter’s amanuensis at Rome, and

Luke, Paul's close associate, felt no difference between their tradition and his doctrine: had they fallen short of what he considered true he would certainly have proclaimed it. Moreover, the divine Sonship of Christ is certainly taught by St John: yet the sentence: All things are given over to Me by My Father; and no one fully knoweth who the Son is save the Father, nor who the Father is save the Son—and to whom the Son shall choose to reveal it" (Mt. xi. 27; Lk. x. 22) has been described as an "aerolite" fallen from the very skies of John. It is not because Jesus is Messiah that He is called to become, or named, "Son of God"; it is because He *is* so, so that His knowledge and the Father's reciprocate, that He is made Messiah, with the mission of revealing God to man. It is *in terms* of these facts that we should interpret sentences otherwise obscure, or but hinting the Divinity of Jesus.

The Son of Man shall sit on the right hand of the power of God and come on the clouds of heaven: shall come in His majesty and all the Angels with Him, and take His seat on His throne of glory; shall send *His* Angels, and they shall gather (all iniquity) out of *His* kingdom (Mt. xxiv. 64; xxv. 31; xiii. 41): when Jesus accepted the title of "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed," and added: "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man seated on the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mk. xiv. 62; cf. Mt. xxvi. 65; Lk. xxii. 70), His judges in a paroxysm of horror recognised His words as "blasphemy," and had what they needed—a "crime" worthy of death. "We have a law," they sulkily said to wavering Pilate, "and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself 'Son of God'" (John xix. 7).

Adequately to describe the doctrine of St John's gospel would mean quoting almost the whole of it (we reserve his epistles for the next essay). "These signs have been written," he says (xx. 31), "that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name." John's purpose is active—we are so to "believe," that we "come to Him," and accept from Him that Eternal Life which is not to be found outside of Him. He had spoken much about

"giving" that Life: by the well, to the woman of Samaria; again during the feast of Tabernacles He spoke of that water of Life, while water was fetched from the cistern of Siloam and poured over the altar to obtain rain: and soon, when He spoke of the Light of the World, none could forget the lighting of the four great candelabra in the Women's Court between the first and second days of the Feast, which were supposed to give light to the whole City and the Land.¹ Still, He now concentrates on what He *is*: He gives, because He possesses: but He possesses because He *is* what He has, and what He gives, and He leads up thus to the stupendous declaration: (You appeal to Abraham as your ancestor) "Before Abraham came into being, I AM" (Jn. viii. 58). He had used of Himself the very Name of God: they sought to stone Him, but He escaped. Again, when Martha in her anguish agreed that her brother should "rise again at the last day"—but, you feel, what use was this remote resuscitation to her? she needed him *now*—Our Lord declared: "*I am* the Resurrection and the Life" (Jn. xi. 25).

The plan of St John's gospel is made, we said, in terms of "witness." Jesus is the supreme witness to God, who on His side is witness to His Son. And there are other witnesses to Jesus: the prophets; and, though at first this seems to beg the question, His own Self. He *is* the supreme Sign, and not only because of His resurrection which, after all, occurred but after His ministry. St John certainly implies that the Jews *ought* to have yielded to Our Lord: it was a fault in them that they looked, but could not "see"; heard,

¹John vii. 37-39; viii. 12. Though He says He *is* the Light, yet the emphasis is on the "world," which may, or may not shut its eyes to it. This "omitted evidence," omitted by John but discoverable by us, is an admirable argument for John's "historicity." One does not mention what is so familiar to one that one takes it for granted: yet it may be in one's mind, and provide *point* to what is said. Had John not mentioned the feast of Tabernacles, as he did not mention the Jewish ritual, how much more "in the air" would these *logia* of Our Lord have seemed to us! But knowing the ritual, we see them as absolutely appropriate.

without "listening"; were so close, yet did not "come to Him." The world *resists* God. He continually makes, in fact, a contrast between Light and Dark; Walking, Wandering; World or Flesh, and Spirit; Life, and Death. These notions (save that of "walking") are caught up and correlated in his Preface, which also we leave over till the next essay, as John uses in it a term of Greek philosophy, *Logos*, which Our Lord never did.

Already, in Jn. v. 19, we see that the activity of the Father and of the Son reciprocate: in v. 26, *as* the Father has life in Himself, *so* to the Son He has given to have life in *Himself*: and though the Father can thus "give" to and "send" the Son (iii. 16; v. 36; viii. 26, etc.), yet He and the Father are "one thing" (x. 30; xvii. 11-23). From the glory that He shared with the Father before the world existed, the Son proceeds and to it He returns (xvii. 5): yet even during that Mission, the Father remains in Him and He in the Father: "If you knew Me, you would know the Father also Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The Father who abideth in Me, He doeth the works All My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine. . . . He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (xvii. 5; viii. 19; xiv. 10; viii. 10, etc.). As for the Holy Spirit, the term is too vaguely used in the Old Testament, and even in the Synoptists (despite the apparition at the Baptism and the baptismal formula which is clear but stands alone) for us to call Him a Third Person in the Holy Trinity: but the Discourse in the Supper Room, recorded by St John, makes it clear that He is a Third along with Father and with Son. Jesus will "send" Him from the Father from whom He proceeds: He in His turn shall bear witness about Jesus; He shall guide the disciples into all truth. But the earlier form of the doctrine of the Spirit is best observable after Pentecost. Yet, in all this, Jesus is not as it were an isolated portent, nor even a climax to a long history after which nothing happens. The whole of that history, the coming and

life of Christ, are for man's sake: God "gave" Him, because He "so loved the world" (iii. 16); the Son receives life from the Father, but that He may hand it on (v. 27): "to them that received Him, He gave power to become sons of God" (i. 12): the upshot of the Last Discourse is that man, too, through and in Jesus, should "become one thing, even as We are . . . that as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may also be in Us . . . I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect into One" (xvii. 11-23).

Involved in what we have said is the doctrine of what we now call "supernatural grace," by which we mean a free favour from God ("No man can come unto Me unless the Father draw him," vi. 44), owing to which we are "born again" (the word translated "again" is one of Our Lord's favourite ambiguities—it can mean: a "second time," but also "from above," spiritually) and become "sons of God," having been but merely "children of men" (iii. 5). But observe that God does not force us into this supernatural life. "To them gave He *power* to become sons of God." We are able to *resist*, as we said above. Such men "die in their sins," are self-severed vine-shoots, withered, and fit only for the fire. This creates a "division" between men—the word we translate "judgment," so frequent in St John, really means "division," only, if you are on the wrong side of the dividing-line, you are by that very fact condemned. Thus Our Lord can say both that He is come into the world "for a judgment"—*i.e.*, an inevitable separation between those who would accept Him and those who would not (ix. 39), and that God did not send His Son into the world to "judge"—*i.e.*, to condemn the world—the point of His mission was salvation. "He who believes in Him is not being "judged," *i.e.*, separated—he is forthwith in a state of *union*; but he who does not believe is forthwith in a state of "judgment," *i.e.*, separation, *because* he does not believe (iii. 17-19). The Father "judges" no man; but the whole "judgment" hath He made over to the Son. He who hears My word and believes in Him

who sent Me, *has* Eternal Life (v. 22-24). Everything, that is, depends on whether a man wills to unite Himself with Jesus Christ or not.

This is what St John alludes to when, in his first Epistle (ii. 2) he speaks of our "Anointing" by God's Spirit, which abides in us, and the indwelling within us of God's Seed. "We are called 'sons of God,' and so in fact we *are*" ("he *hath* Eternal Life"); it is only the fixation (so to call it) of that sonship (for we still can sin), and its external manifestation hereafter that remain to be realised and revealed. St Peter, too (ii. Peter i. 3, 4), speaks of the "divine power unto Life" that has been given to us, that we might "become sharers in a divine nature"; and St Paul insists again and again, and in every key, upon this vital union between Christ and Christian; but this (like St John's epistles, in reality) takes us over into the epoch of the "Apostolic Church," and such sentences are deductions from the "gospel," rather than the gospel itself, as preached by Jesus. By this we do not mean that the Synoptists do not contain what leads up to this theme: perhaps we can say that had we not had St John's gospel we should not have understood what Christ was already hinting at even in His earlier preaching of God's Fatherhood. Enough is however involved in the sentence: "No man fully knoweth the Father, save the Son . . . and he to whom the Son shall choose to reveal Him" (Mt. xi. 27); for here the gift of more than human knowledge and union is declared—the Son's unique *reciprocity of knowledge* of and with the Father involves a unique *life*, and it is this life which He hands on, in the measure in which man can sustain any such thing. Hence the doctrine of the Synoptists, of St John's gospel, and of the epistles, is interlocked.

Though this Essay is not, we repeat, a "biography" of Our Lord, it would be out of place were we not to give a brief account of His last days on earth. It is well-known that there are difficulties of chronology and of order of events: what follows is the system that commends itself to the present writer, and is admitted by Catholic authorities.

Our Lord was crucified on a Friday, and the Last Supper was eaten

on the previous evening. This was certainly the Paschal Meal—the actual Feast of the Pasch falling that year on the Saturday or Sabbath. It can be shown that ritual regulations were not being violated, if the Supper was eaten on the Thursday, and not on the day immediately preceding the Pasch. Our Lord, therefore, ate it on the Thursday; the chief priests and Pharisees on the night of the Friday. Jesus prefaced it by the symbolical washing of His disciples' feet: they all, then, lay down at the horse-shoe shaped table, left elbow resting on it, and feet pointing outwards. John, we gather, was on His right; Judas, on His left. When the ritual dish of herbs—a salad—was placed before Him, He said: "One of you will betray Me." In the hubbub that ensued, Peter called to John to ask Our Lord who that should be. John, leaning back, whispered his question. Jesus said: "He to whom I shall give something from this dish." Judas, in a panic, asked if it were he. Our Lord, whispering "Yes," handed him a pinch of the salad, and forthwith said: "What you intend to do—do quickly." Judas hurried out, no one save John having understood what had happened. Judas had in fact given the Jewish officials their chance. They had feared to arrest Our Lord in the City, in the daytime—He was surrounded by too many sympathisers. At night, He vanished into the hills, or went to Bethany. But to-night, He had determined to visit Gethsemani, a favourite place of His. Judas therefore could let the officials know where He was, and lead them to Him. After his exit, Our Lord instituted the Most Holy Eucharist. In doing so, He both preserved and transformed the ancient Paschal rite, which commemorated the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. He instituted a "social meal," in which all who shared in it entered into Communion with Himself, and therefore, with one another. But it was now no mere commemoration of a past event. The Food was no mere symbol. We have seen that the Christian's sharing in the Divine Life was to be *real*. And in the Eucharist, the Apostles fed upon a *real* Christ, neither memory, nor hope, nor metaphor. Moreover, with the departure of Judas, Our Lord is to be considered as having passed definitely into His Passion. All that happens between now and His Death on the Cross is to be regarded as one act, of which that Death was the *consummation*. The act was therefore sacrificial, and the Apostles were already eating from the Altar, and entering into Communion with the Victim. Death, therefore, and Life met in this event, which has, by Christ's ordinance, continued itself ever since within His Church.

After this, He went to Gethsemani, and, conscious of what was about to happen, entered into an Agony of fear, of soul-weariness, and of grief. Judas then arrived with the Temple-police and Roman soldiers, and Jesus was arrested.

He was taken first to Annas. We regard this as a mere "courtesy visit": Annas was the real high-priest, holding office technically for life. But that office was seldom so held. His son-in-law, Caiaphas, was what we may call "acting-high-priest." At this first visit,

nothing happened. Our Lord was then taken to Caiaphas.¹ Caiaphas then found himself in a difficulty. No *trial* was legally possible at night, nor without due witnesses. He had hoped that Jesus would incriminate Himself by saying something that must obviously be regarded as "blasphemy." But He would not do so. Caiaphas had therefore to detain Him, while he hunted for witnesses to some past "blasphemous" allegation. Early next day, he summoned Jesus back, having found two men who vaguely alleged that they had heard Him say that He would destroy the Temple The witness was inadequate. In desperation, Caiaphas asked Our Lord point blank if He were the Messiah. Jesus, adjured by the Name of God, could not but reply. He said that He was—that He was the Son of God. Caiaphas had what he needed—an avowal that rendered his Prisoner "worthy of death." But the Jews had the right to state that much, but not to carry their sentence into execution. Only the Roman governor could inflict death. But it was certain that Pilate would not do this on some mere "religious" charge. A political one would have to be alleged. The priests said that Jesus had declared Himself "king." Pilate, with this exhausted prisoner before him, derided the charge; contemptuous of the Jews, and also animated by the rough Roman sense of justice, he struggled against condemning Jesus. We cannot give details of this fight of Pilate's for Our Lord's life. In the end, the Jews practically asserted that if Jesus were not executed, they would let the Emperor know that Pilate was "not his friend," was disloyal, and a friend of revolutionaries. Then the governor succumbed. Jesus was taken to Calvary, and there crucified. While He was being nailed, He "kept saying": "Father, forgive them, for they do not understand what they are doing." To the thief who had first mocked Him, then repented, by an amazing act of faith recognised the Messiahship of Jesus, and prayed to be "remembered" when He should come "in His glory" at the Last day, Our Lord promised that that very day he should be with Him in Paradise: and He commended His Mother to St John. Then, as death drew near, He cried: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"?—words expressive of the ultimate desolation, yet proper to a psalm which passes, through undefeated trust, into exultant triumph: then He said: "I thirst." He, who at the beginning of His crucifixion had refused the drugged wine they offered to such sufferers, now accepted this human alleviation. Finally, He cried out: "It is consummated," and "with a strong voice" said: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." Thus the Death, in so many ways foreshadowed, predicted, and prepared for, consummated the Life of Christ, and the consummated Gift He made over to His Father.

The bodies had to be buried before sundown: the two thieves were killed: to make sure that Jesus had died, a Roman officer pierced

¹This involves placing John xviii. 24 after xviii. 13, for which there is sufficient manuscript authority besides that of St Cyril of Alexandria. See Commentaries.

His heart with a lance. The body was hastily embalmed and put in a tomb hard by. The door was closed by a large stone, and sealed by Pilate at the request of the Pharisees, who remembered that Jesus had foretold His resurrection. And in fact, early on Sunday morning, He left His tomb alive. Shortly after this the stone was overthrown and the guards fled.

The narratives of the visits to the empty Tomb reflect the agitation of those who paid them. Groups of women went first, to complete the embalming, if they could reach the Body. They found the guards gone, the stone removed, and angels watching over the grave-clothes, folded up and left behind. Some, terrified, ran back and said nothing, or not till later: others told the Apostles who thought them delirious. Mary Magdalene, however, ran and told Peter who, with John, went and saw the empty Tomb. Magdalene, as I think, returned more slowly and saw Our Lord: in the evening, He appeared to two unnamed disciples on the way to Emmaus; and at night to the Apostles (save St Thomas, who was absent, but who was present when Jesus re-appeared after a week). St Peter was granted his special and merciful apparition. Afterwards the Apostles went back to the quieter world of Galilee, where again Jesus appeared often to them, and instructed them in their future work. It was during this time that He definitely commanded them to "teach," and, in their turn, to "command," a commission world-wide in its incidence (all nations) and world-enduring: He instituted the Sacrament of Baptism in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and, having given to them that self-same Spirit, imparted too the power to remit and retain men's sins. Finally, when 40 days were finishing, they returned to Jerusalem, and He ascended from their sight.

It was on their memory of these days after the Resurrection that the Apostles based all their preaching. The difference made by the events of Pentecost was a gift of courage, not of new conviction. It was, too, the sign and seal set upon them, for which they had been told to wait, not wholly unlike that Descent of the Holy Spirit which accompanied Christ's Baptism. Henceforward, they preached Jesus, Son and God, Messiah, fulfilment of all prophecy, and sealed as all this by God, who raised Him from the dead.

In this essay we have tried to show how Jesus Christ was continuous with His past and prolonged Himself vitally into the future. Adequately to understand a living organism, you must understand the whole, not parts in isolation. It has been a sacrifice not to "picture" Our Lord's life in its exquisite or tragic circumstances, to catch the cries of the harvesters and the piping of little shepherds: but we could not do that: His environment was mentioned only that He might be seen in His place

in the divine Process. Having purified, first, men's conscience, He enabled them forthwith to know God better: and the heart, source both of good and of evil (Mk. vii. 21, 22; Mt. xii. 33; Lk. xvi. 15) must grow perfect as God is perfect (Mt. v. 48). And that perfection is not one merely of All-Holiness and All-Power, but of infinite Love. Almost reluctantly had Jewish religion begun to recognise God's Fatherhood towards not Nation alone, but Individual Soul: now that was to be the centre of spiritual life. The parables of the Lost coin, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Son (whom his Father recognised, ran to meet, and welcomed even in his squalor), show alike the love and the saving work of the Son, and the love of that Father to whom Jesus could safely pray for those who crucified Him, and into whose hands He made over, in perfect peace, His own departing Soul. The past had nothing to compare with this: no future will ever add anything to it.

When Our Lord passed on to the "Kingdom," He had already made the transition—having concentrated on Conscience, He could not offer a Kingdom that was merely exterior. Yet it was *also* exterior, since we are body as well as soul, and even on earth we form a society; nor did He ever drift off into a mere other-world: His ethic is the one solution for even our human problems upon earth. It is not too much to say that hereby the whole Sacramental Principle was proclaimed by Him, as indeed it was in His own person—but the Jews did not know that. As we are body-soul, and He, true God, true man, in one Person, so was His Church at once visible and invisible, though all in her that is visible is ordered towards what is spiritual, our sanctification. And with His elimination of mere nationalism went His destruction of the barrier between Jew and Gentile, symbolised by that "dividing wall" within the Temple itself which kept the pagan out of the Courts reserved for the Israelite. Our Lord destroyed this Wall. He also proclaimed Himself King, as other, crudely Messianic, visionaries had done; yet unlike them, in proportion as He did so clearly, He also

prophesied His Passion the more clearly, setting thus against Him, His Apostles included, who wanted nothing less than a Death, and expected nothing less than a Resurrection—in a sense, fortunately for us, since it disposes finally of the argument of those who assert that the expectation of the Apostles created their own visions. The opposite is true: the unmistakable reality of Our Lord's appearances left the astounded Apostles no room for doubting or disbelieving any more.

Christ, then, did not offer Himself as a super-prophet, a super-saint, as merely indwelt by God or used by God. Nor did He make a Society that should be held together merely by bonds of charity. Had He done so, He would have failed to satisfy human nature and its needs. He never de-humanised, volatilised, humanity. Claiming to be *man*, He admitted all the exigencies of man's nature. Through Baptism, the Society was entered: the Eucharist was the common social meal within it, which all societies, you may say, feel bound to celebrate in some shape or another, especially, maybe, in the East. Nor has any society, intended to endure, survived without a government; nor government without a head. Nowhere, in our day, have we seen so frantic a cult of a recently dead man, and even of a living man, as in the Russian worship of Lenin and Stalin. Cæsar has climbed off his throne on to the altar. Christ's check on this tendency was not the abolition of all human authority, but the creation of a divinely-human one, that of the Apostles and their chief, ever to endure.

Men have said: "Christianity is Christ," meaning thereby to teach the futility of institutions, dogmas, moral codes, and so forth. They are wrong. But if by the phrase it is meant that other religions have had nothing to compare with Him, they are right. Osiris, Attis, Mithra—these are mythological fantasies without substance. No one in his senses will bring a Mohammed, a Buddha, a Confucius, into comparison with Jesus Christ. Christ, born of Mary, a working-lad, a grown man, poor, preaching, dying, and rising—all this is history. Christ, who could ask: "Which of you convicteth Me of sin"?

(Jn. viii. 46), who could say that in Him the Prince of this world had no part (Jn. xiv. 30), can claim, herein, the assent of all those who, even a little, understand the meaning of "character." Tender, yet able to be stern; utterly pure, yet intimately sympathising; white-hot sincere amid hypocrisy; joyful and at peace among grief, treachery, disappointment, vulgarity; always "Himself" in presence of prince or priest, child, or public sinner—with such an one we are asked to join ourselves, that we may be not only with Him, but in Him, and He in us, and all of us in God.

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