

# **A Concise Summary of Alfred Edersheim's** *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*

## **Part III** **The Passion Week**

### ***THE FIRST DAY - PALM SUNDAY AND THE ROYAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM***

At length the time of the end had come, and Jesus was to make entry into Jerusalem as King: King of the Jews, heir of David's royal line, with all of the symbolic, typical, and prophetic import attaching to it. Yet he did not come as Israel after the flesh expected, in the proud triumph of war and conquests, but in the meek rule of peace.

It was a bright day in early spring of the year 29 when the festive procession set out from the home at Bethany. Jesus sends two of his disciples into the nearby village of Bethphage where they would find by the side of the road an ass's colt. Upon learning that it was for the use of the Lord, no hindrance is offered to the disciples taking it.

Christ and those who followed him from Bethany slowly entered onto the well-known caravan road from Jericho to Jerusalem. Somewhere along this road the disciples, accompanied by a crowd, brought the colt to Jesus. Bethphage formed a part of Jerusalem, and during this Passover week it must have been crowded by pilgrims who could not find accommodation within Jerusalem itself. The announcement that the disciples had just fetched the colt on which Jesus was to enter Jerusalem must have quickly spread among the crowds which thronged the Temple and city.

The two streams of people met: the one coming from Jerusalem and the other from Bethany. The procession from the city came to meet Jesus with palm branches cut down by the way and greeting him with Hosanna shouts of welcome. Caught up in their enthusiasm, the disciples spread their garments on the colt and set Jesus thereon, and taking off their cloaks stretched them along the rough path to form a carpet as he approached.

Gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge where first begins the descent of the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem. The multitude that had come from the city was in front, while the multitude from Bethany followed. We can have little doubt that this great multitude consisted of those that had come from a distance to the Feast, not citizens of Jerusalem whose enmity to Christ was settled. Among the crowd were also a number of Pharisees whose hearts were filled with bitter thoughts of jealousy and hatred. With angry frowns they turned to one another. "Behold, how ye prevail nothing! The world is gone after Him!" In impotent rage they make a desperate appeal to the Master himself to check and rebuke the zeal of his disciples. With a touch of quick and righteous indignation, Jesus points to the rocks and stones and tells them that if the people held their peace, the very stones would cry out.

Another rise and turn in the road, and Jerusalem comes into view, and when Jesus saw the city he wept over it with loud lamentation. He saw in vision Jerusalem surrounded by the enemy, the city laid in ruins, the dead bodies of her children. We know only too well how literally this vision has become reality, and yet, though uttered as prophecy by Christ and its reason so clearly stated, Israel to this day remains blind.

A question arises. How is this royal welcome of Jesus to be explained and reconciled with the speedy and terrible reaction of his betrayal and crucifixion? We remember that the multitude consisted chiefly of pilgrim-strangers. The overwhelming majority of the citizens of Jerusalem were bitterly and determinately hostile to Christ. Even so, the Pharisees dreaded to take the final steps against Christ during the presence of these pilgrims at the Feast, apprehending a movement in his favor. But these country people were ill-informed; they dared not resist the combined authority of their own Sanhedrin and of the Romans. The prejudices of an Eastern populace are easily raised, and they readily sway from one extreme to the opposite.

Also, deeply significant as was this welcome of Christ, we must not attach to it deeper meaning than it possessed, for even his own disciples did not understand the significance of the whole scene in which they had been a part until after Christ's resurrection. The Pharisees understood it better and watched for the opportunity of revenge. But for the present, the weak, excitable, fickle populace streamed before him through the city gates, through the narrow streets, and up the Temple mount. The city was moved, and the question passed among the crowd, "Who is he?" And they answered, not this is Israel's Messiah King, but, "This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."

And now the shadows of evening were creeping up. Weary and sad, Jesus once more returned with the twelve disciples to the shelter and rest of Bethany.

### ***THE SECOND DAY - THE BARREN FIG TREE, CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE***

Very early Monday morning Jesus and his disciples left Bethany. In the fresh, crisp, spring air "he hungered." By the roadside, as so often in the East, a solitary tree grew in the rocky soil. Covered with leaves, the tree attracted Jesus' attention. It is a well-known fact, that in Palestine the fruit of the fig tree appears before the leaves. And although it was not the season for figs, there would still have remained some of the old fruit which would have been quite edible. The new, unripe fruit, according to the Mishnah and confirmed by the Talmud, was also eaten as soon as it began to assume a red color. However, Jesus found neither. It was a barren fig tree encumbering the ground and needed to be cut down. This barren fig tree must have vividly recalled the scene of the previous day when Jesus had wept over Jerusalem that knew not the day of its visitation and over which the sharp axe of judgment was already lifted. Israel was that barren fig tree, and the leaves only covered her nakedness. Jesus curses the tree that it should never bear fruit again.

The same symbolism of judgment was to be immediately set forth still more clearly in the Temple itself. On the previous afternoon when Christ had come to it, the services were probably over and the Sanctuary comparatively empty of worshipers and those who carried on the traffic. Once again, as at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus cleanses the Temple of those who had made it a house of robbers. At the first it had been for teaching and warning, but now it was in symbolic judgment. This time his authority was not challenged, nor was a sign demanded; the contest had reached quite another stage. But fear of the people restrained their violence. For the time the Temple was restored to the solemn service of God and now became the scene of Christ's teaching and healing ministry. The boys that gathered about their fathers burst into "Hosanna to the Son of David!" and it rang through the courts and porches of the Temple.

### ***THE THIRD DAY (first section)***

The third day is so crowded and the actors introduced so many, the occurrences so varied and the transitions so rapid, that it is even more than usually difficult to arrange all in chronological order. This was, so to speak, Christ's last working day, the last of his public mission to Israel as far as its active part was concerned. It was also the last day in the Temple, the last of his teaching and warning to Pharisees and Sadducees, and the last of his call to national repentance. We will divide this third day into several sections.

The day begins with notice of the fig tree that has completely withered from its roots to the surprise of the disciples. Jesus points to the lesson to be learned: the need of realizing that simple faith, the absence of which was the cause of Israel's leafy barrenness, if present and active could accomplish all, however impossible it might seem by outward means.

What follows on this day will be better grouped together rather than follow the exact order of their succession. As usual, the day commenced with teaching in the Temple. The chief priests, scribes, and elders are there. There was no principle more firmly established by universal consent than that authoritative teaching required previous authorization; it must be handed down from teacher to disciple. To teach differently from what previous authority had taught was either the mark of ignorant assumption or the outcome of daring rebellion, in either case to be visited with 'the ban.' At the time of our Lord, it is certain that no one would have ventured authoritatively to teach without proper Rabbinic authorization.

The question, therefore, with which the Jewish authorities met Christ, was one which had a very real meaning and appealed to the habits and feelings of the people who were listening to him. It was their duty to verify his credentials, "or," if thou has not proper Rabbinic commission, "who gave thee this authority?" The point of their contention is that Jesus' power was delegated by none other than Beelzebul.

Jesus answers their question and at the same time exposes the cunning and cowardice which prompted it. He appeals to the Baptist. But they were afraid to publicly disown John, and so their cunning and cowardice stood out self-condemned when they pleaded ignorance.

Their next endeavor is to bring Jesus into collision with the civil authorities. If it could be proved on undeniable testimony that Jesus had declared himself on the side of, or even encouraged, the so-called 'Nationalist' party, he would quickly perish like Judas of Galilee. The Jewish leaders would thus have readily accomplished their object, and its unpopularity would recoil only on the hated Roman power. For this purpose it was not the old Pharisees who came, but some of their disciples, apparently fresh, earnest, zealous, conscientious men. They were combined with certain of the Herodians, a political party at the time who accepted the house of Herod as occupants of the Jewish throne. Herod must have been anxious to rid himself of one who could be a formidable rival, and his party would be glad to join with the Pharisees in that which would secure their gratitude and allegiance.

Feigning themselves just men, they now came to Jesus with honeyed words intended not only to disarm his suspicions, but, by an appeal to his fearlessness and singleness of moral purpose, to induce him to commit himself without reserve. The right of coinage implies the levying of taxes and constitutes absolute submission to it. Was it lawful for them to give tribute to Caesar or not? Christ does not evade the answer, but truly answers it. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Christ's kingdom is not of their world; a true theocracy is not inconsistent with submission to the secular power in things that are really its own; politics and religion neither include nor exclude each other; they are side by side in different domains. The State is divinely sanctioned and both are equally the ordinance of God.

We come now upon one of those sweet pictures which affords real relief to the glare all around. Under the colonnades which surrounded the Court of the Women provision was made for receiving religious and charitable contributions. All along these colonnades were the thirteen trumpet-shaped boxes each bearing an inscription marking the object of the contributions placed therein. Jesus' gaze was riveted by a solitary figure. We can see her coming alone, as if ashamed to mingle with the crowd of rich givers; a widow in the garb of a desolate mourner; her condition, appearance, and bearing that of a 'pauper.' She held in her hand 'two Perutahs'. It must be noted that it was not lawful to contribute a lesser amount. But it was all her living; probably all that she had to live upon for that day until she worked for more. And of this she now made a humble offering to God. To all time it has remained, like Mary's alabaster that filled the house, a deed of self-denying sacrifice.

In this section of events of the third day, we note one other of solemn joyous import. It is narrated only by St. John, and its position seems to imply that it was the last event of that day. Certain Greeks proselytes who had come to the Feast approached Philip of Bethsaida that they might see Jesus. Philip went to his own townsman, Andrew, and together they came to Jesus. The request of these Gentile converts was granted, and now these representative of the Gentile world offer their homage to the Messiah. Jesus speaks of the hour of decision which was about to strike. If in this world he must fall as the seed into the ground and die that many may spring of him, so must they also hate their life that they may keep it unto life eternal.

Jesus knew the awful realities which were to follow, and his human soul was troubled in view of

it. He also sympathized with his disciples in their coming struggle. "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." And a voice from heaven audible to all, but its words intelligible only to him, came, "I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it!"

### ***THE THIRD DAY (second section)***

Only on one occasion during the whole previous history had Christ come into public conflict with the Sadducees. That was when they had asked of him a sign from heaven. Their rationalism would lead them to treat the whole movement as beneath serious notice, the outcome of ignorant fanaticism. But now they wished to guard their position, and possibly the powerlessness of the Pharisees may also have had their influence. Delegates now come to Christ and their question had been well-planned. They would use the dangerous weapon of ridicule. Persecution would be resented by the populace, and for open opposition all would have been prepared. But to come with icy politeness and philosophic calm, and by a well-turned question to reduce the renowned Galilean Teacher to silence and show the absurdity of his teaching would have been to inflict on his cause the most damaging blow. Such an appeal would be effective against the untrained intellect of the multitude.

The subject of attack was the Resurrection. In those days the defense of belief in the Resurrection labored under a twofold difficulty. It was as yet a matter of hope, not faith; something to look forward to, not back upon. And the isolated cases recorded in the Old Testament and the miracles of Christ, granting that they were admitted, were rather instances of resuscitation. The Resurrection of Christ was not even clearly in view of any one.

The story under which the Sadducees conveyed their sneer was also intended covertly to strike at their Pharisaic opponents. The ancient ordinance of marrying a brother's childless widow had more and more fallen into discredit as its original motive ceased to have influence. A large array of limitations narrowed the number of those on whom this obligation now devolved. The Sadducees held the opinion that the command to marry a brother's widow only applied to a betrothed wife, not to one that had actually been wedded. This gives point to their controversial question, as addressed to Jesus. It proceeded on the assumption that the relations of time would apply to eternity, and the conditions of the things seen hold true in regard to those that are unseen.

Christ first appeals to the *power* of God. The world to come was not to be a reproduction of that which had passed away; else why should it have passed away? It will be a regeneration and renovation. What, therefore, in our present relations is of the earth, and of our present body of sin and corruption, will cease, and what is eternal in them will continue. Christ also appeals to the Pentateuch. He who not only historically but in the fullest sense calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, cannot leave them dead. It is a living relationship. The Sadducees were silenced.

The answer of our Lord prompts the following question. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus tells them that all revelation is one connected whole, not disjointed ordinances of which the letter was to be weighed, but a life springing from love to God and love to man. Jesus continues by setting before them what was perhaps the most familiar subject in their theology, that of the descent of Messiah. Viewed separately, the two statements--that Messiah was David's Son, and that David owned him Lord--would seem incompatible. But in their combination in the Person of the Christ, it was harmonious and full of teaching concerning the nature of Christ's Kingdom and his work, both to Israel of old and to all men.

It was not a break in the discourse, but rather an intensification of it when Christ now turned to make final denunciation of Pharisaism in its sin and hypocrisy. Corresponding to the eight Beatitudes with which his public ministry began, he now closed it with these eight denunciations of woe. (1) against their shutting the Kingdom of God against men by their opposition to the Christ (2) against their covetousness and hypocrisy (3) against their proselytism which issued only in making their converts twofold more the children of hell than themselves (4) against the moral blindness of these guides (5) against their most burdensome minuteness in regards to tithing (6) against their most punctilious regulations concerning purification (7) against their appearance of righteousness while their hearts and minds were full of iniquity (8) against their national impenitence.

And yet it would not have been Jesus if, while denouncing certain judgments on them, he had not also added to it the passionate lament of a love which, even when spurned, lingered with regretful longing over the lost. And he left the Temple courts with these words, that they of Israel should not see him again till the night of their unbelief passed, and they would welcome his return with a better Hosanna than that which had greeted his royal entry three days before. It was a farewell which promised a coming again; a parting which implied a welcome in the future from a believing people to a gracious, pardoning King.

### ***THIRD DAY (third section)***

Although it will not be possible to mark their exact succession, it will be convenient here to group together the last series of Parables. Most, if not all, were spoken on this third day of Passion Week. The first four were to a more general audience. The last three were to the disciples concerning the last things and will be treated in another section.

### ***Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard***

As treating of 'the End,' this parable evidently belongs to the last series although it may have been spoken previous to Passion Week, perhaps on the mission journey in Perea in connection with what is recorded by St. Matthew.

The principle which Christ lays down is, that while nothing done for him shall lose its reward,

yet for one reason or another, no forecast can be made nor inferences of self-righteousness be drawn. It does not by any means follow that the most work done, at least to our seeing and judging, shall entail a greater reward. On the contrary, "many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." And in such cases no wrong has been done; there exists no claim even in view of the promises of due acknowledgment of work. Spiritual pride and self-assertion can only be the outcome either of misunderstanding God's relation to us, or else of a wrong state of mind towards others. It betokens mental or moral unfitness. The parable is an illustration and teaches nothing beyond this. Work for Christ is not a ponderable quantity, so much for so much, nor we the judges of when and why a worker has come. Yet the parable conveys much that is new and comforting. (1) the abundance of work to be done (2) the anxiety of the householder to secure all available laborers (3) that it was not from unwillingness or refusal, but because they had not been there and available, that laborers had come at later hours (4) and that when they had come they were ready to go into the vineyard without promise of definite reward, simply trusting to the truth and goodness of him whom they went to serve.

And now it is time to pay the laborers, the order of payment being inverse of that of labor. This is a necessary part of the parable. If the first laborers had been paid first, they would either have gone away without knowing what was done to the last, or if they had remained, their objection could not have been urged except on the ground of manifest malevolence towards their neighbors, that is, not that they themselves didn't receive enough, but that the others had received too much.

But it was not the scope of the parable to charge with conscious malevolence those who sought a higher reward or deemed themselves entitled to it. We note that those of the third hour did not murmur because they did not receive more than those of the eleventh hour. They had not made any bargain with the householder at the beginning but entirely trusted him. But those of the first hour had their greed excited. Seeing what the others had received, they expected to have more than their due. They now appealed to justice, but from first to last they had justice. Their 'so much for so much' principle of claim, law, work, and pay, had been satisfied.

Those laborers who, owing to the lateness of their appearance, felt they had no claim, trusted to the Master, and as they believed so it was unto them. Such a Master could not have given less to those who had come when called, trusting to his goodness and not in their deserts. The reward was now reckoned not of work or debt, but of grace.

If all is to be placed on the new ground of grace, then the laborers who murmured were guilty either of ignorance in failing to perceive the sovereignty of grace--that it is within his power to do with his own as he wills--or else of malevolence when they looked on the Master with an evil eye. And so, in the illustrative case of the parable, 'the first shall be last, and the last first.' And in other instances also, though not in *all*, '*many* shall be last that are first, and first that are last.'

### ***Parable of the Two Sons***

The first son in this parable represented the publicans and harlots whose curt and rude refusal of the Father's call was implied in their life of reckless sin. But afterwards they changed their minds and went into the Father's vineyard. The other son represented the Pharisees with their hypocritical and empty professions. When challenged by the Lord as to which son had done the will of his father, the Pharisees could not avoid the answer. And so Christ pointed to the moral: when the Baptist had come preaching righteousness, the self-righteous Pharisees had not believed while those sinners had. And even when the Pharisees saw the effect on these former sinners, they did not change their minds that they might believe.

### ***Parable of the Evil Husbandmen (Vinedressers)***

The object here is to set forth the patience and goodness of the owner, even towards the evil. The neglect and non-belief which had appeared in the former parable have now ripened into deliberate, aggravated rebellion and carried to its utmost consequences in the murder of the King's only and loved Son. What appeared formerly as their loss, that sinners went into the Kingdom of God before them, is now presented alike as their guilt and judgment, both national and individual.

The whole structure of the parable shows that the husbandmen are Israel as a nation, although they are dealt with in the persons of their representatives and leaders. The meaning of the parable is sufficiently plain. The owner of the vineyard [God] had let out his vineyard [the theocracy] to his people of old. The covenant having been instituted, he withdrew [the former communication between he and Israel ceased]. In due season he sent his servants [the prophets] to gather *His* fruits (they had had theirs in all the temporal and spiritual advantages of the covenant). But instead of returning the fruits meet unto repentance, they only ill-treated his messengers, even unto death. In his longsuffering he sent a greater one [John the Baptist], who received the same treatment. At last he sent his son [Jesus]. His appearance made them feel that it was now a decisive struggle for the vineyard, and so, in order to gain its possession for themselves, they cast the rightful heir out of his own possession and killed him.

The application was obvious. And then followed in plain and unmistakable language the terrible prediction that, nationally, the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and "given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." And individually, that whosoever stumbled at that stone and fell over it, in personal offense or hostility, should be broken in pieces; but whosoever stood in the way of, or resisted its progress, and on whom therefore it fell, it would "scatter him as dust."

### ***Parable of the Wedding Feast***

This parable is familiar to us all. The Kingdom is likened to a marriage feast. The King sent forth his servants to tell those invited that he had made ready his 'early meal' (not dinner), and that the oxen and fatlings were now killed, no doubt with a view to the later meal. But we mark as distinctive, that the King makes it *for his Son*. Thus Christ, as son and heir of the Kingdom, is

the central figure. The invited guests were the ancient Covenant people Israel. Although they had not heeded his first call under the Old Testament, a second class of messengers were sent to them under the New. The message of the latter was that 'the early meal' was ready [Christ's first coming], and that all preparations had been made for the great 'evening meal' [Christ's Reign].

We turn now to the second part of the parable, the guest with no wedding garment. As the guests had been travelers, and as the feast was in the King's palace, we cannot be mistaken in supposing that such garments were supplied in the palace itself to all those who sought them. And with this agrees the circumstance that the man so addressed was speechless. His conduct argued utter insensibility as regarded that to which he had been called; ignorance of what was due to the King and what became such a feast. For although no previous state of preparedness was required of the invited guests, all being bidden whether good or bad, yet the fact remained that if they were to take part in the feast they must put on a garment suited to the occasion. All are invited to the Gospel feast, but they who will partake of it must put on the King's wedding garment of evangelical holiness. The King will not only view his guests generally, but each will be separately examined.

And here the parable closes with the general statement, "For many are called, but few are chosen." For the understanding of these words, we have to keep in view that logically the two clauses must be supplemented by the same words. Many are called *out of the world* by God to partake of the Gospel feast, but few *out of the world* (not out of the called) are chosen by God to partake of it. The call to the feast and the choice for the feast are not identical. The call comes to all, but it may be outwardly accepted and a man may sit down to the feast, and yet he may not be chosen to partake because he has not the wedding garment of converting, sanctifying grace.

### ***THE OLIVET DISCOURSE***

The sun was probably setting as Jesus and his disciples slowly climbed the Mount of Olives. A sudden turn in the road and once again the Temple was in view with the western sun pouring its beams on the marble cloisters and terraced courts, the golden spikes on the roof of the Holy Place now glittering. The vast proportions, the symmetry, and the sparkling sheen of this mass of snowy marble and gold must have gloriously stood out. It was probably as they now gazed on all this grandeur and strength that the silence imposed by gloomy thoughts of the near desolateness of that House was broken. One and another of the disciples pointed out to Jesus those massive stones (some nearly twenty-four feet long), or spoke of the rich adornments of the Temple. It was but natural that the contrast between this and the predicted desolation should have impressed them. Then Jesus spoke fully of that terrible contrast between the present and the near future, when not one stone would be left upon another.

"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?" This was not a question posed from idle curiosity, but it concerned them personally, for had not Jesus joined the desolateness of that house with his own absence: "You shall see Me no more till you shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." In their view this

could only refer to his Second Coming and to the end of the world as connected with it. This explains the two-fold question addressed to Christ.

We can scarcely believe that the disciples could have linked together the desolation of the Temple with the immediate Advent of Christ and of the end of the world. For in the saying that gave rise to their question, Christ had placed an indefinite period between the two. Between the desolation of the Temple and their new welcome to him would intervene a period of indefinite length during which they would not see him. The disciples could not have overlooked this; therefore, neither their question nor yet the discourse of Christ could have been intended to link the two together. It is necessary to keep this in view, and any different impression must be due to the exceeding compression in the language of St. Matthew, and to this, that Christ would purposely leave indefinite the interval between the desolation of the Temple and his own return.

When Jesus left the Temple and said "You shall not see Me till," he must have referred to Israel in their *national* capacity - to the Jewish polity in Church and State. If so, the promise in the text of visible reappearance must also apply to the Jewish Commonwealth, to Israel in their national capacity. Accordingly, it is suggested that in the present passage Christ refers to his Advent, not from the general cosmic viewpoint of universal history, but from the Jewish standpoint of Jewish history in which the destruction of Jerusalem and the appearance of false Christs are the last events of national history to be followed by the dreary blank and silence of the many centuries of the Gentile dispensation. This would at last be broken by the *events* that usher in his coming.

With this in mind, their question was twofold: *When* would these things be? "What would be the *signs* of his royal advent and consummation of the age?" Concerning the first question, Christ gave no information. The Olivet discourse was directed to the second.

As regards the answer of our Lord to these two questions, it may be said that the first part of the discourse is intended to supply information on the two facts of the future: the destruction of the Temple, and his Second Advent and the end of the Age. He does this by setting before them the signs which would indicate the approach or beginning of these events. But even here the exact period of each is not defined, and the teaching given is intended for purely *practical* purposes. In the second part of the discourse, the Lord distinctly tells them what they are *not* to know and why. All that was communicated to them was simply to prepare them for that constant watchfulness which applies to the Church at all times. The words of Christ contain nothing beyond what was necessary for the warning and teaching of the disciples and the Church.

The *first* part of the discourse consists of four sections: vss. 4-8, 9-14, 15-26, and 29-35. The expression, "The End is not yet," clearly indicates that it marks only the earliest period of the beginning of birth woes.

The purely practical character of the discourse appears from its opening words. They contain a warning addressed to the disciples in their *individual* capacity against being led astray. Between the rule of Pilate and the destruction of Jerusalem, references by Josephus and hints in the New Testament of many seducers are implied. Against such seduction the disciples must be

peculiarly on their guard. Taking a wider view, they might also be misled by either rumors of war at a distance or by actual warfare, so as to believe that the dissolution of the Roman Empire, and with it the Advent of Christ, was at hand. This would also be grievously misleading and thus to be carefully guarded against. Even in our own age, do we not perceive such commotions as if they were a token of the immediate Advent of Christ rather than marking only the beginning of the birth woes of the new Age?

From the warning to Christians as individuals, the Lord next turns to give admonition to the *Church* in her corporate capacity. The events now described form a continuation of the birth woes, and these events begin partly before, partly during, and partly after those formerly predicted. St. Matthew writes, "Then shall they deliver you up," while St. Luke places the persecutions "before all these things," and St. Mark, who reports this part of the discourse most fully, omits every note of time and only emphasizes the admonition which the fact conveys.

Two sources of danger are pointed out: *internal*, from heresies and the decay of faith; and *external*, from persecutions. But before the end would come, "this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations." This, then, is really the only sign of the end of the present age.

In the third part of the discourse the Lord proceeds to warn the disciples of the great historic fact immediately before them and of the dangers which might spring from it. This is his answer to their first question, but not as regards the *when*, but the *what*. And with this he links the present application of his general warning regarding false Christs. The fact of which he speaks is the destruction of Jerusalem. Its twofold dangers would be the outward difficulties and perils which would beset men, and the religious pretensions and claims of false Christs or prophets at a period when all Jewish thinking and expectancy would lead men to anticipate the near Advent of the Messiah. From both these dangers the Church was delivered: they fled to Pella at an early stage of the siege, and the fact that his coming would be with the brightness of that lightening which shot across the sky prevented them from being deceived. As for Jerusalem, the prophetic vision initially fulfilled in the days of Antiochus would once more, and now fully, become reality; for the Lord took the well-known Biblical expression in the general sense in which the Jews took it, meaning that the heathen power (Rome, the abominable) would bring desolation. But on the morrow of that day no new Maccabee would arise, no Christ would come, as Israel fondly hoped. Over that carcass would the vultures gather, through the age of the Gentiles, until converted Israel should raise the welcoming shout, "Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord."

In a rapid sketch the Lord outlines His Coming and the End of the World: the age of the Gentiles; the end of the Age with the new allegiance of his now penitent people Israel; the sign of the Son of Man in heaven perceived by them; the conversion of all the world; the coming of Christ; the last trumpet; the resurrection of the dead.

We recall that the disciples did not, indeed, could not have connected as immediately subsequent events the destruction of Jerusalem and his Second Coming since he had expressly placed

between them the period of his absence. The Lord had dwelt in detail only on those events which would be fulfilled before this generation should pass. It has been the prediction of the immediate future for practical purposes. More than this would have defeated the very object of the admonition and warning which Christ had exclusively in view. Accordingly, what follows in verse 29 describes the history, not of the Church, but of the hostile powers of the world in prophetic imagery. A constant succession of empires and dynasties would characterize politically - and it is only the political aspect with which we are here concerned - of the whole period after the extinction of the Jewish State. Immediately after that would follow the appearance to Israel of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

From this rapid outline of the future, the Lord once more turned to make present application to the disciples, and to all time. We can picture Christ taking a twig of the fig tree just as its softening tip was bursting into young leaf. Surely this meant that summer was nigh, not that it had actually come. The distinction is important. For it seems to prove that "all these things," which were indications to them that it (the summer) was near, were to be fulfilled before that generation passed away. This could not have referred to the last signs connected with the immediate advent of Christ, but must apply to the previous prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Commonwealth. At the same time we admit that the language of the Synoptists seems to indicate that they had not clearly understood the words of the Lord which they reported, and in their own minds they had associated the last signs and the Advent of Christ with the fall of the city. Thus may they have come to expect that blessed event in their own days.

The *when* of his coming was to remain hidden. It formed no part of his present Messianic Mission nor subject for this Messianic teaching. Had it done so, all the teaching that followed concerning constant watchfulness and the pressing duty of working for Christ would have been lost. The Church would not have been that of the New Testament had she known the mystery of that day and hour.

### ***EVENING OF THE THIRD DAY (final section)***

These parables concerning the Last Things are closely connected with the discourses of the Last Things which Christ had just spoken to his disciples.

#### ***Parable of the Ten Virgins***

This parable proceeds on the assumption that the Bridegroom is in town but somewhere far away, so that it cannot be known at what precise hour he may arrive. But it is known that he will come that night. The virgins who are to meet him have gathered, presumably, in the house where the marriage is to take place, waiting for the summons to go forth and welcome him. They have brought with them the lamps which will be lit as they go forth to meet the bridegroom. These lamps consisted of a round receptacle for oil for the wick. The wick was

placed in a hollow cup or deep saucer which was fastened by a pointed end into a long wooden pole that would be held aloft. Only five of the ten virgins brought oil for their lamps. The five foolish ones neglected to do so, no doubt expecting their lamps to be filled out of some common stock in the house.

We cannot be at a loss to interpret the meaning thus far. The Bridegroom is Christ who has come from a far country, that is, the home above. The ten bridal companions are his professed disciples who gather in the bridal house ready to welcome him. They all have brought their lamps, the church profession. But only the wise have more than this, the oil that keeps the church profession from being an empty vessel. It was not due to forgetfulness that the oil wasn't brought, but to willful neglect in the belief that it would be provided from a common stock, or that there would be time to purchase it at the last moment. The five foolish virgins had no conception of any personal obligation on their part to be prepared for the bridegroom's arrival. They correspond to those in the church who expect to share in the wedding feast but have neglected the preparation of grace, personal conversion, and holiness.

The interval between the gathering of the virgins and the arrival of the bridegroom is much longer than had been anticipated. So both the wise and the foolish slept. Manifestly, this is but a secondary trait in the parable, chiefly intended to accentuate the surprise of the sudden announcement of the bridegroom. As mentioned earlier with other parables, it is not wise to press every detail. Suddenly the cry is heard that the bridegroom comes. The virgins now hastily draw up the wick and light it, but the lamps of the foolish virgins immediately go out as there is no oil in the receptacle. The sudden cry at midnight had come upon all ten unexpectedly, but only to the five foolish had it come unpreparedly.

It is impossible in the day of Christ's coming to make up for neglect of previous preparation, and those who have failed to meet him, even though of the bridal party, shall be finally excluded as being strangers to the bridegroom.

### ***Parable of the Talents***

Whereas the reference in the previous parable was to the personal state of Christ's disciples, this parable refers to their personal work. They are servants who are to give an account of their stewardship. To each is given, according to his capacity for working, a certain number of talents. The capacity for work does not lie within each man's power, but it lies in his power to use for Christ whatever has been given him. The parable is familiar to us all. The first two were faithful with the stewardship given them. The third servant failed in using the talent entrusted to him. Being afraid to incur responsibility, he had hidden his talent in the earth. It needs no comment to show that his own words, however honest and self-righteous they might sound, admitted of dereliction in his work and duty as a servant, and of an entire misunderstanding as well as an alienation of heart from his Master. He did not serve him, did not know him, did not love him, and did not sympathize with him. His answer was also an insult and mendacious pretext, for he had been idle and unwilling to work for his Master.

The Master put aside this flimsy pretext. Addressing him as a wicked and slothful servant, he pointed out that even on his own showing, if he had been afraid to incur responsibility, he might have 'cast' (a word intended to mark the absence of labor) the money to the bankers where it would have gained interest.

Faithful use for God of every 'talent' will always open fresh opportunities in proportion as the old ones have been used. Spiritual unprofitableness must end in utter loss even of that which, however humble, might have been used in his service.

### ***Supplementary: Parable of The Minas***

This parable is recorded only by St. Luke and placed by him in somewhat loose connection with the conversion of Zacchaeus. A superficial perusal will show unmistakable similarity with the Parable of the Talents, but there are divergences in detail. Here we have the message of hatred on the part of the citizens and their fate in consequence of it. A brief analysis follows.

A certain nobleman has claims to the throne, but he has not yet received the formal appointment from the suzerain power. As he is going away to receive it, he deals only with his servants, giving to all *equally* a small sum. To trade with so small a sum, of course, would be more difficult and success would imply greater ability even as it would require more constant labor. The same sum is supposed to have been entrusted to all in order to show which of them was most able and most earnest, and hence who should be called to largest employment and with it to greatest honor in the Kingdom. While the nobleman was at the court of his suzerain, a deputation of his fellow-citizens arrived to urge this resolution: "We will not have this One to reign over us." It was simply an expression of hatred. It stated no reason and only urged personal opposition, even in the face of the personal wish of the sovereign who appointed him king.

The king, now duly appointed, returns. He reckons first with his servants who have, with the exception of one, been faithful, although with varying success. In strict accordance with that success is now their further appointment to rule. But as regards his enemies who would not have him reign over them? The ashes of the Temple, ruins of the city, blood of the fathers, and the homeless wanderings of their children attest that the King has many ministers to execute that judgment which obstinate rebellion must surely bring if his authority is to be vindicated and his rule is to secure submission.

### ***THE FOURTH DAY***

The three busy days of Passion Week were past, and now Jesus would use this day, Wednesday, to refresh himself and prepare for the terrible conflict before him. He spoke to the disciples of his crucifixion on the near Passover. They sorely needed his words; they, rather than he, needed

to be prepared for what was coming.

But to Judas this was the decisive moment. In the beginning he had been drawn to Jesus as the *Jewish* Messiah, but step-by-step he had come to be disappointed. John the Baptist was beheaded and not avenged. On the contrary, Jesus withdrew himself. Judas was disillusioned by this constant withdrawing, whether from enemies or success, as when they would have made him king. Jesus refused to show himself openly, refused to take up the repeated public challenges of the Pharisees to show a sign from heaven. And chief of all was the constant reference to shame, disaster, and death.

Judas left Bethany and the disciples to seek out the Jewish authorities. They were gathered informally, not in their ordinary meeting place, but in the High Priest's palace. The Temple guard and his immediate subordinates seem to have been there, no doubt to concert the measures for the actual arrest of Jesus. The arrest had to be made at just the proper moment, when the multitude was not in attendance to effect a public outcry.

It must have been intense relief to those assembled when Judas presented himself. But his reception was probably not what he himself was expecting. Most likely Judas expected to be hailed and treated as a most important ally. But he was treated not as an honored associate but as a common informer, a contemptible betrayer. This was not only natural, but under the circumstances, the wisest policy. They would save their own dignity and keep secure hold on the betrayer. And now Judas had to speak barefacedly, selling himself as well as the Master. "What will you give me?" They weighed out thirty pieces of silver. From the temple money that was destined for the purchase of sacrifices, Jesus, who took on himself the form of a servant, was sold and bought at the legal price of a slave.

### ***THE FIFTH DAY***

When Judas returned from Jerusalem on Wednesday afternoon, the Passover was close at hand. It began on the 14th Nisan, that is, from the appearance of the first three stars on Wednesday evening the 13th, and ended with the first three stars on Thursday, the 14th Nisan. On the evening of the 13th, a solemn search was made throughout each house with a lighted candle for any leaven that might be hidden or have fallen aside by accident. Any that was found was put by in a safe place and afterwards destroyed with the rest. By way of public notification, two desecrated thankoffering cakes were laid on a bench in the Temple, the removal of one indicating that the time for eating what was unleavened had passed, and the removal of the other that the time for destroying all leaven had come.

It was probably after the early meal and when the eating of leaven had ceased that Jesus began preparations for the ordinary Paschal Supper. He sends Peter and John to Jerusalem to secure accommodations, but neither the house nor the owner are named within the hearing of Judas. This last meal was not to be interrupted and their last retreat betrayed until all had been said and done, even to the last prayer of agony in Gethsemane.

The disciples were not to ask the owner for the chief or Upper Chamber, but for what might be referred to as a hostelry or inn - the place in the house where the beasts of burden were unloaded and burdens put down. The common practice was for more than one company to partake of the Paschal Supper in the same apartment, but Jesus and his apostles would partake alone.

The owner of the house was undoubtedly a disciple, and to us it seems most likely that he was Mark's father. He had provided all that was needed for the supper. Peter and John would find the wine for the four cups, the cakes of unleavened bread, and probably the bitter herbs. It would only remain for Peter and John to see to the Paschal lamb and anything else required for the supper, possibly also to what was to be offered as *Chagigah*, or festive sacrifice, and eaten afterwards at the supper.

If we are not mistaken, these purchases had most likely been made on the previous afternoon by Judas. It is not likely that they would have been left to the last nor that Jesus would have sent his disciples to the courts of the Temple to purchase a lamb. On this supposition, the task of Peter and John would have been simple. They had seen, not the hostelry, but a large upper room furnished and ready. At about half-past one, the two apostles ascended the Temple mount following a crowd of joyous, chatting pilgrims. The Priests' Court was filled with white-robed priests and Levites, for on that day all the twenty-four courses of priests were on duty. Before the incense was burned for the Evening Sacrifice, and before the lamps in the Golden Candlestick were trimmed for the night, the Paschal lambs were slain. The worshippers were admitted in three divisions within the Court of the Priests. A threefold blast from the priests' trumpets intimated that the lambs were being slain. Each Israelite did this for himself, and Peter and John were probably in the first of the three companies for they must have been anxious to meet the Master and their brethren in the upper room.

The sacrifice was flayed, cleansed, and the parts which were to be burnt on the altar removed and prepared for burning. Then the lamb was laid on staves which rested on the shoulders of Peter and John to be carried back to the upper room. The lamb would be roasted on a pomegranate spit, special care being taken that the lamb did not touch the oven.

It was probably as the sun was beginning to decline in the horizon that Jesus and the other ten disciples descended once more over the Mount of Olives into the holy city. He was going forward to offer himself up as the true Passover Lamb, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

### ***THE PASCHAL SUPPER***

It is difficult to decide how much of the ceremonial in regards to the Paschal Supper was obligatory at the time of Christ. Too often ceremonialism develops in proportion to the absence of spiritual life. But we may be fairly certain that, as prescribed, all men would appear at the Paschal Supper in festive array. We also know that they reclined on pillows, or divans, around a

low table, each one resting on his left hand so as to leave the right free. But ancient Jewish usage casts a strange light on the painful scene with which the Last Supper opened. Sadly humiliating as it reads, and almost incredible as it seems, the Supper began with "a contention among them, which of them should be accounted to be greatest." We can have no doubt that its occasion was the order in which they should occupy their places at the table. We know that this was a subject of contention among the Pharisees, and that they claimed to be seated according to their rank. A similar feeling now appeared in the circle of disciples. We instinctively associate such a strife with Judas. We believe there is ample evidence to show that he not only claimed the chief seat at the table next to the Lord, but actually obtained it.

The table around which they reclined was an oval or elongated table of which one end was used for setting down the dishes. This end of the table was not covered with the tablecloth. The pillows, or divans, were placed around the perimeter of the table in the shape of an elongated horseshoe, and each guest reclined on his left side on a pillow with his feet stretching out behind him. This would make it necessary for the table to extend beyond the line of guests in order to place or remove anything from the table.

Jewish documents are explicit that in a company of more than two, say three, the chief personage or head, in this instance Christ, reclined on the middle divan. We know from the gospel record that John occupied the place on Jesus' right at the end of the divans. From this position he could lean back on the Savior. The chief place next to Jesus would be that to his left, or above him, and we believe this place was claimed and actually occupied by Judas. This explains how, when Christ whispered to John by what sign to recognize the traitor, none of the other disciples heard it. It also explains how Christ would first hand the sop to Judas as the chief guest, which formed part of the Paschal ritual, and not excite special notice. Lastly, it accounts for the circumstance that no one at the table knew what had passed when Judas, desirous of ascertaining whether his treachery was known, dared to ask whether it was he and received the affirmative answer. As regards Peter, we can quite understand how, when the Lord with such loving words rebuked their self-seeking and taught them of the greatness of Christian humility, he should in his impetuosity of shame, have rushed to take the lowest place at the other end of the table. Finally, we can now understand how Peter could have beckoned to John, who sat across the table from him, and ask John who the traitor was.

The Paschal Supper began, as always, with the head of the company taking the first cup and speaking the thanksgiving over it. This thanksgiving consisted of two benedictions; one over the wine, the other for the return of this Feastday with all that it implied and for being preserved once more to witness it. From the gospels, the words seem to imply that Jesus made use of the ordinary thanksgiving so as to speak both these benedictions. The cup of wine, mixed with water according to Rabbinic testimony, was passed round. The next part of the ceremonial was for the head of the company to rise and wash hands. It is this part of the ritual that Christ adapted and transformed by washing the disciples feet. There were two handwashings during the ceremony, but the second required all to wash, not the head only, and that would have meant that all were standing and thus not in the position to have their feet washed. Also, the footwashing was intended both as a lesson and as an example of humility and service, and evidently was

connected with the dispute about which of them should be accounted the greatest. It was natural that the Lord should have begun with Peter who occupied the end of the table. This explains his expostulation. If Christ had turned to the others first, then Peter would have had to remonstrate before his own feet were washed, or else his later expostulation when the Lord came to him would be either an act of self-righteousness or of needless voluntary humility.

After the washing, the dishes were immediately brought to the table. Jesus would dip some of the bitter herbs into the salt water or vinegar, speak a blessing, partake of them, and then hand them to each of the disciples. Next, he would break one of the unleavened cakes of which half was set aside for after supper. This is called the *Aphiqomon*, or after dish, and we believe it was the bread of the holy eucharist. The dish in which the broken cake lies (not the *Aphiqomon*) is elevated, and these words are spoken. "This is the bread of misery which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. All that are hungry, come and eat; all that are needy, come, keep the Pascha." As we think of the Lord's comment on the Passover and Israel's deliverance, the words spoken have deeper meaning attached to them.

After this the cup is elevated and the service proceeds somewhat lengthily, the cup being raised a second and then a third time. A prayer is spoken and the cup drunk. This ends the first part of the service.

The Paschal meal begins by all washing their hands, a part of the ritual that we scarcely think Christ observed. It was during this part of the meal that Jesus became troubled in spirit, and he solemnly testified to them of his near betrayal. It is no wonder that they all became exceedingly sorrowful and each asked, "Lord, is it I?" According to St. John, the disciples were looking at each other, wondering of whom he spoke. In this agonizing suspense, Peter beckoned from across the table to John, whose head was resting on the Lord's bosom, and asked him of whom Jesus spake. And to the whispered question of John, the Lord gave the sign that it was he to whom he would give the sop when he had dipped it. Even this perhaps was not clear to John since each one in turn received the sop, Judas naturally receiving it first since he was reclining to Jesus' left in the first and chief position. But before Jesus did so, probably while he was dipping the sop in the dish, Judas, who could not but hear that his purpose might be known, whispered into the Master's ear, "Is it I, Rabbi?" It must have been whispered, for no one at the table either heard the question nor Christ's answer.

The meal was scarcely begun, and Judas rushed out into the night. None of the others knew why there was this strange haste, unless it was from obedience to something that Jesus had bidden him to do; perhaps to purchase something needful for the feast, or to give something to the poor. It is sufficient here to state that anything needful for the Feast was allowed on the 15th Nisan. And this must have been especially necessary when, as in this instance, the first festive day, or the 15th Nisan, was to be followed by a Sabbath on which no work was permitted. In the Paschal night when the great Temple gates were opened at midnight to begin early preparations for the offering of the *Chagigah*, or festive sacrifice that was not voluntary but mandatory, such preparations would be quite natural. And equally so that the poor who gathered around the Temple might then seek to obtain help from the charitable.

The institution of the Lord's Supper took place after the departure of Judas. The meal continued to its end, and then the third cup was filled. We can have little doubt that the Institution of the Cup was in connection with this third cup of blessing. A question arises: to what part of the Paschal Service does the breaking of bread correspond? While the Paschal Lamb was still being offered, before the destruction of the Temple, it was the Law that after eating its flesh, nothing else should be eaten. But after the Paschal Lamb could no longer be offered, it became the custom after the meal had ended to break and partake of the after dish, that is, the half of unleavened cake which had been set aside before the supper. Christ anticipated this, and because his death was truly the last Paschal Sacrifice, and consciously so to all the disciples, he connected the breaking of the unleavened cake at the close of the meal with the Institution of the Bread in the Holy Eucharist.

As far as we can judge, the Institution of the Holy Supper was followed by the discourse in John xiv. The concluding psalms of the *Hallel* were sung after which the Master left the upper chamber. While still in the house, Jesus gives the discourse recorded in John xv. The last of the parting discourses was that recorded in John xvi. And last of all, before leaving the house, is recorded for us in John xvii, Christ's High-Priestly prayer.

### ***GETHSEMANE***

Jesus now heads out of the city to the Mount of Olives. The streets could scarcely have been deserted, for from many houses shone the festive lamp, and everywhere was the bustle of preparation for going up to the Temple, the gates of which were thrown open at midnight.

Passing out by the gate to the north of the Temple, Jesus and his disciples descend into a lonely part of the Kidron valley. The brook at this season was swelled into a torrent. Crossing the brook, they take the road that leads towards Olivet and to the garden called Gethsemane. Eight of the disciples are left somewhere near the entrance of the garden, either inside or out, while Peter, James, and John follow Christ further in. Christ continues on alone to pray, and as had been the case at the Mount of Transfiguration, irresistible sleep crept over the three.

With his every step forward, Jesus became sorrowful, even unto death. What was the cause of this sorrow? Not fear of either bodily or mental suffering; but death. Man's nature shrinks from the dissolution of the bond that binds body and soul. Yet to fallen man death is not by any means fully death, for he is born with the taste of it in his soul. But not so Christ. It was the Unfallen Man dying; it was he who had no experience of it, tasting death not for himself but for every man, emptying the cup to its bitter dregs. No one could know as he did what death was (not dying, which all men dread but which Christ dreaded not). No one could taste its bitterness as he. His going into death was his final conflict with Satan for man, and on his behalf. By submitting to it, he took away the power of death.

In the fortress of Antonia, close to the Temple and connected with it by two stairs, lay the Roman

garrison. During the Feast, the Temple itself was guarded by an armed cohort consisting of from 400 to 600 men so as to prevent any tumult among the numerous pilgrims. The chief priests and leaders of the Pharisees would apply to the captain of this cohort for an armed guard to effect the arrest of Jesus. There is no reason to believe that an entire cohort was sent, for that might lead to a riot. But the commander first approached the procurator, Pontius Pilate, and they sent out a strong detachment led not by a centurion, but by a chiliarch, who represented one of the six tribunes attached to each legion.

This Roman detachment, armed with swords and staves, was accompanied by servants from the High Priest's palace and other Jewish officers to direct the arrest of Jesus. They bore torches and lamps placed on the top of poles so as to prevent any possible concealment. With this band, Judas headed to the upper chamber, but not finding Jesus there, he led them to the garden where Jesus often went with his disciples. A signal by which to recognize Jesus seemed almost necessary with so large a band, and where escape or resistance might be attempted.

As the band reached the garden, Judas went in advance of them and reached Jesus just as he had roused the three and was preparing to go and meet his captors. He saluted him, "Hail, Rabbi," so as to be heard by the rest, and then covered him with kisses, repeatedly, loudly, and effusively. The Savior submitted to this indignity, and not stopping but continuing to walk on, spoke, "Friend, that for which thou art here." And then, perhaps in answer to Judas' questioning gesture, said, "Judas, with a kiss deliverest thou up the Son of Man?" If Judas had wished by going in advance of the band and saluting the Master with a kiss, to act the hypocrite and deceive Jesus and the disciples that he had come only to warn them of the approaching band, he was mistaken. This statement of the Lord must have struck his inmost being. The only time we shall see him again is when he takes upon himself his own destruction.

Leaving the traitor and ignoring the signal which he had given them, Jesus advances to the band and asks them, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus the Nazarene." They had, no doubt, been prepared for either fear or resistance, perhaps compromise, and when with infinite calmness and majesty Jesus replied, "I am he," the effect was that those in front went backward and fell to the ground in awe. The question and answer was repeated, and Jesus added, "if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way."

These words of Christ about those that were with him seem to bring the leaders of the guard to full consciousness, perhaps awakening in them fears of a possible rising at the incitement of his disciples. So they laid hands on Jesus and took him. Peter reacts by taking out his sword and swinging it at Malchus, the servant of the High Priest and perhaps the Jewish leader of the band. This appearance of resistance was enough for the guard, and their leaders now bound Jesus. As the ranks of the armed men closed about Christ, the disciples fled lest they should also be bound for resisting authority. But there was one who remained, and he lingered in the rear and followed as they led Christ away, never imagining that the guard might attempt to lay hands on him as well, since he had not been with the disciples nor even in the garden. But he was noticed, perhaps by the Jewish servants of the High Priest. They grasped him, but Mark was able to disengage himself, leaving his upper garment in their hands, and fled.

## ***THURSDAY NIGHT BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS***

No figure is better known in contemporary Jewish history than that of Annas. On the night before us, he is no longer High Priest, for this pontificate is now held by his son-in-law, Caiaphas. Yet Annas enjoys all the dignity and influence of the office and really directs affairs without either the responsibility or restraints that the office imposed.

The Roman soldiers evidently had orders to bring Jesus to the late High Priest and then return to quarters. No account is given in the gospel record of what passed before Annas. From the palace of Annas Jesus was taken to the palace of Caiaphas, Peter and John now following at a distance. We have two accounts of what transpired there. St. John records a more private interview between Caiaphas and Jesus at which only some personal attendants of Caiaphas were present. It was during this interview that Christ was brutally hit by one of them. Possibly it was one of these attendants from whom John derived his information. The second account is that of the Synoptists and refers to the examination of Jesus at the dawn of day by the leading Sanhedrists who had been hastily summoned for this purpose.

John was no stranger in the palace of Caiaphas and was allowed entrance into the court along with the guard. Peter remained outside until John was able to procure his admission. John then hurried up to be in the palace, and Peter remained in the middle of the court warming himself by the fire. We place the private examination by Caiaphas (recorded in St. John) between the first and second denial of Peter. After his second denial, there is the first arrival of the Sanhedrists, who had held themselves in readiness for the summons of the High Priest.

This was not a formal, regular meeting of the Sanhedrin. All Jewish order and law would have been grossly infringed in almost every particular if it had been. The resolution to sacrifice Christ had been taken for some time, and the proceedings of this night seem to be a concession, as if the Sanhedrists had willingly found some legal and moral justification for what they had determined to do. They first sought false witnesses against Christ, but the Sanhedrists' haste in assembling these witnesses only led to such manifest contradictions in their testimony as to make it hopelessly destroyed.

Abandoning this line of testimony, the priests next brought forward probably some of their own order who had been present when Jesus gave the sign of the destruction and raising up of the Temple of his body. Dexterously manipulated, the testimony of these witnesses might lead to two charges: that Christ was a seducer of the people and that he laid claim to Divine or magical pretensions.

The charge of being a seducer of the people broke down. Then the simple question was addressed to Jesus, whether he was the Messiah. Jesus replied by referring to the needlessness of such a question since they had predetermined not to credit his claims, in fact, had only a few days before in the Temple refused to discuss them. It was upon this that Caiaphas adjured the True One by the Living God, whose Son he was, to say whether he were the Messiah and Divine.

No doubt or hesitation could here exist. Jesus' assertion of what he was, was joined with that of what God would show him to be in his resurrection and seat at the right hand of the Father, and of what they would see when he would come in those clouds of heaven that would break over their city and polity in the final storm of judgment.

They all heard it, and Caiaphas tore both his outer and inner garment with a tear that might never be repaired, as directed by the Law when blasphemy was spoken. Then turning to those assembled, he put to them the usual question that preceded the formal sentence of death. But the formal sentence of death was not pronounced. If this had been a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, it would have been spoken by the President.

After this meeting of the Sanhedrists had broken up, revolting insults and injuries were perpetrated on Jesus by the guards and servants of Caiaphas. When they were at last weary of the smiting, Jesus was left alone, perhaps in the covered gallery or at one of the windows that overlooked the court below. About one hour had passed since Peter's second denial. The excitement of the mock trial with witnesses coming and going had diverted attention from him. Now, with the departure of the Sanhedrin, it focused once again on him. This one also was with Jesus the Nazarene; truly, he was of them, for he is also a Galilean! A fellow servant and kinsman of Malchus asserted that he actually recognized him. Peter returned only a more vehement denial to these declarations, accompanying it this time with oaths to God and imprecations on himself.

The echoes of his words had scarcely died out when the loud and shrill second crowing of the cock was heard. His memory was wakened and he remembered the words of prediction that the Lord had spoken. He looked up, and just at that moment the Lord turned around and looked upon him. Feelings of true shame and self-condemnation burst forth, and bitterly weeping Peter rushed out from that cursed place of betrayal by Israel, by its High Priest, and, yes, by himself.

### ***THE MORNING OF GOOD FRIDAY***

It was early in the morning when the Sanhedrists once more assembled in the Palace of Caiaphas. The number of those present was now increased, and they who came belonged to the wisest and most influential of the Council. They were there to advise how the informal sentence might best be carried into effect. It seems strange to us that they who did not scruple about so cruel and bloody a deed, should have been prevented by religious scruples from entering the Praetorium. This Praetorium to which these Jewish leaders brought Christ was the quarters occupied by the Roman Governor, in this case, the magnificent Palace of Herod at the northwestern angle of the Upper City. They who brought Jesus there would not themselves enter the portals of the Palace, "that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover."

It is impossible to equate the expression 'Passover' to the Paschal Supper. The term was also applied to all the Passover sacrifices, especially to what was called the *Chagigah*, or festive offering. According to the express rule, the *Chagigah* was brought on the first festive Paschal

Day. It was offered immediately after the morning service and eaten on that day, probably some time before the evening when another ceremony claimed public attention. Thus, on this first Paschal Day the Sanhedrists would avoid incurring a defilement which would last until the evening, thereby prohibiting them from offering the *Chagigah*.

It may have been about seven in the morning, probably even earlier, when Pilate went out to those who summoned him to dispense justice. Their procedure had been private, whereas it was of the very essence of proceedings at Roman Law that they were in public. Also, the procedure before the Sanhedrists had been in the form of a criminal investigation, while it was of the essence of Roman procedure to enter only on definite accusations. Accordingly, he asks them first what accusation they were bringing against Jesus. Their answer displays humiliation, ill-humor, and an attempt at evasion. If he had not been a malefactor, they would not have delivered him up. Pilate refused to proceed on this vague charge and proposed that they try Jesus according to Jewish law.

The Jewish authorities could not proceed against Jesus before their own tribunal since they did not have the power to pronounce capital sentence. It now behooved them to formulate a capital charge. Jesus had said that he himself was Christ a King. In this they falsely imputed to Jesus their own political expectations concerning the Messiah. They prefaced the charge by saying that Jesus perverted the nation and forbade to give tribute to Caesar, a charge grossly unfounded.

Pilate now calls Jesus to appear and asks, "Thou art the King of the Jews?" Christ, who had not heard the charge of his accusers, now ignored the question in his desire to stretch out salvation even to a Pilate. Was this inquiry his own or merely the repetition of his Jewish accusers? Pilate quickly disowned any personal inquiry. How could he raise any such question? He was not a Jew, and the subject had no general interest.

Jesus brings before Pilate that truth for which his words had given the opening. It was not a *Jewish* question, but one which concerned all men. The Kingdom of Christ was neither Jewish nor Gentile; otherwise, Jesus would have led his followers to a contest for his claims and aims and not become a prisoner of the Jews. Pilate grasped only one word. "So then a King art thou!" He was now in no doubt as to the nature of the Kingdom, but his exclamation and question applied to the Kingship. Jesus tells him that his Kingdom is not of this world, but of that other world that he had come to reveal and open to all believers. Here was the *truth*.

But all his words struck only a hollow void as they fell on Pilate. "What is truth?" Yet this question of Pilate seems an admission, an implied homage to Christ. As Pilate left, he told the assembled Sanhedrists that he found no fault in Jesus. A perfect hailstorm of accusations erupted from the assembled Sanhedrists. Amidst the cries he catches the name of Galilee as the scene of Jesus' labors. Gladly he seizes upon this as an opportunity of devolving responsibility on another. Jesus was a Galilean, and therefore belonged to the jurisdiction of King Herod. Therefore, Jesus was now sent to the old Maccabean Palace in Jerusalem where Herod was now staying since coming for the Feast.

St. Luke alone records what passed there. Herod welcomed the opportunity. He had wished for a long time to see Jesus of whom he had heard so many things. Coarse curiosity, a hope of seeing some magic performance, was the only feeling that moved him. But Christ was silent before him. To Antipas, he was only a helpless figure who might be insulted and scoffed at, and after doing so, he sent Jesus back again to the Praetorium.

It was during the interval when Jesus was before Herod, or shortly thereafter, that we place Judas' final moments. We infer this from the circumstance that on the return of Jesus from Herod, the Sanhedrists do not seem to be present since Pilate had to call them together, presumably from the Temple. Now in despair, Judas returns to the Temple and cries, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood!" The Sanhedrists turn from him with impatience and contempt. Judas rushes into the Sanctuary itself where he hurls the thirty pieces of silver. Then he hurries out of Jerusalem to the potter's field of Jeremiah, somewhere to the west above where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys merge. The soil is soft and full of clay, footsteps easily slip. Jagged rocks rise perpendicularly, and perhaps there was a stunted, gnarled tree. He unwound the long girdle that held his garment, the one in which he had carried those thirty pieces of silver. He wraps the cord about his neck, and after fastening it to the tree, jumps from the top of the jagged rock. It is done. But unconscious, not dead yet, he swung on the branch, and his weight caused the branch to break, or perhaps the knot to come loose, and he fell heavily forward among the jagged rocks beneath.

Outside the Praetorium a crowd has gathered, among it the Sanhedrists whom Pilate had summoned. They not only wished to see what was about to happen, but to witness the release of a prisoner. It seems to have been the custom that at the Passover the Roman Governor would release to the Jewish populace some notorious prisoner who lay condemned to death. It may have been that the Sanhedrists incited the crowd to direct their sympathy toward Bar-Abbas, thus more securely fixing the doom of Jesus. The Governor urged the release of Jesus, but it was in vain. It was now that he sat on 'the judgment seat.' Incited by the priesthood, the crowd clamored for Bar-Abbas, and that Jesus be crucified. With all reasoning failing, Pilate had recourse to one more expedient, which under ordinary circumstances, would have been effective. When a Judge, after having declared the innocence of the accused, actually rises from the judgment seat and by a symbolic act pronounces the execution of the accused a judicial murder from which he clears himself from all participation, no jury would persist in demanding the sentence of death. In this regard, all the more terrible would be the guilt of Jewish resistance. "His blood be upon us and on our children." Some thirty years later, and on that very spot, was judgment pronounced against some of the best in Jerusalem. Among the 3600 victims of the Governor's fury, of whom many were scourged and crucified right over against the Praetorium, were many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem. A few years more, and hundreds of crosses bore Jewish mangled bodies within sight of Jerusalem. And still have these wanderers seemed to bear, from century to century and from land to land, that burden of blood.

Bar-Abbas was at once released and Jesus was handed over to the soldiery to be scourged and crucified, although final and formal judgment had not yet been pronounced. Indeed, Pilate seems to have hoped that the horrors of the scourging might still move the people to desist from

their cry for crucifixion.

The scourging ended, the soldiers hastily cast Jesus' upper garments upon him and led him back into the Praetorium. The whole cohort was called and the suffering Christ became the object of their ribald jesting and physical abuse. When Jesus came forth from the Praetorium arrayed as a mock king, Herod's hope of the crowd being appeased was not realized. The sight only infuriated the chief priests and their subordinates as they cried "Crucify!" This cry of the Jews filled Pilate with fear, and once again he led Jesus into the Praetorium to speak to him. The impression that Jesus had made upon him had now deepened into the terror of superstition. "Where are you from?" Jesus did not answer. Did he not know that Pilate had absolute power to release or crucify him? Jesus answered, not absolute power for all power came from above. But the guilt in the abuse of power was far greater on the part of apostate Israel and its leaders, who knew from where the power came and to whom they were responsible for its exercise.

The more earnestly did Pilate seek to release Jesus. However, the crowd threatened to implicate Pilate in the charge of rebellion against Caesar if he persisted in seeking mercy. This danger Pilate would never encounter. He sat down once more in the judgment seat. The process of crucifixion was begun, the Friday of Passover Week, between six and seven in the morning. In mockery, Pilate once more presents Jesus to them: "Behold your King." The chief priests burst into the cry, "We have no king but Caesar!"

With this cry Judaism was, in the person of its representatives, guilty of denial of God, blasphemy, and apostasy. It committed suicide, and will remain dead until Jesus comes a second time, who is the resurrection and the life.

### ***CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED***

Pilate delivered Jesus over to his own soldiers to be crucified. The purple robe was torn from his body, the crown of thorns from his bleeding brow, and Jesus was again arrayed in his own blood-stained clothes. Preparations for the crucifixion were made: the hammer, nails, cross, and the very food for the soldiers who were to watch under each cross, four soldiers to each of the three crucified that day, all under the command of a centurion.

At the outset, Jesus bore his own cross, but he soon failed in strength, and a man coming from the opposite direction, from the large colony of Jews which had settled in Cyrene, was compelled to bear it for him. Although traveling was forbidden on the Sabbath, it was not forbidden on feast-days. Jesus himself needed to be supported on the way to Golgotha from that point.

At 9:00 that morning the melancholy procession reached Golgotha. The upright wood was planted in the ground. It was not high, and probably the feet of Jesus were not more than one or two feet above the ground. The transverse wood was placed on the ground, and before Jesus was laid upon it, he was unrobed, and only the covering absolutely necessary for decency was left. In the case of Jesus, we have reason to think that, while the mode of punishment was un-Jewish,

every concession would be made to this Jewish custom, and he was spared the indignity of exposure. To have died exposed would have been truly un-Jewish. Once laid upon the wood, a nail was driven first into his right hand, and then the left. He was drawn up, possibly by ropes, and the transverse was either bound or nailed to the upright, and a rest or support for the body fastened to it. Lastly, the feet were extended and either one nail hammered into each or a larger piece of iron through the two. And so might the crucified hang for hours, even days, in the unutterable anguish of suffering, till consciousness at last failed.

It was a merciful Jewish practice to give to those led to execution a drink of strong wine mixed with myrrh to deaden the consciousness. This charitable office was performed at the cost of, if not by, an association of women in Jerusalem. This drink was offered to Jesus, but once tasting it he would not drink it. His was a voluntary self-surrender, and he would conquer death by submitting to it in the full.

On the hill of Golgotha, shaped like a skull, Jesus was placed between the two malefactors and somewhat higher than they. Affixed to his cross was the so-called 'title', on which was inscribed the charge on which he had been condemned. This board had been carried before the prisoner enroute to the place of execution, and it was now affixed at the top of the cross. The words were written in Latin, Greek, and Aramaean, and these are the words recorded by the Evangelists, except for St. Luke who seems to give a modification of the original, or Aramaean text. St. Matthew's account represents the Latin words. The most offensive description would have been in Aramaean, which all could read. Very significantly this is given by St. John. It follows that St. Mark must represent the Greek words.

The Sanhedrists were not aware of what had been written on the titulus, for once Jesus had been condemned they had returned to the Temple. Originally they had no intention of doing anything so un-Jewish as to gaze upon the crucified or to deride him in his agony. But they heard, probably from some one who had watched the procession, of the inscription which Pilate had written on the titulus: *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*. They hurried to Pilate to induce him not to allow it to be put up. But when they found that Pilate would not yield to their remonstrances, some of them hastened to the place of crucifixion and, mingling with the crowd, sought to incite jeers so as to prevent any deeper impression which the significant words of the inscription might have induced.

Before nailing Jesus to the cross, the soldiers parted among them the worldly inheritance of his raiment. We bear in mind here that of all the disciples, only St. John witnessed the last scenes. The other accounts of it circulating in the early Church must have come from second-hand sources. First, there was a division of the clothing into four parts, one to each of the soldiers, of such garments as were of nearly the same value. The head gear, the outer cloak-like garment, the girdle, and the sandals would differ little in cost. Which item was to belong to which soldier was determined by lot. Besides these four articles was the seamless woven inner garment, most valuable of all, and this could not be divided without destroying it. Lots again were cast.

Following this Jesus speaks the first of the so-called seven words: "Father, forgive them, for they

know not what they do." These words point to the soldiers as the primary, though certainly not the sole, object of the Savior's prayer. Has this prayer been answered? We dare not doubt it. We perceive it in some measure in those drops of blessing which have fallen upon heathen men, and have left to Israel also, even in its ignorance, a remnant according to the election of grace.

The real agonies of the Cross, physical, mental, and spiritual now began. The jests of the soldiers were directed against Jesus in his representative capacity, and therefore against the despised Jews. The taunts of the Sanhedrists challenging him to come down from his cross are the blasphemies of doubt. They also had the motive of influencing those who were journeying in and out of Jerusalem, and who would no doubt be arrested by the spectacle of the three crosses, and who might be impressed with the titulus displayed on the cross of Jesus. The Sanhedrists intended to turn their minds into a totally different direction.

Joining in the taunts was one of the thieves crucified with Christ. The first words of the other thief were a reproof to his comrade. The hour of the deepest abasement of Christ was, as were all the moments of his greatest humiliation, to be marked by a manifestation of his glory and Divine character, in that of salvation for the thief. In that hour the penitent thief feared God. He came to recognize that Jesus, who suffered so cruelly, was innocent. "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom!" The thief had spoken of the future, Jesus of the present. "Today you shall be with me in Paradise." This was the second utterance of Christ from the cross.

Probably two hours had passed since Jesus was nailed to the cross. St. John does not record the hours of derision nor the conversion of the penitent thief. His silence seems to stem from his absence from the scene. We suppose him to have hurried into the city after the last scene with Pilate to have told those disciples whom he might find, and the faithful women and virgin mother, of the terrible scenes that had passed during the previous evening. Then he returned to Golgotha to witness Jesus being nailed to the cross. Afterwards, he seems once more to have returned to the city to bring back those women whom we now find standing close to the cross. A more loving service could not have been rendered. We find John not afraid to be near Christ: in the Palace of Caiaphas, before Pilate, and now under the cross. He gives his protection to the women as he guides them to the cross: Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary, the wife of Clopas; Mary of Magdala, and the fourth woman, the sister of Jesus' mother. In fulfillment of Jesus' command, "Behold thy mother," John immediately took the virgin mother from the scene of horror. The other three women withdrew to a distance to watch, joined now by others who loved and followed Christ.

The name of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is omitted from the other three gospels. Yet, the three names are the same as mentioned by John. Mary, the wife of Clopas, is now described as the mother of James the Less and Joses. The sister of Jesus' mother is Salome, the wife of Zebedee and mother of St. John. John, the beloved disciple, was a cousin (on the mother's side) of Jesus and the virgin Mary's nephew. We believe that Clopas was the brother of Joseph, the virgin's husband. Thus Mary, the wife of Clopas, would also have been an aunt of Jesus and her sons Jesus' cousins. And so we notice that among the twelve apostles, five are cousins of the Lord: the two sons of Salome and Zebedee, who are James and John; and the three sons of Clopas (or

Alphaeus) and Mary, who are James, Judas (surnamed Lebbeaus and Thaddaeus), and Simon (surnamed Zelotes or Cananaean.)

It was now midday, and the sun was crape in darkness from the sixth hour to the ninth. We regard this event as supernatural. It could not have been an eclipse since it was the time of full moon. The language of the Evangelists seems to imply that this darkness extended over the inhabited earth, that is, it extended far beyond Judea and to other lands.

At the close of Christ's agony, he cries out, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthanei?" No Jew would have mistaken Eli for the name of Elijah, nor yet misinterpreted a quotation of Psalm 22:1 as a call for that prophet. So we can scarcely doubt that it was the soldiers who mistook the opening words. It can hardly have been more than a minute or two from the time of this cry that the words, "I thirst," were uttered. And they indicate by this merely human aspect of suffering that the other and more terrible aspect of sin-bearing and God-forsakenness was past. One soldier, moved by sympathy, now ran to offer some slight refreshment by filling a sponge with the rough wine of the soldiers, fastening it to the stem of a hyssop, and putting it to the Savior's lips. But even this act of humanity was not allowed to pass unchallenged by the coarse jibes of the others who would bid him leave the relief to the agency of Elijah. Jesus now uttered the last two sayings: "It is finished," and, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

We follow now the rapid outlines of the narrative. We first have the rending of the Temple veil in two from the top downward. Closely connected with it is the earthquake wherein tombs were opened. The Centurion at the cross must have witnessed many scenes of horror, but this crucifixion made a lasting impression. Only one conclusion could force itself on his mind: Jesus was not what the Jews had described him. Jesus was what he professed to be, what his bearing on the cross and his death attested him to be, that is, righteous and therefore the Son of God. From this there was only a step to personal allegiance to Jesus, and it may be possible that we owe to him some of those details which St. Luke has alone preserved.

It was verging towards the evening of the Sabbath. The Sabbath about to open was the second Paschal Day, which was regarded in every respect equally sacred with the first, yes, even more so since the so-called Wavesheaf was then offered to the Lord. The Jews therefore now proposed a shortening, but not in any sense a mitigation, of the punishment to Pilate. Sometimes there was added to the punishment of crucifixion that of the breaking of the leg bones by means of a club or hammer. This would not itself bring death, but was always followed by a sword or lance stroke which would immediately put an end to life. Thus, the breaking of the legs was a sort of increase of punishment by way of compensation for its shortening by the final stroke that followed.

The Jews could not have asked for the final stroke without the breaking of the bones that always preceded it. In their anxiety to fulfill the letter of the Law as to burial on the eve of that high Sabbath, it would be unjust to suppose that the Jews sought to intensify the sufferings of Jesus. St. John records how Pilate acceded to the Jewish demand and gave directions for the *crurifragium* (breaking of the bones) and permission for the removal thereafter of the dead

bodies. When the soldiers had broken the bones of the two malefactors, they came to the cross of Jesus and found that he was dead already, so a bone of Christ was not broken. Had it been otherwise, the scripture would not have been fulfilled.

Joseph of Arimathea boldly asks Pilate for the body of Jesus, thus making an open avowal of his discipleship. It is Friday afternoon and the Sabbath is drawing near. Pilate grants the request. The cross is lowered and lain on the ground, the nails drawn out, and the ropes unloosed. Joseph wrapped Jesus in a clean linen cloth, and the body was rapidly carried to the rock-hewn tomb in the garden close by. Such a tomb had niches where the dead were laid. At the entrance, but within the rock, was a court nine feet square where ordinarily the bier was deposited and the bearers gathered to do the last offices to the dead. Nicodemus now comes bringing a roll of myrrh and aloes. In the court of the tomb the anointing takes place, and beholding from afar are only a few faithful ones, notably Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus. From the distance at which Jewish manners dictated they stand, their's was only a dim view of what passed within the court of the sepulchre, which may explain why on their return that Easter morn they brought spices and ointments. The clean linen cloth in which the body had been wrapped was now torn into cloths, and the body was bound limb by limb with layers of myrrh and aloes. Jesus' head was wrapped in a napkin. After they exited the tomb, a great stone, the *Golel* was rolled against the entrance, and a smaller stone, the *Dopheq*, was placed against it for support. The following day the Jewish authorities would affix the seal where the one stone was laid against the other.

### ***THE RESURRECTION***

It was Sunday morning and according to Jewish reckoning, the third day from Jesus' death. A number of women come to the tomb, perhaps two separate groups starting from different places who met there. Mary Magdalene seems to have been the first to reach the grave, and seeing the great stone rolled away, hastily judged that the body of the Lord had been removed. Without waiting further, she runs back to inform Peter and John. The Evangelist here explains that there had been a great earthquake and that the Angel of the Lord had rolled back the stone and sat upon it. The two sentries on duty were seized with terror. The earthquake could not have been one in the traditional sense, but a shaking of the place when the Lord of Life burst the gates of Hades to retenant his glorified body.

While Mary Magdalene hurried to the abode of Peter and John, the other women, probably coming down a different road, reached the tomb. They found the stone rolled away and entered the vestibule of the sepulchre. The appearance of the Angel filled them with fear, but he told them that Christ was risen, and that they should hurry and bring this announcement to the disciples to meet him in Galilee. With the scattering of the eleven at Gethsemane, the apostolic college had been temporarily broken up, the bond for the moment dissolved though they continued to meet as individuals.

The women are commanded to enter the tomb where they see two angels, one at the head, the

other at the foot of the niche where Jesus had lain. And without speaking they hasten to carry the glad tidings to the disciples.

Mary Magdalene's news causes Peter and John to run to the sepulchre. John outruns Peter and reaches the sepulchre first. Stooping down he sees the linen cloths, but from his position he does not see the napkin which was lying apart by itself. Peter arrives and with no hesitation enters fully into the tomb, and he sees both the linen cloths and the napkin. John now follows Peter into the tomb. The effect of what he saw was that now he believed in his heart that the Master was risen. The evidence that he had risen led them to the knowledge of what the Scriptures taught on the subject.

They left the tomb and returned to their home. Mary Magdalene returned, and for a time her sorrow gave way to tears. She stooped to take one more look into the tomb, which she thought was empty, but now saw the two angels sitting there. They ask her why she is weeping. "Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him." Becoming conscious of another person standing near her, she turns and gazes upon one whom she thinks is the gardener. He speaks her name, and she recognizes Jesus.

Two disciples are walking along the road to Emmaus, one named Clopas, the other very possibly Luke himself. They are joined by a third, and he opens up to them those Scriptures concerning the Christ. It was towards evening, and the two disciples ask him to be their guest. Jesus breaks the bread, speaks the words of blessing, and as he hands the bread to them, their eyes are opened, and they recognize the Master. Just as quickly, he vanishes from their view. That same afternoon the Lord appears to Peter, in what manner and circumstances we do not know.

Leaving Emmaus, the two disciples hurry to Jerusalem where many of the apostles and others associated with them were gathered. We know that Thomas was not present. The outer and inner doors were shut to conceal their gathering and to prevent surprise. They were sitting at a meal discussing the real import of the appearances of Christ, for as yet they still did not fully understand his resurrection, but rather regarded it as an ascension to heaven from where he had made a manifestation of himself; what might be referred to as a spectral appearance. But all at once, Jesus stood in the midst of them, and they now believed they were gazing on a spirit. The Savior corrects this error by showing them his wounds and bidding them to handle him. He partakes of their supper of broiled fish.

When Thomas hears the report of the Easter evening, he refuses to believe. It was not that he did not believe that Christ's body was no longer in the tomb, but he held fast to what we refer to as the spectral theory. The Octave of the Feast comes, one week from the resurrection morning. The disciples are gathered, Thomas included, and Jesus once again appears in their midst. He offers to Thomas the evidence he demanded, but it is no longer needed, for conviction of Christ's reality has immediately come upon him.

Once again we are by the Lake of Galilee. If it were not for the need to correct a misapprehension in regard to the aged Apostle John, we would not have a record of this

manifestation of Christ. It was probably directly after the Octave of the Feast that the disciples went away into Galilee making known the fact of the resurrection. On this morning there are only seven of the disciples, five of them are named. Peter proposes to go fishing and his companions naturally join him. All that night they caught nothing. Early morning was breaking and on the beach stood one whom they did not recognize. He told them to cast their net to the right side of the ship, and as a result of their obedience they netted such a multitude of fishes that they were not able to draw the net up into the ship. John recognizes Jesus, and whispers this to Peter, who jumps into the lake. Peter, however, seems not to have gained anything over the others by this haste, for when he arrives at the shore, the others are already there, having transferred themselves from the ship to a small boat attached to it and rowing ashore.

Jesus directs them to attend to the netful of fishes that they had dragged to shore. When Peter brought up the weighted net, it was found to have no less than a hundred and fifty-three large fishes in it. Jesus has already prepared a meal for them and now bids them to come.

With the frugal meal over, Jesus addresses Peter. It was he who had mistakenly said that his love for Jesus was greater than the love that the other disciples had for him, and Peter's love would endure even an ordeal that would disperse all the other disciples. His threefold denial still stood before the other disciples; before Peter himself. It was to this that the threefold question of Christ now refers. With an allusion to the danger of self-confidence, Jesus asks him, "Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these?" No longer with self confidence and avoiding the former reference to the other disciples, he answers, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Christ sets before him the humblest work: "Feed [provide with food] my lambs." The question comes a second time, this time without reference to the other disciples, and Peter gives the same answer. Jesus gives an enlarged commission: "Feed [shepherd] my sheep." Yet a third time Jesus repeats the same question, and Peter is grieved at this threefold repetition, for it recalls only too bitterly his threefold denial. "Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou perceivest that I love thee!" Jesus answers, "Feed [provide food for] my sheep." And Jesus saw how Peter's ardent temperament would give place to patient work of love and be crowned with that martyrdom which, when John wrote, was already a fact of the past.

Beyond this narrative, we have only briefest notices: by St. Paul of Christ manifesting himself to James and to the five hundred at once; by St. Matthew of the eleven meeting Jesus at the mountain where he had appointed them; by St. Luke of the teaching in the Scriptures during the forty days of communication between the risen Christ and his disciples. The apostles were once again formed into the Apostle Circle with a new commission.

In Jerusalem, Pentecost was drawing nigh. Jesus leads them forth to the well-remembered Bethany. From where he had made his last triumphal entry into Jerusalem before his crucifixion, he now makes his triumphal ascension visibly into heaven. Hereafter, neither doubting, ashamed, nor afraid, the disciples were continually in the Temple, blessing God. "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed."