

A. D. 30.

1 *The consolation and mutual love between Christ and His members, under the parable of the vine.* 18 *A comfort in the hatred and persecution of the world.* 26 *The office of the Holy Ghost, and of the apostles.*

**I** AM the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 15. 13. 2 <sup>a</sup> Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He

## CHAPTER XV.

## Final Discourse continued.

1. "I am the true Vine." Those who think the discourses of this and the next chapter were uttered after leaving the upper-chamber and on the way to Gethsemane, have pointed out that our Lord and the Eleven would pass close to the Temple, over the gates of which was a gigantic golden vine, the clusters of grapes on which were six feet in length. This, it is thought, may have been used by our Lord as the occasion of His parable of the Vine. It is however better perhaps to suppose that our Lord is still speaking in the upper-chamber (See on xiv. 31.). We may observe that, strictly speaking, St. John gives no parable of our Lord, for this of the Vine, like the discourse upon the Good Shepherd (See on x. 1—21.), is not cast in the form of a true parable, the spiritual meaning being mingled with the figure throughout. Still we may in a looser sense not improperly speak of this as a parable. Marvellously instructive is the figure here used. Its great leading lesson is that of the spiritual unity between Christ and His Church. When Christ says, "I am the true Vine", He speaks of stem and branches together, joining His people in a blessed oneness with Himself. His Church is His Body, and this He counts as part of Himself (See this truth most strongly asserted by St. Paul, under the image of the marriage union, in Eph. v. 30.). Under the Old Covenant the Jewish people were God's Vine (See Ps. lxxx, and Is. v. 1—7.). Now Christ declares that they were but a type of the "true Vine",—even Himself and His Church, in which the ancient types and shadows found their fulfilment and reality. We must not omit to notice the bearing which this solemn discourse on union with Christ has upon the great sacramental act of union but just before instituted. Although St. John gives no account of that institution itself, yet none other utters such profound teaching upon the very central truth of the Holy Communion as he who records the Sermon on the Bread of Life at Capernaum (in vi.), and the parable of the True Vine.

"My Father is the Husbandman." That is, the Lord or Owner of the vineyard, at whose will, and for whose glory, it exists. The same comparison is made in the parable of the Barren Fig-tree (See St. Luke xiii. 6—9.).

2. "Every branch in Me" &c. Note well that there are branches *in Christ* which bear not fruit. Every baptized Christian has been *grafted* into Christ,—made a branch in His Vine. We say in our Catechism that in Baptism we are made *members* of Christ. We might express exactly the same truth by saying we are made *branches* of Christ. For what the member is to the body, the branch is to the tree. And just as there are sickly, helpless, or unruly members in the Body, so are there sickly, barren, or wanton branches in the Vine. It is not every

taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, A. D. 30.  
 He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. b ch. 13. 10.  
 & 17. 17.  
 Eph. 5. 26.  
 1 Pet. 1. 22.  
 c Col. 1. 23.  
 1 John 2. 6.

3 <sup>b</sup> Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 <sup>c</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch

graft that lives, nor every one that lives that thrives, nor every one that lives and thrives for a time that ends in bearing good fruit. What the good fruit is we learn from St. Paul's list of the "fruit of the Spirit" (See Gal. v. 22, 23.). The barren branches God "taketh away." This is the "Cut it down" of the Barren Fig-tree. But how fearful is that which is meant by this "taketh away"! This is unfolded farther on (See 6.).

"He purgeth it," &c. Literally, 'cleanseth it.' The fruitful branch is not let alone. In a fruitful tree we see the gardener prune and cut back the strongest shoots; he cleans off the blight, and cuts out the canker. An ignorant person might think he was injuring the tree. But we know he does it "that it may bring forth more fruit." So God deals with the branches in His Vine. If they are bearing fruit, He checks and prunes and purges them, often using sharp and painful means, cutting off health or comfort or this world's goods, taking away the dearest objects of love, and thus chastening and humbling them. This *outward* purging is very wholesome, and often necessary before the branch is really as fruitful as it should be. But we must not forget that God has also an *inward* purging for His branches, a secret discipline and training, a cleansing through His word and its searching power, of which we read in the next verse.

3. "Now ye are clean" &c. Literally, 'Already are ye clean.' So Christ had declared at the washing of the feet (See xiii. 10.), and He speaks in the same sense here. He does not mean, 'Already ye are purged and cleansed so as to bring forth that more abundant fruit, of which I spake', for there was much purging still in store for them: but, 'Ye have indeed been already once cleansed'—'Ye are grafted as clean pure branches into Me—therefore' (in the next word) "'Abide.'" May not this be understood: 'Ye have been justified; persevere, and in sanctification bring forth much fruit'? But their cleansing was "through the word", that is, not any one special saying of Christ, but through His teaching. This begot in them the faith which brought them to Him for the cleansing of justification. And, we may well observe, this word is also God's instrument (under the Holy Spirit) of sanctification, for Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (xvii. 17.). We must weigh with the present passage St. Paul's words, in which he says that "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Ephes. v. 25, 26.).

4. "Abide in Me." By grace are we called; our work is to make our "calling and election sure" (2 St. Pet. i. 10.). We are branches; our work is to abide in the Vine. The true position of the Christian is rather that of one fighting lest he lose the blessed inheritance which has been given him, than that of one fighting in the hope of at length winning a place in the kingdom of heaven. He is already a child of God, an heir of the kingdom, a sheep of the fold, a branch of the Vine. The command he needs is, "Abide in Me."

"And I in you." That is, 'And so shall I abide in you.' We

A. D. 30. cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.

5 I am the Vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much <sup>d</sup>fruit: for <sup>2</sup>without Me ye can do nothing.

<sup>a</sup> Hos. 14. 8.  
Phil. 1. 11.  
& 4. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Or, severed  
from me,  
Acts 4. 12.

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 3. 10.  
& 7. 19.

6 If a man abide not in Me, <sup>e</sup>he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you,

abide in Christ by cleaving to Him in faith love and obedience. He abides in us by imparting to us His grace, and giving life to our souls. Perhaps we could not select a better place than this for calling attention to the wonderful frequency of the expression '*in Christ*' throughout the Epistles. The Epistle to the Ephesians especially abounds with the expression, every spiritual blessing being spoken of as bestowed '*in Christ*' (See especially the first chapter.). In this place we learn something of the *nature* of this most blessed union, of which the fruits are so manifold.

"**As the branch.**" The branch has no free will to sever itself, as man has. But it may be torn from the tree, and then it dies, because the sap can no longer flow into it from the stem. So when a man severs himself from Christ he breaks the channels of spiritual life, and spiritually dies. The sap of the tree represents that inner life which flows from Christ to all His branches; and what is this but the Holy Spirit?

5. "**I am the Vine,**" &c. If we distinguish here between the vine and the branches, the vine would mean the stem of the tree, from which the branches draw their life and strength. But it is better to understand by the vine the whole tree, including the branches (See on 1.), for the Christian is in very truth a part of Christ—a member of Christ—even as the branch is a part of the tree.

"**Without Me.**" This does not simply mean 'without My help', but 'apart from—that is, severed from—Me.' It is the same thought as that which is expressed in the latter part of the 4th verse, only more strongly stated, for here the utter helplessness for good of the man who is not in Christ is most plainly declared.

6. "**As a branch.**" That is, 'as a branch broken off from the tree.' "**Withered;**" &c. An awful picture of the end of the man who has forsaken Christ! There is first the spiritual death—the withering; then the eternal death—the burning.

7. "**If ye abide in Me,**" &c. Jesus now leaves the figure, and speaks in plain language, though the figure is still present to His mind, and re-appears in the mention of bearing fruit (8 and 16.). Observe here instead of saying '*I in you*', our Lord says "*My words abide in you.*" This is one sign and fruit of Christ's abiding in us. When He is in us, His words are very dear to us, and we love to keep His commandments. It is then that our prayers are heard and answered. Nor can we doubt that St. John was thinking of this gracious promise, when he said, "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments" (1 St. John iii. 22.). When Christ promises, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you", we must

## ST. JOHN, XV.

ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done A. D. 30.  
unto you.

8 <sup>f</sup> Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; <sup>h</sup> so shall ye be My disciples.

<sup>f</sup> ver. 16.  
ch. 14. 13, 14.  
& 16. 23.  
<sup>g</sup> Matt. 5. 16.  
Phil. 1. 11.  
<sup>h</sup> ch. 8. 31.  
& 13. 35.

9 As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.

10 <sup>i</sup> If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

<sup>i</sup> ch. 14. 15,  
21, 23.

remember that all such promises concerning prayer are limited by God's will (See on xiv. 13.). Indeed the Evangelist himself most plainly says so in another place, when he writes, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us" (1 St. John v. 14.). It appears moreover that the prayers here spoken of are closely connected with the bearing of fruit, and, if so, are to be understood as petitions for spiritual rather than for temporal blessings. Let us not fail to notice that in the words "what ye will" the true desire of the heart is implied. How many pray without any real wish that their prayers may be granted! This is no true prayer. "They whose hearts desire nothing pray for nothing" (*Bishop Wilson.*).

8. "Herein" &c. The word "Herein" belongs to what follows, not to what goes before. The sense is, 'My Father is glorified in this—namely that ye bear much fruit.' Christ taught us to pray to the Father, and say, "Hallowed be Thy Name." Do we ask, 'How shall we hallow God's Name?' Here is an answer:—'By bearing much fruit'; for so shall men "see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (St. Matt. v. 16.).

"So shall ye be My disciples." That is, by bearing the good fruit. This alone will prove us to be Christ's true disciples, for He has "chosen" and "ordained" us for the very purpose that we should bear fruit (See on 16.).

9. "As the Father" &c. How wondrous must be Christ's love to "His own" to be compared with the Father's love to Him! If "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son" (iii. 16.) to die for the world, what must be His love for that only-begotten Son Himself! Yet no less is that Son's love for His sinful servants.

"Continue ye in My love." The word "Continue" is the same which is translated "Abide" in the former verses. But "when Christ says, 'Abide ye in My love', it is not plain what love He means, whether that by which we love Him or that by which He loves us. Yet it is decided by the foregoing words: for He had said 'So have I loved you'; and then adds, 'Abide ye in My love': therefore it is in that love with which He loveth us" (*St. Augustine.*). This command then signifies, 'Take heed lest ye lose the love which I have bestowed upon you.'

10. "If ye keep" &c. Thus is the keeping of Christ's commandments not only the only proof of our love to Him (See xiv. 15.), but also the only way to retain His love to us.

"Even as I" &c. The Son, perfectly fulfilling the Father's will, abides in the perfect enjoyment of the Father's love (See on v. 18. *St. Augustine's* rule for understanding such sayings as this.).

A. D. 30.  
 k ch. 16. 24.  
 & 17. 13.  
 1 John 1. 4.  
 1 ch. 13. 34.  
 1 Thes. 4. 9.  
 1 Pet. 4. 8.  
 1 John 3.  
 11. & 4. 21.  
 m ch. 10. 11,  
 15.  
 Rom. 5. 7, 8.  
 Eph. 5. 2.  
 1 John 3. 16.  
 n See Matt.  
 12. 50.  
 ch. 14. 15, 23.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and <sup>k</sup>that your joy might be full.  
 12 <sup>l</sup>This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.  
 13 <sup>m</sup>Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.  
 14 <sup>n</sup>Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

11. "That My joy" &c. "The joy of Christ is His own sacred "bliss, the joy of the holy Son in the consciousness of the love of God, "and of His unity with the Father" (*Lücke quoted by Stier.*). This great joy Christ imparts to "His own", so that it is *in them*, the fountain of their own "joy" "in believing" (Rom. xiv. 17.). Thus does Christ fulfil His own command, "Let not your heart be troubled" (xiv. 1.). The heart cannot be greatly troubled in which Christ's joy abides.

"That your joy" &c. This means, 'that your own peace and happiness, being raised and perfected by the indwelling of Mine, may be 'full'—as full, that is, as may be in this world where there must still be "tribulation" (xvi. 33.). Let us not forget that it is written of the blessedness of Christ's kingdom *in this world* that "Eye hath not seen, "nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things "which God hath prepared for them that love Him", for St. Paul continues, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.).

Observe that this beautiful verse concerning joy springs out of the thought of abiding in Christ's love. It is because of that, His measureless love to us, that He imparts to us of His joy, and it is the knowledge of that same love which is the source of our joy.

12. "That ye love one another." A repetition of the great "new "commandment" (See on xiii. 34.) in order to its fuller explanation in the following verses. Christ has spoken of His disciples abiding in His love. This they cannot do except by keeping His commandments. And they cannot keep His commandments except by loving one another, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10.). So the love of Christians to one another flows naturally out of the love of Christ to them.

13. "Greater love" &c. "But God commendeth His love toward "us, in that, while we were yet sinners" ("*enemies*" in 10.) "Christ "died for us" (Rom. v. 8.). And this love seems greater still. Yet it is the same love of which Christ speaks, for He that died for His friends died also for His enemies. In this place however He is not thinking of His enemies, but rather of His special love to those whom He deigns to call His "friends". No man, He argues, can show greater love to His friends than by dying for them; and this, which is the proof of Christ's love, is to be the pattern of ours, for "Hereby "perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: "and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 St. John iii. 16.).

14. "Ye are My friends." Blessed they to whom such words are

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the A. D. 30.  
 servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I  
 have called you friends; ° for all things that I  
 have heard of My Father I have made known  
 unto you.

° See Gen.  
18, 17.  
ch. 17, 26.  
Acts 20, 27.

16 <sup>p</sup> Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen  
 you, and <sup>q</sup> ordained you, that ye should go and  
 bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should re-  
 main: that <sup>r</sup> whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father  
 in My name, He may give it you.

<sup>p</sup> ch. 6, 70.  
& 13, 18.  
<sup>1</sup> John 4.  
10, 19.  
<sup>q</sup> Mat. 28, 19.  
Mark 16, 15.  
Col. 1, 6.  
<sup>r</sup> ver. 7.  
ch. 14, 13.

spoken! True there is a condition—that of obedience. But the Apostles themselves were weak and faulty. All forsook their Lord in fear at His betrayal: one denied Him thrice. Yet He calls them “friends.” So their falls are our comfort; for He that accepted their faulty obedience, and called them “friends”, will not refuse to grant to us, if we are striving to obey Him, the same blessed title.

15. “Henceforth” &c. It is true that even before this Jesus had addressed His disciples as “My friends” (St. Luke xii. 4.). But this was only a passing word of love. For the most part they had been rather servants than friends. They called Him “Master”, and looked up to Him with reverence and awe. Now in His love He draws them closer, lifts them nearer, to Himself.

“The servant knoweth not” &c. The proof that Christ really looked upon His Apostles as His friends was His treatment of them. His language to them was not that of a master giving his servants their necessary orders, but the free and kindly intercourse of friend with friend.

16. “Ye have not chosen” &c. This verse is a safeguard against all pride. What if they are friends? And what if they do what He commands them? And what if they bring forth much fruit? And what if He opens to them the divine mysteries? Is any of this their own doing? Is it not all His? Yes, the election, and the power to bear fruit, and the grace to persevere, are His—not theirs. Observe that our Saviour says that He has chosen His disciples that they may bear fruit. In other words He has chosen them unto holiness as the middle stage between their calling and their glory. So St. Paul writes, “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thess. ii. 13.).

“Ordained.” This has no reference to ordination to the work of the ministry. It would be better translated, as it simply means, ‘appointed’.

“That your fruit should remain.” This may mean either ‘that your fruit should be of that nature which would endure the trial, and ‘be found true and worthy fruit in the last day’, or ‘that you may ‘continue to produce pure good fruit, persevering to the end, and not ‘growing weary of well-doing.’

“That whatsoever” &c. This is another end and result of Christ’s choice. The prayers of His friends are heard and answered. This blessing appears here to depend upon the bringing forth fruit (as upon

- A. D. 30. 17 \* These things I command you, that ye love  
 one another.  
 ver. 12. 18 \* If the world hate you, ye know that it hated  
 t 1 John 3. Me before *it* hated you.  
 1, 13.  
 u 1 John 4. 5. 19 \* If ye were of the world, the world would love  
 x ch. 17. 14. his own: but \* because ye are not of the world,  
 but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore  
 the world hateth you.  
 20 Remember the word that I said unto you,  
 y Mat. 10. 24. y The servant is not greater than his lord. If they  
 Luke 6. 40. have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;  
 ch. 13. 16. z if they have kept My saying, they will keep your's  
 z Ezek. 3. 7. z  
 a Mat. 10. 22. also.  
 & 24. 9.  
 ch. 16. 3. 21 But \* all these things will they do unto you

the abiding in Christ, in 7.), and indeed this is true, not because the fruit, however good, can deserve to win answers to prayer, but because it is an evidence of that state of heart, and of that union with Christ, to which God vouchsafes such answers.

17. "These things" &c. Once again our Lord enforces His great "new commandment" (See on 12.). By "these things" our Lord means all He had spoken concerning His love to His friends. The end and object of this was that they might learn how to love one another. The word "command" here seems used in a rather unusual sense, meaning 'declare' or 'enforce upon you'.

18. "If the world hate you," &c. This follows most naturally upon the mention of love to one another. The Christian will strive to love all. He knows no limits which he may set to his love. Yet he will not always be met by answering love. The world—that is, the evil in the world—will only have hatred to repay (See on vii. 7.). But is this surprising? If the pure and perfect love of Christ Himself only aroused the hatred and enmity of the world, His disciples cannot expect to be otherwise dealt with.

19. "If ye were of the world," &c. It is the *separation* of Christians from the world,—their opposition to its ways and habits and pursuits,—which arouses its enmity. Like their Master, while not shrinking from kindly intercourse with any, they are ever, by their pure conduct and high motives and holy lives, a rebuke (even if a silent one) to the wicked.

20. "The servant" &c. This saying is used by our Lord in the same sense as in this place in His directions to His Apostles on first sending them forth (See on St. Matt. x. 24.). It is used in a different sense at the washing of their feet but just before the uttering of the present words (See on xiii. 14.).

"If they have kept" &c. Christ does not mean to imply that "the world" had kept His saying—that is, His word. He only puts the two sides before the Apostles as the two ways in which the world might have received Him, saying as it were, 'Ye have seen in which 'of these two ways they have treated Me; ye can judge then in which 'to expect to be treated yourselves.'

for My name's sake, because they know not Him A. D. 30.  
that sent Me.

22 <sup>b</sup> If I had not come and spoken unto them, <sup>b</sup> ch. 9. 41.  
they had not had sin: <sup>c</sup> but now they have no <sup>c</sup> Rom. 1. 20.  
<sup>2</sup> cloke for their sin. <sup>2</sup> Or, *excuse.* James 4. 17.

23 <sup>d</sup> He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. <sup>d</sup> 1 John 2. 23.

24 If I had not done among them <sup>e</sup> the works <sup>e</sup> ch. 3. 2.  
which none other man did, they had not had sin: & 7. 31.  
but now have they both seen and hated both Me & 9. 32.  
and My Father.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might  
be fulfilled that is written in their law, **They hated  
Me without a cause.** Ps. 69. 4.

26 <sup>f</sup> But when the Comforter is come, whom I <sup>f</sup> Luke 24. 49.  
will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit <sup>f</sup> ch. 14. 17, 26.  
& 16. 7, 13.  
Acts 2. 33.

21. "For My name's sake." Most literally true in the fiery persecutions of the early church. True also in a somewhat different sense even now. For the hatred and enmity of bad men to good springs from their hatred and enmity to all that purity and heavenliness and unselfishness which are summed up in Christ.

"Because they know not." And yet, as our Lord goes on to show, they are without excuse, for they *might* have known. Even the very heathen, St. Paul says, are "without excuse" (Rom. i. 20.) in their blindness, because that blindness was of their own causing. How much more they to whom the Son of God Himself came and spoke!

22. "No cloke." That is, 'no excuse,'—nothing to cover them, and to render their sin less hateful. Christ Himself throws this "cloke" over those ancient heathen cities, which had never heard His voice, saying it shall be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment than for such as these spoken of in this verse (See St. Matt. x. 15. xi. 20—24.). The sin here spoken of seems to be specially that of hatred towards Christ and His disciples. And this sin is aggravated by the truth stated in the next verse.

24. "Both Me and My Father." Because He was the Revealer of the Father to man; and, inasmuch as He was "the express Image" of the Father (Heb. i. 3.), it was impossible to hate Him, and love the Father. In seeing and hating the "Image" they saw and hated Him whose Image He was.

25. "They hated Me without a cause." The words are doubtless taken from that Psalm which is so full of the sufferings of Christ, the 69th. There the Psalmist complains, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head." How much truer was this of Christ, the "despised and rejected of men"! (Compare Ps. xxxv. 19.)

26. "Whom I will send" &c. This verse has been one upon the true sense of which great controversy has existed. The question whether the Holy Ghost should be spoken of as proceeding "from the Father" only, as the Eastern Churches hold, or as proceeding "from the Father and the Son", as the Western Churches hold, has been the cause of the greatest schism the Church has ever known. Un-



A. D. 30. of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, & He  
<sup>g</sup> 1 John 5. 6. shall testify of Me:  
<sup>h</sup> Luke 24. 48. 27 and <sup>h</sup> ye also shall bear witness, because <sup>i</sup> ye  
 Acts 1. 8, 21, 22, & 2. 32. have been with Me from the beginning.  
 & 3. 15.  
 & 4. 20, 33, & 5. 32. & 10. 39. & 13. 31. 1 Pet. 5. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. <sup>i</sup> Luke 1. 2. 1 John 1. 1, 2

## CHAPTER XVI.

<sup>1</sup> Christ comforteth His disciples against tribulation by the promise of the Holy Ghost, and by His Resurrection and Ascension: <sup>23</sup> assureth their prayers made in His name to be acceptable to His Father. <sup>33</sup> Peace in Christ, and in the world affliction.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 11. 6. **T**HESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye  
 & 24. 10. <sup>a</sup> should not be offended.  
 & 26. 31.

doubtedly the Western Churches have without due authority added the words "and the Son" to the original Nicene Creed, but, since Christ speaks so plainly here (and in xvi. 7.) of sending the Holy Ghost, and since the Holy Ghost is called "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. viii. 9. 1 St. Peter i. 11.), no real objection can be made to the words. It should however be observed that the word "proceeding" is always understood as meaning more than merely 'sent' or 'coming'. It is used as expressing the *relation* of the Holy Ghost to the other Persons of the Holy Trinity. Just as we hold that the Son is "begotten of His Father before all worlds", so we hold that the Holy Ghost "proceedeth from the Father and the Son", or as the Athanasian Creed more fully expresses it, "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but *proceeding*."

When Christ promises to send the Comforter from the Father, we are reminded of the prophetic words of David, who sang, "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them" (Ps. lxxviii. 18.). St. Paul in quoting these words, instead of "received gifts for men", has "gave gifts unto men" (Eph. iv. 8.), the full truth being that, when Christ ascended, He received from the Father the gifts which He gave to His Church, the greatest of which was the gift of "the Lord God" the Holy Spirit to "dwell among them".

"He shall testify of Me." The Holy Spirit's great work was, and is, to bear witness to Christ, teaching men to know Him, and the way of life through Him (See on xvi. 8—10.).

27. "Ye also shall bear witness," &c. This is spoken in its literal sense only to the Apostles, for they alone had been with Christ "from the beginning", that is, from the beginning of His public work and ministry among men, which had lasted now more than three years. They, with the Holy Ghost to teach them, would be Christ's witnesses to the world. But may we not apply the words to ourselves in a very true, though less literal, sense? Ought we not to be witnesses to Christ before the world because we have been with Him, in holy meditation and prayer, in study of His Divine Example, in seeking His presence in His House and Sacraments?

## CHAPTER XVI.

## Final Discourse continued.

1. "These things." That is, the foretelling of the world's hatred,

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

- 2 <sup>b</sup> They shall put you out of the synagogues: A. D. 30.  
 yea, the time cometh, <sup>c</sup> that whosoever killeth you  
 will think that he doeth God service. <sup>b</sup> ch. 9. 22, 34.  
& 12. 42.  
<sup>c</sup> Acts 8. 1.  
& 9. 1.  
& 26. 9, 10,  
11.  
<sup>d</sup> ch. 15. 21.  
Rom. 10. 2.  
1 Cor. 2. 8.  
1 Tim. 1. 13.
- 3 And <sup>d</sup> these things will they do unto you, be-  
 cause they have not known the Father, nor Me. 11.
- 4 But <sup>e</sup> these things have I told you, that when  
 the time shall come, ye may remember that I  
 told you of them. And <sup>f</sup> these things I said not  
 unto you at the beginning, because I was with  
 you. <sup>e</sup> ch. 13. 10.  
& 14. 29.  
<sup>f</sup> See Matt.  
9. 15.
- 5 But now <sup>g</sup> I go My way to Him that sent  
 Me; and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest  
 Thou? <sup>g</sup> ver. 10, 16.  
ch. 7. 33.  
& 13. 3.  
& 14. 28.

but perhaps also including the promise of the Comforter. The knowledge that their persecutions were foretold by their Lord, and the presence of the promised support under them, would prevent these persecutions from causing them to stumble (See, for the meaning of "offend," on St. Matt. v. 29. xvii. 27.).

2. "Put you out of the synagogues." The Jewish excommunication (See on ix. 22.).

"Doeth God service." So thought St. Paul in his ignorance before his conversion (See Acts xxvi. 9.). Yet there were differences in the guilt of these who thus acted, according to the amount of light rejected. St. Paul had more "cloke for his sin" (See on xv. 22.) than those to whom Christ Himself had already "come and spoken", and therefore he "obtained mercy" (See 1 Tim. i. 13.).

3. "Because they have not known" &c. Some, like the Pharisees, refusing to know and shutting their eyes to the light; others, like Saul before his conversion, ready to know as soon as the light shone upon them.

4. "These things I said not" &c. Our Lord had told His disciples of coming persecution before (See St. Matt. x. 16—28.). But He had not before declared the deep ground of the world's enmity, namely ignorance of the Father and of Himself, nor so plainly prepared His disciples for the immediate approach of persecution, nor bound up His words of sad prediction with others of blessed strength in the promise of the Divine Comforter. While He was still with them, He was their Strength and Comforter, and persecution seemed either in the distant future, or endurable when shared with Him.

5, 6. "None of you asketh" &c. They *had* asked this question (See xiii. 36. xiv. 5.), though with so much blindness and ignorance in the asking that they had received no clear answer as yet. Now the time was come when they might learn the truth, if they cared. But they were so overwhelmed with simple sorrow at the thought of their Lord's departure that they could not imagine that in that very departure there could be any thing to calm their trouble. It is as though Christ said, 'If, instead of giving way to your grief, you only cared to enquire whither I am going, and for what purpose, you would find reason to hope, and not to despair' (See on xiv. 28.). Yet He speaks not in reproof so much as in love, as His next words show.

A. D. 30.  
 h ver. 22.  
 ch. 14. 1.

6 But because I have said these things unto you,  
 h sorrow hath filled your heart.

i ch. 7. 39.  
 & 14. 16, 26.  
 & 15. 26.  
 k Acts 2. 33.  
 Eph. 4. 8.  
 2 Or,  
 convince.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedi-  
 ent for you that I go away: for if I go not away,  
 i the Comforter will not come unto you; but k if  
 I depart, I will send Him unto you.

8 And when He is come, He will 2 reprove the  
 world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judg-  
 ment:

7. "Nevertheless." That is, 'Though ye are too sorrowful to ask  
 'Me, yet I tell you.'

"It is expedient" &c. "Expedient" means 'good' or 'profit-  
 'able,' and Christ's departure was profitable for His disciples, because  
 otherwise the Comforter would not come. Two things were needed  
 before the gift of the Comforter could be bestowed: 1. that Christ  
 should *die*, thus winning for His Church all gifts and blessings; 2. that  
 He should *ascend* thither whence He would send the promised Gift from  
 the Father. But the main truth in this verse is a very startling one.  
 It is simply this—that it is better to have the Holy Spirit with us than  
 to have Christ. Why is this? Not because the Holy Ghost is greater  
 than the Son. But because it was necessary to raise the disciples into  
 a more spiritual life and more spiritual thoughts, and (as St. Augustine  
 says) while they carnally clung to Christ's Bodily presence, they could  
 not receive the Spirit. Their thoughts of Christ were still far too  
 earthly, and they were hindered by their very love to His Person from  
 rising to a more spiritual view of His nature and office. They needed  
 the same lesson which was taught to the sorrowing Magdalene in the  
 mysterious words, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended unto  
 "My Father" (See on xx. 17.). On the coming of the Comforter  
 Alford well remarks that "this saying of our Lord is a convincing  
 "proof that the gift of the Spirit at and since the Day of Pentecost  
 "was, and is, something *totally distinct* from any thing before that time:  
 "—a new and loftier dispensation." The Spirit was in the world before,  
 but never in such gracious power, nor as the guiding and enlightening  
 Presence with God's people.

8. "He will reprove the world" &c. The translators of our Bible  
 have given the word "convince" in the margin as another translation  
 of the word which they have expressed by "reprove" in the text.  
 Perhaps "convince" is the better word of the two, especially as "re-  
 "prove" seems used in a sense not usual in these days, namely as  
 meaning 'prove against,' or 'convict.' It is the same word which is  
 translated 'convince' in the words, "Which of you convinceth Me of  
 "sin"—that is, 'proveth any sin against Me?' (See on viii. 46.).

In this short verse is described by our Lord the great work of the  
 Holy Ghost the Comforter in the world. This work is to "convince  
 "the world." "The same world which cannot *receive* the Spirit, because  
 "it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him, must nevertheless become con-  
 "scious that He is working upon it, speaking to it, and chiefly—*testi-*  
 "*fying against it*" (Stier.). The three things of which the Holy Ghost  
 convinces will be best considered under the next three verses. It must

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

9 <sup>1</sup> of sin, because they believe not on Me ;

10 <sup>m</sup> of righteousness, <sup>n</sup> because I go to My Fa-

ther, and ye see Me no more ;

A. D. 30.

<sup>1</sup> Acts 2. 22,

—37.

<sup>m</sup> Acts 2. 32.

<sup>n</sup> ch. 3. 14. & 5. 32.

however be observed that in each case the conviction is two-fold in its effect, being either, by its acceptance, the means of conversion and salvation, or, by its rejection, the occasion of hardening and destruction. Indeed this is the law of all great privileges. They are ever mighty to save or to destroy. Christ Himself is to one a "chief corner stone, elect, precious", to another "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" (1 St. Pet. ii. 6—8. See also on xii. 31.); and His Gospel is to the one "the savour of death unto death", and to the other "the savour of life unto life" (2 Cor. ii. 16.). So too with the work of the Holy Spirit. It convinces unto salvation, or convicts unto condemnation.

9. "Of sin," &c. The first work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin. But it will be at once remembered that this is the very office and work of the *Law* under the old covenant, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20.). The strictness of God's Law taught man his own sinfulness and weakness, and thus "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. iii. 24.). Besides this, man had already, even without the law, the witness of conscience to his own sinfulness (See Rom. ii. 15.). Thus we must beware of saying that the Holy Spirit came to do only that which God's law or the natural conscience did already. The truth is, we must read this verse as a whole, and take the second part of it as describing the special sin of which the Holy Ghost convinces. The word "because" may quite properly be understood as 'namely that' in each of these three verses. So that here we learn that the Holy Ghost convinces the world of sin, *namely that* they believe not in Christ. This unbelief is, in truth, the root and fountain of all sin, just as faith is of all holiness. For unbelief (like faith) is not purely of the head. Its seat is quite as much in the heart. It is very seldom that unbelief may not be traced to some sinful temper or habit or state of mind, such as pride, or sloth, or worldliness. And when we speak of unbelief, we must not limit our thoughts to actual rejection of Christ or of His words, but must include that *practical* unbelief, which is far more common in these days, and which is rather indifference, and unconcern, and the absence of any deep earnest conviction, than the positive denial of any revealed truth.

10. "Of righteousness," &c. Of what "righteousness" is the Holy Ghost to "convince the world"? Not of its own, for it has none. Therefore certainly, in the first place, of *Christ's* righteousness. And in truth the leading men to discern the wonderful perfection of Christ's righteousness, which is their example, is one work of the Holy Spirit. But there would be little strength and comfort in being convinced of one's own sin and of Another's righteousness: and still less to have added to this the conviction of a righteous "judgment" (ver. 11.). The conviction of Christ's righteousness would only make the conviction of our own sin more terrible, if this were all. Therefore the "righteousness" here spoken of must be, not simply Christ's sinless perfection, but that righteousness which He wrought *for us*,—His *justifying* righteousness,—those merits for the sake of which we are accounted righteous before God by faith. Thus this expression answers to, or rather

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

A. D. 30. 11 ° of judgment, because <sup>p</sup> the prince of this world

is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, <sup>a</sup> but ye cannot bear them now.

<sup>q</sup> Mark 4. 33. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Heb. 5. 12.

embraces within itself, "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22.). But this righteousness is explained in the words, "Because"—or, 'namely that'—"I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more." How is this? Partly, because this would prove Him who was "despised and rejected of men" to be none other than the spotless Son of God. But still more because the full accomplishment of the great work of the Atonement would make Christ to be "the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6.). The words of Luther on this place are worth recording. "We must know no other righteousness, with which we can stand before God, than this *going of Christ to the Father*; which is no other than that He hath taken our sin upon His own back, and for the sake of it hath suffered the death of the cross, been buried, and descended into hell; not remaining however under the power of sin and death and hell, but passing through them all in His Resurrection and Ascension."

11. "Of judgment," &c. The "judgment" here spoken of is not to be limited to the great Judgment of the last day. It rather refers to the righteous severance which God is ever making between the godly and the wicked, defending and rewarding the one, casting down and condemning the other. The conviction of "judgment" is well described in the Psalmist's words, "So that a man shall say, verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily there is a God that judgeth the earth" (Ps. lviii. 11.). It convinces the world that evil shall not prevail, nor go unpunished, and that the victory of good over evil is certain. And this conviction is said to be, "because," or 'namely that'—"the prince of this world is judged"; that is, that the power and dominion of Satan is already cast down. We cannot read these words without remembering a like saying of our Lord in His conversation when certain Greeks sought to see Him, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (xii. 31. See on this verse for a fuller comment on the present.).

We must not forget to note the advancing stages of the three convictions of the Holy Spirit. First, the sinner is convinced of sin, seeing its hatefulness and hopelessness. Secondly, the sinner, made conscious of his sin, is led to seek salvation from his sin through Christ's righteousness. Thirdly, being justified by faith in Christ, he learns to feel a blessed assurance that the cause of Christ must prevail, and that, as Satan's power has been already cast down, he—the prince of darkness—and all the evil of which he is the author, shall at last be utterly cast forth from the kingdom of God. (The thoughtful reader may like to trace out the same advancing stages—from the deep consciousness of sin, through deliverance in Christ, to faith in the final triumph—as drawn out in Romans vii. and viii.)

12. "Yet many things." Namely those deeper and more heavenly truths concerning Himself and His kingdom, which the earthly notions of the Apostles hindered their receiving until endued with power from

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

13 Howbeit when He, <sup>r</sup> the Spirit of truth, is <sup>A. D. 30.</sup> come, <sup>s</sup> He will guide you into all truth: for He <sup>r</sup> shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He <sup>r</sup> shall hear, *that* shall He speak: and He will shew <sup>r</sup> you things to come.

ch. 14. 17.  
& 15. 26.  
ch. 14. 26.  
1 John 2  
20, 27.

14 He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

---

on high. They were as yet too weak to bear these more spiritual truths. They would have been to them like the new cloth in the old garment, or the new wine in the old bottles (See on St. Matt. ix. 16, 17.).

13. "He will guide you" &c. The Holy Ghost would reveal to the Apostles those truths which as yet they could not bear. Thus in their writings we may be sure that we have the full declaration of "all truth". Moreover, this promise being made to the Apostles, we must believe the revelation of the truth to them to have been *complete*, and reject the idea of farther revelations of the truth, or new disclosures of it, in after ages.

"He shall not speak" &c. Christ had said of Himself, "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear I judge" (v. 30.); "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me" (vii. 16.); with other like words (See viii. 26, 28. xii. 50. xiv. 31.). What Christ thus spoke of Himself, He now says of the Holy Ghost. The Son is of the Father, and so derives from Him His wisdom: the Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, and so derives from Them His wisdom.

"Things to come." We see the fulfilment of this promise in such prophecies as those of St. Paul in the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, and St. Peter in his 2nd Epistle, but still more in those of the Book of the Revelation of St. John.

14. "He shall glorify Me." As the work of the Son was to glorify the Father (See viii. 49.), so the work of the Spirit was to glorify the Son. And this is the best test of all work and of all teaching which professes to be of the Spirit. If it glorifies Christ, we dare not lightly condemn it. If it does not glorify Christ, we must at once suspect it of another origin. It is not hard to apply this test to the vain reasonings of half-believers on the one side, or to the errors of Rome on the other. But, if the Spirit's work be to glorify Christ, let us ever remember that this is done not only by the Spirit's witness to Christ in the teaching of God's word or of the Church, but in that witness which is borne by the holy lives of those in whom the Spirit has wrought a likeness to Christ. This work of the Spirit is clearly described by St. Paul, who says, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18.).

"He shall receive of Mine," &c. The word "Mine" here is of very wide significance. It seems to embrace our Lord's whole Nature, and Work, and Teaching, concerning all which the Holy Ghost would enlighten the minds of the Apostles after Pentecost, so as to make them faithful witnesses of the truth. Again what a pledge we have here of the *fulness* and *completeness* (See on 13.) of the witness borne to the things of Christ by the inspired writers of the New Testament! Who

A. D. 30. 15 'All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

16 "A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, \* because I go to the Father.

can think that, if the Holy Spirit led them into all truth, showing unto them the things of Christ, their writings can fail to contain (as our Church teaches in her 6th Article) "all things necessary to salvation"?

15. "All things that the Father hath" &c. This mysterious verse declares, first of all, the unity of the Father and the Son. There is nothing belonging to the Father—no glory of Godhead, no Divine attribute, no dignity of power, no wealth of wisdom,—which does not equally belong to the Son. Secondly, it teaches that when the Holy Ghost takes of the things belonging to Christ and reveals them to His servants, that Holy Spirit is in very truth revealing the things belonging to the Father also. He is the Spirit of God—that is, of God the Father and of God the Son, proceeding from Both, and revealing Both to man. It is through the teaching of this Divine Teacher that men are brought "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 2, 3.).

16. "A little while," &c. The first and simplest meaning of this saying is that which explains it of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord, and this meaning our Lord seems Himself to give to His words (See 20.). And if it were not for the strange reason given, "Because I go to the Father", this would be sufficient. But how could Christ's going to the Father be the cause of His being quickly seen again? And how could He speak of His Death as going to the Father (See xx. 17.)? Surely this cannot be *all* the meaning of our Lord's saying. He seems to have still in mind the *spiritual* sight which the Holy Spirit would bestow (See 14, 15.), and of which He spoke earlier in this great discourse, when He said, "I will manifest Myself to him" (xiv. 21.). And this would be granted when He sent the Comforter from the Father (See 7.) on the Day of Pentecost. This spiritual sight, like the spiritual touch spoken of to St. Mary Magdalene (See on xx. 17.), could not be till Christ went to the Father. Both parts of the saying have thus their double fulfilment. 1. "Ye shall not see Me" was fulfilled when, a few hours afterwards, His Body was laid in the tomb; it was further fulfilled when, forty-two days afterwards, He left the world and went to the Father. 2. "Ye shall see Me" was fulfilled when, on the Day of the Resurrection, Christ appeared to the assembled Apostles; it was further fulfilled when, after His Ascension, He came (as He still comes) by the Spirit, to manifest Himself to His own, and to reveal Himself to the eye of faith. Happy are they who can say, like the patriarch, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of

16. "See Me." Two different words are used in the original, both in this verse and in the next, for "see". The first "see" signifies 'gaze upon,'—'behold', and seems used of the earnest gaze of the bodily eye upon one deeply loved. The second word is that commonly used for 'see', and has here a wide meaning, including the spiritual sight of faith.

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

A. D. 30.

17 Then said *some* of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that He saith, A little while? we cannot tell what He saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 *Y* A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, *Y* Isai. 26. 17.

---

“the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee” (Job xlii. 5.)! St. Augustine takes the view above given, saying of this verse, “It may be understood first of Christ’s Death and of the joy of the disciples in His Resurrection. But it is better and far more perfectly fulfilled in His Ascension—the “little while” of the Church’s travail. It seems long to us, because it is yet going on: when it shall be ended, we shall feel how little it has been.”

20. “**Ye shall weep**” &c. This verse plainly speaks of the coming time of sorrow and perplexity,—the hours of sadness so close at hand. We find the Apostles mourning and weeping on the very Resurrection morning (St. Mark xvi. 10.). The world (See on vii. 7.) meanwhile rejoiced, thinking it had won the victory. How often is this scene repeated! Christ’s Church weeps and laments, and the world is triumphant; yet the darkest hours are but for a “little while”, and then the light breaks out again, and sorrow is turned into joy:—the very sorrow itself becomes a matter of rejoicing for the blessing it leaves behind it.

21. “**A woman**” &c. This figure plainly describes the sorrow of the disciples at our Lord’s death, and their sudden joy at His reappearance among them after His Resurrection. It is written of that reappearance, “Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord” (xx. 20.). It has been thought that in the “man born into the world” Christ may refer to His own Resurrection, which is spoken of under the figure of a birth in the 2nd Psalm, “Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee” (Ps. ii. 7. Acts xiii. 33.). This, at any rate, was the cause of the joy foretold to the disciples. And here again (as in 16.) we may carry on the figure to a still farther fulfilment, for the sorrow of the travailing woman may well represent the present trials and struggles of the Church of Christ, which, with all creation, “groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Rom. viii. 22.), waiting for the deliverance and final joy of the second glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.



## ST. JOHN, XVI.

A. D. 30. because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 <sup>z</sup> And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and <sup>a</sup> your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

<sup>z</sup> ver. 6.  
<sup>a</sup> Luke 24.  
41, 52.  
ch. 14. 1, 27.  
& 20. 20.  
Acts 2. 46.  
& 13. 52.  
1 Pet. 1. 8.  
<sup>b</sup> Matt. 7. 7.  
ch. 14. 13.  
& 15. 16.

23 And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing.  
<sup>b</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, <sup>c</sup> that your joy may be full.

---

22. "I will see you again." As in *their* seeing Christ (See on 16.), so here in *His* seeing them, there is a double meaning. These words were first fulfilled when He suddenly stood among the wondering Apostles on the evening of His Resurrection. They are fulfilled in a second sense by His spiritual presence with His Church "even unto the end of the world." This presence, discerned by the eye of faith, is the source of all true joy and peace amid the conflicts and troubles of the world. The world rejoiced when Christ died, but how short and bitter a joy was that! How fleeting are even the purest earthly joys! But they that rejoice in the sense of Christ's presence have a joy which no earthly troubles can wholly cloud over, and which will shine forth in all its brightness for ever, when earthly troubles are over.

23. "In that day." By "that day" is meant, not the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension (for then the Apostles did ask our Lord questions), but the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This verse will be wrongly understood, if we do not observe that in the Greek the word translated "ask" in this first sentence, is quite a different word from that which is used in the latter part of this verse, and twice in the next. This first "ask" means 'ask questions.' In the other places it means 'ask in prayer.' So what our Lord here says is, that in the day of enlightenment by the Holy Spirit the Apostles would no longer need to seek from Him an explanation of their doubts and difficulties, since the "Spirit of Truth" would make all things plain to them. He then goes on to speak of the blessedness of prayer in His Name, probably referring chiefly to that very enlightenment of the Spirit, which He had long before said God would give to those that ask Him (See St. Luke xi. 13., and compare St. James i. 5., and see on xiv. 13.).

24. "Hitherto have ye asked" &c. Observe, the Prayer our Lord Himself had taught them was not *in words* offered in His Name. It could not be before the Atonement was wrought which wins acceptance for all our prayers. But, being His own words, the Lord's Prayer is now *in effect* most truly offered through Him. "Ask, and ye shall receive" is not merely a repetition of the words in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. vii. 7.), for here the meaning is, 'Ask *in My Name*, and ye shall receive.' The Sacrifice is just about to be offered; and now Jesus teaches its all-prevailing power. The certainty that our prayers are answered in love and wisdom for Christ's sake is a new source of joy beyond that of the sense of Christ's presence (See 22.).

## ST. JOHN, XVI.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in A. D. 30.  
<sup>2</sup> proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no  
 more speak unto you in <sup>3</sup> proverbs, but I shall shew  
 you plainly of the Father.

<sup>2</sup> Or,  
*parables.*  
<sup>3</sup> Or,  
*parables.*

26 <sup>d</sup> At that day ye shall ask in My name: and  
 I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father  
 for you:

<sup>d</sup> ver. 23.

27 <sup>e</sup> for the Father Himself loveth you, because  
 ye have loved Me, and <sup>f</sup> have believed that I came  
 out from God.

<sup>e</sup> ch. 14. 21,  
 23.  
<sup>f</sup> ver. 30.  
 ch. 3. 13.  
 & 17. 8.

28 <sup>g</sup> I came forth from the Father, and am come  
 into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to  
 the Father.

<sup>g</sup> ch. 13. 3.

29 His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest  
 Thou plainly, and speakest no <sup>4</sup> proverb.

<sup>4</sup> Or,  
*parable.*

25. "In proverbs." That is, 'in dark sayings', for such must many of our Lord's words have been to them. Even to us, for whom the Holy Spirit has unfolded so much of the meaning, through the teaching of Scripture and the faith of the Church, many of Christ's sayings are hard to understand. They must have been harder still when uttered.

"The time cometh." This "time" is the same as "that day" (in 23.)—the time of the Holy Spirit's out-pouring and of His abiding presence with the Church.

26. "I say not unto you," &c. Our Lord does not mean to say, that He will not intercede for His own, for this we know He ever liveth to do for us. His meaning may be thus unfolded: 'Ye shall pray in My Name; and I make no mention *now* of My praying for you, as though you could not of yourselves approach God, or as though God did not love you; for in My Atonement you shall have free access to the Father, and need not shrink from Him as if He were angry with you.' With such freedom of approach to the Father through Christ is it not wonderful that any should teach—not that the sinner needs Christ's prayers to bring him to God, but—that the sinner needs the prayers of the blessed Virgin Mary and other saints to bring him to Christ?

27. "Because ye have loved Me," &c. Thus is God pleased to accept and bless the love and faith of Christ's disciples, imperfect though they be. They may love little; but God loves much.

28. "I came forth" &c. This distinct declaration of our Lord's Divine pre-existence should be carefully marked. Do we ask what and where He was before "He came forth from the Father"? Let the Evangelist answer us:—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (i. 1.).

29. "Now speakest Thou plainly." So in their weakness they thought, yet "that day" was not yet come. The last words our Saviour had uttered seemed to them plain, and were doubtless plainer than some of His words; yet so little did they understand His sayings that, as St. Augustine says, "they did not so much as understand

A. D. 30.

30 Now are we sure that <sup>h</sup>Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this <sup>l</sup>we believe that Thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 <sup>k</sup>Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, <sup>l</sup>every man to <sup>2</sup>his own, and shall leave Me alone: and <sup>m</sup>yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that <sup>n</sup>in Me ye might have peace. <sup>o</sup>In the world ye shall

h ch. 21. 17.  
i ver. 27.  
ch. 17. 8.  
k Matt. 26. 31.  
Mark 14. 27.  
l ch. 20. 10.  
m Or, his  
own home.  
n ch. 8. 20.  
& 14. 10, 11.  
o Isai. 9. 6.  
ch. 14. 27.  
Rom. 5. 1.  
Eph. 2. 14.  
Col. 1. 20.  
p ch. 15. 19,  
20, 21.  
q 2 Tim. 3. 12.

“that they understood them not.” They mistook a little ray of light for the fires of Pentecost.

30. “Now are we sure” &c. It is plain from these words that Christ had answered the thoughts of their minds,—the questions they longed to ask, but had not courage to ask. He had told them that at “that day” they should ask Him nothing—no questions. They feel as though even now they could be content to ask nothing, but reverently to listen to the unfolding of their doubts and the enlightenment of their ignorance. As new gleams of light enter their souls, they feel their faith strengthened, and believe more clearly in the Divine origin of their Lord.

31. “Do ye now believe?” That is, ‘Have ye so strong and clear a faith?’ The question is asked in loving sadness, for He who knew their hearts knew how really weak and dim their faith was.

32. “Ye shall be scattered,” &c. “His own” here means ‘his own home’, or ‘his own place.’ Each would flee his own way. This is the same prediction which is given in St. Matthew in other words, where we read, “All ye shall be offended because of Me this night” (St. Matt. xxvi. 31.). It was fulfilled when “All the disciples forsook Him and fled” (St. Matt. xxvi. 56.).

“Not alone.” The Son could never be really separated from the Father. The “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” was the cry of the *Human* Soul suffering for us that pang of human desolation which is bitterest of all to bear; but we know God had not really forsaken Him (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 46.). In a lower sense the Christian is “not alone, because the Father is with” him. Though all men forsake him, God will never leave him nor forsake him.

33. “Ye might have peace.” This great discourse begins with “Let not your heart be troubled” (xiv. 1.). It ends with peace and victory. Yet it is peace through tribulation, and victory after a battle. Christ does not only *promise* “peace” when the Comforter comes. The promise of the Comforter, with all His other sayings, is to give the disciples *present* peace. Yet had they for the present more trouble than peace, because their faith was dim (See concerning the gift of peace on xiv. 27.).

“In the world” &c. The joy and peace spoken of are not to be *outward* joy and peace. Outwardly Christ’s people must have tribulation,—often more tribulation than the wicked. But this cannot rob them of their inward joy and peace (See 1 St. Pet. i. 6.).

## ST. JOHN, XVII.

have tribulation: <sup>p</sup> but be of good cheer; <sup>q</sup> I have overcome the world. A. D. 30.

<sup>p</sup> ch. 14. 1.  
<sup>q</sup> Rom. 8. 37.  
1 John 4. 4.  
& 5. 4.

### CHAPTER XVII.

<sup>1</sup> Christ prayeth to His Father to glorify Him, <sup>6</sup> to preserve His apostles, <sup>11</sup> in unity, <sup>17</sup> and truth, <sup>20</sup> to glorify them, and all other believers with Him in heaven.

**T**HESSE words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, <sup>a</sup> the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: <sup>a</sup> ch. 12. 23.  
& 13. 32.

---

“I have overcome the world.” He had already overcome the world, having conquered the prince of this world. He was just about to redeem the world by His own all-prevailing Sacrifice on the Cross, and thus yet more mightily to overcome it, and its evil. And His people, as being not of the world, but of and in Him, overcome the world too. It shall not, and cannot, prevail to hurt them. Its tribulations do not make them faint, nor its temptations fall. Mark St. John’s words in another place; “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 St. John v. 5.). And St. Paul’s, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. xv. 57.).

### CHAPTER XVII.

#### Christ’s parting Prayer.

Few passages in all God’s word are so sublime or so affecting as this. Simple in language yet full of deep meaning,—a prayer spoken to the Father by the Son as our great High-Priest interceding for us, yet spoken aloud that it might be recorded for our instruction and example,—its every word should be thoughtfully and prayerfully pondered.

1. “These words” &c. By “these words” is meant the whole discourse in the three preceding chapters. The Prayer which follows was probably uttered before leaving the Upper Chamber (See on xiv. 31.).

“Father.” “Not ‘Our Father’,—which He could never say,—nor ‘My Father’,—which would be too great a separation between Himself and His for such a prayer (See St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42., where He prays for Himself only),—but simply “FATHER”;—that great Name “in which all the mystery of Redemption is summed up” (*Alford.*)

“The hour is come;” &c. Nearer and nearer had been drawing that hour—the heaviest laden with awful agony, yet the heaviest laden also with triumph and glory, in all the world’s history. Again and again had Jesus announced its near approach; yet ever through the agony shone out the glory. The way to the Crown was through the Cross; yet the Cross was lit with the brightness of the Crown, till, when it came very close to Him in Gethsemane, its black shadow was suffered for a moment to hide all the glory beyond. But this was not quite yet. Mark how Jesus prays for that which He sees clearly before Him. Promise never shuts out prayer. In the glorifying Jesus doubtless foresees not only His Death, though that was necessary to

A. D. 30.  
 1. Dan. 7. 14.  
 Mat. 11. 27.  
 & 28. 18.  
 ch. 3. 35.  
 & 5. 27.  
 1 Cor. 15.  
 25. 27.  
 Phil. 2. 10.  
 Heb. 2. 8.  
 e ver. 6. 9, 24.  
 ch. 6. 37.  
 d Isai. 53. 11.  
 Jer. 9. 24.  
 e 1 Cor. 8. 4.  
 s ch. 13. 31. & 14. 13.

2 <sup>b</sup> as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many <sup>c</sup> as Thou hast given Him.  
 3 And <sup>d</sup> this is life eternal, that they might know Thee <sup>e</sup> the only true God, and Jesus Christ, <sup>f</sup> whom Thou hast sent.  
 4 <sup>g</sup> I have glorified Thee on the earth: <sup>h</sup> I have finished the work <sup>i</sup> which Thou gavest Me to do.

1 Thes. 1. 9. f ch. 3. 34. & 5. 36, 37. & 6. 29, 57. & 7. 29. & 10. 36. & 11. 42.  
 b ch. 4. 34. & 5. 36. & 9. 3. & 19. 30. i ch. 14. 31. & 15. 10.

His glory, but His Resurrection, His Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost (See on xii. 23, 28. xiii. 31, 32.).

2. "As Thou hast" &c. That is, 'Even as Thou hast in Thy eternal decrees given Him power over all the world.' This power had before been proclaimed by St. John the Baptist, who said "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His Hand" (iii. 35.). Yet this power was not fully confirmed and established till the work of Redemption was finished, and the Redeemer, about to ascend up on high and to sit on the Right Hand of God, exclaimed, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.).

"That He should give" &c. This was the great end and object of the gift to the Saviour of His kingly power over all flesh. He reigns to save. But we must note here a gift within a gift. There is the Father's great gift to the Son of "all flesh"—that is, 'all mankind'. But within this is the lesser circle of "as many as Thou hast given Him". To these—God's elect, led by the Spirit, drawn to Christ (See vi. 44.), believing in Christ, loving Christ,—the Father's best gift to the Son,—He giveth eternal life. These are they who have "received" Christ's words, and "believed" in Him (See 8.). It is then in the salvation of these that Christ is glorified, and that the Father is glorified in Him.

3. "This is life eternal," &c. To *know God*—by which is meant no mere head knowledge, but a deep personal abiding union with Him through faith and by the Holy Spirit—this is (in present possession, not in mere future expectation,) "life eternal." The life, which shall live on for ever in heaven is actually begun here below in those who thus know God. So Christ says of him that believeth on Him, as well as of him that eateth His Flesh and drinketh His Blood,—that he "*hath everlasting life*" (See v. 24. vi. 47, 54., and Compare St. John the Baptist's words iii. 36.). Observe the words of the 2nd Collect in Morning Prayer, "In knowledge of whom" (that is, in knowing whom) "standeth our eternal life",—words plainly taken from the present verse. It is important to note that the knowledge of Jesus Christ Himself is coupled with that of the Father, as of equal necessity,—as equally "life eternal". No man can know the Father without knowing the Son.

4. "I have glorified" &c. These words, and indeed much of this great Prayer, like so many other of our Lord's later sayings (See "Ye know Him", and "Ye see Me", xiv. 17, 19.), are spoken by anticipation, that is, before the time when they are fully accomplished.

ST. JOHN, XVII.

5 And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with A. D. 30.  
Thine own Self with the glory <sup>k</sup> which I had with ch. 1. 1, 2.  
Thee before the world was. & 10. 30.

6 <sup>l</sup> I have manifested Thy name unto the men Phil. 2. 6.  
<sup>m</sup> which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine Col. 1. 15,  
they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they 17.  
have kept Thy word. Heb. 1. 3, 10.

7 Now they have known that all things what-  
soever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. 1 ver. 26.

8 For I have given unto them the words <sup>n</sup> which Ps. 22. 22.  
Thou gavest Me; and they have received *them*, m ver. 2, 9,  
<sup>o</sup> and have known surely that I came out from 11.  
ch. 6. 37, 39,  
& 10. 29.  
& 15. 19.  
n ch. 8. 28.  
& 12. 49.  
& 14. 10.  
o ver. 25.  
ch. 16. 27, 30.

Christ stands, as it were, "at the end of His accomplished course, and "looks back on it all as past" (*Alford*). The "work" here includes those acts not yet past, but soon to be so, by which the great scheme of man's salvation was perfected.

5. "With Thine own Self" &c. The glory our Lord here prays for is the glory of His Human nature. Or, more exactly, He prays the Father to exalt His now twofold nature—Godhead and Manhood for ever united—to the glory which, as God alone, He had from all eternity with the Father. At His Ascension His Human Body entered that glory, and being set down at the Right Hand of God, was, and is, with the Father in glory. "Before the world was" answers to "In the beginning" (i. 1.), and signifies 'Before any thing was created'. What grander witness could we ask for to the eternal Godhead of Christ?

6. "Unto the men" &c. The great Intercessor has spoken of Himself. He now speaks of "His own", presenting them in His intercessions before the Father. From this verse to the end of the 8th is a sort of introduction to the real act of intercession, which begins with, "I pray for them" (9.).

"Thine they were." Not simply by creation, but yet more as being of God's true people, 'Israelites indeed', children of God, loving Him, and ready to obey His will. Jesus said to the Jews, "If God "were your Father, ye would love Me;" and again, "He that is of "God heareth God's words" (viii. 42, 47.). These men had God for their Father, and so loved Christ. They were "of God", and so heard God's words. Thus they came to Christ through the Father, being His before they were given by Him (See on 2.) to the Son. This was the natural course *then*. Now we are taught from our infancy to believe at once in the Holy Three in One, in whose Name we are baptized.

7. "Now they have known" &c. Thus does Christ accept the as yet weak and imperfect knowledge and faith of His disciples. They were willing to know and believe, and had made a good confession but just before (See xvi. 30.). And lo! they are accepted. A weak faith, if humble and willing, may yet find mercy. By "all things" we need not understand only the "words" named in the next verse, but all our Lord's works and power and glory. All these were derived from the Father as the eternal Source of all things (See on v. 18.).

- A. D. 30. Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.
- <sup>r</sup> 1 John 5. 9 I pray for them: <sup>p</sup> I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.
- <sup>q</sup> ch. 16. 15. 10 And all Mine are Thine, and <sup>q</sup> Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them.
- <sup>r</sup> ch. 13. 1. & 16. 28. 11 <sup>r</sup> And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, <sup>s</sup> keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, <sup>t</sup> that they may be one, <sup>u</sup> as We are.
- <sup>s</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 1. <sup>t</sup> ver. 21, &c. <sup>u</sup> ch. 10. 30.

9. "I pray for them." Here strictly begins the great High-Priestly Intercession.

"Not for the world." That is, 'not now'. Christ does not mean to say that He *never* prays for the unbelieving world; but *this* prayer is not a prayer for unbelievers. He is not now praying for the conversion of sinners, but for the unity and perseverance of saints.

"They are Thine." "For the Father, in giving them to the Son, did not Himself lose those whom He gave" (*St. Augustine.*).

10. "All Mine are Thine," &c. Observe the perfect equality between the Father and the Son. "It would not be much for Christ to say merely, "All Mine are Thine"; for of course we all can, and ought to, say that every thing we have is from God: but it is an infinitely greater thing to say, "All Thine are Mine", claiming "equality in all things, the Godhead itself included, with the Father" (*Peter Young.*).

"I am glorified in them." Christ is glorified in His people by the evidence they give of His power and life in them.

11. "And now I am" &c. Again spoken by anticipation—that is, before it comes to pass (See on 4.). The same is true of many of the following expressions, such as, "While I was with them" (12), "Now come I to Thee" (13.), "Where I am" (24.). Christ regards His work as already finished.

"These are in the world." Anxiously does the Saviour think of those He would leave to be sifted by the rough handling of the world. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (xiii. 1.). True, there would be "another Comforter", when He was gone, but the "tribulation" was at hand, and they were weak.

"Holy Father," &c. Perhaps our Lord uses this solemn title—"Holy Father"—because He is praying the Father to keep in holiness and purity those for whom He intercedes. Is not He here beginning to fulfil His promise, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter" (xiv. 16.)? For how else does God "keep" His people, and make them one, except by the power of the Holy Ghost?

"Through Thine own name." This would be better translated 'In Thine own name', for it is the same expression in the Greek as that so translated in the next verse. The sense seems to be, 'In the

12 While I was with them in the world, <sup>x</sup>I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and <sup>y</sup>none of them is lost, <sup>z</sup>but the son of perdition; <sup>a</sup>that the scripture might be fulfilled.

A. D. 30.

<sup>x</sup> ch. 6. 39.

& 10. 28.

Heb. 2. 13.

<sup>y</sup> ch. 18. 9.

1 John 2. 19.

13 And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

<sup>z</sup> ch. 6. 70.

& 13. 18.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 109. 8.

Acts 1. 20.

<sup>b</sup> ver. 8.

14 <sup>b</sup>I have given them Thy word; <sup>c</sup>and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, <sup>d</sup>even as I am not of the world.

<sup>c</sup> ch. 15. 18,

19.

1 John 3. 13.

<sup>d</sup> ver. 16.

ch. 8. 23.

‘knowledge of Thy Name’, which Name Christ had “manifested” (6.) to His disciples, and would still “declare” (26.).

“That they may be one, as We are.” What a perfect and loving unity of heart and mind does Christ ask for His disciples, if it can be compared to that bond of unity by which the Father and the Son are united in the One Godhead! And who will dare to despise unity when it is thus the first great subject of Christ’s intercessions! There is but one thing which should be dearer to the Christian, and that is Truth. Alas! that in these days we must sometimes choose between them! The unity of believers is more fully unfolded farther on (in 21.).

12. “None of them is lost,” &c. We learn here the startling truth that the traitor himself was one of those whom the Father gave to Christ, and who might have been saved, had he not wilfully resisted grace (See on vi. 70.). Moreover when we recollect our Lord’s words, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me” (vi. 37.), we can scarcely doubt that Judas did at first come to Christ in a true conversion. Yet he soon suffered his besetting sin to creep in again, and, having been “exalted to heaven”, he was “thrust down to hell” (St. Luke x. 15.). By “son of perdition” is meant one fit only for destruction. The expression is like that of “child of hell” (St. Matt. xxiii. 15.). The “scripture” here referred to is doubtless that which St. Peter, in speaking of Judas, quotes from the 109th Psalm, “Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take” (Acts i. 20.). Observe the allusion to the present words of our Lord in the next chapter, when a few hours later the faith and courage of the Apostles was so sorely tried (xviii. 9.).

13. “These things I speak” &c. By “These things” our Lord here means ‘This Prayer’. The knowledge of their safety—the “none of them is lost”—would fill the faithful ones with holy joy (See on xv. 11. xvi. 22, 24.).

14. “I have given them Thy word.” This is a rather fuller expression than “I have manifested Thy Name” (6.). It was by this making known of God’s Name, and imparting His word, that Christ had kept the faithful ones in their faithfulness.

“And the world hath hated” &c. This is spoken as though following naturally from the last words; and so in truth it does. For it is the knowledge of God and of His word which makes men to be “not of the world”, and it is this which arouses the enmity of the world (See on xv. 18.).



- A. D. 30. 15 I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out  
 of the world, but <sup>e</sup> that Thou shouldest keep them  
 from the evil.
- <sup>e</sup> Matt. 6. 13.  
<sup>f</sup> Gal. 1. 4.  
<sup>g</sup> 2 Thes. 3. 3.  
<sup>h</sup> 1 John 5. 18.  
<sup>i</sup> ver. 14.
- 16 <sup>f</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not  
 of the world.
- <sup>g</sup> ch. 15. 3.  
<sup>h</sup> Acts 15. 9.  
<sup>i</sup> Eph. 5. 26.  
<sup>j</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 22.
- 17 <sup>g</sup> Sanctify them through Thy truth: <sup>h</sup> Thy word  
 is truth.
- <sup>h</sup> 2 Sam. 7.  
<sup>i</sup> 28. Ps. 119.  
<sup>j</sup> 142, 151.  
<sup>k</sup> ch. 8. 40.  
<sup>l</sup> ch. 20. 21.
- 18 <sup>i</sup> As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even  
 so have I also sent them into the world.

15. "I pray not" &c. With the hatred of the world before them, and the many mansions awaiting them above, it would be almost natural that He who loved them so well should pray for their speedy death, that they might depart and be with Him. And indeed it is blessed to die in the Lord. It is a blessed thing to be spared the struggle, and rescued from the peril, and taken away from the evil to come. But it is still more blessed to stay, and fight the Lord's battle, and win through Him the victory. By "the evil" is probably meant, as in the Lord's Prayer (See on St. Matt. vi. 13.), 'the evil one', that is, the devil.

16. "They are not of the world," &c. Surely these words must be very weighty to be thus repeated. Before, they were given as the reason for the world's hatred. Here they seem spoken in reference to the words, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world", as though to add a thanksgiving that as yet at least they were, like Himself, unworldly and separate from the evil of the world.

17. "Sanctify them" &c. However much men are "not of the world", they have still need of sanctifying grace. But we must not take the word "sanctify" simply in its common meaning of 'make holy', for it cannot have that meaning when Christ says, "I sanctify Myself" (19.). Therefore we must understand it in a sense very common in the Old Testament, as meaning 'consecrate' or 'set apart for their holy work and office'. This in *them* would of course also imply making holy. In *Him*, already without sin, it would have the former sense only.

"Through Thy truth." Or, 'In Thy truth'—that is, in the receiving, the holding, and the setting forth, of Thy truth.

"Thy word is truth." Many have seen in this saying of our Lord a reference to Himself—"the Word" (i. 1.), as though He prayed, 'Sanctify them in Thy truth; I am the truth; therefore sanctify them through living union with Myself.' There is nothing in this interpretation, which is not in itself true, for Christ is both the "Word" and the "Truth" (xiv. 6.). But it is better to understand it of the word revealed by Christ and taught and confirmed by the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of Truth." That "word" has been, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, written for our learning; and in it we have the truth of God. So to be sanctified by the word is really to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, for the word is the teaching of the Holy Ghost.

18. "As Thou hast sent" &c. Our Lord is now regarding His Apostles in their sacred office, and pleading for them as 'sanctified', or

19 And <sup>k</sup>for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be <sup>2</sup>sanctified through the truth. A. D. 30,

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word: \* 1 Cor. 1, 2, 30.  
1 Thess. 4, 7.  
Heb. 10, 10.

21 <sup>1</sup>that they all may be one; as <sup>m</sup>Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. <sup>2</sup> Or, truly sanctified.  
<sup>1</sup> ver. 11, 22.  
23, ch. 10, 16.  
Rom. 12, 5.  
Gal. 3, 28.  
<sup>m</sup> ch. 10, 38, & 14, 11.

consecrated, to that office. Observe that the word 'Apostle' signifies one 'sent'. (Concerning the sending itself See on xx. 21.)

19. "For their sakes" &c. We have already seen (on 17.) that "sanctify" here signifies, not 'make holy', but 'consecrate' or 'set apart.' Christ speaks here of His own willing acceptance of His office of Redeemer of the world. He came into the world, and became our great High Priest, made "perfect through suffering" (Heb. ii. 10.), offering Himself as the Sacrifice for our sins, for the sake of those for whom He prayed;—firstly His Apostles, that they might be duly consecrated to their holy office; but also for us all, that we too might be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

20. "Neither pray I" &c. The Lord now widens the bounds of His intercession, and embraces the whole Church to the end of time. Thus did He begin for us those prevailing intercessions which He ever liveth to make for us. If He thought of us then, can He forget us now?

"Through their word." Which yet is not "their word", but the word of the Father, which the Son gave (See 14.),—the word of the Son, for He taught it on the earth,—the word of the Holy Ghost,—for He stored it up for us in holy Scripture, and brings it home to men's hearts by the living voice of the Church.

21. "That they all may be one." Blessed Communion of Saints, knitting together in holy oneness all ages and generations of the Church of Christ! God forgive us for the "carnal" mind and tempers which have so marred this blessed unity (See 1 Cor. iii. 3.).

"As Thou, Father," &c. Quite literally this sentence would be translated as follows: 'As thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may in Us be one.' Jesus does not say, 'That we may all be one', for we cannot be one with God in the same exalted sense in which the Father and the Son are one: but 'That they may in Us be one', for we can be one with our fellow Christians, *in Christ*, and so *in the Father* as One with Him. The unity of Christians with one another through union with Christ is well set forth in the parable of the Vine, but just spoken by our Lord (See on xv. 1.).

"That the world may believe" &c. That is, that unbelievers, seeing the unity of Christians, may acknowledge that the religion that can bear such fruits is of God. Some will say that all the unity God requires in Christians is inward spiritual unity. If there were nothing else (and surely there is abundance) to shew that God looks also for outward and visible unity, this verse were enough. For it is the *sight* of Christian unity, which must therefore be *visible*, which is to convince

22 And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; <sup>n</sup> that they may be one, even as We are one:

23 I in them, and Thou in Me, <sup>o</sup> that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

the world. Can we read these words, and then look upon the Church of Christ in the present day, without falling down in deepest self-abasement, and confessing that the world, when it beholds our miserable divisions, may well doubt of our faith itself? In early times we read that the enemies of Christ were forced to exclaim, 'See how these Christians love one another!'

22. "The glory." What "glory" had the Father given to Christ? Not the glory which He had before the world was, for this He had of His own will laid aside to become Man. Yet He prays, "Glorify Thou Me", that is, 'Exalt Me in My now double Nature,—receive Me back, now Man as well as God, into the glory which, as God alone, I possessed from all eternity' (See on 5.), and this prayer Jesus doubtless regards as already granted. It is then the glory which was bestowed on His Human Nature, so that it should be exalted to the Right Hand of God, of which He here speaks. But how has Christ given this glory to His disciples? Partly because all those who are united to Him are glorified with Him, for God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6.). The overflowings of His glory, as it were, fall upon them and glorify them. It is glorious to belong to One so glorious. And they who are changed into the image of Christ, advance "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18.), so that it is written that whom God "justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 30.). But doubtless the Redeemer is also gazing forward into a purer and holier brightness, and beholding as already accomplished the full and final glorification of His saints, when they shall be changed into the likeness of His "glorious Body", and "behold" His "glory" (24.) with undazzled eyes.

"That they may be one." Again this yearning prayer for unity! Oh how blessed a thing must this be, which is thus again and again the subject of the Saviour's petitions! But here there is a new thought; for Christ declares that His gift of glory is in order that Christians may be one. The thought of their union with their glorified Lord, and the hope of a glory where all is love, should surely be to Christians a holy bond of unity.

23. "I in them," &c. It is by the indwelling of the God who is One, and who is Love, that Christians must dwell in oneness and love. "Our Lord seems to have a vision, if we may venture so to speak, of His Church as one body, penetrated with the Divine Spirit, radiant with the brightness of His presence, its members living together in faith and love, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, exhibiting such a spectacle of love and holiness that the world might be led to acknowledge that they were the special objects of the Father's love" (*Peter Young*). Oh! when shall this vision be realized?

## ST. JOHN, XVII.

24 <sup>P</sup> Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: <sup>q</sup> for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, <sup>r</sup> the world hath not known Thee: but <sup>s</sup> I have known Thee, and <sup>t</sup> these have known that Thou hast sent Me.

A. D. 30.  
<sup>P</sup> ch. 12. 26.  
 & 14. 3.  
<sup>1</sup> Thess. 4. 17.  
<sup>q</sup> ver. 5.  
<sup>r</sup> ch. 15. 21.  
 & 16. 3.  
<sup>s</sup> ch. 7. 29.  
 & 8. 55.  
 & 10. 15.  
<sup>t</sup> ver. 8.  
 ch. 16. 27.

24. "Father, I will" &c. Blessed "will"! May it be accomplished in us! This verse needs more loving and thankful contemplation than searching explanation. Christ *wills*: and "it is the Father's good pleasure" also (St. Luke xii. 32.). If it come not to pass, on whom shall we charge it? Before, Christ had said the "where I am" (See on xii. 26.), but then there was present to Him a way of sorrow before the glory. Now He only looks onward to the glory, and oh how full of perfect bliss is *this* "where I am"! The words "which Thou gavest Me", as describing Christ's glory, should probably be understood, as before (See on 5. and 22.), of the glory which shone forth after the Ascension in His glorified Humanity.

"For Thou lovedst Me" &c. That eternal love of the Father to the Son is one part of His glory; and to behold this love glorifying the Son as Man—nay more, as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8.)—will be the beholding of His glory. Some of the fathers supposed the love here named to mean the love of the Father towards the *Man* Christ Jesus, who was to come—the future incarnate Saviour, and not towards the Son in His eternal Godhead. But in speaking of things belonging to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, we would speak with great humility, and as men who from their dim distance see but the outskirts of the glorious things of which they speak.

25. "O righteous Father," &c. Before He closes the Lord turns His gaze for one moment on the other side of the picture—on the world which knoweth not God. It seems to be with the thought of the great final severance between those whom the Father had given Him and the world that Christ uses (for this once only, as "Holy Father" before) the title "Righteous Father." It is as though He said, 'The world hath not known Thee, having refused to know, and I leave it to Thy righteousness,—it must perish.'

"But I have known Thee," &c. He cannot end with the thought of the lost world. Once more He utters the heavenly truth, to which He had often borne witness before (See vii. 29. viii. 55. x. 15.), and declares His knowledge of the Father. But who shall sound the depths of this knowledge? We use a word of earth to express a reality of heaven. But even here He rests not. His last thought is not of Himself. Drawn up to heaven, He bends down His loving gaze once more to earth, and speaks of His own:—"These", perhaps by gesture, alluding to the group of adoring and marvelling Apostles—"These have known that Thou hast sent Me" (See on 7.).

24. "That they also," &c. There is a peculiar expression in the Greek here, according to some of the best copies, which it is difficult to convey in English. It is literally, 'I will that *that which* Thou hast given Me—even that they *be with Me*.' Our Lord embraces all the Church in one thought and one word—the whole of God's gift is summed up in the '*that which* Thou hast given.' The expression is precisely like that in vi. 37.

## ST. JOHN, XVIII.

A. D. 30. 26 <sup>u</sup> And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love <sup>x</sup> wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

<sup>u</sup> ver. 6.  
ch. 15. 15.  
<sup>x</sup> ch. 15. 9.

### CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Judas betrayeth Jesus.* 6 *The officers fall to the ground.* 10 *Peter smiteth off Malchus' ear.* 12 *Jesus is taken, and led unto Annas and Caiaphas.* 15 *Peter's denial.* 19 *Jesus examined before Caiaphas.* 28 *His arraignment before Pilate.* 36 *His kingdom.* 40 *The Jews ask Barabbas to be let loose.*

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 26. 36.  
Mark 14. 32.  
Luke 22. 39.  
<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. 15.  
23. **W**HEN Jesus had spoken these words, <sup>a</sup> He went forth with His disciples over <sup>b</sup> the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: <sup>c</sup> for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples.

<sup>d</sup> Acts 1. 16. 3 <sup>d</sup> Judas then, having received a band of men

---

26. "I have declared" &c. Already He had revealed much: He is about to reveal more, partly in person after His Resurrection, but still more by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost.

"That the love" &c. That is, 'That Thou mayest love them with 'the same Fatherly love wherewith Thou hast loved Me.' Being in Christ, and Christ in them, the love which is poured on Him overflows them also.

We cannot close this most heavenly chapter without confessing how unworthy our dull hearts and dim faith are to handle such mighty mysteries. Even through our clouds of ignorance we catch glimpses of surpassing glory: and more and brighter glimpses the oftener and the longer we gaze. Yet we wait for the Light Himself to show us its perfect glory, when there shall be clouds no more.

Meanwhile shall Christ thus pray for us, and all His prayers be in vain?

### CHAPTER XVIII.

#### 1—12. The betrayal and taking of Jesus.

St. Matt. xxvi. 47—56. St. Mark xiv. 43—51. St. Luke xxii. 47—53.

1. "A garden." It need scarcely be said that this is Gethsemane. The Agony in the garden is omitted by St. John, being fully related by the other three Evangelists.

2. "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither." So St. Luke says, He "went, as He was wont, into the Mount of Olives" (St. Luke xxii. 39. Compare also St. Luke xxi. 37.). Blessed are they who like Jesus, have a place of resort for holy communings with their heavenly Father.

3. "A band of men" &c. Literally, 'the band', probably a portion of the garrison on duty for the night. It should be observed that the "officers" are no part of the "band", the sentence being much plainer in the Greek than in the English, and standing thus, 'Judas then, having received (or taken) the band, and from the Chief

---

1. "When Jesus had spoken these words," &c. See on xiv. 31.

## ST. JOHN, XVIII.

and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. A. D. 30.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *He*. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as He had said unto them, I am *He*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

---

‘Priests and Pharisees officers (or servants)’— Thus the company he got together was made up of Roman soldiers with their Captain and of certain Jewish officers also (See 12.). Possibly the Chief Priests had obtained the use of the Roman soldiers on the plea of taking a prisoner dangerous to the state. It may be that Judas expected his former fellow-Apostles to resist the taking of their Master. At any rate the Chief Priests might expect such resistance. We may add that the Romans were always watchful against an outbreak at the time of the Passover on account of the number of Jews assembled at Jerusalem.

“Lanterns and torches.” Though there was a full moon at this time (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 36.), yet these would be supposed needful in case of our Lord hiding Himself in a house, or in a dark part of the garden. The night may also have been overclouded. Lanterns and torches to seek the Light of the world! Swords and staves to capture the Prince of Peace!

4. “Went forth.” Perhaps out of the shade into the moonlight; at any rate so as to meet His enemies unexpectedly. This seems to throw light on the words, “Rise; let us be going” (St. Matt. xxvi. 46.). There was a time when Jesus “withdrew Himself” from His enemies (St. Matt. xii. 15.), because His hour was not yet come. Now He goes forth to meet them.

“Whom seek ye?” This simple and dignified question was asked partly with a view to the formal giving of Himself into the hands of His enemies, and partly also that He might secure safety for His disciples (8.).

5. “They answered.” Some of those who came must certainly have known Him by sight. But the Roman soldiers would probably be strangers to Him, and this answer therefore may be supposed to come from them, or their captain.

“Judas also, which betrayed Him,” &c. St. John, having been present, would have the scene vividly before his eye, as he wrote his account of it. As this strange conversation was going on, he saw the traitor standing there among the armed mob. St. John does not describe the *act* of the betrayal, nor tell us when it took place. Probably it should be placed *after* this conversation (that is, between the eighth and ninth verses), when, the multitude and the soldiers being staggered and in confusion, Judas was put forward by the Chief Priests to give the kiss which was to be the signal to the soldiers.

6. “They went backward, and fell to the ground.” This sudden

A. D. 30. 7 Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye?  
And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *He*:  
if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way:

9 that the saying might be fulfilled, which He  
spake, \*Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost  
none.

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew

dismay might very well have been caused by the majesty of Christ's aspect and words. Still it is probable that there was something miraculous in it. It seems as though the armed multitude beheld for a moment His Divine Nature unveiled before them (See the effect produced on a former occasion, vii. 44—46.). St. Augustine asks well, "What will *He* do, when He comes to judge, who did such things when taken to be judged? What will *He* be able to inflict from His throne, who had this power when about to die?"

7. "Then asked He them again." Our Lord doubtless allowed the multitude time to recover from the confusion their strange and sudden retreat had thrown them into. When this is past, He repeats His question, "Whom seek ye?", gazing with calm dignity upon the enemies whom He could have withered with one look, had He so willed. And again some, though it may be less loudly and boldly than before, repeat the answer, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8. "Let these go their way." Probably the multitude may have been closing round the disciples, or even beginning to lay hold of them (See St. Mark xiv. 51.), but Jesus thinks of their safety, while yielding up Himself. Divine Love not only makes self-sacrifice, but in making it thinks not of self but of others. The highest instance of this is shown on the Cross (See xix. 26, 27. St. Luke xxiii. 34.). Probably our Lord's manner, and readiness to yield Himself up, procured the escape of the disciples, which might not otherwise have been granted. Although when the disciples "forsook Him and fled" (St. Matt. xxvi. 56.) they doubtless showed a cowardice very inconsistent with their previous boasting that they would go with Him to prison and to death, yet we must remember our Lord had Himself begged that they might be allowed to depart, and, thus encouraged to seek their safety, they do not seem so deeply guilty as might at first sight appear.

9. "The saying." That, namely, uttered but a few hours before in His great intercessory prayer (xvii. 12.). Observe the one exception there named, and of course to be understood also here. We must not suppose our Lord's words, which St. John applies to this thoughtfulness for His disciples' safety, find here their *only* fulfilment. This is but *one instance* in which they were fulfilled. Nor again must we think that St. John applies the words only to the *bodily* safety of the disciples. Doubtless our Lord's care for their escape from capture in the garden arose from His knowledge of their weakness, and want of strength to meet the trials which, if taken prisoners, they would have to undergo. The fall of St. Peter may open our eyes to the peril all might have been exposed to of being "lost." Our Lord's care for their bodily safety was a loving answer to the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

10. "Simon Peter." "Malchus." The names are given by St. John

it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. A. D. 30.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: 'the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?' <sup>f</sup> Matt. 20, 22, & 26, 39, 42.

12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him,

13 ¶ and led Him away to <sup>g</sup> Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. <sup>g</sup> Luke 3. 2.

14 <sup>h</sup> Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. <sup>2</sup> And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. ver. 24. <sup>h</sup> ch. 11. 50.

only. Probably all reason for withholding them was at an end before this Gospel was written.

11. "The cup" &c. So in St. Matthew, "Thus it must be" (xxvi. 54.). Note two things: 1. Though St. John does not relate the prayer of agony in Gethsemane, yet these words plainly refer to it. 2. That prayer in Gethsemane was *heard*: but, as many prayers are heard and answered, not by the removal of the cup, but by strength to drink it. So with St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.). This was not the first time St. Peter had wished to take from his Lord the cup which His Father had given Him (See St. Matt. xvi. 22.).

12. "The band and the captain and the officers of the Jews." All these to bind One meek and willing Captive! How foolish do all their precautions seem, when we know how easily He could have summoned the twelve legions of Angels, and how joyfully they would have come, to His rescue. "He is led like a Lamb."

### 13—27. Jesus at the High Priest's palace, and St. Peter's denials.

St. Matt. xxvi. 57—75. St. Mark xiv. 46—72. St. Luke xxii. 54—62.

13. "To Annas first." Caiaphas was at this time actual High Priest, but Annas, who had been High Priest before, was a person of great influence, and continued in some ways to act as High Priest still (See on St. Matt. xxvi. 57. and St. Luke iii. 3.). Why our Lord was taken to Annas first we are not told. His opinion, on account of his greater age and experience, may have been thought important, especially in a matter of so much difficulty and delicacy; or by some private arrangement he may have undertaken certain special duties, answering to those of a magistrate who commits a prisoner among ourselves; or, as some think, the Jews may have considered him as still rightfully the High Priest, for he was only deposed from his office by the heathen Roman power, which could not, in God's Eye, either give or take away a sacred and spiritual office. However we know nothing (See on 15.) of this visit to Annas, by whom it appears our Lord was at once (See on 24.) sent on to Caiaphas, as the proper person to deal with Him.

14. "Now Caiaphas was he," &c. This reference to the prophetic



A. D. 30.

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this Man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine.

\* Luke 4. 15.  
ch. 7. 14, 26,  
23. & 8. 2.

20 Jesus answered him, \*I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in

saying of Caiaphas (See xi. 49—52.) would be somewhat strangely brought in here, if the rest of the passage were concerned with Annas, and not with Caiaphas. It seems brought in to show the spirit and mind of Caiaphas towards Jesus, who was doubtless now brought to him.

15. "Another disciple." Undoubtedly St. John himself. His love and St. Peter's boldness soon conquered their first fears, and drew them to the scene of their Master's peril. How St. John was acquainted with the High Priest we know not, but it is probable that this acquaintance saved him from the dangerous questioning, under which St. Peter fell.

"The palace of the high priest." After the mention of Caiaphas as High Priest (in 13.), and the reference to his saying concerning Jesus (in 14.), it seems most probable that *Caiaphas* is meant by "the High Priest" in this verse (though it is not meant to deny that Annas *might* be called so (See Acts iv. 6.). In that case Annas had already sent Jesus on to Caiaphas, and verse 24. describes what had taken place sometime before (But See *Note* on that verse.).

19. "The high priest then asked" &c. This questioning of our Lord by Caiaphas was evidently a private matter, and previous to the more formal trial or examination described by St. Matthew (xxvi. 57—65.). A very few minutes would suffice for all that is here described. The High Priest wished to draw from Jesus the number and names of His disciples, probably to seize them too. He also asked about His teaching, no doubt hoping to obtain evidence against Him from His own mouth.

20. "I spake openly" &c. This answer of our Lord seems directed against the suspicion that He had some secret object in view, and gave His disciples some hidden teaching. Our Lord declares that all His teaching had been perfectly open and free from concealment.

the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and A. D. 30.  
in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by <sup>1</sup>struck Jesus <sup>2</sup>with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the high priest so? <sup>1</sup> Jer. 20. 2.  
<sup>2</sup> Acts 23. 2.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, with a rod.

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?

24 Now Annas *had* sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

“In secret have I said nothing.” That is, nothing different from my public teaching. I have not had two doctrines,—one for the public, and one for My disciples.

21. “Ask them which heard Me,” &c. His teaching having been perfectly open, there could be no reason to question Him about it, nor any lack of witnesses able to say what it was.

“Behold, they know” &c. The word “they” in this place should more correctly be ‘these’. Probably our Lord pointed to some of the officers of the court or other people standing by, and said, ‘Behold, these know what I said.’

22. “Struck Jesus.” This is the beginning of the horrible course of insulting treatment, to which our Lord was exposed before His Crucifixion. It is a sign of the injustice and cruelty of the High Priest himself that he should suffer a prisoner to be so treated in his presence. The officer’s blow was given on the pretence that our Lord’s answer was not sufficiently respectful to the High Priest.

23. “If I have spoken evil,” &c. This calm and gentle remonstrance of our Lord forms an excellent comment upon His saying in the Sermon on the Mount, “Whosoever shall smite Thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (St. Matt. v. 39.). It shows that such a command is to be understood rather in the spirit than in the letter.

24. “Now Annas *had* sent” &c. According to the view taken of the foregoing passage, this sending of our Lord by Annas to Caiaphas had taken place *before* verse 15, and the rest of the passage refers to Caiaphas, not to Annas. This accords with the other Gospels, which speak *only* of our Lord being brought to Caiaphas, and describe St. Peter’s denials as taking place in the palace of Caiaphas (But see Note.).

24. “Now Annas *had* sent” &c. A different view from that given above is taken by many. They hold that the passage next before this verse, namely 15–23, relates entirely to Annas, and not to Caiaphas. Perhaps such is the more natural impression of any one reading from verse 12 onwards, if at least it is known that Annas is sometimes called the High Priest as well as Caiaphas. A good deal must depend upon this verse 24. And here it must be said that the “had” in the English is not expressed in the Greek, and that the translation would be

A. D. 30. 25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of His disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?

<sup>m</sup> ch. 13, 38. 27 Peter then denied again: and <sup>m</sup> immediately the cock crew.

<sup>n</sup> Acts 3, 13. <sup>2</sup> Or, *Pilate's house*, Matt. 27, 27. <sup>2</sup> the hall of judgment: and it was early; <sup>o</sup> and <sup>o</sup> Acts 10, 28. & 11, 3. they themselves went not into the judgment hall,

26. "One of the servants" &c. It appears that this man's attention was directed to the Apostle by those who were remarking upon his Galilaean speech. The other Evangelists do not specially name this man, nor the fact of St. Peter being recognized as having been in the garden.

### 28—40. Jesus before Pilate.

St. Matt. xxvii. 1, 2, 11—26. St. Mark xv. 1—15.

St. Luke xxiii. 1—5, 13—25.

28. "Lest they should be defiled." A Jew was defiled by entering into the house of a heathen, or uniting in any way with heathens, and of course he would be defiled by going into a heathen court of justice. Such defilement rendered him unable to take part in any religious act. These hypocrites would not defile themselves by entering the same room with the heathen governor and soldiers, yet they thought it no defilement to employ those soldiers to seize the Innocent, and to urge that governor to condemn Him to death!

more strict if it were 'Annas sent' instead of "Annas *had* sent." Still the Greek *may* bear this latter sense. If however we read simply 'Annas sent' &c., it would seem as if the sending was to be understood as occurring in the place where it appears, and so would make *Annas* to be the High Priest spoken of in the passage before us. But then arises this difficulty. St. Peter's denials are in all the other Gospels plainly described as taking place in the palace of *Caiaphas*: whereas, if Annas is to be understood in this passage, the first denial took place in *his* palace (17.), and the other two in that of *Caiaphas* (25—27.), without any hint of his moving from one place to another. To this however it is very reasonably answered, that, as there was but one actual High Priest at a time, it was not likely that there would be two High Priest's palaces; and that, in all probability, Annas and Caiaphas lived

in different portions of the *same* large public building. This would, of course, remove the difficulty as to the place of St. Peter's denials. Still the other Gospels undoubtedly lead one to think that the whole of St. Peter's denials took place after our Lord had been brought to *Caiaphas*. It has therefore been thought best to adopt the view given above, and to suppose our translators right in understanding the word in this 24th verse to mean "*had* sent", and the verse itself to be a remark of the Evangelist to explain (what he had omitted to say sooner) how it came to pass that Jesus was in the presence of *Caiaphas*. It should be added that some think the important word of this verse is the "bound", and that what St. John wishes to record is the *manner*, not the *fact*, of the sending; which would leave the *time* of the sending an open question, and allow of either view.

## ST. JOHN, XVIII.

lest they should be defiled; but that they might A. D. 30.  
eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said,  
What accusation bring ye against this Man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If He were  
not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him  
up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him,  
and judge Him according to your law. The Jews  
therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to  
put any man to death:

---

“That they might eat the passover.” By the “passover” here we must probably understand, not the paschal-lamb, but the unleavened bread and sacrifices eaten daily during the week of the Passover. The words would thus mean, ‘that they might keep the feast.’ The *true* Passover, that is, the eating of the paschal-lamb, had probably taken place the evening before (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 19.).

29. “Pilate then went out.” That is, to the open space in front of the ‘prætorium’, or Roman court of justice, where the members of the Jewish Council stood with their Prisoner.

30. “If He were not a malefactor,” &c. It seems as though the Jews understood Pilate’s question as to the accusation against Jesus, or possibly the manner in which it was asked, as implying an unwillingness to try the case. And doubtless it was so. We may well imagine that there was something in our Lord’s appearance and manner which struck Pilate at the first moment, and made him doubt the guilt of One so meek and gentle. The Jews however do not answer his question by stating their charges immediately, but seem at first to think they can persuade Pilate to pronounce sentence of death upon Jesus without a trial, and merely upon their word. ‘If He were not a ‘malefactor’, they reply, ‘we—we the Chief Priests and members of the ‘Council—would not have brought Him here.’ They stand on their own dignity, but Pilate has at least enough justice or mercy in him not to condemn without a question One who looks so harmless. They had persuaded him the night before to grant them a band of soldiers in order to take Jesus, but from the first sight of the Prisoner we find him exceedingly anxious to avoid dealing with Him. Pilate seems to have felt a sort of superstitious fear of our Lord, and a doubt whether His claims to spiritual power might not have some truth in them.

31. “Take ye Him, and judge Him” &c. Pilate seems to have perceived that the real charges against Christ were of a religious, rather than a political, nature, and therefore not such as he cared to enter into.

Probably also he did not understand as yet that the Jews wanted to bring a capital charge against Christ, and to put Him to death.

“It is not lawful” &c. Just before this time the Romans had taken from the Jewish Sanhedrin, or Council, the power of putting any one to death, which could now be done only under the authority of the Roman governor. But this authority could be exercised in two ways:  
1. by giving permission to the Sanhedrin to try a prisoner themselves,

A. D. 30. 32 that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled,  
 P. Matt. 20. 19. which He spake, signifying what death He should  
 ch. 12. 32, 33. die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?

and execute him, if guilty; 2. by trying and condemning the prisoner in the Roman courts of justice. The Jewish rulers were most anxious not to accept the responsibility of putting Jesus to death themselves, though they had declared Him guilty of death (St. Matt. xxvi. 66.). Indeed, even had they possessed the power, they could not have exercised it during the Paschal Feast. So, if they could get the Roman governor to fulfil their wicked desires for them, it would plainly be their safest course. It is well to mention that the stoning of St. Stephen was not an act of law, but an outrage performed in defiance of the law (See on Acts vii. 57—59.).

32. "The saying of Jesus." He had distinctly foretold His crucifixion (St. Matt. xx. 19. &c. Compare xii. 32, 33.). Had the Jews themselves put Him to death, it would have been by stoning, not by crucifying.

33. "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" This appears not to be the same identical question with that recorded by the other Evangelists, to which our Lord answered simply, "Thou sayest." That question seems to have been asked publicly *outside* the judgment hall in presence of the accusers. This was asked *inside*, and for the purpose of drawing from our Lord an explanation of His simple assent to the charge that He made Himself a King (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 11.). It is plain Pilate saw that in the answer "Thou sayest" was hidden some meaning different from that of the mere words. The Roman governor felt it impossible to believe that Jesus meant to claim the rank and title of King in the earthly and usual sense. So He took Him inside, and there repeated the question apart from the clamour of His accusers and of the multitude.

34. "Sayest thou this thing" &c. The latter part of this question causes some little difficulty, for, according to the view taken above, Jesus had heard the accusations made against Him, and had already been once asked the same question, to which He is now replying, publicly before His accusers. The meaning then must be, 'Are you now asking Me this question from something in your own mind, as expressing your own wish to know, or only because of what others have told you?' In other words, 'Is this your own question, or merely a repetition of the accusation made by others?' (But see *Note*.)

34. "Sayest thou this thing" &c. If it is felt difficult to believe that our Lord could thus speak after hearing the accusation made against Him, it may be held that Jesus had been taken into the judgment-hall at the first, and that Pilate remained outside hearing the accusation, so that it was not made in the presence of Christ. In that case the question and answer as given by the other Evangelists must be taken as being simply a summary of the present conversation, the answer "Thou sayest" being contained in 37.

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done? A.D. 30.

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. 6. 13.  
<sup>r</sup> Dan. 2. 44.  
& 7. 14.  
Luke 12. 14.  
ch. 6. 15.  
& 8. 15.

37 Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear

35. "Am I a Jew?" That is, 'Am I likely to ask such a question from any *personal* interest in the matter? Why should I trouble myself about it as if I had any concern in it? I am no Jew, to want to learn about the "King of the Jews." It is nothing to me.' Yet, though Pilate thus spoke, it is probable that Jesus saw in his heart a greater desire to learn than he suffered to appear in his words, and He therefore vouchsafed the true and needful answer in the next verse.

"What hast Thou done?" Pilate turns from his first question, which he seems ashamed now to have asked, since Jesus thought it possible he might really wish it answered for his own sake, and asks a different one, wishing Jesus to give an account of the acts for which He had been given up.

36. "My kingdom is not of this world:" &c. Jesus does not answer the last question, but the first; for by explaining the sense in which He is a King He gives Pilate an insight into His real character and claims, and so a chance of learning the truth, if he will. In so doing our Lord seeks not His own safety, but Pilate's. His kingdom, He says, is "not of this world", that is, not springing from, or founded upon, this world, so as in any way to set itself against the "powers that be." It is from heaven,—a spiritual kingdom. Observe, our Lord does not say His kingdom is not *in* this world, only not *of* this world. All His teaching proves that His kingdom, which He calls the "kingdom of heaven" or the "kingdom of God", is a kingdom here on earth, though to be perfected hereafter in heaven (See on St. Matt. iii. 2.). Pilate sat on the judgment-seat as the representative of an earthly kingdom which claimed dominion over the whole world. Jesus stood a Prisoner before him, yet He claimed to be King over a heavenly kingdom greater than Cæsar's (Compare xvii. 16.).

37. "Art Thou a king then?" Force must be laid in this little question on both the words "Thou" and "King". It is as though Pilate said, 'A King? Thou! What! Art *Thou*—a Prisoner, despised and rejected, so unlike a king—art *Thou* a King?'

"That I should bear witness unto the truth." This our Lord

36. "Now." It may be well to point out that this word does not here denote *time*, as if it were 'at present', so as at some future time to be otherwise. It is simply in opposition to the "if" and "then" of the former part of the sentence, and means, 'as it is'.

A. D. 30. witness unto the truth. Every one that <sup>s</sup>is of the  
 truth heareth My voice.

John 8. 47.  
 1 John 3. 19.  
 & 4. 6.

38 Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth? And  
 when he had said this, he went out again unto the  
 Jews, and saith unto them, 'I find in Him no fault  
 at all.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release  
 unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore  
 that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 <sup>u</sup>Then cried they all again, saying, Not this  
 Man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

declares to be one end for which He came into the world. He is the  
 "Word", in that He reveals to man the will of God and the truth of  
 God (See on i. 1.). The connection of these words with the answer  
 "Thou sayest that I am a King" may be shown as follows: 'Thou  
 sayest; I am a King: and I speak the truth in so saying; for the  
 very purpose for which I came into the world was to bear witness to  
 'the truth.' This would be likely to make an impression on Pilate,  
 for, while the Jews required a sign, the Greeks (that is, the Gentiles)  
 sought after wisdom (1 Cor. i. 22.), and this search after truth was the  
 great employment of the best and noblest of the heathen. Jesus speaks  
 of "the truth" as something real and certain, which He had power to  
 make known. This was what the philosophers, or wise men, among the  
 heathen laid claim to. Thus Pilate might be attracted by such words.

"Every one that is of the truth." "Of the truth" here means 'on  
 'the side of truth.' 'Every one who really loves and longs for truth,  
 'and is not content, like the many, to put up with a sham instead of  
 'the truth,—every such person listens to My voice'.

38. "What is truth?" Pilate asks, but waits for no answer. He  
 is not "of the truth," and therefore he hears not the voice of Him, who  
 is "the Truth." Possibly for the moment Pilate thought of hearing  
 this new Teacher of the truth explain His views; but more probably  
 he asked this question—"What is truth?"—with the half-scornful half-  
 sorrowful feeling of one who doubted whether there was such a thing  
 as truth to be found, and pitied one who could waste thought upon  
 so hopeless a subject. He seems to ask, 'Is there such a thing as this  
 'Truth Thou speakest of? Has any man found it? Has it done any  
 'good to any one?' Seemingly he did not believe in, and therefore  
 did not wait for, any answer to his question, but went out at once to  
 tell the Jews, who were waiting outside, that he found no fault in  
 Him.

39. "The King of the Jews." We can hardly suppose Pilate to  
 use this title except with some sort of mockery. Probably he had come  
 to the conclusion that Jesus was a harmless fanatic, quite innocent as  
 to the charges brought against Him, but under some strong and pecu-  
 liar delusions, especially in regard to His being a King. Thus we can  
 fancy Pilate calling Him the "King of the Jews" with a smile half of  
 contempt of the accusers and half of pity for the Accused.

[The sending of Jesus to Herod (St. Luke xxiii. 6—12.) must be  
 brought in either here, or just before the offer to release Jesus in 39.]

*Christ is scourged, crowned with thorns, and beaten. 4 Pilate is desirous to release Him, but being overcome with the outrage of the Jews, he delivered Him to be crucified. 23 They cast lots for His garments. 26 He commendeth His mother to John. 28 He dieth. 31 His side is pierced. 38 He is buried by Joseph and Nicodemus.*

**1** **WHEN** <sup>a</sup> Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged <sup>a</sup> Matt. 20. 19.  
Luke 18. 33.

<sup>b</sup> *Him.*  
**2** And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe,

**3** and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote Him with their hands.

**4** ¶ Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, <sup>b</sup> that <sup>b</sup> ver. 6.  
ch. 18. 38. ye may know that I find no fault in Him.

**5** Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the Man!

CHAPTER XIX.

1—3. The Scourging and Mockery.

St. Matt. xxvii. 26—31. St. Mark xv. 15—19.

**1.** "Therefore." That is, because the people would not accept Jesus as the prisoner to be released to them. The scourging was a common addition to the sufferings of those about to be put to death. It was a very terrible thing, the scourges tearing the flesh and inflicting fearful wounds.

4—7. "Behold the Man!"

**4.** "Pilate therefore went forth again." Doubtless Pilate thought that the punishment and ill-treatment our Lord had already endured would move the people to pity, and that they would be content. It was partly with this expectation (as we learn from St. Luke xxiii. 22.) that he ordered Jesus to be scourged.

**5.** "Behold the Man!" The picture here presented to us is indeed a marvellous one. The Roman governor stands in front of the court of justice, and half in pity, half in scorn, points to the meek and silent Form by his side, and says, "Behold the Man!" Surely such a sight as they then beheld would have moved any heart that was not hard as stone. Jesus stands there, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, bleeding, wounded, mangled, yet how wondrously meek and patient and uncomplaining! Truly it was then that the prophet's words were most true, "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isai. lii. 14.). Even the heathen judge thinks such a sight *must* stir pity in the hearts of the beholders. 'Is *this* the man who stirs up the people? 'Is *this* He who sets Himself up as King? Is *this* One who deserves 'to die?' So he would plead with them, but the sight stirs no com-



A. D. 30. 6 ° When the chief priests therefore and officers  
 ° Acts 3. 13. saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *Him*,  
 crucify *Him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye Him,  
 and crucify *Him*: for I find no fault in Him.

d Lev. 24. 16. 7 The Jews answered him, ° We have a law, and  
 ° Matt. 26. 65. by our law He ought to die, because ° He made  
 ch. 5. 18. Himself the Son of God.  
 & 10. 33.

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he  
 was the more afraid;

9 and went again into the judgment hall, and  
 f Isai. 53. 7. saith unto Jesus, Whence art Thou? ° But Jesus  
 Matt. 27. 12, gave him no answer.  
 14.

passion in their hearts. It only makes them more fierce in clamouring  
 for death. Truly "He is despised and rejected of men" (Isai. liii. 3.).

6. "Take ye Him," &c. This is certainly not a formal and distinct  
 delivering of Jesus to be crucified, like that at the conclusion of the  
 scene (16.). The force here is on the word "ye"; and Pilate means  
 plainly, 'Take Him and crucify Him *yourselves*, for I will not do it.'  
 But how could Pilate speak thus, if the Jews had no power to put  
 any one to death without his permission (See xviii. 31.)? Probably he  
 meant to say that, if the Jews chose to run the risk of taking the  
 law into their own hands and putting Jesus to death, he would shut  
 his eyes to it and not interfere, but that he would give no legal  
 sanction to the execution.

7. "We have a law," &c. The Jews dare not obey Pilate's last  
 words, and risk the anger of the Roman government by an execution  
 without a legal sentence. They must make him partaker in their deed.  
 So they bring forward their own law, which the Roman government  
 professed to respect, and desire Pilate to give sentence against Jesus  
 upon that. The law they refer to (Lev. xxiv. 16.) punishes blasphemy  
 against God with death. Thus they forsake their former accusation,  
 and now bring up a new one. Pilate will not condemn for the political  
 offence of aiming at the kingdom, so he is asked to condemn for the  
 religious offence of blasphemy.

### 8—16. Pilate's last conversation with Jesus.

8. "That saying." That is, that Jesus made Himself the Son of God.

"He was the more afraid." Thus we see Pilate had already felt  
 some fear or awe in our Lord's presence. He had already been im-  
 pressed by the strange mysterious appearance and conduct of His  
 wonderful Prisoner. He was ready indeed to, laugh at the idea of  
 royal power or pretensions in One so unlike a king; but yet in this  
 meek and harmless Man there was something which he could not  
 understand, and when he heard that He called Himself the Son of  
 God, the words seemed to bring to a point the vague notions which  
 had been floating in his mind, and to explain, or at least to suit, the  
 mystery of Christ's words and conduct so well that a deeper fear and  
 awe crept into his inmost soul, as he felt that possibly he had been  
 dealing with a Being from another world.

9. "Whence art Thou?" Surely it must be hard for any man,

## ST. JOHN, XIX.

10 Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest Thou A. D. 30.  
 not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power  
 to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?

11 Jesus answered, \*Thou couldest have no power \* Luke 22. 53.  
ch. 7. 30.  
*at all* against Me, except it were given thee from  
 above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee  
 hath the greater sin.

not blinded by passion or prejudice, to gaze on the picture which Pilate had before him when he said, "Behold the Man!" without asking, in reverence and awe, "Whence art Thou?" But, though Pilate was not so utterly hard and unmoved as to resist altogether the impression which the picture of Jesus, suffering with such meekness and yet with such majesty, was fitted to excite, yet he seems to have asked the question "Whence art Thou?" with only a half-earnestness. He was not prepared to yield, and to receive the truth. His feeling of awe was only a passing emotion, perhaps mixed with some superstition. It was no genuine cry, like that of the Philippian gaoler, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30.). It may be fitly remarked here that Pilate's wretched weakness and irresolution and cowardice may well be looked upon as the fruit of his former wicked life.

"Jesus gave him no answer." Yet silence is often a very eloquent answer. And who can tell what *look* our Lord fixed upon His questioner? *That* may have spoken better than words. But did he who before had asked, "What is truth?" (xviii. 38.), and then never waited for the answer, deserve an answer now? Jesus knew that to answer would be only casting "pearls before swine" (St. Matt. vii. 6.). Pilate would not believe, and farther light would but increase his guilt.

10. "Speakest Thou not unto me?" The "me" in this question stands the first word in the original, to give it force. It is as if Pilate said, 'Speakest Thou not to **ME**—to **ME** who represent 'the mighty power and empire of Rome?'

"I have power." Pilate's brief impression of fear soon vanishes. He now speaks in displeasure at Christ's silence. And here comes out (though he means not to utter it) his real injustice of heart. Can we conceive a just and upright judge telling a prisoner that he has power to acquit or condemn? If the prisoner be guilty, he has no lawful power to acquit: if innocent, none to condemn. Pilate has again and again pronounced Jesus innocent. He now says he has power to release Him. Why then does he not exercise that power? Because in his heart he cares not for justice.

11. "From above." That is, plainly, 'from God.' So St. Paul says, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained 'of God' (Rom. xiii. 1.). Our Lord does not mean, of course, to imply that Pilate had absolute power over Him, but that the authority of which he boasted was allowed him by God. And to this authority, as ordained of God, and now exercised for God's great purposes, Jesus bows.

"Therefore he that delivered Me" &c. Behold how the Prisoner already sits in judgment upon His judge, awarding to him and to others their degrees of guilt! It is best to understand our Lord to speak of Caiaphas in these words, although indeed the whole Council

A. D. 30.

n Luke 23. 2.

x Acts 17. 7.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, <sup>n</sup> If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: <sup>1</sup> whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

x Matt. 27. 62. 14 And <sup>k</sup> it was the preparation of the passover,

of the Jews would plainly share in his guilt. Some have supposed our Lord to speak of Judas, but it seems far more likely that He would compare the guilt of Pilate the heathen judge with that of Caiaphas the Jewish judge, than that He would thus allude to the traitor. It is not quite easy to see how this greater guilt of the Jew follows (as the word "therefore" seems to imply) from the words immediately before. If however we reflect that by the "power" permitted to Pilate our Lord means not only the authority which as a Governor he rightly possessed, but also much more that exercise of it which was to deliver Him to death in obedience to the Divine decree, Pilate having power given him to do that which God's Hand and God's Counsel had "determined before to be done" (Acts iv. 28.), then the connection is plainer. Pilate could have had no power at all against Jesus unless it had been God's appointment that by him, and by the authority committed to him, should be brought about the Redemption of the world. He was an instrument in God's Hands, unconsciously fulfilling God's decrees. "Therefore"—because Pilate was using his power by Divine permission, and in ignorance of the great crime he was committing in condemning the Son of God,—"he that delivered" Jesus to him, being no blind instrument in the hands of others, but having abundant means of knowing the truth, and recognizing the Messiah, had "the greater sin." We must not forget that Pilate's sin was great, for he was distinctly an unjust judge. But the sin of Caiaphas was greater.

12. "From thenceforth" &c. Pilate was again softened and touched. The majesty and gentleness of Jesus had its effect. He now makes some earnest effort to release Him. But the limit of his earnestness is soon proved.

"Not Cæsar's friend." The Jews have at last touched the weak point. They knew how lightly the Roman Emperor appointed and removed the governors of the provinces; and they threatened Pilate with the loss of his place, if he screened One who made Himself a King. They would inform the Emperor of his conduct, and bring down his displeasure upon him. How glaring is the hypocrisy of these Jews! They pretend to be jealous for Cæsar's honour, while in their secret hearts they hate his rule, and long to be free from it.

13. "The Pavement." This appears to have been a raised platform, paved with coloured marbles, in front of the court of justice, from which the sentence upon prisoners was publicly announced. The Romans were so fond of decorating their public buildings with this sort of pavement, that they carried the materials for it into distant provinces.

14. "The preparation of the passover." The 'preparation' being the ordinary name for the Friday in each week, that day being the

## ST. JOHN, XIX.

and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! A. D. 30.

15 But they cried out, Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, <sup>1</sup>We have no king but Cæsar.

16 <sup>m</sup>Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *Him* away.

17 ¶ And He bearing His cross <sup>n</sup>went forth into

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 49. 10.

<sup>m</sup> Matt. 27.

26, 31.

Mark 15. 15.

Luke 23. 24.

<sup>n</sup> Num. 15. 36.

Heb. 13. 12.

day of preparation for the approaching Sabbath, this probably means the Friday of the Passover-week (See *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17, and compare St. Mark xv. 42.).

“Behold your King!” Pilate, vacillating, uncertain, quickly changing from one mood to another, now turns again to his tone of mockery, possibly even yet with a hope that the folly of putting Jesus to death as dangerous to the power of Cæsar would be so clear that the Jews could not persevere in their purpose. Before, he would appeal to their human feelings with “Behold the Man!” (5.): now, he would shame them with their own folly, and show them the King who was to rob Cæsar of his throne, saying, “Behold your King!” No doubt Jesus still wore the purple robe and the crown of thorns.

15. “We have no king but Cæsar.” Yet if Christ had only promised to deliver them from this very Cæsar, they would have followed Him in thousands. Mark how these Jews themselves declare the fulfilment of Jacob’s prophecy, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come” (Gen. xlix. 10.). They declare that the sceptre is departed; for they have “no king but Cæsar.”

16. “Then delivered he Him.” Thus ends this long morning’s course of shifting, and hesitation, and half-purposes of right, and timidity, and self-seeking. Pilate has again and again pronounced his own condemnation, and he stands forth eternally the example of an unjust judge. He knew what was right, but was too cowardly to do it.

Shortly after this time Pilate was recalled by the Roman Emperor, and falling into misfortunes committed suicide.

### 17—37. The Crucifixion.

St. Matt. xxvii. 32—50. St. Mark xv. 20—41. St. Luke xxiii. 26—49.

17. “Bearing His cross.” This is mentioned only by St. John.

14. “About the sixth hour.” This would be about noon, which would not agree with St. Mark, who says (xv. 25.) that Christ was crucified at the *third* hour, that is, at nine o’clock, the supernatural darkness lasting from the sixth to the ninth hour (33.), that is, from twelve to three. Thus some have supposed that St. John is reckoning according to our present manner, and is speaking of six o’clock in the morning. St. John wrote some time after the other Evangelists, and might certainly have adopted this mode of reckoning, which appears to have been common shortly afterwards. But the difficulty is scarcely lessened by this suggestion, for it makes

this scene as much too early, as the other and more ordinary sense of the words makes it too late. It was thought in ancient times that the number may have been wrongly copied, the Greek signs for 3 and 6 being somewhat alike, and that St. John really wrote ‘about the third hour.’ Indeed some ancient copies have ‘third’ instead of “sixth.” St. John being doubtless familiar with the other Gospels, it is not probable that he would use a different way of reckoning, which would naturally cause a difficulty, without explanation. Thus it seems easiest to suppose that the number has been accidentally miscopied in this case.

A. D. 30. a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *His* coat: now the coat was without seam,<sup>2</sup> woven from the top throughout.

<sup>2</sup> Or, wrought.

Thus it is by comparing this Gospel with the other three that we learn that Jesus began His "way of sorrow" carrying His own Cross, and that it was afterwards laid upon Simon of Cyrene, when Jesus could no longer bear the weight.

19. "Pilate wrote a title." This was probably done in mockery, but rather in mockery of the Jews for their folly in making such an accusation against the meek and harmless Jesus, than in mockery of Him.

21. "Write not," &c. The Jews were offended at the title, because it seemed to imply that they had accepted Christ as their King.

22. "What I have written" &c. This answer of Pilate was probably a mere refusal to alter what he had written in order to please the Jews. Yet by the title itself, and by his adherence to it, he unconsciously proclaims Christ to be King.

23. "His garments." The garments of those who were executed belonged by custom to the executioners; in this case to the four soldiers, who, with a centurion or captain over them, formed the band appointed to crucify our Lord.

"The coat." This was the inner garment, worn under the loose outer robe. It reached from the neck, where it was fastened, to the feet, and was held together by a girdle round the waist. The fact that this coat was "without seam, woven from the top throughout", has been often used to suggest the unity of Christ's Church. He that makes schisms in the church rends the sacred robe of Christ.

St. JOHN, XIX.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us A. D. 30.  
not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be:  
that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith,  
**They parted My raiment among them, and for  
My vesture they did cast lots.** These things  
therefore the soldiers did.

25 ° Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His Ps. 22. 18.  
mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of ° Matt. 27. 55.  
2 P Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and 2 Or, Clopas.  
the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith P Luke 24. 18.  
unto His mother, ° Woman, behold thy son! ° ch. 13. 23.

27 Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy & 20. 2. &  
21. 7, 20, 24.  
° ch. 2. 4.

24. "That the scripture might be fulfilled." It is well to bear in mind that this expression by no means implies that the act spoken of was done *for the purpose* of fulfilling the prophecy. It is perfectly plain that the soldiers here had no such purpose (See on St. Matt. i. 22.).

25. "By the cross." Behold the "three Maries", drawn by their great love close to the very cross itself. St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of the women as standing "afar off." This was at the end of the solemn scene; and we may believe that, having at first gathered near the Cross, they afterwards, when the darkness began, and Jesus hung in silence, withdrew to watch from a distance in awe and reverence.

"His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas." It is open to question whether these words describe one person, or two. The former is the more natural sense of the words, there being no 'and' before "Mary"; but it is undoubtedly difficult to believe that two sisters could have borne the same name 'Mary'; and thus many, avoiding that difficulty, suppose "His mother's sister" to be Salome, St. John's own mother, whom he thus modestly mentions, and who we know was there (St. Matt. xxvii. 56. St. Mark xv. 40.). If this be a true supposition, St. James and St. John would be first cousins to our Lord, but of this we have no hint. The whole subject of the relatives of our Lord is full of difficulty (See on St. Matt. xiii. 55.).

26. "When Jesus therefore saw His mother," &c. Oh, loving thoughtful care in the midst of the agonies of such a death! This was the hour when the "sword" was indeed piercing through the Virgin Mother's soul (St. Luke ii. 35.). And she would be left desolate indeed, for doubtless Joseph had been dead long before this. But the Divine Son loved His human mother to the last, and gave her in her hour of desolation another son to care for her, even him, whom of all His well-loved disciples He loved the best. This scene is a strong argument against the idea that the blessed Virgin had any other child than our Lord. If those called "brethren" of our Lord

25. "Cleophas." This is 'Clopas' in the original, the name of the disciple on the way to Emmaus in St. Luke xxiv. 18. being 'Cleopas', so that it is doubtful whether they are the same person. This 'Clopas' is generally supposed to be the same as Alphæus.

**A. D. 30.** mother! And from that hour that disciple took her  
ch. 1. 11. <sup>s</sup> unto his own *home*.  
& 16. 32.

**28** After this, Jesus knowing that all things were  
Ps. 69. 21. now accomplished, <sup>t</sup> that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

**29** Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth.

**30** When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar,  
ch. 17. 4. He said, <sup>u</sup> It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

had been her children, surely she would not have been commended to the care of St. John.

**27. "From that hour."** It is thought that St. John may at once have led the stricken mother away from the scene of awe, at which time the other women also retired to a distance. St. John however certainly returned to the Cross and witnessed the end (See 35.). We can well imagine with what jealous care the beloved Apostle would fulfil his sacred charge, and what holy communings these two would have one with the other concerning Him whom they both loved and adored. It is remarkable that this Evangelist, who had thus the best and fullest means of learning the history of our Lord's childhood and youth, is profoundly silent concerning it. He would lead us to adore, not the holy Infant in His blessed mother's arms, but the glorified Saviour on His eternal throne. It is no less observable how complete a silence he maintains in his Gospel, in his Epistles, and in the Revelation, concerning her who was committed in so awful an hour, and in so solemn a manner, to his charge. Apart from other difficulties, it is simply impossible to reconcile this most impressive silence with the prominence given to the blessed Virgin in the Romish system.

**28. "After this."** At the end, that is, of the three hours of darkness, and immediately after the cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (See on St. Matt. xxvii. 48.).

**"That the scripture might be fulfilled."** These words may plainly bear a different meaning here from that which they bore when used concerning the soldiers in verse 24. For Christ would be conscious that he was fulfilling the Psalmist's prophecy in saying, "I thirst"; nor is there any reason why we should deny that the fulfilment of that prophecy may have been one motive for the utterance of the words. It is needless to say that it was a cry of real suffering. Yet Christ knew that all was now fulfilled save this one feature in the prophetic picture, and sinking under the torture of a burning thirst, He uttered the cry of suffering (the only complaint of all His passion), and received the offered vinegar, knowing that in this He was but completing the picture, and willing that so it should be.

**29. "Upon hyssop."** It is very uncertain what plant the "hyssop" of the Bible is. Some say marjoram, or some plant like it. At all events it must be a plant with a long stalk, for it is used here to raise the sponge to our Lord's Lips.

**30. "It is finished."** What is finished? He that can answer this

## ST. JOHN, XIX.

31 The Jews therefore, <sup>x</sup>because it was the preparation, <sup>y</sup>that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

A. D. 30.

<sup>x</sup> ver. 42.

Mark 15. 42.

<sup>y</sup> Deut. 21. 23.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs :

34 but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith <sup>z</sup>came there out blood and water. <sup>z</sup> 1 John 5. 6, 8.

35 And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true : and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, <sup>a</sup>that the scripture should be fulfilled, **A bone of Him shall not be broken.**

<sup>a</sup> Num. 9. 12.  
Ps. 34. 20.

Ex. 12. 46.

---

must be rich indeed in knowledge of Christ ; for that little word "It" contains in itself all that the Redeemer came to do—Sufferings, Life, Work, Scripture, Salvation, All.

31. "The preparation." That is, the Friday, the day before the Sabbath, which began at sunset (See on 14. St. Mark xv. 42. and *Note* on St. Matt. xxvi. 17.).

"An high day." Because the Sabbath in the Passover week.

"That their legs might be broken." A cruel and barbarous way of hastening death in those who lingered on the crosses. The crucified sometimes lived in torture for more than twenty-four hours.

34. "Blood and water." It is a much disputed point whether this mysterious out-pouring can be explained by natural causes. Yet it was clearly witnessed by St. John, on whom it made a deep impression ; for not only does he in the next verse declare the truth of his account in a very solemn manner, but also we can hardly doubt that he is thinking of this same event when he writes in his 1st Epistle (v. 6. and 8.) that Jesus "came"—that is, came as Redeemer—"by water and blood", and when he speaks of "the Spirit and the water and the blood" as bearing witness on earth. Certainly the water and the blood did bear witness in the most powerful way to the reality of Christ's Death and Sacrifice, so that none could doubt that He truly died. It is also probable that one object St. John had in stating this fact so forcibly was to show the error of certain false teachers who in his days held that the Body of Jesus was but an appearance, and that He did not really suffer. The water and the blood have always been regarded as types of the two Sacraments, flowing from Christ, and drawing their life-giving power from His Death.

35. "He that saw it." St. John never names himself, but no one can mistake his meaning here. He plainly was close by (See on 27.).

36. "A bone of Him" &c. This was the command given con-



A. D. 30. 37 And again another scripture saith, <sup>b</sup> **They shall**  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. 22. 16, **look on Him whom they pierced.** Zech. 12. 10.

17. Rev. I. 7. 38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being  
<sup>c</sup> ch. 9. 22, a disciple of Jesus, but secretly <sup>c</sup> for fear of the  
 & 12. 42. Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the  
 Body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He  
 came therefore, and took the Body of Jesus.

<sup>d</sup> ch. 3. 1, 2. 39 And there came also <sup>d</sup> Nicodemus, which at  
 & 7. 50. the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a

cerning the lamb of the Passover. Jesus was the "Lamb that was  
 slain", and in all things fulfilled that remarkable type.

37. "They shall look" &c. In the prophet Zechariah, from whom  
 these words are quoted, God says, "They shall look upon Me whom  
 they pierced" (Zech. xii. 10.). St. John uses the same words of  
 Christ, thus showing that He is God. This looking upon Him whom  
 they have pierced will finally take place when "He cometh with  
 clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced  
 Him" (Rev. i. 7. Compare also Ps. xxii. 16, 17.).

### 38—42. The Burial.

St. Matt. xxvii. 57—61. St. Mark xv. 42—47. St. Luke xxiii. 50—56.

38. "Joseph." It is to be noted that the name and the act of  
 Joseph of Arimathæa are recorded by all four Evangelists, the Holy  
 Spirit thus leading us to dwell with special care and reverence upon  
 the Burial of Christ, and giving high honour to him who undertook  
 this pious work. Like the anointing of Mary, it is accepted as a  
 homage to the sacredness of our Lord's Body, even in death. Surely  
 too some honour is reflected hence upon every Christian burial. St.  
 John alone names the fact that Joseph was a *secret* disciple, though we  
 may gather it from the mere fact that he was a "counsellor" (St. Mark  
 and St. Luke), which he could not have been had he been a professed  
 disciple of Christ.

39. "Nicodemus." His part in the sacred scene is also only given  
 by St. John, as he alone names him at all. We can hardly doubt that,  
 when he beheld the Saviour on the Cross, he would remember the  
 words spoken to him before, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the  
 wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (iii. 14.), and  
 this would confirm his timid faith, and strengthen him to join with  
 Joseph in showing more open respect for their Lord in death than  
 they had showed to Him while living. Love to Him who so loved them  
 had made these timid ones bold (See on iii. 1.). "Already does the  
 power of Christ's death begin to work; so that in His utmost humilia-  
 tion the rich gain that strength and courage, which they had not  
 in His life, to confess Christ;—to confess, not the living Christ, nor  
 Christ risen, but Christ crucified;—to confess Christ, when to all  
 worldly appearance He could profit them not, and when the act of  
 doing so was such that all human expediency and prudence, motives  
 which too often operate with the rich, would have condemned their  
 interference" (Is. Williams.). Speaking of these early confessors of

## ST. JOHN, XX.

mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred A. D. 30.  
pound *weight*.

40 Then took they the Body of Jesus, and <sup>e</sup> wound <sup>e</sup> Acts 5. 6. it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 <sup>f</sup> There laid they Jesus therefore <sup>g</sup> because of <sup>f</sup> Isai. 53. 9. the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was <sup>g</sup> ver. 31. nigh at hand.

## CHAPTER XX.

1 *Mary cometh to the sepulchre: 3 so do Peter and John, ignorant of the Resurrection. 11 Jesus appeareth to Mary Magdalene, 19 and to His disciples. 24 The incredulity, and confession of Thomas. 30 The scripture is sufficient to salvation.*

**T**HE first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter,

---

Christ crucified, the same thoughtful writer says, "The Sun had gone down to His rest; and even now, at His setting, the stars begin to come forth, and one or two become visible."

"Myrrh and aloes," &c. Myrrh is the gum of a very aromatic shrub, and aloes from their strong bitter were used to preserve the dead from corruption. It seems that, although Nicodemus brought so large a quantity, yet the short time before sunset, when the Sabbath began, only allowed a hasty use of the myrrh and aloes, and that the embalmment was considered temporary, to be more perfectly done when the Sabbath was over (See St. Luke xxiii. 56. xxiv. 1.).

41. "In the place." That is, in the same immediate neighbourhood,—close at hand. We learn from St. Matthew that the tomb belonged to Joseph.

42. "For the sepulchre was nigh at hand." This may possibly have first led Joseph to think of begging for the Body.

## CHAPTER XX.

### 1—10. The Resurrection.

St. Matt. xxviii. 1—8. St. Mark xvi. 1—8. St. Luke xxiv. 1—12.

1. "Mary Magdalene." The other Evangelists tell us that she was not alone, but that Mary "the mother of James", and Salome, and Joanna, also came to the sepulchre.

"When it was yet dark." That is, before actual daylight, and so as to reach the sepulchre by sun-rise. It is well for those who rise betimes to seek Christ.

2. "Then she runneth," &c. Plainly she left the other women at the sepulchre, and thus did not see the "vision of angels" which they

A. D. 30. and to the <sup>a</sup> other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and  
 ch. 13. 23. saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord  
 & 19. 26. out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they  
 & 21. 7, 20, have laid Him.  
 24.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw  
 b ch. 19. 40. <sup>b</sup> the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

c ch. 11. 44. 7 and <sup>c</sup> the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

saw. (For the order of the events of this great morning see on St. Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.)

“They have taken away” &c. Mary Magdalene seems to have had no thought of the Resurrection as yet. When she saw the tomb open, she at once concluded that some one had removed the Body, and ran with this news to the Apostles.

“We know not.” Although St. John does not name the other women, yet these words, being in the plural, seem to imply that Mary Magdalene was speaking for others as well as herself.

4. “The other disciple did outrun Peter.” St. John was probably much younger than St. Peter.

5. “Yet went he not in.” Probably from a natural awe and shrinking from the mysteries of death.

6. “Then cometh Simon Peter” &c. With his usual boldness, and forwardness of action, St. Peter goes in while St. John hesitates. From this eagerness of the fallen Apostle to know what had happened to his Master’s Body we may gather that his bitter penitence had already quickened in him a new love and devotion. The misery of his denial would make him doubly anxious to show his love.

7. “The napkin.” We read of this too in the case of Lazarus (xi. 44.). It appears that the orderly state of the grave-clothes struck the two Apostles greatly, possibly because it would be very unlikely that any one removing the Body would have unwrapped It, and left the linen as they saw it.

8. “He saw, and believed.” Believed, that is, that Jesus was risen. It seems that the truth flashed upon him, like a ray of the

## St. JOHN, XX.

9 For as yet they knew not the <sup>d</sup>scripture, that **A. D. 30.**  
He must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their **A. D. 30.**  
own home. **Ps. 16. 10.**  
**Acts 2. 25,**  
**-31. & 13.**  
**34, 35.**

11 ¶ ° But Mary stood without at the sepulchre **Mark 16. 5.**  
weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and  
looked into the sepulchre,

12 and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one  
at the head, and the other at the feet, where the  
Body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest  
thou? She saith unto them, Because they have

---

Resurrection light, in the darkness of the tomb. But did St. Peter  
also believe? It seems most natural to conclude so.

9. "As yet." That is, up to this time. Till now the Apostles had  
never understood our Lord's own prophecies of His Resurrection, be-  
cause they had never understood the Scriptural foreshadowings of the  
event, such as in the history of Jonah, and in the 16th Psalm.

10. "Unto their own home." Of course this means their present  
abode in Jerusalem, not their home in Galilee. They simply went  
back to the place where Mary Magdalene had found them, probably  
joining other of the Apostles.

At what time, or in what manner, during this day, our Lord ap-  
peared to St. Peter (St. Luke xxiv. 34. 1 Cor. xv. 5.) we know not.

### 11—18. Our Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene.

St. Mark xvi. 9, 10.

11. "But Mary stood" &c. She had followed St. Peter and St.  
John back to the sepulchre, and when they went away, she remained  
behind weeping. That her weeping was no shedding of a few tears,  
but a very bitter weeping, we may gather from the fact that the first  
words both of the Angels and of Jesus Himself to her are, "Woman,  
"why weepest thou?" "If when Christ stood at the grave of Lazarus,  
"and wept, the Jews said, "Behold, how He loved him", may we  
"not say also of this woman, standing and weeping at Jesus' sepulchre,  
"See how she loved Him!" (P. Young.)

"She stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." She had  
not done this at her earlier visit, having apparently run to tell the  
disciples the moment she was near enough to see that the stone was  
rolled away.

12. "The one at the head, and the other at the feet." The  
space between was empty, yet it was hallowed in that there the Body  
of Jesus had lain. The two Angels must have looked like the golden  
cherubim on the mercy-seat; and perhaps their position may suggest  
that they had watched at the Head and at the Feet of our Lord's Body  
while in the tomb, that Body being, as it were, the Ark of the New  
Covenant. Yet the two Apostles immediately before this did not see  
the Angels.

13. "Because they have taken away my Lord." The sight and

A. D. 30.

b Ps. 22. 22.  
 Mat. 28. 10.  
 Rom. 8. 29.  
 Heb. 2. 11.  
 1 ch. 16. 28.  
 k Eph. 1. 17.

am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to  
 My brethren, and say unto them, 'I ascend unto  
 My Father, and your Father; and to My God,  
 and your God.'

"ascended to My Father, then shalt thou handle Me more perfectly  
 "and more truly, for then shalt thou embrace what thou touchest not,  
 "and believe what thou seest not." So too St. Bernard: "Can it  
 "be that, when He has once ascended, He would either be willing to  
 "be touched, or we capable of touching Him? Yea, but thou shalt  
 "be capable—by love, not by touch; by desire, not by the eye; by  
 "faith, not by sense. Thou shalt touch Him with the hand of faith,  
 "the finger of desire, the embrace of devotion; thou shalt touch Him  
 "with the eye of thy heart." St. Augustine, who takes the same view,  
 sees in the words, "For I am not yet ascended to My Father", a gentle  
 rebuke to Mary for earthly and human conceptions of Christ, as though  
 it were, 'I am not *in thine eyes* ascended: thou dost not yet look  
 'upon Me in My Godhead as one with the Father: thou hast not  
 'yet risen to the beholding of My Divine nature'. When any one  
 accepts and knows Christ as God, then to such an one Christ, as it  
 were, ascends to the Father.

Perhaps the sense of this mysterious but most instructive passage could not be better expressed than in the following lines:

"Love with infant haste would fain  
 Touch Him and adore;  
 But a deeper holier gain  
 Mercy keeps in store.

'Touch Me not; awhile believe Me;  
 'Touch Me not till heaven receive me:  
 'Then draw near, and never leave Me,  
 'Then I go no more.'—(Keble.)

"But go to My brethren," &c. Mary Magdalene has already been  
 once with very different tidings to the Apostles. She is now sent to  
 carry a most blessed and glorious message. She is the first herald  
 of the Resurrection. Mark the love of the risen Lord, who is not  
 ashamed to call His disciples "brethren" (Heb. ii. 11.).

"I ascend" &c. That is, 'I am about to ascend'. Our Lord's  
 Body plainly had not yet ascended. Nor had His Spirit done so, while  
 absent from the Body (See on St. Luke xxiii. 43.). And He was yet  
 to remain forty days on the earth. But He looked beyond the short  
 forty days to the glory that awaited Him, and at once prepared His  
 disciples for that last scene. He would not have them think He was  
 come to be with them again as before. He is now on His way back  
 to heaven—a Passenger halting but a few days on His journey.

This is a fitting place to notice that all our Lord's sayings and doings  
 during these great forty days are, as it were, but one great farewell.  
 "He seems to be again and again saying 'Farewell', only adding to  
 "each 'Farewell' yet a few words more of love and exhortation"  
 (Schmieder quoted by Stier.).

"My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."  
 Christ does not say 'Our Father and our God', as though He were  
 'Father' and 'God' to both in the same sense. The 'My' and 'your'

## ST. JOHN, XX.

18 <sup>1</sup> Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples A. D. 30.  
that she had seen the Lord, and *that* He had spoken 1 Matt. 28. 10.  
these things unto her. Luke 24. 10.

19 ¶ <sup>m</sup> Then the same day at evening, being the m 1 Cor. 15. 5.  
first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut  
where the disciples were assembled for fear of the  
Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith  
unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

20 And when He had so said, He shewed unto  
them *His* hands and His side. <sup>n</sup> Then were the n ch. 16. 22.  
disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

---

seem to show that the words are used in a different sense, as if it were,  
'My Father by nature, and your Father by adoption and grace: My  
'God, in that human nature which I still possess, and your God, in  
'that I have reconciled you unto Him'. Still, without losing sight  
of this distinction, we may see in the words a loving condescension  
which would make Himself one with His "brethren."

Let us not fail to note that, while St. John gives no account of the  
Ascension, he records two sayings of our Lord concerning it (See  
vi. 62.). The fact itself was plainly familiar to his mind. This is  
a similar case to that of the two Sacraments, the Evangelist giving  
our Lord's discourses concerning them (See on iii. 5.), but making  
no mention of their institution, that being perfectly well known to  
all Christians.

### 19—23. Appearance to the assembled Disciples (Thomas being absent) on the evening of the Resurrection.

St. Mark xvi. 14. St. Luke xxiv. 36—43.

19. "When the doors were shut." This fact is stated also con-  
cerning the next appearance of our Lord a week after this (See 26.).  
Plainly the doors were fastened as well as shut, and our Lord appeared  
in the room without the doors being opened (See on St. Luke xxiv. 31.).  
The words "for fear of the Jews" would have no meaning unless the  
doors were fastened; and the mention of the fact itself would have  
no meaning if the doors were opened to admit our Lord.

20. "He shewed unto them His hands and His side." This is  
a short account of what is more fully related by St. Luke, from whom  
we learn that Jesus suffered His Apostles to prove the reality of His  
Resurrection by touch as well as by sight. Let us observe that it is  
not only that Christ is risen which is thus shown forth to the Church,  
but that He who was *crucified* is risen. He is "the Lamb that was  
"slain." His sacred wounds are the tokens of His victory. By them  
is His glorified Body even now more glorious at the right hand of  
God. Well may the Apostle exclaim, "Who is he that condemneth?  
"It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even  
"at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom.  
viii. 34.).

- A. D. 30. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto  
 you: ° as *My* Father hath sent Me, even so send  
 I you.  
 ° Matt. 28. 18. ch. 17. 18, 19.  
 2 Tim. 2. 2. Heb. 3. 1. 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on  
 them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy  
 Ghost:  
 P Mat. 16. 19. & 18. 18. 23 P whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted

21. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you." The Lord is now about to give to His Apostles their solemn commission as stewards of His gifts and mysteries (See 1 Cor. iv. 1.), and in doing so He repeats His salutation of Peace. He gives peace upon peace, as prophesied by Isaiah, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace"—the Hebrew is, 'peace, peace,' (as in the *Margin*)—"whose mind is stayed "on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Is. xxvi. 3.). In this double bestowal of Peace (for Christ's salutations were no empty words of courtesy, but rich outpourings of love) the Lord had a twofold design; firstly to comfort and gladden them by His return, and secondly to consecrate and strengthen them for His departure. "Thus the first greeting spoke of the past: 'I have overcome the world, and have "brought life to light; I was dead, and, behold, I live'. But the "second greeting speaks for the future: 'And I so send you'. So that "we may say that the first Peace was rather for the disciples them- "selves, to assure them and gladden their hearts; while the second "Peace was through them to pass on to all others" (*Stier.*). The mes- sengers of Christ must go forth, their "feet shod with the preparation "of the Gospel of Peace" (Eph. vi. 15.).

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." "Even "so"; that is, 'bearing My authority, even as I bear My Father's "authority; speaking in My Name, even as I speak in My Father's "Name'. This was not the first bestowal of authority upon the Apostles (See St. Matt. x.); it was rather the solemn and final confirmation of it, together with the gift of grace for its exercise.

22. "He breathed on them." When God made man, He "breathed "into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. ii. 7.). The Son of God now breathes into the souls of His disciples the breath of a new life. How full of deep meaning is this action. The laying on of hands is the ordinary sign of the imparting of grace. This breathing is a more solemn and sacred act, a sign of deeper significance. For it tells of life and grace and power as flowing from the Saviour's glorified Human Nature. It teaches that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Son. It shadows forth a very close union of Christ with His people.

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." That is, for the fulfilment of the commission He has laid upon them, and for the exercise of the powers He is entrusting them with. It is true that their full powers as Apostles were to be bestowed at Pentecost, so that this gift is but a sort of earnest of farther and fuller gifts to come. It seems as though our Lord desired to connect the remission of sin very closely with His own Death and Resurrection, and so proceeded at once to bestow upon the Apostles the power to convey to others the benefits of His Passion.

23. "Whose soever sins" &c. In these solemn words our Lord

## ST. JOHN, XX.

unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they A. D. 30.  
are retained.

---

commits to His Apostles, and through them to His Church, the exercise of a godly discipline in the remitting or retaining of sins; assuring them that their sentence on earth, as spoken in His Name and with His authority, will be ratified and confirmed by Himself in heaven. The remitting and retaining of sins answer to the loosing and binding spoken of on other occasions (See on St. Matt. xvi. 19. xviii. 18.). This power is exercised in two ways. First, in regard to external privileges, the Church having authority in her Lord's Name to admit to, and to shut out from, the means of grace. This takes place chiefly in connection with the Holy Communion, from which notorious evil liver are shut out by Excommunication. Of such exercise of discipline we have a notable instance in the case of the scandal in the Church at Corinth (See on 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. and 2 Cor. ii. 10.). Secondly, the power spoken of in the passage before us is exercised in regard to the actual relation of the individual soul to God, the Church pronouncing God's sentence in His Name by the mouth of the authorized minister. This takes place in the Absolutions of the Church. These do not imply the removal of excommunication or Church censures; but in them the Priest, as the messenger or ambassador of Christ, declares and pronounces the sentence of Christ's pardon for the comfort and assurance of His people. The doctrine of the Church of England on this subject is excellently given by Bishop Wilson, who speaks thus:—  
“Our Church ascribeth not the power of remission of sin to any but  
“to God only. She holds that faith and repentance are the necessary  
“conditions of receiving this blessing. And she asserts, what is most  
“true, that Christ's ministers have a special commission, which other  
“believers have not, authoritatively to declare this Absolution, for  
“the comfort of true penitents; and which Absolution, if duly dis-  
“pensed, will have a real effect from the promise of Christ.” This  
solemn declaration may be well illustrated by the case of David and  
the prophet Nathan. “David said unto Nathan, I have sinned  
“against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also  
“hath put away thy sin.” These last words are a most true  
sentence of Absolution, spoken by the prophet as bearing the com-  
mission of God. Such is the Absolution in the Daily Morning and  
Evening Prayer, in which the Priest solemnly announces that God,  
then and there, “pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent  
“and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel.” Such also is the Ab-  
solution in the Service for the Holy Communion, which is the most  
ancient form of all, and resembles that of Blessing, being partly of  
the nature of a prayer, and calling down the pardon from heaven;—  
“Almighty God . . . pardon and deliver you from all your sins.”  
Such also is the Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick, in which  
it is necessary to observe that “I absolve thee” means ‘I pronounce  
thy Absolution, solemnly declaring God's pardon for the sins of  
which thou dost truly repent.’ The above will help to make clear  
the sense in which the words of our Lord are used in the Ordination  
of Priests. (See also on St. Matt. ix. 8.)



A. D. 30.  
ch. 11. 16.

24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, <sup>9</sup>called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy <sup>r 1 John 1. 1.</sup> finger, and behold My hands; and <sup>r</sup> reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.

#### 24—29. The unbelief and conviction of St. Thomas.

24. "Not with them." Possibly he was overwhelmed with sadness, and had no heart to be with those with whom he had so lately shared hopes which he now thought shattered. The fact of St. Thomas' absence has been used to teach a lesson of unity. He was absent, and missed the high privilege enjoyed by the rest. So they who forsake the Apostles' fellowship may forfeit Apostolic blessings.

25. "We have seen the Lord." No doubt the Apostles also told St. Thomas all that had passed, and how Jesus had offered to them the proof of *touch* to confirm their belief (See St. Luke xxiv. 39.).

"Except I shall see" &c. We must not think of St. Thomas' words as springing from an obstinate unbelief so much as from weakness and a difficulty in believing. He appears to have been of a sad and despondent nature, and, having seen his hopes destroyed in the Crucifixion, to have been unable to revive them upon the testimony of others. Still this does not excuse the state of mind which could lay such conditions upon His Lord, and declare so positively that nothing short of such evidence of the senses would convince him.

26. "After eight days." That is, on the next Lord's Day, according to the Jewish method of reckoning (See *Note* on St. Matt. xvii. 1.). Thus does our Lord consecrate the weekly return of the Resurrection Day by His second appearance to the assembled Apostles. And thus does He also give a special pledge of His Presence with those who on that day are gathered together in His Name.

"The doors being shut." That is, fastened (See on 19.).

27. "Then saith He to Thomas." After His salutation our Lord hastens at once to restore the faith of the doubting Apostle. He offers

24. "Called Didymus." See on xi. 16.

25. "Thrust my hand." The word translated "thrust" here and in 27 is the same as that translated "put", and does not imply any force, as the English word "thrust" might suggest.

## ST. JOHN, XX.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto Him, A. D. 30.  
My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: <sup>s</sup> blessed *are* <sup>2 Cor. 5. 7.</sup> <sup>1 Pet. 1. 8.</sup> they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

30 ¶ <sup>t</sup> And many other signs truly did Jesus in <sup>t</sup> ch. 21. 25. the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book:

---

him the very proof he had presumptuously said would alone satisfy him. Surely He saw in him more of weakness than of wilfulness, else He would hardly have thus gently dealt with him. Light is for those who seek light, not for the wilfully blind.

28. "My Lord and my God." It appears as though Thomas did not avail himself of our Lord's permission (for His words are a permission not a command) to touch His sacred wounds. He touches with His heart, and that is enough (See on 17.). He has seen the holy Form: he has heard the loved Voice. It is enough; he forgets his doubts and his required proofs, and breaks forth in the simple yet grand confession, greater even than St. Peter's (St. Matt. xvi. 16.), and cries, "My Lord and my God". Thus is St. Thomas' faith again triumphant. He was willing to be convinced, though slow to believe; and, once believing, his faith was clear and bold. We have no stronger confession of the Divinity of our Lord made by any of the disciples during His life on earth. And He accepts it as His due. He is our Lord and our God.

29. "Because thou hast seen Me." These words confirm the impression which St. Thomas' exclamation has made, namely that he did not venture to make the proof of *touch* which our Lord offered him. How gentle and tender is the rebuke conveyed!

"Blessed are they that have not seen," &c. This blessedness we may share, and it is a higher blessedness than that of those who saw with the eye of flesh and believed. Probably St. Peter had this saying of our Lord in his mind when he wrote those beautiful words, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 St. Pet. i. 8.). It has been well remarked that "our Lord is here adding a new Beatitude to those of the Sermon on the Mount" (*Trench.*).

### 30, 31. The purpose of the Gospel.

30. "Many other signs." These are either such miracles as Christ performed throughout the great three years of His Ministry, or else more specially such as He performed during the forty days between

---

30, 31. These verses are by some supposed to have been the original conclusion of St. John's Gospel, the 21st chapter having been added as a sort of appendix. Even if this be so, still there is no reason for going on to assume that the 21st chapter was written at a different, and later, time. However, the appearance which these verses have of a con-

clusion may be accounted for by understanding them as the conclusion of the Evangelist's account of the Resurrection and of the circumstances connected with it, that event being the great crowning event of the Gospel history. In this view the "signs" spoken of would be those wrought in proof of the Resurrection.

A. D. 30.  
 Luke 1. 4.  
 ch. 3, 15,  
 16, & 5, 24.  
 1 Pet. 1.  
 8, 9.

31 "but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; <sup>x</sup> and that believing ye might have life through His name.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Christ appearing again to His disciples was known of them by the great draught of fishes.* 12 *He dineth with them:* 15 *earnestly commandeth Peter to feed His lambs and sheep:* 18 *foretelleth him of his death:* 22 *rebuketh his curiosity touching John.* 25 *The conclusion.*

**A**FTER these things Jesus shewed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed He *Himself*.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas

His Resurrection and His Ascension—the “many infallible proofs” spoken of by St. Luke (Acts i. 3.). The Evangelist is careful to tell us that the things he has related are only specimens and samples, as it were, selected, under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, from an infinite store (Compare xxi. 25.).

31. “That believing ye might have life.” Here the great purpose of the Gospel is declared to us. The Divine record of the Life and Death and Resurrection of our Lord is to confirm our faith, and through faith to bestow upon us life—spiritual life here, eternal life hereafter. We can hardly doubt that St. John in these words looks back to our Lord’s saying, “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” He has written his Gospel that that blessedness may be ours.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## 1—14. Second Miraculous Draught of fishes.

Compare the former miracle related in St. Luke v. 1—11, and the Parable in St. Matt. xiii. 41—50.

1. “After these things.” That is, after the events connected with the Resurrection, and His appearances in Jerusalem.

“Jesus shewed Himself again.” This is, literally, ‘Jesus manifested Himself’, an expression which teaches us that, after His Resurrection, our Lord only revealed Himself, and made Himself visible to human sight, when and where He pleased.

“The sea of Tiberias.” Another name for the Sea of Galilee (See on St. Matt. iv. 18.). Tiberias was a town of some importance on the Western shore. The Apostles had gone into Galilee in obedience to the Angel’s message by the women (St. Matt. xxviii. 7.).

2. “Simon Peter,” &c. We may notice that the Apostles, being Galilæans, had returned now to the neighbourhood of their own homes. Here they doubtless expected some great event to happen, Christ having promised to meet them there.

“Thomas called Didymus.” It can no more be said of St. Thomas that he is not with the rest of the Apostles when Jesus comes to them.

## ST. JOHN, XXI.

called Didymus, and <sup>a</sup> Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and <sup>b</sup> the sons of Zebedee, and two other of <sup>a</sup> A. D. 30.  
ch. 1. 45.  
b Matt. 4. 21.  
His disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples <sup>c</sup> knew not <sup>c</sup> ch. 20. 14.  
that it was Jesus.

5 Then <sup>d</sup> Jesus saith unto them, <sup>2</sup> Children, have <sup>d</sup> Luke 24. 41.  
ye any meat? They answered Him, No. <sup>2</sup> Or, Sirs.

6 And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

---

“Nathanael.” Probably the same as Bartholomew (See on St. Matt. x. 3.).

“Two other.” Possibly St. Andrew and St. Philip, who came from Bethsaida.

3. “I go a fishing.” This is no forsaking of the work of Christ. It is simply a due employment of the time of waiting (and they knew not how long that might be) in the providing for their necessary support. They return to their old calling. So St. Paul wrought as a tent-maker at Corinth (Acts xviii. 3.). Let us not fail to notice that Jesus manifests Himself to His own, not only when He findeth them in the Temple, or when He meeteth them on the solitary mountain, but also while they are busy with the work of their earthly calling (See on St. Luke x. 42, quotation from the Christian Year.).

“That night they caught nothing.” Till Christ blesses the labour, all is in vain. What a lesson of patience and hope is here given to the Minister of Christ who seems to labour long in vain.

4. “The disciples knew not” &c. They were only about a hundred yards from the shore (See 8.), and it was morning, but the sacred Body of Jesus was in some mysterious way changed in the Resurrection, so that, even when He made Himself visible, those who had known Him well before did not immediately recognise Him (See on St. Luke xxiv. 16.).

5. “Children, have ye any meat?” The word “Children” is only a kindly and familiar address, which might have been used by a stranger. By “meat” is here meant ‘fish’—that food for which they were toiling. Of course our Lord knew well that their labour had been hitherto in vain, but He asked the question to draw out the expression of the want He was about to supply (See on St. Luke xxiv. 19.).

6. “On the right side of the ship.” It has been remarked in the case of the former miracle of like character that it is vain to enquire whether in His command our Lord exercised Divine Omniscience, simply telling the Apostles to cast their net where He knew the fishes

A. D. 30. 15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs.

**15—19. The threefold confession of St. Peter, with the threefold charge of Christ.**

15. "When they had dined." The mysterious meal was eaten in solemn and awful silence, and doubtless the hearts of the Apostles trembled in expectation of what should follow. It may be observed that St. John usually relates the miracles of our Lord in order to introduce some weighty conversation flowing out of them. This is very remarkable in the case of the Feeding of the five thousand (vi.), and in the present case the account of the second Miraculous Draught of fishes leads directly to the following most important conversation with St. Peter.

"Simon, *son* of Jonas." Thus does our Lord break the solemn silence. Observe, He does not call the Apostle by his name of strength and honour 'Peter', but simply by his own former name, as though to remind him that he had forfeited his right to so honourable a name as 'Peter'.

"More than these." That is, 'more than these love Me'. St. Peter had professed to love Jesus more than the rest, when he said, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended" (St. Matt. xxvi. 33.), and, by his throwing himself into the water to be the first to come to Him now, had again seemed to wish to be thought first in love to his Lord.

"Thou knowest that I love Thee." St. Peter, humbled by his fall, does not dare to say "more than these". He simply appeals to his Lord's knowledge of his heart, and leaves it to Him to judge of the strength of his love. It is to be noticed that in the Greek, in which St. John wrote, a different word is used for "love" in our Lord's question and in St. Peter's answer. That in the question—"Lovest thou Me"—is the word that would be naturally used for the love of man to God: that in the answer—"I love Thee"—is a word which signifies a more warm and personal love, such as that of the nearest relatives. It is probable that our Lord spoke in the language of the Jews, and not in Greek, but we may be sure that St. John in recording His words would use such Greek words as would best give the exact sense of the words our Lord actually used. So that St. Peter seems to have used a warmer word than our Lord, as though to the question "Lovest thou Me?" he answered 'Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee *dearly*'. In the second question and answer there is the same change of word. In the third the Lord graciously adopts His Apostle's expression, using the same word St. Peter had in his two former answers (See on 17.).

"Feed My lambs." By the "lambs" is probably meant the little ones of the Christian flock, children, or "such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Heb. v. 12.). In these solemn words our Lord graciously confirms to St. Peter his apostolic office as one of the chief shepherds of the flock. He had long ago, on occasion of a like

## ST. JOHN, XXI.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, A. D. 30.  
*son* of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him,  
 Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. <sup>h</sup> He saith unto him, Feed My sheep.

h Acts 20. 28.  
 Heb. 13. 20.  
 1 Pet. 2. 25.  
 & 5. 2, 4.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son*  
 of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved be-  
 cause He said unto him the third time, Lovest  
 thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, <sup>i</sup> Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love  
 Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep.

i ch. 2. 24, 25.  
 & 16. 30.

miracle to that but now performed, made him a fisher of men (See St. Luke v. 10.). He now confers on him the same charge, only under a new figure. He is to "feed the flock of God" (as he himself says, doubtless remembering the Good Shepherd's words, 1 St. Peter v. 2.). Doubtless this charge is specially given to St. Peter because he might well think he had lost all right to his former privileges by his denial, and thus the words are a solemn forgiveness of his fall, and acceptance of his penitence. Still, though spoken to him for this reason, they are plainly words which might equally have been spoken to the rest of the Apostles (See on St. Matt. xvi. 18.), and which truly describe the charge laid upon all. In receiving this charge St. Peter stands as the representative of all Christ's Ministers, whose duty and privilege it is to tend His flock.

16. "Feed My sheep." The word translated "Feed" in this place is not the same as that used in the other two like commands. In those it is simply "Feed": in this it is 'Tend and watch over',—a much wider expression, implying all the duties of a shepherd. The English language, as we see in this case and in that of the word "love" (See on 15.), cannot always express the shades of difference in the meaning which exist in the Greek. It need hardly be said that, if the "lambs" mean Christ's little ones, the "sheep" are the rest of His Church.

17. "The third time." The threefold denial must be met by a threefold confession. Fear thrice denies: love thrice confesses.

"Lovest thou Me?" Our Lord uses a different word here for "Lovest" from those He had used before (See on 15.), taking up and adopting the warmer and more affectionate word St. Peter had used in each of his answers. It is as though He said, 'Dost thou indeed love 'Me so dearly?'

"Peter was grieved" &c. We must not suppose St. Peter to have been hurt, as some have said, by this public reminder of his threefold denial. Rather this bringing to mind of his fall brought back the bitter grief and remorse of his first penitence, and filled him with shame and sorrow. This grief would be increased by the seeming suspicion of the genuineness of his love in the thrice repeated question.

"Lord, Thou knowest all things;" &c. St. Peter, though "grieved", is not silenced. He has a third confession to make, and, conscious of the true love in his heart, he speaks yet more fervently, appealing once more to his Lord's knowledge of that love.

"Feed My sheep." Thus is the Apostle's pardon sealed to him by the threefold pastoral charge. And here once more we have one of

A. D. 30. 23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is *that* to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and <sup>o</sup> we know that his testimony is true.

<sup>o</sup> ch. 19. 35.  
3 John 12.

---

years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and died at the age of a hundred at Ephesus, about a hundred years after the Birth of Christ, so that he was of about the same age as his Master, and probably the youngest of the Apostles, all of whom he long outlived. The chief objection to this second sense is that the destruction of Jerusalem was past before St. John wrote his Gospel, and it seems strange that, had this been our Lord's meaning, it should not have been revealed to the Evangelist after the accomplishment of the event spoken of. Whereas neither he himself, nor those who adopted the wrong notion that he would not die, connect the saying in any way with the destruction of Jerusalem. It should be mentioned that some very able commentators see in the words "till I come" a reference to the coming of Christ to the Apostle in the island of Patmos to reveal to him the mysteries of His kingdom (See Rev. i. 10—20. and compare on St. Matt. xvi. 28. and xvii. 1.). In all these three senses St. John did tarry till Christ came, but it is hard to pronounce in which sense our Lord uttered the words. If this was hidden from St. John himself (See on 23.), we may surely be content to acknowledge our ignorance. Let us rather listen to that second, "Follow thou Me." It matters not what Christ may have in store for others. It is enough for us to see the Hand that beckons us on. We long sometimes to lift the veil of the future. Let us only ask to have it lifted so far as that we may see the path in which we may follow Jesus. Let us notice how the more earthly of the two great Apostles is drawn upward and encouraged by the 'Follow Me', while the more heavenly is repressed by the "If I will that he tarry". Each perchance needed the words spoken of him.

23. "Then went this saying abroad" &c. St. John is careful to correct this mistaken view of our Lord's words; yet he simply repeats those words without a hint as to their real meaning. This probably was hidden from himself; and when at the end of his Revelation we read his longing aspiration "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20.), we cannot but wonder whether he even then had learnt the true meaning of his Master's saying.

24. "We know" &c. It has been thought that these words with the following verse were not written by St. John himself, but were added by the primitive Church in witness of the authorship and truth of this Gospel; but there is nothing in the words "we know" to suggest any such idea, for the Apostle (like other writers) might naturally speak of himself in the plural number, as indeed he does in his Epistles (1 St. John i. 1—5; 3 St. John 12.). Thus we may understand the words to be a simple declaration of the Evangelist's own certainty of the truth of his testimony.

## ST. JOHN, XXI.

25 <sup>P</sup> And there are also many other things which <sup>A. D. 30.</sup>  
Jesus did, the which, if they should be written <sup>P ch. 20. 30.</sup>  
every one, <sup>9</sup> I suppose that even the world itself <sup>9 Amos 7. 10.</sup>  
could not contain the books that should be written.  
Amen.

---

25. "Even the world itself" &c. This expression is not meant to be taken in the letter, but is a very natural and perfectly plain mode of speech to express the immensity and endlessness of any perfect record, if such could be had, of our Lord's words and works.

---

25. "Amen." See on last word of St. Matthew's Gospel.