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# New Testament Theology

OR

*HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE TEACHING OF JESUS  
AND OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING  
TO THE NEW TESTAMENT SOURCES*

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# NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY



## BOOK IV

### THE PAULINE SYSTEM



#### CHAPTER I

##### INTRODUCTORY

###### § 1. THE ORIGINAL APOSTLES AND THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

THE view of the first apostles could not satisfy early Christianity for any length of time. The proclamation of Christianity as the crown and perfection of the old covenant, and the source of a new life from God, by which the law is spiritualised and the fulfilment of the Messianic promise guaranteed, might be sufficient for the Jewish people as it smoothed their way in passing over to faith in Christ. But even in their case it could not permanently hinder them from making this change under the influence of a dead faith without a true inward renewal, the result of which was that they fell back into Judaism when the expected parousia was delayed. But the future of the kingdom of God did not rest with the Jewish people. It had come into the world in distinct opposition to the Jewish national spirit, and so, though the original apostles did not at first suspect it, the limitation of Jewish Christianity to a small minority, and the early migration of the gospel to

the Gentile world, followed by a true historical necessity. But in order to take root there, especially in those who had not, like Cornelius the centurion, passed through the school of Judaism, it had to break through the Jewish limits of the primitive Church and develop new forms of thought and life. It could not, in presence of the Gentile world, begin with law and prophets, but with universal human needs and religious and moral experiences, and in order to prove how it met and satisfied these needs it required an entirely different and more comprehensive statement of what was new and distinctive in it; its inmost meaning must be exhibited, which, in spite of its connection with the religion of the old covenant, marked it off from that religion and made it the religion of salvation for humanity. The older apostles and their Palestinian colleagues were not qualified for this task. They were plain men whom no formal schooling had prepared for such mental work, men who belonged to the reflective, pious circles of the nation to whom belief in Christ was really the completion of the Old Testament evangelical idea, and they found their real calling in leading their own people by the way in which they themselves had been led by Jesus from the old to the new covenant (Gal. ii. 8, 9). But a Christian Hellenist or Greek would also have failed to transplant the gospel from the Jewish to the Greek world. On the one hand, he would not have grasped what distinguishes Judaism from Christianity, for he would be inclined to spiritualise the former, and, on the other hand, he would have treated the latter according to the methods of a foreign culture; and so Christianity would inevitably have been mixed with what was alien to it, as actually took place afterwards on Greek soil. Among the plainest and most notable traces of a Divine Providence in history, is the way in which the instrument was created which alone was fitted for realising its purposes here. The Apostle to the Gentiles must be made of what is strongest in Judaism, of the sect of scribes and Pharisees; his spiritual life must be deeply rooted in the soil of the historical revelation, and yet he must have within him an instinct that can find no satisfaction in Pharisaism. Unlike Peter and James, he must be identified with that tendency in Judaism which was most hostile to Christ and most opposed to the gospel, so that his

surrender to Christ may be abrupt and revolutionary; for thus only can he carry into his new life the necessity of finding some reasonable understanding between the new and the old. We need not say that we refer to Paul. On one occasion he wrote in humble pride, because of the grace of God which was with him, "I have laboured more than they all." The reference is to the wide extent of the field of his labours in the Gentile world in comparison with the moderate success of the older apostles among the Jews, but he might as truly have referred to his work in thought. He only in the full sense mastered the meaning of the experience of salvation through Christ which was common to them all; he considered all that was implied in it, and he almost completely transformed what was fact into ideas and doctrines; he started the Christian development of doctrine. And so in his system of doctrine we stand in presence of the greatest monument of primitive Christian teaching, when the incomparable glory of Jesus' own revelation is excepted.

## § 2. DOCUMENTS

The records of this magnificent world of thought lie before us in fitting abundance, above all, in the apostle's own Epistles. Certainly we cannot regard as genuinely Pauline everything that has been handed down under his name. Not to speak of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which only a part of antiquity hesitatingly ascribed to Paul, we must, with as much certainty as in such things is possible, reject the Pastoral Epistles as records of Pauline teachings. It is not that no place can be found for them in some obscure situations of the apostle's later history, but the account of their origin, which they contain, is in itself untenable; they betray the conditions and motives of a later age, from which they can only be artificially and imperfectly transferred to the lifetime of the apostle; and except in a few phrases, which may have belonged to a genuine letter here embodied, they are as far apart as the poles from Paul's own modes of thinking and writing. This latter fact is so evident, especially in the greatest of the three,—the First Epistle to Timothy,—that we may confidently say: the man who is now able to ascribe it to the author

of the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians has never comprehended the literary peculiarity and greatness of the apostle. It is the very opposite with the four great doctrinal and controversial Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans. They have been recognised even by the most sceptical criticism, so far as it has any historical feeling, as the sure basis for the understanding of our apostle as well as of the whole apostolic age. Even they have recently been suspected of being the products of a later age imputed to Paul; but this attempt only makes it clear how unreasonable is the critical desire for innovations which looks upon historical scepticism as the height of scientific attainment. No one who keeps before him the laws of historical criticism, and can distinguish the expression of real experience from nebulous accounts of fictitious situations, and the work of a man who is merely copying the style of another,—no one who can appreciate the impress of a historical personality, and can feel the throb of its inmost life, can here be tempted to think of a forgery. In the literary history of antiquity there is no case so plain as this. Modern critics are divided in opinion as to the other lesser Epistles, of which those to the Thessalonians belong to an earlier, the rest to a later period than those four main Epistles. The so-called critical school, in opposition to Baur himself, has for the most part undertaken the defence of First Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon. It rejects Second Thessalonians on account of an alleged dependence on the Apocalypse, though, for example, in its attitude towards the Roman State it radically differs from the Apocalypse, and the resemblance may be completely explained by a common remnant of early Christian eschatology. The Epistle to the Colossians is questioned on account of a formal development in it of the Pauline Christology, to which, however, the occasion of the Epistle offers the natural impulse, and on account of a difference of style such as always appears in every writer who is mentally alive; while, on the other hand, the predominance of a genuinely Pauline character has forced them to assume that a genuine original has been used as the groundwork of a stranger's writing. The Epistle to the Ephesians can only excite serious doubt on account of the fact that it appears in great

measure to be a more copious repetition of the Epistle to the Colossians, which, in addition, lacks the clear occasion of the other, and has no personal reference to the Ephesian Church. But here, again, no sufficient reason can be discovered why it should later be attributed to Paul in face of an Ephesian tradition; and, on the other hand, a marked Pauline impress cannot be mistaken. It is in no way improbable that Paul directed a circular letter of an edifying character to the whole circle of his Churches in Asia Minor at the same time as he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians, whose case was specially before him, in which he generalised, as far as they were capable of a general application, the ideas of the Epistle to the Colossians, and especially extolled and strengthened the union of Jews and Gentiles in a new humanity in Christ, and that this circular letter reached the Ephesian Church only as the first in a series. As the case stands thus, there is no reason for separating the doctrinal contents of the Epistles to the Thessalonians, or the Epistles of the Captivity, from that of those four great main Epistles; a joint treatment serves to bring out all the more clearly the weakness of the critical attacks on the lesser Epistles. The idea that Paul, when he wrote the Epistle to the Thessalonians, had not yet grasped the fundamental thoughts of the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans, is likewise false. The controversy with Peter (Gal. ii. 14-21), which took place before the writing of the Epistle to the Thessalonians, proves the contrary. And if the Epistles of the Captivity exhibit in several points an advance in Paul's ideas, such as appears in every man when his mind is stimulated, the advance must be noted in biblical theology; but it does not justify a separate treatment, for similar differences may be shown even between the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galatians, nay, between First and Second Corinthians.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, the Epistles whose genuineness is most incontestable are those which show most of Paul's world of thought, so that their doctrinal contents can everywhere be built on. To the Epistles we may add, as sources of a second rank, the discourses of Paul contained in the Acts of the Apostles. They are not, of course, to be

<sup>1</sup> Note, for example, the very different treatment of the idea of the resurrection in 1 Cor. xv. and 2 Cor. v. 1 f.

regarded as verbal reports, but only as sketches noted down from memory; but they are not to be looked upon as inventions of the author of the Acts of the Apostles, and, least of all, can the thoroughly original and spiritual preaching at Athens be so regarded. Their difference in tone from the Epistles is explained by the fact that they are addressed not to Christians, but to heathen or Jews, and this gives them their value as illustrations of the Pauline missionary discourse.

### § 3. SKETCH OF THE APOSTLE'S LIFE

Now we can only gain access to the ideas of these Epistles and discourses by understanding the person from whom they proceed, and the career in which they originate. And therefore it is well to present a short sketch at least of this person and his career. The chief source here is the Acts of the Apostles, where the story turns about Peter and Paul as the two stars of the earliest Church history, and where the Apostle of the Circumcision falls into the background behind the Apostle to the Gentiles, just when the latter has departed for the conversion of the Gentiles. It may be admitted that the idea of this juxtaposition influenced in some degree the selection of materials and the composition; it may be admitted that the writer, besides being dependent on unequal sources, was not equal to the task of giving a clearly outlined image of Paul; but there can be no doubt as to the honesty of intention and the essential faithfulness of his narrative; and this certainly is greatest in the section beginning at xvi. 10, in which he frequently speaks as an eye-witness, or makes an eye-witness speak. In this best assured part of his book there are repeated historical sketches of the apostle's life, and his voyage to Rome is portrayed with singular vividness. But his own Epistles contain the most various and significant contributions to the picture of his life, so that it is possible on almost all important points to complete or test the Acts of the Apostles by them. The early circumstances of the apostle's life are peculiarly significant, and in a true sense providential. He who is to carry the gospel from the Jews to the Greeks and Romans is born, not in the homeland of the Jewish people, but in the Græco-Roman Tarsus. His descent and

education are indeed genuinely Jewish; an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee's son (Rom. xi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5; Acts xxiii. 6). But the seat of culture in which he was born gave him from his childhood a mastery of Greek, the universal language of the schools, which in spite of any irregularity in his style is truly marvellous; and in its syntax, its wealth of synonyms, and its particles, adapted to convey the finest differences of meaning, he found the only fit instrument for expressing afterwards his trains of thought. And the right of Roman citizenship inherited from his father made him at the same time a citizen of the world, and gave him in the cradle the passport for his future mission from Jerusalem to Rome. His marvellous mental ability matched the favouring circumstances of his birth. What is fundamental in the Jewish nation, the predominant inclination towards God and divine things, appears in him in all its power and depth, just as the similar inclination of the German people appeared in Martin Luther. And to this he added another peculiar gift of the Jewish people; he was drawn by the very structure of his mind to be a seer, a prophet. But the Jewish genius which he thus brought to the service of the gospel was met in him by a truly Hellenic delight in dialectic, a Hellenic power, keenness, and delicacy of thought to examine, analyse, and search to the bottom, and by a Roman energy urging him on to conquer the world. His father as a Pharisee resolved to place the boy at an early age in the centre of Judaism at Jerusalem, in order to train him to be a Pharisee and scribe. He sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the most celebrated master in Israel at that time.<sup>1</sup> But the spirit that was in him was totally unlike that of this mild and moderate sage, it was a fiery spirit which carried all its convictions to the uttermost extreme. Surpassing all his contemporaries in zeal for the

<sup>1</sup> That even this fact, attested in Acts xxii. 3, should be questioned, is a proof of the quality of the criticism, now fashionable, which I cannot refrain from noting here. Paul's subsequent persecuting zeal does not agree with the tolerance of Gamaliel, therefore we must distrust the account of the Acts; that is to say, the developed character of Alexander the Great does not agree with the philosophy of Aristotle, therefore it is false that Aristotle was his teacher, etc.

Jewish institutions (Gal. i. 14), he passed in his conduct beyond Pharisaism to violent Zealotism, but in his spirit he drove it to self-contradiction; he imposed the demands of the law on himself with such pitiless strictness as to make it impossible for him to continue a self-righteous Pharisee. Engaged in this inner struggle he comes in contact with the power of God, which alone could help him and give him satisfaction, viz. Christianity; but he comes upon it in the form most repulsive to him, in Stephen's conception of it, which, going beyond the considerate bearing of the primitive apostles who were faithful to the law, threatened that the crucified and risen Jesus would destroy the temple and set aside the Mosaic customs. It is in keeping with the peculiarity and energy of his nature that he is not satisfied with hating this supposed outrage on the sanctuary of the fathers, but appears at the head of the persecution, and carries this persecution beyond the limits of the Jewish land in order to annihilate the enemies of God in their last hiding place. But in this passionate persecution he carries within his soul the secret sting that all his zeal for the law does not bring him inward peace; behind all his outwardly blameless obedience is concealed the war between inclination and commandment, between God's law and the natural lusts and desires of the heart,—a war more abundant in defeats than victories, which makes him cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 22-24). Then suddenly the wonder-working hand of God lays hold of him from heaven, confronts him with the risen and glorified Messiah whom he persecutes, and thus shatters at a stroke his whole Pharisaic structure of faith and life. For three days he wrestles in fasting and prayer with the Saviour who thus overcame him; then he recognised in the Exalted One Him who condescended, who also loved him and gave Himself for him (Gal. ii. 20). And so with clear eye he rises a new man, who has found in the love of God in Christ that which no law and no self-torment could have given him, the forgiveness of his sin and the power of a new life in God. We can easily understand that after his first witness borne in Damascus, after he had declared his abandonment of his persecution of the Christians, he should be drawn into



solitude to study there quietly the vast experience; he had to clear away the fragments of his former system, and to lay the foundations of a new structure of knowledge in a new and thorough study of the Scriptures. What was fundamental in his subsequent system was undoubtedly discovered in his Arabian seclusion (Gal. i. 17), for he confronts Peter with it at Antioch (Gal. ii. 14–21) before the composition of any of his Epistles. He now begins to make preaching his calling, and now comes to know Peter and James. But though he does not doubt that he has to devote his life to bearing witness for Christ as they did (1 Cor. ix. 16), the apostle, and especially the Apostle to the Gentiles, is not yet developed. In the unspeakably humiliating feeling that he persecuted the Church of God he is willing to be the least of the messengers of Christ, and in that passionate love for his people, which he still professes at the height of his apostolate to the Gentiles (Rom. ix. 3, xi. 14), he would like, above all, to devote himself to the saving of Israel. Only after the bitter experience that they will not accept the gospel from him, the supposed deserter and traitor, does he get a clear perception, in that prayer and vision at Jerusalem (Acts xxii. 17–21), of the mission which God intended for him when He revealed His Son in him (Gal. i. 15). And even then ten years of labour pass quietly over him, spent in experimental and apprentice work, before the master of the mission to the Gentiles has been fully trained. From Tarsus, Barnabas calls him to the larger sphere of Antioch. Here, under the shadow of his older companion, he grows up until he grows beyond him, though he undertakes the first great missionary journey to Lystra and Iconium as his assistant. He becomes fully conscious of his special call to the Gentile world, and at the same time of his apostolic independence and equality as an indispensable condition of this call only in the arrangements which became necessary with the primitive apostles as to the freedom of Gentile Christians from the law, and in the important later event at Antioch, where he alone proved true in his defence of that freedom (Gal. ii. 1–10, 11–21). And now separating from Barnabas, and forming a body of helpers for himself, he enters on that great expedition across the Hellespont in which he reversed the course which Alexander

took, and carried the gospel into Europe to the centres of old Greek culture; he establishes his Churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth. But it becomes a still greater and more difficult task to preserve them than to found them. He was everywhere pursued, not only by the furious hatred of his people, who saw in him the profaner of the hopes which Israel inherited, but also by the hostility and rage of the narrow-hearted Jewish Christians, who would not admit that Gentiles were to share in the promises of Israel unless they subjected themselves to the law of Israel. The struggle with this Judaism becomes more and more the tragic feature of his life. But it also spurred him on both in his thinking and writing. When the wide circle of his Churches compelled him to call pen and ink to his help, he for the first time unfolds all the fulness of his spiritual resources in seeking to preserve his own work in Galatia and Corinth, and to secure for himself in the Church at Rome, which had originated without his assistance, a starting-point for the evangelising of the West. And this epistolary activity must have helped to make up for his own presence during the years of captivity in Cæsarea and Rome, till at last the seal of martyrdom was set on one of the greatest lives which the history of the world has seen.

#### § 4. ORIGIN OF THE PAULINE GOSPEL.—(a) CRITICAL

✓ If we now seek in this life for the birth hour of that peculiar conception of Christianity which meets us in the Pauline Epistles, there can be no question that it was the hour of the apostle's miraculous conversion. However many of his doctrinal ideas may have been developed in the work of teaching, and especially in his conflict with Judaistic opponents, and whatever elements of his system of Christian doctrine may have existed in him prior to his conversion, the real source of his Christian doctrinal development can have been none other than the source of his personal Christianity. His conversion, as already indicated, was so abrupt, it was a sudden change from the phase of Judaism most hostile to Christianity into the full comprehension of the new faith; and this from the first must have made his

thinking independent, for he had to come to some reasonable settlement between the old and the new. Though recent discussions of the apostle's conversion have caused this to be generally recognised, yet the detailed comprehension and description of this origin of the Pauline gospel are still very diverse. The critical school, which gives a purely subjective and visionary explanation of the conversion, has devised a theoretic and theological scheme by which Paul, through discussions with the Christians whom he persecuted, is brought first to admit the possibility of that which he afterwards saw at Damascus, and in consequence to experience it as apparently real. We, on the other hand, have urged the practical or spiritual and moral preparation of the persecutor, his vain striving for righteousness, as the bridge which led him from Pharisaism to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> This question, although belonging chiefly to the history, cannot be entirely passed over here, because the fundamental character of the Pauline system, and our whole view of its value, depends on whether it is to be regarded as the result of a chain of reasonings, which, moreover, would be partly sophisms, or as the product of an inward experience of universal validity. The account which the critical school gives of the genesis of the Pauline gospel is briefly this. The cross of Christ, according to 1 Cor. i. 18 f. was the pivot of the Pauline gospel; it must also have been the pivot on which Paul's own thought turned. Yet the death of Jesus on the cross was the main offence to the Jews; it was, in particular, the main argument which the Pharisees urged against the Messiahship of Jesus, for it was to them the proof that God did not own Jesus, but had abandoned Him. In contrast with this the Christians gave a Messianic meaning to the death of Jesus on the cross, by interpreting it as the propitiation necessary before a sinful people could receive

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Holsten, "Die Christusvision des Ap. Paulus und die Genesis des paulinischen Evangeliums" (abgedruckt in seinem, *Ev. des Paulus und des Petrus*); on the other hand, my essay, "Die Bekehrung des Ap. Paulus," (*Stud. u. Krit.* 1864). Then Holsten's reply in his *Ev. des Paulus u. Petrus*, and mine in the *Stud. u. Krit.* 1871, "Die Visionshypothese in ihrer neuesten Begründung). Finally, the discussions in Weizsäcker's *Apostolic Age*, and in Pfeleiderer's *Paulinism* and his *Urchristenthum*, which really follow Holsten.

the kingdom of heaven, and they declared, at the same time, that God's apparent condemnation in abandoning Jesus had been removed by His raising Him from the dead. These two Christian positions, it continues, Paul as a Pharisee could not contest. He also believed in a resurrection of the dead, and it must have been quite clear to him that an unholy people could not receive the Messianic salvation without a Messianic atonement. Besides, as the Christians' joy in their faith and even in death made it impossible for him to regard the resurrection of Jesus, which they asserted, as a mere invention of impostors, he is more and more involved in that inward difficulty which, as he was inclined to visions, brought about the crisis in his vision of Christ at Damascus. The mental picture of Christ, who he felt might perhaps have risen, which caused his inward struggle, passed from his struggling soul into the field of vision, and he became a believer in Christ by being forced to regard that picture as objectively real, as the actual Risen One. But now to the faith in Christ which has thus arisen there is added apposition to any righteousness of the law: for a man who has been crucified, that is, cursed by the law (Gal. iii. 13), can never to Jewish thought have brought a mere completion of the righteousness sought by the keeping of the law, but only an entirely new way of righteousness which would have nothing to do with the law, and therefore his gospel of justifying faith originated in his conversion.<sup>1</sup> Rarely, indeed, has a brilliant construction been so composed of pure sophisms. To begin with the point mentioned last: this Rabbinism must be referred to the expositors and not to the apostle, who never reasons in this way. For as long as Jesus was to him a man cursed by the law of God, his Pharisaic thinking could not regard Him as founding any righteousness at all; but as soon as he thought of Him as the Servant of God dying to make atonement for the people, He was no longer to him a man accursed, but God's favourite and chosen, for whom God's law could have no curse. And why should not the righteousness sought by keeping the law and that procured by the Messianic atonement have agreed

<sup>1</sup> So Pfleiderer recently in his *Urchristenthum*, supplementing Holsten's construction.

with and mutually supplemented each other, as in Israel the righteousness obtained by keeping the law and the atonement, especially the yearly atonement for the sins of the people, at all times agreed? But even if all that favoured the opposite opinion, it is the purest fancy to make the scribe Paul fall into a helpless confusion through the poor Christians' theory of atonement. In the first place, there is no trace in the Acts of the Apostles that the Christians before Paul did set up such a theory of the death of Jesus on the cross, for the Epistle to the Hebrews unfolds it to the Jewish Christians as something new. But if they had had a view like this, and had brought it before Paul, he would have replied to them as a man instructed in the Scriptures, that the prophets knew nothing of an atoning death of the Messiah (the relevant passages in Isa. liii. were not applied to the Messiah): they certainly knew that a great forgiveness of sin should open the Messianic age, by which the obstacle to the bestowal of the kingdom of heaven on an unholy people should be removed, but this Messianic forgiveness of sin was not thought of as depending on an atonement (cf. Jer. xxxi. 34). And Paul would be just as little embarrassed by the Christians' witness to the resurrection. As a Pharisee he did believe in a resurrection of the dead, but a resurrection that was to take place only at the end of time, and in connection with the renewal of heaven and earth. An individual resurrection before this last day, a resurrection to a higher and glorified life in the body before the general transfiguration of the world, was just as incredible and inconceivable to him as it was to the disciples of Jesus on Easter Day. And if he could not trace back this incredible message of the Christians to falsehood and imposture, but admitted that they might be honest, yet the kindly way in which the Pharisees judged his own testimony to a resurrection (Acts xxiii. 9) without accepting it, or the way in which the disciples on Easter morning treated the testimony of the Magdalene whom they certainly did not regard as an impostor, shows that he was far from being compelled, on account of the subjective honesty of the witnesses, to accept their testimony as objectively true. But all this does not even touch the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of that

critical edifice, viz. the assumption that between the Pharisee Paul and the Christian faith there was no other obstacle than the "offence of the cross." If that were so, why did the Pharisees bring Christ to the cross, and so first create the "offence of the cross"? Their deadly opposition to Jesus, according to the testimony of the Gospels as well as from the nature of the historical circumstances, lay rather in the question of righteousness. Jesus destroyed, as a miserable sham holiness, that whole system of righteousness which was their pride and their hope; and they in turn beheld in Him who was nobly free a Sabbath breaker, a despiser of rule, and a seducer of the people from the way of obedience. Accordingly, apart from the offence of the cross, there were mountains of offence between Jesus and Paul the Pharisee which no theory of atonement and no assertion of resurrection could remove; mountains of misunderstanding which made it quite impossible for him inwardly to venture on belief in Christ even by way of experiment, such as is required by that hypothesis which would account for the vision of Christ.

#### § 5. ORIGIN OF THE PAULINE GOSPEL.—(b) POSITIVE

And yet this very question of righteousness was not only the reason of their separation, but also that which drew them towards each other, though, in the case of Paul, unconsciously. Let us hear the apostle himself on the motives of his conversion,—motives which, as the event itself was sudden, he only afterwards clearly conceived, but which, nevertheless, possess for us the full weight of personal testimony. In Gal. ii. 19 he says: "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ." That is to say, I have been driven by the law itself to break with the law, so that I have attained to the life of communion with God only by having the death of Christ on the cross repeated in myself. And again, in the same chapter, ver. 16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we (thou Peter and I Paul) have believed in Jesus Christ." This expressly asserts that his conversion took the course we have indicated

above. That which drove him to belief in Christ was the experience that through the law he could not succeed in living unto God and standing before Him justified. The confession which he makes in Rom. vii. 14–25 of his own experience before he was a Christian, gives further information respecting the negative experience which prepared the way for his conversion. While the youthful Pharisee was outwardly blameless in the righteousness of the law, and surpassed all his contemporaries in zeal for the traditions of the fathers (Phil. iii. 6; Gal. i. 14), he wrestled inwardly in a vain conflict with the demands of the law which came to him from the last and most penetrating of the commandments, “Thou shalt not covet,” and which he, as stated above, comprehended more deeply and inwardly than any Pharisee had ever done. In this inner struggle, which has its counterpart in Luther’s soul conflict in the monk’s cell, he, in virtue of the depth of his character, reached a result which no Pharisee had ever reached—the knowledge of an *ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκός* (Rom. viii. 3), despair of overcoming the natural desires by means of the commandment, and attaining to peace of conscience and life in the love of God by the deeds of the law. He was thus inwardly prepared for the experience of salvation in Christ, though he did not know it. But when the hand of God put a bridle on him on the way to Damascus, and the appearance of Christ enthroned in glory actually convinced him of the perversity of all his former conduct, there fell, as it were, scales from his eyes. In those three days of outer and inner darkness, in which he wrestles with God for enlightenment and forgiveness, there arises at length in his soul “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. iv. 6). He perceives the mystery of eternal love which has not left man to his own vigorous willing and running, but meets him with its mercy in order to draw him to itself. He sees in the Risen One, who was crucified for him, one who has surrendered His life as a pledge of infinite divine love and forgiveness, and as a power of new life for those who allow themselves to be laid hold of by this grace of God; and as he throws himself at His feet and surrenders his own life entirely to Him, he feels himself born anew

(2 Cor. v. 17), justified by faith, willing and glad to do and suffer all things for Him. There can be no doubt then that the cross of Christ became the turning-point of his inner life; that instead of an offence and foolishness it became to him the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. i. 23, 24). It did not become this, however, by way of an attempt to solve a theological problem thrust upon him; it was an actual solution of the deepest problem of his inner life, and it came to him, not in the form of a hypothetical atonement for the unholy people of Israel, to whom, as a whole, this atonement would never be of advantage (Rom. ix.); it was the masterpiece of eternal love seeking to be reconciled as far as in it lies with the sinful world, and seeking to give both the assurance of complete forgiveness and the continual impulse to a perfect sanctification to those whose hearts were won by it (2 Cor. v. 14–21). This history of the birth of the Pauline gospel does not certainly permit of any purely subjective and visionary explanation of the conversion, but demands an overwhelming objective reality as its cause. For while the persecuting Pharisaic zealot lacks everything that might have produced in him an image of the risen Christ in glory, it is clear that only an overwhelming proof that he was on the wrong way could shatter the perverse system of belief in which he was held captive, and make a free path for the entrance of the opposite views. And, at the same time, the doctrinal system of the apostle resting on this supernatural experience does not rest on doubtful experiments in Jewish theology aided at last by self-deception, but on the truth in the full sense of the word, and so it has a far higher value than any ingenious subjective system of ideas, it has value as a universal solution of the inmost questions of the soul in its search for God.

## § 6. COLLATERAL SOURCES OF THE PAULINE SYSTEM.—

### (a) INSPIRATION OF THE SPIRIT

Though we have thus fixed the source of the Pauline system, yet we must observe that the teaching of the apostle cannot have sprung from it alone, but that many



tributary streams have swelled it as it lies before us in his Epistles and discourses. We have now to settle the relation to each other of these secondary sources, and the measure of their influence. The apostle appeals, above all, to the inspiration of the Spirit of God and of Christ which sprang up within him at his conversion and now accompanies him through life. "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. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 9-13). The stream of the new life which sprang up in him in that wonderful moment of his conversion is therefore, at the same time, a stream of heavenly light, which henceforth penetrates his spirit, and by which God Himself reveals to him the eternal truths which he is to proclaim. And this high consciousness of drawing his doctrinal ideas, not from human instruction or his own thoughts and conjectures, but from divine illumination, extends even to the form of his teaching; the same spirit who gives him the facts gives him also the words in which to express them. These declarations, opposed to the pride of the wisdom of this world, are not meant in so absolute or abstractly supernatural a sense as they read. Nor have we any right to convert into an inspiration of his own speculative genius that which he is conscious of having received from the Spirit of God; the spirit to which he appeals is none other than that which is given to the Christian Church and its several believing members, especially to the Christian prophets. The apostle feels himself indeed to be a Christian prophet favoured above others, to whom the great mystery of the divine purpose of salvation, hid for thousands of years (Rom. xvi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 7), was

revealed immediately from heaven, and to whom in his constant intercourse with God new light is ever falling on this revelation; consequently, particular *μυστήρια*, that is, purposes of God not discoverable by human reason, open up before him (Rom. xi. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 51); and this course of his life in God supplies him with fit forms of representation, not in philosophic or theological, but in genuinely prophetic speech. But he does not, in this, start from that extravagant notion of prophecy which regards the spirit of man as the lyre whose strings are struck by the Holy Spirit. He rather considers prophecy as springing from the mystical union of the divine and human spirit which exists in every believer (Rom. viii. 15, 16, 26), and this involves the possibility of a mistake on the part of the prophet; at anyrate, it involves his imperfection and limitation. The Christian prophets are subject to the criticism of the same spirit from which they speak (1 Cor. xii. 10; 1 Thess. v. 19-21). They are not therefore infallible, but need to be exhorted to prophesy *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως* (*sc. αὐτῶν*), that is, to say no more than they can say with inner truth (Rom. xii. 6). But he declares that even his own prophecy and knowledge obtained from inspiration are essentially imperfect. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face" (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10, 12). From the same passage we learn that the apostle's present knowledge and prophecy are, in comparison with those which are future and perfect, only as the speech of a child is to that of a man. It may be asked how this admission, which justifies a Christian criticism even of his views, agrees with the absolute certainty of a God-sent man who elsewhere feels impelled to pronounce anathema on those who preach a gospel different from him (Gal. i. 8, 9). It agrees in this way, that the apostle distinguishes between what belongs to simple faith, the facts of salvation, and that in which the prophetic thought and speech go beyond the simple facts of salvation. The former is to him absolutely certain, the foundation which is laid, and which no man can lay otherwise; the latter, even his own development of the

σοφία θεοῦ, so far as it goes beyond the simple λόγος τοῦ σταύρου, is to him gold, silver, and precious stones built on that foundation among which there might also be wood and straw; at anyrate, it is not to be co-ordinated with the foundation, as salvation does not depend on it (1 Cor. iii. 12–15; cf. ii. 2, 6 f., iii. 2). Accordingly, though favoured with the gift of the spirit of the Lord, he does not in any way, as is sometimes said, put his own views on a level with the commandments of Jesus;<sup>1</sup> but, on the contrary, he distinguishes his own modest γνώμη, that is, opinion or good counsel, from the ἐπιταγὴ κυρίου (1 Cor. vii. 25, 40).

### § 7. (b) THE HISTORICAL TRADITION ABOUT JESUS.

This brings us to a second and less recognised factor in forming the Pauline system. A modern theological tendency which explains the Pauline system as a mere production, not of divine inspiration but of free Christian speculation, all but excludes from its genesis the influence of a historical tradition about Jesus. The apostle has expressed himself differently on this point. "I have received of the Lord (that is, through a sure tradition reaching back to Him) that which also I delivered unto you"; "I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also (myself) received." He thus introduces, in 1 Cor. xi. and xv., two most important features of the life of Jesus, His institution of the Supper and His resurrection. And how, except by tradition, could he have attained the knowledge of such things? It is utterly unnatural to think of an immediate revelation from heaven of facts such as, "The night when Jesus was betrayed," or the succession of the particular appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. During Paul's intercourse with Ananias and other Christians in Damascus he would celebrate with them the Eucharist, and then, if not before, learn its origin; and when in Jerusalem he came to know Peter and James, what else can have been the subject of conversation than the

<sup>1</sup> Whether the word ἐντολαί in 1 Cor. xiv. 37 be genuine or not, the apostle here only expresses that what he here writes is the Lord's own will. He does not say that all he writes is just as good as if said by Christ Himself.

life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? It is further a fact that Paul frequently appeals to sayings of Jesus, to sayings that are contained in our Gospels and to sayings that are not found there, though they do not on that account bear less the stamp of genuineness (1 Cor. vii. 10, ix. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 15; Acts xx. 35); he knows, for example, in the chapter about marriage, what Jesus has declared about it and what He has not spoken (1 Cor. vii. 10, 25). Certainly he makes but little use of such quotations in his Epistles and discourses. In general he prefers, like the older apostles, to make the whole appearance and life of Jesus his text, rather than details of His teaching and life. But when he appeared as a missionary, and had to lay the foundation of a Church just forming, then he manifestly proceeded differently, and made abundant use of the historical tradition, as is proved by 1 Cor. xi. 23, xv. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 4; Gal. iii. 1. That he owed to Peter and other disciples details about Jesus is not contradicted by his *ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου* (Gal. i. 1). But he did not need to borrow the greater part of it from the first apostles, for he knew it before he was a Christian. He had come to Jerusalem in the days of Jesus, or soon after His death, which stirred and filled the minds of all. He had taken an increasing polemic interest in Christianity, and he brought the persecuted Christians to trial; in this way he had undoubtedly, even before his conversion, collected a large amount of knowledge about Christ's life and teaching; he had, as he says 2 Cor. v. 16, known Christ *κατὰ σάρκα*. And if we interpret the *ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκωμεν*, which is there added, as meaning that all that has lost its value to him since his conversion, instead of meaning that it has been transfigured into a *κατὰ πνεῦμα γινώσκωμεν*,—what a miraculous and unnatural Christian man we make of him. He must have known and loved Jesus as the holy Son of God, as Him who gave Himself for him to the death of the cross, and every word of His mouth, every feature of His self-denying earthly life, must have been dear and sacred to him. It is a still more curious error to suppose that the mere appearance of the Risen and Exalted One to Paul on the way to Damascus could have invested Him with the significance of Saviour. His faith and his

teaching rest primarily, indeed, on the death of Jesus on the cross; but the whole saving significance of this death depends for Paul on the spirit in which it was endured, on the innocence, the obedience, the wideness of the mercy of the life which was completed by it; how, then, could the knowledge and view of this life have been to him a matter of indifference? All this compels us to ascribe to the historical tradition about Jesus, which he could have at first-hand in a hundred ways (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 6), a far greater share in the apostle's doctrinal development than is commonly done. If what he inferred for himself and others as saving truth from his conversion and under the free impulse of the spirit, had not thoroughly agreed with the doctrinal sayings and characteristics of Jesus with which he was familiar, he would not have been able to maintain it in presence either of the first apostles and the Judaists or his own heart and conscience. And although in details we can only conjecture a formal connection of his doctrine with that of Jesus,—for example, between his doctrine of the death of Jesus and the institution of the Supper, between his moral teaching and the sayings of the Sermon on the Mount (cf. Rom. xii. 19–21; 1 Cor. vi. 7),—we can have no doubt whatever that his teaching, in spite of its difference in form, is in substance in profound harmony with the gospel of Jesus as we have developed it from the sources.

#### § 8. THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE JEWISH THEOLOGY

Finally, the Old Testament and Jewish theology must undoubtedly be reckoned among the factors in the Pauline system; but these influences are commonly exaggerated, just as his historical knowledge about Jesus is depreciated. First, as to the Old Testament, it is true that he always regards it as Holy Scripture, infallible, and the voice of God Himself, so that proofs from it surpass all proofs from reason and experience (cf. for example, 1 Cor. ix. 8). Notwithstanding this belief in Scripture, which, of course, he shared with his people and their scholars, his substantial dependence on the letter of the Old Testament is very little. In the first place, he always quotes it according to circumstances, now in

the original text, now in the Septuagint, without taking into consideration the differences of the two; sometimes, trusting to his memory, he makes unintentional departures, and sometimes he consciously departs from the Old Testament, so that it is impossible to ascribe to him a belief in verbal inspiration. Besides, he does not mean all his Old Testament quotations to be actual proofs; Christian ideas, already well assured, gain more solemnity and a formal sanction from the quotation, and sometimes the apostle appropriates Old Testament words even with a conscious change of meaning, of which we have a remarkable example in Rom. x. 6-8, as a mere classic expression of his own idea, just as we make expressive application of our classics. But, above all, he only proves from the Old Testament what is already certain to him, apart from it, from his Christian experience and the inspiration of the Spirit, and he treats it with a freedom which often seems caprice, in contrast to our methodical exposition, and which, though his training allowed it, really violates the binding authority of the Scriptures. All the liberty which we possess with regard to the Old Testament by our historico-critical method, and by means of the distinction of a divine and a human interest in the history of revelation and the genesis of the Bible, was secured for the apostle in the simplest way by his Christian spiritual insight employing the instruments of his Jewish training. It allowed him to take out of the Old Testament text views which the authors themselves had never thought of, to leave the context unnoticed, or to create connections (*e.g.* Rom. iii. 10-19) and propose completions of the text which imported into it something entirely new (*cf.* 1 Cor. xv. 45); at one time he presses the letter to the uttermost, at another he explains it away by allegorising what did not seem worthy of God (1 Cor. ix. 8 ff.; Gal. iv. 21-31). These self-deceptions were common amongst Jewish scholars, and we recognise them in Paul just as we recognise along with them his insight in distinguishing in the Old Testament all its anticipations of the New. This brings us, finally, to the share which his training as a scribe has on his dogmatic system. Although he, who as a Christian counted all that but loss, was unconscious of its having any permanent influence on his doctrine, we should not fail to perceive its existence.

But this influence has recently been much exaggerated. Not only has a Pharisaic but also a Hellenic and Alexandrian preparation been noted in the apostle, and traces of it have been found in his most peculiar doctrinal views (for example, of flesh and spirit). Now Paul may have had some acquaintance with Greek writings, such as is recorded of his teacher Gamaliel; but, apart from those two quotations from Greek poets (Acts xvii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 33), which he can hardly have learned at Jerusalem, more likely at Tarsus, the traces of it are limited to some faint echoes of the Alexandrine Book of Wisdom (*e.g.* in Rom. i.). But he derives neither his anthropology, nor his idea of immortality, nor his (alleged) doctrine of predestination from this book; this Hellenistic factor in the mode of thought of a man who was trained by parents and teachers in the strictest Pharisaic traditions is, as will be shown, a chimera. But his Palestinian schooling as a scribe is a fact, and its far-reaching influence on the form of his mode of teaching is unmistakable; it appears in his exposition of the Scriptures, as well as in his dialectic methods. The only question is as to whether, besides an influence on his style, we are to regard it as having an influence on his ideas also. It is more than doubtful whether the system of Jewish Palestinian theology, such as has been recently presented to us so clearly from the Chaldaic paraphrases and the Talmud, had any existence in that form in Paul's time. The exposition of it that we have bears throughout the impress of the age which began with the destruction of the temple, and the theology can only have existed in the time of Jesus in freer and more fluid forms, otherwise we should be able to trace it in a very different degree in the controversies of Jesus with the Pharisees and scribes. Now, if Paul has ideas in common with this system, which, apart from it, could be derived from the Old Testament, such as, for example, the idea of justification, it would be foolish to conclude that he was dependent for them on the wisdom of the Jewish schools. Other Pauline views which are unknown to the Old Testament, such as that of the *πρώτος* and the *ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ*, or of the world-ruling *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις*, are certainly of Jewish origin; he owes these to his Pharisaic theology. But even such views, so far as we can see, are

grasped by Paul in so original a fashion, they are so living and elastic, that one can scarcely describe them as borrowed. We do too little honour to the creative power of the early Christian spirit when we insist on such similarities and points of contact with the Judaic-Pharisaic theology. What the apostle says about the renovating power of his conversion—*τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρήλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινὰ τὰ πάντα* (2 Cor. v. 17)—holds good in particular of his world of ideas. In it also the old elements are recast into something new; and that only is retained which agrees with the new spirit which has taken possession of him; and even what is retained comes to new life in the element of the spirit, so that it is no longer old, and is no longer thought of by him as belonging to the old. And so this spirit of which his conversion was the source, the spirit of Christ living in him, remains the energetic power which outweighs everything that appears in his thinking, inspiration, tradition, doctrine of Scripture, scholastic ideas, and fuses them into a living unity.

#### § 9. PECULIAR CHARACTER OF THE PAULINE SYSTEM.

We may already suppose from the circumstances of the origin of the Pauline system, that it will have a much more developed character than the gospel of Jesus and the preaching of the first apostles. It is in point of fact the most perfectly shaped in form, and the most instructive of the whole New Testament. Nevertheless, this peculiarity of the Pauline system cannot be traced back to the distinction of a theological, in the narrower sense, from a simple religious character. We can only in Paul's case speak of theology, in the formal sense of the word, where he makes use of his training as a scribe; and that he does in all cases only incidentally. He refuses in presence of the Corinthians to sum up the message of revelation in the common forms of Greek thought, as incompatible with his fundamental apostolic task (1 Cor. i. 17 f.). Strong as is his instinct to make the Christian faith a matter of thought, and many as are the hints towards a theology which appear in his writings, yet he never felt the need to express in rigid formulæ the peculiar but fluid conceptions with which he works, or to present in systematic



doctrinal form the magnificent view of the world which he carries within him. He never gets beyond a struggle with his thoughts and words; when forced by some practical necessity he indicates a train of thought, he does not pursue it, but when the occasion recurs he starts afresh. Strong, therefore, as the theological elements are which his system contains, the practical and moral aim is always dominant; and so it is the speech, not of theology, but of religion which we hear; and we hear it with such power, fulness, and depth as, apart from Jesus' own preaching, was never heard in words before or afterwards. That which distinguishes it from the gospel of Jesus is evident, and lies in the nature of the case. Jesus uses the simple, sublime speech of revelation; Paul in every tone utters the experience of salvation and of faith, of one praising and confessing, struggling and fighting, reflecting and speculating. In Jesus we see the open heaven with its quiet stars; in Paul the inner life of the heart which (needs salvation, and which) though like the troubled sea it reflects that heaven, yet these shining images move and are broken in its waves. In comparison with the older disciples of Jesus as we have known them, there appears that mighty distinction already alluded to in the introduction to this chapter; while in them we hear chiefly the pious Israelite to whom Moses and the prophets are fulfilled in Jesus, here we perceive the human soul as such torn by the deep discord of its higher and lower attractions, and finding in Christ harmony with self by finding harmony with God. The consideration of Christianity is no longer, as with these older disciples, broken up by the Old Testament division of law and promise, but, in conformity with the unique fact of conversion, it finds its unity and originality in the person of the Redeemer conceived in its perfection. On the one hand, Christ crucified and risen is the pledge of forgiveness of sin and of all the promises of God; on the other, He is the source of a new life, and at the same time of obedience to all commandments, and so He is the uniform and original source of a religion in its essence new, and at the same time of a new doctrine of religion. And as this source presents itself in the person of a Son of Man, who in His perfection is no longer a Jewish Messiah but the perfect image of God and the ideal of

humanity, this religion on its objective side appears as for all men, a religion for the world freed from all wrappings and limitations of Judaism. If we wish to present it in this character we must note how Paul, in addition to his conversion, had a double impulse in which the first apostles did not share, and which enabled him, with Christ as his central point, to exhibit the new doctrine with all that it implied; this impulse was apologetic and speculative. Though the character of his conversion, in its sudden breach with Judaism and legalism, forced him to find a rational understanding between the new and the old, his task of preaching to the Gentiles who knew nothing of the New Testament preparation, as well as the further task of defending his preaching against the Judaists, led the apostle to explanations for which there had formerly been no occasion. From this point of view his system as usually conceived and represented appears to be predominantly anthropological, it is ruled by the question, How is man to be justified with God? the doctrines of sin, law, faith, justification occupy the foreground. But we should be wrong if we supposed that the Pauline system is all contained in the practical question that emerges in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. Behind that practical and apologetic motive of his growth in thought, another is operative; the character of his mind forced him to seek for a complete understanding of the world's history as having God for its first cause and last end. And this speculative impulse (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 6 f.) carries the apostle over to the objective *theological* side of Christian thought, to the original and final purpose of God, to the working of His wisdom in history, to the contrast of Adam and Christ, and thus of flesh and spirit. To bring together the two sides of his speculation and discussion just as they existed in his mind is the business of biblical theology. But how is this to be done? It cannot well start from the objective or subjective central point of the whole, from Christ's cross, or from justification by faith; because these points of doctrine cannot be clearly stated without the preliminary questions about the person of Christ, or about sin and the law. But even the attempt to start from the apostle's idea of God, and to develop from that the process of the world and of salvation, would be a doubtful procedure, as the

apostle's Christian idea of God was rather the result of his Christian experience than the starting-point of his knowledge. We shall do most justice to the peculiar history of the Pauline system if we start from the contrast of flesh and spirit, the perception of which drove him to his decisive experience. From that we shall advance to the contrast of Adam and Christ, in which flesh and spirit, those fundamental powers in life, become to the apostle turning points of the world's history. The consideration of Christ in whose face the glory of God appeared to him (2 Cor. iv. 4) will lead us over to the apostle's idea of God, in the light of which he comprehends the world. His understanding of the divine decree and government of the world, aiming at the work of salvation in Christ, will first appear here, and then it will be possible to build on those fundamental considerations the practical articles of doctrine, viz. the doctrines of the historical establishment, the divine arrangement, the moral procuring, and the final perfection of salvation.

## CHAPTER II

### FLESH AND SPIRIT

#### § 1. THE PROBLEM

The most elementary, and at the same time the most thorough contrast on which the Pauline view of the world rests, is the contrast of flesh and spirit. It is in the first instance an ontological contrast which embraces every living being; but then it passes from an ontological to an ethical contrast, which embraces the fundamental, moral, and religious problem of humanity, and in the actual solution of this problem the salvation in Christ celebrates its triumph from beginning to end. We must therefore begin our consideration of the Pauline system of thought with this contrast. But as there prevails up to this moment an incredible confusion in theological opinion with regard to it, we must proceed by the simplest examination of the idea, the result of which must justify itself by its simplicity and naturalness.

## § 2. ONTOLOGICAL IDEA OF THE σάρξ

The Pauline contrast of flesh and spirit as ontological coincides, not entirely, but nearly with that of matter and spirit with which we are familiar. The apostle does not comprise all matter, but only that which possesses life and soul, in the notion σάρξ which was presented to him by the Old Testament. He looks upon σάρξ as the living flesh which is common to man and beast; οὐ πᾶσα σὰρξ ἡ αὐτὴ σάρξ, ἀλλὰ ἄλλη μὲν ἀνθρώπων, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ κτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ πτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ ἰχθύων (1 Cor. xv. 39); as distinguished from the slaughtered flesh which one eats (κρέας, 1 Cor. viii. 13). Flesh, therefore, is the sensuous living animated matter, the animal life and essence. According to the story of Creation in Gen. ii., man is formed from the dust of the ground, that is, from the material of earthly nature already existent, and a living soul is breathed into him by God; in allusion to this the first man is said to be ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, of the earth earthy (1 Cor. xv. 47); but God breathed into the earthy material a breath of life, and the man became a ψυχὴ ζῶσα, a living soul (1 Cor. xv. 45). The earthly matter thus animated with a soul is, according to the Pauline idea, the human σάρξ. And in this idea, which may surprise us, are already contained Paul's notions of the relation of σάρξ and ψυχὴ, and of the distinction of πνεῦμα and ψυχὴ, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; these are seen in his use of σαρκικός and ψυχικός as equivalents, and in his opposition of both to πνευματικός (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15; cf. with iii. 1-3, xv. 45-50). The psyche is just the animal principle of life which, according to the biblical view, has its seat in the blood, and which, as a matter of course, belongs to the σάρξ, for which σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα is a more complete expression (1 Cor. xv. 50). The σάρξ, then, is the lower and sensuous constituent of humanity, which connects it with nature in contrast with the supersensuous which relates it with God, which the biblical view of the world also recognises in man. This already explains a great part of Paul's peculiar uses of the notion σάρξ. Thus our earthly life is called a ζῆν, περιπατεῖν, ἐπιμένειν ἐν σαρκί (Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 22, 24;

2 Cor. x. 3), a life in the sensuous element, an embodied life on earth; man's physical descent and kinship are described by *σάρξ* or *κατὰ σάρκα*, Rom. i. 3, ix. 5, 8, xi. 14 (*ἡ σάρξ μου* = my flesh and blood, that is, my relative), or Gal. iv. 23, 29. Ishmael as the purely sensuous and naturally begotten is contrasted with Isaac who was begotten by means of the miraculous word of promise, that is, supernaturally and spiritually. From this *σαρκί, κατὰ σάρκα* may be understood as a designation of the bondage in which the slave finds himself towards his master, as when in Col. iii. 22 slaves are exhorted to be obedient *τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις*, or when, in Philem. 16, Onesimus is described as *ἀγαπητός* to Philemon *καὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ*, both as a bondsman and as a fellow-Christian. Such phrases as *θλίψις τῇ σαρκί* (1 Cor. vii. 28), *ἄνεσις τῇ σαρκί* (2 Cor. vii. 5), or even *πρόνοια τῆς σαρκός* (Rom. xiii. 14), are still more simply explained; they are afflictions, refreshment, or care which concern the bodily side of our nature. But even the more difficult passage Gal. iii. 3, *ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι, νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελείσθε*, may be explained from this point of view, "Having begun in the spirit, with the inward, are ye now made perfect in the flesh," that is, by externals which belong to the sensuous side of man, such as circumcision and commandments as to food. In the same way may be explained here, so far as they are applied in an innocent sense, the adjectives *σαρκικός* and *σάρκινος*—differing from each other in fundamental meaning as fleshly and made of flesh. *Τὰ σάρκικα* (Rom. xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix. 11) are the sensuous blessings and the earthly means of life which the Gentile Christians communicated to the poor of the primitive Church, or the Church to her leaders in gratitude for the *πνευματικά*, the spiritual blessings of the gospel received from them. And the *πλάκες καρδίας σάρκιναι* (2 Cor. iii. 3) are in biblical language, in contrast with the stone tables of the law of Moses, the softer and more impressible material of the human heart on which one can write. Phrases such as *εἶδέναι κατὰ σάρκα, σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα* seem rather to lie outside the scope of the fundamental meaning, and yet it is perfectly sufficient even for them. Whoever boasts of such prerogatives as descent, circumcision, etc., which belong

solely to the sensuous external side of life, he *καυχᾶται κατὰ τὴν σάρκα* (2 Cor. xi. 18). He who knows any man, even though it be Christ, only as ascertained by sense, that is, outwardly, and not as spirit knows spirit, knows Him only *κατὰ σάρκα* (2 Cor. v. 16). And a wisdom which extends solely to the sensuous earthly side of existence, not to the supersensuous facts and eternal blessings, and which belongs therefore essentially to the sphere of the five senses, is a *σοφία σαρκική* or *σοφία κατὰ σάρκα* (1 Cor. i. 26; 2 Cor. i. 12). Apart from phrases, to be discussed further below, in which *σάρξ* or *σαρκικός* has an ethically bad sense, there remain, strictly speaking, only two Pauline passages which the fundamental significance we have suggested cannot be made to fit. The one is Rom. iv. 1, where the *lectio recepta* runs, *τὶ οὖν ἐροῦμεν Ἀβραὰμ τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν εὐρηκέναι κατὰ σάρκα*, that is, the *κατὰ σάρκα* belongs to *εὐρηκέναι*, and seems to have the meaning "of his own natural powers." The other passage is Rom. vi. 19, *ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν*, where this *ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός* is wont to be taken in the sense of weak insight. But the first passage should undoubtedly be read, *εὐρηκέναι Ἀβραὰμ τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα*, that is, the *κατὰ σάρκα* should be united with *προπάτορα*; a reading which is well attested, and which was changed into the Received solely on account of the objection that Abraham could not be described as bodily ancestor of the Gentile Romans. And in the passage vi. 19, we are certainly not to think of a weakness of knowledge on the part of the readers, the mention of which in this particular place would be quite meaningless after so many far more difficult discussions of the apostle, but of their moral weakness, which makes the doing of right appear to them not as freedom, but as bondage (*παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ*); so that this passage belongs to those which are to be explained from the connection between *σάρξ* and sin, which we must elucidate further on.

### § 3. REJECTION OF A MISINTERPRETATION

Nevertheless, it has been supposed on account of these and similar difficulties, which must be referred to later, that we

must give up the natural meaning of the word *σάρξ* in Paul, and exchange the concept of sensuous nature for that of human nature. The "flesh" is used by Paul to designate human nature in its distinction from the divine, that is, with the collateral idea of that which possesses the nature and weakness of a creature.<sup>1</sup> This interpretation, which at one time was much favoured and which is not yet extinct, appeals with much plausibility to the similarity of meaning between *σαρκικοί ἐστε* and *κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε* in 1 Cor. iii. 3, but it overlooks the fact that in this passage, notwithstanding its wording, there is no mention of human nature as such. The *κατὰ ἄνθρωπον* stands here confessedly not in the sense of the essentially human, but of the wicked human, the everyday human (cf. ver. 4); and the *σαρκικοί* stands here likewise, not in the ontological, but in the ethical sense, so that the two synonymous expressions coincide in expressing the notion, not of what is human, but of what is sinful. The conception in question has another apparent support in an Old Testament usage which Paul also now and then adopts, and in which *πᾶσα σάρξ*, or even *σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα*, means man collectively. In these phrases, however, which do not belong to the peculiarly Pauline phraseology, but to the common popular speech, men are regarded—in contrast with God—solely on the sensuous side of their nature, and therefore the fundamental meaning of the word *σάρξ* is only apparently given up. Such expressions are as little meant to give a complete description or definition of human nature, as when we nowadays speak of so many heads or souls. Moreover, the collective notion "man" does not throughout coincide with the abstract notion, human nature, or creature nature, and it is not in the least degree probable that Paul would use an inaccurate popular expression to describe the latter, or regularly describe human nature by a name that left its best element unnoticed, viz. the spirit. But that which renders the application of *σάρξ* to human nature as such quite impossible, are the two facts that the apostle frequently regards *σάρξ* and *σῶμα*, flesh and body, as equivalents, and further, that he frequently and expressly understands by *σάρξ*

<sup>1</sup> Thus Tholuck and Julius Müller among the older expositors. Weiss and Wendt among the modern.

only one part of human nature to which he opposes another factor of that nature. In the first place, let us consider the proof for the former of these facts. In numerous cases Paul contrasts *σῶμα* and *πνεῦμα* with each other, quite in the same way as *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα* elsewhere. Thus, for example, 1 Cor. v. 3, ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι, παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, while it is said in Col. ii. 5, τῇ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἶμι. Or 1 Cor. vii. 34, ἵνα ἡ ἁγία καὶ τῷ σώματι καὶ τῷ πνεύματι; while in 2 Cor. vii. 1 we read, καθαρῖσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ. And still more frequently are *σῶμα* and *σάρξ* used with the same meaning beside each other, as when it is said, 2 Cor. iv. 10, ἵνα ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ, and immediately afterwards, ver. 11, ἵνα ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν; or Eph. v. 28, 29, οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶν τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας ὡς τὰ ἑαυτῶν σώματα . . . οὐδεὶς γὰρ ποτε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα ἐμίσησεν. Not that the apostle did not recognise an abstract distinction between *σῶμα* and *σάρξ*; in the idea of the *σῶμα* the notion of the organism prevails, and so the body divided into its many members can be an emblem of the Church; in the idea of the *σάρξ*, on the other hand, the notion of the material predominates, without, however, excluding that of the organic, as is shown in the fact that the presence of the psyche in it is assumed. The apostle can therefore apply the concept of *σῶμα* to creatures to which he would not ascribe *σάρξ*, viz. to plants and stars (1 Cor. xv. 38, 40); nay, he can conceive the idea of a *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, a body which is to be the expression of the *πνεῦμα*, just as the present body is the expression of the psyche. But the earthly body of man, which is for the most part dealt with, is a *σῶμα τῆς σαρκός* (Col. i. 22), and so in many cases the two notions coincide to such a degree that the one can stand for the other. This being so it is clear that the apostle cannot have designated human nature as such or its created character by the word *σάρξ*, since he certainly did not regard man as a mere bodily existence, but did regard man's soul and spirit as created like his body. But, in the second place, we have direct evidence in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans that by *σάρξ*



just as by *σῶμα* and *μέλη*, he has designated only the lower constituent of the human being. Here the *ἐγώ*, the human personality, is once, indeed (ver. 18), co-ordinated with the *σάρξ* in a loose way, and therefore with a limiting *τοῦτ' ἐστίν*; but in ver. 20 it is all the more decisively contrasted with it, and an element in man is brought into prominence in the *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος* or *νοῦς*, which is not *σάρξ* (cf. ver. 25), but rather resists the impulses of the *σάρξ*, the law in the members. Does the apostle not regard this *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος* or *νοῦς* as belonging to the very essence of man as created?

#### § 4. THE IDEA OF THE *πνεῦμα* IN GENERAL

After these preliminary results let us, in the first place, turn our attention to the other principle of existence which the apostle recognises alongside of the *σάρξ*, the *πνεῦμα*, the spirit. The *πνεῦμα*, as is shown by the word itself and by its being constantly set in opposition to the *σάρξ*, is the immaterial supersensuous principle of existence. In itself the apostle regards it as the principle of the true life; for, as it is significantly said in 2 Cor. iv. 18, "That which is seen is temporal; that which is not seen is eternal." The *σάρξ*, and here the apostle confidently overturns the natural man's view of the world by a higher wisdom and a deeper experience,—the *σάρξ* with all its sensuous vivacity has only an apparent life; weakness (*ἀσθένεια*), liability to decay (*φθόρα*), and death are in its very essence. Therefore, "He who soweth to the flesh,—who regards the sensuous part of his nature as the field which he has mainly to cultivate,—will of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. vi. 8). On the other hand, *πνεῦμα* and *δύναμις*, *πνεῦμα* and *ζωή*, are equivalents (1 Cor. ii. 4; Rom. viii. 2, 6, 10, 13; 2 Cor. iii. 6); the true life is spiritual, and the spiritual alone the true vitality; the spiritual as such is eternal, or capable of immortality. Consequently, the idea of the *πνεῦμα* points directly to the eternal source of life, to God. The *πνεῦμα* is, above all, *πνεῦμα θεοῦ*; it is the life of the eternal God, who communicates Himself to men; it is the power of true eternal life issuing from God. Certainly this divine communication of the spirit is sometimes preconceived by the apostle in the

manner of the Old Testament, not as a communication of life in the full sense of the word, but as it were a mere breathing upon and temporary enlightenment, that is, the pneuma appears as the principle of inspiration and prophecy; and this prophetic principle is then represented by him in its particular, limited, and imperfect appearance, now purely objectively as *πνευματικόν* (*sc.* *χάρισμα*), now personified; it is the individualised *πνεῦμα* of the several prophets or inspired men (1 Cor. xiv. 1, 12, 32). But in the new covenant this varied inspiration is to him only an appearance which accompanies a real self-communication of God, the outpouring of His Spirit in the heart, by which the Christian, the child of God, as such, is first constituted (Rom. viii. 9, 14). This Spirit of God communicating Himself is called the Holy Spirit (Rom. v. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 3), because in spite of His union with the spirit of sinful man, He remains absolutely separated from all that is sinful, and is its triumphant adversary. He is called the pledge or earnest of eternal life, because He—Himself eternal life—guarantees its full bestowal in the future (Rom. viii. 23; 2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 14). And because the decisive mark of the new covenant is found in this divine self-communication, this dwelling of God in the heart of the believer, as contrasted with the entrance of the divine from without in the letter of the law, which is characteristic of the old covenant, the principle and nature of the new covenant is also directly called *πνεῦμα* in contrast to *γράμμα* (Rom. ii. 29, vii. 6; 2 Cor. iii. 6). Now everything that springs from or corresponds to this divine stream of life flowing into the world, and everything that has part in this higher principle of life, is to the apostle *πνευματικόν* or *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. Thus, for example, the food and drink of the Israelites in the wilderness were spiritual (1 Cor. x. 3, 4), because, according to Paul's idea, they did not spring from the earthly nature, but were produced directly by divine power. Thus the generation of Isaac was spiritual, because it depended not upon the generative power of the aged parent (Gal. iv. 29), but on the miraculous life-begetting word of promise (Rom. ix. 7-9). And thus also the benefits of the gospel (Rom. xv. 27), the walk of the Christian, which, in the power of the new divine life which is communicated to him, is according to

God's commandments (Rom. viii. 1-14), even the true Christian himself, that is, the man who is enlightened and moved by the Holy Spirit, is called spiritual (1 Cor. ii. 15). That is the chief and most essential sense in which the apostle speaks of *πνεῦμα*. There are certain applications of the word which are purely customary, and belong to ordinary usage, which must be distinguished from it, as when he speaks of a spirit of bondage, or of fear, or of insensibility, or even of meekness or of faith, etc. (Rom. viii. 15, xi. 8; 1 Cor. iv. 21; 2 Cor. iv. 13), that is, of a disposition of this or that kind; or when he describes the devil as the *πνεῦμα νῦν ἐνεργῶν ἐν τοῖς υἰοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας*, and the evil angels as the *πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας* (Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12). There is, of course, in these cases no thought of a divine reality or substance, but simply of the spiritual nature of the disposition or being in question. And it is a much agitated point of controversy in the Pauline anthropology whether the apostle ascribes to man as such, that is, to the natural sinful man, a *πνεῦμα* in this everyday customary sense, or in the more serious sense of a principle in him related to God, a divine spark of life which shines in him from the beginning, unextinguished by sin.

### § 5. THE GOD-RELATED *πνεῦμα* OF MAN

In the latter case, of course, the apostle can only mean a divine capacity which he finds in man's spiritual life, which is capable of and in need of development, and which does not grow up with the mental powers. But even in this sense the matter has been recently contested, not merely by those who seek to widen the concept *σάρξ* so as to make it the designation of human nature, but also by those who hold that *σάρξ* is the sensuous nature, whilst they attribute to the apostle the view that *σάρξ* in this sense is the substance of man. It is not denied that the apostle ascribes to the natural man spiritual powers and activities; but they are conceived by him as mere powers and activities of the *σάρξ*.<sup>1</sup> The main proof text for this strange conception, whose motive appears in the discussion of the ethical sense of *σάρξ*, is 1 Cor. xv. 45 f., where Adam and Christ are contrasted with each other in the

<sup>1</sup> Baur and Holsten.

words, ἐγένετο ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν ὁ δὲ ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν. Have we not verbal evidence here that Paul conceived the first Adam, that is, the original of natural humanity, as created a mere ψυχὴ ζῶσα without πνεῦμα? We grant that the letter appears to support this idea; but this appearance proves too much, and so it proves nothing. For we must then infer from the same letter that Christ conversely had no psyche, nay, that He as well as Adam must be conceived without a body, for that is not mentioned; while the whole context shows that the apostle conceived even the glorified Christ, not as a mere spirit, but in His resurrection body as a σῶμα πνευματικόν. An impartial consideration lets us see that in these words Adam and Christ are not meant to be described in the whole extent of their personality, but only in the characteristic element in which they are opposed as the two originals of humanity: the one the sensuous, the other the spiritual; the former the author of its natural life, depending on what is physical; the latter, the author of its supernatural life in the spirit. It cannot be denied that Paul ascribes to man, as man, that is, even to the natural man, a πνεῦμα; the one intentionally psychological passage (1 Cor. ii. 11) proves it—*τις γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ?* But this passage does not stand quite alone. When Paul in his bodily absence declares himself *παρὼν τῷ πνεύματι*, or when he speaks of the unrest of his πνεῦμα at Troas (1 Cor. v. 3; 2 Cor. ii. 13); when he warns the Corinthians against all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (2 Cor. vii. 1), or desires to hand over to Satan the incestuous man among them *εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆ* (1 Cor. v. 5); when, according to Rom. i. 9, he serves God *ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου*, and in viii. 16 makes God's Spirit witness with our spirits that we are God's children,—he no doubt speaks of Christians; but only in a very artificial interpretation could we understand by πνεῦμα in these phrases their new life born of God, and not that which they have in common with all other men, their inner self, their mind, their immortal soul.<sup>1</sup> It may now be asked whether this universal

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* 339, 340, who, in consequence of this, must also distinguish artificially the new spiritual life bestowed on the Christian

human *πνεῦμα* is conceived as possessing a merely formal activity, as feeling, thinking, and willing, without character of its own, and simply as moved by the *σάρξ*? Assuredly *πνεῦμα* in the sense of inner being, heart and mind, is sometimes used by the apostle in such a way that the distinction between it and *ψυχὴ* in particular cases vanishes (cf. for example, Phil. i. 27; 2 Cor. i. 23; Col. iii. 23), and the same feelings can be ascribed even to the *σάρξ* and the *πνεῦμα* (cf. 2 Cor. ii. 13 with vii. 5); but, on the other hand, in those cases where the *πνεῦμα* appears as the seat of the inward worship of God, the inner sanctuary where divine and human meet (Rom. i. 9, viii. 16), its relation to God is at once assumed. But the expressions in Rom. vii. and ii. 14, already quoted, give conclusive proof of this view. In Rom. vii. the apostle knows of an *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος* in the unregenerate man standing solely under the discipline of the law, who agrees with the law of God and has pleasure in the same, a *νόμος τοῦ νοῦς* which is in conflict with the law in the *μέλη*, that is, urges the commandments of God against the impulses of the *σάρξ*. And for those who are not yet convinced that Rom. vii. speaks of the prechristian, unregenerate man, Rom. ii. 14 expressly declares of the heathen that they have the works of the divine law written in their heart, a *συνείδησις*, a moral consciousness inhabiting them, which urges them to do the right even without a revealed positive law. Now, if in the *πνεύμῳ* of the natural man—and where else than in the *πνεῦμα* shall we seek the *νοῦς* and the *συνείδησις*?—there dwells a divine element and law, in virtue of which the man resists the desires of the sensuous nature and seeks after God's commandments, there can be no need for further proof that Paul conceived the human *πνεῦμα*, not simply in a formal way as indifferent, but as having a true relation to God. That is expressed in the sermon at Athens (Acts xvii. 27), in words whose Pauline origin there is no reason for contesting, "And, indeed, he is not far from anyone of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of our own poets have said, We are His offspring." The unconscious, from the Holy Spirit given to him. It needs no special proof that *πνεῦμα*, wherever it is contrasted with *σάρξ* in the ontological sense, must also be meant anthropologically and not soteriologically.

involuntary breathing of the human soul in living communion with God, which is felt in every manifestation of its religious and moral capacity, could not be more decidedly expressed. But how could one attribute anything else to a real biblical thinker, who knew that man was created in the image of God ?

#### § 6. THE ETHICAL ENIGMA OF HUMAN NATURE

Men have fallen into the error, on account of the enigma, alluded to at the beginning of this investigation, which the Pauline anthropology presents to us in the ethical significance which the apostle in fact and in idea attributes to the *σάρξ*. The apostle considers the natural man, notwithstanding the existence of the *pneuma* in him and the revelation of God in it, as essentially fleshly, and through this fleshliness as sinful. *Οἶδαμεν γὰρ, ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι, πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* (Rom. vii. 14). All sins and vices, such as idolatry, fornication, lasciviousness, drunkenness and revelry, and also idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, malice, intrigue, faction, envy and dissension, are to the apostle works of the flesh (Gal. v. 19–21). In the flesh, according to Rom. vii. 18, 23, dwells no good thing, but a law which wars against the law of God in the *νοῦς*, and turns out to be the law of sin. The *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*, the thoughts of our sensuous nature, are enmity against God, according to Rom. viii. 7, *ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν*, that is, not in the sense of real hatred, but of resistance to God's law, *τῷ γὰρ νόμῳ θεοῦ ὄνχ' ὑποτάσσεται*. The *πνεῦμα*, the *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, the *νοῦς*, or as we may call it, the higher part of human nature, is impotent in presence of this insubordination of the *σάρξ* against God's law; it can do no more than desire the good and strive against the evil. Rom. ii. 14 tells of good done by the few, but of human life in the mass only this report can be given: the spirit is always beaten in the moral conflict that is carried on between it and the *σάρξ*, and is taken captive by the law of sin in the members (Rom. vii. 15, 18, 19, 22–23). In a word, the natural man is *ἐν σαρκί*, in the power or in the element of the flesh; and so long as he is so he cannot please God (Rom. viii. 8), for the only effect which the law of God has upon him is to intensify in

his members the sinful passions which bring forth fruit unto death (Rom. vii. 5). These are the views of the apostle which have led some expositors to force upon the concepts *σάρξ* and *σαρκικός* a sense foreign to the natural meaning, and to confound with the human or creaturely nature the sensuous nature, which they could not regard as the source of sin in man, nor as the only cause of all kinds of sin, especially of the non-sensuous; while they have forced other expositors, who adhere to the natural meaning of the word *σάρξ*, to attribute to the apostle a more unnatural view of human nature, a materialistic, dualistic view which regards matter in itself as evil. Both conceptions are destroyed by a closer consideration of Paul's actual teaching. As to the first, however attractive the view which removes the seat and home of sin from the sensuous nature of man, that is, his body, to the actual human nature, that is, to the moral province of that nature, the will, it yet proves to be delusive. It is very improbable that the apostle, as this exposition assumes, should have developed the idea of sinfulness from that of creaturehood or creaturely weakness (of the flesh): it is unworthy of a thinker so keen and ethically so strict as Paul, that he should have confused the natural weakness of creaturehood with the moral weakness of godlessness; and to deduce the latter from the former is little less than an identification of sin with finiteness, with the limits imposed by God on the creature. But what completely hinders us from removing the seat and home of sin, in the teaching of Paul, from the sensuous province of human nature, is the fact that the apostle expressly and emphatically extends the synonymy, already alluded to, of *σάρξ* and *σῶμα* to the relation to sin. The apostle frankly describes the body as the seat and home of sin. Thus, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof: neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin" (Rom. vi. 12). "But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. vii. 23, 24). "But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because

of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness ” (Rom. viii. 10). “ For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live ” (Rom. viii. 13). Any attempts to allegorise the concept “ body ” in such sayings, and to understand by it a different organism from that composed of flesh and blood and the μέλη, are hopeless, since Paul speaks expressly of the body which consists of the members. And therefore no other evasion seemed to remain than to attribute to the apostle a bit of materialistic dualism, and to make him get from questionable Hellenic influences the entirely unbiblical view, that the sensuous or material is in itself the evil, whilst the supersensuous or spiritual is in itself the good, and that man because essentially sensuous, σάρξ, is also essentially sinful, ἀμαρτία. But this theory also, even if one were willing to shut his eyes to its general improbability on biblical soil, is destroyed by the facts of Paul’s teaching. In the first place, in Rom. v. 12 f. the apostle does not make sin adhere to the first man in virtue of his fleshly nature, but makes him fall into sin through disobedience and transgression, that is through an act of will, and thus sin comes first into the world. In the same way, if the apostle had held the sensuous to be in itself the evil, he must have developed in his teaching an ascetic morality. But, as is well known, he does the very opposite ; no man can in principle occupy a freer position with regard to the use of natural things than he. But even the concepts themselves, πνεῦμα and σάρξ, as used by him refuse to have that platonising sense thrust on them. Paul, as we have already proved, ascribed to man a pneuma related to God ; but this pneuma, in which the divine is only a capacity to be developed, that is, a capacity that may also be suppressed, is by no means conceived as good and holy in itself, but, as is shown in 1 Cor. v. 5, vii. 34 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1, it is capable of pollution and even of destruction. And, on the other hand, although he calls the σάρξ in its actual condition a σὰρξ ἀμαρτίας (Rom. viii. 3), he does not by any means consider it as evil in itself, but distinguishes it from the sin that dwelleth in us. For he exhorts the Romans (vi. 13) to yield their members as instruments of righteousness ; they are therefore



not evil in themselves, but capable of sanctification. In 2 Cor. vii. 1 he warns against "all filthiness of the flesh as of the spirit"; even the flesh, therefore, is something pure and innocent in itself. Finally, he ascribes a *σάρξ* even to Christ, a *σάρξ ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβίδ* (Rom. i. 3), the same *σάρξ* which in our case is a *σάρξ ἁμαρτίας* (Rom. viii. 3, *ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*); and yet to him Christ, not the pre-existent Christ as confusion drove men to imagine, but the Christ becoming sin for us, that is, living and dying in the flesh, was *ὁ μὴ γνοῦς ἁμαρτίαν*, He who knew no sin, that is, He had no experience of it (2 Cor. v. 21). That could not possibly have been said of Him if He had had sin dwelling in Him by reason of His *σάρξ*, and therefore had constantly, though victoriously, to do battle in Himself.

### § 7. THE SOLUTION OF THE RIDDLE

But how is this riddle solved? Simply enough, as it seems to me; here, as is so often the case, too much sagacity has overlooked what is obvious. The misery of man, according to Rom. vii. 22-24, is, that the will to do good, "the law of the mind," is weak in him, and the impulse of the sensuous nature, the "law in the members," has the upper hand in him. But that was not God's creative idea; the *σάρξ*, the *σῶμα*, and its *μέλη* were meant to serve God as instruments of righteousness (Rom. vi. 13), and the Christian man has to restore them to this service. Our sensuous nature, on the one hand, was to bring us impulses from without which, subject to the inner tribunal of conscience, should give occasion to moral acts of obedience, and so develop the moral personality; on the other hand, it was to be the instrument by which these inward acts of the will should be made outward acts; it was to be the organ by which the personality should act upon the world. In a word, the *σάρξ* was to serve and be the instrument, and the *πνεῦμα* was to rule in man and to unfold itself in ruling, and in that to find its proper object. And in Paul's view it is our common sin that this relation is reversed; that the higher is not the stronger, that the element of our nature which was to serve actually rules,

and the higher governing element allows itself to be ruled by it; our sin is that the *σάρξ*, with the inclinations that are rooted in it, has got free from the power of the *νοῦς* and its law of God, and has made the spirit, with its activities of thought and will, its servant. It is not the *σάρξ* as such that is evil, but the evil that dwells in us (Rom. vii. 7); the *ἁμαρτία*, the error that in principle adheres to us, is the perversion of the relation between *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα* which God intended, and this perversion hinders the true unfolding and development of the spirit into the likeness of God. It is not difficult to show how the so-called ethical use of the word *σάρξ* unfolds itself from this conception without any sacrifice of the fundamental idea of the word. The adjectives *σαρκικός* and *σάρκινος*—in the ethical application of which Paul does not seem to make any further distinction<sup>1</sup>—designate, like their synonym *ψυχικός* (1 Cor. iii. 14), the natural man only *à parte potiori*, that in him which is most influential and characteristic, without excluding the existence of a weak, resisting, supersensuous factor. The *ἐν σαρκὶ εἶναι* (Rom. vii. 14, viii. 8, 9), which as a condition displeasing to God but no longer existing in the Christian, is distinguished from the innocent *ἐν σαρκὶ εἶναι*, that is, merely living on in the body (Gal. ii. 20); but just as the expression *ἐν πνεύματι εἶναι* means being inspired, being in the power or in the element of the spirit (cf. Matt. xxii. 43; 1 Cor. xii. 3; Rev. i. 10), does the culpable *ἐν σαρκὶ εἶναι* describe the condition of a man in the power of his sensuous nature, living and moving entirely in it. The *κατὰ σάρκα εἶναι*, or *ζῆν*, or *περιπατεῖν* (the latter in a very instructive way is opposed in 2 Cor. x. 2, 3 to the innocent *ἐν σαρκὶ περιπατεῖν*), designates a being, living and walking according to the standard of the *σάρξ*, a conduct and temper according to its promptings (Rom. viii. 4, 5, 13, etc.); and *κατὰ σάρκα βουλευέσθαι* (2 Cor. i. 17) describes the forming of purposes simply in accordance with our own likes and dislikes, without seeking God's

<sup>1</sup> The two passages referring to this (Rom. vii. 14, 1 Cor. iii. 1), in virtue of the uniform contrast to *πνευματικός*, and of the whole connection, positively contradict the idea that the apostle makes any distinction between the two adjectives in their ethical application. Moreover, in 1 Cor. iii. 1-3 he alternates between *σάρκινος* and *σαρκικός*.

direction. It need not surprise us that a *φρόνημα* or *θελήματα* is ascribed to the *σάρξ, διανοίαι* and the like are added (Rom. viii. 6, 7; Eph. ii. 3); the *σάρξ* in man becomes mistress, takes possession of and uses for its service the formal spiritual powers of understanding and will; nay, it has an impulse of its own, a striving, which the apostle in his pictorial personifying mode of expression may very well describe as a character, as a willing.<sup>1</sup> It is, of course, a bold metaphor when the apostle writes, Col. iii. 5, *νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν, ἀκαθαρσίαν*. He there puts the bodily organs for the impulses rooted in them, or even for the sinful inclinations springing out of these impulses, as the *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* indicates the impulses cleaving to the earth which oppose the heavenward impulses. But even here we have only to remember the common biblical view, which, for example, makes the eye the seat of unchaste or covetous and envious desire, in order to see that the fundamental meaning of the *σάρξ* continues to exist as the unity of the *μέλη*. There is only one important objection to this complete solution of the riddle of the Pauline idea of the "flesh," hitherto attempted by few,<sup>2</sup> and even it is not insurmountable. It is said, for example, and said correctly, that Paul traces back to the *σάρξ* not merely sins of sensuality, such as unchastity, intemperance, and covetousness, but, as Gal. v. 19–21 especially illustrates, even the more spiritual sins, such as wrath, contention, malice, and pride, and therefore he cannot have traced back human sinfulness merely to the preponderance of our sensuous nature over the spiritual. We admit the premiss, but contest the inference, notwithstanding the great importance that has been attributed to it, as mentioned above in the discussion of the notion *σάρξ*. When the popular view, even among ourselves, traces back wrathfulness or contention to hot blood or too much gall, would it be so inconceivable that a biblical writer,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the personifying, anthropomorphic phrases which the apostle in Rom. viii. 19–23 uses regarding the impersonal creation.

<sup>2</sup> To my knowledge, only R. Schmid (*zur paulinischen Christologie*) and Gloel (*Lehre vom h. Geist*) follow this way of explanation, the latter, moreover, without clearly surmounting the final difficulty of the matter (cf. pp. 37, 38). I owe this solution to neither, but was led to it many years ago by the sources themselves.

to whom the soul had its seat in the blood, should have deduced from impulses of a sensuous nature even those sins which do not bear a directly sensuous character? But the explanation seems to us to lie deeper. If, according to the fundamental view of the Bible, all good in man is traced back to love for God, and all evil to the opposite of this surrender of the heart, to selfishness, to the *ἐαυτῷ ζῆν*, emphasised by Paul in 2 Cor. v. 15, had not Paul reason to find in the *σάρξ* the natural root of selfishness? All natural and purely sensuous life is in its nature selfish; it desires and seeks nothing else than itself, its self-assertion and satisfaction. That is not a sinful selfishness, for where there is no moral nature there is also no immoral. Plants and beasts do not sin when they carelessly follow only the impulse of self-assertion and self-satisfaction. But where natural joins with supernatural in order to serve it as a support and as the instrument of its development, if the natural throws off this servitude and becomes its own object, then the innocent natural selfishness becomes the immoral; and if the natural is raised to be the standard of life, it will also mirror itself in the inner life of the spirit, and beside the deeds of sensuality will also appear the false tendencies of the spirit, lovelessness and self-glorification, so that these also are born of the selfish nature, of the *σάρξ*. We have further to note that though Paul deduces the more spiritual sins likewise from the *σάρξ*, he always places first the sins of sensuous desire, and makes the others as more abstract, and indirect manifestations of sin follow those which are as it were more natural. Certainly Paul nowhere asserts or examines that selfish nature of the *σάρξ*, so that we are here in the position of filling in by conjecture an indispensable middle term in his train of thought, though he seems to us more than once to indicate it indirectly and by way of presupposition. When he writes in Gal. v. 17, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things ye would," he is speaking, not indeed of an original antithesis in God's creation, but of the actual condition of the Christian, in which each of the two powers seeks to overcome the other; but if it is the original nature of the *πνεῦμα*, its essential *ἐπιθυμεῖν*, to hold men to

self-denial and surrender to God, does not the contrary ἐπιθυμῆν follow as the original nature of the σάρξ? And when the apostle in Rom. viii. 7 says of the σάρξ, that its mind is "enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," he is no longer here, as in chap. vii., speaking of the moral inability of the whole man, but is giving the reason why the redeemed should no longer live to and serve the flesh, that is, he is speaking of the σάρξ, as such. Does not οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναται, which is here added to and goes beyond the assertion of insubordination, sound like a judgment upon the unethical nature of the σάρξ, as such, its essential inability to accommodate itself to the law of God, that is, its inborn selfishness? And this conception may perhaps give its full meaning to the striking and unqualified statement, Rom. vii. 18: οἶδα γάρ, ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν.

#### § 8. SUMMARY OF THE PAULINE ANTHROPOLOGY

The Pauline anthropology now lies clear and open before us. It is at bottom none other than that of the rest of the New Testament, except that the apostle, where he uses his terms more strictly, does not use ψυχή and πνεῦμα as synonyms, but as describing the lower and higher principles of life. Not that he has taught a Platonic trichotomy, as has been argued from 1 Thess. v. 23; this passage, more rhetorical than psychological, and standing quite alone, shows that he can at times distinguish the psyche as a middle term between body and spirit; while, as a rule, he thinks of it as included in the living σάρξ, that is, in the body as alive. The dichotomy common to the Bible thus remains: man related to nature and related to God, fashioned out of matter belonging to the earth, and a breath of life from God's own being. Though σάρξ and πνεῦμα are the peculiarly Pauline names for these two elements, other designations appear beside them which have the same sense; as the σῶμα and the μέλη are interchanged with the σάρξ, so are the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, the νοῦς, and the καρδία with the πνεῦμα. The expression ἔσω ἄνθρωπος (Rom. vii. 23; 2 Cor. iv. 16; Eph. iii. 16) is opposed to the ἔξω ἄνθρωπος

(2 Cor. iv. 16) quite in the same way as the *πνεῦμα* to the *σάρξ*; it is as synonymous with the *pneuma* as *Innere*s and *Geist* are in German. Now as the natural instincts and desires belong to the flesh, the living body, and its several members (Rom. vi. 12, xiii. 14), so to the inner man belongs the *νοῦς*,—the organ of hearing and receiving the divine,—the higher reason or moral consciousness. For it is clear from Rom. vii. 25 (*τῷ νοῖ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ*; cf. also vv. 22, 23 with vv. 16, 20, 21) that the *νοῦς* in the psychological sense<sup>1</sup> is to the apostle not merely the faculty of perception, the theoretic reason, but is at the same time the practical reason, the faculty of moral perception and of moral will, so that the *θέλειν* and *μισεῖν* mentioned in Rom. vii. 15, and the *συνείδησις*, the conscience made prominent, in Rom. ii. 15, come within its province. The apostle uses the "heart" as another equivalent for *πνεῦμα*, *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, *νοῦς* (cf. e.g. Rom. ii. 28, 29, viii. 27; 1 Cor. iv. 5, xiv. 25; 2 Cor. v. 12; Eph. i. 18). The apostle, in the popular way in which the Bible often speaks, regards it as the living point of unity of the whole personality, in which all psychic and pneumatic impulses meet, so that it may be described as the place in which the law of God is inscribed by nature (Rom. ii. 15, where the synonymy of *καρδιά* and *νοῦς*, Rom. vii. 22, is obvious), and again as the seat of the lusts and desires that spring from the *σάρξ* (Rom. i. 24). The peculiarity of the Pauline anthropology does not lie in all these psychological designations which do not completely coincide, but certainly cannot be clearly marked off from each other. It lies in the ethical side which we have developed above, in the strict opposition of flesh and spirit as the ungodly and the God-related principles in man. Not that he proposed here a doctrine at variance with the rest of the New Testament; we need only recall the saying of Jesus about the willingness of the spirit and the weakness of the flesh, as well as the reference of sin to the *σάρξ* in the Epistles of James and Peter. But none of the apostles has described, like Paul, the over-

<sup>1</sup> There is also an ethical sense of the word = mode of thought, disposition. For example, 1 Cor. ii. 16 speaks in this sense of a *νοῦς Χριστοῦ*, Col. ii. 18, of a *νοῦς τῆς σαρκος*.

powering strength of the flesh, the sensuous, selfish nature, or has emphasised the feebleness of the divine in man, which is like a smoking flax or a latent germ; and no one, like him, has made the whole work of salvation bear upon this evil element in man and nature; for salvation, founded by Christ as the ideal spiritual man, consists in breaking the power of the flesh and kindling the smoking flax of the spirit into a clear, holy flame through supplies from above; and that flame first of all transfigures the heart and the conduct, and, finally, it changes the mortal body also into the image of the perfected Christ. If we ask, finally, whence the apostle obtains this peculiar view of the *σάρξ* as the seat and home of sin in man, it is preposterous to seek for Old Testament suggestions which, in point of fact, do not exist; still more preposterous is it to make a clear thinker like the apostle transform in Hellenistic confusion a mere unspiritual substance, whose province is the sensuous body, into a principle hostile to spirit, which encroaches on the whole man.<sup>1</sup> The apostle gets his theory from life, from the moral experience which he passed through, and of which he has given a more exact account than perhaps any man before him. His experience of the power and selfishness of the *σάρξ* came from that inward conflict which he confesses in Rom. vii.,—from his conflict in youth between desire and conscience, from the excited passions of his sensuous, selfish nature, and the earnestness of the law of God which he felt judging even the secrets of the heart,—and from this experience sprang his doctrine of the *σάρξ*. Without doubt there is something individual and subjective in this experience; that inward conflict is not waged with such severity in every human soul as it was in Paul, and he himself in other passages, such as Rom. ii. 14, 15, 26, has not asserted the feebleness of the inward man so absolutely as in Rom. vii.; he could express it with this absoluteness in Rom. vii. only because he applied the absolute standard of the divine law to his heart. But his self-observation in that conflict between flesh and spirit was more than self-observation, just because, in feeling how absolute was the divine demand, he experienced with dreadful severity his inner

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gloel, *Der h. Geist*, pp. 54-58; Pfeleiderer, *Paulinism*, p. 55.

discord with it. It was the keen perception of an inward need and disease, which actually exists in every man and is felt more or less distinctly; and on his assertion of it as on a universal truth, he could base, with confidence, his message of salvation. In the subsequent doctrinal development of the Church, Augustine was the first to take up again these fundamental views of Paul, and through him they became the foundation of a reformed theology and an evangelical Church doctrine. We need only refer to the fact that an important difference prevails between Paul's conception and proof of the universal sinfulness of man and the later doctrine of the Church as it had been influenced by Augustine, seeing that Paul admits something really good in man's pneuma, however undeveloped and fettered.

## CHAPTER III

### ADAM AND CHRIST

#### § 1. TRANSITION TO THE HISTORICAL VIEW

Flesh and spirit are the elements in human nature in every man, and every man contains in himself the riddle of the discord of these elements. But this riddle is not solved in the individual, either as concerns the genesis or the overcoming of that discord. In order to find this twofold solution, the apostle was compelled to go beyond the consideration of the individual man to a consideration of humanity as a whole, of history in the most comprehensive sense. By raising himself to this standpoint he first of all surveys the problem to be solved in its whole extent; he perceives two dark, dreadful powers, sin and death, who, in union with each other, rule man and history, and have thrown a black veil over everything fair and joyous. But as he follows the obscure stream of the world's history up to its beginning and then down to its end, he discovers at these two points two corresponding and opposite figures which form the poles of the world's history, and solve for him its riddle in different ways. These figures are Adam and Christ.



Twice in his Epistles he contemplates the two in their contrast with each other (Rom. v. 12 f.; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45 f.). In the first passage he compares them with each other in their historical effect; Adam, the author of sin and death for all, and Christ, the conqueror of sin and death for all. In the second he goes back from their influence to their nature, to the relation in which they stand to the idea of humanity; Adam the first, sensuous, earthly man, and Christ the second and last, the spiritual and heavenly man. By analysing these views of the apostle we may hope to penetrate further into the depths of his view of the world.

## § 2. CONCEPT AND NATURE OF SIN

First, then, as to his view of sin. In the exposition of the wrong relation of spirit and flesh, Paul has led us to the actual basis of sin in man; but he has not yet made sin, as such, the object of his consideration. He nowhere does so in any formal explanation, but he gives abundance of incidental suggestions. His view of sin is contained essentially in its name *ἁμαρτία*, a missing of the mark. That describes it as in its idea unnatural, as something that ought not to be, something deviating from the right line; the name at once gives the thing the stamp of contradiction to God and His holy will. The same idea is expressed in the synonymous designations, *παράβασις*, *παράπτωμα*, *ἀνομία*, and *ἀδικία*. The apostle calls sin *παράβασις*, transgression where it ignores a known positive commandment (Rom. iv. 15, v. 14; Gal. iii. 18); something more is comprehended in the idea *παράπτωμα*, error, in which the consciousness of transgressing the law is not necessary, and which is sometimes used in the singular as a collective noun (Rom. iv. 25, v. 15–18, 20). Without distinguishing between sinful acts and sinful states, but with reference to both, *ἀνομία* and *ἀδικία* bring into prominence the insubordination and illegality of sin, describing it sometimes in the widest sense, including even impiety (Rom. i. 18b, ii. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 3), and sometimes denoting immorality in the narrower sense (Rom. vi. 19, i. 18, beside *ἀσέβεια*). Thus sin everywhere presupposes divine laws and arrangements (*δικαιώματα*, Rom. i. 32, ii. 26), a law of God

which it consciously or unconsciously violates. The apostle especially thinks of the kernel of the law as revealed in Israel, the Ten Commandments (cf. *e.g.* Rom. ii. 21 f., xiii. 9), the contents of which, he assumes, are written by nature on the hearts or consciences of the Gentiles (Rom. ii. 14, 15). Not that he limits their scope to the mere letter; rather, with Jesus, he traces them to their foundation in the heart, to the great fundamental obligation of love to God and our neighbour. The latter is expressly described (Rom. xiii. 8) as the summary of the commandments of the second table; and that the love of God, the great fundamental religious duty, which also contains the whole of morality, is not to be forgotten (Rom. viii. 28; 1 Cor. ii. 9), is self-evident.<sup>1</sup> Just because all right moral conduct must rest on love for God, natural selfishness, the opposite pole, is in its inmost nature *ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν*, enmity against God (Rom. viii. 7), though this is commonly unconscious. This relation of sin to God and God's holy ordinances is, moreover, the reason that sin in all its forms is guilt towards God, arrears in a debt of honour towards Him, and of obedience due to Him (Rom. ii. 8, *ἐριθεία, ἀπειθεία*), and so every sin coming into consciousness must beget in man anguish before God, a fear of His punishment (*φόβος*, Rom. viii. 15), in a word, a sense of guilt. It is surprising that the apostle has formed no quite adequate expression for this subjective element, which is yet of unmistakable significance in his doctrine of justification.<sup>2</sup> He has preferred to emphasise the objective reality which lies at the basis of the sense of guilt, and attests itself in it, viz. the wrath of God, that is, His holy indignation against all ungodliness and impiety of men (Rom. i. 18), out of which His judgments spring, which are on that account also described as *ὀργή, sc. μέλλουσα* (Rom. iii. 5, v. 9, etc.). As a matter of course, the measure of guilt, both of the subjective sense of guilt and of the objective wrath of God, depends on the degree

<sup>1</sup> Observe how, in Rom. i. 21, all the religious and moral corruption of the Gentile world is traced back to its negligence in right conduct towards God, to the omission of praise and thanks.

<sup>2</sup> The idea of the sense of guilt is only touched on in the *θλίψις καὶ στενοχωρία* (Rom. ii. 9), or the "curse of the law" (Gal. iii. 13), and similar phrases.

of responsibility, and this responsibility depends upon the greater or less knowledge of the divine law. Hence it is said (Rom. v. 13), that sin is not imputed where there is no law, and in Rom. iv. 15, that the law worketh wrath (of God), as where there is no law there is also no transgression. These are two undeniable truths, but only of relative application. Assuredly the full idea of sin, and therefore of guilt, is only present where God's commandment clearly opposes the man in his going astray, and he, in spite of the commandment, continues to cling to his error (Rom. vii. 7). The apostle therefore, in face of all the excess of sin in the heathen world, does not regard Israel, who possesses the revealed law, and is more moral outwardly, as less, but as more sinful and guilty (Rom. v. 20, vii. 13; Gal. iii. 19). But yet no man, no heathen even, so far as he is at all spiritually responsible, is entirely without a knowledge of the divine law; God has written it by nature on his heart, and therefore he is responsible in the measure of his knowledge;—the wrath of God which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men lies justly on the heathen world also (Rom. i. 18–20).

### § 3. MANIFESTATION AND POWER OF SIN

As to the appearance of sin in the life of man, the apostle naturally directs his attention first to the individual act as such (*ἁμαρτία* = *ἁμαρτήμα*, 1 Cor. vi. 18; 2 Cor. xi. 7; Rom. iii. 25). Every moral act, whether it be deed or word or thought, which offends against God's holy will—and every act does so which does not spring from love to God—is sin (cf. Rom. xiv. 23). There can be no question that the apostle, in such individual acts, attributes to man freedom to do or leave them undone. All his moral exhortations and warnings presuppose such freedom, and if heathen men have the moral capacity of doing *τὰ τοῦ νόμου* (Rom. ii. 14, 26), then even their transgressions are free acts of their will. But still it is only on the surface that sin appears to us as a separate act of free will; in the continuity of the moral life, every good or evil particular, especially certain decisions of the will for good or evil, have a proportional binding power. "Know ye not," says the apostle to his readers (Rom. vi. 16), "that to whom

ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." Sin therefore, on every side of moral life, may develop itself as tendency, as condition, as vice, and the apostle turns his attention more to this its worse form. The condition of the life of the people of his time, the Jews, and still more the heathen, gives him repeated occasion to portray the prevailing corruption, and to enumerate the dissolute, dishonourable, and loveless vices, where unnatural lust was allowed and the natural instincts of morality were destroyed, in which pre-Christian humanity was entangled (Rom. i. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 9; Gal. v. 19 f.). Even here may be found a sense of guilt (Rom. i. 32), and therefore a consciousness of freedom and responsibility: though sin already appears as a ruling power enslaving the will (Rom. vi. 20). Accordingly the apostle calls the prevailing vices *πάθη, πάθη ἀτιμίας*, (Rom. i. 26); it is a fitting designation for man's moral passivity in presence of a power foreign to his true nature in which he finds himself, and which degrades and dishonours him. But he certainly does not mean that this bondage to vice holds good of all who have not been made free in Christ. He cautiously says, after the enumeration of the past pre-Christian vices of his readers (1 Cor. vi. 11), *καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε, — τίνες*, not all. There are heathen even who have kept themselves pure from all that is recorded in Rom. i., who "do the works of the law," who "keep the commandments of the law" (Rom. ii. 14, 26): how much more have there been and still are in Israel those who, as distinguished from the heathen world, are characterised by the *διώκειν νόμον δικαιοσύνης*, the following after the law of righteousness (Rom. ix. 31). Not to speak of the pious of the old covenant, like Abraham or Elijah, the apostle himself is proof of what an earnest will directed to God's commandments can achieve; he was a young Jewish Zealot, *κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ ἄμεμπτος* (Phil. iii. 6). Yet he places himself, and with himself all, even the best and purest who are out of Christ, in a wider, deeper sense in the same relation of bondage to sin; he knows himself to be by nature (*αὐτὸς ἐγώ*, Rom. vii. 25) *ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν, δουλεύων τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, πεπραμένον ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* (Rom. vii. 14, 25), for he is *σάρκινος*. The most

secret but most powerful form in which sin appears to him is that it is an attribute of human nature as such, it is the evil supremacy which the flesh has over the spirit. He puts emphasis on this fact in his very phraseology ; to him *ἀμαρτία* is not so often particular sins or individual sinful condition, it is more frequently the evil principle of our sinfulness, the evil power which has forced its way into the world (Rom. v. 12) and which rules in it (*βασιλεύει*, Rom. v. 21, vi. 12), under which all are sold and concluded (vii. 14, xi. 32), which dwells in every child of man, and has implanted its law in him (*ἡ ἐνοικοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἀμαρτία*, Rom. vii. 17, 18, vii. 23, *νόμῳ τῆς ἀμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου*). He himself tells us in Rom. vii. 9 f. how he came to experience sin in this form : “ Without the law sin is dead. For I was alive without the law once, in the happiness and peace of childhood, untouched by the law. But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died, that is, I felt myself to be a child of death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” This manifest repetition of the story of Paradise (Gen. iii.) he here describes as an experience of his own ; but the serpent, which there comes to man from without, he nursed in his own bosom ; it only slumbered and appeared to be dead. Then arose the conflict between commandment and natural desire, the commandment, “ Thou shalt not covet ” (for this is meant, ver. 7), stamped the natural desire, which till then was innocent, as evil desire by opposing it, and yet was unable to suppress it. And thus Paul became sensible of his sinfulness and lost condition, since that which was forbidden continued to appear to him attractive ; the sentence of the holy God pierced him like a sword of judgment. That is an experience in which every man does not follow the apostle, because every man does not enter into judgment with himself with such pitiless severity, but which he nevertheless can present as universally true because human nature, which he has in this way come to know in himself, is the same in all. The perversity and corruption of human nature which reappear in all consist in the fact that the flesh is mightier than the spirit, that the sensuous selfish impulse, when it encounters the contradiction of reason and conscience, does not yield and be silent, but

resists and—though it may not issue in a deed of sin, it asserts itself in the heart as evil desire, or concupiscence. That is the fact which leads the apostle in Eph. ii. 3 to call men “children of wrath by nature,” and which now leads him in his consideration of sin to take the last step which fixes the character of his whole Christian doctrine of salvation; he maintains not only the inclination of the natural man to evil, but his impotence for what is truly good, his inability to produce in himself a righteousness which can satisfy God. “There is none that doeth good, no not one. Every mouth must be closed, and the whole world become guilty before God” (*ὑπόδικος γενέσθαι τῷ θεῷ*). “For by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” “The good that I would I do not; and the evil that I would not that I do. To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Rom. iii. 12, 19, 20, vii. 15, 18). To understand this moral sentence of death which the apostle passes on himself and the whole of natural humanity, we must keep steadily in view that he is here applying the most ideal, and absolute standard of goodness. There is abundant goodness according to a relative standard in the world, and abundant freedom and power to perform it, but the good in question here is the absolute good; as when Kant says, there is nothing really good in heaven or earth but a good will. This really good will, which endures nothing of evil beside it, which everywhere gives to a pure act the pure motive, which, in successive victories over the radical evil, the natural selfishness, produces in us the true and perfect man of God, who lives and moves with his whole heart in the love of God,—this is what the apostle denies to the natural man; and who can contradict him here? But this ideal and absolute standard is the only one that can be admitted in the presence of God, the holy God who looketh on the heart, and whose blessed fellowship is bound by the rule: “Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.” If all His commandments are comprehended in the one, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,” and if the fleshly mind is *ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν*, what signify all relative virtues and pious wishes if we are unable to tear this *ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν* from the heart and put in its place the perfect love

of God? And therefore Paul certainly makes good his point when he carries his judgment about sin to this extreme, that no freedom remains in man to do what is good except the freedom to cry for divine deliverance: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. vii. 24).

#### § 4. SIN AND DEATH

On this universal moral bondage there lies a judgment of God as universal: that is death. For the wages of sin is death, writes the apostle (Rom. vi. 23); this statement is not, according to a common interpretation, an explanation of what we now call death, but it presupposes the apostle's peculiar idea of death, and explains it as the result of sin. What is this idea? It is an error to suppose that the apostle did not include the death of the body in the death which, according to Rom. v. 12, has come into the world by sin, or to suppose that because many passages (as, for example, Rom. vii. 10, "I died") cannot possibly refer to the death of the body, he had diverse conceptions of death, and applied now the one and now the other. He only takes a profounder and more comprehensive view of death than we do; death is to him something that refers not merely to the body, but also to the soul; and not merely to the moment when soul and body are separated, and the soul set free perhaps to rise to a higher existence; it is a state and course of life in contradiction with that communion of body and soul which God intended, which begins long before the moment of separation, but is completed and revealed in that moment in order to remain permanent for body and soul—unless a higher power interposes. Or, to note at the same time the relation between death and the law, or God's commandment, as we have it in Rom. v. 12–19, vii. 8 f.; 1 Cor. xv. 56; 2 Cor. iii. 6, death to the apostle is the sword of the eternal Judge, which pierces through soul and body, the effectual judgment of God which is felt beforehand in the soul, as wretchedness and a sense of guilt, as an inward sentence of death, and is felt in the body as weakness and frailty, as a feeling of perishableness before it is consummated in the bodily death; death is manifest not merely in the failure of the body, but also in the soul, which, with all the

deceptions of the lusts of sense and the world of sense gone from it, is confronted openly and inevitably with God's judgment. The proofs of this range of the idea *θάνατος* may be got from the very passages which are supposed to yield diverse ideas of death, while the fact that one relation of sin and death is common to them all, shows that they rest upon one fundamental view. Certainly the apostle, as is natural, does not exhaust the sense of his fundamental idea in every application of it, in many cases he lays stress only upon particular parts of it. Such expressions as "I died," "Sin, through the commandment, slew me" (Rom. vii. 10, 11), speak of the first inward experience of the divine sentence of death. The statement, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. iii. 6), emphasises the judicial efficacy of the Old Testament law condemning to death, in contrast to the redeeming, spiritual life-giving power of the gospel. The remarkable words 1 Cor. xv. 56, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," tersely describe the connection of death, sin and law, in a picture which is suggested by the words of the prophet, "Death, where is thy sting?" death is conceived as a scorpion which kills with a poisonous sting; this sting, by which death makes its way into man, is sin; but the deadly, that is, condemning, power of sin lies in the law, which first makes man truly experience sin as sin (Rom. vii. 7). In all these passages death is conceived as the direct result of sin, that is, death is viewed only in its relative realisation which is already present; other passages, such as, for example, Rom. vi. 22, 23, "The end of those (sinful) things is death; the wages of sin is death," consider it rather in its absolute realisation, as the final result of the sinful development, as the final *κατάκρισις* and *ἀπώλεια* of man; that is the main difference in the application of the idea. Now, the death of the body lies midway between that secret incipient condition and this manifest consummation of the process: it is a moment of transition, an acute manifestation of the chronic condition of disease, which makes an epoch in its progress. No doubt our apostle, like other writers of the New Testament (cf. Jas. v. 20; 1 John iii. 14), got this conception of *θάνατος* from the Old Testament account of the Fall: for when it is said there, "In the day thou eatest thou



shalt surely die," and Adam did not die bodily for centuries afterwards, the idea is suggested of a death which began in germ, when Adam forfeited access to the tree of life, and so became a child of death. But the deeper motive for the forming of that idea is the consideration, which also seems to underlie that Paradise story, that man can have eternal life only in unbroken communion with God the eternal source of life, and that in the separation from God which sin has introduced he has only a transitory, seeming life, which is rather a sort of death, first hidden and then made manifest. As to the particular connection between sin and death as thus conceived and taught by the apostle, he traces it back, as we shall see, sometimes to a divine judgment of condemnation and sometimes to its natural basis in the discord of flesh and spirit in man. There is no contradiction in these two views. The first corresponds likewise to the story of the Fall (Gen. ii. 17, iii. 19), and the apostle regards it as important for throwing light upon the relation of the divine law to sin, as guilt, and worthy of death. The commandment in Eden, united with a threatening of death, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," he regards as foreshadowing the divine law as expressed in the Ten Commandments and the whole Sinaitic legislation. It is the divinely revealed order of man's life, whose transgression calls forth death, and which, in the sense of guilt awakened in the transgressor, insinuates as it were the merited divine sentence of death (Rom. v. 16-18, vii. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 6). But that does not do away with the fact that this divine sentence of death is at the same time, in a certain sense a law of nature, a natural consequence of the illegal dominance of the *σάρξ* in man. The *σάρξ*, as the material, is in itself perishable and null, and in spite of all its selfish desire for life it never attains true life, but, if left to itself, is necessarily subject to decay, *φθορά*. "Flesh and blood, it is said (1 Cor. xv. 50), cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Now, the *σάρξ*, by usurping the lordship in man, hinders the *πνεῦμα* from deriving from communion with God the powers of eternal life, by which it would not only have won for itself immortality, but also have transfigured the *σῶμα τῆς σαρκός* into a *σῶμα πνευματικόν*; instead of that it drags the spirit

down with itself in its natural ruin to its *ἀπώλεια*, unless a *σωτηρία*, a power of deliverance, intervenes. The apostle then looks on death as a law of nature; and yet in its application to man it is not an original, it is not merely a law of nature, but, as it affects the soul and rests on moral grounds, it is a penal law of the moral order of the world. But God is the maintainer of the moral order of the world, and His sentence, His judgment, is carried out in its applications.

§ 5. TRACING BACK OF SIN AND DEATH TO ADAM,  
ROM. V. 12 FF.

Yet well-conceived and profound as all this is, it does not solve, but only brings into prominence a last and most difficult question: How did this fatal perversion of human nature, from which sin and death spring, originate? how are we to conceive that a condition so hostile to God that He must attach to it the penalty of death, should be the universal condition of man? The rest of the New Testament has not entered into this old question of religious speculation, *ποθὲν τὸ κακόν*? but has been content with representing the natural ruin of humanity as a fact, and with opposing to it the fact of the redemption that is offered in Christ. Our apostle, who penetrated deeper into the obscure fact, both in the way of experience and of thought, has suggested a historico-philosophic explanation, which has received more attention in the doctrinal development of the Church than the example of the New Testament justifies. Or rather the desire to throw light upon the comprehensiveness of Christ's salvation in overcoming sin and death, caused the apostle to plunge into the obscurities of human origins, and to seek the origin of sin and death in the first man Adam (Rom. v. 12). The passage requires a more thorough discussion. "Therefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men," *ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον*; this last clause, as is pretty generally acknowledged, should be completed by this other: "So also by one man righteousness has come into the world, and through righteousness eternal life." But the much discussed words, *ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον*, which can only be explained by giving to *ἐφ' ᾧ* the force of a con-

junction, equal to because or inasmuch as, are evidently meant to show how sin and death passed from one to all. Now, if we take these words in the sense usually favoured, "Because they all in their individual lives have sinned," they contain an idea as untrue as it is inappropriate. Untrue, because infants who die at birth or soon after have not actually sinned; inappropriate, because the premises would then be refuted by this statement, and the whole parallel between Adam and Christ be destroyed. For if all die because all have actually sinned, then death has not passed upon all through one man's sin, and this one is not the prototype of Christ, through whom eternal life for all comes into the world. To understand the apostle we must rather follow the exposition of Bengel (which is favoured also by Meyer and Pfleiderer), "Because they—viz. in Adam—all have sinned"; they all, viz. who were included in Adam according to the Old Testament view, which sees the whole race in the founder, acted in his action. In favour of this exposition is (1) the further illustration of the apostle, vv. 15, 19, τῷ τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον—διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί; (2) the Aorist ἥμαρτον, which cannot refer to the continuous and in part still future sinning of all men in their individual lives, but only of a solitary historical fact like the act of sin of all in Adam; (3) the argument in vv. 13, 14 directly joined on with γὰρ to the ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον. Paul continues: "For until the (Mosaic) law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (that is, not against a positive commandment whose transgression called forth death); by which he must have meant that those between Adam and Moses, who sinned in ignorance, did not die because of their personal sin; for where there is no law sin is not imputed, and least of all is it reckoned worthy of death, so they must have died for another reason, viz. for their part in the sin of Adam. And these words can only establish the argument of vv. 13, 14 if ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον express the sinning of all in Adam, an idea which we have certainly in vv. 15, 19, and which has its parallel in 2 Cor. x. 15, in

the dying of all in the death of Christ. Consequently the apostle regards Adam as the author of sin and death for all, just because at the hour of his fall he was as yet the sum-total of all. The passage does not teach an "original sin," but an act of humanity as a whole in Adam. Adam had a positive command from God, the transgression of which was death; he transgressed that commandment, and therewith he called down on all the divine sentence of death, for in him all had sinned. This is a juristic argument which strikes us nowadays as somewhat Rabbinical, and which we might reasonably answer with *summum jus, summa injuria*. For we are not conscious of having acted and sinned in Adam, and yet we must have such knowledge, if on account of what we did in him we have deserved death. This onesidedly legal view of the apostle in Rom. v. 12 f. is evidently connected with the forensic notion of justification which rules the first five chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, and we have the satisfaction of finding that at another time he considers the matter from another point of view, and so brings it nearer to our comprehension. This is done in the second contrast of Adam and Christ, which we mentioned in the beginning of this chapter (1 Cor. xv. 45-49).

#### § 6. ADAM ACCORDING TO 1 COR. XV.

It is written: "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (that is, sensuous); afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as are the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." In this profound argument, therefore, the fact that "We all die in Adam" (ver. 22) is traced back not to Adam's deed, but to Adam's nature. Adam was *ἐκ γῆς, χοϊκός*, and the earthy is in itself the frail and perishable. Now, as we have Adam's nature, and are like him, *χοϊκός*, we are also subject to death by nature. That, of course, cannot mean nature apart from sin,

for that would not only contradict all that the apostle has said in Rom. v. 12 f., but also the statement that meets us in 1 Cor. xv. 56, that the sting of death which pierces man is sin. Neither can it mean, what we have already rejected, that Adam was created by God without spirit as a purely psychical or fleshly man, and so was from the first incapable of fulfilling God's commandments or doing anything but what was sensuous and selfish. For how then could the apostle speak of a disobedience or transgression of Adam, and continue to assert man's responsibility, and the character of sin as guilt? On the contrary, the apostle, on the basis of the biblical history, has conceived Adam as endowed with the original capacity of doing the will of God; it was possible for him by moral development, by spiritualising his sensuous nature, to come to eat of the tree of life, that is, to immortality, and to obtain without death the transformation of his *σῶμα ψυχικόν* to a *σῶμα πνευματικόν*. Adam did not take this path; he did not subject his sensuous selfish impulse to God's commandment, but without restraint he gave up his fleshly nature to what is sensuous and vain. He so perverted the human nature in himself that the sensuous selfish impulse overpowered the Godward tendency of the spirit, and this corruption passes over from him as the founder of the human race to all his descendants. That is the only view consistent with 1 Cor. xv. and Rom. v. 12 f., as to the origination of the universal sinfulness and mortality of man through Adam. *Οἶος ὁ χοϊκός, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ χοϊκοί*, a relation of likeness which the apostle, though he nowhere expresses it, can scarcely have conceived to be brought about otherwise than by natural generation; so that from this side the Church's dogma of original sin is undoubtedly founded on his view.<sup>1</sup> This explanation of the universality of sin is certainly not satisfactory to us. A first man who was free to destroy at once the full freedom of the whole race descending from him, and by transmission of his sin to infect them all unavoidably with

<sup>1</sup> The same thing is usually expressed in the words *ἡμεθα τέλεια φύσει ὁσγῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί* (Eph. ii. 3). But these words only mean that the Jews are by nature just as much fitted as the Gentiles to evoke God's displeasure. They do not mean that this natural condition has arisen through generation and heredity.

sin and death, is an idea that is scarcely consistent with our Christian idea of the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator, and which really cannot be logically maintained. "Let us bear in mind with regard to this, that the biblical Adam is really a mythical person, a figure due not to historical reminiscence but to the creative religious ideas and fancies of Israel thousands of years afterwards; even the history of his fall was not originally conceived as a crisis pregnant with results for the whole human race; it is nowhere thus regarded in the canonical books of the Old Testament. It is meant as the history of the fall of man as such, of every man who has to decide between God's commandments and the enticements of the world of sense. Now the apostle, in accordance with the view of Scripture of his time, has certainly conceived Adam as a historical person, but in reality has treated him as a mythical figure which the same view of Scripture allowed him also to do. For it is certain, though the fact is often neglected, that the Pauline Adam is not the literal Adam of the history of the Fall. In the biblical history sin and death do not proceed from one human being but from two, who eat together of the forbidden fruit. But the apostle could not make use of this duality in his proposed contrast of Adam and Christ, and therefore he goes back to the Adam of Gen. ii., as he is conceived before the creation of the woman, conceived as the unity of human nature not yet differentiated by sex. But, according to the original history, this Adam no longer exists at the time of the Fall, and therefore the Pauline Adam, who is the author of sin and death, is in no way like the historical Adam of Gen. iii., but is a Pauline ideal, the imagined prototype of natural humanity, the *ἄνθρωπος πρῶτος χοϊκός*, as the apostle calls him. He is man in his original condition, as he springs from the *γῆ*, the *χοῦς*, that is, the lower unspiritual nature, in virtue of a higher principle of life implanted in him by God. In this original condition it was most natural for him to let the impulses of the sensuous selfish nature have their way. Yet this sensuous nature from the very first is opposed by something higher, the demand of the moral capacity which makes itself felt in him as God's commandment, and requires him to subdue the natural impulse by the law of the Spirit. From the very

first, then, the sensuous moral conflict exists in man; the dominion of the sensuous and selfish nature is felt by the dawning conscience as that which ought not to be, and the development of the moral personality, the spiritual man who is to rule completely the natural impulse, is pointed out to him as the ideal to be realised. But the law of the development of the higher from the lower—a law which our apostle seems to recognise in his statement, *ἀλλ' οὐ πρῶτον τὸ πνευματικόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ψυχικόν, ἔπειτα τὸ πνευματικόν* (1 Cor. xv. 46)—confers an advantage on the sensuous factor in man which makes it difficult if not impossible to master it at first or subsequently. At anyrate it is a fact that humanity has not mastered it, but has remained under the dominion of the sensuous and selfish nature, in spite of all progressive development of its spiritual capacities in their relation to the world, hence the reversal of the right relation of flesh and spirit has become a second nature, although reason and conscience constantly protest against it and make the inward man as by right free-born, responsible for his unworthy bondage. That is a translation into our forms of thought of the kernel of the Pauline idea of the first Adam and his fall, viz. the assertion of the fact that sin, on the one hand, is rooted in man's actual nature as known in experience, and yet, on the other hand, through the sense of guilt which it produces, presents itself to him as that which ought not to be, as contradicting the will of God and the idea of man. This is essentially the Church doctrine of original sin, and it may be questioned whether religious and moral study can attain to any further solution of the riddle of the origin of sin in man. The only fully satisfying solution lies rather in the fact that God does not leave humanity in the wretched state of contradiction into which it has sunk more and more, but makes the realising of its ideal possible to it. And that leads us over from the earthly psychical Adam of the apostle to Christ, the second Adam, the spiritual and heavenly man.

#### § 7. CHRIST THE SECOND ADAM

It should be noted that Paul, as already pointed out, does not make Adam the subject of consideration for his

own sake, or merely with the view of solving a theoretic problem, but that he regards him as a means of instruction—a means of making plain by this antitype the whole significance of Jesus for humanity and history (Rom. v. 12 f.). But we must also note that this significance of Jesus is comprised for Him in no other name so expressively as in the second Adam. This may be said to be the peculiar Pauline designation of Jesus. Other names of the Saviour, such as *ὁ Χριστός, ὁ κύριος, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, are found in him as well as elsewhere in the New Testament; and even those select names which he uses, such as *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*, have their synonyms in the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 3), or in Revelation (iii. 14). But the designation of Jesus as the second Adam, whether developed by Paul from Jesus' name for Himself—the Son of Man—or from some Jewish speculation about Adam already existent, belongs to him alone. But what does it mean? It means, of course, in particular, the human personality of Jesus, for Adam means man; and, in fact, the apostle, when applying it to Jesus, simply substitutes *ἄνθρωπος* for it (Rom. v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 47). But it means, too, that a new beginning of history has been made with this man, a beginning comparable only to the first beginning when God created man, but in another and higher, and indeed an opposite way. Jesus is to the apostle the *δεύτερος* and *ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ*, because He follows the first only after a long interval during which there had been no event in history of like significance for humanity; and because He virtually closed the human development inaugurated by the first Adam, inasmuch as He has raised man to the highest stage conceivable. But he calls Him the *πνευματικός, ἐπουράνιος Ἀδάμ*, in contrast with the *Ἀδάμ ψυχικός, χοϊκός*, because the outward resemblance in world-wide significance of both carries with it a direct opposition in substantial significance. As Adam in himself sums up the whole natural earth-born life of humanity, and is the archetype of all men on their lower sensuous side, the author of sin and death for all, so Christ is for all the Archetype and source of their higher spiritual development, the origin of righteousness and life for all.



In this sense the apostle, in Rom. v. 12–19, maintains that Christ is the regenerator of humanity, the virtual repairer of the damage which Adam caused, and that He not only repairs but restores to perfection by leading humanity not only back to the point at which the error began, but to the goal of its eternal destiny. But in 1 Cor. xv., as already stated, he bases this incomparable ministry of Christ still more definitely on His incomparable personality. He is the “spiritual and heavenly Man,” the Man in whom, as distinguished from all the children of Adam, the *pneuma*, the divine principle of life, is the absolutely determining factor. He alone is Man, as God in His heaven from eternity conceived and willed Him to be; in a word, the original ideal Man. And this ideal Man, in His life, death, and resurrection, has become a *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν* for all (1 Cor. xv. 45), a spiritual power which is able to communicate to all and imprint on all its own life from the outpouring of the Spirit into the heart to the final glorification of the body. From all this there can be no doubt that the apostle comprehends, in this idea of the second Adam, the typical, spiritual Man, everything that Christ is to humanity, and that there can be no greater mistake than to think of finding in this idea only that which the subsequent doctrine of the Church calls the human nature of Christ as distinguished from the divine. If that were correct, then Paul would make the human nature in Christ that which alone redeems, and the divine nature would be quite superfluous; for when the apostle ascribes to Christ as the *εἰς ἄνθρωπος (πνευματικός)*, “grace, gift of grace, superabundance of grace and gifts of righteousness, dominion of grace by means of righteousness to eternal life” (Rom. v. 15–19); or, according to 1 Cor. xv. 45, the nature of a *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν*,—there is nothing further or higher that he can say of Him. On the contrary, it is clear that while the concept “human nature” only expresses that which Christ has in common with us all, the apostle by the names “*δεύτερος Ἀδάμ, εἰς ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός*,” characterises that in Him which distinguishes Him from all who have the common human nature, and presents Him in perfect uniqueness. He applies to Him

the idea of humanity, in its most ideal conception, in a loftiness and perfection which no longer allows us to think of it alongside of, but contained in that which the doctrine of the Church calls His divine nature. In this, however, the apostle shows us a more perfect and satisfying Christology than that which was set up by the later Church in its doctrine of the two natures, obtained by an application of scholastic notions of the Greeks. For, in the first place, that doctrine of the two natures, as is well known, does not succeed in constructing a harmonious living personality from the two natures, but they remain apart, conflicting with each other in their attributes, and mutually destroying each other; they are always on the point of separating into two persons. The apostle, on the other hand, by thinking of Christ as the ideal Man—that is, the perfect image of God among men—does not place the human and divine beside each other, but thinks of both in each other, God living in Christ and Christ in God. For the notion of the ideal Man cannot be completed without the perfect indwelling of God in Him; for as God has prepared the human heart to be His dwelling-place, and man only fulfils his destiny in communion with God, the ideal Man is just the Man who stands in absolute communion with God, or in whom “dwells the fulness of the Godhead.” The ideal Man is therefore the God-Man. But, in the second place, in that doctrine of two natures, the human nature of Christ, as is well known, never gets its due. It unavoidably becomes a mere appendage to a divine person already complete without it, and thus arises an image of Christ which is capable of no human development, no human feeling and experience, and which presents at bottom only an apparent human personality. And yet a Saviour who is not a full true man is only a seeming Saviour just because He is not really of us, and therefore what is given in Him cannot really be for the advantage of humanity. It is different in the case of our apostle, who makes the ideal humanity the essential element in his picture of Christ, and develops this so as to contain the full presence and revelation of God; thus only do we get a clear view of a Saviour in whom humanity really

receives as its own all that it lacked in Adam. But even yet it is by no means recognised that this is the actual character and scope of the Pauline Christology. It is all the more important for us to convince ourselves, by a thorough investigation of the christological utterances of the apostle, that they are really enclosed in the fundamental view, "Christ the ideal Man," and therefore do not less but more justice to the interests of Christian faith. We begin with his utterances about the historical Christ in order to lead up from that to the exalted and, finally, to the pre-existent Christ.

### § 8. THE HISTORICAL CHRIST

The apostle has repeatedly found occasion to allude to the historical origin of the Saviour: Rom. i. 3 f., viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4. The first of these passages is for us the most instructive, because it in no way—like the other two—raises the question of pre-existence, but fixes attention solely on the historical personality, though it also describes that personality analytically. At the very beginning of this Epistle to the Romans the apostle desires to explain his conception of the person of Christ to his judaising readers, to grant to them what must be granted, that Christ as David's son is descended from the Jewish people, but at the same time to remind them that as the Risen and Exalted One He is now free from that national limitation, and is Saviour of the whole world, even of the Gentiles. And thus appears the double description of the Son of God: *τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα—τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν*. The first declaration so unreservedly expresses His origin as a temporal and human one, that it excludes even the synoptic tradition of a Fatherless generation and Virgin birth. He is *κατὰ σάρκα* in conformity with the predictions of the prophet, *γενόμενος ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ*: He must therefore have had a human father, who on his side sprang from David. For the attempt to meet the difficulty by saying that He might be Davidic by means of His mother Mary, is opposed not only by the absence of any biblical tradition of Mary's Davidic

descent, but also by the universal view of the Hebrews, that descent is determined by the father and not by the mother, as well as the universal usage of words, which in *ἐκ σπέρματος* leads us to think solely of a father's begetting (cf. Acts ii. 30). This is sufficient even if we did not note that, as we shall see, the following words base the divine Sonship of Jesus only on the *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, that is, they do not extend to His *κατὰ σάρκα γένεσθαι*. The *γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός* of Gal. iv. 4, in the same way, emphasises simply the genuine human beginning of life. For the expression, as the following *γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον* shows, is used intentionally to bring into prominence His likeness to us. But not less significant, on the other hand, is the continuation of the passage in Romans which refers to His *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. It does not indeed speak directly of the descent of Jesus, but rather of His arriving at the power and glory of a Son, attained in virtue of the resurrection from the dead. But that He should first have become *υἱὸς θεοῦ* through the resurrection is inconceivable according to Paul's view, which always assumes that He is Son of God (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4); according to our present passage (ver. 3) He is only "declared with power," or installed, in virtue of His resurrection, in the position which He had by right. And therefore the *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης* cannot describe anything which He first received in virtue of His resurrection or subsequent to it, but can only give prominence to the original factor of His personality, in accordance with which it was necessary that He should finally attain to the glory of the exalted Son of God, viz. that factor of His personality which is in contrast to the *κατὰ σάρκα*, and on which His divine Sonship rests, as His Davidic sonship on the former. The whole passage therefore is specially significant, as giving expression to the universal human nature of Jesus, and at the same time His uniqueness within that nature. The two elements of human nature, *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα*, are also regarded by the apostle as the elements of the personality of Jesus, except that He had in addition a divine nature existing alongside of them. But both factors in this personality are specifically defined, the *σάρξ* as Davidic, the *πνεῦμα* as *πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης*. The apostle has manifestly chosen this

latter expression with the view of avoiding the “*πνεῦμα ἄγιον*,” which would have been perplexing here, in order to make us see that the point in question here was the *πνεῦμα*, which together with the *σάρξ* forms the human personality, but that there was a quality inherent in the *πνεῦμα* of Jesus which established His spiritual individuality; a holy energy that excluded from the first that sinful predominance of the *σάρξ*, which is in all other men the basis of sinfulness. That, according to Paul, is the unique and wonderful element in the origin of Jesus, which does not, however, exclude the universal human element. He is sinless even in His original constitution, while the *πνεῦμα* in Him exercises a holy power of making the *σάρξ* its servant; and thus there is in Him from His very birth the *ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός*, which develops to its full capacity the God-related side of human nature, and will help all who attach themselves to Him to do the same. This result is confirmed from another side by the passage Rom. viii. 3 : *ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*. By this *ὁμοιώματι* the apostle assuredly does not mean simply in a flesh like to our sinful flesh; for that would destroy the force of his main thought, that God has broken the power of sin in humanity, and given it its death-blow (*κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί*), by clothing His Son in the very flesh in which sin in us has its seat. If His flesh was only similar to ours, not the same, then He has become no real member of the human race, and that which He has accomplished in His *σάρξ* (of another kind) has no significance and no result for the totality of the human race. And yet Paul cannot and has not wished to write *ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν σαρκὶ ἁμαρτίας*; for he would then have ascribed to Him our sinful flesh, and conceived Him as Himself diseased and needing salvation, not as the Saviour of the diseased. And so he has manifestly chosen that phrase in order to express thereby, in the same *σάρξ* as that we bear, which in us is a *σάρξ ἁμαρτίας*, but in Him was not such. That is, He had a sensuous nature capable of suffering and temptation and death like our own: it is said in 2 Cor. xiii. 4, He was crucified “*ἐξ ἰσθενείας*.” He could be crucified because He was a man weak and capable of suffering like ourselves. And in Rom. vi. 9 it is

said, *θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει*, that is, till then it had dominion over Him. He was mortal like ourselves. Only that dominion of the *σάρξ* over the *νοῦς* or *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, which is the root of sin in us, was in His case excluded: how can it have been excluded except by an original holy vigour of the pneuma, as a *πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης*? To the mind of the apostle, then, there is prepared in Jesus the pure vessel into which the fulness of the Godhead may be poured, the sinless Man (*ὁ μὴ γνοὺς ἁμαρτίαν*, He who has no personal experience of sin, 2 Cor. v. 21), who can and does give Himself up to God as the perfect organ of His revelation of love to the world (2 Cor. v. 19: *ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ*). Even in His earthly humiliation a truly divine character belongs to this Christ from whose countenance "shines the glory of God" (2 Cor. iv. 6; cf. John xiv. 9); but the apostle even in those loftiest utterances about Him, such as 2 Cor. v. 19 f., Col. i. 19, ii. 9, always distinguishes the human personality as the vessel from the God who fills it. To his mind also this unity of Christ with God is not complete from the first; He is not raised by that natural sinless disposition above the peculiarly human task of moral self-determination, producing at last complete fellowship with God. Little as the apostle has to say about the historical life of Jesus, he makes us see quite plainly that this was not his thought. Although Jesus from the first is *ὁ μὴ γνοὺς ἁμαρτίαν*, yet, according to Rom. vi. 10, He only died to sin once for all upon the cross, that is, He so died to it that henceforth He has nothing more to do with it.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, till then He had to do with it; His relation to it was wholly innocent; He never committed sin, but only suffered from it, and that passive relation was one of infinite greatness and difficulty. For He had to maintain obedience towards His heavenly Father in the midst of a sinful world estranged from God, not only by keeping Himself unspotted from this world, but by revealing to it the whole of God's holy love. He had not therefore to live to God simply for Himself in quiet seclusion from the world, He had to enter

<sup>1</sup> A meaning of the passage which is sufficiently clear from the context, and is also recognised by the exposition. The reference here is not to a dying for our sins, but of His own death to sin.

into it as the Christ, the God-sent Saviour, and allow the revilings of those who revile God to fall on Himself (Rom. xv. 3); He had to bear upon His heart in compassion the sinful corruption of the world. Accordingly, the apostle describes His earthly life as the entire opposite of all selfishness (*οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρρεσεν*, Rom. xv. 3; cf. Phil. ii. 7), as a denying of self and becoming poor for God's sake and ours, as a life of absolute obedience to the Father, and unlimited compassion towards us (2 Cor. viii. 9; Phil. ii. 8; Gal. i. 4, etc.). The summit and perfection of all that, however, is His death, which, for God's sake, He undertook in the interests of sinners and enemies (Rom. v. 6, 10). His obedience to the Father reaches its climax in this death upon the cross, for He cannot deny Himself more utterly than in this (Phil. ii. 8), and therefore He is perfected here as the Saviour of the world, as the complete opposite of the first Adam, who by his selfish disobedience has brought sin and death upon all (Rom. v. 19). For as that infinite act of obedience is at the same time an infinite act of love for the world, as in that self-surrender for sinners and enemies of God His own love for a lost world is revealed (Rom. v. 8), there lies in it also the power to repair all that the first Adam destroyed, and to reconquer the whole world for the eternal love.

### § 9. THE EXALTED CHRIST

The inner perfection which Jesus attained in His death expresses itself in the glory into which He entered through His resurrection. For He does not return to the old earthly life, but, as it is said in Eph. iv. 10, "rises above all heavens, that He may fill all things." He passes into a higher existence from which the earthly limitations are removed. Not only does He "live henceforth unto God," in a sense that was not possible till then (Rom. vi. 10), that is, enjoys His fellowship with God in an existence undisturbed by any conflict with sin; He also comes down from heaven and enters into a new relation to the earthly world. For in virtue of the glorified body (*σῶμα πνευματικόν*) which now pertains to Him, He becomes to the humanity which He has

potentially redeemed the *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν*, the holy spiritual power which implants in the heart the salvation and new life historically founded in Him, and so calls into existence a new redeemed and sanctified humanity. That is the first and most immediate form of His kingly government which, because it is throughout inward and spiritual, occasions the bold statement of the apostle, "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 17); that is, He is the higher principle of life which inwardly forms, guides, and leads to perfection the Church of believers, as well as the individual child of God belonging to that Church. The dominion and glory of the Exalted One will, however, gain a further development with His parousia, that is, His reappearance in power before the world in order to judge and perfect it (1 Thess. iv. 16 f.; 1 Cor. xv. 23). Then the renewal of the world, which in spirit, in an inward way, He began, will be perfected in material fact: He will raise His own to a glorified bodily life, and abolish the imperfect ordinances and powers opposed to God which have prevailed in the world; He will among them destroy death, in particular, as the last enemy, and thus restore the universe to what it was in the eternal thought of the divine love (1 Cor. xv. 23–27). It is certainly a divine might and glory which the apostle thus ascribes to the exalted Jesus. And those who hold the humanity of Christ to be but the garb of a servant assumed by a divine person, would expect the apostle to bring into prominence here, in the state of exaltation, Christ's fundamentally divine nature, whilst even if the humanity remained a glorified accident of the recovered divine form of existence, he would treat it as inferior, that is, he would cease to embrace all that is in the Exalted One in the notion of the *ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός*. But the very opposite of this is the case. First, it is doubtful even whether Paul has ever called the exalted Christ, God. The decision of that depends on the passage, Rom. ix. 5, where, after an enthusiastic enumeration of the privileges conferred by God on Israel, especially the last and greatest, that from it Christ should come *κατὰ σάρκα*, the apostle continues in the words, *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν*. The words may be referred to God by the insertion of a colon before them, as a thanksgiving which



the apostle renders Him for the grace bestowed on Israel, "God ruling over all be blessed for ever";<sup>1</sup> or the words may be referred to Christ, as a complement to the *τὸ κατὰ σάρκα*, by prefixing a mere comma, "Who (now as exalted) rules over all as God blessed for ever." Both views are possible, but neither forces itself upon us, and neither can be thoroughly refuted. But even if the christological interpretation is preferred it would not give a designation of Christ as *ὁ θεός*, which would be impossible for our apostle, as he always co-ordinates *ὁ θεός* and *ὁ πατήρ* (1 Cor. viii. 6); all that could be said is, Christ is described as *θεός* only in that wider sense without the article in which the Logos is called God in John i. 1, and in which in Scripture even earthly majesties are so called (cf. John x. 35). For the words do not run *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός*, so that the article would belong to *θεός*, but *ὁ ὧν ἐπὶ πάντων* belong to each other, and *θεός εὐλογητός, κ.τ.λ.*, is then added in apposition to this subject. The name which the apostle prefers to apply to the Exalted is *ὁ κύριος*; and that this expresses a position of rank different from *ὁ θεός* and subordinate to God, is sufficiently clear from the classic passage, 1 Cor. viii. 6, *ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἰς θεός, ὁ πατήρ . . . καὶ εἰς κύριος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*; the more so, that the Mediatorship of creation, there ascribed to the *εἰς κύριος*, extends the distinction even to the pre-existent state of the *κύριος*. The *κυριότης*, in the sense in which the apostle ascribes it to the exalted Christ, is indeed something incomparable, quite superhuman as contrasted with any one other essential quality of humanity. The name "Lord," which belongs to Christ since His resurrection, is a name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 9), for it signifies the subjection of all things that are in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth (*ib.* ver. 10). Still it is no *θεότης* in the strict sense of the word, for that would be His own from eternity; the *κυριότης*, on the contrary, is acquired, won, and conferred, and therefore presupposes a being whose nature does not exclude development, a rising to something

<sup>1</sup> The most plausible reason which is urged against this view, that *εὐλογητός* always stands first in a doxology, is not convincing. Though it is said a hundred times "praised be God," that does not prevent one from writing once "God be praised."

higher. And the apostle is perfectly conscious of this nature of the *κυριότης* of Jesus. Jesus has won it in His earthly life by His death and resurrection, *εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἔζησεν, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ* (Rom. xiv. 9), or, which is only another view of the same events, God has bestowed it on Him as a reward of His voluntary humiliation to the death on the cross—*διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερίψωσεν . . . , ἵνα πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογησῆται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς* (Phil. ii. 10, 11). That which stands out in this latter passage is the true human relation of dependence on God the Father in which the Exalted One with all His incomparable loftiness, remains, *ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ*, His whole glory is a divine gift of grace,—that runs through all the Pauline utterances about the Exalted. “All things are yours : for ye are Christ’s (own) ; and Christ is God’s” (1 Cor. iii. 23). “The husband is head of the wife ; and Christ is the head of the man ; and God is the head of Christ” (1 Cor. xi. 3). The resurrection of Christ is never described as an act of His own power, but always as an act of the omnipotence of God or of the Father, wrought on Him (Rom. vi. 4 ; 1 Cor. vi. 14, *ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ τὸν κύριον ἤγειρεν καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐξεγερεῖ*) ; and in like manner the glorified life which He now enjoys is traced back, not to His own divine nature, but to the omnipotence of the Father (*ἐσταυρώθη ἐξ ἀσθενείας, ἀλλὰ ζῆ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ*, 2 Cor. xiii. 4). Nay, even the indwelling of God’s fulness in Him rests, in the view of the apostle, not on an eternal nature, a metaphysical relation, but on a free act of divine favour, *ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι*, Col. i. 19 (cf. Mark i. 11, *ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα*). But the most remarkable evidence of the essential difference which the apostle finds existing between Jesus even in the glory of His exaltation and the eternal personal God, lies in the fact that to Him the whole kingly glory of the Exalted One, so far as it goes beyond the glory of a child of man completed in God, is only a temporary one, an extraordinary authority conferred by God, which the Son again gives back into the hands of the Father when He shall have completely used it ; 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28 : “Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ;

when He shall have put down all rule, and authority, and power . . . when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then will the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." No twisting or quibbling will remove from the mighty passage the meaning that the exalted Christ when His task of saving the world has once been finished, and death as a world-power been done away, will retire into the position of a first subject of the eternal King; just as a field-marshal who has received extraordinary royal authority from his king, after conquering the last enemy, gives it back to him who entrusted it, and retires into the position of a simple subject.<sup>1</sup> Paul has indicated the same idea in Rom. viii. 29 by making God's thoughts of love have this as their end, that ultimately Jesus is "the firstborn among many brethren"; that is, between Him and the redeemed, the sons of God glorified in His image, there is no further distinction than (according to the Hebrew view) between the firstborn and the younger sons of one house. But that brings us back again to the idea of the archetypal man; for what Jesus, according to God's decree, ultimately becomes, viz. the firstborn among many brethren, that is, the Prince among the sons of men, must also be His true essence, the idea of His whole personality. And now, finally, we must recall the fact that Paul describes the exalted Christ also as the second Adam, just as he does the historical Christ in Rom. v. 12 f. The argument of 1 Cor. xv. 12-16, "If the dead rise not, then is Christ not risen. But if Christ is risen, then there must be for us a resurrection of the dead," shows not only how completely and as a matter of course he brings Christ under the general concept "man," but this very risen and glorified One, the πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν of humanity, is in vv. 45-49,

<sup>1</sup> Gess in his book, *Christi Person und Werk*, ii. p. 130, endeavours to escape this meaning by distinguishing a permanent government of the world from Christ's redemptive government—which, of course, comes to an end; and he seeks to prove this world government from 1 Cor. viii. 6. But the kingdom of Christ which is to be given back, and which the apostle characterises as a doing away with ἀρχαί, etc., even of death, must include the government of the world as well as the redemptive government; and when Christ delivers His kingdom to the Father that He may be all in all, there remains nothing for Him to govern.

characterised as the ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ, as the δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.

### § 10. THE UTTERANCES ABOUT PRE-EXISTENCE

But does not the apostle's doctrine of pre-existence finally reverse this anthropocentric Christology and compel us to return to a theocentric, such as is proposed in the old doctrine of the two natures, or in the modern kenotic doctrine? It is certainly surprising, after the simple Christology of the first apostles, and after what we have already seen of the Pauline Christology itself, to find the apostle ascribing to the Saviour a heavenly life prior to His earthly birth, and a share in the creation of the world; and these surprising doctrinal statements must be examined and impartially estimated. Let us in the first place ascertain the actual state of things. The Pauline view of a pre-existent Christ stands out purposely, and in a developed form only, in the Epistle to the Colossians, in the composition of which the task was forced on the apostle of emphasising the supreme dignity of Christ, with the view of suppressing a worship of angels which did not acknowledge Christ to be the Head (Col. ii. 18, 19). Here (i. 13 f.) we meet with by far the most expressive and important of all his statements about pre-existence: τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα, εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτι ἐξουσίαι, τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται, καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν, καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος, τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Beside this main utterance, we have to place, according to the prevailing and by far the most probable exposition, the celebrated passage in Phil. ii. 4 f.: τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγῆσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος καὶ σχήματι εὔρεθεις ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ. The fact that the passage starts with the historical name of the Saviour, and then finds

in His earthly life and death the element of example which is its subject, will always suggest to some interpreters that the whole statement should be referred to the historical Jesus, as Luther has already done.<sup>1</sup> But against that is the remarkable idea of the *μορφή θεοῦ*, which can hardly be referred to a purely inward quality of Jesus, and still more the impression that what is meant in the *ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτόν* is the giving up of this *μορφή θεοῦ*, the exchanging it for the *μορφή δούλου*; and in ver. 7, we see that the latter means the mere man's life. According to this view, then, ver. 6 contains an assertion of pre-existence which is certainly most remarkable and enigmatic. The earlier and greater Epistles do not so decisively assert the idea of pre-existence. But they contain enough to forbid our disputing the genuineness of the Epistles of the captivity simply because of the doctrine of pre-existence. The most important passage bearing upon this is 1 Cor. viii. 6, where after that *ἀλλ' ἡμῶν εἰς ὁ θεός, ὁ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν*, the words follow: *καὶ εἰς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ*. It is hardly possible to conceive the *δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα* as referring to anything different from that alluded to in the *ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα* which precedes, viz. the creation of the world, which is thus ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, however surprising such an ascription may appear.<sup>2</sup> As we have here a shorter parallel to the passage in Colossians, so in 2 Cor. viii. 9 we seem to have a similar parallel to the passage in Philippians: *γινώσκετε τὴν χάριν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν πλούσιος ὢν, ἵνα ὑμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχεία πλουτήσητε*. For although *πτώχεύειν* really means *to be poor*, and not *to become poor*, and though an outward becoming poor on the part of Christ, notwithstanding a continuous possession of divine riches, may very well be an image of His self-abnegation culminating in His death of

<sup>1</sup> Among the more recent, de Wette and Dorner. In my *Christology of the New Testament* I also thought that this conception could be carried out and justified.

<sup>2</sup> It is true that the important Codex Vat. reads *δι' ὧν*, which would give a quite different meaning. But this solitary reading cannot destroy the weight of all the other witnesses, especially as it may be accounted for by the apparent superfluity of the *καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ*, after the preceding *δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα*.

shame, it cannot be denied that the statement becomes more impressive when we understand it of the voluntary passing from the riches of a previous heavenly life to the poverty of an earthly existence. Less value and certainty attach to the passages 1 Cor. x. 4, 9, according to the usual exposition of which Christ accompanied the march of the Israelites through the wilderness; but the question arises, whether in the first *ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός* is more than an allegorising reflection, and whether in the second *κύριον* should be read instead of *Χριστός*, and applied to God. As to the passages which speak of a sending of the Son of God, such as Rom. viii. 3, Gal. iv. 4, they do not of themselves attest pre-existence, as a sending into the world may simply, in the biblical phraseology, designate a causing to be born. But when it is certain, on the ground of other passages like Col. i. 15 f., that Paul thought of the Son of God as a pre-existent being, it does certainly become probable that these passages should be read in the same sense. But what is still questioned by some seems to me undeniable, that in 1 Cor. xv. 47, *ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ*, the words *ἐξ οὐρανοῦ* refer to a heavenly descent, that is, to a pre-existence. For in contrast with *ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός*, which describes the descent of the first Adam and the nature following from it, the words cannot possibly mean merely that the other Adam will come from heaven sometime in the future, at His parousia, but must designate His original nature and descent as the *Ἀδὰμ πνευματικός* and *ἐπουράνιος*, which certainly cannot be made to depend on the glorification of His body. What strikes us in all these statements about pre-existence is, that the apostle nowhere really establishes or teaches the pre-existence of Christ, but, especially in his earlier Epistles, presupposes it as familiar to his readers and disputed by no one. It must therefore have been a notion which was not in the least strange even to the primitive apostolic Christians before Paul, such, for example, as the readers of the Epistle to the Romans. But, on the other hand, it clearly added nothing essential to the simple Christology of the primitive apostles, so that not a trace of it can be found in the first three Gospels, in the speeches of the Acts, in the Epistle of James, or First Peter.

## § 11. HISTORICAL EXPLANATION AND ESTIMATION

The question arises as to how the apostle, in the course of his life and training, obtained this notion or this estimate of its value. The passages 1 Cor. x. 4, 9 may be best explained by the general notion of a heavenly pre-existence of the Messiah, just as the Israelites regarded all their sacred things as originally pre-existing in heaven. The Pauline teaching cannot be deduced from some slight knowledge of the words of Jesus about His own pre-existence, such as might be got from the Gospel of John, for these words do not describe the Pre-existent One as taking a share in the creation of the world; and this is the most remarkable and the most peculiar element in Paul's thought. This element suggests with much certainty that the idea comes from what is otherwise well known in Old Testament theology, the pre-Christian Logos idea in its wider sense. The tendency to distinguish God in His self-existence, in His inaccessible secret nature, from His revelation in the world, runs with increasing strength through Old Testament thought, and produces various expressions of the idea of an intermediate principle between God and the world. At first men were satisfied with the notion of an angel of Jehovah, in whom for the particular occasion He places His name, that is, His self-revelation, and who could therefore be conceived both as distinct from Jehovah and as one with Him. But this notion did not allow of any application to the creation of the world, although in it the great question was to bridge the gulf between the God who was hidden in Himself, and the sum of finite existences. Therefore a more speculative view, such as we have in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, identifies the angel of Jehovah with the divine wisdom. Wisdom is described in poetic personification as a daughter and handmaid of God, as the mistress of His creation as well as of His government of the world and His legislation. The whole revelation of God in nature and history is thus traced back to a single principle, to an all-comprehending idea in which God is mirrored, and which lies at the basis of the world and its history. Some of the Old Testament Apocrypha, such as Jesus Sirach and the Book of Wisdom, go further on this path and develop the poetic personification of wisdom until

they actually make it a person in accordance with the Platonic doctrine of ideas. Wisdom becomes an intermediate being distinct from God, through whom God has created the world and reveals Himself in it (Sir. xxiv.; Wisd. Sol. vii.). At the same time, by the use of synonyms for the idea of wisdom, men sought to find the same notion in the oldest Scripture writers; chief of these is the divine "Word," by which God creates the world and reveals Himself (Gen. i. 3). It is hypostatised, and is combined by the Alexandrian Philo with the Greek philosophic idea of the divine *νοῦς*, the world soul, and by the Palestinian scribes Memra (that is, Logos, Word) is put in the Old Testament wherever in the original text God reveals Himself directly. But this narrower sense of the Logos idea is not the only form in which it occurs in the speculations of the scribes. Alongside of the notion of the Memra appears that of the Shechinah, the *δόξα θεοῦ* (Rom. ix. 5), the revealed glory of God, in which, according to the Mosaic history, He repeatedly appears, and in which He makes His dwelling in the Holy of Holies; or it is connected with the idea of an image of God (Book of Wisdom vii. 26), a mirror of His glory; for Gen. i. 27 spoke expressly of an image of Himself, after which God created man. And here we come upon the form in which Paul has appropriated this theological idea: *ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ* (Col. i. 15; cf. 2 Cor. iv. 4). We cannot fail to see what his circle of ideas was; we see it in the addition *τοῦ ἀοράτου* pointing back to the distinction of the God who is invisible and the God who reveals Himself in *πρωτόκοκος πάσης κτίσεως*, which is unmistakably connected with the saying of wisdom in Prov. viii. 22, *κύριος ἔκτισεν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ*, as well as in the whole further argument which describes this image, this firstborn of creation, as the sum of all that is to be created, as the ideal world. And though the passages 1 Cor. x. 4, 9 may be explained by the popular notion of the pre-existent Messiah, whom Paul could recognise in the Old Testament Angel of the Covenant in 1 Cor. viii. 6 (*δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα*), we manifestly have in brief form the same train of thought and the same origin as in the passage in Colossians. We shall meet with this application of the Logos idea to the person of Jesus in the doctrinal notions of the later apostolic age, which have to be considered further



on ; but it is highly probable that Paul, with his training as a scribe, was the first who made it. It suggested itself very readily to a Christian of a speculative turn. He who, on the one hand, was familiar with the idea of a hypostatic self-revelation of God, and on the other was certain that the self-revelation of God had appeared in Jesus, could not but recognise in Jesus that pre-existent principle of revelation, the Word made flesh, or the image of God which had appeared in the flesh, and thus he would exalt the person of Jesus into eternity, and make Him the Mediator of the creation of the world. This new mode of thought did not contradict the former simple faith of the community, as even the simpler Jewish Christians expected this Messiah as a matter of course to descend from heaven ; and through the Paraphrases of the Old Testament, which were read in the synagogues, they were probably not unfamiliar even with the idea of the eternal Word. On the other hand, that doctrine helped them to look at the person of Christ in a way which, for the Gentile world of culture in particular, was more satisfying than the Jewish name Messiah. Jesus was placed in a relation to God and the world which in principle was as lofty as could be conceived. And that is the permanent value of this speculative Christology of the apostolic period, that through it the temporal appearance of Jesus is traced back to its eternal basis. Jesus is recognised as the self-revelation of God in the absolute sense, and the unity of God's thought in creation and redemption is insisted on. But we must not fancy that we have here a fragment of a metaphysical revelation of God, and not merely a fragment of apostolic theology ; profound and true, yet, like all theology, it has human and earthly imperfections. These imperfections lie in the fact that when the Logos idea and the person of Jesus are identified, the distinction which remains between an idea and a person as such is overlooked ; and in consequence of this the idea itself is conceived as a person existing eternally before the birth of the actual historical person. Even we, in expressing the profoundly true statement, "Christ is the self-revelation of God," do not at first think that thus we are identifying an idea and a person ; an idea can never be a living person, but can only find in a person its manifestation or realisation. We are not conscious

of that, because in our conception the idea of the self-revelation of God, in its application to Jesus, directly assumes concrete personal features. How much less was the apostle, from his training and mode of thought, in the position to distinguish here between idea and person! For to him the *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου*, the self-revelation of God, was no abstract idea, but an ideal reality, a hypostasis, and for that very reason an actual person. As in the Platonic mode of thought, where poetry and speculation have not yet become separated, ideas are real beings, so also the religious thought of men of the Bible viewed ideas as spiritual realities, and spiritual realities as persons. The apostle involuntarily personifies the flesh, sin and death, and much more the highest idea of all, which is the image of the personal God, the ideal of every human creature, the heavenly form of the personal Redeemer. There would not be anything more to say concerning the formal defect which lies in this personification, if it had not been marked as the mystery of revelation, and made the point of departure for the development of Christology. By making the Logos idea the basis of her Christology, by conceiving the Logos more and more as a second eternal personality beside God the Father through a confusion of the concepts, *hypostasis*, *persona*, personality, and by seeking to construct the historical Christ out of the Godhead, the Church was forced to add a historical to a pretemporal person, whereby neither the unity of Christ's person nor the truth of His human development could be preserved. No impartial reader of the New Testament can have any difficulty in perceiving that these trains of thought are not those of our apostle. Had Paul set up a Christology entirely different from the simple synoptic and primitive apostolic Christology, had he preached a second person of the Godhead who only became the historical Jesus by assuming a human nature, or by exchanging His divine nature for a human nature, as modern Kenotics suppose, there would have been such a revolution of ideas in primitive Christianity that the contradiction could not have failed to appear to the strict monotheists of the early Church. But we have not the least trace of a christological controversy in the apostolic age. And, moreover, it is evident that Paul's mode of christological

thought was entirely different. One only needs to subtract the doctrine of pre-existence from the Pauline and from the ecclesiastical Christology; by so doing the latter is entirely overthrown, while the Pauline, brought back within the limits of the primitive apostolic thought by the removal of the speculative addition, remains complete in itself and intelligible. Paul does not, like later theologians, start in his picture of Christ from an idea of God and of the Trinity, nor does he add a human nature with soul and spirit to a divine person, nor does he think of that divine person as changed into a man, but he simply in thought raises the historical "Jesus Christ" into eternity. The passage in Colossians, as well as that in Philippians, simply starts from the historical person; the former from Him who died for us, the latter from the historical Jesus Christ. This person is treated as pre-existent, without taking anything away from it, and again it is treated as historical and glorified, without any addition to it. Can there be a plainer proof that the apostle does not know of the doctrine of the two natures? The only thing he makes the Son of God assume in coming into the world is the *σάρξ*, which is not a complete human nature with a human pneuma, and then it is stripped off and exchanged for the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* at His death and resurrection, where, however, the human nature is not laid aside.

## § 12. TRACING BACK TO THE IDEA OF THE ORIGINAL MAN

There is still one objection that might be made against our conception of the apostle's doctrine of pre-existence. It might be said, and it has been said,<sup>1</sup> that the pre-existent Christ of Paul is not merely an ideal man, but a principle of the world, and so that anthropocentric Christology which we deduce from the utterances about the historical and exalted Christ falls to the ground in every instance. Plausible as the objection is, it is only plausible. It overlooks the congruence which exists for the apostle—and not for him only, but also for the speculation of his people generally—between the ideal man and the principle of the world. From the profound idea that man is the divine purpose of the world, in fact is a summary of the world, a microcosm, the Logos is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gess, *l.c.* pp. 294, 295.

conceived by Philo as both the idea of the world and the original of humanity at the same time, and is therefore frankly designated *ἄνθρωπος οὐράνιος*, ideal man. But in Col. i. Paul, as distinguished from Philo, in choosing, not the term "Logos," but *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου*, puts the idea of humanity in the foreground, and then in the phrase *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, κ.τ.λ.*, he develops it further to an idea of the world. For, according to Gen. i. 27, the image of God is the original of humanity; but because man is the central point and final aim of the world, because everything in the world exists for man's sake, the original of humanity is at the same time to the apostle the sum-total of all the creative thoughts of God. Everything is placed in him, mediated by him, and determined for him as is declared by the statements which follow in the passage in Colossians, and again this principle of the world is the head of the humanity that is well-pleasing to God, viz. the Church (ver. 18). And this again clearly indicates, even in the pre-existence idea itself, the profound distinction between the Pauline and Athanasian Christologies. The latter places beside God the Father a second divine Being, who in His *homoousia* stands as far from the world and humanity in itself as God the Father does. Paul, on the contrary, thinks of a real intermediate Being between God and the world, in whom the world already exists in possibility, a *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, ἐν ᾧ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα*, who therefore with all His unique sublimity remains essentially subordinate to the one God, the Father. In conformity with his idea of man as one who can say *τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν* (Acts xvii. 28), and yet remains a creature, he conceives the pre-existent Archetype from the first as the God-Man. The expression in Col. i. 15 describes this extremely well: while the *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀοράτου* describes Him as the self-revelation of the God who is invisible, the face of God turned as it were to the world, the *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* places Him as God's first-born Son at the head of creation.<sup>1</sup> Like the passage in

<sup>1</sup> I doubt whether *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* is to be explained, not as 'firstborn of all creatures,' but as "born before any creature" (Francke in Meyer's *Comment.* p. 304). For *πρωτότοκος* is a firmly defined idea which places a definite person at the head of his fellows (brethren). Cf. Col. i.

Colossians, Phil. ii. 5 f., the other main statement about the pre-existence, is only explained from this fundamental view of the apostle, which widely differs from the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity. The subject of which this passage treats is not God the Son, as in the so-called Athanasian symbol, or in Kenotic theories which look to this passage as their one anchor, but Jesus Christ, who is clearly distinguished from God; the *μορφή θεοῦ* in which He pre-existed is no *μορφή τοῦ θεοῦ*, and the *ἴσα θεῶ ἐῖναι* in question is no *ἴσα τῶ θεῶ ἐῖναι*. On the contrary between Him and the *εἰς θεός*, which is the Father (ver. 11); there remains a distinction so great that, as noted above, even the incomparable glory which Christ acquires by His self-emptying and His obedience unto death, does not come to Him of itself as a natural eternal possession, but is bestowed on Him by God's free grace (*ἐχαρίσατο*), and must finally redound entirely to the honour of God the Father. From this it appears that the passage might be appealed to in support of an Arian rather than of an Athanasian Christology. But it also contains no reference to an "incarnation" in the proper sense of the word. Neither can the *ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτόν*, which is explained by the parallel *ἐταπεινώσεν ἑαυτόν*, signify a laying aside of His (divine) nature (which, moreover, would be an absurdity, as no being can lay aside its nature), but only the laying aside of a glorious appearance, a form of existence similar to God (*μορφή*). Nor can the words, *μορφήν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος καὶ σχήματι ἐύρεθεις ὡς ἄνθρωπος*, describe an actual incarnation (they rather describe an apparent incarnation *ὡς ἄνθρωπος*), but only a descent into the common lot of humanity, a putting Himself on an equality with poor, weak, ordinary men (cf. 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4). Certainly Paul in no other passage has gone so far in his poetic and speculative view of the personal life of the pre-existent One as in this, where he paints His passage

18, *πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν* = first among those who are risen from the dead; Rom. viii. 29, *πρωτότοκος ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς* = first among many sons of God. On the other hand, the idea, "earlier born than any creature," would have been differently expressed by the apostle. Francke, *l.c.* p. 306, has correctly proved that in the *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* no distinction should be made between *τίκτειν* and *κτίζειν*, begetting and creating, as it is said of wisdom in Prov. viii. 22, *ὁ κύριος ἐκτίσεν με*.

from eternity to time with the colours of deliberate self-denial (colours which he borrows from the character of Jesus displayed on earth); but even here he does not go one step beyond the lines of the ideal man. This Being who in Himself is man cannot, indeed, become man subsequently, though He no doubt can, according to Paul, exchange His original heavenly state in which He existed "as a God," *ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ*, for the earthly form of a servant's life; He can become in all things equal to His poor brethren on the earth, and in the death on the cross He can humble Himself beneath them in order to be, in return for this, exalted by God to supreme authority as head of the humanity He redeems,—an authority, however, which is and remains subject to God. Nay, if we do not err, there hovered before the mind of the apostle in the whole passage the contrast of the *Ἀδὰμ χοϊκός* and *Ἀδὰμ ἐπουράνιος*, which furnished him in particular with the obscure expression *οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ*. For the first Adam, while still in the full glory of his likeness to God, did certainly count it robbery to be equal to God, something which one might snatch at (Gen. iii. 5), and thus through selfish disobedience he lost the glory which God intended for him. The second Adam, on the contrary, freely surrendered a real heavenly glory, and submitted in self-denying love to the most painful lot of earthly humanity. By so doing He proved His obedience towards God in the most perfect way, and thus He obtained as a reward of divine grace the *ἴσα θεῷ εἶναι*, on which He did not rashly lay hands. Finally, the Pauline application of the name Son to Christ becomes clear only from the standpoint of this fundamentally anthropocentric view. The apostle applies the name Son to Jesus, not indeed so frequently as the name *κύριος*, which describes in particular the state of glory of the exalted One, but it is frequent enough, and it is used of Him in all His three states, the historical, the glorified, and the pre-existent (the most conspicuous examples of the latter are in Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4; cf. Eph. i. 5). The original Messianic sense of the name no longer appeared in his use of it; though it never describes a God the Son, but a Son of God of whom it is true that God the Father is not only His Father but also His

God.<sup>1</sup> The name son expresses the union of human dependence and divine community of nature. The Son is His Father's image, and at the same time His subject, both in the pre-existent state and in that of exaltation. Accordingly the apostle does not hesitate to apply the name son in the plural to believers who are led by the Spirit, and who consequently have an affinity of nature with Christ (Rom. viii. 14, 15, 19; Gal. iii. 26, iv. 6). He does, indeed (Rom. viii. 32), distinguish the one Son from the many by the addition of *ἴδιον*, which is meant there to emphasise the greatness of the sacrifice which the Father offers for the world. But notwithstanding the special relation to God which this asserts, believers in the same context are placed on a level with the Firstborn—*εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς* (ver. 29). Though one may find in that *ἴδιον* the intimation of an original divine nature, yet it is but the divinity of an original into the likeness of which all believers are to be brought, *οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ* (Rom. viii. 29); *τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτρίζομενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα* (2 Cor. iii. 18). Again, the Son is the special object of divine love (*ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ*, Col. i. 13); but so far is this from supposing any inner trinitarian relation that the elect are included from eternity in the same love, and, on the other hand, the idea of election—presupposing a human personality—is also applied to the "Beloved" (Eph. i. 5, 6). These are so many features which come together in the notion of the ideal man, the pre-existent head of the Church, and therefore make it no longer appear strange, but only natural, that in 1 Cor. xv. 47 the pre-existent One is directly described as the *ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ* and *ἐπουράνιος*.

### § 13. STARTING-POINT OF THE PAULINE CHRISTOLOGY

// The idea of the second Adam as *ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός*, in which, according to this view, the Pauline Christology is

<sup>1</sup> It is so verbally in Eph. i. 17: *ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. But wherever mention is made of *θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν*, the genitive is undoubtedly dependent not merely on *πατὴρ*, but on *θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ*.

comprised, is the conclusive evidence that this Christology was developed as we have viewed it; that it started from the historical and exalted Christ, and from that only rose to the pre-existent Christ. For Jesus could only be viewed as the *δεύτερος* and *ἕσχατος Ἀδάμ* from the historical standpoint. It followed afterwards, from the development of the speculative view, that the second on earth and in history is in God the first of all. And that was certainly an immense advance in knowledge; it was thereby perceived that to secure a union of the divine and human, to bring humanity to its height of ideal perfection, to full likeness and blessed communion with God, was the first idea of the heavenly Father, from which His whole government of the world, and even its creation, must be understood. With that the apostle had reached the highest standpoint of knowledge and of speculation.

## CHAPTER IV

### GOD AND THE WORLD

#### § 1. SOURCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

The apostle had known about God from his childhood, but he first knew Him as one ought to know Him (1 Cor. viii. 2-4), in Jesus Christ. "The God who had called light out of darkness—it is said in 2 Cor. iv. 6, in allusion both to the history of creation and to his own experience on the way to Damascus—hath shined in our heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The God who showed him His open glory in the face of Jesus Christ, as in a mirror, was the God of Israel, but was a different God from that imagined by the Pharisee and Zealot. If, in accordance with his old faith, Paul saw in Him the one only God, he now knew this one God as the heavenly Father.

#### § 2. UNITY AND TRINITY OF GOD

We have already seen in our christological investigations that the apostle adheres to the unity of God in the strict



sense, and does not enter on the path which led to the Church doctrine of the Trinity. To him the Father is not the first of three divine persons, so that the concept "God" includes in the same degree the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but, as we have already noted, he regards the Father as the only God—*ἡμῖν εἰς θεός, ὁ πατήρ* (1 Cor. viii. 6). Yet it may be said that though the apostle has no doctrine of the Trinity, he has trinitarian tendencies. When, in 2 Cor. xiii. 13, he invokes the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God (revealing itself in this grace), and the communion, or communication, of the Holy Spirit (shedding abroad this love in the heart); or when, in naming the gifts of grace and blessings of salvation (1 Cor. xii. 4-6), he rises from the *ἐν πνεῦμα* to the *εἰς κύριος*, who is Lord of this Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 18), and from the *εἰς κύριος* to the *εἰς θεός καὶ πατήρ*, who is God and Father of this *κύριος*,—we have an economic Trinity, in which we recognise a decided subordinationism; we have a saving revelation of the one God, consisting of three stages. And besides the self-revelation of God through Christ, and the self-communication of Christ through the Spirit, there is also express mention of a fulness of God dwelling in Christ (Col. ii. 9); and again the dwelling of the Spirit in the heart, or in the community of believers, is conceived as God's own indwelling (1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16). Now, if God in His entire fulness can dwell in Christ, and yet stand above Him as His God and Father; if, in the Holy Spirit, He can enter into the human heart, and yet remain in heaven, the Searcher of hearts, who hears and answers when His Spirit cries, *Abba, Father*, out of the hearts of His children (Rom. viii. 26, 27),—then the apostle manifestly supposes in God the possibility of a threefold mode of being—over the world, in Christ, and in the hearts of believers. And that certainly furnished a starting-point for the subsequent speculation of the Church. Nay, the apostle takes a further step in this direction. In the passage Eph. iv. 4-6, after having risen from *πνεῦμα* to *κύριος*, and from *κύριος* to *θεός καὶ πατήρ*, he ascribes to the latter, as such, a threefold mode of being in the words, *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσι*, a standing over all (believers), an acting through all, a dwelling in all. That gives us, if we choose to call it so, a kind of

ontological Trinity of God the Father. But we have to note in it a twofold distinction from that which is so named in the history of dogma. First, that threefold mode of being, or of conduct in God the Father, is not an inner relation of God to Himself, but an outer relation to the believers who are in the world. The apostle has nowhere speculated about the inner life of God apart from the world, not even in the passage 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, where something of the kind has been supposed to be found by an overstraining of the comparison there made. When he writes, *τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐρευνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ· τίς γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ; οὕτως καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ*, he does not, as the connection shows, speak of an immanent self-knowledge of God, of which it would be difficult to conceive how it should only exist in the third hypostasis. But he speaks of the human knowledge of God, in virtue of the Spirit of God communicated to the apostle or prophet, as he does not write *τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ*, but (ver. 12) *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ θεοῦ*. Not in God as He lives in Himself, but out of the heart of the apostle, into which it has been poured, does the Spirit know the deep things of God, just as He cries also out of the same heart, *Abba, Father* (Rom. viii. 26, 27). The other distinction from the later ontological doctrine of the Trinity is that *ἐπὶ πάντων, διὰ πάντων, ἐν πάσιν*, ascribed to God the Father as such, does not lead to three divine persons or hypostases, but only to three modes of being, that is, to a purely modalistic Trinity. Even if the apostle should have imagined the *διὰ πάντων* to be conditioned by the Son as the creative source of the world, that would not give a second trinitarian person; for though the pre-existent Christ is personally conceived, the fulness of God dwelling in Him is distinguished from Him as a person (Col. i. 19). And thus the threefold relation which the apostle, in Eph. iv. 6, makes God the Father hold to believers, amounts rather to the distinction of a transcendence of God over the world, and an immanence of God in the world, the latter of which is again conceived as twofold, a general presence in the world, and a special presence in the hearts of men.

## § 3. NATURE OF GOD, RELATION OF LOVE AND WRATH

The name Father given by Jesus is to our apostle also the proper name of God; the name *κύριος* for God has a place beside it only in Old Testament statements or phrases. And Paul uses the name Father in the same sense as Jesus did. God is, above all, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in a unique way, is His Son. Then He is in Christ our Father, the Father of all, into whose heart He has sent the Spirit of His Son (Gal. iv. 6). Finally, He is the Father simply (1 Cor. viii. 6; Gal. i. 1; Eph. ii. 18, etc.); Eph. iii. 15 adds, *ἐξ οὗ πάντα πατρία ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς ὀνομάζεται*, in order to describe Him as the original and universal Father.<sup>1</sup> That supposes love as the nature of God; for what else can Fatherhood be than boundless unbought love? Though Paul has not given utterance to any definition of God's nature like that of John, "God is love," yet this idea is everywhere implied in his writings. He is never weary of praising the love of God, so that it is manifest that to him it is more than one divine attribute beside other attributes. If God has revealed Himself in Christ, and if in Him He has revealed His love and nothing but love, then the nature of God must be love (cf. Rom. v. 8, viii. 39, xi. 33, where *βάθος πλούτου* does not go with *καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως*, but describes independently the riches of God's love, asserted in ver. 32). Naturally the unfathomable love of God, with its special expressions, as *οἰκτιρμοί* (compassion, Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 3), *ἔλεος* (mercy, Rom. ix. 23, xi. 31; Eph. ii. 4), *χάρις*, grace, undeserved, pardoning and helping love to sinners (Rom. i. 7, iii. 24, v. 2, etc.), appears to the apostle, above all, in the work of redemption. But by tracing it back to a pre-temporal and eternal decree of love, the creation of the world itself appears as essentially an act of love on the part of one rich and blessed in Himself, who, of His own free will, goes forth from Himself

<sup>1</sup> The play of words between *πατήρ* and *πατρία* (*race*) cannot be reproduced. All races of angels and men are meant who spring from Him, and therefore are called *πατρίαί*. The rhetorical passage means nothing more than a paraphrase of the idea of the universal Father.

and places before Himself something which is poor and needy, on which He can bestow the whole fulness of His life: *ἐν ἀγάπῃ προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτόν, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ*, Eph. i. 5, 6; cf. 1 Cor. ii. 7. It might be urged against this that Paul yet emphasises a principle in God that is opposed to love, viz. wrath (Rom. i. 18, ii. 5, iv. 15, v. 9). But the wrath of God would only be a principle opposed to love, that is, annulling His pure love of nature, if it were synonymous with hate; but Paul has nowhere taught a real hatred on the part of God. That the expression *ἐχθροί* in Rom. v. 10, Col. i. 21, with reference to the relation of man to God, is not to be taken passively in the sense of hatred by God, but actively, according to the words Rom. viii. 7, *τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν*, follows from the doctrine of reconciliation. But in Rom. xi. 28 the hatred on the part of God to the Jews is immediately explained by the following *ἀγαπητοὶ διὰ τοὺς πατέρας* as a merely apparent hatred, and the Old Testament *τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐμίσησα*, in Rom. ix. 13, is meant, just as *μισεῖν* in Luke xiv. 26, only as a rejection of one in favour of another who is preferred. But though wrath, as distinguished from hatred, is the refusal to manifest love, it is not necessarily refusal to cherish love, which rather in the case of an angry father continues to live in his inmost heart, and is to some extent the source of his anger at the faults of his child. The wrath of God is, in Paul,—as in the Scriptures generally,—His holy displeasure with evil, His fierce indignation against all impiety and immorality of man (Rom. i. 18), such as cannot but exist in the ethically perfect divine Being. It has been maintained<sup>1</sup> that this is always conceived by Paul, eschatologically, as divine energy directed to the annihilation of the refractory, and the assertion is so far true that to the apostle the wrath of God becomes complete, and is completely revealed in the final judgment, and therefore he often understands by *ὀργή* or *ὀργὴ ἐρχομένη* (1 Thess. i. 10) the final judicial revelation of wrath. The wrath

<sup>1</sup> By A. Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, ii. p. 38.

of God, however, is by no means regarded by him as first appearing at the final judgment, but as existing always wherever sin is. According to Rom. i. 18, its manifestation lies before the apostle in the God-forsaken heathen world, and, according to Eph. ii. 3, Jewish as well as Gentile Christians were φύσει by nature, in which the σάρξ and the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός ruled and revolted against God's commandment, τέκνα ὀργῆς, children, that is, objects of wrath.<sup>1</sup> But they were, at the same time, objects of the seeking, saving love of God. The relation of the wrath and love of God is set forth with special clearness in Rom. ii. 4, 5, v. 8, 9: "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and God's righteous judgment." The sinner, therefore, is under the wrath of God; and yet, at the same time, is under His goodness, patience, and long-suffering—the evidences of His love. In proportion as he does not suffer himself to be led to repentance by the love of God, wrath grows (consequently, it is not absolute from the first) against the day of wrath. Again, when it is said, "God commendeth His love towards us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then being now justified by His blood we shall be saved from wrath through Him," we see—perhaps to our surprise—that even the pardoned and justified, much as they are the objects of the divine love, are regarded by the apostle as needing deliverance from wrath. Even they therefore continue somehow under it, viz. so far as they yet cherish sin—things displeasing to God. They are only made the objects of pure and eternal love when the ζωὴ Χριστοῦ, the communion of life with Christ, becomes perfect in them. We see, then, that the wrath of God has to do with the sinner in the man, while love applies to the man in the sinner. Where wrath and love coexist, and are related to the same person, this twofold relation is a relative and conditioned one, and can

<sup>1</sup> The efforts of Ritschl to interpret this passage also eschatologically are manifestly against the plain wording and context.

only continue so long as neither sin nor sanctification has become perfect in the man. But we can conceive a point where there is nothing more in the man for God to be angry with, and nothing more for Him to love. In the one case the man is finally delivered from wrath by Christ; in the other, wrath accumulated to the utmost breaks over him "on the day of wrath and righteous judgment." But if that is so, then the Pauline idea of the wrath of God, inasmuch as it designates not merely the final judicial revelation of wrath, but something habitual and natural in God,<sup>1</sup> expresses that inner limitation of the eternal love which lies in its ethical nature, in its necessary opposition to all evil, that is, in its holiness. It is the holiness of God which asserts itself in His wrath. The holiness of God, however, is not in contradiction to His love, but is an essential attribute of it as an ethically perfect love. It is only the limitation of the manifestation of love which can never be made to evil as such.

#### § 4. ATTRIBUTES OF GOD, ESPECIALLY THAT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

What the apostle mentions incidentally of other divine attributes, with the exception of one concept to be discussed immediately, needs scarcely any exposition; they are partly the ontological, partly the ethical characteristics of God the Father, which need no explanation to Christian thought. The unity of God is emphasised, not only in the sense of number, but also in the uniformity of the divine conduct, the all-embracing equality of His love (Rom. iii. 30 : *εἴπερ εἰς ὁ θεὸς ὃς δικαιοῦσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως*). In contrast with the mortality and nothingness of the creature, God is called the Everlasting and Eternal (Rom. i. 23, xvi. 26), who alone hath glory and majesty. He is the Almighty, who can call into existence things that are not, and with whom nothing is impossible (Rom. i. 20,

<sup>1</sup> The assertion of Kühn (*Heilsbedeutung des Todes Christi*), that the wrath of God is not conceived in Paul as a continuous line of conduct on the part of God, but as a momentary outburst, does not agree with Rom. i. 18; Eph. ii. 3, and rests on a confusion of the idea and its form.

iv. 17–21), the only wise God, whose plans are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out (Rom. xvi. 27, xi. 33), the absolutely independent and free One, whose least and greatest actions rest on His free will and good pleasure (Col. i. 19; Gal. i. 15). But all that is conditioned and determined by His ethically perfect nature. For His element is light, that is, radiant purity and goodness revealing itself, the absolute opposite of ethical darkness (2 Cor. vi. 14); so that His sons must walk in the light and be children of the light (Eph. v. 8, 9; 1 Thess. v. 5). Again, He is the God of peace (Rom. xv. 32; 1 Cor. xiv. 33; 1 Thess. v. 23), that is, of order and harmony, and therefore of satisfaction and blessedness (*εἰρήνη* beside *χάρις* in the salutations of the Epistles). He is the true and faithful One (Rom. iii. 3, 7; 1 Cor. i. 9), who never contradicts Himself, and leaves no promise unfulfilled. He is rich in goodness, patience, long-suffering, mercy, and grace (Rom. ii. 4, iii. 26; Eph. ii. 4—Rom. iii. 24; Eph. i. 6, etc.). To this circle of ethical attributes belongs also His righteousness, which, according to Rom. iii. 5, 25, 26, is essentially exemplified in the work of redemption, and is usually conceived in a wrong or, at least, onesided way as judicial or penal righteousness, and is therefore placed in fundamental contradiction with the divine grace. Not only the Pauline, but the whole biblical thought and expression about “righteousness” is essentially different; it is not juristic but ethical. When the Scriptures speak of a righteous or unrighteous man, they mean chiefly, and for the most part, not a judge faithful to duty or forgetful of duty, but a morally righteous or a morally perverted man; and it is the same with the application of the idea of righteousness to God. The biblical *δίκαιος*, as a translation of the Hebrew *דָּיָק* (from *דָּן*, to be upright), designates the morally right or righteous, the man who lives and acts in accordance with the moral rule of conduct; just as the contrary *ἀδικος*, *ἀδικία* is the summary of all moral perversity, the designation of the immoral as such (Rom. i. 18, iii. 5, vi. 13, cf. with ver. 19, etc.). And so also the divine *δικαιοσύνη* is by Paul (Rom. iii. 5) contrasted with our *ἀδικία*, that is, sinfulness is conceived as its complete opposite. This alone makes the fact intelligible, that in the same paragraph (cf. ver. 5 with vv. 3, 7) the idea of God’s

righteousness is interchangeable with that of His faithfulness and truth. Faithfulness and truth have nothing to do with penal righteousness, but have to do with integrity, with moral uprightness. Consequently, righteousness in God and man is not so much, in the biblical sense, one particular moral quality alongside of others, as their righteous or moral conformity to a standard. And as the highest moral standard is the holy love which God cherishes and bears in Himself, He is righteous inasmuch as He conducts Himself in conformity with this holy love.<sup>1</sup> He conducts Himself according to it in imposing moral demands on men *δικαιώματα* (Rom. viii. 4), and attaching a penal sentence to their transgression (Rom. i. 32). Consequently, He is righteous also when He judges the transgressors, and especially the incorrigible sinners; cf. the idea of *δικαιοκρισία*, Rom. ii. 5, which certainly justifies the penal righteousness as a partial notion of the divine righteousness.<sup>2</sup> But he conducts himself not less, but more, in accordance with that standard when He pardons and helps to put morally right the sinful man. It may be surprising and foreign to our custom to see such acts of God's grace placed under the point of view of His righteousness, but it is undeniably the custom of the Bible. "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness," exclaims the Psalmist (Ps. li. 16), "that my tongue may speak of Thy righteousness." The same idea of a saving righteousness of God is found in Deutero-Isaiah (xlvi. 13, li. 5, 8, lvi. 1); and in the New Testament it is said, 1 John i. 9: "If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We have the very same idea of the characteristic righteousness of God in the celebrated passage Rom. iii. 24, 25, to be discussed later on. "Whom (Jesus) God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through

<sup>1</sup> Kühl's assertion, *l.c.*, is quite mistaken, that the biblical idea of God's righteousness is a purely formal one, at the basis of which is laid now this, now that standard. The biblical idea of righteousness would in that case destroy itself.

<sup>2</sup> The assertion of Ritschl, *l.c.*, p. 116, that the word refers to the saving perfection of the righteous, is undoubtedly in opposition to the context.



the forbearance of God. To declare at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." The proof of His righteousness here does not consist in punishing an innocent man with death, in order to let the guilty go free (which would be anything but a proof of righteousness), but in giving practical proof of His moral earnestness and zeal so long suspended in passing over the sins of ignorance, and in presenting to men in Christ's death an effective means of effacing their sin through faith, that is, in effectually interposing against sin, and helping men to get rid of it. Now, if the divine righteousness is such that it does not merely judge, but much rather helps and justifies (cf. ver. 26, *εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιούντα*), interposes against sin; and if, on the other hand,—which is mostly overlooked,—the divine grace is not merely a forgiving grace, but at the same time a transforming power, stronger than any law in keeping men right (Rom. vi. 14),—it is clear how little in Paul's case there can be any talk of a conflict between righteousness and grace in God.

### § 5. THE IDEA OF CREATION

All these declarations about the nature and attributes of God presuppose the existence of a world in relation to which God stands. For though the apostle knows of a *πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου* (Eph. i. 4), yet, as remarked above, he has not speculated about a being and life of God not related to the world. His doctrine of the pre-existent Son has already informed us how, in accordance with his whole way of looking at things, he passes from God to the world. As it is the nature of love to go out of itself, to communicate itself to others in order to find itself again in them, the apostle has undoubtedly, by the help of the idea of a real self-revelation of God, conceived the motive and model of the creation of the world. He has supposed that God, in that image of Himself which is the original of the world and humanity, first projected from Himself an ideal world, a summary of His creative ideas, through which He then called into existence the multitude of His creative works; that *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* of which it is said first, Col. i. 16, *ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ*

πάντα, and then again τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἔκτισται, two statements of which the former designates the ideal existence of all things in Him, and the latter their real production through Him. A third utterance, by adding to ἐν αὐτῷ and δι' αὐτοῦ, εἰς αὐτόν, expresses the idea that all things were created for Him, and have in Him as original the goal of their destiny; this not only describes the world's nature as growth as intended for development and history, but it expresses the most exalted and most complete idea of the world. The world is to attain to that Archetype of it which is the image of the invisible God; it is to be and become a vessel and mirror of God's glory. We must not, however, overlook that this speculative view of the transition from God to the world and His relation to it, is not with the apostle the only one. That old and simpler view of the Bible, which needs no personal Logos for the creation of the world, but ascribes it directly to God the Father, and leaves Him to rule and govern His world with the same directness, is found alongside of it. The apostle speaks likewise in 1 Cor. ii. 7 of a σοφία θεοῦ, ἣν προώρισεν πρὸ αἰώνων, which is the same as that mentioned in Prov. viii., the eternal decree which lies at the basis of the world, and issues in a blessed kingdom of God. This σοφία, however, is not a person or hypostasis, but a simple idea which the Spirit of God has revealed to the apostle. Again, the whole relation of God to the world, which in Col. i. 16 is mediated by Him who is the eternal image of God, is in Rom. xi. 36 ascribed directly to God the Father: ὅτι ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτόν τὰ πάντα. Consequently God has not only produced the whole course of the world from Himself, but He mediates it, and leads it to Himself as the goal of its perfection, without any mention of an intermediate principle between God and world. Nay, the evidences of this old and simpler view in the Bible regarding the relation of God to the world, are more numerous than those of that speculative view. God is said in Rom. iv. 17 to call those things that are not as though they were—calls them into existence. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (2 Cor. iv. 6). It is not the pre-existent Son then, but the Father Himself, who performs the six days' work. God gives the plants their bodies (1 Cor. xv. 38); He has

arranged the members of the human body (1 Cor. xii. 18). He has raised up Christ by the power of His glory, and will also quicken our mortal bodies through His Spirit (Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. vi. 14). He spoke to Abraham without a *μεσίτης*, an intermediate person (Gal. iii. 18, 19). The *κλησις*, the calling into the fellowship of His Son (Rom. viii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 9, etc.), is throughout ascribed to Him. These are purely creative or world-governing acts of God, in which there is no thought of a mediation through the pre-existent Christ, nay, in which such a thought is partly excluded by the ideas themselves. They prove that the theological idea on which his doctrine of Christ's pre-existence and Christ's activity as Creator of the world rests, had only relative value for the apostle; his thought was so little fixed that he frequently presents two different aspects of the matter side by side, and so this idea was not essential to him, and we are justified in treating even the christological use made of that idea only as an accessory of his knowledge of Christ, and not as belonging to its foundation. But whichever view he follows, his idea of the world and of creation always ends in man as God's proper aim, as the being on whom the love of God desires to rest. If he follows the speculative view, the pre-existent Son, in whom the ideal world is comprised, bears from the first ideal human features, and so He represents the form of God's favourite (*ἡγαπημένος, υἱὸς ἀγάπης*, Eph. i. 6; Col. i. 13), to which every child of man who is perfected as a child of God is to attain. But it is the same when he keeps within the simple view of the Bible. All things are of God; but we men are not only created by Him, but also to Him (1 Cor. viii. 6). The eternal decree in which all His *βάθη*, His deep, mysterious thoughts, are contained, is prearranged before the world for our glory, the glory of the sons of men (1 Cor. ii. 7-10). He has chosen Jesus as His beloved before the foundation of the world, and "chosen us in Him to be holy and unblamable before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus to Himself" (Eph. i. 4, 5). It may be surprising that in connection with this special and unique destiny of man to communion with God—for he ascribes such a destiny to no angel—the apostle has not made use of the old biblical idea of the creation of man

in the image of God. He only once touches on it, and then not on its highest side; for he only uses it to express the sovereignty of man upon earth, as giving the man a relative advantage over the woman (1 Cor. xi. 7). But indirectly he has used it with great power by emphasising the destiny of believers to become *συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ* (Rom. viii. 29), and he gives it most vigorous expression in other words in the sermon at Athens, when he says—not of Christ, but of man as such—*γένεος οὖν ὑπάρχοντες τοῦ θεοῦ* (Acts xvii. 29). We have already, in our discussion of his anthropology, seen how this divine descent of man consists in God's having implanted in the earthly material (*χοῦς*, 1 Cor. xv. 47) a germ of life from His own being and nature, a *πνευματικόν* from the eternal Pneuma.

### § 6. HEAVEN AND THE ANGELS

The old division of the world into heaven and earth is, as a matter of course, repeated in Paul. In that passage of Colossians in which the apostle enlarges most on the creation of the world, he divides the world created in the *πρωτότοκος* first of all into *τὰ πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατα καὶ τὰ ἄόρατα* (Col. i. 16). And he is still on ground common to the Bible writers when, in addition, he incidentally mentions an underworld (Phil. ii. 10), the dwelling-place of departed souls not yet entered into heaven, which is thought of as under the earth. But Paul's idea of heaven is somewhat complex. There is no thorough distinction made between the singular *οὐρανός* and the plural (*οὐρανοί* or *ἐπουράνια*, which reminds us of the Hebrew form of the word); but the apostle manifestly regards the higher world as divided into a series of ascending spheres. He speaks once of a third heaven (2 Cor. xii. 2), and another time he makes Christ (after His resurrection) ascend above all heavens (Eph. iv. 10),—an idea in which the very heavens to which the glorified Christ attains are distinguished as the creative work of God from God Himself, who is above the heavens. But there are two notions of heaven which diverge from one another, an ideal and an empirical one. The ideal heaven, as it were the uppermost sphere, is conceived as the

throne of God (Rom. i. 18); the home and dwelling-place of the Son of God (1 Cor. xv. 47; Col. iii. 1; 1 Thess. i. 10, iv. 16), the kingdom of eternal blessedness, and the goal of perfection which believers seek, and in which they already have a right of citizenship (2 Cor. v. 1; Eph. i. 3; Phil. iii. 20; Col. iii. 1 f.). In other passages the apostle by *ἐπουράνια* manifestly thinks of the lowest sphere, the visible heavens (*αἴθρ*). He thinks of it as the home of the evil spirits who rule earthly things (*ἐξουσία τοῦ αἵερος*, Eph. ii. 2 = *τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανοῖς*, vi. 12). But in it Christ, when He comes again, will take His seat to judge the world and destroy those evil powers (1 Thess. iv. 17: 1 Cor. xv. 24). It is therefore thought of as the sphere on which the earth and earthly things chiefly depend, and from which they are ruled. This brings us to the world of angels or spirits, who are to be understood by the *ἀόρατα* (Col. i. 16), and who are represented as dwelling *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανοῖς*,—an obscure part of the apostle's view of the world which is usually but wrongly passed over without notice. Without teaching anything about the angels, the apostle shows that he was keenly occupied with the notion of them. There exists for him a living connection between the world of spirits and of men. His fortunes as an apostle are a spectacle to angels and to men (1 Cor. iv. 9). The Corinthian women are not to come to public worship unveiled, because of the angels (1 Cor. xi. 10). He warns against errors, even though proclaimed by an angel from heaven (Gal. i. 8), and assumes that the Christian community, with its glorified Head, will have to judge even angels (1 Cor. vi. 3). The difficulty of applying the usual notion of good and evil angels to such passages, should make us mindful that we have here a peculiar element of Pauline thought which the imaginative and speculative mind of the apostle constructed out of the fluid Old Testament or Judaic idea of angels. This peculiar element appears in the designation of the angels as *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις, θρόνοι, κυριότητες*; for that angels and not earthly authorities are meant by these designations is clear from the comparison of Col. ii. 10, 15 with vv. 18, 19 (cf. also the *ἀρχάγγελος*, 1 Thess. iv. 16). Those mysterious beings appear mostly in the Epistle to the Colossians, where

the combating of a worship of angels specially leads the apostle thereto. But even in the contemporary Epistle to the Ephesians, and not less in the earlier main Epistles, they appear as a familiar element of his view of the world (Rom. viii. 38; 1 Cor. xv. 24). The riddle of the spirit world is at first only increased by these new and impersonal designations; for how mysterious and apparently contradictory are the things which the apostle says of those "principalities, mighty, dominions, or powers"! According to Col. i. 16, they are the *ἀόρατα* which God created in the first-begotten of every creature, and in ver. 20 God has reconciled them to Himself, and brought peace to them by that Firstborn; but in ii. 15 He has divested them of their lordship, and leads them in triumph. According to Col. ii. 10, Eph. i. 21, Christ is the head *πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας*, who is throned over them in heaven; and yet, according to Eph. vi. 12, Christians have to endure a conflict more difficult than against flesh and blood, *πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου, πρὸς τα πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*. And from Eph. ii. 2 we learn that Christ is not their actual governor, but the *ἄρχων τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος* is Satan, and therefore the exalted and triumphant Christ must finally destroy them as enemies (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25). The first ray of light in this darkness is given in 1 Cor. xv. 26, according to which even death, the last enemy, belongs to these *ἀρχαῖς* that are to be put down. We call to mind that in its more developed doctrine of angels, Judaism represented death as an angel—a destroying angel (cf. 2 Kings xix. 35); that it supposed every heathen nation to have its angel or genius (Dan. x. 13, 20; Sir. xvii. 14), in the same way as the Apocalypse supposes each of the seven Churches to have a peculiar genius; that, in particular, powers and ordinances of nature were personified as angels, or angels were thought of as their directors and rulers (cf. Heb. i. 7; Rev. vii. 1, xvi. 5). The apostle, with his peculiar speculation, put life into these notions in which he had been educated. The *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις* are in his imagination personifications of created powers, they are the cosmic orders or powers on which the worlds of nature and history depend, and by which they are

sustained. They are found in God's idea of the world as moments, means, or possibilities, and so they are said to be created in the Firstborn (Col. i. 16). But they do not represent either the aim of the world or its principle. The bearer of the idea of the world, the *πρωτότοκος*, stands far above them, and is their rightful head (Eph. i. 21; Col. ii. 10). But the course of the world has not continued to be normal. Evil powers have arisen, sin and death. The powers of nature have set themselves up as gods. The presiding spirits of the nations, instead of subordinating themselves to the higher and uniform idea given in the prototype of humanity, have made themselves their own end, and thus they have divided the one humanity into sections, hating and fighting one another. Then there appears in the world the highest idea of God realised in a human life in Christ. He reconciles the national ideals that are at variance with each other by setting up one people of God composed of Jews and Greeks, Greeks and barbarians (Eph. ii. 14-17, iii. 10).<sup>1</sup> He divests the deified powers of nature of their usurped majesty, and leads them in His triumph by vindicating the alone true Deity of His Father (Col. ii. 15). He overcomes sin and death by His dying and rising again. But He does all this at first only virtually. The power and possibility of doing so exist in Him, and are introduced to the world by Him. In the actual world finite powers which have fallen into a state of indifference and opposition to God continue to exist and rage far and near. The Christian community has a far harder conflict to endure with the powers of heathendom, the national ideals and the spirit of the age which are still powerful, than if it had to fight with flesh and blood, with a human belligerent power. The spirit of selfishness and of worldly pleasure still rules as a "god of this world," and Death still exercises his fearful power over all, even over believers. The task, therefore, of the exalted Christ is to put every principality, dominion, and power beneath His feet, to destroy death as the last enemy, and thus secure

<sup>1</sup> This is a view which the apostle loves to dwell upon, especially in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which is very specially devoted to the exhibition of Christianity as the higher element of unity between Jews and Gentiles in the Churches composed of both.

victory for God, who is all in all, to bring in the complete dominion of God alone (1 Cor. xv. 21–28). That is the profoundly spiritual interpretation which the apostle gives to the Jewish conception of angels. It takes up this conception into a magnificent philosophy of the world, and does not finally leave us in uncertainty about the conjectured personality of the angels. This personality is throughout only a form of presentation such as the poetic thought of the Bible could not help giving to real powers, but the inference from which it does not draw. Even the apostle may have shared this notion, though he uses expressions which are far from personal, ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, κ.τ.λ. But he has nowhere treated the angels as ends to God, which is the decisive mark of personality, as beings in whose moral development the personal and eternal God wished to reveal Himself. He nowhere speaks of an eternal salvation or condemnation of the angels; but simply of a being put down or destroyed, such as might be affirmed of impersonal powers and laws; and how, in particular, could he seriously regard death as a personality?

### § 7. THE ORIGIN OF MORAL EVIL

This Pauline conception of finite created powers, which rule the visible world till they are done away with at last in the victorious divine idea, is very significant of his whole view of the course of the world, however fantastic and obscure it may be to us. The apostle does not, as some have thoughtlessly done, conceive the original world as already perfect, answering completely to the divine idea; but as he everywhere views the world as in the highest sense historical, he distinguishes also between its original capacity and its ideal perfection. The creation did not proceed from God's hand as in any sense complete, but as a growing thing. God created the world for growth which is to be guided by Him, but which, proceeds of itself, and whose goal must, of course, lie higher than its starting-point. In other words, when the apostle says, ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα (Rom. xi. 36), he thinks not of an earthly return of individual existences into the universal, and the loss of their separate



being, but the completion of a process of development founded and guided by God to the goal of a perfect conformity to and communion with Himself. This process of development is possible only by the creation of the *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις* as a kind of divine lieutenancy; that guarantees from the beginning a certain separateness of life to the world, a comparative independence with regard to God, which does not exclude His guiding influence, but which does exclude the possibility of regarding everything that appears in it as directly divine, and of tracing back the substance of everything that happens in it to His will. God, according to Paul, leaves the world He created in a state of independence and freedom. And in that freedom is involved, as a matter of course, the possibility of a fall into the undivine, the possibility of evil. Now, as Paul in the majority of the above passages conceives the *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, δυνάμεις* in this way, they contain not merely the possibility, but the full reality of evil in themselves. They are at variance with one another. They are in revolt against their rightful Head, and exercise illegal power, so that Christ has to divest them of that power and lead them captive in triumph. They have death, the shadow of sin, in their midst. How has this revolt come into the creation of God? How did the apostle, starting from the idea of creation, conceive the origin of evil? This question can be answered only tentatively and by a sort of guessing, so fragmentary and enigmatic are his declarations on the point. Let us fix our attention, first, on his conception of Satan, which, like all New Testament writers, he has taken over from the Old Testament and Judaism. He calls Satan (Eph. ii. 2) the *ἄρχων τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ αἴρος*, the prince or governor of that spirit world which he thought of in the atmosphere encircling the earth, and he makes him carry on the natural government of the world from thence. Satan thus appears likewise to belong to those degenerate *ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξουσίαι* which are described in vi. 12 as the *πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας*: only he takes the highest, or more correctly the lowest, but the mightiest place amongst them. Beyond this we see that Paul, like Jesus before him, thinks of Satan as the undivided principle of physical and moral evil. On the one hand, an evil-doer is delivered to him *εἰς ὄλεθρον σαρκός* (1 Cor. v. 5), to

smite him like Job with bodily sickness, and it was an *ἄγγελος σατανᾶ* who tortured the apostle with bodily suffering (2 Cor. xii. 7). On the other hand, he is the seducer who draws a man away from faith and seeks to plunge him in despair (2 Cor. ii. 7, 11). He is therefore, as it were, the unity of sin and death, their common *ἀρθῆ*—or, as we should say, perhaps, after our investigation about the *σάρξ*, he is the fleshly principle, the principle of selfishness, and as such he exists already as an ungodly principle in the very essence of the creature. But the apostle has not followed up the mystery of the origin of evil in the form of this mythological conception of Satan. The idea of Satan plays no prominent rôle in his thought. He has left it entirely out of account, especially and very notably where he treats of the origin of sin and death. These he simply mentions, and the latter of them (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25), and without doubt the former also, the ruler of the world (Rom. v. 21), he has placed among the *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι*. Is it too bold a conjecture to suppose that among these created *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι* he thought also of potentialities in contrast to actualities, possibilities established by God without their being under necessity of coming to reality? We get the idea, not from the ambiguity of the concepts *ἐξουσία*, *δυνάμις*, but from Rom. v. 12: *ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος*. From what other quarter can sin and death have entered into the world than from the kingdom of possibility in which they were resting? Just as it is said of sin in the life of the individual (Rom. vii. 8), so in the life of the world they were lifeless, *νεκραί*, established by God as mere possibilities, as powers not actually existing until the fatal act of Adam's will called them into reality. Only in this way can we understand why the apostle does not place Satan but Adam, as he conceives him, in the foreground of his thought. The decision of the future of the world's history proceeds, not from the *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι* whose impersonal nature is clearly seen at this point, but from man, the personal being endowed with freedom. He, placed midway between God and nature, and related to both, meant to know and to obey God, yet having power to take another course and invited by the world of sense to try and find in it the source of his true life, holds in

his own hands the balance of destiny. He lets the scale dip on the wrong side, and dark powers, which should have remained bound, are unfettered and enter into the real world out of the kingdom of possibility in order to make themselves its masters. The godless principle, the principle of natural selfishness, becomes the prince, nay, the god of this world (2 Cor. iv. 4).

### § 8. THE ORIGIN OF PHYSICAL EVIL

It need not surprise us that Paul makes the effects of this portentous fact of the passage of moral evil from the kingdom of the possible into the actual world, which he presupposes in the primitive history, extend not merely to humanity, but to the whole creation under man. For the latter, to which man on his bodily side belongs, exists from the first for his sake, and is from the first the serviceable companion of his way. A mysterious fragment of our apostle's speculative theory of the world (for it is expressed in his Epistles only in fragmentary hints) enables us to guess how, from this point of view, he conceived the origin of physical evil. We refer to the remarkable passage Rom. viii. 19-22, about the sighing of the creature: *ἡ γὰρ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἰῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεκδέχεται· τῇ γὰρ ματαιότητι ἡ κτίσις ὑπετάγη, οὐχ ἐκούσα, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, ἐπ' ἐλπίδι· διότι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ. Οἶδαμεν γάρ, ὅτι πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει ἄρχι τοῦ νῦν.* That the unconscious creation, the world of nature below humanity, is here meant by the *πᾶσα κτίσις* which sighs and longs, is clear from the complete distinction which exists even at the end (ver. 23) between the *κτίσις* and the *υἱοὶ θεοῦ*, the children of men arriving at the perfection of salvation. The apostle sees this world of nature in a condition which neither is the original nor shall be the final one; it is under a curse imposed on it at a definite point of time (*ὑπετάγη*), which is, however, against its native tendency, and is therefore borne by it unwillingly (*οὐχ ἐκούσα*, ver. 20), and with sighing. This curse is the *ματαιότης*, the vanity and nullity, or the *δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς*, the being subject to corruption; it

is the dominion of death in nature. The apostle did not imagine the original state of nature as without growth or decay, but he probably conceived it just as he conceived the capacity and destiny of man, as intended for growth in order to attain at last to ideal and immortal forms. But now it is doomed to a cheerless round of eternal growth and decay that is ever aimlessly repeated, to a *ματαιότης* in the most proper sense. In the deep, low plaint that on that account runs through it, and breaks from the heart of humanity living in closest connection with nature, the apostle found a poetic expression for the manifold appearances of the imperfect, contradictory, and corruptible in nature, in a word, for natural evil. If we now inquire as to the sources to which he traces back this sad condition of the life of nature, we find it in the connection which he supposes between the future deliverance of nature and the redemption of the bodies of the sons of God. As the completed redemption of man is to be the signal for the deliverance of nature, so undoubtedly the apostle regards the beginning of man's error, the fall, as the signal for the *δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς* of nature. Whether the *διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα* in ver. 20 refers to Adam or to God, the apostle undoubtedly regarded the moment in which man by his sin called down death upon himself and his race, as that in which the principle of death obtained a power in the whole life of nature which it did not possess before.<sup>1</sup> It is true that the primitive act of the human race which is assumed by the apostle, the false step of Adam, is not made more conceivable in its universal effects by the fact that it convulsed and threw into disorder the life of nature outside man; and we occupy very much the same position towards this view of the origin of physical evil, which we may call mythical, as towards the corresponding view of the origin of sin. But it must ever be regarded as the kernel of the apostle's thought, that the present condition of nature, torn by inner contradiction and war, and felt by man as a source of manifold misery, does not in any-

<sup>1</sup> It is certainly God to whom the *ὑπετάγη* in Rom. viii. 20 finally points back; but the expression *διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα* is, in reference to God, so singular, that one is forced to apply the idea to Adam. Spoken of God, it must have read *διὰ τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος*.

way correspond with the original divine idea ; but it is in thorough correspondence with the sinful condition of man, which is wholly contrary to God's idea of man ; and the same gracious divine government of the world which aims at the moral redemption of humanity will also issue in a glorifying of nature, a deliverance of the whole creation from the curse of evil.

### § 9. IS THE WORLD GOVERNED BY DETERMINISM OR FREEDOM ?

In all the world-wide disorders produced by Adam's abuse of freedom, the apostle regards one thing as certain : it has not changed the eternal purpose of God's love to fashion the world for His kingdom, and to make man share in this its glory (1 Cor. ii. 7 ; Eph. i. 4 f.). But if that is so, the question presses all the more, whether this purpose is carried through without regard to what appears to us as human freedom ; has the apostle regarded freedom as a mere appearance, and subscribed to a deterministic view of the world ? That, of course, is inconceivable with regard to the disobedience and transgression of Adam. The apostle, in that case, would not only have played falsely with the words, he must have traced back to God Himself the contradictions to the divine idea which he traces back to Adam's deed, viz. sin and death. He must have credited God with the principle which, in Rom. iii. 8, he rejects for man as one worthy of condemnation : " Let us do evil, that good may come." But after the full moral freedom of man, the freedom to do good, was lost through the error of Adam, can we suppose that the apostle regarded what still remained as a mere appearance, a mere form of human feeling and action, and that he ascribed to God an irresistible influence with regard to man's salvation ? It is well known how the doctrine of an absolute foreordination of some to salvation, and a leaving of others to inevitable destruction, has been found in Paul's words by great divines ; and now, when we are considering the apostle's idea of the divine government of the world, we must examine this exposition. Does not the apostle speak of an election of believers to eternal salvation before the world was ? Does he not,

often enough, in the strongest way (in Rom. viii. 28–39), express an assurance of the salvation of believers which completely excludes the possibility of failing, through any abuse of freedom, to reach the goal? Does he not, in the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, declare of the children of Rebecca, that one of them was loved by God and the other hated (neglected), before they were born, or had done anything of good or evil; and does he not directly apply that to the believing and unbelieving among his contemporaries, using the image of the potter, who prepares one vessel to honour and another to dishonour, whilst the clay has no power to remonstrate with him on the matter? Strong as the deterministic appearance of such passages is, it is still a deceitful appearance. To begin with the idea of the *ἐκλέγεσθαι*: who bids us, when Paul speaks of the elect, of an election of God and of His grace, immediately add in thought before the foundation of the world, so as to exclude all regard for the inner free development of those to be chosen? The idea of election naturally presupposes a multitude from whom the choice is made, and therefore it best suits a historical act of God in which He must have His reasons for choosing this or that one for His kingdom; reasons which must be sought in the inner nature of those concerned. And in this sense, as a historical act of God, which is an act of grace, and yet takes regard of man's fitness for being God's instrument, the Old Testament idea of election is adopted in the New Testament. When it is there said that "God chose Abraham or the people of Israel," it does not mean before the creation of the world, but from the multitude of men and nations already existing; and no one can assert that that took place without regard to their inner nature. And it is not otherwise when Paul declares to the Corinthian Christians, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, have been called in Corinth: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty" (1 Cor. i. 26, 27). The apostle does not speak there of an act of God before the world was, but of an act of God in the effect of the gospel in Corinth; He chose principally the poor and

lowly, in order to draw them to Himself, since they were without doubt most ready to receive the gospel there. The discussion of the celebrated section, Rom. ix.—xi., will show that the idea of the *ἐκλογή* there is the same that these chapters describe an inner act of God's will, which directly precedes that of the outward *κλήσις*, so that the two words can be used interchangeably, just as in 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. The apostle speaks of an election before the foundation of the world only once, Eph. i. 4; and this passage, in its strict meaning, as *ἐκλέγεσθαι* always presupposes a larger number out of which the election is made, and where other members remain unchosen, would certainly suggest predestination if the word had been selected for the sake of believers. But it is unquestionably chosen on account of Christ, who is the *υἱὸς θεοῦ ἐκλελεγμένος* (Luke ix. 35, xxiii. 35), who was chosen by God before the foundation of the world, out of the whole number of the future children of men, as the anticipated Redeemer. By describing us as chosen in Him the apostle has applied to us the word which is properly true only of Him, to express the thought that we are included in the divine thoughts of love which are realised in Him. It is the same with the concepts *προγινώσκειν* and *προορίζειν* in Rom. viii. 29 (cf. Rom. xi. 2; Eph. i. 5, 11). We must not interpret *προγινώσκειν* here simply as foreknowledge, but must take into consideration the biblical meaning of *γινώσκειν* elsewhere (cf., for example, 1 Cor. viii. 3), which goes far beyond *εἰδέναι*. We must undoubtedly think of a loving foreknowledge in the case of those *οὓς προέγνω*, an election to fellowship in advance; but this very idea presupposes an estimate of the nature of those who have been chosen. But the *προ-* in *προέγνω*, as well as in *προώρισεν* which follows it, does not refer back to eternity; as *προέγνω* in Rom. xi. 2 goes back only to the previous history of the people of Israel in Abraham (cf. ver. 28), so those two acts of God in viii. 29 are merely characterised by the *πρό* as the *καλεῖν* which precedes the effectual act of God on the believer. Finally, as to Rom. ix., modern readers have been forced more and more to recognise that there is no mention at all of an eternal foreordination to salvation or destruction in this main proof passage for the Augustinian and Calvinistic doctrine of pre-

destination, but simply of a historical choice of men who are to uphold the cause of the divine kingdom in the world, and of a corresponding non-election, and even a temporary infatuation against the gospel.<sup>1</sup> The famous image of the potter and his vessels is not suited to a foreordination from eternity, as it does not represent a creation out of nothing, but a formation out of material already existing. It is a picture of the conduct of God in governing the world when, out of the existing material of human nature, He fashions His historical instruments in accordance with His will, a Moses to be the instrument of the revelation of His grace to Israel, a Pharaoh to illustrate His judicial might. The whole discussion, however, in Rom. ix.—xi. is occasioned, not by a dogmatic, but by a historical question, viz. How are we to think that Israel, God's chosen people in the Old Testament, should now, in the beginning of the New Testament period, remain strangers to the gospel, while the heathen world accept it? To this the apostle answers first: in the history of His kingdom God has always so acted; according to His own will He marks out one to be a bearer of His revelation, while He rejects another who seems to have equal or higher claims to it; He chooses Isaac and rejects Ishmael; He chooses Jacob and rejects Esau. And if at present He is making the heathen the supporters of the cause of His kingdom, and on the other hand is hardening the Jews, He is acting with the same right of free choice of grace which in the days of Moses led Him to choose Israel and harden the Egypt of Pharaoh. But this hardening, this fatal prejudice against the gospel, which in point of fact held the minds of the mass of the Jews in the apostolic age, is not a foreordination to eternal condemnation, it is merely a historical destiny, as is explained by the apostle in the eleventh chapter, where he teaches that God has not made the Jews to stumble that they should fall, but that salvation should come to the Gentiles, whose fulness will bring about the hour of Israel's grace, and all Israel will be saved (Rom. xi. 11–31; cf. 2 Cor. iii. 14–16). Consequently, if, in the whole section, the apostle had wished to teach an irresistible predestination, it would not have been

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for this and for what follows my treatise, *Die paulinische Theodicee*, 1868.



a foreordination of some to salvation and of some to condemnation, but a foreordination of all men to blessedness; for how does he close his discussion? *συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπίθειαν, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλέησῃ* (xi. 32). But we have the clearest evidence in Rom. ix.—xi. itself that he did not exclude, but include, human freedom in his statement of God's methods in governing the world, as He works for the realising of His salvation. First, we have in the ninth chapter the ideas of the divine wrath and the divine long-suffering. But how could God be angry with an unbelief or hardness of heart which He Himself had ordained for men, and for what would His long-suffering wait if He Himself had made it impossible for the man to be converted? And the study of ix. 30 to x. 21 shows that what the apostle has treated as a divine hardening, is on another side, just as in the case of Pharaoh in the Old Testament, seen to be Israel's self-hardening. When he shows how easy it is for man to be saved in the New Testament, but, how, in spite of that, Israel obstinately persists in the impracticable way of self-righteousness; how the gospel has done everything to reach all, but in Israel's case it meets with nothing but obstinacy,—what does he wish to prove, except that the guilt of Israel's blindness lies in her own will? Finally, in the eleventh chapter, when he warns believing Gentiles against losing their salvation again through unbelief, and keeps salvation open to the Jews who do not continue in unbelief (xi. 19–24), could he more clearly refute the illusion that he was teaching an irresistible grace and an invincible hardening? In addition to all that, however, we have the most positive testimony that the apostle sincerely presupposed a real moral freedom in the sinful world. All his exhortations to conversion and holy conduct would have no meaning if man, with all the helps of divine grace, did not need to “work out his own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. ii. 12). Most instructive on this point is the passage Rom. ii. 4, 5, which of itself is sufficient to exclude the notion of predestination in the case of the apostle. If “God's goodness, patience, and long-suffering lead (*ἄγει*) men to repentance, but man in his impenitence can treasure up for himself wrath against the day of wrath and righteous judgment of God,” then it is

unmistakable that, according to Paul, there is no irresistible grace, but a human freedom which of itself can frustrate the gracious intention and operation of God. Moreover, how should God, to secure the realisation of His thoughts of love, require all those indirect means which the apostle describes in Rom. xi. ? Nay, why did He delay the appearance of His salvation to the last times, instead of making it immediately follow the false step of Adam, if He had not placed the world in a condition of freedom which He regards as inviolable even in its abuse, and out of which there could come, only after thousands of years, such a susceptibility as was required for the voluntary reception of His salvation ?

#### § 10. THE RELATION BETWEEN FREEDOM AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD

But this fact does not solve the riddle of freedom and the government of the world. How do the two harmonise with one another in the mind of the apostle ? How can he, if he recognises a reality in human freedom, speak so frequently of God's government as if the course of the history of salvation in humanity or in the individual depended on God alone ? In the *ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα*, the second and third member are worded as absolutely as the first. According to Eph. i. 11, God is *ὁ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργῶ κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ*. The nations and times are shut up by God to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all (Rom. xi. 32). The faith of man is ascribed to the divine call (Rom. viii. 28, ix. 24), and the preservation and perfection of believers to the faithfulness of God (1 Cor. i. 8, 9 ; 1 Thess. v. 23). Shall we say that that is one side of the theory which is only half true, beside which stands the other, likewise half a truth, which places everything in the self-determination of man ? But in Paul's case the latter view appears with almost equal emphasis. Shall we fall back on the favourite expedient of perplexed expositors, that the idea of the divine government of the world and that of human self-determination form an antinomy which no human thought can explain ? But the man who wrote Phil. ii. 12, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you

both to will and to do of His good pleasure," cannot possibly have regarded the two statements which he connected with "for" as incapable of being thought together. When in Rom. xi. 23 he places a *δυνατὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς πάλιν ἐγκεντρίσαι αὐτούς* beside the *ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμείνωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ*, he cannot have meant, if of themselves they become believers, God is able to incorporate them in His kingdom, for that would be a meaningless and self-evident idea. It can only mean, "for God is able to bring them to believe"; and yet the *ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμείνωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ* undeniably presupposes a free self-determination in man, as is proved by the former warning to the Gentiles not to throw away the grace of God through unbelief. According to this, the apostle thought of the divine action and the human self-determination as compatible; but he imputed to God in contrast with man a spiritual as well as moral ascendancy, in which he was unquestionably right. And there is no reason why he should consider the moral self-determination of man and his guidance by God's higher power and wisdom as incompatible with each other, seeing that a free guidance of men by their betters is no riddle at all. A good teacher rules the formation of his pupils' characters in a free way, both by his interference and his reserve, and he sees the results of his teaching ripen before the pupil knows anything about it. A great king of a free people will observe the free constitution of his people, and yet he will find ways and means of making even rebellious subjects in the end the willing and enthusiastic instruments of his kingly thoughts. If that is possible to a human teacher or ruler, how much more so to the eternal Father, who has Himself created human freedom, and therefore must understand perfectly the way to guide it? He observes the free constitution He has given to the world, the moral nature and capacity of each of His children, because the moral good which He desires can only be realised in the way of moral freedom. Yet the whole meaning and purpose of His government of the world is to have His will freely done in His world, and so to establish His eternal kingdom in it. Paul does not describe the relation of God to the individual as if man's sinfulness had closed his heart against God: "In Him we live, and move, and have our being," he exclaims to

the heathen Athenians. God is like an atmosphere which man breathes even when he does not know it; his moral and religious nature is not done away by sin (Rom. i. 19, ii. 15), and thus in a certain sense and measure he still lives in God. He commits evil only of his own impulse, but every movement of the good which passes through his soul is a breath of God's communion. This makes the saying of Phil. ii. 13 intelligible, "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." God perpetually proffers to His own the impulses and powers to do good, and that makes it a great responsibility to use them properly. Men must labour and work out their salvation; but they labour with capital which God has given them. If that is chiefly true of the Christian whom God prompts by the Holy Spirit to desire to do what is good, yet it has also a certain application to the heathen in whose hearts God has written His law, and whom He has not left without witnesses of Himself that they might seek and find Him (Rom. ii. 15; Acts xiv. 17, xvii. 27). If in such words the apostle refers to the universal benefits and dispensations of God in nature, we come to his idea of Divine Providence as the teacher of men. The finite secondary causes to which, according to Paul, the world is delivered, the *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι*, do not exclude the action of the first cause, the divine governing will. His outward circumstances, even the carrying out or frustration of a journey, are to the apostle in God's dispensing hand (Rom. i. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 19, etc.). It is God "who with the temptation makes also the way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 13). God therefore has in His hand both the coming of the temptation and its issue. If all that happens is not in every sense His will,—for evil as such cannot be His will (cf. 1 Thess. ii. 18), yet—nothing happens without His will. The course of the world, with its thousand possibilities crossing each other, depending on the arrangements of nature and the wills of men, is so completely in His hand that He can bring adversity or success, and He can make all work together for the good of His own (Rom. viii. 28; 1 Thess. v. 17, 18). And therefore He is also able, as a matter of course, to work miracles and hear prayer without disturbing His own order of nature. Nor does He, in this access which He has to the

individual human life, disturb the natural order of history. He does not remove the individual from the position which he occupies in the world, but He guides the individual life, as well as the great life of humanity, according to inviolable laws of spiritual and moral development towards the height where salvation for the whole world can be produced, which shall be also for the advantage of every individual. The way in which the apostle, who views all things as possible with God, nowhere sees in the history of the world an arbitrariness of God, but everywhere recognises the laws of a divine education of the human race, belongs to the grandest features of the Pauline thought. From this point of view he has sketched a true Christian philosophy of history especially in the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans, though in the fragmentary form which the nature and design of such Epistles alone permitted (cf. Gal. iii. and iv. ; Rom. i. 18 f., iii. 25, ix.—xi.). He regards the divine education of the sinful human race as beginning with a great *ἀνοχή τοῦ θεοῦ* (Rom. iii. 25), which extends so far that God's *δικαιοσύνη*, His moral energy, lays itself open to misconception on that account; a great forbearance which again confirms the free nature of the history of the world. It is said (Acts xiv. 16, xvii. 26) that God allows the nations, for whom "He hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation," to go their own way; He left the world to its own development, with large indulgence for its sin (*πάρεσις*, Rom. iii. 25). This *ἀνοχή θεοῦ* is contrasted with a great *ἄγνοια* on the part of man (Acts xvii. 30; Eph. iv. 18); this is not a complete, but a far-reaching ignorance of God and His holy will, by which, on the one hand, sin is unfettered, whilst on the other it is excused, and is regarded as sin of ignorance (Rom. v. 13). The consciousness of God and the activity of conscience is never completely extinguished by this (Rom. i. 19, ii. 14), but is kept alive even by the natural gifts of God (food and gladness, Acts xiv. 17), as well as by the thought of God as Lawgiver and Judge, which is suggested even by the authority of magistrates (Rom. xiii. 1 f.), and thus the field of humanity is prepared for a higher revelation to come. At the same time, that divine long-suffering does not prevent God's moral order from being satisfied in the course

of the world's history. Within the sphere of conduct between relative good and evil which has remained to humanity, it has often been found that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7 f.), corruption from the fostering of the fleshly mind, or a higher life from the fostering of the spiritual impulses. It is natural that in the world as it is the penalties exacted by its moral order are essentially those carried out in its history; hence the dreadful congruity with which the ever deeper and more universal moral degradation has grown out of the religious degeneration of heathendom (Rom. i. 18-31): and hence also the moral necessity with which the infatuation of the Jewish nation against the gospel of grace entering into the world proceeds from its self-righteousness of works (Rom. ix. 30-x. 21). This law of the moral order of the world is carried out by men themselves without any special interposition of God, and thus it attests the co-operation of divine government and human freedom. The apostle can express by *οἷτινες ἑαυτοὺς παρέδωκαν τῇ ἀσελγείᾳ* (Eph. iv. 19) that which in Rom. i. 26 he had described as *παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας*, and the hardening of his Jewish contemporaries against the gospel, which in Rom. ix. and xi. he considers as a divine destiny, he characterises in chap. x. as the self-hardening of Israel. The one is the religious, the other the moral view of the matter; but both sides are one. The immanent moral law of history is God's law, which men carry out of themselves. But even creative interpositions of God are not wanting in the history of the world, though without any violence being done to its natural course. God, as the Parable of the Potter and the Clay (Rom. ix. 20 f.) represents, is the great Artist who out of the existing material of human nature at all times fashions His "vessels," His historical instruments, one as a vessel of His penal judgment, and another as an organ of His mercy (vv. 22, 23). God's creative co-operation gives his peculiar talent and therewith his historical vocation to every child of man that comes into the world, and thus the great Governor of the world, wherever His purpose requires it, can find in mighty personalities the levers of the world's history. But in relation to the great whole of humanity God limits Himself for thousands of years to this general mode of

acting, and at the same time He quietly prepares for a world-wide act of revelation by giving a series of preparatory and progressive revelations within a narrow circle. He first takes under His special care and discipline Abraham, and from Him a family, then a nation proceeding from that family, and so He prepares in the midst of humanity and history the place for the world's salvation (Rom. iii. 1, 2). That is His purpose according to election (*κατ' ἐκλογήν πρόθεσις*) of which Rom. ix. 11 speaks: it is ever a choice of one in preference to another to be a bearer of the promise; the other is not eternally cast away, but one is chosen to become an organ of God for an ever wider circle, the patriarchs for a whole nation, and this nation for all the nations of the earth. And in pursuance of this purpose, according to election, the divine providence celebrates its triumph in this, that even its judgments, called down by guilt, enter into the service of its grace and mercy. The hardening of Israel, as the apostle points out in Rom. ix. 23 f., xi. 11, 25, drives the gospel out into the Gentile world, and in this Gentile world again it is to win shape and power, and so to draw Israel that has remained behind. What God seeks by all these means in humanity is (and this completes the proof that He governs the world in consistency with human freedom) a general susceptibility for the salvation which He has intended for humanity as a whole, and for all the members of it in their relation to each other. The best and highest that remains to humanity, after having lost the capacity to make itself good by its own efforts, is the full perception of how evil it is, and the longing to be redeemed from the fetters of sin (Rom. vii. 24). But this knowledge and longing do not at first exist in sinful humanity, they are the final and mature product of all its growth before Christ comes. Neither the humanity of the times of Abraham nor of Moses could feel as Paul did in Rom. vii. 24: "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" That could only be felt in the fulness of the times. Why? Because the point was only then reached in which sin was judged in the conscience of humanity. To reach this highest point, however, there was needed a twofold progress of development and completion of sin, an extensive and an intensive one. The first, the development of sin

until it is resistless, omnipotent, driving to despair, is consummated in heathendom. The second, the development of sin as conscious guilt, as infinite sin against the love of God which was manifested and rewarded with murderous hatred, is consummated in the people of the law, in Judaism. To both processes of development the apostle has devoted special consideration.

### § 11. HEATHENDOM

The apostle discussed the genesis of heathenism only incidentally (Rom. i. 18 f.), and, as may be easily conceived, without any studies in the history of religion. He was led to consider it by the hopeless moral corruption of the Græco-Roman world, the dreadful godlessness which confronted him as the other side of the highest worldly culture in the moral condition of Ephesus and Corinth. It is significant of the free, natural character of his thought, which everywhere avoids excessive speculation, that he does not, as we might have expected, bring heathenism into connection with the Fall. A wide space seems to separate the two in his feeling. In his thoughts about heathenism we are carried back to a comparatively innocent infancy of humanity which, ignorant of the subsequent moral corruptions, began its education under the influence of the great creative works of God. God was not foreign and unknown to this race. His *γνωστόν*, that which (naturally) may be known of Him, viz. His eternal power and Godhead, had been set forth to them. For who could rationally contemplate the works of creation (cf. the *νοούμενα* in ver. 20) without being led to a Thinker and Master of these? "But—continues the apostle—although they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." The elementary knowledge of God which the men of the primitive period possessed should therefore have been religiously confirmed and cherished, and it would have undoubtedly grown and strengthened.



But at this parting of the ways, again, man followed the sensuous instead of the supersensuous attraction. They became vain in their imaginations; that is, instead of giving themselves up in thanks and praise to God, they gave themselves up to the charm and magic of created things, the glory of nature, and so they lost their original knowledge of God. They went so far as to exchange God for the images of the perishing creature, to worship Him in the image of man like the Greeks and Romans, or even in the form of beasts like the old Egyptians and like some of the Romans in the Syncretist period of the Empire. Thus, and not according to the Jewish fable of a deception by demons, did Paul explain the origin of idolatry. It is a wilful conceit of our exegesis which regards 1 Cor. x. 20, 21 as a declaration that the gods of the Gentiles are demons, forgetting that in the same context the apostle repeatedly, and even directly before ver. 19, declares the idols to be nothing. The *δαιμόνια* in 1 Cor. x., just as in Acts xvii. 18, signify the heathen gods at whose table one should no longer sit as a guest, and of whose libations one should no longer drink, after having become a guest at the table of the Lord, and a partaker of His cup.<sup>1</sup> In describing the fall of man from the living God to the worship of the creature, Paul seeks to leave those without excuse who in their unrighteousness hold back the truth of God, which was thrust upon them from all sides of creation (Rom. i. 18); but he must not be understood as meaning that every individual is without excuse whom he knows to be involuntarily and almost unconsciously led and drawn to dumb idols (1 Cor. xii. 2). He is thinking of the common guilt of pre-Christian humanity, and he speaks, as he frequently does, in the relative sense, without excluding the equally relative point of view of the excusing *ἄγνοια* (Acts xvii. 30; Eph. iv. 18). What he has in view, however, is the connection between the primeval religious errors of humanity and its present hopeless moral condition, a connection which he considers as a revelation in history of the wrath of God (Rom.

<sup>1</sup> The apostle's argument amounts merely to the incompatibility of the Christian profession with taking part in heathen sacrificial meals, which was an act of heathen worship. Moreover, he never calls the *πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας, δαιμόνια*.

i. 18). After that examination of the origin of idolatry, he continues, "therefore God gave them up to shameful lusts," and then he gives a terrible picture of the unnatural lusts and the dissolution of all natural and moral bonds which were patent in his day, as the final and hopeless result of the development of heathen culture. God gave them up, he says, where he might as well have said they yielded themselves;—for God's moral order of the world involves that impiety begets immorality, and that man, in falling away from the living God, loses his moral restraint and sinks into the service of sensual lusts and selfish passions, and these in accordance with the same penal law run out into unnatural practices that are shameful even to the natural man. The apostle therefore sees in the moral dissolution of the heathen world of his time the punishment of God on those who stifled their better religious knowledge. And yet, even in this fearful judgment, he sees an element of correction unto righteousness, inasmuch as sin in this way must exhaust itself, and must produce in the heathen world the universal feeling of being lost, which did actually drive it, in these last days, to the grace of God in Christ (cf. Rom. i. 18 with vv. 16, 17 and ix. 30; Eph. ii. 12). That is the picture of the night of heathendom as it confronts the apostle, which shows its need of deliverance through the rising of the sun of the gospel; at times also he definitely recognises the stars which shine through that night. He can, as mentioned above, reproach the vices of Israel by contrasting them with the several appearances of virtue among the heathen (Rom. ii. 26, 27). He has an open eye for the great supporter of the moral idea in the heathen world, the State; all authorities are to him ordained of God for the terror of evil-doers, and the reward of those that do well (Rom. xiii. 1 f.), and thus they are a power of moral preservation, a strong barrier opposed to the overflowing evil (cf. 2 Thess. ii. 6, τὸ κατέχον), which makes a spiritual and moral development of humanity possible. He does not deny a certain propædæutic value even to the heathen religion, low as it stands in his esteem. In the enigmatic idea of the *στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου* (Gal. iv. 3, 9; Col. ii. 8, 20) he seems to have embraced, in one conception, the heathen ceremonial with that of Israel, so like it in point of form, and estimated it as the

religious A B C of humanity. Though in Gal. iii. 9 he calls these elements of religion weak and beggarly, yet they appear to him as first exercises in the fear of God, in which deeper presentiments might arise, such as he saw in that altar inscription at Athens, "To the unknown God," which he treats, in Acts xvii. 23, as a heathen prediction. In like manner the apostle (1 Cor. i. 21) estimates Greek philosophy as an attempt by wisdom to know God in His wisdom, that is, to enter into the great creative thoughts of God. And though he must regard this attempt as on the whole vain, yet he does not fail to appreciate the anticipations of truth in the Greek thinkers and poets, such as, "We are His offspring," which he quotes in his sermon at Athens (Acts xvii. 28). According to all this the history of heathendom is to him mainly a negative preparation for salvation. God has allowed the Gentiles to go their own way in order that thus they might be led into a pathless wilderness, and so become willing to be led by His delivering hand. But he also found traces of a positive preparation for Christianity.

## § 12. THE REVELATION AND PROMISE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

But there is a history of revelation in the Old Testament, a continuous, progressive, and positive preparatory history of salvation. If the apostle loves to divide the men of his time into Jews and Greeks (*e.g.* 1 Cor. i. 22), he does so in view of the actual result of ancient civilisation. Secular culture reached its highest point in Greece, and from Greece it conquered and embraced the whole of humanity. In contrast with it stood Judaism alone as the champion of the only religion that breaks the spell of the apotheosis of nature, the religion not of fancy but of revelation. That in the eyes of the apostle is the historical glory of his people that cannot be lost, and of which he, though a Christian, does not cease to be humbly proud (Rom. ix. 1-5; Gal. ii. 15; Phil. iii. 5); *ὅτι ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ* (Rom. iii. 1-3). But the divine words of revelation, which were entrusted to the Jews, are partly gracious promises, partly religious and moral commandments—they

are law and promise. While the apostle prizes these heritages along with his people, he separates from them in the estimate he forms of them. To the Jewish people the law was the main fact in their religion; it was the fundamental, and, in their relation to God, it was the standard and sufficient thing. The promise was simply the reward attached to the keeping of the commandments. On the other hand, to the apostle, as is specially manifest from the third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, the promise is the essential and fundamental element of the old covenant to which the law is subordinate; and this is so because the promise is the gospel before the gospel, it requires of man not doing and performing, but simple acceptance or faith (cf. Rom. iii. 27). Here we have a profound difference between his idea and that of the Jews, and the true piety is restored in presence of the old and degenerate. The prevailing Pharisaic tendency in the Judaism of the time had made the religion of the old covenant a eudæmonistic moralism, a religion of human performance and merit, and of divine command and reward. To this religion of institutions and good works, whose superficiality and falsity Paul had already as a Pharisee experienced, he now, as a Christian, opposed the genuine religious feeling in which a man desires to be nothing in the presence of God, but everything in and thorough God (1 Cor. i. 29). To him piety is essentially the feeling and consciousness that we neither can nor wish to gain anything from God by our merit, but, with humble gladness, owe everything to His grace: it is essentially faith, child-like, trustful surrender to an undeserved and eternal love. From this standpoint no figure of the Old Testament is to him so precious and congenial as Abraham—the first receiver of the promise, the unequalled hero of faith. The Jews loved to rely on their physical descent from him (Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 33), but the apostle saw in him rather the pioneer of a religion essentially non-Jewish—a religion of grace and of faith going far beyond Judaism, and destined for all nations; Abraham was to Paul, it may be said, the spiritual ancestor of Christianity and of Christendom (Gal. iii.; Rom. iv.). Before there was an

Israelitish nation and commonwealth, before there was a Mosaic law as the foundation for that commonwealth, there was formed between the heart of the Father in heaven and a solitary human heart, which sought God above nature, a covenant of personal intercourse of fatherly disclosures and filial acts of confidence which continued and was developed as a sacred tradition—first in a family of friends of God, and then in a nation growing out of the family; and that covenant was the germ of the religion of salvation for all the nations of the earth. That is the element of most certain truth in the biblical story of Abraham which the penetration of the apostle discovers (Gal. iii. 8; Rom. iv. 16). Though the idea of salvation to the spiritual eye of Abraham lies in the dim and distant future, yet it is grace which speaks to him from heaven, and faith in him which answers to that special historical revelation. There is given him in Isaac, the child of promise, a symbol and pledge of larger and largest blessings from God; and the spread of this blessing to all the nations of the earth is predicted, and his heroic faith in all these promises of God is crowned, in the memorable words: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Gen. xv. 6; Rom. iv. 3). When he presses these facts as anticipations of Christianity against Judaism with its particularism and legality, the apostle argues sometimes like a Rabbi, for he wished to break the authority of Old Testament tradition by arguments taken from the Old Testament itself; but in the heart of the matter he is right. When, in Gal. iii. 15–17, he insists upon the fact that no one can abrogate or add to the legal arrangements of another, and argues that the law, which was 430 years later, could not add to or take from anything of the promise, the juristic argument is sound in meaning in so far as it ascribes the law to a different authority from the promise (viz. to angels, ver. 19). But the whole is an *argumentum ad hominem*. In the same way, and in the same passage, in order to prove the validity of the covenant of promise up to Christ, he makes the *σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ* refer to Christ, while in Rom. iv. 16 he applied it more correctly to believers. And in Rom. iv.

10 f. he lays weight upon the fact that Abraham was not circumcised when he received justification by faith, and therefore stood as yet in no closer relation to the Jew than to the Gentile. And finally, in Gal. iv. 21–31, he constructs an allegoric interpretation of the history of Hagar and Sarah in order to make clear the higher right of the covenant of promise against the covenant of the law. Yet he is substantially right in this, that the religion of grace is in principle higher than the religion of law; that the Old Testament from the beginning pointed beyond itself, and could not find its conclusion in the law; that the perfect religion, for which it prepared the way, must not be bound to the limits of a nationality, but must be for humanity; finally, that a religious relation, such as that of Abraham to God, cannot be transmitted in a physical, but only in a spiritual way by means of the same religious conduct, and that believers therefore, and they only, are, in point of fact, the true children of Abraham. In all this he has not lost sight of the fact, and of the reason of the fact, that salvation was not really given to the faith of Abraham in order to pass immediately from him to his children. Abraham is a type or example of the believer in Christ; but, with all his justifying faith, he was not, in the sense of the apostle, in possession of the New Testament salvation; Paul has nowhere ascribed to him the *πνεῦμα τῆς ζωῆς*, the *πνεῦμα ἁγίου*. Abraham's relation of trust in God was possible only in a time of childlike naivete of humanity—in that period between Adam and Moses when the consciousness of sin was not yet awakened, when sin was still dormant as it is in childhood (Rom. v. 13, vii. 8, 9). Sin and the consciousness of sin must first be developed. The evil hidden in humanity must unfold its power and reach its height in order to be overcome once for all in humanity. And it is here, according to Paul, that the Mosaic law has its place in the economy of salvation (*οἰκονομία τοῦ πληρώματος τῶν καιρῶν*, Eph. i. 10).

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## § 13. THE MOSAIC LAW—TWFOLD CONSIDERATION OF IT

Next to the establishing of faith in a transcendent God of goodness and trust, the revelation of the law is undoubtedly the greatest work of the pre-Christian period in the economy of salvation. Not only did the Mosaic law give in Israel a starting-point for the development of a religion of faith amongst the people; it also contains for all men and times the holy commandments of God, without the fulfilling of which no kingdom of God in time or eternity can be imagined. Now it may sometimes seem as though Paul did not sufficiently appreciate this gift of God. He replaces the law by the promise. He seems to see in the law a rod of correction more than a gift of divine kindness. He declares Christ to be the end of the law, and makes believers be dead to the law (Gal. iii. 17; Rom. iv. 15, x. 4, vii. 4-6). Yet it should never be forgotten that the main task of the apostle was to oppose the false legal religion of Judaism and its reintroduction to the religion of grace which makes men morally free. While he does this with all the energy of his spirit he has done full justice to the law. In order to understand him aright on this point we must distinguish in his writings two views of the law. When he regards it in its spiritual content as developed by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, it is to him spiritual and divine, holy, righteous, and good (Rom. vii. 12, 14, 22, *ὁ νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ*), and he never thinks of pronouncing it to be abrogated or transitory. On the contrary, he rejects the idea of its being abolished by faith with a *μὴ γένοιτο* (Rom. iii. 31); he is conscious that his work is to establish. In this sense Christ is not the end of the law, but its fulfilment, as through Him "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 4). In this sense, the sense of the Sermon on the Mount, where love is the fulfilling of the law, and the whole law is practically comprehended in the one commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Rom. xiii. 9, 10; Gal. v. 14), Israel has never fulfilled the law, and Christians have to fulfil it after they have become *ἔννομοι Χριστοῦ* (1 Cor. ix. 21), and have received the Holy Ghost, who enables them to do so. But the historical situation

and task of the apostle make this ideal view of the law the less frequent with him. Commonly he looks at it, as it was natural for him to do, from the standpoint of history and experience. The law as it lay before him, a collection of literal ordinances (*δέγματα*, Col. ii. 14), is not *πνευματικός* but *γράμμα* (Rom. vii. 6). In this form he cannot even ascribe to it a purely divine origin, but it is *διαταγείς δι' ἀγγέλων, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου* (Gal. iii. 19).<sup>1</sup> The later Jewish notion, which also appears in the New Testament, that the law was given, not immediately by God, but by angels (Acts vii. 53; Heb. ii. 2), performs the same service for the apostle that a freer idea of revelation, in recognising the human factor beside the divine, has done for us; it enabled him to distinguish in the Mosaic law the eternal fundamental thoughts of God from the imperfect interpretation adapted to the circumstances of the time and the needs of the people. The Mosaic law in its maturity is not the pure religious and moral law of God for all men, but the Jewish national law, which on that account must come to an end in Christ, because it could not possibly be the intention of the new religion for the world to Judaise the non-Jewish nations (cf. Gal. ii. 14). The apostle also comes to recognise the imperfection and transitoriness of the letter of the law when he considers it on its ritual side. All these ritual rules have no doubt their symbolical meaning; they are *σκιά τῶν μελλόντων, τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, emblematic outlines of the future gifts and orders of God coming in the new covenant, the spiritual reality of which (*σῶμα*) is given in Christ (Col. ii. 16). But they are nothing more than this. In the letter they are not the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, such as is rendered in a reasonable service when body and soul are devoted to the service of God (Rom. xii. 1, 2). That is one thing which the apostle has against the Mosaic law, but the

<sup>1</sup> The passage which immediately follows, and of which there are said to be more than three hundred interpretations, does not seem to be inexplicable. The phrase, *ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἑνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς εἷς ἔστιν*, is meant to establish that the law must have been given by angels, that is, by a multitude, and not directly by the one God. A number, in order to treat with another, needs a middleman, and so the angels made use of Moses. The one God could have spoken with Israel directly as He did with Abraham.



other point is still more significant. This law offers itself as a means of righteousness and blessedness, and it is not such. It declares, keep me and you shall live (Rom. x. 5; Gal. iii. 12). But no man—no man whose knowledge of God is limited to what the law gives—can keep it (Rom. iii. 20). Even the law as expressed in the second table, of which the apostle for the most part thinks (cf. Rom. vii. 7, xiii. 9; Gal. v. 14), is unable to awaken in the natural man the higher divine life to which it seeks to lead him (Gal. iii. 21; Rom. vii. 10, *ἡ ἐντολὴ ἢ εἰς ζωὴν*). The will of God cannot be imparted to the natural man by a written letter from without; the law, holy, righteous, and good as it is, is weak in presence of the flesh (Rom. viii. 3), which, in its selfish dominion in man, mocks the commandments. The *ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου*, viz. to constrain man to a walk after the Spirit, to a true inner keeping of the commandments of God, must be accomplished by means entirely different; powers from within must be used to write the law on man's heart as a *νόμος πνευματικός, νόμος τῆς ζωῆς*. The apostle therefore directs his attack vigorously against the fatal self-deception of his people in regarding the revelation of the law as the perfect final and sufficient revelation of God, and in taking their outward obedience to the letter for a true righteousness acceptable to God (Rom. ix. 31, 32, x. 2, 3). He uses the narrative (2 Cor. iii.) of the fading glory on Moses' face to remind them that the glory of the law's function must also fade; that from the first the law was not meant to be the abiding word of God; as an instrument of the old covenant it was destined from the first to give way to a new covenant, the covenant of the Spirit and of grace. And for the same reason he regards the state of one under the law as equivalent to the state of being in the flesh or under sin (Rom. vii. 4–6). For if a man is in the power of the *σάρξ* and sin, he has the will of God in the form of the letter of the law outside him and against him; and so long as it is thus outside, it is not within him as an impelling spirit and a new life born of God. And therefore it is the legal condition which the apostle is compelled to describe (Rom. vii. 7–25) as the condition of moral impotence and of hopeless inner discord.

#### § 14. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LAW IN THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION

But this is the point at which the significance of the Mosaic law in the economy of salvation discloses itself. Though we cannot overcome sin by the law, yet the first condition of doing so, the knowledge of sin, is obtained through the law (Rom. iii. 20). This knowledge in itself is by no means a beneficial, but rather an unhappy knowledge. As the dominion of the *σάρξ* and sin in man prevent him from making a beneficial use of it, the only direct fruit which it produces is the sense of guilt, the inner experience of the divine wrath lying on sin, the sentence of death imposed by God on the transgression of His commandments. The apostle in every way emphasises this effect of the law in producing the consciousness of guilt, which, of course, requires that men take the law in earnest, such as he himself in Rom. vii. exhibits. The law, he says (Rom. iv. 15), worketh wrath, that is, it causes the inner experience of the wrath of God by evoking the transgression and bringing it to consciousness. The letter killeth, he exclaims (2 Cor. iii. 6), that is, the law written on the two tables judges inwardly, and whispers to us the divine sentence of death. Again, he compares the law to a handwriting against us (Col. ii. 14), a bond which Christ must utterly destroy, as a jailer to whom we are handed over by God as debtors (Gal. iii. 23). Nay, he speaks of a "curse of the law" which adheres to us, since in the law which springs from the holiness of the Lawgiver there is written, "Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Even the image of the *παιδαγωγὸς εἰς Χριστόν* (Gal. iii. 24) does not, as some interpret it, point to an actual moral instruction by the law; this is only of the most elementary kind, and is not taken into account in the apostle's train of thought; the phrase rather expresses the bondage and fear in which man found himself under the law, in accordance with the character of the *Pædagogus* of Antiquity, who was not an Educator, but only a Slave to keep the child in order (cf. Gal. iv. 1-5). This emphasising of the sense of guilt not only corresponds to the personal experience of the

apostle, it is justified by the fact that through that sense of guilt a religious turn is given to the knowledge of sin. In the feeling of guilt, or of the ὀργή, God is revealed to man as the Holy One, angry and threatening; and such a revelation must precede the experience of His holy love and sanctifying grace (Gal. iii. 23, iv. 1 f.). That is one side of the working of the law in the economy of salvation, but there is another connected with it which has an even stranger look. According to Paul, the business of the law is to develop sin and bring it to perfection. To the question raised in Gal. iii. 19; Rom. v. 20, "Wherefore then serveth the law if it cannot lead to righteousness and the inheriting of the promises, the apostle answers: τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη—παραεισήλθεν, ἵνα πλεονάσῃ τὸ παράπτωμα. Τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν means just what it says, in favour of transgression. First of all, the law was given that transgression should take place; that is to say, apart from the law, with its commandments and prohibitions, sin would not become transgression, and so would not come clearly into consciousness; sin, which appears natural to the children of Adam, is developed to transgression, and becomes sin, conscious violation of a divine commandment, only by means of the law. And if that did not happen, if all things remained as at the pre-Mosaic time described in Rom. iv. 15, v. 13, "Where there is no law, sin is not imputed," a decisive crisis between humanity and sin would never have been reached. This function of making offence into conscious transgression coincides pretty much with the function already discussed of awakening the knowledge of sin and making it guilt; but there lies in the phrase what the passage in Romans describes, ἵνα τὸ παράπτωμα πλεονάσῃ. The law itself in certain circumstances evokes and excites the still latent sin as described in Rom. vii. 5, 9; the apostle knows the experience which the Gentiles had before him, *Nitiumur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata* (Rom. vii. 7). But even where the desire is not first awakened or brought to consciousness by the commandment, the law increases sin intensively. Sin first develops its whole power under the law, that is, in the knowledge of the holy will of God, by mocking this divine will and becoming a more conscious ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν (Rom. viii. 7); it becomes, as the apostle appropriately expresses, Rom.

vii. 13: καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς. Thus beside its guiltiness the enslaving character of sin is first brought clearly out by means of the law, while the complete impotence of man's better knowledge and desire, and the dæmonic power of the indwelling sin, become manifest by the vain opposition of the commandment. But sin can only be vanquished in its completed development so as to be overcome as sin.—οὐ δὲ ἐπλεόνασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις (Rom. v. 20).—Not that every individual must experience this perfecting of sin by means of the law—how could that be in the Gentile world, which was not in possession of the revealed law?—but the apostle's outlook is universal, as the passage just quoted and the whole contrast of Adam and Christ as the two heads of humanity would lead us to expect. It is not so much in the particular individual as in the human race as a whole, and in its historical development, that sin, the "offence," has to reach that height at which the corruption proceeding from the first Adam could be surpassed and overcome for all by the second Adam through an infinite deed of righteousness and salvation. That could not take place on the soil of heathenism, where sin in all its extent and heinousness continued to have the character of sins of ignorance; sin there was a natural moral bondage without a full consciousness of guilt. It could only take place under the law, and among the people of the law, where each could know through God's positive revelation what he was doing, and was therefore intensively far more sinful than in the Gentile world. As the Son of God when He came to reveal the Father's love was nailed to the cross among that people, and in that land where God and His law could be known as nowhere else, and at no previous time in the world, sin achieved a triumph that cannot be surpassed; and as in this masterpiece of sin the Son of God fully proved His obedience and mercy, and overcame the monstrous evil by infinite goodness, the redemption of humanity was established once for all. That is the meaning of the οὐ δὲ ἐπλεόνασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις, and in tracing the service of the law to this point the apostle has completely shown its significance in the economy of salvation, and has brought God's government of the world to the point of decision.

## CHAPTER V

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SALVATION

## § 1. THE WORD OF THE CROSS

The study of the economy of the law brings us to that work of God in establishing salvation which is the climax of the world's history religiously considered, and the cardinal point of the Pauline gospel. It is well known that the apostle finds this act of God in the death of Jesus with a decisiveness that might seem onesided, and which, at anyrate, is not found in the older apostles. To Paul the gospel is essentially what he calls it, 1 Cor. i. 18, "the word of the cross." When he appeared among the Galatians, he set forth Jesus Christ before their eyes as crucified among them (Gal. iii. 1). When he removed to Corinth, the chief city of Greece, he determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2). In his first Epistle addressed to them (1 Cor. i. 23, 24) he tells them that this Christ is "to the Jew an offence, and to the Greek foolishness; but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks, the power of God and the wisdom of God." This prominence which he gives to the death of Christ should not be overstrained and made onesided. Paul never made the fact of the death upon the cross by itself the basis of salvation, as though Christ had come into the world only to die. He never forgets that this death has a saving character only in connection with the life, a life of faultlessness and self-denial, of obedience and mercy; and therefore he can go back to the whole mission and life of Jesus, of which His surrender to death forms the culmination, as the basis of salvation (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4, 5). On the other hand, and this should at once be noted in our present section, he did not find the divine work of salvation in the death of Jesus alone, as the later doctrine, even that of Protestants, does; but in the death and the resurrection, in the death and in the exalted, glorified life of the Crucified (Rom. iv. 25, viii. 34, xiv. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 17; 2 Cor. v. 15), to which we will have to come back.

But this is clear, that in immediate connection with his own conversion, in the three days of conflict which followed the appearance of the Risen One to him on the way to Damascus, the death of Jesus on the cross must have won for him a decisive importance, and must especially have become to him the source of the peace of God and the new life of which he was from that moment certain. And therefore on this particular point, which was still obscure to the first apostles, it was he who was called to expound to the earliest Christendom, and all following generations, God's thought of love. He did so more in preaching than in his Epistles, in which he refers to it only in the way of presupposition and suggestion. His utterances on this point are numerous and highly significant, but they are in every case incidental, and they are never intentionally didactic, and that is the reason why there are still such difficulties and differences of opinion, not indeed about his fundamental thought, but about the more exact conception and exposition of it.

## § 2. REJECTION OF THE THEORY OF EXPIATORY SACRIFICE

It is therefore well to seek at once the right key to the exposition. The Old Testament idea of expiatory sacrifice has recently been used by many, especially in one celebrated work of great influence.<sup>1</sup> We cannot regard this method as the right one, or as leading to the goal; apart from the fact that there is no unanimity about the Old Testament ideas of sacrifice, we have no right, even if there were unanimity, to presuppose in the contemporaries of Jesus those views which the theology of to-day regards as historically established. No doubt New Testament ideas which have their roots in the Old Testament must be traced to these roots. But we are not to refer them to the standards of the Old Testament ideas, for in the interval there had taken place the greatest possible change, which remodelled even the world of thought. The apostles received the New Testament facts, not as theological problems which they had to solve according to the rudimentary Old Testament conceptions; they learned them as religious experiences, and understood them chiefly by their immediate effects;

<sup>1</sup> A. Ritschl, *Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii.

and if, in order to satisfy themselves as to their direct explanation of the facts, they studied their experiences in the light of the Old Testament, they read into it as much at least as they took out of it. Our apostle, in particular, tells us that he knew the cross of Christ chiefly as a power changing his inmost life, "I am crucified with Christ: in Him the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. ii. 20, vi. 14). It is natural that afterwards, in closer reflection on the self-sacrifice of Jesus, through love to God and for the good of men, he should remember the Old Testament sacrifice as the prelude to this New Testament sacrifice. Yet this comparison appears seldom in his writings, and merely by way of allusion; it is never a matter of doctrine (1 Cor. v. 7; Eph. v. 2, and perhaps Rom. iii. 25). Paul, like Jesus, attaches himself to the prophetic rather than to the Levitical views of the Old Testament. The aspect most common and peculiar to him, in which he studies the death of Jesus, that of reconciliation (*καταλλαγή*), has, in point of form, nothing in common with the Old Testament idea of sacrifice, and in like manner the Old Testament expiatory sacrifice has no point of connection either with the life of Messiah, which ends in the death upon the cross, or with the resurrection life which shares in the saving significance of that death. Consequently, to make this Old Testament idea fundamental can only lead us to thrust aside as insignificant a series of the most important Pauline declarations and points of view.

### § 3. DELIVERANCE FROM GUILT THROUGH THE DEATH OF JESUS AND ITS TRADITIONAL INTERPRETATION

The theory of expiation, however, is only a particular variety of the view of Jesus' death as a removal of guilt which has been recognised and has many varieties. Many Pauline passages certainly appear to favour this conception. There can be no question that Paul traces back the deliverance from guilt or—to express it positively—the justification of sinful man to the death or to the blood of Christ, that is, to the shedding of His blood, the surrender of His life. Let us call to mind only some of the most expressive passages. (1) Rom. iii. 25, 26: "God hath set forth Jesus in His blood

as a propitiation through faith." However other words in this passage, which we shall afterwards discuss more exhaustively, may be understood, there lies in the words as well as in the express addition, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν . . . δικαιούντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ, the certainty that ἱλαστήριον, propitiation, means of eradicating guilt, contains at least the idea of taking away guilt, of forgiveness. (2) 2 Cor. v. 21: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." If the expressions "made to be sin" and "made the righteousness of God" are here equivalent to becoming the bearer of sin and the receivers of righteousness, then Christ is made the bearer of sin by His surrender to the lot of the servant of Jehovah (Isa. liii. 6), to the death of a criminal; and on this depends our becoming righteous in God's sight, that is, our exculpation or justification. (3) Gal. iii. 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." The curse of the law is the ban which lies on transgression, the consciousness of guilt. Jesus therefore hath redeemed us from this by being made the bearer of a curse in our interests, that is, by being crucified for us. (4) Col. ii. 14: "He hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross"; that is, Jesus hath abolished the bond of commandments that was against us, the accusation of the violated law, by taking it, as it were, with Him into His death upon the cross. These are all more or less obscure, and they need a more detailed explanation. As a rule they are interpreted in the light of a juridical theory which proceeds from a mediæval scholasticism, and has assumed the value of a Church doctrine in want of a better. When attention is fixed entirely on the justification of man as the immediate aim of the death of Jesus, the causal relation between the two is explained thus, that Jesus has taken the punishment of our sins upon Himself and expiated our guilt on the cross. He has thus furnished the satisfaction to God the Father which, because of His righteousness, He was compelled to demand, and has made it possible for Him, notwithstanding this (penal) righteousness, to show mercy towards us



and forgive our sins. This theory, according to which Christ would have been more merciful towards sinners than His heavenly Father, must be seriously shaken by the fact that it presupposes a concept of the righteousness of God entirely different from that which we have already found in Paul. The Pauline conception of righteousness is not juristic but ethical, and he does not recognise as proceeding from God's nature of holy love any contradiction of righteousness and grace which must be removed by a satisfaction of the former. But it can also be proved directly by a series of positive evidences that the theory in question cannot be the view of our apostle.

(1) The accurate expression for that juristic, vicarious relation would be that Christ ἀπέθανεν ἀντὶ ἡμῶν in our place. But Paul never describes the relation in question by ἀντί, but always by ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, that is, for our good, in our interests.

(2) According to that theory, Jesus must have suffered the very thing which we had deserved, but from which we are now exempted. But, according to Paul, Jesus does not die the eternal death which we as sinners have deserved, but He dies the temporal death (Rom. vi. 10) from which God does not exempt believers (Rom. viii. 10).

(3) The exculpation or justification is, according to Paul, conditioned throughout by faith. But if it took place in virtue of a legal substitution, it would be bound to no conditions; for he who allows a third party in my stead to pay what I owe him, has no further demands on me, nor could he attach a condition to the validity of that performance. (4) According to 1 Cor. xv. 14, 17, our faith would be κενή and ματαία, empty and vain, and we should yet be in our sins, that is, unjustified, if the death of Jesus had not been followed by His resurrection.

And that is inconceivable if the death of Jesus had secured our justification in the manner of a substitutionary satisfaction. (5) According to that theory, God would be reconciled through Christ, His wrath appeased by Christ's payment of death. But Paul never says, nor does any other Scripture writing, that God is reconciled, but that God hath reconciled;

and He has not reconciled Himself to the world, but the world to Himself (κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19); so that the obstacle to harmony is not found in God, but in the world. (6) According to that conception, God

could only pardon after the reconciliation had taken place, and the death of His Son had made it possible for Him to forgive. But such a view would not merely be in full contradiction with the prophets and Psalms, as well as with the teaching and preaching of Jesus, but its opposite is directly presupposed by Paul himself in his doctrine of reconciliation. When he writes, *θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν*, he does not think of the non-imputation of trespasses, that is, of forgiveness as an effect or consequence of the act of reconciliation, but as a constituent part, and to some extent a presupposition of it. God magnanimously passes over the insults which He has experienced at the hands of men, and so can meet them in Christ with reconciliation. From all this we may see that another key will have to be sought for the apostle's doctrine of salvation, secured in the death of Jesus, than the judicial theory of substitution and satisfaction; and it can only be found by observing that, according to Paul, not only is the guilt of sin abolished by the death of Christ, but the power of sin is also broken.

#### § 4. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS A POWER OF EXCULPATION

The traditional way of looking at the death of Jesus as deliverance from guilt leads to error, because it takes what, in the case of the apostle, is only one constituent part of a more comprehensive whole for this whole, and therefore supplements it with foreign additions. Guilt is only the reflex of sin, the shadow which it throws upon the conscience of man, and which, as even conscience declares, it throws also upon God. It is not the whole, or even the real evil from which man needs to be redeemed, which is the sin itself which dwells in him and rules him. Now it would be the most marvellous and inconceivable mutilation of the gospel if the apostle, who was able to give us such profound disclosures, not merely of the guilt of man, but of the reason of this guilt of sin as a power in man, had only considered the second Adam so far as He had abolished the guilt of man, but not as He had broken its power. How could the apostle have fallen into the error

of supposing that Christ redeemed man from the consequences of sin, and not first of all from sin itself?<sup>1</sup> The train of thought in his Epistle to the Romans on the one hand, and a certain Protestant onesidedness in the use made of it on the other, might mislead us on this point. When Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, gives the foremost place to deliverance from guilt or justification, and when the Reformation has followed him in this, the reason must be found in the Judaizing opposition against which he and against which Luther and his colleagues had to develop their doctrine. The system of legalism, on Jewish as on mediæval soil, had forced upon pious minds the need of justification and forgiveness, and this need is met by the satisfying side of the gospel of the cross. But the apostle knows another side of this gospel which is not related to the abolition of guilt. We are reminded chiefly of such passages as 1 Thess. v. 10; Gal. i. 4; Rom. xiv. 9: "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together (*ἅμα*) with Him"; "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this evil world, according to the will of God and our Father"; "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living." In all this there is no mention of a vicarious or justifying, but of an infectious power of the death of Christ,—a power to raise us out of relation with the world's corruption into His holy and blessed fellowship. The same view on its negative side has been expressed in a larger number of passages. The immediate presupposition of the fellowship of faith with Christ is the fundamental breach with sin, or, as Paul expresses it, the being dead to sin; and this is traced back to the death of Jesus as its effective cause. This is, above all, done in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; Christians as such are dead to sin; they have grown into the likeness of His death; as He Himself died to sin once for all, so they also have to reckon themselves dead to sin, that they should no longer live to it (Rom. vi. 2, 11). And in the seventh chapter of the same Epistle, in conformity with the relation which, in the opinion of the apostle, exists between bondage

<sup>1</sup> Thus Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* p. 424, vol. i. Eng. trans.

to sin and bondage to the law, deliverance from the latter is likewise traced back to the death of Jesus; *ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, that is, through His slain body, through that which is usually elsewhere expressed as "the blood of Christ," through His life given up for you (Rom. vii. 4, cf. ver. 6). We have the same idea more tersely expressed in the two passages already quoted from the Epistle to the Galatians as describing a personal experience (Gal. ii. 19, 20, vi. 14). The apostle traces back the fundamental revolution of his life, his breach with the world, sin and law, to the death of Christ upon the cross. It is the same in the Epistle to the Colossians; according to ii. 11, Christians have "in Christ put off the body of flesh"—that is, they have put off the dominion of their sensuous selfish nature in principle, and this circumcision of Christ, as the apostle calls that sanctification in principle in contrast with ceremonial circumcision, follows from the fact that they let themselves be buried with Christ; according to ii. 20, they have died with Christ to the *στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου*, that is, to the ceremonial worship; and, according to iii. 1-3, they have died with Christ and (inwardly) have risen with Him, and in fellowship with Him have a life hid in God. It would be as superficial as it is vain to seek to transform the connection which the apostle in all these passages finds between the dying of Christ and our dying unto sin, our deliverance in principle from the power and dominion of sin into a mere pictorial likeness between His bodily and our spiritual dying. It is no doubt a picture and parable when, in Rom. vi. 3, Col. ii. 12, Paul declares that the decisive entrance into the fellowship of Christ takes place in baptism, which in the form of immersion then practised symbolised the dying with Christ or being buried with Him. But the inner experience reflected in baptism, the breach with sin accomplished once for all, the virtual annulling of the dominion of the *σάρξ*, is to the apostle no mere copying of the death of Christ, but a mighty effect of it; nay, it is the all-essential effect of the act of God that took place in the death of Christ, inasmuch as the holy God desires most of all man's actual deliverance

from sin. While the apostle is certain that there exists between the resurrection of Christ and the new life and walk of the believer, not merely a relation of likeness, but a causal connection, as the glorified Christ becomes to the believer *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν*, he is as certain that there exists between the death of Christ on the cross and the virtual breach with sin, which is the negative side of the beginning of that new life, a real causal connection, which he expresses (Rom. vii. 4) in words that cannot be misunderstood, *ἐθανατώθητε διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*.

### § 5. THE PASSAGE 2 COR. v. 15

The important series of passages already quoted proves that in this view of the death of Jesus as a power of deliverance from sin we are not dealing with an occasional conceit of the apostle, but with a doctrinal idea of not less importance than the thought of the justifying significance of the Saviour's death. But we have not yet considered the main passage which proves the latter, viz. 2 Cor. v. 15: *κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθάνοντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι*. That is a statement which sets forth with unsurpassable clearness the profound distinction between the Anselmic and the Pauline view of the saving significance of the death of Jesus. According to Anselm it ought to read: He died, one instead of all, so that they need not all die, viz. the eternal death of condemnation. But Paul says: He died, one for the advantage of all, and therefore they all died (in Him); they inwardly mortified their natural wickedness, and died to sin. Only the utmost violence could interpret this Pauline statement into Anselm's meaning: "No one now dies because of his sins, since the death of Christ is valid as the death of all."<sup>1</sup> Not only do the words immediately following show that the point in question is certainly a dying, viz. a dying to selfishness, but the whole context refutes that interpretation, for it certainly does not treat of that which man is spared through the death of Christ, but of the new aspect

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* p. 433 f., vol. i. Eng. transl.

under which the apostle sees men placed in virtue of the death of Christ (*κρίναντας τοῦτο*). Henceforth he knows no man *κατὰ σάρκα* (ver. 16), for *κατὰ σάρκα* all men have died in Christ's death. But how is it that they have died? Certainly only in idea, in destiny. But the second statement, beginning with *ἵνα*, tells us that in the death of one endured for all, lies for them all the power and possibility of mortifying their wicked nature, their natural selfishness, and as new creatures living a life of love for the Saviour,—that they should henceforth no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again. If we ask how it is conceivable that the bodily death of the one causes such an ethical dying of all, we have to observe the relation between the *εἰς* and the *πάντες*. It is not indeed anyone you please who has died for the advantage of all, but one who bore them all upon His heart, a personality embracing humanity, who acted, lived, and died in the name of all. In other words, the relation which Christ as the second Adam has to humanity forms the presupposition on which the apostle's declaration rests; it is the same relation only viewed from another side as that referred to in Rom. v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." One has sinned, and in him all have sinned; in virtue of their natural connection with him all have sunk into sin and death. And again, one has resisted sin unto blood, has become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and so has broken through the universal jurisdiction of sin and death; in connection with Him, our Prince and Head, we are now all called to die unto sin and live unto God (Rom. vi. 10, 11; Gal. ii. 19). As the connection of all with the first sensuous Adam is a sensuous one, the connection of all with the second spiritual Adam will naturally be a spiritual one. It is the might of the Spirit of Christ by which He implants in the hearts of those who open their hearts to Him, His own personal victory over the sin which harassed Him with its utmost power, the absolute breach between Him and the sin of the world accomplished once for all in His death upon the cross (Rom. vi. 10). He does not remain a dead man as the *ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθάνοντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι* in our passage duly reminds us.

He comes forth from His death already as the *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν* (1 Cor. xv. 45), which lays hold of men inwardly and draws them into an inner fellowship, into an imitation of His victory and death. That is the apostle's idea when he calls to believers *ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ, ἐθανατώθητε διὰ τοῦ σώματος Χριστοῦ*, or when he says of himself *Χριστῷ συνεσταυρώμαι*. But he makes his idea still more intelligible to us by reminding us that that spiritual power of Christ is the power of a love which has given itself for us (Gal. ii. 20 ; Rom. v. 6 f.). For there is nothing more influential and morally overpowering than undeserved, self-denying, sacrificing love. Now, if He who loved me, and gave Himself for me, is the Holy and Righteous One, the deadly foe of sin, who has been slain by this deadly foe of His in order to deliver me from sin, how can I consider that without being laid hold of and won by Him, and how can I live to Him without dying to sin? But in this sense He has died for all,—as we are reminded in that passage of Corinthians with its *ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν*,—He has borne the whole of humanity and each of its members on His loving, breaking heart.

#### § 6. RELATION BETWEEN THE JUSTIFYING AND CLEANSING ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S DEATH

If this be the apostle's view of the cleansing power of Christ's death, and if in it we have discovered God's final aim in surrendering His Son, it may be asked how this view is related to the justifying significance of that death which he likewise unquestionably held. The usual view of this relation is to regard justification as the direct and sanctification merely as the indirect effect of Christ's death. The justification of man is conceived as a fruit of the direct effect of Christ's death upon God, whom it reconciles ; sanctification, on the other hand, as a fruit of the gratitude which the man feels towards God, who has been assured of that justification through preaching and faith. That neither of these views is Pauline, follows from the examination of his teaching in the above paragraphs. God is not reconciled or appeased—He reconciles out of His free fatherly goodness ; but He does this only for believers, while the children of disobedience abide under the wrath of God

(Eph. v. 6); so that even the justifying effect of Christ's death is mediated by faith. On the other hand, Paul nowhere teaches that the fundamental breach with sin proceeds from man's gratitude for the forgiveness of sins received, but as we saw, he traces it back as directly as justification to an experience on which the whole Christian profession is based,—*ἀπεθάνετε, Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι*,—an experience which he manifestly regards as coinciding with the entrance into fellowship with Christ, that is, with becoming a believer. It follows, therefore, that the two effects of Christ's death which the apostle asserts alongside each other, are to him the two sides of one uniform effect, and that from the nature of the case they mutually condition each other, that there is no forgiveness without conversion, and no conversion without forgiveness. The highest aspect under which Paul always presents the death of Christ from the side of God leads to this same result; it is to him the highest proof of the love of God to sinners and enemies: *συνίστησιν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἔτι ἀμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν* (Rom. v. 8). It is God's own love which sends and surrenders Christ, which urges Him, and urges Him to death—a love for sinners and enemies which cannot be surpassed. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 6, 7). The two-sided but single aim of this infinite deed of God's love in Christ is manifest. Such a sacrifice of love for evil-doers and enemies is offered only by one who desires to forgive, who has, indeed, already long ago forgiven them in His heart. But the sacrifice is made in order to win and convert them, to prevail upon their erring and estranged hearts to enter into a new relation with Him who loves them. Now, if the hostile condition of man towards God is, according to Rom. viii. 7, their fleshly mind, the natural selfishness which rules them and makes them rebel against God, it is clear that God desires to overcome them morally by the proof of His infinite love in Christ, to burst the bands of selfishness which bind their hearts, and therefore to break the power of sin in them. But it is also clear that He can do so only in virtue of an



infinite and undeniable pledge of His forgiveness which He brings to them, and that this pledge of His forgiveness is contained in that very sacrifice and proof of love with which He comes to meet them. For as the anguish of the evil conscience is united with the enmity against God of which the apostle speaks in Rom. viii. 7, the sense of guilt which drives men from the presence of the living God, they cannot be laid hold of by His love, cannot even believe in it, unless it assures them above all of the forgiveness of their sins; and that is just what God in Christ does in giving up His dearest for them, and subjecting Him to the uttermost of suffering. God having sacrificed His well-beloved for them, and this well-beloved having endured all the suffering of the world for their sakes, men can now say: "He that spared not His own Son, but hath given Him up to death for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32). To the apostle, therefore, Christ's cross, Christ's blood, is the infinite pledge which God has given to the world of His desire to forgive, His purpose to reconcile them, His will not to reckon unto men their trespasses (2 Cor. v. 19); and we can easily understand why the element of exculpation, of forgiveness and justification, has so often the first place in the Pauline view of the Saviour's death. The assurance of an unlimited forgiveness is the first thing with which the love of God in Christ must meet the sinful man. But it should not be for a moment overlooked that this guaranteed offer of forgiveness is not the actual justification of the sinner; the actual awarding of that which is offered depends, of course, on the man's allowing the love of God to take effect on him, and this consists in that change of heart which the apostle calls a dying unto sin. Paul nowhere teaches that one can be laid hold of by the love of God, or grasp grace and forgiveness in the blood of Christ, and continue as he was before; he does not then remember that change of life is due to God for His grace, but—as the apostle's doctrine of the plan of salvation will further confirm—the man who is laid hold of by the proof of God's love in the cross of Christ becomes in the same moment *καινή κτίσις* (2 Cor. v. 16), is justified and (in the sense of 1 Cor. i. 2, vi. 11) sanctified at the same time. He is, of course, sanctified only in principle,

which is followed by a long process of gradual accomplishment, while justification or forgiveness is complete from the first. But neither can be without the other in this sense, that as the holy love in converting can only pardon for its own sake, so in pardoning it can only convert for the sake of the man. But if that is so, the apostle did not, as is usually supposed, think of God's work of salvation in the death of Christ as a completed fact, but as an operative power, as an undivided potency of forgiveness and of renewal; and this conception of the potential and dynamic, which lies in the death of Jesus (cf. Rom. i. 16, *δύναμις θεοῦ εἰς σωτηρίαν*; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24, *Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον . . . θεοῦ δύναμιν*), can help to clear up the confusion that prevails about the saving significance of the death of Jesus. Certainly what God does in surrendering His Son is a perfect and completed act. But what He has in view in that, the redemption or reconciliation of the world, or whatever other name we may give to the salvation that is instituted in the cross of Christ, is not in itself complete, but it is intended to act on men, and only in proportion as they allow it to act on them does it become a power and possibility to be realised, an effectual power. By showing how the different conceptions applied by our apostle to the death of Christ are explained from this point of view, we hope to prove from the pertinent main passages what has been already unfolded, and to clear up, besides, the many enigmas of this article of doctrine, which is as great as it is obscure.

§ 7. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS A JUDGMENT ON SIN,  
ROM. VIII. 3

We begin with a sentence of the apostle which does not, indeed, make express reference to the death of Jesus, but, as will be shown, presupposes this reference; it is the passage (Rom. viii. 3, 4) about the *κατάκρισις* of sin in the flesh. The general idea of the passage is, that God in sending His Son has accomplished what was impossible for the law (*τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκός*), viz. the condemning of sin in the flesh. That this judging must mean more than a mere condemnation *in contumaciam*, lies already in the *ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου*; a mere theoretic con-

demnation is quite possible to the law, and is constantly uttered by it. What was not possible to the law, since it was weak through the flesh, was an effectual judging of sin in the flesh, an execution of it, or a condemnation by which it is brought to death; just as in Rom. v. 18 the *κατάκριμα* of man in Adam is conceived as one that involves him in actual death. Consequently *κατακρίνειν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* describes the same effect as we have already noted as the chief effect of the death of Christ, the breaking of the power of sin in man. If we now ask how God through Christ has carried out this sentence of sin in the *σάρξ*, we get the significant answer, "By sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin." *Περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, that is, to conquer and break it where it has its seat and home in man in the *σάρξ*. Therefore He came *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*; to break sin in human nature, God, as it were, seeks it out in its citadel: He sends His Son in that sensuous nature which in us is the seat and home of sin, that He may put sin to death in this nature. It is manifest that this idea is imperfect unless reference is made to the death of Christ. All His lifelong Christ resisted the demands of the *σάρξ*, and disciplined it by the *πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* which was in Him (Rom. i. 4). But in this conflict He finally conquered only when He died to sin once for all (Rom. vi. 10), when He suffered His *σάρξ* to be broken for the sake of God and of His brethren, rather than yield to what seems its innocent demand for self-preservation. The apostle in his expression, which is carefully chosen here, may have gone back, not to the mere act of dying on the part of Jesus, but intentionally to the whole conflict of His life, and to the sensuous nature which prepared for and rendered that conflict possible. There can be no doubt whatever that Paul's whole mode of thinking leads him to view the death as the climax of that conflict. Where in the life of Jesus could Paul have placed God's *κατάκρισις* of sin in the flesh, but in His death upon the cross? And especially after the discussions of the sixth and seventh chapters, after repeatedly calling attention to the fact that in the death of Christ believers die with Him, and are delivered from the dominion of sin in the *σάρξ* and the bondage of the law, it must have seemed to him quite

superfluous in the beginning of the eighth chapter to make any express reference to the death of Jesus when speaking of His being sent "*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*." If the question as to the manner of the *κατάκρισις ἁμαρτίας ἐν σαρκί* be narrowed to mean, how has Jesus in His death upon the cross broken the dominion of sin in human *σάρξ*? the dynamic element in the apostolic idea of the saving work of Jesus comes unmistakably into prominence. Not that anything in human nature was actually changed as by magic in the moment when Christ died, but in the completion of this holy life there was established a universal and personal principle of victory (a *δύναμις σωτηρίας*), which is able wherever it is received to break sin in the *σάρξ* and kill the natural selfishness, so that, as is added in ver. 4, the man may walk no longer *κατὰ σάρκα*, but *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. Hence in this main passage of the Epistle to the Romans the sanctifying and morally transforming power of the death of Jesus is not only once more asserted, but is also established and illustrated. At the same time, however, the context looks back to the justifying side of the death of Jesus, and so throws light in a most instructive way upon the relation of the two aspects. The chapter starts from the justification of the believer in Christ *οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, and that divine *κατακρίνειν* of sin in the flesh which is spoken of in ver. 3 is a manifest reference to these words. Why is there "now no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"? The answer is given in vv. 2, 3: "Because the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God hath accomplished in the mission of His Son, and hath condemned sin in the flesh." For the *οὐδὲν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* is simply the negative expression for, they have been justified by Christ's death (cf. ver. 34). But if *ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσέν με ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας* simply expresses that "they died in Christ to sin," then we have here the most striking confirmation that could be desired of our assertion that the forgiveness and justification which are based upon the death of Christ really belong only to those to whom the Saviour's

death has become in principle the source of an inner transformation.

§ 8. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS AN ATONEMENT,  
ROM. III. 25

If the idea of breaking with sin through the death of Christ occupies the foreground here, the idea of its propitiation, that is, the justifying aspect of the matter, is most prominent in other passages. The conception of atonement appears expressly only once in Paul's writings, in the passage Rom. iii. 25, 26, which is a warning against making it the key for this whole article of doctrine. The passage which has been already referred to in the question about the righteousness of God reads, *ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, κ.τ.λ.*—the essential point here is the meaning of *ἱλαστήριον*. Luther rendered it mercy-seat, and in that would also be contained the idea of the means of atonement. But this application of the word to the cover of the ark of the Covenant over which God was conceived as enthroned between the cherubim, and on which the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the great Day of Atonement, can hardly be correct for the following reasons:—(1) This typology, unheard of in the New Testament, would have been unintelligible to the readers of the Epistle to the Romans; (2) the cover of the ark of the Covenant had neither blood of its own nor an active atoning character; (3) the addition of *διὰ πίστεως*, which unmistakably belongs to *ἱλαστήριον*, would not suit the conception mercy-seat, but requires for the word some significance as an adjective. For the same reason *ἱλαστήριον*, *expiatorium*, must not be rendered expiatory sacrifice, especially as the biblical expression for expiatory sacrifice is rather *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* (Heb. x. 8), but should be taken simply as the means of atonement as an *adjectivum neutrum*, equivalent to something that can reconcile, something that has atoning power. But what is it to atone? The standard Old Testament word here, פָּרַף, Piel of פָּרַף, to cover, means to cover up sins from the eyes of God, that is, to make them invisible, to cancel them (*ἐπικαλύπτειν*, Rom.

iv. 7; *ἐξαλείφειν*, Col. ii. 14), to cause that God will no longer look on sin, no longer take it into consideration, but forgive it and treat it as though it had not been; so that the idea of atonement implies on the part of God the *δικαιοῦν* which comes into prominence at the close of our passage. According to this, then, God hath set forth Christ in His blood as a means offered to men of blotting out their sin. How does the apostle conceive this character in Him? The common view is that He makes amends for the sin of the world, bears in His death the punishment that was due to us, and thus satisfies the divine righteousness, so that God without prejudice to His righteousness can now allow His grace to rule and justify the sinner. According to this interpretation, the *ἔνδειξις* of the righteousness of God, which is twice insisted on in our passage, would consist in inflicting punishment on the innocent in place of the guilty. But as we have already proved, the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in Paul's writings is not mere penal righteousness, and it would not be real penal righteousness to let the guilty go free and punish the innocent in his stead. But apart from this, that interpretation of our passage, though it is still defended, is destroyed by the *διὰ πίστεως*, which is added to *ἰλαστήριον*. For if Paul had thought of that vicarious suffering, then Christ would have been to him in His blood *ἰλαστήριον* simply: He would have made amends for the sin of man, and thus would have blotted it out before God whether men believed in it or not. But the idea of an *ἰλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως* suggests quite a different train of thought. It suggests a means of atonement, which reveals its atoning power only to the faith which on the part of man appropriates it; that is, it works atonement, not by concealing sin from God, but through what it works in the believing man. And that is nothing else than the breach with sin. And now we understand the true New Testament conception of the atonement in our apostle, which is not ritual but ethical; the only sufficient means of destroying sin, the only full atonement in the sight of God, is a person and a deed which, like Christ in His self-sacrifice, contains the power of breaking sin in man, and which really exercises this power in the believer. In presence of that God can no longer remember sin, because in

point of fact it is vanishing; He can completely forgive it because that which has broken its dominion in the believer gives Him the full assurance that it will also completely extinguish it in him (Rom. v. 9, 10). If this interpretation is correct, then here also clearly appears the dynamic element of the divine work of salvation in the death of Jesus. God hath set forth Christ in His blood as a means of blotting out sin from His eyes; this means of itself cannot blot out sin or determine the relation between God and men, but it contains the power and the possibility of atonement for all who will realise it by appropriating it through faith. Although the aim of the whole passage, in accordance with the point of view which prevails in Rom. iii.—v. as distinguished from vi.—viii., is to bring into prominence the justifying action of the death of Christ, yet even here the idea of its sanctifying and renewing action lies in the background. If the breach with sin, the transformation of the man in principle, were not necessarily implied in the believing appropriation of the blood of Christ, then God would deceive Himself if He allowed sin to vanish from before His eyes; it must disappear in man, or the arrangement which He had made in the death of Christ would be no proof of His righteousness. This arrangement can only be a proof of His righteousness, that is, of moral justice and perfection with regard to the remission of sins that are past, if it opposes an effectual barrier to sin.

§ 9. CONTINUATION. THE PASSAGES, 2 COR. v. 21;  
1 COR. v. 7

The idea of propitiation lies at the basis of some other passages which treat of the death of Christ, though the expression itself is not used. It is so undoubtedly in those passages where Paul makes Jesus die *περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν* (Gal. i. 4), or *διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν* (Rom. iv. 25). In the first case, the Old Testament expression *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, and in the second the parallelism of *διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν*, favours the special idea of atonement, while *ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*, in 1 Cor. xv. 3, may comprise the whole saving relation of the death of Jesus to our sins. But more important are

passages such as 2 Cor. v. 21, 1 Cor. v. 7, because in them the main thought is made clearer by closer definition. In 2 Cor. v. 21 the divine message of reconciliation which the apostle has to deliver is summed up in the terse announcement: τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν ἀντῳ. The idea of making amends for, of blotting out, our sins before God, in order that we might be acquitted of them, or justified, that is the idea of atonement, is really present here though the word is not. But we are not therefore to say that the idea of atonement by substitutionary suffering of the punishment of sin is an idea which neither here nor elsewhere finds expression in Paul. That the obscure phrase in which it is commonly found, "God hath made Him to be sin," cannot be taken literally is beyond all question, as in no case has Jesus become sin. In the second half of the verse, ἵνα γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ must mean, at anyrate, that we might be acquitted; and from the parallelism of the clauses it follows that the phrase "made sin" must be understood as meaning "was treated as a sinner," or simply "appeared as a sinner"; but even that does not lead to the idea of substitutionary penal suffering. If, as may be inferred from Rom. v. 12, vi. 22, the apostle regards eternal death as the just punishment of sin, then Jesus as a substitute must have suffered, not the death of the body on the cross, but the death of the condemnation of the soul. But it is worthy of special note that neither here nor elsewhere has Paul ever spoken of soul tortures of the Crucified, of a feeling of the divine wrath, etc., on the part of Jesus, but has always, with historical simplicity, characterised His sufferings of death as a death upon the cross, the death of a malefactor. In ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν—ἵνα γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη the apostle really has in his mind a blessed exchange between us sinners and the Sinless One. But the idea of this exchange is quite intelligible if God has given up the Sinless One to the fate of a criminal worthy of death, in order to be able to acquit the guilty; it does not need for this the idea of a substitutionary making amends for the sin of the whole world, an idea which is so strange and difficult that it must have been expressly asserted. But, what is more, the passage shows positive



traces that the exchange between Christ and us which the apostle has in view cannot be thought of in the form of the abstract juridical doctrine of substitution. We find such traces in the facts that it does not read *ἀντὶ ἡμῶν*, but *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*, and that *ἐν αὐτῷ* is added to the second half of the verse. God has not made the Sinless One make amends for sin in our place, but has given Him up to the lot of the sinner for our good, and we become *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*, not as a simple mathematical consequence of His satisfying expiation, but only *ἐν αὐτῷ*, in fellowship with Him. But the idea of substitutionary satisfaction does not lead to that of a fellowship with the Crucified which grows out of His sacrifice. On the contrary, if the Sinless One is made sin in order to bring us into fellowship with Him, that the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* may be communicated to us, then God's work cannot be directed to appeasing the divine wrath or satisfying His penal righteousness, but only to winning our hearts. "And if we are justified only *ἐν αὐτῷ*, then we are not justified because He has made amends for our sin, for He has done that for those who are not *ἐν αὐτῷ*; but we are justified because He has exercised an influence on us by His sacrifice, has won us to Himself, and made us new creatures in the bottom of our hearts (cf. ver. 17). In other words, there is no thought even here of a completed payment to God, but only of a power working upon us, a power which makes God willing to declare us righteous, not because of an equivalent offered to His inexorable justice, but because of a guarantee that those who are justified by pardon will become actually righteous. The passage (1 Cor. v. 7) may also be studied in connection with atonement, in which Paul compares the relation of Christians to the Saviour, who was given up to death for them, with the relation of the Israelites to the paschal lamb that was slain for them. *Ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ἦτε νέον φύραμα, καθὼς ἐστε ἄζυμοι καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός.* The slaying of the paschal lamb had unquestionably an atoning significance; its blood was employed for expiation, though the rest of the festival referred more to deliverance or redemption (from Egypt). But the apostle here has not spoken of a justifying significance of the slain paschal lamb, but passes to its sanctifying significance. And

indeed the New Testament Paschal Lamb binds all those who wish to share in it not merely to purify themselves from sin (*ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ᾖτε νέον φύραμα*), but has already produced in them a purification in principle—*καθὼς ἐστε ἄζυμοι*. It could hardly be made more evident that the apostle ascribes a sanctifying influence to the death of Christ quite as direct as the justifying influence, that is, direct in the potential sense. For all men have not of themselves become ἄζυμοι by the fact that Christ dies for them, but only those on whom that New Testament Paschal sacrifice has taken effect, so that they appropriate it in faith, and in so doing become ἄζυμοι, separated in principle from the leaven of sin.

#### § 10. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS A DEED OF REDEMPTION

The allusion to the Passover—which in any case meant a deliverance, a redemption from Egyptian bondage—brings us to the idea of the saving value of the death of Jesus that is most familiar to us, the idea of redemption, *ἀπολύτρωσις*. The objects of Christ's activity here are not, as in the aspects hitherto considered, chiefly sin and guilt, but, as in the aspect of reconciliation, man directly. In Rom. iii. 24, Paul applies the conception of the *ἀπολύτρωσις* to the founding of salvation; immediately before the words *ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον* it is said: *δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν, τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι, διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*. The expression occurs again in 1 Cor. i. 30, *ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις*; and in Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 13, *ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων*, or, as it is in Colossians, *τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*. The word unquestionably means deliverance by means of a ransom. To put aside the latter part of the conception, and look upon deliverance as the only thing worthy of consideration, is utterly at variance with the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> The question arises: redemption from what, and by what means? It has been inferred from the use of

<sup>1</sup> So Ritschl, *l.c.* pp. 221, 222. But the *λύτρον*, the *ἐξαγοράζειν*, and even the price (*τιμῆς*), are emphasised as much as possible in the New Testament.

*ἀπολύτρωσις* and *ἄφεσις*, as equivalent in Eph. i., Col. i., that the first means only a deliverance from guilt. But it is not necessary that two concepts of like nature rhetorically substituted for each other should absolutely coincide, and it is more probable that, instead of saying the same thing twice, the apostle sought to describe by the two expressions a different content, or a different relation of the salvation purchased by Christ. That he regards redemption as embracing or conditioning forgiveness or justification is placed beyond doubt by Rom. iii. 24, for the *δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν* is emphasised as that which is secured by the redemption in Christ. On the other hand, the concept *ἀπολύτρωσις* in itself suggests deliverance from bondage rather than from guilt. In 1 Cor. i. 30, where *ἀπολύτρωσις* comes after *δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός* as a designation of what Christ has been made to us by God, it cannot possibly be a mere repetition of the idea which was already expressed in *δικαιοσύνη*; it either unites the two preceding ideas of righteousness and sanctification, or it expresses the final deliverance from all the bondage of the earthly life. The word *ἀπολύτρωσις* is used in this latter sense in Eph. i. 14, iv. 30; and Rom. viii. 23 speaks of an *ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος*; the expression corresponds to the immediately preceding *δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς*, and proves the reciprocal relation of bondage and redemption in the mind of the apostle. At anyrate, the apostle thinks of sin not merely as guilt, but as moral bondage; cf. Rom. vii. 14, 23, *πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν—αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*; so that it is quite impossible to exclude the idea of moral deliverance from *ἀπολύτρωσις*, as it is, moreover, expressed in synonymous terms in Rom. viii. 2. In the concept *ἀπολύτρωσις* the apostle perhaps saw both the deliverance from guilt and the deliverance from the power and dominion of sin in the image of enslavement or imprisonment for debt. As to the means by which this redemption is brought about, there is no question that by the *λύτρον* contained in *ἀπολύτρωσις* is meant the blood of Jesus Christ, that is, His life given up to death for us; and we are kept from thinking of His ransom of blood in a mere physical sense by Paul's occasional substitution of Jesus Himself, His moral active personality, for the blood (cf. Gal. i. 4, ii. 20).

Here again the juridical doctrine of satisfaction tries to assert itself by taking the life of the Son of God given up to death as an equivalent for the guilt of man's sin. But, apart from the fact that this view rests on an insoluble arithmetical problem, and that the moral deliverance of humanity would fall outside the idea of the ἀπολύτρωσις, the apostle must have thought of the ransom as paid to God by Christ, a payment which God demanded in order to set man free from his guilt. But that, as we have already seen in the Epistle of Peter, is an altogether unbiblical idea. The idea of the Bible is that Christ has purchased us for God, nay, that God in Christ has purchased us for Himself. That this is also the view of our apostle will be shown further on, and is manifest even here, from the fact that in Rom. iii. 24, Eph. i. 7, Col. i. 13, the ἀπολύτρωσις is universally thought of as God's arrangement;—it would be strange indeed if God had made arrangements to purchase those who were in debt to Himself.

On the other hand, it is in harmony with the whole circle of Paul's ideas that God should be willing to pay even so great a price as the life of His Son (Rom. viii. 32) in order to purchase deliverance, for those morally enslaved, estranged from Him, and lost, from the ungodly powers which hold them captive (Rom. vii. 24, viii. 2), and thus secure them as His own. The juridical doctrine of satisfaction is also excluded here by the ἐν Χριστῷ, which, in all these passages, is the condition of our sharing in the redemption founded in Him. If we only have the ἀπολύτρωσις in fellowship with Him, then it is not settled apart from us by a payment of Christ to God, but it is brought about in us, it lays hold on us, and draws us into fellowship with Christ. We have redemption from sin and guilt in living connection with Him who makes His blood a power to renew us, as well as a pledge of our forgiveness. Here again the dynamic character of the institution of salvation comes into prominence. Men are not delivered from the power of sin and guilt, which holds them captive, by the shedding of Christ's blood *eo ipso*, but this deliverance is made possible on the side of God by that blood-shedding, and only when the joyful confession, "The law of the spirit of life hath made me free from the law of sin and death," takes the place of the sad confession, "The

law in my members leads me into captivity to sin," has the virtual ἀπολύτρωσις become the actual.

§ 11. SYNONYMS OF ἀπολύτρωσις, GAL. III. 13

There are some synonymous expressions placed beside redemption which explain it, such as to set free (Rom. viii. 2 ; Gal. v. 1), to take out of, viz. connection with the evil world (Gal. i. 4), to purchase or ransom (1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23 ; Gal. iii. 13). Ἐλευθεροῦν in the passages adduced, which means undoubtedly a moral deliverance in principle, is not expressly connected with the death of Christ, though it is ascribed to Christ with a reference to deliverance which His death effects. The "freeing from this present evil world" is expressly described as the aim of His surrender to death (τοῦ δόντος ἑαυτὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, ὅπως ἐξέληται ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτος πονηροῦ), and seems to apply to the entire deliverance from connection with a lost world, a result which in any case is inconceivable without sanctification. On the other hand, if the τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε is a sufficient parallel to the idea of redemption, then the τιμῆς unquestionably refers to Christ's blood, and the ἡγοράσθητε, as the context shows, refers not to a being bought from God or a being redeemed from guilt, but to a being bought for God, and so being bound to Him as His own to live for His honour and service. If the ἡγοράσθητε thus coincides with redemption in the sense of moral deliverance, the ἐξηγόρασεν in Gal. iii. 13 emphasises, on the other hand, deliverance from guilt in a way that seems to support the juristic doctrine of satisfaction more decidedly than any other Pauline expression, and therefore demands a more thorough consideration. The apostle is speaking in the context of the fact that no man can be justified by the law (ἐν νόμῳ, in the covenant of the law), as the law does not occupy itself with faith, but demands the doing of its commandments, and imposes a curse on the transgression of any of its demands. But, the apostle continues, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν); for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." It is a current assumption that the curse which Christ bore on the cross was the very curse which the law laid on

those who transgress it, and that therefore the curse of guilt was vicariously borne by Christ, that He inwardly experienced on the cross the misery which is the just consequence of sin, in order that we might be delivered from it, and appear righteous by faith. But this interpretation, though it is confidently advanced, rests upon a very defective understanding of the text. We attach no importance to the fact that the apostle, strictly speaking, asserts redemption from the curse of the law only of the Jewish Christians, as he continues, *ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ γένηται*; for in Col. ii. 13 f. he has applied the same idea to the Gentile Christians in somewhat different imagery. But still it is a manifest error to suppose that the apostle in Gal. iii. 13 makes Christ bear the very curse which the law has laid on those who transgress it. The curse of the law is (ver. 10): "Cursed is every one that abideth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." But the curse which Christ bore is (ver. 13): "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Jesus no more bore the punishment of all transgressors of the law by hanging on the cross, than the law, or God who gave the law, desires to inflict the penalty of hanging on everyone who transgresses His commandments. The parallel which Paul draws between the Crucified and transgressors does not reach so far. Christ has become a curse for us (*ὄμῆρ*, not *ἀντι* even here); that is, He has submitted to the cursed death of a criminal in order to deliver us from the curse of the law which has been transgressed, from the curse of conscious guilt that oppressed us. The apostle asserts nothing more, and his thought even thus is in itself complete and clear. The passage has this in common with many other declarations of the apostle, that it traces back the justification of believers to the death of Jesus on the cross. By giving Himself up to the uttermost which the fellowship of sinful humanity could prepare for Him, Jesus has become the sufficient pledge of the divine willingness to forgive. But the peculiarity of the passage, a peculiarity which also occurs in Col. ii. 13, is that it gives a closer definition of that justifying action from the side of the law. Christ by His death has placed us in a new relation to God which is no longer conditioned by the law and its sentence of

condemnation on all transgression, but by grace and faith (vv. 8, 9). How and by what means has the death of Jesus on the cross been able to bring this about? Not by an expiation of the sins of the world as the juristic doctrine of satisfaction fancies. For suppose that such had taken place, it would not have redeemed men for the future from their relation to the law, and the curse of the law revived anew by every transgression. On the contrary, after having secured an atonement for past sins, God must have insisted the more on the keeping of the law, inasmuch as it contains His holy will, and He could not possibly have made faith a substitute for obedience. Christ in His death could only redeem believers from the curse of the law by redeeming them absolutely from the legal relation to God, that is, by changing the outer law of threatening, judging, and cursing into an inward, impelling law of the spirit and of life. The curse of the law could be abolished only when this law of the spirit had delivered them from the law of sin and death; only then is there "no more condemnation for them which are in Christ Jesus," as it is expressly said in Rom. viii. 1, 2. And the passage (Gal. iii. 13) agrees with all that we have hitherto found in the teaching of the apostle. But this passage only serves to complete that teaching if we take along with it the view which is found in Rom. vi. and vii. (ver. 4), according to which, through the (slain) body of Christ, believers have died to sin, and at the same time died to the law,—not in order to be careless of the commandments of God, but in order to serve God in newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter (Rom. vii. 6). It is the same with Col. ii. 13, 14, in which the *χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα, ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον, κ.τ.λ.*, is preceded by a *συνεζωποίησεν ἡμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ*, proving that our apostle never separates the justifying significance of the death of Christ from the sanctifying, which lays the basis of a new life.

§ 12. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS AN ACT OF RECONCILIATION,  
2 COR. V. 15 f.

The apostle most frequently regards the saving act of God in Christ as a reconciliation; and that he does not borrow

this favourite conception from the Old Testament, but finds it in his own thought, shows how inadvisable it is to seek to trace back all Pauline ideas to the Old Testament. The main passage on reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 18–21) is the most important utterance to be found in Paul's writings about God's procuring of salvation. But he has also applied the conception in a significant way in Rom. v. 8–10; Col. i. 21.<sup>1</sup> What is this conception? In German the words reconcile and atone (*versöhnen* and *sühnen*) have a common derivation and this relation has never ceased to produce a confusion of ideas. In Greek *καταλλάσσειν* or *ἀποκαταλλάσσειν* (*reconciliate*) has nothing to do with *ἰλάσκεσθαι* (*expiate*). *Versöhnung*, *καταλλαγή*, signifies in Greek the transformation of a relation of hostility into one of peace and friendship. The hostility to be removed may be partly due to both sides, though perhaps to one more than to the other; or the guilt of the estrangement and the feeling of estrangement and hostility may exist solely in the one, while the other magnanimously and lovingly rises above the estrangement, and is eager for reconciliation. How, then, did Paul in this respect conceive of the relation between God and man? Strangely enough, the *ἔχθρα*, the enmity which is to be removed by the reconciliation, has been sought, under the influence once more of that juristic doctrine of satisfaction, on the side of God, and the *εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ* in Rom. v. 10 has been taken in the passive sense as meaning hated by God. But the apostle immediately before had been praising the love of God, which shows itself in the very fact of His having given His Son to death for sinners and enemies; and one cannot entertain the idea that God could treat with infinite love people whom He at the same moment hated. The idea of God's love for enemies, His love for people who are His enemies, and therefore require to be reconciled to Him (*εἰρήνη*

<sup>1</sup> We leave out of account here the passages Col. i. 20, Eph. i. 20, which speak of the reconciliation of the *ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι*, etc., through the death of Christ. That the estranged powers of the world are also in principle restored to harmony, that, for example, the warring spirits of the nations of the old world are in principle made into one new humanity, is an idea which does not stand on the same level as the founding of salvation for sinful humanity, and we have already discussed it in the chapter on God and the World.



πρὸς τὸν θεόν, Rom. v. 1), would have been clear as day if men had not looked at it through these dogmatic spectacles. The whole passage in Colossians is likewise in favour of taking the ἔχθρους in an active sense.<sup>1</sup> Καὶ ὑμεῖς ποτὲ ὄντας ἀπηλλοτριωμένους καὶ ἔχθρους τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς πονηροῖς, νυνὶ ἀποκατήλλαξεν ἐν τῷ σώματι τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου; that is, alienated, and enemies in your minds by the evil works which ye have done;—there is no support for the passive interpretation *deo invisit*, as God is never mentioned, and of a hatred of Christ there can be no thought in any circumstances. The ἔχθρα in question here is plainly described by the apostle in Rom. viii. 7: διότι τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν· τῷ γὰρ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναται; this feeling of enmity must be taken away from mankind. But besides that, how could the idea of an enmity of God to man form the presupposition of the idea of reconciliation? The apostle (which is often taken no notice of) starts from his personal experience of reconciliation, that God in Christ graciously changed him, the enemy and persecutor, into the preacher of His work of reconciliation,—τὰ δὲ πάντα (viz. what he had formerly said about his new standpoint conditioned by the death of Christ) ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς.<sup>2</sup> The continuation of the passage in which the apostle makes his view wider is just as instructive: ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. As the apostle here neither says God suffered Himself to be reconciled by Christ, nor God reconciled Himself with the world, but God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, he makes it plain that the estrangement and hostility to be removed are entirely on the side of the world. And in explaining “reconciling the world to Himself in Christ” by the addition, “not

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, note, p. 429, *N. T. Theol.* vol. i. Eng. trans., tries to interpret this passage: ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν is not a hostile feeling towards God, but the sum total of things hostile to God, as contrasted with those that please Him. But when was that which is repugnant to God ever expressed by εἰς θεόν?

<sup>2</sup> The ἡμεῖς can only, of course, refer to the same person as the following ἡμῖν, that is, to the apostle.

imputing to men their trespasses," he has plainly excluded the idea that God's act of forgiveness was made possible only by the completed work of reconciliation. On the contrary, as already noted, it is a constituent part or presupposition of this work of reconciliation that God, like a man desiring reconciliation with someone who had wronged him, had resolved to forgive before he offered the hand of reconciliation. Hence the apostle thinks of God, not as one angry with humanity, to whom a third person or mediator offers a satisfaction in order to appease Him. In the phrase *θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ*, he takes God and Christ entirely as one; God comes to meet man in Christ, who is the minister of His love. He thinks of God as a mighty, magnanimous King, who is face to face with rebellious subjects. He could destroy them, but He resolves rather to win them back by a great act of grace. He meets them with pardon, removes the fear of His judgments produced by their evil conscience, and thus restores them to faithful and obedient subjects. There is only one point where this parable does not sufficiently describe the greatness of the deed of God in question. Such a king could only express in words his purpose of reconciliation, his amnesty for all who repented (in a *λόγος καταλλαγῆς*). God announces it by a deed which quiets the conscience and conquers the heart, by the surrender of His Son to the most painful lot of human nature. As the apostle in ver. 21 tersely expresses his message of reconciliation: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He surrendered Him who was without sin to the most painful lot of the sinner, in order, by this assurance of His pardoning love, to make us partake in the fellowship of this Saviour, and in that of His righteousness. The guilty consciences of those to be reconciled needed this infinite pledge of the pardoning love of God before they could believe in it. But the hearts of those who do believe in it are won, so that they live no longer to themselves, but to God in Christ; the same act which pardons them also transforms them, and they can only appropriate the pardon when they are laid hold of and conquered by it, and are won from all sin. The apostle therefore—and this explains his preference for this point of view—found in

the idea of reconciliation an expression for the living unity of the two sides of salvation, the justifying and the sanctifying. If in 2 Cor. v. 21 he specially urges the first (*ἵνα γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ*), he insists upon the second in Col. i. 21 f.: *ἀποκατήλλαξεν (ὑμᾶς) ἐν τῷ σώματι τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου, παραστήσαι ὑμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους καὶ ἀνεγκλήτους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ*. But even the dynamic element of the divine founding of salvation nowhere comes out so clearly as here. For a reconciliation as a completed fact can never be accomplished all on one side; the magnanimity of the one has to be accepted by the other. Therefore the reconciliation established by God in Christ is in itself only a potential reconciliation, a power and possibility of actual atonement, and for a full reconciliation it is necessary that man should take the hand of God offered to him, and should throw himself into the fatherly arms of God. And the apostle was clearly conscious of this relation between possibility and realisation. In this consciousness he describes (2 Cor. v. 18 f.) the course which the work of redemption must take after what God has done in Christ. An embassy, an office of reconciliation, must be instituted in order to proffer to the estranged and hostile the divine reconciliation, to "beseech" them in Christ's stead, reconcile yourselves with God (vv. 19, 20). For this *καταλλάγητε* means neither "be reconciled," seeing that no one can be called upon to do a thing that is purely passive, nor "let yourselves be reconciled," as if to the act of God, which is complete in itself, something further must be added which would not depend upon man; but it simply means, as 1 Cor. vii. 11 shows, "reconcile yourselves," that is, take the hand of God which is offered to you. Accordingly, the apostle can call the act of God completed in Christ's death *καταλλαγή*, for it is a virtual reconciliation once and for all and on behalf of all, just as he can call the acceptance of the gospel on the part of the Gentile world *καταλλαγή κόσμου*, which he actually does in Rom. xi. 15, for it is only by this that the reconciliation between God and the Gentile world is actually accomplished. And yet there is only one *καταλλαγή*, that which, established in Christ, is preached in the message of reconciliation, and is consummated by the world's acceptance of this message.

§ 13. THE SHARE WHICH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS HAS  
IN THE FOUNDING OF SALVATION

The last link of evidence in favour of the view we have been engaged in demonstrating is, that it alone explains the share in the founding of salvation which the apostle assigns to the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, as well as to His death. The statements in question are as numerous as they are definite. Rom. iv. 25 : ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν. Rom. v. 10 : εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ. Rom. viii. 34 : τίς ὁ κατακρίνων ; Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀποθανών, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐγερθείς, ὃς ἐστὶν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃς καὶ ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Rom. xiv. 9 : εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἔζησεν, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ. 1 Cor. xv. 17 : εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, ματαία ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν, ἔτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ὑμῶν. 2 Cor. v. 15 : τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι. The traditional view of this doctrine in Paul's writings does not, as may be easily conceived, know very well what to do with this element of it ; if the work of redemption and reconciliation is settled by Christ's obedience unto death, what part can His resurrection have in that work ? It is usually said : Without the resurrection of Jesus we should not have known that His death was not the death of a sinner, and therefore we could not have believed in Him. But did the centurion at the foot of the cross, and the penitent malefactor at His side, not perceive that this was the death of a holy man, the death of a Saviour, though they knew nothing about the resurrection ? And could our impression of the life and death of Jesus not be the same though we had not the message of the resurrection ? And if we could not believe in the holiness of His death without the message of the resurrection, how could we believe in the resurrection itself, which is more incredible to the natural man ? Moreover, the apostle sets aside this quite untenable hypothesis by the words : " If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." That is to say, faith might exist without the resurrection, but it would be vain, it would not justify. Why should this be so, if atonement, redemption, reconcilia-

tion were secured in the death of Christ? Because the founding of salvation, perfect in itself, cannot, according to Paul, be realised except through the living, glorified Christ. Here we reach a point which belongs to another article of doctrine, the appropriation of salvation, and we can therefore expound the apostle's meaning only in suggestions and anticipations. The appropriation of the salvation which is secured in Christ and in His death is regarded by the apostle as following, not from a natural impression which sets free the man's own moral powers for the attainment of perfection: he views it as resting on the real spiritual power of the living Christ standing behind that historical impression, who through His resurrection has become the *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν* of humanity. As the Risen One from heaven laid hold of the apostle on the way to Damascus and stamped the image of Himself upon his heart, so must He always stamp His death on men's hearts, and kindle in them a new life which is no longer *ἐαυτῷ* but *θεῷ*. And the apostle has made not only the beginning, but also the continuance of this new life depend on a living fellowship with the glorified Christ. The believer's growing conformity to Christ, his being transformed into the image of the perfected Lord, is to him the work of the Risen One, who has now become the quickening spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18; Gal. ii. 20). The resurrection of Christ is viewed by the apostle as the condition necessary to the completeness of the cleansing and sanctifying power of His death; but it is no less a condition of the justifying power of that death. According to Paul, as has already been specially emphasised, a man is justified only *ἐν Χριστῷ* (2 Cor. v. 21; Eph. i. 7), that is, in living connection with Him; and this connection manifestly can only exist with a living Christ, not with one who is dead and parted from us. Only by viewing the believer in living connection with Him from whom the stream of sanctification ever flows into them, can God truly pronounce men righteous who in point of fact are not yet really so. He has the living guarantee in Him who has begun the good work in them that He will carry it on until they have become perfectly righteous.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The idea of Bürgen, though not formally Pauline, helps to simplify the difficult doctrine of the saving significance of the death of Jesus,

This explains the utterance in Rom. viii. 34, which represents our justification as conditioned not merely by Jesus' death and resurrection, but also by a continuous heavenly activity of the exalted Christ. This description of Christ as sitting at the right hand of God and representing us (with the Father) may appear strange in presence of the assurance of justification expressed in ver. 33; it suggests that the justification based on the death of Christ is incomplete and in need of being supplemented; or even that Christ is more merciful than the heavenly Father who sent Him, and gave Him up; that He is, as it were, forced continuously to intercede with the Father, lest His wrath should begin again to burn against us. But this appearing for us is simply the biblical expression for the continuous security which the living and glorified Christ gives to the Father for the justified so long as they are not yet thoroughly sanctified, and therefore not in themselves wholly well-pleasing to God. The other passages adduced above will now give us even less trouble. That Christ has risen for us, for our advantage: that He died and rose again in order to be Lord of the dead and the living, is self-evident after what has been said. That He gave Himself for our trespasses, and was raised again for our justification, does not mean, of course, that our justification is not based upon His death, but that it, whilst rendered possible by His death, can only be communicated to us by His resurrection. The reason why, without the resurrection, our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins, is that faith in one who has departed, and who is therefore incapable of fellowship with us, could not communicate to us all the glorious things He desires to give, no matter how glorious these might be. There still remains the remarkable passage Rom. v. 10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, especially for homiletic and catechetical use. Christ in His holy death is a guarantee to the Father that humanity, so far as it allows itself to be drawn into fellowship with Him, will be delivered from sin and attain to a more complete sanctification. In the completed revelation of eternal love which takes place in His death, He is at the same time the assurance of God to humanity, that so far as it lets itself be laid hold of by the power of love in His death, all its guilt will be forgiven, and the love and grace of God will be bestowed.

being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." The passage reminds us that even those who are reconciled and justified are still in a certain sense under the divine wrath, inasmuch as there is still sin in them. Their final deliverance or salvation (*σωθησόμεθα*, future) depends therefore on something additional to the death of the Son of God, *ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ*, on a living communion with Him, the communion of a life which as it grows and comes to its perfection in them, makes them fully objects of the divine good pleasure.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WAY OF SALVATION

#### § 1. FOUNDING OF SALVATION AND WAY OF SALVATION

When God had established the possibility of salvation for the whole world, there remained as a further task the subjective realisation of salvation; but the completion of the first leads naturally over to the second. In the exposition of this point of doctrine we come upon the topics which Paul has worked out with most deliberation, for here he was impelled by his special call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and to preserve it against the attacks of the Judaists. We may describe it as his doctrine of the way of salvation. He does not indeed use this term which was later current in the Church, though, in Rom. viii. 29, 30, there is clearly the consciousness of a divine order of ways and means through which men are to appropriate the salvation which is founded.

#### § 2. THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL

If we ask, first of all, about the means whereby the salvation procured in the death and resurrection of Christ is brought near to men, we get a clear answer from the main passages discussed above concerning reconciliation; it is by the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 19), by what, in 1 Cor. i. 18, is called the word of the cross—the

“gospel,” as the apostle prefers to call it (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 1, etc.), that is, the glad message of the love of God, and His manifestation of that love in Christ. Its declaration is, that reconciliation must be offered to those who need it and for whom it is intended, and therefore the apostle regards himself as an ambassador in Christ’s stead (or in Christ’s cause, *ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ*, 2 Cor. v. 20); and so the ministry of reconciliation, the evangelical ministry of preaching as Jesus bequeathed it to His disciples, is the first essential article of the divine way of salvation. Salvation is brought about in a rational and moral way by the preaching of the word of God applied to the rational and moral nature of man, as it is said in Rom. x. 17: “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (or of Christ). And whilst the apostle knows of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, he has no doctrine of the sacraments, and he ascribes to them no magical efficacy alongside of this means of grace in the word. Nevertheless, there is an essential difference between the mode of operation and communication of a doctrine of human wisdom and that of the gospel, a difference which the perverted demands of some of the Corinthians, that he should have preached the gospel *ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου*, in the wisdom of words, like the philosophers (1 Cor. i. and ii.), causes the apostle to expound. A human wisdom, a philosophy, convinces by means of human dialectic and rhetoric; the gospel, by the proof of the spirit and of power, that is, by the proof of the holy effects which the Spirit of God exercises on the human heart (1 Cor. ii. 4). If the efficacy of the gospel depended on human dialectic and rhetoric, Christian faith would depend on these also, and then not only might it be overturned by a superior kind of proof or eloquence, but the only power it could exercise on man would be such as is exerted by the conviction of the truth of a doctrine. And in man’s present condition a natural conviction of reason is far from being a power to overcome sin and sanctify the will. But the gospel is such a power. It is, as the apostle fitly calls it (Rom. i. 16), *δύναμις θεοῦ, εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι*, because in it there speaks to man something mightier than



the great truths of reason; for in it there is the supreme demonstration of the eternal love,—a power which can do what the law in the mind could not do (Rom. vii. 23), it can overcome in man the power of selfishness, and can put in its place its own divine life of love. The apostle is therefore perfectly right, not only in tracing back the effect of the gospel to God, as all effects of spirit and truth in the world run up to God in the end, but in perceiving in the gospel a peculiar saving operation of God in Christ, a continuous working of the living, glorified Saviour (Rom. ix. 24, xv. 18). For through the preaching of the gospel the unique and imperishable manifestation of God's love in Christ tells upon men; through it is felt the power of a love which has been in Christ for ever, a love that is living, lasting, and operative—that is, the power of the exalted Christ Himself, for He has given to this preaching concerning Himself the force of His own glorified life and of the Holy Spirit. This explains the secret of the ministry of preaching, a secret which the apostle learned in the divine education of his own Christian character. No man has understood more clearly than this chosen vessel to the Gentiles why Christ did not leave behind Him a system of doctrines theoretically expressed and composed in book form, but fashioned and sent out men to bear a formless gospel. His Second Epistle to the Corinthians is really the attempt to express the secret of an inner life on which any apostolic success he could show depended. Only a man in whom the Lord who is the Spirit has come to dwell, who exhibits the love of Christ in its transforming power, can kindle that flame of divine life in others; and the fire is spread, not by instruction in a doctrinal system, but by testimony to a personal experience of the gospel of God coming from the heart with individual truth and freedom. In the very moment therefore in which the apostle, rejoicing in his success, casts a glance at his vain and sordid rivals in the proud words, "Yea, who is sufficient for these things?" (for such an activity), 2 Cor. ii. 16, he gives the humble explanation of them: "Such self-confidence have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves

to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (iii. 5). The secret of his apostolic activity is simply that he surrenders himself openly and unselfishly, more openly and unselfishly than his opponents, to be the mere instrument of the power of God in Christ, and that he is determined in all the work of his calling by nothing save the love of Christ, the power of His death and resurrection (2 Cor. ii. 17, v. 14 ff.).

### § 3. ELECTION AND CALLING

Now the gospel, even when it is preached according to the mind of God, does not produce in all who hear it its intended effects in drawing them to salvation. On the contrary, even where the apostle stands as it were in silent wonder before the mighty results which God has accomplished by his preaching, he describes these results as twofold, 2 Cor. ii. 15, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. In the one we are a savour of death unto death; and in the other a savour of life unto life." That is to say, the gospel is effective wherever it is preached in the spirit and power of God, but is not effective everywhere for salvation. While it fills one with the powers of life eternal, others are disgusted with it, as by a breath of death, and are thus driven further by it on the way of death on which they are already. Or, in other words, the one finds in it a call from God, a call to the enjoyment of His salvation, and to the fellowship of His Son (1 Cor. i. 9); whilst others are hardened and blinded by it against this salvation (Rom. xi. 7 f.). In this notion of "calling" we touch upon one of the main pillars of the Pauline doctrine of the way of salvation. The *κλήσις*, always traced directly to God, is in the apostle's view one of the most essential acts of grace in aiding men to appropriate salvation (Rom. viii. 28, ix. 24). And by this we are not to understand, as in the synoptic saying, "Many are called, but few are chosen," a mere outward invitation to the kingdom of God; it does not consist in simply hearing the glad message, without leading to the actual enjoyment of salvation. To our apostle the "calling" is an effectual drawing to the enjoyment of salvation, it is the opposite of

hardening: "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 29, 30). So far is the apostle from putting calling and election in opposition to each other, that he rather treats them as equivalents (cf. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27); and by tracing back the call to a preceding divine *προγινώσκειν* and *προορίζειν*, he confronts us anew with the question of the compatibility of the divine action with the free human self-determination, which has already been discussed in the chapter on the Divine Government of the World. Here again, on a closer view, the appearance of determinism resolves itself into the idea of a grace which takes full account of human freedom though strongly influencing it. The statement already alluded to about the peculiar character of the gospel as a divine means of grace (1 Cor. i. 18 ff.), first of all throws light upon it. In the world of culture, Jewish as well as Greek, into which the gospel enters, it encounters certain historically developed claims which it is neither able nor willing to satisfy; but it has something better and more profoundly satisfying to offer than those claims suppose. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The sensuous bias of Jewish religiosity required from God the palpable proof of a visible Messianic kingdom, and the philosophising scholasticism of the Greeks expected the salvation of the world from a doctrine scientifically established. By preaching, in opposition to the Jewish Messianic expectations and of the Hellenic scientific ideas, a crucified Saviour, the gospel inevitably repelled both parties, and yet had something far better to offer both than they desired, the very thing which they at bottom needed, a divine power to renew the world from within, and a divine wisdom for salvation. And from both Jews and Greeks there was collected a community of believers who came to know the crucified Messiah as the power and wisdom of God. By what law then was the world of that day separated into blinded (*ἀπολλύμενοι*, ver. 18) and

called (*κλητοί*)? Where those mistaken claims outweighed the need of salvation which exists in every human heart, the gospel was rejected as an offence and foolishness. On the other hand, where these hindrances to the sense of wickedness and need of help fell into the background, as was the case chiefly with the lower and uncultured classes in Corinth, the glad message was willingly received as a power of God and wisdom of God. But that proves that the divine election which the apostle asserts of his readers (1 Cor. i. 27) is not an eternal and irresistible decree, but one formed in time; it is a resolution of the Governor of the world depending on His knowledge of the susceptibility of those men, which was afterwards carried out in their effectual calling. The same is true of Rom. ix.–xi., where the apostle again discusses this twofold action of the gospel on the Jewish nation and the Gentile world as a whole. The law had led but a small minority of the Jewish people to Paul's experience that the law cannot justify, and that one must die to the law and repeat in himself the death of Christ upon the cross in order to live unto God (Gal. ii. 19). The great majority of the nation were rooted in self-righteousness and legality to such an extent that the gospel of grace preached to them in the name of the Crucified could act on them only as an offence and a means of hardening. The Gentile world, on the other hand, sinking under the burden of the misery of sin which had reached its height, having a knowledge of the right, and pervaded by the feeling of its moral impotence and lost condition, yielded willingly over wide circles; and so for the time it became what the Israel of Moses was in presence of the Egyptians, the vessel of God's grace; while the Jewish nation, which had become the vessel of His wrath, hurried onwards to its destruction (Rom. ix. 22–24 f., 33, x. 1 f.). Who could deny that this historical condition of the empire in the apostolic age, as set forth by Paul, consisted of acts of free human self-determination and operations of a divine order and government of the world, and that the decree of the eternal Governor of the world, not to make the nation formerly chosen, but the Gentile world, hitherto left to itself, the bearer of His gospel, is conceived throughout with regard to the inner nature of both sides? The apostle has produced

that appearance of predestination in the ninth chapter, which he removes in the tenth and eleventh chapters, only by first emphasising the divine decree and government that he may afterwards indicate how it proceeds according to human conditions.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the eleventh chapter lets us see most definitely that the being repelled or hardened by the gospel, which is opposed to the gracious choice and calling of some, is not meant to be the final will of God (such an idea is expressly rejected, ver. 11, with a *μὴ γένοιτο*), but that in His own time it is to give place to a later amnesty and calling. The apostle's view is that the divine Governor of the world educates and inclines men, in their freedom to susceptibility for salvation, to faith; but the law of the history of the world involves that this cannot be attained by all at the same time, but that there must always be a *κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις θεοῦ* (Rom. ix. 11); the plan of God's grace in the world must always proceed by selection. For the very thing which inclines some to be susceptible—in those days the Gentiles—is an offence to the others—the Jews—in the offer of the gospel. But this is the wonder of the purposes and ways of God which the apostle praises at the close of the chapter, that through the mutual working of the history of the world, and the further guidance of God in it, those who to-day are blinded may afterwards have their eyes opened in faith; this is expressly predicted of the Jewish nation, but it appears as a purpose of God's love for all who at any time are in a like condition (cf. xi. 32). We have already called attention to the fact of how far the indirect methods of the divine government of the world, indicated in Rom. xi., confirm the complete co-operation of divine power and human freedom in the realising of salvation, for a deterministic government of the world, which took no account of human freedom, would have no need of this freedom for the attainment of its end. From all this we can have no doubt of the non-deterministic sense of the main passage Rom. viii. 28, which applies the notions of election and calling to the individual as such. The apostle explains the preceding expression, *τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν*, with which, in the light of the result, he has described those "who love God," and for whom therefore all things are

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 111 ff.

to work together for good. He wishes to give them a perfect assurance of salvation by representing to them that their calling is no momentary thought of God which might again be dismissed as it was conceived, but that it rests on a deliberate purpose of God pursued to its final goal. Those whom God has previously chosen He has also destined to perfection, and accordingly has called, justified, and glorified them. We must not indeed, on the strength of the prefix *προ*, regard the foreseeing and predestinating as belonging to eternity, whilst we refer *ἐκάλεισεν*, *ἐδικαίωσεν*, *ἐδόξασεν* to time; the apostle could not possibly have meant to say that God had already called, nay, already glorified, all those whom He had determined from eternity to be conformed to the image of His Son. The utterances must be taken all together as elements of God's thought. Whom He did foreknow, He also at the same time—in His thought—did appoint to perfection, did call, justify, glorify. Hence, as we have already noted, the *προ* of these first two acts is not to be regarded as pretemporal, and as therefore leaving the human condition out of account, for that conception would even put an end to the distinction between *προγινώσκειν* and *προορίζειν*; it can only be meant to emphasise the precedence of those two acts of God in the human experience of salvation. As, according to Rom. xi. 2, God foresaw the nation of Israel in the patriarchs (cf. ver. 28), that is, in the beginning of its development; as the apostle says of himself in Gal. i. 15, that God separated him from his mother's womb (that is, elected him to his future calling), and called him (then a man) by His grace,—the same meaning must be given to the foreknowing and predestinating in Rom. viii. 28. Foreknowledge and predestination describe the divine thought of love which, necessarily preceding any working of love, marks out a man as its own before he feels any inclination towards God; but this choice is made because the real impulse in the man's life is in that direction. The call is the realisation of this thought of love which follows in its own time; when God has guided, as in the case of our apostle, a free growth through all its seeming departures from Himself, and when He has ripened the nascent susceptibility for salvation, the process is accomplished, and God brings home His gospel to the man in a way

that overpowers him. He who is called must afterwards say that in this process divine grace has had the ascendancy, and has indeed done everything; but human freedom is not excluded, it is guided, and finally it is overpowered with the might of love.

#### § 4. FAITH: ITS GENERAL CONCEPTION

That which the divine call immediately produces in man is faith, which, according to Paul, is on man's side the fundamental condition of salvation. The apostle has nowhere given an express exposition of this, which is in some respects the most important idea of his doctrine; all the more carefully must we collect the passages in which all sides of the Pauline idea of faith are brought out. There can be no doubt that the fundamental conception of *πίστις* or *πιστεύειν* here, as everywhere, is that of trust. It clearly appears in 1 Cor. xiii. 7 (*ἡ ἀγάπη πάντα πιστεύει*), and not less clearly in the specially Old Testament phrases in which *πιστεύειν* is united either with the dative or with *ἐπί*—in the sense of relying on something (the former, for example, in Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6; the latter in Rom. iv. 5, ix. 33, x. 11). Now, in the case of the apostle, we have, as a matter of course, to do with faith as a religious act. The object of faith is that which, from its nature, cannot be reached by sensuous perception, that is, can only be grasped in virtue of an inward act such as trust, and which, at the same time, can give our soul firm footing, and can be the basis of our heart's confidence—that is, God and the kingdom of eternal blessings. It is not, however, an unknown God on whom we place our confidence, but the God who has revealed Himself in Christ, who speaks to us in His gospel, and awakens our confidence by His loving entreaties (2 Cor. v. 20). Now, so far as faith springs out of this preaching, and is related to it (*ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς, ἡ δὲ ἀκοή διὰ ῥήματος θεοῦ*, Rom. x. 17; *ῥῆμα πίστεως*, Rom. x. 8; *πίστις τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*, Phil. i. 27), the idea of conviction is united with that of confidence, viz. conviction of the truth of the gospel. This idea of conviction, that is, of course, regarding as true, appears in Paul not only in things of daily life (1 Cor. xi. 18, *μέρος τι πιστεύω*), but also in

religious questions, whenever *πιστεύειν* refers to individual Christian truths; for example, Rom. vi. 8: *πιστεύομεν, ὅτι καὶ συζήσομεν αὐτῷ*; 1 Thess. iv. 14: *εἰ γὰρ πιστεύομεν, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη*. We have perhaps the clearest statement of it in Rom. xiv. 23: "What is not of faith is sin," that is, whatever is not done from the conviction that it is right is wrong for him who does it. But in religious things this idea of conviction is never separated from that of trust, so as to degrade faith to a mere persuasion of the intellect without any interest of the heart, but it always remains a conviction, which, as produced by an act of trust, has for its object that which is most worthy of confidence, and is therefore fitted to form the basis of the whole inner life. Faith is a matter of the heart, an act of the whole inner life, not simply an act of the understanding, *καρδιά γὰρ πιστεύεται* (Rom. x. 10; Eph. iii. 17). Those who are "weak in faith" (Rom. xiv.—xv.) are so called, not merely because they waver in their convictions, but because their hearts are not yet sufficiently prepared for the emancipating grace of God in Christ to let their old scruples fall away. Now, if faith is a sure confidence, a confiding assurance, then we further understand how the apostle can at one time contrast it with doubt and at another time with sight (Rom. iv. 20, xiv. 23; 2 Cor. v. 7), "We walk by faith, not by sight." Heavenly things cannot be seen and proved in our earthly life as earthly things can. They leave room for doubt; but doubt calls in question the very thing which is to be the firm basis of our trust, and so it is related to unbelief, and must give way to faith. This does not mean that the apostle desires to speak the word to a blind faith, but the contrary; he regards faith and knowledge—and this is another mark of his notion of faith—as going hand in hand. As the gospel is grace and truth in inseparable unity, the apostle is able to include the whole of subjective Christianity in the idea of knowledge just as well as in that of faith. He gives the first and most prominent place to the former, especially in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, without neglecting the latter. He praises God on behalf of his readers for having made His grace abound towards them in all wisdom and knowledge, and for having revealed to them the mystery



of His will. He prays that God would give them, further, the spirit of wisdom and revelation to know Him; that He would lighten the eyes of their heart to know the hope of their calling, etc. He fixes it as the goal of Christian perfection to come to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and to be no longer driven about with every wind of doctrine (Eph. i. 8, 9, 18, iv. 13, 14; cf. Col. i. 9, 27, ii. 2). These phrases make manifest the inner relation of faith and knowledge; and in point of fact the apostle frequently substitutes the one for the other. That which in Rom. xiv. is called weakness of faith, the bondage to Jewish or heathen prejudices, is thought of in 1 Cor. viii. 7, 10, 11 as a want of knowledge. Did not Israel know? (*οὐκ ἔγνω*) he asks (Rom. x. 19), manifestly presupposing that one could not believe without knowledge; and in 2 Cor. iv. 4 f., the *ἄπιστοι* are those whose *νοήματα* are blinded, so that the light of the gospel does not shine into them. "But the God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Again, in Phil. iii. 8, 9, the apostle has counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, since he became a believer in Him (*διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ*, ver. 9). And in 2 Cor. ii. 14 he spreads the sweet savour of the knowledge of God in every place, whilst he is fulfilling his mission to all nations, *εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως* (Rom. i. 5). This synonymy may be easily understood from the religious nature of the knowledge in question. It is not knowledge of the *νοῦς* apart from the *καρδία*, a notion which in itself has no place in the Bible; it is an act of the heart as faith is, and it depends upon love for the truth (2 Thess. ii. 10), and is inseparable from love to God, so that if any man in mere pride of understanding without love "thinks that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing at all as he ought to know" (1 Cor. viii. 2, 3). Accordingly, knowledge is the reflection of faith in our reason, the acceptance and elaboration of the gospel in our thought, and it is well to observe, though not to be wondered at, how essential in the Christian profession this intellectual side of faith is to the apostle, who is certainly one of the greatest thinkers of all times. Only in a relative way can it

be said, that on the one hand knowledge surpasses faith, and on the other faith surpasses knowledge. Knowledge may be distinguished from faith, which is the acceptance of the gospel once for all (1 Cor. xv. 1, *ὃ καὶ παρελάβετε*), as the gradually growing insight that Christ is *θεοῦ δύναμις* and *θεοῦ σοφία* (1 Cor. i. 24); that He is the real *μυστήριον θεοῦ* in whom is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. ii. 3), so that from Him the whole of God's plan of the world from the creation to its final perfection unfolds itself before the reflective mind (1 Cor. ii. 6 f.). On the other hand, knowledge through all its growth on earth is always unsatisfied, because, as time passes, it becomes only the more sensible of its imperfections, and so faith remains our comfort and stay here below (1 Cor. xiii. 8–12, 13). Of course faith also has to grow; from the immaturity (*νηπιότης*) of the first childlike acceptance it has to be strengthened until it reaches the power and maturity (*τελειότης*) of a masculine assurance of conviction (1 Cor. iii. 1 f., xv. 58; 2 Cor. x. 15; Col. ii. 6; 2 Thess. i. 3); but in its direct act of trust it grasped at once all that knowledge gradually and imperfectly secures. "Again, a new light is thrown on the nature of faith when we observe how, according to Paul, it has to do quite as much with the man's willing as with his thinking. The apostle lays stress on this relation of faith to the will as often as he describes believing as *ὑπακούειν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ*, and unbelief as *οὐχ ὑποτάσσεσθαι*, as *ἀπειθεῖν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ* (Rom. i. 8, ii. 8, vi. 17, x. 3, xvi. 21; cf. 2 Thess. ii. 12, the opposing of *πιστεῦειν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ* and *εὐδοκεῖν τῇ ἀδικίᾳ*). This presents faith as a decision of the will, a moral obligation and act. Not that the apostle viewed it as an act which a man was free to perform at any time or under any circumstances, or one that was possible to him of his own strength at all. The contrary is manifest from what we have seen with regard to the divine call, and the apostle says significantly, 2 Thess. iii. 2: "All men have not faith." Man does not procure faith for himself as Paul strikingly experienced; it is begotten in him by God through His word and Spirit. It is God who made it shine into the heart of the apostle (2 Cor. iv. 6). God is thanked that the readers of the Epistle to the Romans have obeyed that form of doctrine which was delivered to

them (Rom. vi. 17). "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," exclaims the apostle to the Ephesians (ii. 8). But just as a man cannot force himself to trust another, though he can refuse to trust, when his confidence is won by another, he has still the right and duty to give his confidence; so is it here. Faith, although on one side produced in the heart by God, is on the other side an act of the heart itself, and indeed the most decisive act; it is the willing surrender to the importunity of divine grace and truth which that grace justly claims, and by which it first becomes the man's own. In the passage just quoted (Rom. vi. 17) the apostle says, "Ye shall become obedient to that form of doctrine which was delivered to you," thus embracing in one expression the human and the divine activity. Nay, from this point of view the apostle can describe the human act of faith, the *πίστις*, directly as an *ἔργον* (1 Thess. i. 3; 2 Thess. i. 11), notwithstanding the great contrast which at other times he regards as existing between *πίστις* and *ἔργα*.

#### § 5. FAITH: ITS RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE AND CHRISTIAN EXPRESSION

From this we learn the unusual significance which faith, even in its wider sense as belonging to all religions, has for the apostle. We have already called attention to the way in which he sets it in opposition to all righteousness of works as the principle of true religion, not merely for the New Testament, but also for the Old (Rom. iv. 1 f.; Gal. iii. 5 f.); and his reason is not only that no sinful man can perform the *ἔργα νόμου*, the works of righteousness demanded by the law, but because the wish to do or merit anything in God's presence is itself a perverted and impious standpoint, as we can do nothing good except in Him and through Him. The apostle (Rom. iii. 27) finds the proof of the correctness of the *νόμος πίστεως*, the way of faith in our relation to God, in the fact that it excludes all boasting in God's presence; while the *νόμος τῶν ἔργων*, the principle of works, issues in this boasting. All true religiousness, as he illustrates by Abraham's case, is faith, and faith only is true piety; whilst

Pharisaism, the ethical deism of Judaism, is perverted and corrupt (Rom. x. 2, 3). If God is the eternal love in whom we live, and move, and have our being; if piety is the desire to be nothing out of God,—then it is a fundamental condition of all conformity to God, and God-pleasing, to open the heart to that eternal love in humble trust and allow it alone to operate within us, that is, to believe. If faith, then, is essentially a susceptibility for God and His grace, and is thus fundamental in religious conduct, the common saying is true, that the apostle considers faith essentially as an *ὄργανον ληπτικόν* for the grace of God, whether promising or giving; and yet it is not true that faith has significance for Paul only in this aspect, and that he does not allow it to count for anything before God in itself. The much-repeated statement, *justificamur per fidem, non propter fidem*, opposes two aspects of one fact, both of which are found in our apostle. Certainly Paul never regards faith, even when he calls it an *ἔργον* of man, as a meritorious performance equal to or even similar to obedience to the law; but he really regards it as the *ὄργανον ληπτικόν* of a love which comes freely (*δῶρεαν*) and undeserved. But that does not prevent this relation of susceptibility and faith towards God, when it is humble and childlike, from being in principle pious and well-pleasing to God, so that in its very nature it attracts the divine love and grace. That the apostle is conscious of both views is evident from his appreciation of the faith of Abraham. “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him (by God) for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6). That does not mean, “and Abraham thereby laid hold of the grace and righteousness revealed by God in Christ,” but it means, “faith as such, Abraham’s heroic trust in God, believing in hope against hope, won for him God’s favour; so that, because of it, he was in His eyes a righteous, a truly pious man.” And when the apostle further describes this faith of Abraham (Rom. iv. 19 f.), “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and was fully persuaded that what He had promised He was also able to perform,” he manifestly describes it not as a mere *ὄργανον ληπτικόν* of the promise of Isaac, but praises it as religious heroism, as a supreme act of trust in God. And

when he continues, *διὸ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην*, the *justificatus est propter fidem* is almost expressed in words. And this is peculiarly worthy of notice, as the main analogy between Christian faith and that of Abraham must lie on this side ; for the objects which are grasped, in spite of the apostle's attempts to find some typical resemblance in them, are a whole heaven apart—the promise of Isaac in the one case, and the mission of the Son of God as Saviour and Redeemer in the other. This now brings us to the apostle's specifically Christian idea of faith, which can only be the perfection of the general religious idea, and therefore rests upon the latter ; whilst, on the other hand, it surpasses it. Notwithstanding his comparison of the faith of Abraham with that of Christians, the apostle has not failed to recognise the distance between the two, which springs from the difference in their objects : the faith of Abraham is not the faith of Christians, but only its type. It is self-evident to our apostle that faith, in the full sense of the word, is first rendered possible by the completed revelation of God's love in Christ ; therefore *πιστεύειν*, without specification of object, describes for him the position of the Christian man (Rom. i. 8, xiii. 11, xv. 13 ; 1 Cor. iii. 5, xiv. 22, xv. 2, 11 ; Gal. iii. 22 f.), and *πίστις*, as such, is a designation of the new covenant (Gal. iii. 23, 25). On the other hand, no apostle has referred Christian faith so definitely and emphatically to its proper object as Paul in his phrases, *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν*, or *ἐν Χριστῷ*, and *πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, where the genitive is, of course, a *genitivus objectivus*.<sup>(1)</sup> Faith in Paul does not hold to Christ the future "Messiah of glory" (Jas. ii. 1), the Deliverer in the coming judgment, as it did in the primitive apostles ; it lays hold of a Messiah who has appeared, and who has been crucified, and has risen again. And when faith is thus referred to the person of Christ, the Pauline idea of faith is completed, just as faith itself reaches here its highest development. In the living application to the personal Saviour, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen (2 Cor. i. 20), to the glorified Living One who is in personal intercourse with the soul through His word and Spirit, faith itself becomes a personal relation, and reaches

<sup>(1)</sup>The genitive is the same as in the synoptic *ἔχετε πίστιν θεοῦ*, Mark xi. 22.

far beyond the idea of reliance on any mere fact or truth,—in a word, it is a bond of communion between the soul and its Lord. Πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ does not indeed formally signify a fellowship of life with Christ, though, in reality, it is so. In presence of the living Saviour, who has laid hold of the heart of man, the awakened trust becomes of itself surrender, and surrender becomes communion. The opening of the heart to Christ and the entrance of Christ into the heart coincide in faith, just as the opening of the eye and the entrance of the ray of light do in sight. That the apostle was conscious of this fact, and conceived faith in Christ as the mystic bond of unity between the soul and Christ, may be read in Eph. iii. 17: κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν. But his use of εἰς Χριστὸν πιστεύειν and ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι as interchangeable, or even as equivalents, likewise shows it. The latter, though it is frequently the mere designation of being a Christian, or of that which is Christian, never completely loses the sense of community of life; though sometimes, as in 2 Cor. v. 17 (εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις), that stands out with perfect clearness, and is confirmed by the corresponding Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν (for example, Rom. viii. 10). Now, when the apostle writes, 2 Col. xiii. 5, ἑαυτοὺς πειράζετε, εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει . . . , ἢ οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἑαυτοὺς, ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἐν ὑμῖν, or when, in Gal. ii. 20, he explains the ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός by a ὁ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῆ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, it is clear that he regards the Christian profession of faith and the fellowship of life with Christ as coincident ideas. The same thing follows when we observe that justification can be described at one time as δικαιῶσθαι διὰ πίστεως, and at another time by δικαιῶσθαι ἐν Χριστῷ (2 Cor. v. 21; Phil. iii. 9). This mystical conception of faith, which helps us to understand the apostle's doctrine both of justification and of renewal, serves, finally, to explain the fact that the apostle sees in faith an operative power, a living impulse which of itself produces in us that which only God in Christ can effect. The conception of πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη (Gal. v. 6) cannot be explained by the common idea of faith as a receptive condition of heart, nor yet by the notion of faith as a charism, which we have in 1 Cor. xii. 9, xiii. 2, a heroic faith

which can remove mountains, and which is conferred on one believer rather than another. And when the apostle (Rom. xv. 18, 19) describes the signs and wonders which he has wrought in the power of that heroic faith as accomplished by Christ through him, we have proof from this side also that being in the faith and being in fellowship with Christ are, in his view, equivalent.<sup>1</sup>

### § 6. JUSTIFICATION: ITS CONCEPTION AND CONDITION

According to Paul, faith is followed by God's act of justification, *οὓς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν* (Rom. viii. 30). With regard to this most celebrated of the Pauline ideas, we have first of all to establish that, according to the standard passage just quoted, it belongs to the doctrine of the way of salvation, or the appropriation of salvation, and not, like reconciliation, to the doctrine of the procuring of salvation. It is an absolute inversion of the Pauline train of thought when Ritschl in his celebrated work views justification as the general gift of grace made to the Church, and reconciliation as the individual appropriation of it; reconciliation—as a potential founding of salvation—takes place immediately in the death of Christ; justification is the individual communication of it to the believer. Only once (Rom. v. 9), where *δικαιωθέντες* is used synonymously with *καταλλαγέντες* (ver. 10), is it based upon the blood of Christ, on which it no doubt rests objectively; but elsewhere it is

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* vol. i. p. 461, contests this idea of faith as an effective principle of the new life in consequence of a deep-rooted prejudice which he regards as the preliminary condition to a right understanding of the Pauline teaching. He allows the passage Gal. v. 6, *πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη*, to prove nothing, because in Gal. v. 22, Rom. xv. 30, love is described as a fruit of the Spirit, and therefore can only indirectly spring from faith. But can faith and the Spirit of God not meet in the heart of man in the same moment, and condition each other? If the Spirit is to love a Father, can faith not be love's mother? Ritschl, p. 324, has impartially estimated the passage (Gal. v. 6) as a testimony to the notion of an efficacious faith. But when he explains the efficacy from the relationship of the concepts *πιστεύειν* and *ὑπακούειν* or *ὑποτάσσεσθαι*, he overlooks the wide leap there is between the idea of obedience or subjection and that of the free impulse of love.

based on faith as the subjective condition under which the reconciliation founded for all becomes the justification of the individual. It is therefore a pure importation into the Pauline world of thought, when Ritschl represents justification as given originally to the Church as such, and through her to the individual. No word and no phrase of the apostle suggests this idea. On the contrary, as faith is throughout an immediate personal relation to God and Christ, so also is the justification which rests on it, which, moreover, is often emphasised as something which concerns the individual believer alone (cf. Rom. v. 1, 9, vi. 7; Gal. ii. 16, etc.). The idea is rooted in the Old Testament. There it has already the so-called forensic sense, which, as is well known, the Catholic expositors have mistaken; the word  $\text{הַצְדִּיק}$ ,  $\text{δικαιοῦν}$ , is borrowed from the language of law courts, and does not mean to improve or morally transform a man, but to recognise or declare him to be righteous, not to condemn, but to acquit him. Now a judge may pronounce the man who stands before him righteous, because in point of fact he is innocent ( $\text{δικαιοῦν τὸν δίκαιον}$ , *justificatio justi*, Deut. xxv. 1). He may also pronounce him righteous though he is not so; he may acquit a guilty man (*justificatio injusti*). The latter is a violation of duty on the part of an ordinary judge (Ex. xxiii. 7); but a king is endowed with a right of grace in virtue of which he can acquit a guilty man or justify the unrighteous (Rom. iv. 5). In this twofold application, but always in the forensic sense, the idea passes over into the religious speech of the New Testament. It is introduced here mainly in connection with the idea of the last divine judgment. In the final judgment God will declare those righteous who really are so, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned," says Jesus (Matt. xii. 37). In the same sense of judicial *justificatio justi*, Paul writes, Rom. ii. 13: "Not the hearers, but the doers of the law will be justified" (cf. also 1 Cor. iv. 4). And James, as we saw, uses the word in very much the same way, at anyrate in the sense of a recognition of the righteousness of those who are so. But the Gospels know the word also in the other possible application of favouring or acquitting the guilty. When in the Parable of the Pharisee and



Publican (Luke xviii. 14) it is said, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other," the meaning is that the publican, in spite of his grievous guilt, was in God's eyes more righteous than the Pharisee, who was righteous in the estimation of men; for God had heard and answered his prayer, "Be merciful to me a sinner." X Now the Pauline idea of justification moves on the same lines wherever it is connected with the apostle's peculiar doctrine of the way of salvation, as is specially the case in the doctrinal discussions of the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. That we have to do in this peculiarly Pauline dogmatic application of it with a forensic idea, a divine judgment, is proved by the preposition *παρά* or *ἐνώπιον*, with God or in God's eyes, which is joined to the verb *δικαιοῦν* (Rom. ii. 13, iii. 20), as well as by his use of *δικαιοῦν* and *λογίζεσθαι δικαιοσύνην* (iv. 6, 11) as synonymous, and the opposition of *ἐγκαλεῖν*, to accuse, and *δικαιοῦν* (viii. 33). When Paul applies this forensic idea, not in the common Christian sense, as in Rom. ii. 13, 1 Cor. iv. 4, but in connection with his peculiar doctrinal ideas, he refers it, not to the sentence of God which is expected at the last day, and which then justifies the righteous, but to that judgment of God with which He receives the sinner who turns to Him believing in His grace; that is, to the forgiving judgment of God, in which grace takes precedence of justice, and which is the foundation of the Christian man's position. It lies in the nature of this act of grace, that in it the idea of gift is united with that of judgment, for the innocence or righteousness imputed in judicial form to the guilty is presented, not deserved, a *δωρεὰ τῆς δικαιοσύνης* (Rom. v. 17); justification is communicated to the sinner, not *κατ' ὀφείλημα*, but *τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ χάριτι, δωρεάν* (Rom. iii. 24, iv. 4 f.). In all probability it is this idea of the gift of grace which is intended in *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*, which cannot designate the divine attribute of righteousness, but—as in Rom. i. 17, iii. 21; 2 Cor. v. 21—only something which is necessary to man. This notion of the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* was formerly interpreted in the sense of the *genitivus objectivus* as the righteousness which holds good before God; but although this thought is in itself correct, and Pauline, it does not formally suit Rom. i. 17; for a

human disposition, a condition which is necessary to man, is not revealed in the gospel, and cannot constitute its essential content. On the contrary, the contrasting of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* and *ἴδια δικαιοσύνη*, which we have in Rom. x. 3, that is, a righteousness that is self-produced, the righteousness which Israel laboured to achieve before God, shows that the "righteousness of God" must be conceived in the sense of the *genitivus auctoris*, as proceeding from God, bestowed on man by God as its gracious author. Hence it forms, as a divine gift of grace, the content of the revelation of the gospel as distinguished from the law (Rom. i. 17, iii. 21); and when the apostle (Phil. iii. 9) speaks of a *δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ* which he contrasts with *ἐμὴ δικαιοσύνη*, just as the *θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη* is contrasted with the *ἴδια* in Rom. x. 3, this meaning of the word is completely established. But now the question is as to the possibility or condition of this divine gift of grace which is presupposed in man. For as a righteous king on earth uses his right of forgiveness, not unreasonably or arbitrarily, but with regard to certain circumstances which concern the inward attitude of the man who is to be favoured, so it is also with God in His righteousness (Rom. iii. 26). He does not justify every sinner, but only believers, those who believe in Jesus Christ (Rom. iii. 22-30, etc.); nay, as Paul, in virtue of Gen. xv. 6, prefers to say, He reckons faith for righteousness (iv. 5, 10, 22). If this puts the emphasis on Jesus, and the death or blood of Jesus, as the objective condition of righteousness (Acts xiii. 39; Rom. v. 9; 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. ii. 17), we have already seen that this does not mean that Jesus made it possible for God to be gracious by satisfying His penal righteousness, it means simply that through His appearing and surrender to death He reveals, guarantees, and makes men overwhelmingly sensible of the grace of God. Faith is not demanded of them by the law as a condition, but is rather won from them freely as a fruit of the divine love. Finally, as to that faith itself, in accordance with what we have already remarked about the nature of faith, the apostle can think of it both as a means of receiving grace, an *ὄργανον ληπτικόν* of justification, and as a reason in man for that divine judgment of grace. He does the first when he

speaks of a *δικαιούσθαι διὰ πίστεως* or *πίστει* (for example, Rom. iii. 28, 30); the latter, when in virtue of faith he says, *δικαιούσθαι ἐκ πίστεως* or *ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει* (for example, Rom. iii. 26, 30; Phil. iii. 9), or when he speaks of reckoning faith for righteousness. But it is always faith in Christ in the full sense of the word, faith that apprehends the grace of God in Christ, and springs from His apprehending of us (Phil. iii. 12), the faith which translates us into fellowship with the life of Christ, to which he ascribes justification (*ἐν αὐτῷ*, 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. ii. 17; Phil. iii. 9). What is hard and strange in the whole idea is removed by considering this essence of faith. Faith is not an arbitrary condition which God has appended to His founding of salvation, but, in the apprehension of the love and grace of God in Christ, they may be had for the taking. Whoever unites himself with Christ in faith, enters at that very moment into a new relation to God; and God's first act in that new relation is grace, forgiveness, and fatherly kindness.

#### § 7. THE GENESIS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MODE OF TEACHING

The question, however, arises, as to how the apostle reached this peculiar form of doctrine, and what he gains by it. The original apostles, as is shown by the Epistle of James, spoke indeed of a *justificatio justis*, but the *justificatio injustis* with which God receives the penitent sinner who trusts in the name of Jesus, they did not call justification, but forgiveness of sin. The essential sameness of meaning of the two expressions, even for Paul, is manifest from Acts xiii. 38, 39; Rom. iv. 6-8. And yet in that mode of teaching of the original apostles there was an imperfection which Paul must have felt, especially in his controversy with the Judaizing Christians. The "forgiveness of sins," in the teaching of the original apostles, led one first of all to think of the remission of sins that were past; it did not describe an abiding condition of grace for the believer, such as, according to Paul, existed notwithstanding the sinfulness that still remained (*εἰς τὴν χάριν ταυτήν, ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν*, Rom. v. 2). Here the Judaists replied, in contradiction with the real sentiments of Peter

(Gal. ii. 15, 16), by recognising—as in the subsequent teaching of the Catholic Church—a grace of forgiveness in baptism; but they called the man who had become a Christian once more to keep the works of the law if he would gain the righteousness which God required of him, and thus they brought back the Jewish religion of law into the New Testament religion of grace. Undoubtedly Paul chose his watchword of the *δικαιούσθαι πίστει, χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου*, to oppose this Judaistic corruption of Christianity,—a watchword not found in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, which were written before the controversy, but which fills the polemic Epistle to the Galatians and the doctrinal Epistle to the Romans. In that watchword he expresses most sharply his protest against the delusion of his people which he himself once shared, as though the judgment of God, which acquits the sinful man, could ever be merited by the fulfilling of the law. From a personal, as well as from the general experience, he says: *ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ* (Gal. ii. 16; Rom. iii. 20).<sup>1</sup> In our relation towards God we are ever thrown, not upon our own doings, but upon God's grace, which we apprehend by faith; we cannot supplement this principle of grace with that of works, or divide the glory between them as the Judaists desired (cf. Rom. xi. 6). It is not necessary, because the grace of God in Christ, which is bestowed on faith, is a full and infinite grace; he who apprehends it has it once for all, so far as he does not let it go again (1 Cor. xv. 1, 2); it justifies him completely and for ever;—justification is not a process, but a complete and permanent act of God (Rom.

<sup>1</sup> It is now recognised that we must understand by *ἔργα νόμου*, not merely the keeping of the ceremonial commandments—*ὁ νόμος* is never regarded by the apostle as merely the ceremonial law. Nor does the phrase mean works which the law calls forth (through fear or craving for reward), as contrasted with works that are done from love to God. For the contrast in which the thought of Paul moves is not that of works of a slave and works of a child, but that of works and faith. The *ἔργα νόμου* are the works which the law according to its true sense demands, to which, however, nothing but a knowledge of the law is brought. These works, if really and perfectly performed, would certainly justify before God (Rom. x. 5), but they are never performed. The statement, that “by the works of the law no creature shall be justified before God,” is a judgment of experience.

v. 1, 5, 9, δικαιωθέντες νῦν; ver. 11, καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν). Nor is it possible to supplement faith with works, for the legal standpoint once accepted, God could only allow an unqualified fulfilment to be regarded as actual righteousness—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). The Christian abides under this curse of the consciousness of guilt, if he rests even in part on his own performances, for his justification with God; he could never come before God with confidence and joy, but must ever stand in fear (Rom. viii. 15), because even his growing sanctification on earth would never satisfy the divine law. It is therefore to preserve that precious jewel, the assurance of salvation, that the apostle stands inflexible against all Jewish ambiguity with the watchword which fifteen hundred years later, at the Reformation, became the manifesto against a far more powerful but similar corruption of Christianity. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28).<sup>1</sup> That is to say, my favourable relation towards God rests not on my own doings, which on earth are always imperfect, but on God's grace revealed in Christ, which I apprehend, and which, as is manifest, is not idle but exceedingly active in me (Rom. vi. 12-14; 2 Cor. vi. 1 f.); and just because it rests on that, and on that alone, my relation is perfect and secure. Not that the apostle regards this assurance of salvation as resting on any outward experience. The gracious judgment of the God who justifies (δικαίωμα, Rom. v. 16) is not heard in a sensuous or supersensuous way; for the whole idea of the "sentence" which Paul never emphasises is here only a figurative element. But the divine judgment of justification is also, not as our older theologians suppose, an *actus dei mere immanius*, a judgment which God pronounced to Himself, but did not communicate to him who was concerned in it; on the contrary, "His Spirit witnesseth with our spirits, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). The apostle (Rom. v. 1-8) praises the blessed effects of justification received: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our

<sup>1</sup> The alone, which Luther inserted here, in imitation of his earlier forerunners, corresponds entirely to the meaning of the apostle, as is proved by the *χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου*.

Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." But how were these blessed effects of justification to be felt if the justified did not know that they were justified? Expositors are very confident, among other things, that peace with God is purely objective; but they do not tell us at the same time how one can have a purely objective peace with God (not peace of God with us, but *εἰρήνην πρὸς τὸν θεόν*) without being sensible of it subjectively; and, besides, it would be a sheer absurdity to try to think of the other gifts of God—the hope of glory, rejoicing in tribulation, love of God shed abroad in the heart—as purely objective. The assurance of salvation, notwithstanding such effects, undoubtedly remains an assurance of faith. But the justifying faith here in question is no imagination and no conviction of the truth of doctrines, it is an apprehension of the grace of God in Christ, and as such it has the pledges and experiences which enable it to say: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 38, 39.).

### § 8. JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

Hence from the thought of justification the apostle already discloses to our view the final blessed goal. As in the fundamental passage about the way of salvation (Rom. viii. 39) it is said, *οὓς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν*; so in v. 1, 2 he immediately passes from the present state of grace established in justification to the hope of future glory, by saying of himself and his readers that if God in Christ has expended so much for sinners and enemies, with the view of making them righteous and beloved, He will not withhold anything from them to help them to reach the blessed goal (Rom. v. 6–11).<sup>1</sup> Yet it would be the greatest misunder-

<sup>1</sup> We must understand in the same sense the passage Gal. v. 5, *ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίζομεν δικαιοσύνης ἀπεχδοχόμεθα*, as referring to the

standing of the Pauline teaching if we supposed this to mean, that with the commencement of justification the man is already without more ado ripe for the reception of the *δόξα θεοῦ*, fit for eternal blessedness. On the contrary, in the context just referred to, the apostle reminds us that the justified, notwithstanding the assurance of salvation which is bestowed on them, are yet in need of a deliverance from the wrath (of the last day), vv. 9, 10; and though he often refers to the final judgment, and the final decision of God in that judgment, he never—which may startle the devout prejudices of some—falls back upon justification by faith, but insists on an entirely different standard for the final judgment, the standard of works, that is, of the moral content and outcome of the life. In the very beginning of the Epistle to the Romans (ii. 6 f.) we come upon the remarkable statement, that on the day of His righteous judgment God will reward every man according to his works; and this statement is in no way a hypothetic one, a declaration of what God would do or would have done were it not for His gospel and work of grace, but a quite positive declaration of what God will do to everyone according to His inalienable attributes of righteousness and impartiality (ver. 11). The same idea is applied by the apostle specially to all Christians. 2 Cor. v. 10: “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” That certainly presupposes that men need not only justification, but also sanctification, in order to stand in the final judgment; and, indeed, how could we conceive, from all Paul’s presuppositions about the nature of God and the destiny of man, that God would be satisfied with pardoning sinners who should remain for all eternity affected with sin? Such people would be inwardly incapable of the blessed fellowship with the holy God, even if it could be given to them. On the contrary, the final aim of the eternal love towards man can only be that which the apostle (Eph. i. 4; Col. i. 22) declares as the essential content of the eternal decree of love, “to present us holy, unblamable, and without fault before Him”; and accordingly Paul can desire nothing blessed hope which is given through justification to the believer, who lives here below in the Spirit.

greater for his readers than "that the God of peace would sanctify them wholly, and that their whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23; cf. 1 Cor. i. 9; Phil. i. 9-11). But this new train of thought in the apostle, which speaks of the requirement of a righteousness not merely imputed but appropriated (Rom. v. 19, vi. 13, 16, 18, 19, viii. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 9; Phil. i. 11),<sup>1</sup> should not mislead us, though many modern writers have attempted to twist the forensic idea of justification into the catholic idea of a transforming justification; such an attempt not only contradicts the clearest and most comprehensive results of exegesis, but it logically destroys one of the greatest and most characteristic of Paul's ideas, the idea that that assurance of salvation can be had through faith as such. But the new life of sanctification demanded by the apostle cannot be thought of as a result and effect of justification, though Ritschl has recently attempted it in spite of his perception that Luther's doctrine of the springing of the new life out of gratitude for the reception of justification is not Pauline.<sup>2</sup> The exegetic proof for the deduction of the new life from justification has entirely failed. Its main reliance is in that passage in Habakkuk (ii. 4), *ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται* (Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11); but this is introduced for the sake of the concepts *δίκαιος* and *ἐκ πίστεως*, and *ζήσεται* is plainly interpreted in the sense of the future eternal life. The expression *δικαιώσις ζωῆς* adduced further on (Rom. v. 18), manifestly speaks in the same way—cf. the future *ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύειν* in vv. 17, 21—not of the present new life of the believer, but of the future blessed

<sup>1</sup> To these passages we also reckon Rom. v. 19: *ὡςπερ γὰρ διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἁμαρτωλοὶ καταστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί, οὕτως καὶ διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται οἱ πολλοί*. For the future in the context points to the final aim in which Paul requires actual righteousness, and we have no right to take *δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται* simply as equal to *δικαιωθήσονται*. On the contrary, as the many became sinners in Adam, not by imputation, but in reality; so must the many be made righteous in Christ, not by imputation, but in reality. As little can we take in an imputative sense the righteousness in Rom. viii. 10 which giveth life to the spirit, and which is opposed to the *ἁμαρτία*, which makes the body mortal. This righteousness is just as habitual as sin was formerly.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *l.c.* p. 323.



life, the hope of which is disclosed to him by justification, in the sense of Rom. v. 1–11. Gal. iii. 21 might have been adduced with greater fitness: *εἰ γὰρ ἐδόθη νόμος ὁ δυνάμενος ζωοποιῆσαι, ὄντως ἐκ νόμου ἦν ἂν ἡ δικαιοσύνη*; for *δυνάμενος ζωοποιῆσαι* here must certainly mean the capacity for wakening a new inner life in man (cf. 2 Cor. iii. 6). But if this noteworthy passage implies that justification and the new life affect each other, a point to which we will return later, it also teaches that the new life cannot be deduced from justification. One is rather forced to say: if the apostle had conceived the new inner life of the believer as a fruit of justification, he would have pointed to this nearest and most important fact beyond all else in chap. v. 1–11, where he praises the glorious results and effects of justification; but he does not do so. Instead of that, he passes to the question of the new inner life from chap. v. to chap. vi. in a way very different from what must have been if the new life had been conceived as a fruit of justification; he expressly traces it back in chap. vi., not to justification, but to being dead with Christ. We must take special note of this transition and this new point of view in order to get a clear idea of the relation of justification to sanctification.

### § 9. THE FUNDAMENTAL RENEWAL

After developing, in Rom. i.–v., the doctrine of justification by faith as the perfect gospel which guarantees complete comfort and blessed hope to the heart in search of peace with God, the apostle in chaps. vi.–viii. supplements this purely religious view by one that is religious and moral. Is not the doctrine morally suspicious in the same degree in which it was religiously consoling? If all the blessings of grace were secured to men who still were and remained sinners, was not that making light of sin, or even encouraging men to continue in it? The apostle answers this scruple raised by himself with a consideration which is not connected with the idea of justification, but takes an entirely new point of departure. "How can we," he argues, "who are dead to sin, continue to live in it?" The Christian as such has died with Christ, and been buried by baptism into Christ's death,

that henceforth he should serve God in newness of life, in a life of sanctification. This is enjoined by grace, not by law; while the latter could only stir up in us the unhappy inward discord, and convict us of our impotence to do good. God in Christ has conquered that discord, and planted in us a power of spirit and of life which enables us to walk no longer according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. And the eighth chapter emphatically maintains that all the consolations which the love of God in Christ, with its justifying grace, offers, can only become ours on this presupposition. In this section of the Epistle to the Romans, whose full importance has not always been sufficiently appreciated alongside of the discussions of the earlier chapters, we come upon an idea belonging to the apostle's doctrine of the way of salvation which is quite what we might have expected after our understanding of his doctrine of the founding of salvation. That idea is, that we find in Christ not merely a blotting out of the guilt of sin, but a breaking of its power; and that appropriation of the pardoning or justifying side of salvation is inconceivable without an actual cleansing or sanctification. This cleansing is represented by the apostle in Rom. vi., and also elsewhere, as a dying with Christ and rising again; it is a fellowship of death and life with Him, in virtue of which one dies to sin and rises to a new life consecrated to God (Rom. vi. 1-11; Gal. ii. 19, 20, vi. 14; Col. ii. 12, 13, iii. 1-4). He also applies in the same sense the more matter of fact Old Testament idea of sanctification (Rom. vi. 22); and Christ is described in 1 Cor. i. 30 as its source for us, just as He is the source of our *δικαιοσύνη* (justification). Hence we have two designations of our cleansing through Christ, both with the same double application; on the one hand, they may both signify a continuous process of the inner life, and, on the other hand, a solitary inward fact lying at the basis of that process. Sanctification (*ἁγιασμός*) is therefore at one and the same time the final goal, and the continual task of the Christian life (Rom. vi. 19, 22; 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4, 7). God must sanctify Christians through and through, that they may stand unblamable at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Thess. v. 23); on the other hand, they are already *ἡγιασμένοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*

(1 Cor. i. 2), and therefore *ἅγιοι* (Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. i. 2, vi. 11); that is, fundamentally they are holy in so far as Christ has taken them out of connection with the sinful world, and translated them into the sanctifying element of His fellowship (Gal. i. 4; Col. i. 13). In like manner, in that fellowship with Christ in death and resurrection, the apostle distinguishes the dying with Christ once for all from the continuous walking in newness of life (Rom. vi. 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, vii. 6). That solitary inner fact must not, of course, be thought of as a mere dying unto sin, without at the same time a rising unto God; or that continuous new life, without an accompanying continuous dying unto sin. On the contrary, the apostle can describe the fundamental fact as a being risen with Christ, or as a new creation, and in the same way the unfolding of the new life as a constant mortifying of the flesh and its lusts (Col. iii. 1; 2 Cor. v. 17; Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5). But because the death of Christ is a fact complete in itself, while His resurrection is the beginning of an immortal life (Rom. vi. 9, 10), Paul has preferred to compare and connect the beginning of the new life, that which our dogmatics call the new birth, with the death of Jesus, and the progressive development of the new life, which our dogmatics call sanctification, with the resurrection of Jesus. Besides, it was more in keeping with his own peculiar experience, the sudden and, as it were, deadly breaking up of his old man in his conversion, to represent the solitary revolution in an hour of his inner life awakened by Christ, as a dying and then a being born (cf. Gal. ii. 19, 20, vi. 14). There can now be no difficulty in conceiving a progressive process of sanctification which takes place in the Christian in virtue of his faith, especially as the apostle preaches this process by way of exhortation, as a duty to be fulfilled; on the other hand, there is something mysterious about that solitary completed fact of dying with Christ, the fundamental sanctification. For the question here is not a mere idea and destiny for all based in the death of Christ, as in that saying, 2 Cor. v. 15, "One died for all, therefore all died," but an inner fact of the individual life. When and how does this take place?

## § 10. RELATION OF SANCTIFICATION TO BAPTISM AND FAITH.

In Rom. vi. 3, 4, the apostle traces it back to baptism: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." On this has recently been built the theory that Paul strictly distinguishes two acts of God's grace; one in which a man is justified and translated into the new filial relation towards God, and another which consists in the communication of the Holy Spirit and His saving operations: the first results from faith, the second only in baptism.<sup>1</sup> It seems to us that this is to make the letter of the apostle contradict his meaning and spirit. How are we to conceive of a man who believes, is justified and received into sonship with God, and who yet remains in the bondage of the flesh and of the law, and needs to sigh, O wretched man that I am! simply because he chanced not to be baptized? Or how are we to conceive the profoundest inward revolution of the man as the effect of an outward visible event? how are we to conceive that the apostle, whose whole doctrine of the way of salvation hitherto has advanced in a psychological and ethical way, should all at once take a leap into the magical, and unite the profoundest moral action of grace with an outward rite from which the unrighteous could never be excluded? (cf. Acts viii. 13; 1 Cor. x. 1-5). The fact is, that for the sake of the well-known symbol of the act of baptism, which in its immersion represents a sinking into death and the grave (Rom. vi.), the apostle attached to it what he might as well have attached to faith, whose decisive expression in his view was being baptized. We shall find this afterwards confirmed so far as it concerns his idea of baptism: here it is sufficient to establish it from his idea of faith already developed. Let us first of all remember what, according to Paul, is the real object and living basis of faith. If he regards the Christian faith which justifies as more than a mere reliance on the truth of a doctrine, if in it the love of God in Christ lays

<sup>1</sup>Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* vol. i. p. 454.

hold of the heart, and the heart grasps the personal living Saviour, it is not possible that in faith the heart should not receive as an active power that which it apprehends, and by which it is apprehended. Now, if the love of God in Christ which is shed abroad in our heart (or according to Rom. v. 5, the Holy Spirit) is nothing else than the power of a new life before which selfishness and sin must die, how could it seize and conquer a heart without at the same moment completely transforming it? Again, the Christ of whom faith lays hold is the Christ who was crucified for us and has risen again, who resisted sin unto blood, and has victoriously maintained the exclusive right of the *θεῶ ζῆν* (Rom. vi. 10); how, then, could any man receive Him into his heart in faith without following Him in principle, without at the same moment dying in principle to sin, and beginning to live to God? We reach the same result if we turn our attention to the act of faith as such. If faith is the turning of the heart to God in Christ, then the turning away from ungodliness, that is, the breach in principle with sin, is its direct preliminary condition, nay, it is simply its other side; how, then, should this break with sin fall behind faith as an effect of a second act of God which is not first connected with faith? What reflective reader of the Bible is there who has not asked himself the question as to what has become of the *μετάνοια* of the primitive Christians in Paul's writings? The only valid answer is that it must be contained in the Pauline *πίστις*, just as faith is contained in Jesus' teaching about *μετάνοια* (cf. Mark i. 15 with Matt. iv. 17). Manifestly the dying unto sin in Rom. vi. (just as the being born again in John iii.) is nothing else than the deeper expression which Paul has given to the early Christian idea of *μετάνοια* by connecting it with the cross of Christ, and thus it is essentially an element of the idea of faith. As in Gal. ii. 19, 20 the being dead to the law in order to live unto God, the being crucified with Christ, and the no longer I live, but Christ liveth in me, have manifestly the same meaning as the following: "The life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Here, then, the whole range and depth of the Pauline idea of faith first become clear. Faith, as he conceives it, is the simple root from which there spring, distinguishable

and yet inseparable, justification and sanctification. It is God's greatest work in the human heart, and, at the same time, the most decisive act of the heart itself; it is at once the ground of the new relation of God to man, and of the new relation of man to God. And these new relations must depend on each other, and grow out of the same ground.

### § 11. RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE IDEA OF JUSTIFICATION

But this relation to the new life in Christ first throws a clear light, not only upon the idea of faith, but also that of justification. The apostle in his Epistle to the Romans has certainly good reasons for placing the doctrine of justification before that of sanctification; not only because the opposition to Judaism required it, but because the gracious gospel of the forgiveness of sin must everywhere prepare the way for faith in the human heart as the principle of the new life. And yet the fact remains that in chaps. vi.—viii. he first supports his gospel of justification from another side, and that in another sense the renewal which he preaches here is even the logical *prius* of justification. In a statement which is little noticed, but which forms the indispensable link between chaps. iii.—v. and chaps. vi.—viii., this is directly expressed: *ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας* (Rom. vi. 7). Whether we take this statement proverbially, and as a sort of figure, in which case we shall not be able to do justice to the meaning of the word *δεδικαίωται*; or whether we supply after *ἀποθανών* the words *τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ*, which are suggested by the whole context, and thus at once give to *δεδικαίωται* its usual Pauline meaning (which it would have indirectly even in the former case),—at anyrate we have here, with or without a figure, the significant statement that he only who has died to sin in principle has been absolved from it, or justified. We meet with the same idea in the beginning of the eighth chapter, vv. 1, 2: *οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*. Why? Because *ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσέν με ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου*. *Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς, κ.τ.λ.*, is simply a paraphrase in negative form of the idea, "They are justified once for all," as follows from the idea of justification

itself, which is the direct opposite of *κατάκρισις* (Rom. v. 18), and is also confirmed by the passage which soon after follows (vv. 33, 34): *τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ; θεὸς ὁ δικαίων τίς ὁ κατακρίνων;*<sup>1</sup> Again, why is there no longer any impeachment or condemnation of those who are in Christ—why are they justified? Because they have experienced that decisive change through which the unhappy condition of moral impotence portrayed in Rom. vii. is at bottom destroyed; because a new law of the spirit of life imparted to them has made them free from the law of sin and death which formerly ruled them (vii. 23, 25). A third notable passage leads to the same result, 1 Cor. vi. 11: *καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε· ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιάσθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν.* As the three concepts here opposed to the bondage to vice are manifestly synonymous, it follows that *ἐδικαιώθητε*, that is, the forgiveness of sins, presupposes the breaking of sin's bondage; for otherwise it would form no contrast to that bondage, such as would refer it to a past which is dead and gone. The same thing follows from the succession *ἡγιάσθητε*—*ἐδικαιώθητε*, which forbids our conceiving justification as a presupposition of being sanctified (in principle), but rather indicates the reverse relation. Finally, if the processes described in the words *ἐδικαιώθητε*, *ἀπελούσασθε*, and *ἡγιάσθητε*

<sup>1</sup>Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* i. p. 465, endeavours to escape the force which these passages have in disproving his conception by assuming a second justification, which, in distinction from the first, coincides with the new creation of the inner man, and is not a pronouncing righteous, but a making righteous. This expedient seems to me impossible. In the first place, Paul would have been guilty of hopelessly confusing his readers if he had used the ideas *κατάκριμα* and *δικαιοῦσθαι* in Rom. vi. 7, viii. 1, 30, 33, in a sense quite different from that which holds in chaps. i.-v. Secondly, the statement, *οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χρ. Ἰη.*, would have been utterly untrue if he had been speaking of an actual righteousness. For even now (*νῦν*) there is still sin, unrighteousness in Christians, so that, according to v. 9, they need a future *σώζεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς* by the (growing and finally completed) fellowship of life with Jesus; cf. Phil. iii. 12-14. Finally, how superfluous would the first justification be if in the very moment in which a man becomes conscious of it through the communication of the Spirit it were replaced by another, which for the first time removed from the believer all *κατάκριμα*. In this whole question we ought not to take as two successive acts of God what are only two Pauline views of the same event existing side by side.

are due to one cause (*ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ*), we cannot trace back justification to a first act of God and the communication of the Spirit to a second; rather we must give to the communication of the Spirit, that is, the beginning of the new life, a place in the process of becoming a believer which presupposes the *ἀπελούσασθε, ἡγιασθητε, ἐδικαιώθητε*, as its common ground.<sup>1</sup> And how could the communication of the Spirit take place at a later moment than that of becoming a believer, when, according to Paul, no man can call Jesus Lord (that is, according to Rom. x. 9, believe on Him) but by the Holy Spirit? (1 Cor. xii. 3). Or how could justification take place at an earlier moment than the communication of the Spirit, when, according to 2 Cor. v. 21, Phil. iii. 9, justification is only obtained *ἐν Χριστῷ*; but *ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι*, without possession of the Spirit, and without being through that *καινὴ κτίσις*, is, according to Rom. viii. 9, 1 Cor. vi. 17, 2 Cor. v. 17, an absurdity? This should furnish sufficient proof of the logical priority, in the case of Paul, of the fundamental *ἀγιάζεσθαι* to the *δικαιούσθαι*—I say, the *fundamental ἀγιάζεσθαι*, that which our dogmatic calls “the second birth” as distinguished from “sanctification”; for there is no need to prove that the progressive sanctification, the process of unfolding and perfecting the new life, follows justification, is contained in it, and required by it; cf. Rom. vi. 12 f. with ver. 11, xii. 1 f.; Eph. ii. 10 with vv. 8, 9. Nor may we forget what we have already insisted on in discussing the relation of the pardoning and the purifying power of the death of Christ, that that sanctification or renewal in principle is produced by the previous offer of grace, forgiveness, justification in Christ (2 Cor. v. 19), and that in so far the logical relation can be reversed, and we may speak of them as mutually conditioned.<sup>2</sup> But as we

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *l.c.*, p. 335, in dealing with this passage, which is decidedly opposed to the separation of justification and the communication of the Spirit, snatches at the desperate means of making the apostle incorrectly connect the *ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ*, which really belongs to *ἡγιασθητε*, with *ἐδικαιώθητε*. The difficulty in ver. 11, he says, cannot be got over without the assumption of an inaccuracy of the position of the words introduced by the rhetorical conditions of the statement.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above, p. 144 f. We may be allowed to call attention to the way in which our results there and here confirm each other. The same relation



there noted, the offer of justifying grace in the call to reconciliation, *καταλλάγητε* is not yet the imparting, not yet the actual personal justification, which remains bound to faith in the full Pauline sense, and for that very reason to the inner renewal in principle. We must therefore finally show how only in this way the apostle's doctrine of justification becomes free from all offence. Now only is it manifest that God does not, as it might seem, impose upon Himself a falsehood when He justifies the ungodly. By justifying those who believe in Christ He remits the guilt of a sin, the power of which is virtually broken, so that from that moment it is dying. And He counts for righteousness something which, in point of fact, contains the vital germ of all righteousness. He does not take an *x* for a *y*, but a growing for a being. He can do so, because He views the process of man's sanctification from the standpoint of eternity. He can view that which is germinating in man as that which has already grown and become mature, because the same Christ who has begun the good work of renewal in man will also carry it on until the day of final judgment.

## § 12. ADOPTION

The apostle finally presents in their union the two sides of the decisive experience of salvation, which he abstractly distinguishes as justification once for all, and as fundamental renewal. This is in his idea of *υιοθεσία* the adoption as children of God, or, strictly speaking, sons of God, which is spoken of in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv. This *υιοθεσία*, like justification, appears on the one side as a forensic idea (adoption as an act of law), and in this aspect it coincides with justification. For God in receiving a man as His child forgives all his guilt, and places him in a relation in which he has no longer any need to be afraid (Rom. viii. 15). The only distinction between *δικαίωσις* and *υιοθεσία* on this side is, that the one emphasises more the removal of the condition of guilt, the other, that of bondage (Gal. iv. 7). "But *υιοθεσία* is at of cleansing and pardoning which the apostle sees in the objective side of salvation, in the saving power of Christ's death, is manifest here also on the subjective side, in the nature and effect of faith.

the same time a transforming and renewing act of God. When God adopts, it is not by a mere legal fiction, as in human relations, where the assumed child never becomes the actual child: God's acceptance of a child is an effectual one; it is accomplished by an actual generation of God, by a *πνεῦμα υἰοθεσίας* (Rom. viii. 15), which makes of the man a *καινή κτίσις*, a new creature (2 Cor. v. 17). The two marks of this divine sonship which Paul insists on in Rom. viii., are the confidence of a filial intercourse with God in prayer by which ye cry, Abba, Father (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6); and the moral impulse to do the will of God, and overcome the lusts of the flesh (Rom. viii. 13, 14). The first is the mark of justification; the latter, of the new life of sanctification. And it is as plain as possible from the words he uses in ver. 14 that the apostle does not regard this latter as a mere result of *υἰοθεσία*, but it belongs to its idea and essence: *ὅσοι γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοι* (these and no other) *υἱοὶ εἰσιν θεοῦ*, words which manifestly exclude the possibility of God receiving men as His children who have not received the Spirit. Like justification, *υἰοθεσία* has been declared, in opposition to this view, a purely immanent act of God; so that the believer may be accepted as a son without knowing it, and without tracing its effect, till a second act of God imparts to him the spirit of sonship; and this conception, which treats the apostle as a scholastic, may appeal with some plausibility to Gal. iv. 6: *ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν*. Here, if we render *ὅτι*, because, the assertion seems to be, that Christians were first sons of God, and in consequence of this received the Spirit. That this, however, cannot be the meaning of the apostle, is manifest from the fact that the context immediately before and after says the very opposite. For in iii. 26 he addresses his readers as "all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ," and says that "as many of them as have been baptized have put on Christ"; from which it is clear that the apostle regards sonship as springing from faith, and more particularly as springing from baptism, the expression of faith; and we have seen already that he cannot have deferred the communication of the Spirit till after faith and baptism. Again, when he continues in iv. 7, after saying, *ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα:*

“Therefore (ὥστε) thou art no more a servant, but a son,” the ὥστε makes it clear that the Christian man is υἱὸς θεοῦ in consequence of the sending of the Son’s Spirit into his heart, and so it is not possible that the sending of the Son’s Spirit should conversely be conceived as the result of his being a son. In that rendering, which seems so natural, “because ye are sons, God sent,” etc., too little attention has been given to the surprising fact that a present condition (υἱοὶ ἐστε) should be the reason of an action of God relating to the past (ἐξαπέστειλεν). The natural state of things would be the reverse, and the present condition would be the result of the past action of God, which is the interpretation of good expositors; it is manifest from the fact “that ye are sons,” that “God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.” That is the exposition which, in spite of all the rigour of logic, is in favour to-day.<sup>1</sup> Yet if we regard it as impossible we must remember, that in the verses immediately preceding the apostle has taken the divine sonship of his readers in a pure ideal and prophetic sense, and dated it from Abraham, in the sense that though sons they could be held as servants under the tutorship of the law till the time of their majority. He might therefore in iv. 5, 6 be treating the υιοθεσία in the sending of the Spirit, as the realising of a long existent but inoperative and purely ideal sonship; but in that case the former υιότης is not one that is reckoned by God to personal faith, but one destined for the spiritual seed of Abraham (iii. 14) centuries ago, and the passage loses all force for the temporal distinction of adoption and communication of the Spirit in the Pauline doctrine of the way of salvation. But Paul makes a still further use of the idea of υιοθεσία which entirely confirms our conception of it. The sonship of God established by the communication of the Spirit is only an inward spiritual sonship, and therefore is still imperfect; but God’s intention is to make His chosen conformed to His glorified Son, even to His perfected glory (Rom. viii. 29; 2 Cor. iii. 18). Now, because this glorification, the transfiguring of the body, and introducing it to the eternal inheritance of glory, is only the full investiture with the rights and

<sup>1</sup> Even Ritschl, *l.c.* p. 356, rejects that exposition which finds in the passage the reception of the Spirit described as a result of adoption, and he conceives ὅτι as “criterion” of the fact of sonship.

honours of a son, Paul also calls this act of perfecting, in Rom. viii. 23, *υιοθεσία*—it is the *υιοθεσία* already discussed in a higher potency (cf. Eph. i. 5). It is also formally a “forensic” act, the introduction into the *κληρονομία*, which is the legal result of adoption (Rom. viii. 17). But who will suppose that it is on that account a purely immanent act of God of which those concerned would at first know nothing? Consequently, even the present *υιοθεσία* must not be thought of in this way, for both acts are similar, except that the present *υιοθεσία* is one merely in principle, the future alone is complete. Hence the Pauline doctrine of the way of salvation issues in a view which, as it unites the ideas of justification and renewal, connects also the present salvation with the future and final stage of the way of salvation: *οὐς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν* (Rom. viii. 30). But we must speak of this completion of salvation only in a later passage.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

#### § 1. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS PRINCIPLE OF THE NEW LIFE

The apostle’s doctrine of the way of salvation has led us to the idea of the Holy Spirit, “in whom” justification, renewal, and adoption take place. And so this idea forms the starting-point for our study of the next point of doctrine, the description of the new life whose source was described by the way of salvation; this, according to Paul, “is a life in the Spirit” (Gal. v. 25). We have already repeatedly come upon the idea of the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, in Paul; in the doctrine of man as such (flesh and Spirit), in the doctrine of the person of Christ, and in the doctrine of God; but here only is it fully exhibited. The Holy Spirit—or, as the apostle, holding to his fundamental view of flesh and Spirit, generally says the Spirit—is in the teaching of the apostle the principle of the true Christian life which is developed in the individual believer, as well as in the Church of believers, from God’s grace in Christ, and from the faith which lays

hold of this grace. It may be said that this conception of the idea of the Holy Spirit is peculiarly Pauline. That ethical conception of the Spirit of God in which His holiness, as we understand it, first became current, is not, indeed, entirely unknown to the Old Testament (cf. for example, Ps. li. 12, 13); but alongside of a view of the Divine Spirit which may almost be called physical, the view of Him as the principle of inspiration and prophecy largely preponderates there. It corresponds, therefore, to a stage of religion at which the Divine Spirit came to the spirit of man only as a stranger, and was not yet united with his inmost life, and with the moral basis of will. And in this Old Testament sense of a universal possession of prophetic gifts and ecstatic phenomena in the Church of the new covenant, the original apostles, as we saw, understood at first the "outpouring of God's Spirit upon all flesh which was promised to the Messianic times" (Acts ii. 16). This view does not, indeed, completely disappear in Paul's teaching; it continues to live in his estimate of the special spiritual gifts of the New Testament (1 Cor. xii.); but it falls far into the background in comparison with his perception that the true divine outpouring of the Spirit is the communication to all believers of a new and sanctifying impulse. All that we have found in Paul of the relation of the Spirit of God to the human personality, to the person of Christ, and to God Himself, is summed up in this. We found that the Spirit of God is God Himself in His living presence in the world, in His holy self-communication to men, which everywhere wards off the assaults of sin. God's thoughts of love have been directed from the beginning to this sanctifying self-communication to the heart of man; but this eternal power was first revealed in Christ, and became a power to overcome the world: the Holy Spirit is here the power of holy love with which God in Christ lays hold of the human heart (Rom. v. 5). When He calls, justifies, renews men, all is done *ἐν τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ*, in the power of His Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 11); and when He makes them His children by the communication of His Spirit, He Himself enters among them, in order to dwell truly in them as in His home on earth, as He dwelt symbolically in the Old Testament temple (2 Cor. vi. 16; Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Eph. ii. 21, 22). Again, the apostle has told us, "The Lord, that

is, the exalted Christ, is the Spirit," 2 Cor. iii. 17,—a bold but true and instructive paradox. Christ is from the first the spiritual man, the *ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός*, in whom the higher principle of life as *πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης* (Rom. i. 4) was at all times effectual and all-conditioning, and by perfecting Himself as such, and in that perfection stripping off the limits of the world of sense, He became the *πνεῦμα θεοῦ* Himself, the *πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν* (1 Cor. xv. 45), the bearer of the divine self-communication, the sanctifying and blessing communion of God for all. Not that the apostle wished to destroy all distinction in his paradoxical statement, "The Lord is the Spirit"; he makes one such distinction in the same breath by speaking immediately of a *πνεῦμα κυρίου*, as of a *κύριος πνεύματος* (vv. 17, 18). As the sun does not cease to be in the heavens because he is present with his light and heat upon the earth, so the personal God stands above His vital power, streaming out into the world, and so the glorified Christ stands above His presence and activity in His Church. But He is the Spirit just in virtue of His being present on the earth and operative in His Church; the passage Rom. viii. 9–11 makes it plain that the apostle regards *πνεῦμα θεοῦ*, *πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ*, and *Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν* as one and the same. But the *πνεῦμα θεοῦ* has also in principle a relation of unity to the human personality as such, which those, of course, cannot perceive who deny to man as such the pneuma, or strip this pneuma of its original affinity with God. If the human pneuma is, as Paul preached to the Athenians, *γένος τοῦ θεοῦ*, a spark from God's own Spirit (Acts xvii. 28, 29); if it was meant to cherish God in itself and itself in God, so that the idea of human personality is realised only in the man who is filled and led by the Spirit of God,—must not the original and the regenerate pneuma blend in the unity of the true Christian personality? This view, however, is called in question, and therefore requires a more minute proof.

## § 2. THE RELATION OF THE SPIRIT TO THE HUMAN PERSONALITY

The vague traditional conception of the Holy Spirit as a divine person, which we have already rejected, proves wrong

and embarrassing in this also, that it does not permit of such a union of the Spirit of God with the human spirit, but leads to the notion of the human personality being suppressed and taken possession of by another higher personality. Our apostle has, indeed, poetically or rhetorically personified the Holy Spirit now and then, just as he has personified the flesh, sin, and death. But he does not really conceive it as a person, but as a power and a gift, as is clear from the synonymity of *πνεῦμα* and *δύναμις* (1 Cor. ii. 4), or from the phrase, "the Spirit which is given to us" (Rom. v. 5). And he conceives it as a power and a gift which does not remain foreign to the inner life of man, or float on it as oil on water, but which penetrates, exalts, glorifies it, and, in a word, becomes the better self of the renewed man. Some phrases which seem to favour the contrary view rather confirm it when they are seriously considered. Thus a harmonious double testimony of the Divine Spirit and our own, that is, a twofold individuality in the Christian man, has been found in Rom. viii. 16 : *αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἐσμὲν τέκνα θεοῦ.*<sup>1</sup> But the *συμ* in *συμμαρτυρεῖν* is not to be pressed here, any more than in other applications of this verb, so as to make it declare a twofold witness (cf. Rom. ii. 15, ix. 1); but is simply to be translated, with Luther, "The Spirit witnesseth to our spirit"; that is, He Himself is this living, speaking witness to our being sons of God; the God-given filial condition of our heart attests itself in our consciousness. Or when it is said (Gal. iv. 6) the Spirit cries, "Abba, Father," the appearance of another than the human believing I praying in us disappears by the simple consideration of the parallel passage Rom. viii. 15, in which it is said, *ἐν τῷ πνεύματι*; in virtue of the Spirit of sonship given us we can say, Abba, that is, we can pray to God in filial confidence. Similar, but more obscure, is the idea in Rom. viii. 26, that when we know not

<sup>1</sup> When Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* vol. i. p. 475, distinguishes not only the inner life of man as psychological from our new spiritual life produced by God, but also this again from the objective life of the Divine Spirit communicated to us, and so brings out three kinds of spiritual life in the Christian, his argument rests on the radical error of supposing that the various forms in which the apostle presents his ideas are so many realities which he distinguished in his own mind.

what we should pray for, the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Here also, as is shown by the *ὁ δὲ ἐρευνῶν τὰς καρδίας* of ver. 27, the reference is to the Spirit poured into the human heart, and praying from the heart; but it is thought of in an hour of temptation and trouble, where the divine and human spiritual life appear for the time as separate, the divine light of life unable to shine through the darkening of the natural life of the Spirit, and bring it any clear idea of God; then the perplexed weakness of the natural represents, as it were, the obscure intention of the new God-given self—not in clear ideas and purposes, for that would require the harmonious merging of the one in the other, but in sighs that are unutterable. Mysterious as the passage sounds, it is manifest that even in it the apostle represents two souls as dwelling in the breast of the believer only in a poetic and figurative way. For a real divine ego, a divine person, neither can pray, nor, if He should, could He fail for words and ideas. In all these passages the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* is thought of as the divine power which, as a spirit of adoption, becomes a man's new self, and is separated from the original self only in so far as that is not yet completely renewed; just as we speak of a better soul, a better self beside a worse. And this really follows from the fundamental views of the apostle. For, as we saw from the beginning, the human *pneuma* is to him originally an individualised spark of the divine, which, however, could not burst into flame, because of the pressure and dominance of the *σάρξ*. But there comes upon it the power of that very Spirit from which it sprang, and the smoking wick, in that element of fire, becomes a clear burning flame. The fundamental discussion of the new life in the Spirit, in Rom. viii., has two passages in particular in which this view of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the human personality plainly appears. "If Christ be in you," says the apostle, viii. 10, "the body is dead because of sin (which always has its seat in the *σάρξ*); but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Here it is manifestly man's own spirit that is meant; for the Spirit of God, as producing the uprightness in question, is already implied in the phrase, "If Christ be in you," and it would be wholly superfluous to say of Him that in a definite



case He is "life," that is, living. There is expressed here rather what takes place in the human spirit when the Spirit of God (which, according to vv. 9, 10, 11, is *Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν*) enters into it; it becomes *ζωή*, full of life and vigour, while formerly in its inclinations towards God it was lifeless and impotent, *νεκρόν*. In another form, but in the same sense, ver. 2 describes the significance of the communication of the Spirit for the inner life of man: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." The communication of the new Spirit of life, that is, of the Holy Spirit, brings with it a new law, that is, a new authoritative power and standard, to replace the old sinful, death-producing law, the power and standard of the natural selfishness. But this new law has nothing enslaving like that old one; on the contrary, it works deliverance (*ἠλευθέρωσεν*). Up to that time our inner man, that in us which has affinity with God, was bound by foreign powers; but now, in virtue of the influx of life from above, these bands are burst, and the inner man restored to himself. He is freed by the restored living fellowship with God, for the new law of life which has now gained power in him harmonises with the inmost impulses of the *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, with the law in his *νοῦς* (vii. 22, 23). Hence, in the communication of the Spirit the man remains throughout himself; his personality as such is subjected to no change or violence; and yet there is produced in it the mightiest change that can be conceived—so great that the apostle can exclaim: *εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινὰ τὰ πάντα*, 2 Cor. v. 17; nay, that he can contrast the past and future condition as two persons, as an "old and new man" (*παλαιός* and *καινός*, or *νέος ἄνθρωπος*, Rom. vi. 6; Eph. iv. 22, 24; Col. iii. 9, 10). There takes place a complete reversal of the relation of the two factors which constitute the human being, with which we were occupied in our first investigation of the Pauline teaching. If the *σάρξ* has hitherto ruled in man, and has held the *νοῦς*, the *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, or the *πνεῦμα* captive, this *πνεῦμα*, the inward man, is now restored to its native rights of dominion; he has received power to develop himself freely in God's image, and to subdue the *σάρξ* (cf. Rom. viii. 1–9 with vii. 14–25).

## § 3. THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE SPIRIT

The apostle has illustrated and extolled the nature and significance of this great revolution by the effects which it produces in the believer. Through the Holy Spirit, it is said (Rom. v. 5), the love of God—that is, the love which God has towards us—is shed abroad in our heart, that is, is brought home to us. This delivers us from all fear in God's presence (Rom. viii. 15); we have no longer the sense of being "children of wrath," which results from an evil conscience, but "have peace with God" (Rom. v. 1). This state of peace, which replaces the old *ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν* (Rom. viii. 7), now renders possible that filial intercourse with God already alluded to, that crying to Him as Abba, Father, which is praised in Gal. iv. 6, Rom. viii. 15, as the special inspiration of the Spirit in us. The man might pray before, but in fear and trembling; he could only begin to cry Abba when the Spirit of sonship entered into his heart. The fundamental mood, therefore, of the Christian life is that of joyfulness such as the old man never knew. "The kingdom of God," says the apostle (Rom. xiv. 17), "is righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost," and "rejoice evermore." "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice," he exclaims to the Thessalonians and Philippians (1 Thess. v. 16; Phil. iv. 4). This joyfulness rests on the assurance of the blessed goal which they have before them; "we rejoice in the hope of future glory," it is said in Rom. v. 2, and "this hope maketh not ashamed (that is, is not deceptive); because the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given us." The Holy Spirit—this is one of his favourite views—is the *ἀρραβών* of our future salvation, the pledge or earnest of eternal life; since God has given us in Him a first-fruits, *ἀπαρχή* (Rom. viii. 23), of eternal life, as an assurance that He will not withhold from us the eternal inheritance that is yet to come (2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 14). Nor can this joyfulness of hope be quenched by earthly trouble; "I reckon," says the apostle (Rom. viii. 18), "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Nay, these very sufferings become to the child of God one of the all things

“that work together for good” (Rom. viii. 28), a school of such hope as overcomes the world: “We glory also in tribulation: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope” (Rom. v. 3, 4, cf. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18). And thus springs in those who are *ἐν πνεύματι* a joyfulness of victory over the world. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. viii. 35–37). And hand in hand with this peace and joy in God there goes a new freedom of conscience; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. iii. 17). This freedom, first of all, has to do with natural things. Man is only truly at home in God’s world when God has become his Father, so that he has no fear of any creature. “All things are yours,” it is said of him with regard to the natural and the spiritual world (1 Cor. iii. 22); there is nothing natural, nothing created by God, which is evil in itself, so that one should have scruples about its innocent use (Rom. xiv. 14; 1 Cor. x. 25). But the Christian has also a position of freedom towards the revealed positive law. His conscience is not only freed from all sense of guilt for the past in virtue of justification; it is also no longer bound to the letter of Sinai as such (Gal. ii. 4, v. 1 f.). Just as the Mosaic law as a form of revelation and an instrument of the covenant presupposed the fleshly sinful condition of man, so the virtual overcoming of this condition through Christ and Christ’s death is also the annulment of the law for those who belong to Him (Rom. x. 4). They are dead to the law through His death (Rom. vii. 1–6; Gal. ii. 19); they are so because they belong to Him and live to God *ἐν πνεύματι* (Rom. viii. 2; Gal. v. 5). The Christian therefore has nothing more to do with those paltry outer institutions which formed the religious rudiments of the world—the ceremonial commandments; he knows another reasonable service of God in presenting soul and body as a sacrifice to the living God (Gal. iv. 3 f., v. 1; Rom. xii. 1 f.). But even so far as the letter of the law expresses the inalienable will of God, it is no longer the lord of his conscience; the Christian has another and a better relation to the will of

God; it is no longer outside him and against him "as a letter that killeth"; he bears it in himself as a living, spiritual impulse (Rom. viii. 2, 14: ὅσοι γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν θεοῦ); he is no longer ὑπόνομος, and, therefore, no longer ἄνομος, but ἔννομος Χριστοῦ (1 Cor. ix. 20, 21). That, of course, presupposes a new thinking and willing which apprehends the will of God from within; but even these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit. The old man, whose very thinking was sensuous in its direction (ψυχικός), did not with all his worldly wisdom get beyond the sphere of the world of sense; he could not understand divine things, and was blindly drawn to dumb idols who had not an intelligible word for him (1 Cor. ii. 14, xii. 2). The new man, the πνευματικός, has in the Holy Spirit the most perfect light of knowledge to enlighten him on the highest and deepest questions of existence (1 Cor. ii. 15, 16). Nay, as man knows what is in man, so the spiritual man, in virtue of the Spirit of God bestowed on him, knows what is in God, even the deep thoughts of God: "Eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and the heart of man hath not conceived, what God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10). And though on earth this knowledge always remains fragmentary, and the perfect knowledge—the "seeing face to face"—is reserved for a blessed future (1 Cor. xiii. 9–12), yet it is granted to the believer here on earth to discover the will of God in all things, "to prove (in the sphere of action) what is the good, acceptable, and perfect" (Rom. xii. 2). But what is most important is that, in order to do so, he has now a new will—a real moral power. While formerly there was no real doing of the will of God, notwithstanding all his zeal for a literal fulfilling of the law, he is now able, through the liberating law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, to fulfil freely and inwardly the righteous demands of the law, by walking, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Rom. viii. 4). The love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Spirit has kindled a responsive love to Him which cannot fail to be conformed to the Holy One in holiness and righteousness (Eph. iv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 13: ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος; Rom. vi. 22); and the love for man, which proceeds from this love for God, is "the

fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10), because it can do no evil, but only good to others. In the Christian calling, therefore, the fetters of sin's bondage fall away, in which the most cultured and the proudest children of the world are helplessly bound,—those "works of the flesh," such as are recounted in Rom. i. 24–32; Gal. v. 19–21,—and their place is taken by the fruits of the Spirit, viz. love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 22).

#### § 4. THE BATTLE OF SANCTIFICATION

That is the peaceful picture of the life in the Spirit. But this picture reflects only one side of that life, and the apostle has to complete it by a picture of unwearied labour, nay, of the most earnest spiritual conflict, whose war-cry again and again resounds through his Epistles (Rom. vi. 13 f.; 1 Cor. ix. 24 f.; Phil. iii. 14 f.; 1 Thess. v. 8). The same law prevails in the life of the Spirit as in the whole relation of divine grace and human freedom; grace brings its gift the Holy Spirit, not to spare man labour, but to make it possible to him and impel him to it (Rom. viii. 14); it does not deprive him of responsibility, but restores it to him in full measure. What on the one side is a blessed resting on God's grace, and a childlike receiving out of the fulness of His power, is on the other no less an infinite task, a manly struggle for holiness: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. ii. 12, 13). For even the fundamental work of His Spirit, the "sanctification in principle" (1 Cor. vi. 11), is but a beginning, which must be carried on to perfection; it is a result of faith, which must always be grasped anew (Rom. vi. 11: *λογίζεσθε ἑαυτούς*), and always must be more perfectly assured; it is a victory over sin, which can only be maintained by being incessantly followed up and completed. For the Christian, the spiritual man, lives *ἐν σαρκί*, and this *σὰρξ* remains a *σάρξ ἁμαρτίας* as long as he lives in it; though its lordship over the inward man is destroyed, yet it has a firm footing in the outer works of the fortress, the *μέλη*, and from thence it endeavours to win back its power over the inward man also. Hence that inward

warfare which the apostle describes (Gal. v. 17) is continually waged in the Christian: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things ye would" (that is, each of the two seeks to hinder the other from determining the will). In such circumstances the inner renewal, the dying unto sin and living unto God, must ever be repeated in the Christian, and the apostle is never weary of exhorting his readers thereto. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts" (killed them once for all, Gal. v. 24). "Therefore, brethren, ye are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die (that is, be lost); but if through the Spirit ye do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live" (Rom. viii. 12, 13). "Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 22-24). "Put off the old man with his deeds; and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10, etc.). Not that the apostle in these exhortations, when speaking of a mortifying or crucifying of the flesh and of the members, was thinking of an ascetic morality. No doubt he regards as belonging to sanctification that dominion of the Spirit over the body which never allows its innocent inclinations and needs to become a hindrance to its tasks in life; and in this sense he can consider the body as an opponent in a fight, in which it must be kept under, and deprived of all power of resistance (1 Cor. ix. 27). But he continues to regard the natural as that which in itself is innocent and allowable; only the rule holds good, "all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient, and do not edify" (1 Cor. x. 23); and one should not be so anxious to pamper the flesh, that is, the natural needs, as to fulfil its lusts and desires (Rom. xiii. 14). He tells us plainly in 2 Cor. vii. 1 what he means by to "mortify." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the Spirit," from all works and propensities of the natural selfishness, which, whether on its sensuous or spiritual side, soils and dishonours our personality created in the image of

God. In this sense of a purely moral discipline—taking the members figuratively for the selfish moral impulses rooted in them—he says, Col. iii. 5: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Put off wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications, out of your mouth; and lie not one to another.” Starting similarly from the ethical idea of *σάρξ* is Gal. v. 19: “The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (cf. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10). Such plain warnings against the sin and shame of the old man, as were specially needed by his readers newly converted from the old world, are, in the passage of Galatians just quoted (v. 25), contrasted by the apostle with the fruit of the Spirit; or, as in the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, all the fine proofs of love are strung together like a string of pearls—the love which in Col. iii. 14 he calls the *σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος*, the bond or summary of perfection; or the reader’s own Christian reflection is summoned to seek out in all directions the good and perfect will of God. “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil. iv. 8). It is the inwardness and inexhaustibility of the Christian moral ideal which makes him so speak: it also causes him repeatedly to place beside the word of individual exhortation, which is always insufficient, the speaking example of living men, the example of God (Eph. v. 1: *μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεοῦ*), the example of Christ (Phil. ii. 5 f.); even his own example (1 Cor. xi. 1), which is the most practical, because it is the example of a man who, though a Christian, is yet affected with sin and in need of redemption. It is, above all, an example of the humblest and, at the same time, the most daring effort after perfection: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after—the

Christian ideal of life—if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but one thing (I know), forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press on towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded” (Phil. iii. 12–15). A most remarkable passage, for it seems to forget justification (mentioned, however, immediately before, ver. 9 f.). Everything is made dependent on sanctification; and not on a sanctification in which it is said, though we cannot reach perfection, yet the imperfect work as the work of a good will is sufficient. In all seriousness, his attaining to the resurrection from the dead, the fellowship of the resurrection, is bound up with the perfection of his Christian character with Christian perfection. And this is not to be taken as an extravagant outpouring of his heart; it is the apostle’s view everywhere, to give up nothing of the ideal of Christian perfection, of completed sanctification as condition of blessedness. “He will render to every man according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath” (Rom. ii. 6–8). “The God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. v. 23). This is the point where the agreement of our apostle with the Sermon of Jesus on the Mount, and its demand for a righteousness reaching to perfection, becomes most manifest. And at the same time it becomes clear that the doctrine of justification cannot be the whole of Paul’s doctrine of the way of salvation, and that those who regard justification even partly as an equivalent for the sanctification required in the last judgment, completely misunderstand it. But this unqualified insistence upon the idea of sanctification in no way infringes on Paul’s doctrine of grace but really completes it; for the final assurance that the goal will be reached is based, not on the fidelity of man, but on the faithfulness of God, who will not leave unfinished His work of grace in His elect. “Faithful is He that calleth



you, who will also do it" (1 Thess. v. 23). "He who hath begun a good work in you will carry it on until the day of Christ" (Phil. i. 6). "He will confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son" (1 Cor. i. 8, 9).

### § 5. CONSECRATION OF THE RELATION OF THE SEXES

In this final point, just as in its starting-point, the life in the Spirit appears essentially as a new life of the inward man. But the way which leads from that starting-point to this goal can be no inward one; it leads through the outer world, and the inner life in the Spirit must be preserved in all the relations of life, and must work in a purifying, sanctifying way on the condition of the world. "If we live in the Spirit," writes the apostle to the Galatians (v. 25), "let us also walk in the Spirit," that is, if we have the Spirit as an inner principle of life, He must also be exhibited in our outward active life, in our reciprocal relation with the world. By following, from this point of view, the way of Christian life into the relations with the world, and by explaining to his Churches their duties in these relations, the apostle lays the basis for the cleansing and sanctifying of the most important departments of the earthly life. Everywhere the Christian is surrounded and sustained by natural ordinances of God, which are disfigured and corrupted by sin, and the "life in the Spirit" must exhibit its leavening power in the moral renewal of these according to the divine idea which lies at their basis. None of these natural and moral arrangements is of such fundamental importance, and at the same time so deeply corrupted by the power of natural sinfulness, as that primitive relation in which man finds himself on passing out from the inner life, the relation of the two sexes. The old world, and especially the Oriental and Græco-Roman heathenism, with which the Apostle to the Gentiles was chiefly concerned, had withheld from the woman her honour as made in God's image, and had dissolved the idea of chastity at least for man, and thus had almost destroyed the sanctity of marriage. It was an enormous task for Christianity to bring about a change here,

but the apostle shows himself fully equal to it by opposing the inflexible discipline of the Spirit to the worldly corruptions which were still at work in his recent converts; he nowhere exaggerates that discipline into any excess of spirituality, but does full justice to the natural, creative ordinances of God as the foundation of the moral building. If the pre-Christian world, in its natural evil tendency, more and more denied spiritual equality to the weaker sex, and thereby laid the basis for the unspeakable degradation of the woman, the apostle meets it with the great idea of the gospel, which ennobles the whole position of woman, that before God and in Christ there is no longer any distinction of male or female, inasmuch as the immortal souls of both need and share in the same salvation; "in Christ," he says (Gal. iii. 28), "there is neither male nor female." But this sameness in the highest relations by no means abolishes for him the natural distinction ordained by God, which, rooted in bodily differences, so profoundly influences in its results the earthly life. When, in the Corinthian Church, intoxicated with the Christian ideas of freedom and equality, an attempt was made at emancipating women which went astray and exceeded the limits of the womanly; when the Christian women of Corinth, in opposition to the customs of modesty then current, appeared in public unveiled, and began to speak in the assemblies of the Church like the men, the apostle opposes them with reasons borrowed from nature, and general customs resting on nature (1 Cor. xi. 1 f., xiv. 34, 35). In this present world—this is his meaning—God has placed the man as lord, as the direct image of His majesty, and has subordinated the woman to him; to the man appertains the kingdom of public life, while the home is assigned to the woman as her special sphere; and the gospel abolishes nothing in this natural and moral distinction of manliness and womanliness, but only ennobles it by the consciousness that each is meant by God to supplement the other, and that together they have a common eternal destiny (1 Cor. xi. 11, 12). It was more difficult to reawaken the consciousness, almost completely destroyed in the case of men at least, of the obligation of chastity. For in the Corinthian Church the apostle was met by the opinion which naturally arose from the views and the immorality of anti-

quity, that the illegitimate satisfaction of sexual desire, *πορνεία*, as he plainly calls it, is just as indifferent as the satisfaction of hunger and thirst with the appropriate means of life (1 Cor. vi. 12, 13). Paul contests this delusion by pointing to the moral significance of the body as such, with which its unchaste use is absolutely irreconcilable. The body as such, he argues (1 Cor. vi. 13 f.), is not like the organ of digestion, the *κοιλία*, something which belongs to the earthly existence only, and a thing of indifference for the personality, but, as is proved by its glorified restoration in the other world, it is an essential constituent of the personality. It is the organ of the soul, and shares in its eternal destiny; if the soul is destined to be a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, so also is the body for its sake, as an instrument for its activity. And the surrender to *πόρνη* is clearly incompatible with this its moral significance and destiny. It is the surrender of the body, and with it of the soul, to the bondage of undisciplined desire (*πάθος ἀτιμίας*, 1 Thess. iv. 4), that is, the complete and fundamental opposite of our moral destination, and therefore it is clearly impossible to be unchaste and at the same time in the Lord, *ἐν κυρίῳ* (1 Cor. vi. 1: ἄρας οὖν τὰ μέλη Χριστοῦ ποιήσω πόρνης μέλη; μὴ γένοιτο). For this is the profanation of the body, and with it of the soul, while the moral task of the Christian life is to consecrate both to God and Christ (1 Cor. vi. 18; Rom. xii. 1). It is in this absolute irreconcilability of *πορνεία* with the fundamental destiny of the Christian life that the apostle finds a reason for refusing a share in the kingdom of God to the *πόρνοις* above all other slaves of vice, and to demand their exclusion from the Christian Church (1 Cor. v. 11–13). Marriage, the communion of sex ordained by God, about which certain questions of the Corinthian Church caused him to express himself in detail (1 Cor. vii. 1 f.), is regarded by the apostle as standing in direct opposition to *πορνεία*. So far is he from taking umbrage at its natural basis, that he considers and commends marriage from this side as a means of preservation against the temptation to unchastity (ver. 2). For that very reason he has no desire to trifle with marriage in the sense of a false asceticism; but it must be dealt with according to God's natural and moral

order (vv. 3, 5). If we ask the reason of this distinction in principle between married and unmarried intercourse, it is at first sufficient for the apostle that marriage was instituted by God and defended by Christ (ver. 16). He finds the deeper reason probably in the fact that in marriage the natural desire which is illegitimately satisfied in *πορνεία*, is moralised by being brought under the law of moral motives, in the discipline of moral order and destiny; it becomes the starting-point of a relation of personal love and fidelity, which brings the sensuous selfishness into the school of self-denial. For that very reason the apostle looks upon the indissolubility of marriage, the marriage, of course (ver. 2), of one man with one woman, as of supreme importance. Although a purely earthly relation, and as such dissolvable by death (Rom. vii. 2), yet it is inviolable till death, and is thus delivered from the play of caprice and selfishness, and is raised to a school of that moral love, above desire or dislike, which is described in 1 Cor. xiii. 4-7. The apostle opposes the desire for divorce, which existed in the Corinthian Church, and which sprang perhaps from the opinion that one might live piously without marriage, or in some other kind of marriage tie, with the Lord's unqualified prohibition of divorce, granting, indeed, the possibility of a separation, but without freedom to marry again (vv. 10, 11). He also makes the maintenance of marriage a point of duty on the part of those members of the Church who are united with non-Christians; and only where the non-Christian party desires to make the Christianity of the other the occasion of separation, does he declare the Christian spouse free from the yoke of a marriage in which they could not live according to their faith in peace (vv. 12-16).<sup>1</sup> For all that, however, the apostle does not make marriage a rule for all; he prefers for himself the chaste walk without marriage, and commends this to his unmarried or

<sup>1</sup> The apostle in such a case does not say anything about the right of a second marriage; one can only perhaps infer such a right from the fact that he does not, as in ver. 11, add a *μενέτω ἄγαμος*, and that the *οὐ δεδούλωται* is manifestly synonymous with the *οὐ δέδεσται* (Rom. vii. 2). I question whether we should, as Weiss desires, supplement this *οὐ δεδούλωται* with "under the rule of the Lord" (ver. 10); the natural supplement is, under the yoke of such a marriage.

widowed fellow-believers as the better state, should they be able to maintain their inward chastity in it (1 Cor. vii. 1, 8, 9, 26, 38). One may therefore get the impression that the view of marriage which he cherished had little of the ideal in it, regarding it to some extent as a crutch for the incontinent. Nevertheless, he nowhere urges in support of this view of his an ascetic motive, or regards the unmarried life as a higher stage of morality; his reasons for preferring it are plainly of another character. He himself, in the sense of Matt. xix. 12, for the Lord's sake, and in view of the unsettled calling of the Apostle to the Gentiles, which he had received from Him, had renounced the married life, which was otherwise the rule in the apostolic circle (1 Cor. ix. 5, 12). As to his advice to others, he regarded the end of all earthly things as at hand, which deprived marriage of its significance as a means of propagating humanity (1 Cor. vii. 26, 29-31). He was also apprehensive that the married state would damp the zeal of Christian virgins for their Lord, dividing their hearts between the Saviour and their husbands, for which he had good reasons, in mixed marriages at least (vv. 32-34). In view of all the circumstances, he thought that the final struggle just at hand, and the great tribulation to be expected before the return of the Lord (Matt. xxiv. 21), would be better faced singly than encumbered with family bonds (vv. 26, 28). Hence there is something individual in his preference for the unmarried state, which would adjust itself in the further development of the Church; but there is also in it a genuine Christian trait. While the earthly mind of Judaism saw the only normal form of life in the married state and in begetting children, in Paul's case what was nature's rule was subordinated to life's spiritual task and its eternal destiny; even celibacy, voluntary or involuntary, may become a means of furthering this eternal destiny, and therefore even on earth may be the more blessed lot (ver. 40). And, with admirable tact, the apostle avoids making his commendation of the unmarried state a snare for the conscience of the Corinthians (ver. 35): "Let them marry; they do not sin, nay, they do well" (vv. 36, 38). He only gives them an individual advice, and he himself is quite conscious of its individual character: "I would that all men were as I am: but every

one has his special gift from God, one after this manner and another after that (ver. 7; cf. vv. 25, 40: *γνώμην δίδωμι—κατὰ τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην*). That apparently lower view of marriage (ver. 2) was, at anyrate, applicable to the Corinthians, whose ideas so readily soared heavenwards while they had no firm footing in this practical Christianity, and had to be extricated from the jungle of Greek frivolity; the elements, therefore, of a more ideal conception are by no means wanting in the apostle. When, in ver. 39, he suggests that if a widow desires to marry again she should do so only with a Christian (*μόνον ἐν κυρίῳ*), he probably felt the difference between a purely Christian and a mixed marriage, that is, the value of a communion of spouses "in the Lord." But even in the marriage of a Christian with a non-Christian he regards the non-Christian party as coming under a sanctifying influence through the living fellowship with the Christian (ver. 14, *ἡγιάσται*), which extends also to the children. In the passage Eph. v. 22, 23, written at a later period, he has beautifully described Christian marriage as a school of mutual discipline in love and sanctification—fixing his attention here not, as in 1 Cor. vii., on the reality, with its pregnant absence of the ideal, but keeping before him the ideal itself. "Submit yourselves to one another in the fear of the Lord. Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the Church; and He is the Saviour of the body (that is, has given Himself for it in self-denying love). Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify it." The apostle in making the married relation the image of the union between Christ and the Church, gives the highest ideal of it that could be prepared, and shows the way in which the natural relation must be consecrated so as to become a true home of the life in the Spirit.

## § 6. CONSECRATION OF THE DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

In the same sense and in the same spirit the apostle deals with the domestic and social relations—especially in his

Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. As in the treatment of the married relation, so here also the recognition and confirmation of God's natural ordinances rule throughout; but at the same time they are consecrated and glorified by the spirit of love and sanctifying discipline. Thus he inculcates the fifth commandment on children, not legally, however, but evangelically, with special emphasis on the promise added by God (Eph. vi. 1-3), or still more in the New Testament sense "of pleasing the Lord" (Col. iii. 20). Parents, on the other hand, are reminded not to embitter and discourage their children by that harsh and loveless overstraining of parental rights which belonged to the antique life, but to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. vi. 4; Col. iii. 21). A whole system of Christian training lies in these few words, in this exhortation to make strictness a part of their love, and not lose the entrance to the hearts of children by losing their confidence; also in this, that the actual moral and religious instruction, the *παιδεία*, comes before this instruction in words (*νουθεσία*). The servants of the household are exhorted by the apostle to do their duty, not with eye-service, but from the heart, in sincere reverence and obedience as towards Christ, the rewarder of every good and evil deed. Masters are reminded that they also have a Master in heaven who judges without respect of persons, in order that they may exercise justice and reasonableness, and abstain from threatening. Slavery, with its profound contradiction of the true God-given dignity of man, which, forming almost the whole of the lower stratum of ancient society, offered a peculiar problem for the nascent Christianity; and it obtruded itself on the apostle in a personal way when the runaway slave of the Colossian Christian Philemon fled to him, and was instructed by him in Christianity. Yet he insisted on his returning to his master; and in the Epistle to Philemon, which is sent with him, emancipation is not set up as a command of the gospel. He only reminds Philemon that Onesimus returns to him as a brother in Christ, and expresses the fond trust that the Christian master will grant him still more than the pardon craved (Philem. 16, 21); all the peaceable wisdom of the Holy Spirit speaks here through the apostle. It is not more certain that one of the inferences

from the gospel is to loose the fetters of the slave than that any confusion of religious and social questions is to be avoided, and the ethical question solved only from within in an ethical way. Accordingly, in 1 Cor. vii. we see the apostle not only exhorting the numerous slaves who belong to the Church to give themselves no trouble about the matter, but also advising them: "But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather," *sc.* thy slave condition. The advice has caused surprise, and has led to contradictory expositions of the words and context; and yet it was the right advice. We must not forget that in the world of that day there were no servants, but only slaves; that in Greek countries serfdom was already to some extent humanised; that the apostle, looking to the parousia as near, could not conceive of a Christian reform of society as a whole: so the main thing was, not to compose a social deliverance with the religious deliverance of the gospel. He reminds them that the slave who is called in the Lord is the Lord's freeman, and the freeman who is called in the Lord is the Lord's slave (ver. 22), that is, that in relation to Christ the distinction of slave and freeman disappears. That was a truth which must of itself in the course of centuries lead to the abolition of slavery, and at the same time it should lead the individual to put a higher value on his God-given freedom than on the earthly freedom which he lacked, and to preserve the first in dispensing with the latter (ver. 21, *μᾶλλον χρῆσαι*). And this brings us to the principle which the apostle urges in the context with respect to the social condition of the Christian: *ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ κλήσει, ἣ ἐκλήθη, ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω* (ver. 20; cf. ver. 17). The young Corinthian Church is unmistakably affected by social unrest, an unwise craving to extend the new Christian freedom, the unique change of the inner life to its outer conditions. The apostle meets that with the principle: let everyone abide in the same condition in which the divine call found him; in this condition he is to verify his Christian standing according to the will of God. What Paul here preaches is satisfaction with the earthly lot which God has given, the moral appreciation of every condition ordained by God, as a peculiar mission and occasion for serving Him. On this basis he proceeds to build his positive moral and social obligations. "Lay aside deceit, and speak every



man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another" (Eph. iv. 25). Unbelievers regard lying as allowable, and as an indispensable means of getting through the world. The Christian is reminded that God created men members of a society, intended them to be helpful to each other, and that speech was His chief gift for that purpose; but for that very reason truthfulness in intercourse with each other, and not deceit, is its inviolable law. To this is added the exhortation: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers" (ver. 29). Again: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. iv. 28). Here we have a whole social ethic in a sentence. Property, the necessary foundation of free personal development and work in the world, is defended against the assaults of simple selfishness, and the obligations of labour are opposed to the pretences of this sin;—but labour is not now in the service of egoism, but is the preliminary condition of a royal freedom of doing good to others. The apostle repeatedly returns to this obligation of labour. When some of the Thessalonians in apocalyptic excitement gave themselves up to fanatical idleness, and became a burden on their companions in the church he meets them with the emphatic words: "If any man will not work (viz. when he is able to work), neither shall he eat" (2 Thess. iii. 10). He thereby proscribes all lazy begging and abuse of Christian beneficence; and he exemplified in the grandest way the obligation and honour of labour, by earning his daily bread with his own hands while carrying on his apostolic work, "in order to make the gospel free of charge" (2 Thess. iii. 8; 1 Cor. iv. 12, ix. 6 f.). But he also knows how to give the highest consecration to labour even the humblest, the labour of slaves, and to teach the secret how it may be done with true joy and spiritual blessing. "Whatsoever ye do," he exclaims to the slaves (Col. iii. 23), "do all from the heart, as to the Lord, and not to men." Whatever is done for love to the Lord, and with the view of honouring Him, however little it may be, becomes noble, a service of God; and everything done for the Lord, who has done the greatest and hardest

service for us, can be done from the heart, so that it becomes a joy and a delight. This is a saying of infinite range for the solution of the social question; it is a moral triumph of Christian faith over the hardest conditions of earthly existence.

#### § 7. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE STATE, NATIONALITY, HUMANITY

Finally, the apostle also recognises the Christian's obligation to the great divine creations of the State, nationality, and human society. We have already alluded to the way in which he regarded the great commonwealth, which surrounded his nation and the Christian communities with anything but friendliness, as a natural and moral creation of God, as a great legal organisation for the punishment of evil-doers and the defence of the pious (Rom. xiii. 1-7); here the question is as to the obligation which the State imposes on the Christian. The Church in Rome, echoing the watchwords of the Jewish theocracy, or fancying that it belonged to the coming kingdom of Christ, was disposed to see in the heathen State only a perishing and ungodly institution; but the apostle with admirable liberality puts upon it the stamp of divine authority. He does so in a twofold sense. First, the State, in so far as it is a natural and divine institution like marriage, a moral order established by God in the nature of human things, is the embodiment of law, which has to suppress evil with the strong hand, and, if necessary, even with the sword of justice, and to protect the good. But, in the second place, he extends this divine authority expressly to the actual though very imperfect manifestations of the idea, to the existing magisterial powers, inasmuch as God in His providence has allowed them to grow up in the course of history, which is so full of violence and wrong (ver. 1). Against this administration of justice established by God, the apostle requires of Christians the renunciation of all rebellious resistance (ver. 2), such as was, one might say, in the blood of the Jews, and calls them to obedience, to reverence, and the performance of that which is necessary for the preservation of the State (vv. 6, 7); and the Christian is to do all this, not like the Jew, from compulsion, but for conscience' sake, from an unconstrained fear

of God. It is clear that in the existing political conditions, Christians could not yet be required to take any more positive interest in political life. Certainly the apostle did not fail to appreciate how imperfectly the Roman Empire corresponded to that idea of the State which was urged in its defence,—it was this imperfection that caused him to condemn the Corinthian Christians so sharply for appealing to heathen courts instead of having their quarrels settled by Christian umpires. But even in a Neronic or Diocletian persecution he would only have advised them to accept martyrdom, and never to refuse “that which was Caesar’s,” and so he lays the basis of that absolute innocence of the Christian Churches, with regard to the heathen State, which was destined at last to bring even this world-power into subjection to the sign of the cross. The apostle’s attitude towards nationality was essentially different from his attitude towards the State; the Roman Empire comprised the most diverse nationalities, and the apostle’s own nation was but one of its constituent parts, half subject, half insubordinate. He preached Christian virtue on this side less by doctrine than by personal example. His doctrinal utterances only show us that he neither desires the Judaising of the Greeks nor the Hellenising of the Jews (1 Cor. vii. 18); that to him, therefore, the whole multiplicity of peoples, tongues, and customs has a place in the kingdom of Christ. But he has given the highest proof of love for his fatherland. His people treated him as an apostate and traitor, resisted him in that very thing which he regarded as dearest and most sacred, with a hatred which on one occasion could extort such a severe utterance as 1 Thess. ii. 14–16; but he never on that account doubted the divine superiority of his people, or their better future (Rom. iii. 1–4, xi. 1 f., 25 f.). And he was ready to sacrifice his own salvation, “to become accursed from Christ,” if he might thereby purchase the salvation, the conversion of his people (Rom. ix. 3). Yet even in the sphere of natural things Paul knows of something greater than the Roman Empire and something dearer than his Jewish people, and that is humanity as such. He is a citizen of the world in the noblest sense of the word. The idea of an undivided humanity, the kinship of all who bear the image of God, an idea which had been barely guessed at

by the Stoics, was carried home to his heart and forced into utterance by his apostolate to the Gentiles, and even by the gospel itself. If in looking back on the ways of God's providence in the past he preached to the Athenians of the one God, who has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth (Acts xvii. 26), he now stands still in adoring wonder at the purpose of God to unite again all these scattered members of humanity under the second Adam as head (Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Eph. i. 10), and it is his pride to be the special instrument of this divine work of peace. So glorious and wonderful to him is this restoration of a united humanity in Christ, that he regards it as interesting, and moving the world of spirits who rule the earth. He fancies how through the death of Christ upon the cross the divided *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι*, the spirits ruling in the nations, though from most ancient times at enmity, are now in principle reconciled (Col. i. 20), and how through the Church, whose members are of all nations, the many-sided purpose of God, the *πολυποίκιλος σοφία θεοῦ*, is made clearly known to them (Eph. iii. 10) in order that they may once more range themselves obediently under Christ their rightful head. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, in particular, which is devoted to bringing together the Jewish and Hellenic elements in the Churches of Asia Minor, the apostle never wearies of celebrating the divine wonder, that those estranged from God for thousands of years, strangers to the covenants and promises, were now called, in common with the chosen people of the old covenant, to form a renewed, sanctified humanity (Eph. ii. 11–22, iii. 1 f.). And his look sweeps beyond the opposition of Jew and Greek, who are here reconciled, to that of Greek and barbarian, Roman and Scythian, which is likewise to be bridged over (Rom. i. 14; Col. iii. 11); for in the regenerated humanity, which is renewed in the knowledge of Him who created it, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all in all" (Col. iii. 11). The apostle therefore, working and teaching from his view of Christ as the second Adam, establishes the great idea of humanity, which has become familiar to us through him, while it was all but unknown to the pre-Christian world, and at the same time he exhibits the debt which Christians owe

to humanity, which, then as now, spurred men in the work of missions to the heathen.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

#### § 1. NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP

Family and State, nationality and mankind, are natural and moral societies in which the life in the Spirit may be reflected as in a foreign medium. But the Holy Spirit has called into being a peculiar community in which He and the life in Him have their dwelling—the Christian Church. Much more modest than the Jewish nationality from which it branched off, or even than the Roman Empire in which it was content to be tolerated, this new community yet contains the germ of that renewed humanity which appears to the apostle as the goal of God's ways in history. None of the apostles has done so much in building up the Christian Church as Paul, and none had such difficulties as he, for the Church he conceived was a wholly new construction; and none of them has made the Church so largely the object of his consideration and teaching.

#### § 2. IDEA OF THE CHURCH

The fundamental significance of the word *ἐκκλησία*, which in German is rendered sometimes by "Gemeinde" and sometimes by "Kirche," is "assembly," and in the Bible "assembly for divine worship"; and this is very distinct in Paul. Thus, when he says to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 18), *συνερχομένων ὑμῶν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ*, or as often as he uses the expression *ἐκκλησία κατ' οἶκον* (Rom. xvi. 4; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Philem. 2), we are probably to understand the household gatherings for divine worship, consisting of parents, children, domestic servants, and workmen, the churches of Christian households that were formed here and there in those days. But, as a rule, he calls those who come together *ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ*, themselves the *ἐκκλησία*; and his use of the

phrases *οἱ ἅγιοι* and *ἡγιασμένοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* as synonymous for *ἐκκλησία* (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1), shows that *ἐκκλησία* was not viewed by the apostle as a gospel institution dependent on officials, but in a genuinely Protestant sense as the assembly of the saints—that is, of believers. It lies in the nature of Christianity that the idea should be widened and deepened beyond the conception of the Jewish doctors, of a temporary assembly for divine worship, into that of an abiding religious communion; the meeting of Christians for the worship of God, and for mutual edification in the name of Jesus, is only the expression of an abiding inward relation of separateness from the unbelieving world and of spiritual union in Christ; and thus *ἐκκλησία* becomes the name for the whole communion of Christians as such with one another. This explains, further, its twofold application—first, to a local Christian association, and, again, to Christendom everywhere, to the community of a place and to the community as a whole, or, as we say to-day, the Church. Both usages are found in Paul alongside of each other, save that, in accordance with the fundamental significance of *ἐκκλησία* = assembly, the application to the local community is the fundamental one. The Christian association in Corinth, in Thessalonica, is an *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ οὐσα ἐν Κορίνθῳ, ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ*, with all the ideal rights and honours of the Church of God, which here, in a particular place, becomes visible. But the apostle, using the idea in a more ideal sense, knows likewise of an *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ* in the whole earth (1 Cor. x. 32, xii. 28, xv. 9, and frequently in the Epistles to Colossians and Ephesians), which, as such, is not visible, and cannot be assembled for festival and worship. It is held together by ideal powers: “One body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. iv. 4–6). From all this it is evident that visibility and invisibility, the two predicates which we diversely apply to the “Church,” are both equally essential attributes of the *ἐκκλησία* in the view of the apostle. The persons and their assembling are visible, their festivals and worship appeal to the senses, but the Lord who brings them

together, and holds them together by means of His Spirit, is invisible, and their connection with Him, their sanctification in Him, their faith, are concealed. The apostle, however, does not draw the conclusion which we do from this visible and invisible nature of the Church, viz. that the two are not coincident, but that many, and perhaps the greater number of those who belong to the visible Church, are not to be reckoned to the invisible, because they lack a living faith. He suspects, indeed, that the members of the Church may not all be genuine members of Christ; in this respect he declares, 1 Cor. xi. 19 : *δεῖ γὰρ καὶ αἰρέσεις ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι, ἵνα οἱ δόκιμοι φανεροὶ γένωνται ἐν ὑμῖν*; but that does not, in his opinion, destroy the truth that the visible Church is an *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ*. The state of things in those days was such that no one would readily enter the Church without being somehow laid hold of by Christ, so that the apostle, in that fundamental sense, could regard all the members of his communities as *ἡγιασμένοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, and only needed to fear a defective advance of some in Christianity, an incipient backsliding, an *ἀδοκίμους γενέσθαι* (cf. *ἐκτός εἰ μὴ εἰκὴ ἐπιστεύσατε*, 1 Cor. xv. 2). But, then, he is confident that the Spirit of the Lord, which rules in the communities, will either inwardly reconquer those who have become Christians merely in name (*εἰάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος*, 1 Cor. v. 11), or will separate them from the outer fellowship (1 Cor. v. 13).

### § 3. RELIGIOUS IDEA OF THE CHURCH

That is the formal idea of the Church. But Paul quickens it with its religious idea, his view of its essential meaning in the economy of God's salvation. He expresses this idea in various phrases, mostly figurative, by describing the relation of the Church first to God and then to Christ. In order to distinguish the Christian Church from the Jewish synagogue, he prefers to designate it the *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ* (1 Cor. i. 2, x. 32, xv. 9, etc.); it is the Church of the only true religion, the only religion which brings men into a true fellowship with God. He further calls it God's husbandry, God's building (1 Cor. iii. 9). It is the former so far as divine labour has in it brought under cultivation the fallow ground of humanity,

in order to obtain from it lasting fruits through the labours of the "fellow workers with God" (ver. 6). The latter image reminds the Church that she rests on a foundation laid by God, and must also build herself upon this foundation; that continuance on this foundation, and an unwearied effort upwards, is her sacred duty. For in that image she is conceived as a building incomplete; its foundation is laid, viz. Jesus Christ, the historical and the living (His name and His Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 11), and other foundation (of the Church of God on earth) can no man lay; but let everyone who desires to further God's work in humanity see how he builds there-upon (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11). We have another aspect of the same image in Eph. ii. 20, "built on the foundation (*θεμέλιον*) of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone," where the historical founders of the Church—the apostles and their assistants, the New Testament prophets, like Barnabas, Silas, etc.—are called to mind; but Christ, as in Matt. xxi. 42, is conceived as the pillar and bearer of the whole structure. The same idea of the structure as founded but not complete is found in the phrase in which the task of Church life is described as "edification" (1 Cor. viii. 1, x. 23, xiv. 3). To the apostle "edification" is not, as to us, a mere pious excitation of feeling, but the summary of all that the Christian is to receive from the fellowship of the Church,—it is the furtherance of the inner life towards the goal of perfection which God has set to it. The designation of the Church as a temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16) is akin to but not quite synonymous with this image of the building. As the latter passage in particular shows, it exhibits the Church as the reality of which the Old Testament house of God was only a symbol; as the dwelling-place of God on earth, the home which He prepared for Himself through His Spirit in humanity. The apostle thereby justifies the holy awe which ought to fill everyone who labours in the Church, as well as the holy obligation which the Church has towards herself. "He who destroys this temple, him will God destroy," it is said 1 Cor. v. 17; and 2 Cor. vi. 14 f.: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" The individual Christian also is called (Eph. ii. 22) "an habitation of God in the Spirit," and



His body (1 Cor. vi. 19) "a temple of the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in Him"; yet there is a distinction between the individual personality of the Christian and the Church. The whole fulness of God, the manifold riches of His Spirit, is not presented in the individual, but it can and will be presented in the Church for the advantage of the individual. This brings us to the apostle's ideal picture of the Church as presented especially in his Epistle to the Ephesians. As the whole *πλήρωμα θεοῦ*, the whole fulness of His self-revelation, is presented in Christ, so the whole *πλήρωμα Χριστοῦ*, the whole riches of the grace and truth of God bestowed on man in Him, seek to exhibit themselves in the Church,—the union of all the communities,—so that the Church, conceived in its perfection, is the full reflection of the *πολυποίκιλος θεοῦ σοφία*, the *πλήρωμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ* (Eph. i. 23, iii. 18, 19, iv. 13). The notion of the Church as the Bride or Spouse of Christ, which is incidentally suggested 2 Cor. xi. 2, and elaborated in detail in Eph. v. 25–32, is based on the same idea; the Church is to become the complete counterpart of Christ, but whilst He gives and rules, she is to receive and to obey. The apostle does not mean that the *ἐκκλησία θεοῦ* was in this state of perfection from the first, but this is the ideal towards which it must ever strive. Most of her members, and therefore also the Church as a whole, is still in a condition of childhood (*νηπιότης*). But as the child has to grow up to manhood, so the Church must attain to the state of *τελειότης*,—the state of being full grown,—when her present wavering faith will have become firm and strong to measure the whole height, depth, and breadth of Christ, and thus she will come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God (Eph. iv. 13, 14). As these last words make us see, the apostle does not overlook that on the way to this goal of *τελειότης* there will inevitably be many diverse views of faith; and, with considerate wisdom, he has required freedom and patience for these unavoidable incidents of the Church's growth, so long as Christ the foundation is adhered to. For the doctrines further developed might be gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, hay, and stubble; but it is not human judgment which decides whether they are the one or the other, but the purifying fire of the divine judgment; and even he

who has built with wood and straw, but upon Christ as the foundation of his salvation will not, on that account, be lost; the grace of God will save him, though with a life's work lost, as a brand plucked from the burning (1 Cor. iii. 12-15). Still deeper and more inward than this image of the house or temple, which is used in a variety of connections, is that in which the apostle expresses the close vital connection of the *ἐκκλησία* with Christ. It is "the body of the Lord" (1 Cor. xii.)—that is, it is His permanent appearance in the world, which has to preserve and express His spiritual features; it is the organism which He has produced and ever governs by His glorified life on earth, by His presence in the Spirit in humanity, to such a degree that His name can be directly applied to this in which He is manifested in humanity and history, *ὁ Χριστός* can be substituted for the "Church." It is only a development of this parable, not a deviation from it, when, in the Epistles to Ephesians and Colossians, He is called the head of this body. From the head proceed the spiritual impulses governing the whole body and its members; as soon, therefore, as the spiritual government of the Church organism was taken into consideration, this aspect of the image of 1 Cor. xii. followed of itself. But that which makes it so valuable to the apostle in 1 Cor. xii. is, that it expresses so strikingly and instructively the reciprocal relation of the individual and the whole. The divine law of the connection between the individual man and the whole human race, the divine idea of communion, is repeated in a narrower circle, but in a more exalted manner, in the *ἐκκλησία*. One body, many members; the gift and function of every member is not the same; no member can say to another or to the body, "I have no need of thee." With all the comparative independence of the Christian character it stands in need of a supplement, and is thrown back upon the riches of the whole, which, at anyrate, contains in itself the Spirit of Christ more variously than the most gifted individual. If we have here an exhibition of what the individual finds in the whole, in the Church; so, conversely, the passage Eph. iv. 15, 16, under the same image, describes how, under Christ's guidance, all things work together to lead the Christian community to its full growth, the perfect effect of Christ in humanity. "Speaking truth in love,

let us grow up in all things to Him who is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

#### § 4. BAPTISM

Even Paul regards the entrance of the individual into this visible community of the Spirit as taking place at baptism (1 Cor. i. 14, 16); and it is perhaps the strongest evidence of the actual institution of this ordinance by Jesus, that even the independent Apostle to the Gentiles, with his strong bias to what is spiritual, regards and uses this outward ordinance as the original apostles did, as a necessary condition of entrance to the Christian Church. But how has he, in whom everything is spiritualised and made to rest on grace and faith as inward ethical powers, brought this requirement into his scheme of thought? We have already mentioned and rejected a view which makes Paul connect justification with faith, but the communication of the Spirit, and the renewing that accompanies that communication, with baptism, as a second act distinct from justification. Though we found this view impossible in connection with the Pauline doctrine of the way of salvation, yet it cannot be denied that some of the apostle's utterances concerning baptism give it a certain appearance of truth. The passage 1 Cor. xii. 13, *καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν . . . καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν*, can hardly refer to the baptism of water as such, for then the *ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν* would be left without explanation; but even if the apostle merely compares the communication of the Spirit, as a baptism of the Spirit, with the baptism of water, he presupposes a relation between the two. Just so, and still more definitely in Gal. iii. 27: *ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε*; here the entrance into communion with Christ is traced back directly to the reception of baptism. And in the same way the apostle (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12) has described the reception of baptism as a being buried with Christ in His death. Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that

Paul, who, as we have seen, traced back with Christian reason the inner renewal of the man described in all these phrases to the decisive inward act of faith, should have traced it back, at the same time, to an outward act independent of faith. He can only mean that baptism represents that which is inwardly accomplished in faith. As already mentioned, it is the symbolism of baptism, of immersion and burial in the water, that causes him, in Rom. vi., Col. ii., to connect the being dead with Christ with baptism rather than with faith; and if a detailed exposition be desired, we can say that he has not in view the mysterious moment of death so much as the public moment of the burial of the old man in baptism, which certifies the death. In the same way, in Gal. iii. 27, we see how another symbol of the ordinance, the putting on of the dress after baptism,—perhaps in those days a new white baptismal robe,—led him over from the idea of faith to that of baptism; for in the first half of the verse he traces back the communion with Christ to faith, but in the second to baptism, under the image of the putting on of a garment. Now one gets the impression from the passages in question that he did not regard baptism as a merely emblematic ordinance, but assumed that what was symbolically represented in it was also inwardly and actually completed in the baptized. But in that passage of Galatians (iv. 26, 27)—“Ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”—he presupposed that only because he regarded believing and being baptized as taking place together. One must realise the conditions in which Paul thinks and speaks. There is no mention in his writings, or in any part of the New Testament, of a baptism of children. On the contrary, the way in which he argues (1 Cor. vii. 14) with respect to Christian children—that if the non-Christian parent was unclean, and was not rather sanctified by the living fellowship with the Christian parent, then the Christian children would also be unclean—is the most striking proof that he had no thought of a sanctification (*ἀγιάζεσθαι*) of Christian children by baptism. That is to say, only he who was driven to it by his nascent faith came to baptism in those days, and this faith was not decided so long as it did not impel to the

baptism with water: submission to baptism was the decisive step out of the world into the community of believers. What wonder is it that all the operations of grace which, in God's way of salvation, are connected with the believing decision of the heart, should, as a rule, come to the consciousness of the baptized in an overpowering way at this solemn moment? and that even those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit which men welcomed as assurances of the possession of the Spirit, both in Pauline circles and in those of the original apostles (cf. Gal. iii. 5), were frequently awakened in baptism? If this involves, as the apostle (Gal. iii. 2) expressly assumes, that faith is the actual source of the possession of the Spirit, and baptism only, if faith already exists, the occasional cause which brings it into consciousness, what value, it may be asked, would baptism have for the Christian? It would have that value which the sensible expression of an inward fact everywhere has. Since the fundamental Christian experience which was the beginning of a new life development made no appeal to the senses, it was helpful to have it translated into some sensible sign. This emblematic putting off of the old man and putting on of the new, was a sort of guarantee on the part of Christ into whose name he was baptized,<sup>1</sup> and, at the same time, it was an obligation on the part of the believer who submitted to baptism. The latter had received the sign and pledge given by Jesus Himself that He would give him His Holy Spirit, and through that Spirit would make of him a new man, and had thereby solemnly come under obligation to belong to this Lord henceforth, and to walk in newness of life. But baptism has a meaning not merely for the individual, but perhaps in a higher degree for the community. This community, from its spiritual, and, at the same time, its visible nature, needs not merely an inward, but also an outward act by which one may enter into it; a clear mark of distinction between those who belong to it and

<sup>1</sup> The Pauline Epistles, like the Acts of the Apostles, know only of one baptism in the name of Jesus, not of "the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"; cf. the expression εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Gal. iii. 27. In like manner the phrases 1 Cor. i. 13, x. 2, "Ye were not baptized in the name of Paul," "the Israelites were baptized into Moses," presuppose that the Christians were baptized into the name of Christ as their deliverer.

those who are yet without ; and what better sign could there be than this symbol of putting off the old man and putting on the new ?

### § 5. THE LORD'S SUPPER

That Paul knows of only one element of Church life of the same kind and value as baptism, viz. the Lord's Supper, is fairly concluded from the passage 1 Cor. x. 1 ff., in which he manifestly alludes to our two evangelical sacraments. In the connection of the Israelites marching out of Egypt, with the Red Sea and the accompanying cloud, he finds a figurative "baptism" of these Israelites unto Moses, and in their miraculous eating and drinking in the wilderness, a figurative Lord's Supper ; and thus he teaches the Corinthians that one may have baptism and the Lord's Supper and yet miss the aim of the heavenly calling, that is, may throw away one's salvation, as those contemporaries of Moses failed to reach the land of promise (ver. 5). Here, then, a certain unexpressed idea of sacrament emerges ; it gives us in the two symbolical ordinances instituted by Christ the notion of signs and pledges, to introduce or to confirm God's covenant of grace with the Church, which do not, however, assure the individual receiver of attaining to eternal life. Nothing further can be gathered from the passage with respect especially to the apostle's idea of the Lord's Supper, as the ambiguous expression *πνευματικὸν βρῶμα καὶ πόμα* can scarcely mean anything else when applied to the Old Testament receivers than that what they ate and drank was supernatural in its origin and of religious significance. But we have direct and important utterances about the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor. x. 16, 21, xi. 23 f. In 1 Cor. x. 16, 21, the apostle approaches it from the heathen sacrificial feasts in order to represent to the Corinthians the incompatibility of being guests at the "tables of the gods" and guests at the "table of the Lord." We gather here from the "breaking of bread," and from the name "cup of blessing," that the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the Pauline communities in the form borrowed from the Passover in which it was instituted by Jesus, and we see that the apostle regarded it as a sacred festival representing the

communion of believers with the Lord as well as with one another. But whether he regards this festival as a mere emblematic expression of that communion or as a real consummation of it, cannot be gathered with certainty from the ambiguous words: τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας, ὃ εὐλογούμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστίν, κ.τ.λ., ἢ ὅτι εἰς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν· οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν. The comparison with the meal of the idols, who, according to viii. 4, x. 19, are nothing, or with taking part in the sacrifices of the Jewish altar, with which, as a dead thing, there cannot possibly be any real personal communion, does not favour our taking the *κοινωνία Χριστοῦ* in ver. 16<sup>1</sup> in a real sense, and it is only because the apostle (ver. 19) feels constrained to preclude the false conclusion that his argument treated the idols, or the sacrifices to idols, as something (real), that one might infer that he regarded the celebration of the Lord's Supper as containing a real communion with the object of worship. The profanation of the Lord's Supper by the Corinthians causes the apostle (1 Cor. xi. 23 f.) to express himself most fully on the subject. Here we see from the closing words of Jesus, communicated by him only *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε . . . εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*,<sup>2</sup> that the Supper is to him, above all things, a memorial of the Saviour's death, or—as he adds (ver. 26) with some words of explanation—a festival (founded on fact), “a showing forth of the Lord's death.” Naturally this means a proclamation of the death of Jesus as the death of a Saviour, which one celebrates in order to appropriate afresh and more completely its comfort and its power; but that such appropriation in this festival is possible, was a matter of course to our apostle, because the Crucified One, as risen

<sup>1</sup> The view of Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* vol. i. p. 470, that this very comparison proves that the *κοινωνία Χριστοῦ* must be taken in a realistic sense, stands or falls in respect of the sacrificial meal of the heathen with the false conception, that in the heathen gods Paul saw demons with whom one could be in real communion. The contrary is evident as regards the comparison with the altar of Jewish sacrifice.

<sup>2</sup> That these words are unhistorical, and were suggested to Paul only in virtue of a special revelation of Jesus, is an entirely baseless view of Weiss (*f.c.* p. 469), and all the more arbitrary that he admits the secondary nature of the synoptic version of the words of institution.

and glorified, is always near to His Church, and ready to communicate Himself according to the measure of her susceptibility. Without doubt, then, he was not thinking of an empty memorial festival, the memorial of a man who died and remained dead; in it was recalled the glorified living One, and there was impressed afresh on their hearts what He had done for His people, that they might ever more completely appropriate all the powers of the life which He gave in sacrifice. But Paul certainly did not confine this self-communication of the Crucified to the celebration of the Supper, as if it were only possible, and to be sought here. He who regarded the whole Christian position, the renewal and sanctification of the believer, as resting on this self-communication, could not possibly have made it depend on anything else than the faith which, bound to no visible ceremony, grasps the Saviour at all times and everywhere. Therefore, if we wish to understand the apostle in this matter, we shall certainly have to give up the notion that he regarded the celebration of the Supper as including a specific offer of something that is not contained in the whole gospel, an offer of unique enjoyments, partly sensible and partly above sense. Moreover, this is contradicted by everything we read about the matter in 1 Cor. xi. In the first place, he has no misgivings about paraphrasing the second word of institution, "this is My blood" into "this cup is the new covenant in My blood" (that is, which is ratified by the shedding of My blood); a paraphrase which excludes the real sameness of the wine and of the blood. Secondly, he does not speak of a glorified body, but of that broken (on the cross),<sup>1</sup> just as of the blood shed upon the cross. These are realities which, according to Paul, cannot be materially communicated, because they have ceased to exist since the resurrection of Jesus, as the glorified body in which Jesus now really lives does not, according to 1 Cor. xv. 20, consist of flesh and blood. Our apostle and the Churches

<sup>1</sup> I hold the *κλώμενον* of the received reading of 1 Cor. xi. 24 to be genuine, because the mere *τὸ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν* appears to me too terse; and if that had been the original reading, the copyist would rather have supplied from Luke xxii. 19, *διδόμενον*, not *κλώμενον*, which is not found in any parallel passage.



accustomed to his doctrinal language could not have a moment's doubt as to what Jesus meant by His "body and blood" given for His people;<sup>1</sup> not sensuous and super-sensuous matter, but His life sacrificed for them that it might become their life; for this is the sense in which the "blood of Christ" and the "body of Christ" is constantly spoken of in the whole New Testament, and especially in Paul (Rom. iii. 25, v. 9; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 20, etc.; Rom. vii. 4: *ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*). Consequently that very thing which forms the Christian salvation, that which is in principle appropriated in baptism, that which faith lays hold of, and in which it has eternal life, is also what the Supper contains. Or are we, finally, driven to another conception by what Paul says (ver. 27 f.) about an unworthy partaking of the Supper? Those who, according to ver. 27 f., eat and drink unworthily, are people who make no distinction between the Lord's Supper and a common meal, who seek nothing else in it than the satisfaction of their bodily hunger and thirst; but before we could consider that other conception as possible in the case of Paul, we should have to find in this single passage the statement that such people actually receive Christ in the communion, but to the poisoning of their soul, that is, the spiritually unsusceptible receive spiritual things. But that idea is wrongly read into his words, for one can be "guilty of the body and blood" by making himself incapable of receiving it (spiritually) as well as by receiving it. Finally, the judgment of condemnation, which is to overtake the unworthy receiver of the holy thing, is read into the text; for Paul speaks quite plainly of a mere temporal judgment, a visitation of sickness to which God condemned the Corinthians, and which they are to lay to heart, that they may not be condemned with the world (vv. 30-32). But if this shows

<sup>1</sup> That Paul took the body and blood of Christ in the Supper in a literal sense, and did not speculate about the possibility of a real communication of the same, that is, thought nothing about it (Weiss, *l.c.* p. 470), I hold to be excluded by the character of his mind and by his use of language. Paul cannot have thought of the blood of Jesus otherwise in the festival of His death than he did in his doctrine of the death of Jesus.

that we cannot speak of any specific content either in the Supper or baptism, any blessing which faith would not have without this ordinance, does that mean that it has no specific value? Must it not have been of the very greatest value to the Church to have the fundamental fact on which she was based continually set forth to be appropriated inwardly; that, independent of all words and views about it, the image of her Saviour giving Himself for her should again and again appear before her eyes, in the great simple memorial which He founded, to help her more completely to appropriate that in which alone she has salvation, power, and comfort, His life given for her? When one considers how entirely the Christian life, individual and general, is in other things dependent on the Spirit, and how inevitable, therefore, is the danger of giving up the foundation laid once for all, one admires the divine wisdom of an institution which again and again calls us back to the historical Christ and the decisive act of His life as Saviour, and places before us for ever new appropriation the Alpha and Omega of all Christianity: "He died for you, to the end that He may become the food and drink of your soul; that He may live in you." We cannot point to these reflections in Paul but they enable us to understand why the apostle, instead of speaking of the mysteries of the matter, lays all stress on the "showing forth the Lord's death," on "doing this in remembrance of Me." The mystic secret is not thus excluded but included: the ceremony guarantees to those who rightly use it the very thing which it signifies. In the realising of that which He has done for all, and why He did it, the fellowship with the Lord in life and death is consummated afresh in the believing heart, by which He makes His people partakers of all His salvation. There is consummated at the same time that which is so often overlooked, but which the apostle specially emphasises (1 Cor. x. 16), the renewed fellowship of His people with one another. The celebration of that love of the Saviour, who gave Himself for all, becomes at the same time a celebration of the brotherly love which inseparably unites the redeemed in Him,—as on that evening of institution when the words, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you," are directly followed

by "This is my body, which is broken for you." For, as the apostle writes in the passage quoted, "we are all one bread, one body (viz. one body of the Lord): for we are all partakers of one bread" (viz. of Christ the Bread of eternal Life). That is a saying which by the contrast of the "body of Christ" in the Church, and the "body of Christ" in the sacrament, once more confirms the necessary spiritual and figurative conception of the latter idea, and at the same time shows us how to the apostle the Lord's Supper has a significance for the Church as such, still more than for the individual Christian life.

### § 6. SPIRITUAL GOVERNMENT AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

In baptism and the Lord's Supper the fundamental idea and the fundamental fact of the work of salvation are secured as the Church's foundation for all time. And these are, of course, explained by the tradition of the life and teaching of Jesus as orally proclaimed by the apostle. He exhorts them to hold fast this tradition as the indispensable foundation of saving faith (1 Cor. xv. 1, 2; Col. ii. 7), and he hurls an anathema at its corrupters, who preach another gospel which is yet no gospel (Gal. i. 6-9). But he felt no need of fixing his gospel in writing; his Epistles are not catechisms, or confessions of faith. On the contrary, we see him committing the communities with all confidence to the living Christ, who, on the foundation laid once for all, continues to rule them by His Spirit. But the Lord who is the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17) rules His Churches by continually renewing in them the basal powers of faith and love, and by conferring on them, in virtue of these powers, a new wealth of spiritual gifts which serve for their "edification," that is, their advancement on the foundation that is laid. That faith and love—or, to develop more fully the subjective side of Christianity, faith, hope, and love—are the basal powers by which the life of the community must be supported and developed, and its identity maintained, needs no further exposition (1 Cor. xiii. 13). They can and must decide in all the questions and complications that life can raise, and so the apostle turns to them when he has to solve such questions and complications in the

Church. He claims no absolute authority, no obedience of faith, for his own words (1 Cor. vii. 25, 40), but he appeals to the discernment and brotherly disposition of his fellow-Christians, and is confident that when he is no longer present the same powers will continue to support the Church, and carry it towards perfection (Eph. iv. 13 f.; Phil. iii. 15). And this is all the more certain as the Lord through His Spirit constantly bestows upon the Church that wealth of special gifts for its edification, the "*χαρίσματα*," as the apostle prefers to call them, that is, sanctified talents for serving the Church (1 Cor. xii. 9). In the twelfth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle speaks in most detail of this spiritual equipment of Christendom, with special reference, of course, to the phenomena of those days, but so that we see that he is really dealing with the spiritual gifts which, in changing forms, the Church needs and enjoys at all times. As every member of the human body has its special office and function in ministering to the preservation and prosperity of the whole, so, the apostle teaches us, every living member of the Church, the body of the Lord, has a gift for the service of the whole; and as the sensuous body is dependent on the multiplicity and co-operation of its organs, and the more neglected organs are possibly the most essential, so is it in the body of Christ. The picture which he draws here has become for us the ideal of the living Church, in which every member takes an active part. In that picture he brings out only the most essential gifts as suits his occasion (1 Cor. xii. 8 f.; Rom. xii. 5-8). Above all, he prizes *προφητεία*, prophecy for the edification of the Church, that is, the gift of speaking to the Church under an immediate impulse of the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 30),—not always directly for the communication of a new revelation (1 Cor. xiv. 6), but always for edification, exhortation, and comfort. Beside this *προφητεία* stands on the one hand the *διδασκαλία*, and on the other the speaking with tongues. The former, which the apostle (1 Cor. xii. 8) has in view in his phrase words of wisdom and knowledge, is the gift of teaching in the narrower sense, whether for communicating new knowledge, or only for developing knowledge which is only partly understood; it is also a speaking in the Holy Spirit, only it comes from the

quiet reflection of the Teacher. The speaking with tongues, on the other hand, was an ecstatic outpouring of the heart, surpassing prophecy in impetuous directness, which no longer taught or preached, but only exulted and adored; it was an enraptured, stammering dialogue with God, unintelligible and of no use to the Church unless there was an interpreter who could follow these ecstatic effusions of feeling, and explain them to the hearers (1 Cor. xiv. 2, 4, 5 f.).<sup>1</sup> If these gifts had their sphere chiefly in the public edification of the Church, there were others that ministered to the domestic and social needs, such as gifts of miraculous healing of the sick (*ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*, 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28), or gifts of helps and beneficence to the poor and strangers (*ἀντιλήψεις*, 1 Cor. xii. 28; cf. Rom. xii. 8, xvi. 1, 2); or the gift of government, the talent of director (*κυβερνήσεις*), needed in the assemblies and business of the Church. If we leave out of account the extraordinary and, in part, miraculous form peculiar to the first days of Christianity, we perceive the essential gifts which the Church at all times needs for its maintenance and development: gifts of preaching, of liturgical utterance, of scientific and catechetical teaching, of care for the poor and sick, of guiding and governing. In the apostolic age these gifts no more fell from heaven than in their present natural form they originate without the co-operation of the Holy Spirit. They all, even the *γλωσσαῖς λαλεῖν*, which manifestly has a physical basis, have their root in a man's predisposition, which, however, must be fitted for service in the Church by that which is the Christian spirit of life. Hence the management of them which the apostle suggests presupposes the recognition of an important natural and human factor. In their public gatherings he not only suppresses the speaking with tongues (1 Cor. xiv.), in which a strong psychical exaltation manifestly plays a part, he also subjects prophecy, on which he puts so high a value, to the discipline of the same Spirit from which it came. Hand in hand with it should go a gift of criticism, a *διάκρισις*

<sup>1</sup> About this most mysterious of charisms, and its specially enigmatic name, see my article "Speaking with Tongues," in Riehm's *Bibellexikon*. I hope that I have there explained the name more satisfactorily than was the case formerly.

*πνευμάτων* (1 Cor. xii. 10, xiv. 29), to be exercised by the prophets themselves as well as by the whole Church, with the view of distinguishing, in the words of prophecy, gold, silver, precious stone, and wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor. iii. 12). In the same sense, the apostle exhorts the Thessalonians: "Quench not the Spirit (which speaks by the prophets), and despise not prophecy (of your preachers). Prove all things (all their statements); and hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. v. 19, 20). And in Rom. xii. 6 he reminds the prophets themselves to prophesy *κατ' ἀναλογίαν πίστεως* (*sc. αὐτοῦ*), according to the measure of their faith, that is, not to wish in a vain excitement to say more than they can say with inner truth. This is not, as is usually said, a distinction between divine and dæmonic inspiration—Paul would have used language less mild regarding the latter; but it is the acknowledgment that in prophecy, as in the whole of the new spiritual life of the believer, the divine and the human spirit are blended, and the divine, as it penetrates with its sanctifying power the human, is also subjected to various limitations and disturbances.<sup>1</sup> Here, then, we see how he conceives the development of the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It advances, not without human errors and disturbances, but as the Lord by His Spirit constantly awakens critical gifts corresponding to the creative gifts, and as the "Spirit is not quenched," but His words proved in order that the good in them may be held fast, the truth is maintained, is discovered afresh, and is advanced in new directions.

## § 7. DIVINE WORSHIP AND CHURCH ORDER

These facts and observations furnish us with a clear picture of the divine worship and of the whole life of a Pauline Church. The members of the Corinthian Church, according to 1 Cor. xi. and xiv., had two kinds of regular meetings. One without doubt in the evening, at which the Lord's Supper was celebrated, that is, a meal of love prepared from that which was brought by the wealthy members which represented

<sup>1</sup> Just as the apostle (Eph. iv. 30) in another connection speaks of grieving the Holy Spirit, in which figure he describes all inward unfaithfulness to the new principle of life.

the brotherhood of all in the Lord, and finding its climax in the celebration of the memorial of His death, the Lord's Supper in our sense. The other meeting, which was held perhaps on the morning of Sunday, already marked in the custom of Christians (1 Cor. xvi. 2 ; cf. Acts xx. 7 ; Rev. i. 10), was devoted to edification by the word, by addresses, and free prayer. There is no mention of any kind of fixed order, or of any limitation to the preaching of regular officials, but it is said, 1 Cor. xiv. 26 : "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation (of the tongues). Let all things be done unto edifying." Hence the most diverse utterances and discourses followed and crowded on each other (vv. 27, 29); there were praying, teaching, prophesying, stammering in ecstasy, interpreting of that which was stammered; questions also were raised and answered (ver. 35). If one had prayed aloud, he who took the place of a layman (ver. 16), that is, he who was a mere listener, answered with an Amen; but men without any place in the worship, mere receivers, did not properly speaking exist, at least in principle. "Ye may all prophesy one by one," says the apostle, ver. 31, attesting the general fundamental freedom of teaching, though, of course, its actual exercise was limited to those who had a special gift for it (ver. 29). And even in other parts of the Church life we note little or nothing of a fixed official order. The apostle does, indeed (xii. 28), speak of *κυβερνήσεις*, gifts of government, and (xvi. 15, 16) of men who have been ordained *τοῖς ἁγίοις εἰς διακονίαν*, and to help the Church by their labours. But the very expression *ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς* favours the idea that there was as yet no formal organisation of the Church, but that the management of the common affairs still lay in the hands of a *clerus naturalis*, men honoured because first-fruits of the Church (Rom. xvi. 5 ; 1 Cor. i. 15, xvi. 15 ; Rom. xvi. 23), and of their voluntary helpers who met without special election and appointment. Hence the official idea which the apostle makes use of in 1 Cor. xii. is a purely ideal one. He speaks, indeed, of *διακονίαι*, ministries (cf. Mark x. 43), and even gives them a certain order of rank (ver. 28); but this order passes from posts to duties, such as healing the sick and deeds of beneficence, which cannot in anyway be con-

sidered as legal offices. These *διακονίαι* are manifestly synonyms of the corresponding *χαρίσματα* (cf. vv. 4–6), offices only in the purely moral sense in which every special gift carries its corresponding duty with it, not in any sense of legal ordination. Even the apostolate, which he does not limit to himself and the Twelve, but seems to have recognised in every actual founder of a community (Rom. xvi. 7; cf. 1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 13), is not excepted from this free and ideal notion of office (xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11; cf. ver. 12, *ἔργον διακονίας*). That, of course, does not prevent the free spiritual and natural order of the gifts from being expressed in the legal form of Church order as soon as the need of doing so was felt; and yet under the eyes and in the hands of the apostles this process began with respect to the local churches, while the Church as a whole remained entirely without organisation, subject to the ideal unity and order of Eph. iv. 4 f. Thus Rom. xii. 8 presupposes *προϊσταμένους* in the Roman Church; in Phil. i. 1 the apostle salutes the Church, together with the bishops and deacons—*ἐπισκόποις* who (according to Acts xx. 17, cf. with ver. 28) are called “elders” in the Jewish Christian phraseology. And even in 1 Thess. v. 14 f. he is manifestly speaking to directors of the Church, who have to exhort the same, and might feel tempted to “quench the Spirit,” and is giving them a kind of guidance for their office. In the same way we see him in Corinth introducing the beginnings of Church order so far as it seemed necessary. He excludes women from the general qualification for speaking in the assemblies (1 Cor. xiv. 34), limits the speaking with tongues in the public worship (vv. 27, 28), limits also the number of prophets who are to speak in one and the same assembly (ver. 29). But he does all this not in the sense of a new theocratic legislation, but on general grounds of Christian wisdom which the Corinthians themselves must approve: “Let all things be done decently, and in order. For God is not a God of disorder, of confusion, but of harmony, of peace” (xiv. 40, 33); “If any man has the Spirit of God, he must acknowledge that what I ordain is in keeping with the mind of the Lord” (ver. 37).<sup>1</sup> He appeals also to the order of God in nature in similar cases (xi. 14); God’s Spirit does not place

<sup>1</sup> “That it is *κυρίου*”—the word *ἐντολαί* is probably a gloss.



Himself above God's natural order. We see that the freedom, independence, and spontaneity of the communities, their spiritual government, is not abolished by these beginnings of Church order, or by any genuine Christian development of it. No man had ever less of the hierarchical tincture than Paul —“Not that we would have dominion over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy” (2 Cor. i. 24); “For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord; and ourselves, your servants for Christ's sake” (2 Cor. iv. 5). To him, therefore, every special office in the Church of God goes back to the universal office, the universal priesthood and prophetic function of all believers. “Christ has given some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry” (Eph. iv. 11, 12). And therefore, in his view, all Church order and all spiritual gifts are surpassed by love, the highest and divine law of the Church's life, in virtue of which no one desires to rule over others, but only to serve others: “Love which suffereth long, and is kind; which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things” (1 Cor. xiii.). Again and again he praises and commends love as the mistress of Christian freedom, which permits no selfish use of that freedom, but suspends it in self-denial for a brother's sake, condescends especially to the weak, and thus secures the harmony and blessing of the Church's life (Rom. xiv. 15; 1 Cor. viii.-x.). He has no other law to announce to the Church than this, which the Lord bequeathed to His disciples as His new commandment. But this law is an infinite one, and can never be sufficiently fulfilled: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law” (Rom. xiii. 8). This law of the Spirit seems to deny freedom and love only on one side; the apostle knows cases in which the Church must proceed legally and judicially (1 Cor. v.). But these are cases in which the Church cannot apply her peculiar law of life, because those to whom she has to apply it no longer inwardly belong to her. She has

freedom and toleration for all her members, even for the weakest; but she has no freedom or toleration for the slave of vice who brings shame on the Christian name, for him whose life makes manifest that he is not led by the Holy Spirit, but is only a brother in name (1 Cor. v. 11, vi. 9-11). She does not punish him in the worldly and judicial sense, still less does she condemn him; she only declares to him you no longer belong to us; she excludes him; that is the final and the only love she can show him in order to save him.<sup>1</sup> And even in these cases in which legal procedure against a member who is no longer a member is necessary, the self-government of the spiritual community is manifest both according to Jesus (Matt. xviii. 7) and Paul. Even when Paul urges the Corinthians to this Church duty which is painful to them, he does so not as their master; he does not excommunicate the incestuous person in virtue of official apostolic authority; absent in body but present in spirit, he takes his place in the assembly of the Church at Corinth in order first to give his personal judgment (1 Cor. v. 3, 4). For the custody of its Christian character must be committed to the consciousness and resolution of the Church.

### § 8. THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

This relegation of an unworthy member to the unredeemed world is a duty of the Church both to herself and to the world, the salt and the light of which she can be only by not allowing herself to be drawn down to the same level with it (Phil. ii. 15). And this brings us, finally, to the relation and obligation of the Church towards the world. According to his great principle, "All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient," the relation, in the matter of intercourse with the world, in which Paul places the Churches is that of freedom in principle joined to watchfulness. He does not require Christians to go out of the world (1 Cor. v. 10): "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the

<sup>1</sup> ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, ver. 5. That Paul seems to invoke a miracle of chastisement for this purpose is, of course, an individual peculiarity; but that is subordinated to the general idea of Church discipline.

world" (1 Cor. iii. 22). He does not even object to their having free social intercourse with the heathen as guests (1 Cor. x. 27), although, when he deals with the denials of the resurrection, which had come into the Church from philosophising heathen circles, he incidentally reminds them that "evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. xv. 33). He always in cases of need placed himself under the protection of Roman law (Acts xvi. 37, xxii. 25, xxv. 10, 11), and found no obstacle to his doing so in the exhortations of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 38-42). On the other hand, it may be easily understood that the Christian Church would make no more use than was necessary of the public institutions which were administered according to principles so entirely different from those of Christians. The apostle disapproves of the Corinthian Christians carrying their disputes about property before heathen courts, instead of having the matter arranged by an umpire from the Church, as the Roman law itself permitted; just as we still disapprove of friends and relations going to law with each other (1 Cor. vi. 1-5). He disapproves no less when the levity of the Corinthians, in the name of Christian freedom and enlightenment, leads them to suppose that they could take part in heathen idol feasts, or sacrificial meals held in a heathen temple (1 Cor. viii. 10, x. 1-22). He knew better than these presumptuous beginners in Christianity what a conflict was yet in store for the young Christendom against the seductive spiritual powers of the old world. He appreciated the power of the idol worship with its sensuous charms, the power of Hellenic culture with its glitter and its corruption, the power of the national feeling with its proud memories, and the magic of worldly pleasures and forms of life, and he summoned his converts to put on the whole Christian armour lest they should be defeated in the conflict with these powers. This is the conflict, "not with flesh and blood," with palpable enemies, but with "the evil spirits in the air," "the rulers of the world and spiritual wickedness in high places," of which he speaks (Eph. vi. 10 f.); there he tells them that these enemies are to be fought with the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Besides the power of temptation, he beheld the threatening cloud of persecution hanging over the young

Church. Intentional persecutions of the Christians on the part of the State were as yet unknown, and the apostle could declare to the frivolous Corinthians, "there hath no temptation overtaken you but such as is common to man";—but he foresaw something worse, something so bad that only the faithfulness of God will make the suffering endurable (1 Cor. x. 13). The experience of other communities, at Thessalonica and Philippi, had been less easy. The social pressure which young and small religious communities must always suffer from the old which they have left, was abundantly exercised, and the fanatic Jews spread over the whole Greek East were adepts at rousing the passions of the masses, and the harshness of the Roman government against the Christian communities. Against this the apostle arms his converts with the glorious weapon of Christian patience. "We glory also in tribulation";—"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow";—"To you is this grace given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake";—"We are joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we also may be glorified together" (Rom. v. 3, viii. 18, Phil. i. 29, Rom. viii. 17). And what a heroic Christian example he set them in this matter, is shown by the description of his experience in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. It is the consciousness of an inexhaustible inner riches, of an eternal salvation that cannot be taken from him; it is the free access at all times to a Father in heaven (Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12), who makes all things work together for His children's good (Rom. viii. 28), that makes him preach to his readers in the midst of this state of things: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. v. 16–18). But the Church had not merely the negative duty of guarding herself against the temptations and persecutions of the world, she had also the positive duty of a mission to the world. The apostle, who trusted that he would see the "coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles," and the conversion of the hardened Israel, speaks less of this missionary duty than we might perhaps expect. That obligation was fulfilled of itself without much speaking or planning. The communi-

ties furnished him with colleagues for his undertaking, and equipped him and them for their journeys (Rom. xv. 24). Besides, the meetings of the communities themselves were like so many mission stations, as they were visited by numerous non-Christians, and new hearts were ever being won. The apostle (1 Cor. xiv. 23–25) gives a clear picture of this which is manifestly taken from life: “When the whole Church comes together . . . , and all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all (of his inner condition), he is judged of all (inwardly): the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and he (seized, overpowered), falling on his face, will worship God, and confess that God is in you of a truth.” The most effective mission was the most indirect and the least intentional. The apostle (Rom. xii. and xiii.) gives them a rule for their conduct in the sight of the surrounding heathen world. “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (xiii. 7). “Bless those who persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of one mind toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceable with all men. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath. If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: and so thou shalt heap coals of fire (of shame) on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (xii. 14–21). If Christians walked according to this rule, which reminds us everywhere of the Sermon of Jesus on the Mount, then it could not but be that the people who saw their good works would glorify their Father in heaven who wrought so wonderfully in them (Matt. v. 16). The heathen themselves, in all their antique glory of intellect and culture, were miserable without heavenly comfort or moral power, in bondage to sensuous lusts which they could not but condemn, without hope and without God (Eph. ii. 3, 12); here was a community which in the humblest and most oppressed conditions exhibited the glorious opposite of all that. And so it already exercised

in secret the judicial function over the world of men and spirits which the apostle prophetically awarded it (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CONSUMMATION OF THE KINGDOM

#### § 1. FAITH AND HOPE

We have still to discover Paul's conception of the content of Christian hope. Hope, that branch of the Christian faith which relates to what is still future in the divine work of salvation (Rom. viii. 24, 25; 1 Cor. xiii. 13), does not in the case of Paul, as in the case of Peter and the other original apostles, form the centre of gravity of subjective Christianity;—he finds that in a belief in the salvation that has appeared in the fact of the cross. But a profound sense of the imperfection of earthly things, which never leaves the apostle in spite of all his joy in salvation, causes him to give it an essential place beside faith, and love the fruit of faith. The *σωτηρία* in the full sense takes place only in the future, as is stated in the passage in Romans just referred to, *τῇ γὰρ ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν*. And if this hope should be deceptive, if in this life only we had hope in Christ, without seeing a future fulfilment (1 Cor. xv. 19), then of all men we would be most miserable, because we would be sacrificing this life to an ideal which was only a dream. But this hope is not deceptive, "for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit which is given to us" (Rom. v. 5); and this Spirit, the pledge of eternal glory, has made the special prophetic disclosures to the apostle which form the content of his doctrine of Christian hope. If we sum these disclosures up as giving an idea of the consummation of the kingdom, that is because the notion of the kingdom of God, which elsewhere in Paul's writings falls into the background, is prominent here (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28).

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## § 2. NEARNESS OF THE PAROUSIA

In following the apostle in this closing chapter of his teaching, which is prophetic in the narrower sense, we must, of course, bear in mind throughout the limits (1 Cor. xiii. 8-12) he has set to all prophetic knowledge, even to his own. Even he, according to God's arrangement, does not see things future face to face, but through a glass darkly, in an emblematic form, the real meaning of which may be guessed by us, but cannot be distinguished by the prophet himself. We must keep this point of view steadily before us throughout his whole imaginative presentation of the last things; it is applicable at the outset to that prophetic idea, which is to him the gate of entrance to all else, the idea of the parousia. The "parousia of the Lord," His advent, that is, His return in glory, is a notion which we meet with especially in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, and also in 1 Cor. xv. 23; it undoubtedly springs from Jesus' own prediction, and is held by our apostle in common with the whole of primitive Christianity. It has not for our apostle the meaning which finally appears in the words of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 64), of a process stretching from the present into the future; to Paul as to the original apostles it was a fixed day in the future; and to him it is synonymous with the *ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου* borrowed from the language of the Old Testament prophets (1 Cor. i. 8, iii. 13, iv. 5; cf. ver. 3). That also, in his opinion, involved the nearness of the parousia, although he discreetly withstands fanatical exaggerations of this expectation in Thessalonica which had grown out of his preaching (2 Thess. ii. 1, 2). It was not a positive belief that he himself should live to see the parousia, and in his later letters he clearly acquiesces in the opposite idea (2 Cor. v. 1 f.; Phil. i. 23); but his constant assumption is that the second coming of Christ may be seen by the present generation, that is, by himself also, that it may be expected within a generation. By this assumption he finds his own and his readers' salvation (Rom. xiii. 11) nearer than when they first believed: the twenty years or so of which he is thinking is to him of some consequence with regard to the parousia. In the same expectation he writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. vii. 29-31)

as though it were not worth their while to enter into new earthly relations: "The time is short, so that they who have should be as though they had not: for the fashion of this world passeth away." And when, as in 1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 52, he pictures the parousia to himself, and contrasts those then living with those already dead, he includes himself not among the latter, but the former,—a sure sign that he hoped to be still among the living. Once the parousia was transformed from something "henceforth" passing on through the history of the world and realising itself progressively into a simple future event, understood with all the imperfection which adheres to any immediate understanding of an unfulfilled prophecy, such a shortening of the perspective of the future was unavoidable in a generation which had experienced things so overpoweringly great that they could not doubt the possibility of a miraculous and speedy consummation; and the founding and perfecting of the kingdom of God were so closely connected for them, that they overleaped the historical conditions lying between the two. It may be premised that if the Pauline notion of the parousia as an individual event in the near future is only a symbolic view of an infinite process, the same is true also of his idea of the day of judgment and the day of resurrection.

### § 3. THE ANTICHRIST OF 2 THESS. II

Notwithstanding that expectation of the nearness of "the day of the Lord," the apostle felt that the history of the world must have some sort of inward completeness before it came. How? His utterances on this point are certainly widely divergent in the earlier and later Epistles. As his strongly eschatological preaching produced among the Thessalonians the fanatical idea that the day of the Lord was at hand, he explains to them (2 Thess. ii.) the mystery of iniquity (*ἀνομία*), which must first appear. For the day of the Lord cannot come, "except there first come a falling away, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. His coming



(παρουσία) will be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 7-10). Here, therefore, we have the prophetic idea of the future history of the world: mankind must be separated into believers and unbelievers, the godly and those hostile to God (cf. vv. 11, 12). As the eternal truth and love have appeared in Christ in order to draw to them all who are susceptible, falsehood and selfishness must also reach their climax in a son of Satan opposed to Christ, who in an insolent self-deification will gather round him the unbelievers, and lead them to destruction by the deceivableness of superstition and lawlessness (*ἀνομία*). But the climax of evil is also the commencement of its judgment: when the man of sin shall have placed himself on the throne of God as ruler of the world, then Christ will descend from heaven and consume him with the breath of His mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of His coming (ver. 8); then will judgment fall on all "who have not believed the truth, but have had pleasure in unrighteousness" (ver. 11). How or where the apostle thought that Antichrist would appear, whether he thought of him as proceeding from Judaism or heathenism, are secondary questions. He could hardly have thought of him as proceeding from the Cæsars, though some features—the self-deification and the sitting in the temple of God—may have been derived from certain mad propensities of the Emperor Caligula. As the *κατέχων* and *κατέχων* (vv. 6, 7) can scarcely mean anything else than the Roman government and its imperial upholder, which for the time restrains that extreme manifestation of the *ἀνομία*, and as Paul elsewhere considers the Roman magistrates as God's ministers (Rom. xiii. 1), we must not seek for anything in his writings similar to the idea of the Apocalypse, that the Roman Empire is itself Antichrist, and that its hostility to God is concentrated in Nero. But neither do the colours and features of the picture suit a Jewish pseudo-Messiah and revolutionary hero, as some have recently suggested, with the view of saving the originality of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians in relation to the Apocalypse. A Jewish pseudo-Messiah could

only be thought of as appearing in the name of God and of His law, that is, not as a preacher of *ἀνομία*, and as one making himself God: the description "exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped" (*πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα*), rather points to heathen territory for its origin. In the case of the *ἀποστασία*, spoken of in ver. 3 as the signal for the appearance of the Antichrist, one thinks either of a Jewish insurrection or of a great apostasy in Christendom, of the expectation of which, however, there is not the slightest trace in Paul's writings. It may be that the apostle, who knew the silent fermentation of the East, of which Tacitus and Suetonius speak sometime later, intended by the *ἀποστασία* a general revolt of the subject nations from the Roman dominion; a revolution of the world out of which will arise a champion of it, supported by dæmoniac powers, a rebel against all order, human and divine. It is not necessary, however, to hold that Paul had in his mind a definite historical origin for that figure of the future. The idea of Antichrist, anti-Messiah, was familiar to the Jewish imagination from the days of Antiochus Epiphanes: it might pass over into early Christian prophecy, and obtain in it the form it has in our passage, without giving any sure indication of its historical birthplace.

#### § 4. THE PICTURE OF THE CONSUMMATION OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY IN ROM. XI.

On the other hand, the question arises, whether the picture of the consummation of the world's history outlined in 2 Thess. ii. can be harmonised with that which the apostle sketches in Rom. xi. According to the arguments of this chapter, God has hardened the heart of Israel for the present, because He first of all desires to publish His gospel in the Gentile world; but when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in (to the kingdom of Christ), then that hardening is to cease, and all Israel will be saved (ver. 25). The expression, "the fulness of the Gentiles," is explained by the use of the same word (ver. 12) to describe the Jewish nation which is to be saved. But though one makes deductions from both expressions, and chooses to understand by them,

not absolutely the whole, but only the great mass of Jews and Gentiles, the question must arise, how this agrees with the great ἀποστασία in 2 Thess. ii., and whence the enormous following who serve Antichrist are to come? The apostle cannot have thought of an enormous apostasy of the Church which he hoped would fill the world; for not only does he indicate nothing of this in Rom. xi., but, according to ver. 15, the gracious receiving of the whole of Israel is to be the signal for the raising of the dead, that is, for the appearance of the triumphant kingdom of Christ. There is manifestly no room in this view of the future for the appearance and world dominion of the Antichrist, and it can only be assumed that in the interval between the Epistles to the Thessalonians and that to the Romans, the prophetic views of the apostle had essentially changed. That view of the Antichrist and his dominion in the world was undoubtedly the view of the primitive Christians and apostles; it was taken from Judaism on the authority of the Book of Daniel; Paul had so received it, and proclaimed it to the Thessalonians. But the magnificent results which he obtained in the Gentile world from that very time changed his opinion, and even the obduracy of Israel appeared to him in another light from the prophetic hour in which the *μυστήριον* alluded to in Rom. xi. 25 was disclosed to him. The clouds of divine wrath with which, in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, he saw the heaven of the future overcast, were dispersed by the emergence of the sun of grace, and that idea which he expresses at the close of Rom. xi. came to him as the deepest mystery and the final goal of the world's history: "He hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all" (ver. 32). Not that he imagined the final course of the world's history now as a series of easy, peaceful victories. In the same section of the Epistle to the Romans he speaks of *σκεύη ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν* (Rom. ix. 22), by which, as corresponding to Pharaoh, he unquestionably means the present unbelieving Jewish nation, which he saw, after long trial of divine patience, hastening to its ruin. And in like manner he sets before the Christian Church (1 Cor. vii. 26) an *ἐνεστῶσα ἀνάγκη*, which is to fill the last period of the present æon; that is, he expects painful historical conflicts and crises even in the Græco-Roman

world (cf. x. 13). But these pictures of the last times are by no means so dark as those which meet us in 2 Thess. ii. The judgment on Israel which actually followed in the Jewish war might even help to the conversion of the nation, as was also expected in the Apocalypse (chap. xi.), and the persecution of the Christians by the Gentile world, which was feared (1 Cor. vii. 26, x. 13), might rather result in its conversion. The apostle must have explained to himself in some such way the particulars of Rom. xi. 25–32, by conceiving them as taking place in the present generation, while the progress of things as described in 2 Thess. ii. could not possibly have issued in a *ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσῃ*. And therefore, according to the later and maturer view of the apostle, it is not so much the final culmination of evil and the obduracy of mankind, as the victory of the gospel and the conversion of the world, which calls down from heaven the exalted Christ, and brings in His visible dominion of the world.

#### § 5. THE PAROUSIA

The anxiety of the Thessalonians lest those already dead might not share in the parousia, caused the apostle to describe it (1 Thess. iv. 14 f.) in the style of prophetic imagination. “The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Here the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God simply mean the public and solemn announcement of the great act to all, or—if we compare 1 Cor. xv. 52 with its “last trump” and its *σαλπίζει γάρ*, which announces the raising of the dead—just the divine cry awakening those who sleep in the bosom of the earth. The statement about the believers who are still alive being caught up into the air is more obscure. According to this, He who comes from heaven does not seem to set His foot on earth; for if He did so He would there gather His faithful around Him. But the meaning cannot be that He would come only half-way to meet them, in order to take them

with Him into His heaven, for then His "coming down from heaven" would be a meaningless formality. Nay, His whole parousia would be nothing more for the earth than a momentary spectacle. He would only show Himself to earth in order to vanish from it together with those who believe in Him; and where then would be the judgment of the world which is connected with the parousia as the *ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*? Light is thrown upon the matter, as I believe, by the significance which the earth's atmosphere has in the cosmology of Paul. According to his view of the world, as already described, between heaven, as the throne of God, the world of perfection from which Jesus descends, and earth, as the dwelling-place of mankind, which He comes to judge, there lies the atmosphere as a middle region, and in this middle region dwell the *ἀρχαί, δυνάμεις, ἐξουσίαι*, to which the earthly historical world is subject (Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12). Now, since His resurrection, Christ does rule in the earth; but that is only a secret spiritual government. His parousia is to change that; He comes down from the highest heaven, and sets up His throne in that intermediate space, from which He will rule the cosmic world, and gather His triumphant Church around Him, that He may, in common with His saints, dethrone the *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι* (1 Cor. xv. 24, vi. 3), and judge the world, which they have held captive (1 Cor. vi. 2). That is conceived in the most imaginative style; beside it we have a second picture of the parousia (1 Cor. xv. 22-26), more sober in style, yet richer in ideas, which confirms and completes the results we have just come to. The passage starts from the resurrection of the dead, and from this point of view describes the victorious dominion of the reappearing Christ. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, authority, and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies beneath His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." This disposes of a dogmatic prejudice which makes the parousia the end of all things; for it shows

that the apostle does not regard the parousia as bringing all things to an end, but rather as opening a new development; that, in his opinion, the victorious and triumphant kingdom of Christ, whose throne, according to 1 Thess. iv., is to be set in the air above the earth, comes in between the parousia and what he calls the end. As the βασιλεία of Christ, according to vv. 24, 28, ceases in order to give place to the perfect and direct rule of God, what would become of the συμβασιλεύειν of believers with Christ which is mentioned in 1 Cor. iv. 8, vi. 2, 3, if the parousia were coincident with the end? And where would there be room for the "putting down of the ἀρχαί and ἐξουσίαι," the "putting all enemies beneath His feet," which, in vv. 24, 25, is clearly placed, not before, but after the parousia, and not as a momentary, but as a gradual course of victory, as is shown by the words about a last enemy? Finally, it is undeniable that the "destruction of death as the last enemy cannot possibly coincide with the awakening of the οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ to be expected at the parousia; for death would still hold in his power those who did not belong to Christ at the parousia, at any rate, all who were dead before Christ, that is, death would not be destroyed. But if all are to be made alive in Christ, as all died in Adam, then the apostle must have thought of a great activity of Christ between the raising of those who sleep in Him and the raising of all. It is therefore incontestable that Paul cherished a view similar to that of the writer of the Apocalypse, with his "thousand years' kingdom," though his notion was richer in its contents. In a word, the parousia of Christ discloses to the apostle a victorious and triumphant government of Christ, which is marked off both from His present spiritual dominion and from the final direct dominion of God the Father; an αἰὼν μέλλων in which the greatest problem of salvation has still to be solved, and the cause of God in the universe to be carried to its final goal of victory. Two great prophetic ideas give to this future æon its contents: the idea of the raising of the dead, and that of the judgment of the world. We have now more closely to examine Paul's conception of both.

§ 6. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD: (a) IDEA OF THE  
GLORIFIED BODY

Paul's Jewish and Pharisaic training had already given him the belief in a resurrection of the dead at the last day (Acts xxiii. 6); but this article of his faith was so deepened and spiritualised as to become really new by the view of the Risen One which he got at his conversion. Hence he preached the resurrection of Jesus not as an event in every respect unique, but as a guarantee and beginning of our own resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22); the victorious recovery from death, the glorifying of life through death which God has conferred upon His Son, the second Adam, is intended for the whole human race, and is guaranteed to all who become one with Christ (Rom. vi. 8, viii. 11, 29, xiv. 7, 8; 1 Cor. vi. 14, xv. 20 f. etc.). A doubt of this fundamental article of Christianity, probably imported into the Corinthian Church by heathen philosophic influences, caused him to give the magnificent exposition of it which is contained in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The resurrection of Christ does not seem to have been assailed by the perplexed doubters, but only their own; the apostle therefore argues that both stand or fall together. And with both, Christianity as a whole, faith, hope, the moral ideas of Christian life, likewise fall. Faith becomes "vain," "useless," because it is faith in a dead man who cannot help us (vv. 14, 17); hope becomes loss—"if in this life only we have hope in Christ (without experiencing a fulfilment in the next), then of all men we are most miserable," for we sacrifice the enjoyments of the fleeting existence to an empty dream (ver. 19). "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die" (ver. 32); that is, if death be the end of all, then existence has no higher moral meaning, and the Epicurean, Sadducean philosophy of life, that the best thing is to make the most of it sensuously, is right. We see that the apostle looks on belief in the resurrection as coincident with belief in the eternal destiny of man, with belief in immortality resting on ethical grounds. It may seem strange that in presence of the Corinthians he does not take any notice of the intermediate way between faith in the resur-

rection and denial of personal existence after death, the philosophic belief in an immortality of the soul; and perhaps there is no surer proof of how mistaken it is to seek elements of Hellenic culture in the Pauline system of thought. But even if he had taken notice of that philosophic belief it would have appeared to him imperfect, inasmuch as an abstract immortality of the soul without an organ for communicating with the world around it, that is, without a body, would not have seemed to him an exalted, but a stunted life. It is the idea of the body as an essential constituent of the human personality which guides him; here, as before, it caused him to regard the body as a holy thing not to be profaned (1 Cor. vi. 18, 19); the body, like the soul, is a creation of God, destined for the praise and honour of its Creator, and the soul can effectively serve God only by means of it (Rom. xii. 1 f.). In this healthy biblical realism the apostle can now and then express himself about the resurrection as if he thought of a reviving of the very body which is laid in the grave (cf. for example, 1 Cor. vi. 13-15; Rom. viii. 11: *ὁ ἐγείρας ἐκ νεκρῶν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ζωοποιήσει καὶ τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν*); and yet, according to 1 Cor. xv. 35 f., that cannot possibly be his meaning. If, as is clear from this passage, the Corinthian doubters based their scruples chiefly on the impossibility of a restoration of the mouldering corpse, the apostle disarmed them by the distinction of the present and the future, the sensuous (*ψυχικόν*) and the spiritual body. The idea of the resurrection body as a spiritual body is one of the most original ideas of our apostle, though it is naturally affected by the necessary obscurity of all prophetic speech. The question is first as to the nature, and then as to the genesis of this spiritual body. The notion of a spiritual body seems self-contradictory; we must, however, remember that to the apostle the idea of the body is by no means coincident with that of the flesh; that, on the contrary, the body is the organic, not the material. No doubt the idea of the body as contrasted with the spirit retains something natural, as the apostle also connects the "redemption," that is, the glorification, of our bodies with the glorification of nature (*κτίσις*, Rom. viii. 23); but nature and spirit exist for each other, and the point of importance is that they should



come together in fit forms. By the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* the apostle understood a natural organ of our inner life which would correspond to and serve the *πνεῦμα*, the divine principle of life restored to us by Christ's indwelling and spiritual power, just as our present bodies are suited to our natural inner life, the *psyche*. Just as the sensuous body serves as the expression and instrument of the sensuous vitality, so the spiritual body is the expression and instrument of the vitality of our inmost being sanctified and made perfect in God. From the nature of the case we must, as a matter of course, give up the sensuous notion of such an organ; such a notion is not furnished even by falling back on the resurrection body of Christ to which the apostle supposes our glorified body to be similar (1 Cor. xv. 49). For Paul did not, like Peter under the influence of his Easter experience, think of the body of Christ when it still bore the wound marks of the crucifixion; when he met Christ on the way to Damascus it was as the Exalted One, the King of Heaven, who could penetrate and fill the universe with His brightness (cf. Eph. i. 23). It has been supposed that the apostle thought of the glorified Christ in a body of light; and certainly light, with its capacity of flying in a moment through infinite space and acting upon the remotest objects, would be the most fitting symbol for the material of the glorified body; yet to the apostle it would only have been a symbol, such as was already suggested to him by the earthly and heavenly double meaning of the word *δόξα* (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 40, 41, with Rom. v. 2).

#### § 7. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD: (b) GENESIS OF THE GLORIFIED BODY

Now, if this be the idea of the glorified body, it is improbable that Paul should have thought of it as proceeding from the elements of the mortal body; how should a *πνευματικόν* proceed from the mouldering *σάρξ*? This strange notion has been deduced from the figurative language in which Paul rejects the sameness of the present and the future body: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or

some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body" (1 Cor. xv. 36-38). Understanding by the figure of the seed, the corpse which is laid in the earth, we may credit the apostle with the rabbinical opinion that in the mouldering remains of the earthly body there is contained something incorruptible which God's creative power will develop into the new glorified body. But, then, the apostle's image would be seriously at fault, for he speaks of a living seed which is cast into the earth to die in it; the earthly body, on the other hand, dies first, and then is laid in the earth—not as a seed, but as a corpse. Manifestly the sowing must mean not the burial, but the unfolding of the earthly life which precedes death and issues in it (cf. Gal. vi. 7, 8); what the apostle means to say is that the form and appearance which life gets here is not the future, but only the seed of the future form; it is related to the latter as the seed to the future plant; it must perish, but out of it God brings individual variety and fitness, the eternal form of the personality corresponding to all the variety of individual men.<sup>1</sup> If at times the sameness of the earthly and the heavenly body seems to be asserted, this sameness can only be meant as an ideal one; the glorified body is to be the individual expression of your personality, just as the earthly was your individual body, that is, the two are identical through having a like relation to the same person. But all thought of a material sameness is definitely excluded by the statement: "But this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood—that is, the constituents of the earthly body—cannot inherit the kingdom of God—that is, enter into the kingdom of God;—neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. xv. 50). And this result cannot be shaken by the remembrance of the embodied Christ who came forth from the grave. Even He, to the apostle, did not enter heaven

<sup>1</sup> It may be noted incidentally how much better vv. 42-44, which speak of sowing in corruption, dishonour, weakness, etc., harmonise with this view than with the interpretation which refers them to burial. That a corpse is corruptible, unsightly, and weak, is a truism; that the Christian life on earth, as distinguished from the future glory, is such, are important statements. The *σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν*, however, which is perhaps confusing, designates the whole history of the earthly life, the development as well as the destruction of the earthly life of the body.

with "flesh and blood"; on the contrary, Paul must have imagined that the crucified body of the Saviour underwent a transformation in the resurrection, similar to that which in vv. 51-53 he supposes in the case of those who are alive at the parousia,—a transformation in which, according to 1 Cor. xv. 52, 2 Cor. v. 4, the mortal, the earthly body, is consumed (*καταποθῆ*), as it were, in the twinkling of an eye by the immortal. Even supposing that the inward man is not divested of the earthly body, but is clothed upon with that which is from heaven (2 Cor. v. 4), it is not the mortal, but the immortal, from which the glorified body proceeds. It is put on man as a heavenly garment from God's hand, which He has prepared in heaven for His own (2 Cor. v. 1); and if the garment of mortality has not been already laid aside, it dissolves in a moment under this new clothing of immortality. But this idea of the glorified body as a divine creative gift no more excludes the other idea of the secret preparation of it in man, than a divine gift of grace and an inner growth in man are wont to exclude each other in Paul's thought; this idea of development, however, is not connected with the outer, but with the inner man. If we fall back on the other original image of the apostle about the seed, it tells us: "As the seed which falls into the earth must contain a germ of life from which the future body of the plant can be developed, so the earthly life course hastening to death must contain an immortal, an eternal germ, a life hid in God (Col. iii. 3), for which God will fashion that new and suitable body which takes the place of the earthly body in the case of those who are saved." That we are not importing anything foreign into the apostle's thought, but only expressing his own meaning, is proved by various passages in which he traces back the resurrection of the body to the Holy Spirit inhabiting believers. "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He who raised Jesus from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies through His Spirit dwelling in you" (Rom. viii. 11).<sup>1</sup> "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,

<sup>1</sup> The reading *διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος* is certainly the genuine one, because in comparison with the *διὰ τὸ πνεῦμα* it gives the more original idea. But the same idea is also found in the beginning of the verse.

are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18). In like manner the great thought (1 Cor. xv.), "As we have borne the image of the earthy (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (ver. 49), is supported by the other (ver. 45), that Christ the second Adam has been made "a quickening spirit." As the resurrection of the body is thus repeatedly traced back to the Spirit of God dwelling in the believer, it is undeniably lifted out of the sphere of sensuous processes, and is conceived as the final result of an inner process of life which has absolutely nothing to do with the buried mouldering skeleton. The Holy Spirit is the divine principle of life in believers, the living centre of their personality, and when this principle reaches its full development it finds its expression in a body which corresponds to the perfect inner life, and this is called *σῶμα πνευματικόν*.

#### § 8. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD: (c) ITS POINT OF TIME

✓ If this conception of the resurrection body is correct, it follows, of course, that for Paul there is only an *ἀνάστασις τῶν δικαίων*, for none but such are capable of a pneumatic expression of their inner life. And with this agree the utterances of the apostle about the resurrection of the dead in every respect. He nowhere speaks of a resurrection of unbelievers, of a resurrection to condemnation. But in Phil. iii. 11, he represents the "resurrection from the dead" (*ἐκ νεκρῶν*) as the goal of hope and the prize of victory for which he strives—*εἴπως κατακτήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν*: clearly, therefore, it is by no means for all. Intelligible as this is in the light of what we have already found, it creates a difficulty as to the moment of the resurrection. According to 1 Cor. xv. 23, 1 Thess. iv. 14, Paul connects the awakening of "those who are Christ's," "those who sleep in Christ," with the moment of the parousia. If we leave the question meanwhile undecided as to how the resurrection of all who have become believers up to the parousia is related to the resurrection of all who have died in Adam, which is asserted immediately before (vv. 21, 22), it does seem strange that the resurrection, if it is the

expression of personal perfection, should come at the same point of time for all believers. The question arises, What becomes in the meanwhile of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord? The apostle knows nothing of a sleep of the soul which lasts to the parousia; in his later letters he is, on the contrary, certain that when he dies he will be immediately with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 23). The expression *κοιμᾶσθαι*, to fall asleep, standing by itself or united with *ἐν κυρίῳ* (1 Cor. xv. 18), does not express the unnatural idea of a condition in which the soul sleeps, in which the inner life stands still, it simply describes the departure that has taken place (falling asleep so far as the world is concerned) into fellowship with Christ (Rom. xiv. 7). It might rather be said that in his expectation of the nearness of the parousia, the apostle took no notice of that brief intermediate condition through which the few as he supposed had to pass, or he explained it to himself in the manner of his people as a sojourn in Paradise (Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. xii. 4). But to place the resurrection of believers at the parousia is really only an inference from the notion of "a day of the Lord," a notion from which Paul, in extending the day of judgment to a whole *αἰών* of Christ's victory and triumph, has already departed in so far as the future though not the past is concerned. When he thought of the parousia as a future but approaching event, as an appearance with which the Lord was to inaugurate His office as Judge of the world, and His work of renewing the world, the resurrection of His faithful people, and gathering them around Himself, followed as the first act of the beginning of a new order of the world. This fixing of the time of resurrection, in spite of its connection with Christ's work of salvation, was an echo of that Jewish eschatology which made the resurrection of the dead coincide with the judgment of the world, and the renewing of heaven and earth in the last day. But to the apostle this Jewish eschatology was broken through by the fact that Christ "the first-fruits of them that sleep," had been raised from the dead, not at the last day, but immediately after His death, after the perfection of His inner life. And it is therefore worthy of note that in his later Epistles the apostle, rising above the limits of the Jewish views in which he had been trained, no longer places

the resurrection at the parousia. This appears in particular in the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians. While in 1 Cor. xv. 51 f. he still clings to the idea of living to see the parousia, a serious danger to his life, which seems to have overtaken him before he wrote the Second Epistle (2 Cor. i. 8-10), changed his opinion, and forced him to face the possibility of a speedy death; and this accounts for the remarkable outpouring of his heart in chap. v. 1-8: "But we know, that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.<sup>1</sup> For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that has wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith not by sight). We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." That is, the apostle infers from the longing which we have at present not to be divested of the body, but to be clothed upon with an immortal body (like those who are alive at the parousia, 1 Cor. xv.), that an immortal body, a heavenly building, or a garment of immortality, is prepared for us by God for the moment of the dissolution of the earthly body. The word *αἰώνιον* (ver. 1) shows that he means by this *οἰκία ἀχειροποιήτος*, the resurrection body, and not some preliminary and imperfect embodiment. And it is clear from the determination of time *ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος οἰκία καταλυθῆ*, that the *ἔχομεν* in the same passage does not mean a mere ideal possession, a thing to be bestowed at the day of the parousia, but an actual having, that is, receiving from God. For ideally, in God's purpose, the believer does not obtain his future form of perfection at his death, but from the very beginning of his election (Rom. viii. 29). What he has in the moment of the

<sup>1</sup> "Naked"; the departed souls of the ungodly were, according to the Jewish notion, without a white garment of righteousness.

dissolution of his earthly body he has as an equivalent to that body, as really his as his earthly tabernacle has been. And ἔχομεν ἐκ θεοῦ does not contradict the idea contained in 1 Cor. xv. 35 f., that the glorified body grows up from a germ contained in the earthly life (γυμνὸς κόκκος); even there it is said ὁ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτῷ σῶμα; and in our passage the apostle describes the preparation already made by God for that gift of perfection—ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, θεὸς (ἔστιν), ὁ δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος. And so we have here the same idea of the resurrection in the glorified body as in 1 Cor. xv.; but we have it no longer connected with the day of the parousia, but immediately with the death of a man in Christ such as the apostle is. Paul is certain, and remains certain to the end (cf. Phil. i. 23), that the day on which he leaves the earthly body he will be taken to where the Lord is, that is, not into Hades, not into a "paradise," but into the heavenly world of perfection, and that in virtue of his fellowship with the Lord he will be clothed with the same glorified body as that in which the Lord now is. Whether in this view he transfers to the crisis of death itself the judgment of which he speaks in the same context (ver. 10), as one to be undergone even by him; whether he conceives the result of this judgment as finding expression in the formation of the glorified body; whether he ascribed to this glorified body, just as he did to the earthly body from the moment of its birth, a growth to the maturity of a perfect man,—we do not know. The only certain thing is that as soon as the moment of the resurrection of believers is separated from the day of the parousia, that day itself loses its certainty, and the way is opened up for that view of the parousia which we found indicated in Jesus' own prophetic words, that it is a process of victory and triumph which began with the resurrection of Christ, and is the heavenly counterpart of the earthly and natural course of the world. And so we might perhaps assert that the kernel of the Pauline prediction of the coming kingdom of Christ is as follows. At Christ's resurrection there is founded a victorious kingdom of salvation and eternal life, which, coming in between the earthly world of sin and death and the eternal world of perfection, takes up into itself the results of earth, tests and sifts them in the light of eternity, and

when what is imperfect is removed, makes of the stable elements that eternal and ideal world in which God will be all in all.

### § 9. THE JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD

This anticipates the Pauline idea of the judgment of the world, which is related to the resurrection of the dead, as the perfection of the whole is to the perfection of the individual personality. But this great article of doctrine requires an independent exposition. The idea of the judgment of the world, that is, of the final justification of God in the course of the world, is not peculiar to Paul, is not even a peculiarly Christian idea, but one which belongs to religion. Paul expresses it in this universality (Rom. ii. 6-8), in the passage about the *δικαιοκρισία θεοῦ* already quoted: "Who will reward every man according to his works: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them which are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." The peculiarly Christian conception of the judgment of the world begins with what Paul insists on (Rom. ii. 16), that God will execute this judgment through Christ, that is, it will take place on the basis of the redemption founded in Christ. God does not judge the world without having offered it salvation beforehand, as the apostle preaches to the Athenians (Acts xvii. 31): "God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, after having made faith possible to all by raising Him from the dead." We hear further that this judgment is in point of fact to be executed on all, not merely on unbelievers and non-Christians, and that it is to take place, not on the basis of faith, but of works. The apostle does not except his own conduct from the judgment of Christ. "I know nothing of myself (no unfaithfulness in my calling); but He that judgeth me is the Lord" (1 Cor. iv. 4). And in 2 Cor. v. 10 he writes: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that everyone may receive of the deeds done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." That the judgment is according to works and not according



to faith,—though this can secure an initial justification,—is, as we have already urged, the most decisive confirmation of the fact that the apostle's religious doctrine of salvation does not exclude, but includes the moral; he does not regard justification as rendering complete sanctification unnecessary; but it furthers sanctification, and from the first presupposes it as the final result of the life of faith. Of course "works" in this connection do not mean single acts, but the whole moral result and character of the life, as indicated in Rom. ii. 6 f.; 2 Cor. v. 10.<sup>1</sup> And therefore it is no contradiction, but an explanation, when the apostle repeatedly insists that the judgment of God will make manifest the inmost secrets of the heart (Rom. ii. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 5); it is clear that God judges, not according to the appearance, but the heart, the fundamental bias and inclination of which determines the moral value of the works. With this is connected the further intimation that the judgment will be carried out in the very heart of man, in his own consciousness. "Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that doeth evil," it is said (Rom. ii. 9); and the same passage (vv. 15, 16) plainly delineates how "on that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men, their conscience will bear them witness, and their thoughts accuse or excuse one another." The innermost meaning of the notion of the parousia of Christ for the judgment of the world is discovered here; the truth of God is to be so clear, His revelation in Christ is to shine into the heart of man, so that in this light every one may perceive the eternal worth or worthlessness of his own life, and so execute God's judgment on himself. From all this the symbolic and poetic character of other features in which the apostle paints the judgment of the world is manifest. We have already seen that "the day of the Lord" (Rom. ii. 5, 16; 1 Cor. i. 8, iii. 13, v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14; Phil. i. 6, 10; 1 Thess. v. 2, 4; 2 Thess. ii. 2, etc.),—an expression borrowed from the language of the Old Testament prophets, and carrying the signification of a day of judgment,—grew in the apostle's hands to a whole æon, lasting from the *παρουσία* to the *τέλος* (1 Cor. xv. 24). But even in this expanded form it remains a prophetic and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the like view of the concept "works" in the Epistles of the Apocalypse: Rev. ii. 2, 5, 19, 26, iii. 1, 8, 15.

symbolical view; the process, mysterious and inconceivable to our earthly thinking, in which the eternal product of our life on earth is set forth, unavoidably falls beyond the close of the world's history. It is equally a symbol when fire is mentioned as the element of the day of the Lord: *ἡ γὰρ ἡμέρα (τοῦ κυρίου) δηλώσει, ὅτι ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται, καὶ ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον ὁποῖόν ἐστιν τὸ πῦρ αὐτὸ δοκιμάσει* (1 Cor. iii. 13). This fire of judgment is conceived in 2 Thess. as a consuming fire of the *ἐκδίκησις*, retribution on the ungodly, as an element of separation between good and evil; in the passage quoted from Corinthians, on the other hand, it is the fire of cleansing through which the life-work, even of the Christian, must pass. The two are not exclusive; the fire consumes that which in itself is vain, it proves what is sterling, and therefore it purifies wherever the perishable and the permanent have been mixed. But the passage in Corinthians is worthy of special note, because it assumes that the work of a human life might be consumed by the fire of God's judgment, and yet the man himself be saved as a brand from the burning; and also because in the idea of a purifying judgment of God it presupposes a development of man in the other world. This must affect our conception of the result of the judgment of the world—at least, it refutes the absoluteness with which we are wont to conceive this result as a choice of perfect blessedness or eternal damnation. There can, of course, be no question that Paul thought of the judicial crisis of the world as an alternative, a *σωτηρία* or *ἀπώλεια* (cf. 1 Cor. i. 18; Phil. iii. 19, etc.); but that neither implies an immediate condition of perfection for the *σωζόμενοι*, nor an irrevocable destruction for the *ἀπολλύμενοι*. The apostle's peculiar expression for the final, that is, the future, attainment of salvation is, of course, *σώζεσθαι, σωτηρία* (Rom. v. 9, viii. 24); but his meaning is not that positive one which Luther conveys in his rendering of "seligwerden" (becoming blessed), but rather the negative idea of finally escaping destruction. We have the positive supplement in the *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, which Paul thinks of as essentially in the future (Rom. ii. 7, v. 21, vi. 22), or the divine glory (*δόξα θεοῦ*) in which the saved are to rejoice (Rom. v. 2, 11); or still more in the idea of the praise and reward which they receive from

God. Paul uniformly ascribes God's gifts of eternal life and eternal glory, that is, the unrestrained fellowship of life with God, and the restoration to the likeness of the glorified Son of God, to all the saved; but he thinks of the praise and reward as bestowed variously (1 Cor. iii. 8, iv. 5), corresponding to the special life-work of each, so that the individual form of perfection depends upon the character of the earthly life, which doubtless means differing degrees of ability for serving God. But, as we saw, he also supposes (1 Cor. iii. 13, 15) that one may obtain no special reward, but, as in the case of the malefactor on the cross, may lose his earthly life and yet be saved "as by fire," by purifying pains. And if we consider how even the best need purification on arriving at the gates of death, we have here room for the idea, which is not indeed expressed by the apostle, that perhaps all, even those who receive a reward, have yet, for a longer or shorter time, to pass through a process of purification in death, before their brows are circled with the crown of perfection of which the apostle speaks (Phil. iii. 12, 14). On the other hand, it is evident from the whole teaching of the apostle that all those who on earth have not found salvation in Christ, whether culpably or not, incur in the first instance the judgment of (permanent) *θάνατος*, which is the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23); that is, find themselves, through God's judgment, in *ἀπώλεια*. But it is impossible to confound this *ἀπώλεια* with *ἄλεθρος αἰώνιος*, of which the apostle once (2 Thess. i. 9), but never again, has spoken, unless the words of Christ are forgotten, that the Son of Man has come *σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός* (Luke xix. 10). If the apostle has nowhere expressed the possibility of conversion, and therefore of salvation, after death, it is undeniably presupposed in his doctrinal system. We have it in the thought that God judges the world by Christ, whose nature it is to meet no man as Judge to whom He has not first been offered as Saviour; it is contained in the express presupposition of the judgment of the world which the apostle asserts in Acts xvii. 31, that faith is first offered to every man. And if, according to Rom. ii. 15, 16, the judgment of the Gentile world is to be ratified in men's own consciences, the inner experience of the divine truth as revealed in Christ is everywhere its pre-

liminary condition. The passage (Phil. ii. 10), that "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, even of things under the earth," plainly presupposes a preaching of the gospel to those formerly dead, those that are found in the kingdom of the dead. But the last doctrinal article of the apostle which we have to consider, that of the completed kingdom of God, will show us that his thoughts went further still.

#### § 10. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE KINGDOM AND ITS FINAL PRECONDITIONS

The prophetic view of our apostle goes beyond the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the world to what, in 1 Cor. xv. 24, he calls τὸ τέλος, the final goal of God's ways. Behind the future victorious kingdom of Christ, to which the judgment of the world belongs, he sees the kingdom of eternal perfection, the eternal kingdom of peace of God the Father. "For Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies beneath His feet. But when all things shall have been put under Him, then will the Son also Himself be subject unto Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 25, 28). Paul, as it were, reserved Jesus' great word, the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, for this the goal of God's way of salvation, for here it could find its absolute application. It would not be correct to say that he speaks of the kingdom of God only in this future sense: "the kingdom of God, which is not in word, but in power," which is not "eating and drinking; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. iv. 20; Rom. xiv. 17), is manifestly the kingdom of heaven which Jesus preached as already present; but certainly Paul prefers to designate the latter as the "kingdom of Christ," as distinguished from the completed kingdom of the Father (Eph. v. 5; Col. i. 13). There is no need either to justify or explain the idea of God's being all in all, the idea of a relation between God and the world in which God is to condition all and fill all in the world, so that nothing ungodly should any longer exist; it is the perfect as well as the simplest religious idea of the world. Neither can we have any difficulties about Christ's giving back the government of the world to God the Father, unless we make them

for ourselves by means of an unbiblical Christology. Christ is God's great Captain in the world, in the fight against everything ungodly, against sin and death; He has received royal and divine authority to carry to victory the cause of God. When He has done that, He has made His mediatorial position between God and the world superfluous; He gives back His authority into the hands of the Eternal King, is content to be the first subject of His Father, and rejoices to see Him in uninterrupted communion with all His children, ruling for Himself the great Father's house. But there are still two preliminary conditions required, before this ideal goal of the world can be reached, about which we need information from the apostle. The one is the restoration of the cosmos to that perfection in which it would be the suitable expression of the creative idea,—the eternal wisdom and goodness. Such it is not in its present condition; nay, as we remember, it has not, according to Paul, been such from the very beginning; it was planned, indeed, for an ideal condition, but it has fallen into the very opposite of that. Other forces than God affected it from the beginning; it was placed under the created ἀρχαί and ἐξουσίαι, who had degenerated into ungodly powers of the world. Here comes in the prophecy discussed above (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25), that Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies beneath His feet; "that He must put down and subject to Himself every dominion, authority, and power." By this the apostle means the putting down of the ungodly and imperfect arrangements of the world, and their elevation into accordance with the eternal idea of the world which appeared in Christ, which is essentially what the old prophets had in view when they spoke of the setting up of a new heaven and a new earth. The principle of salvation penetrates even into the natural arrangements of the world, and so fashions it into a suitable place of life's labour for the Church of the perfected. According to 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3, the Church triumphant is to take part in the judgment of the world in general, and in particular in "the judgment of angels"; this is connected with that "putting down" of the ἀρχαί and ἐξουσίαι. The Church of the risen ones, gathered round their Royal Head, rules with Him (1 Cor. iv. 8), and carries through along with Him the judgment of the world, the victory of divine right

and divine truth among men; it also labours with Him for the setting up of the new ideal order of the world—the new heavens and the new earth. In that prophecy, the apostle continues (ver. 26), “death, as the last enemy, is destroyed.” That is not merely a paraphrase for the resurrection of believers while the others abide in death, nor of the resurrection of the dead in general while death continues to rule in nature; it is rather what the apostle thinks of in Rom. viii. 21 when he speaks of the redemption of the groaning creation from the bondage of corruption; it is the abolition of death as a principle of the world (*ἀρχή, ἐξουσία*). It is described as “the last enemy”; sin, with all its other confederates in the world, has been destroyed, and the eternal life now consumes its dark shadow, death, and thus completes the victory of the cause of God over the whole range of existence. Here we enter on the last question which the apostle’s teaching raises: Does the idea of an eternal condemnation, that is, an abiding kingdom of eternal death, agree with this account of Christ’s victory? Unquestionably it does not; if death has been destroyed it can no longer rule over anyone; and if God be all in all, there can no longer be any creature estranged from God, for in them, at least, God would not be *τὰ πάντα*. The idea of an eternal rejection in Paul could only be preserved by supposing the annihilation of the ungodly, a process of self-destruction of the obstinately evil completed before that “destruction of death”; but the apostle has not taught so. He has rather taught a final redemption and deliverance of all. The evidences of this are so powerful and incontestable that every attempt to interpret them in the contrary sense fails, however usual it is among us to stretch the apostle on the dogmatic rack, and force him to say the opposite of what he thinks and teaches. “That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow: of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father”; that this cannot mean an enforced homage of the condemned really needs no proof in presence of such passages as Rom. x. 9; 1 Cor. xii. 3. “Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification

of life" (Rom. v. 18). The whole force of the thought lies in this, that the effect of Christ is to be just as comprehensive as that of Adam; and it is not said that it is as comprehensive in power and possibility but not in actual results, for the actual results of Christ's work are contrasted with the actual results of Adam's. And the apostle repeats the same thought in view of the actual results: "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). It requires a peculiar exegetic conscience to find that in the minor term here "all" does not mean the same thing as in the major, or that in the *ζωοποιηθήσονται* it must be understood that a large portion of the "all" are made over to eternal death. Finally, the great statement with which the apostle closes the sublime argument of Rom. ix.—xi., a statement which inspires him with praises unto Him "of whom, and through whom, and to whom" are all things, "God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on all," that is, that He might finally overcome unbelief in all (cf. xi. 23). All that can be opposed to these well-considered and unambiguous utterances in favour of eternal condemnation will not stand. The *ἀνάθεμα* (1 Cor. xvi. 22; Gal. i. 8, 9) is rather the expression of a strong abhorrence than a dogmatic judgment. We have already mentioned that the idea of *ἀπώλεια*, which Paul repeatedly applies with all earnestness, does not exclude a final deliverance of the lost; in Rom. ix. 22 he calls the Jews of his time *σκεύη ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν*, whilst in the eleventh chapter he teaches that they are not yet finally rejected, because there is still a conversion and deliverance in store for them—*καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται* (ver. 25). There remains in 2 Thess. i. 8 the solitary expression *ὄλεθρος αἰώνιος*, from the severity of which we certainly have no wish to detract. What does it prove? That between the composition of the Epistles to the Thesalonians and the later main Epistles, the apostle, in respect of this point of doctrine, had undergone a change similar to that from the expectation of the Antichrist in 2 Thess. ii. to the hope of the conversion of the world in Rom. xi. He owed to his Jewish education the view of a twofold final destiny of mankind, and at first his Christianity did not contradict it, but confirmed the conviction that the wages of

sin is death, and that he who soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption (Rom. vi. 23; Gal. vi. 7, 8). But as his Christian thinking grew deeper and freer, it allowed him to grasp the assurance that even here grace can and will be more inexhaustible than sin, and that it will finally conquer it, even in those who at first went with it into death and destruction. If we ask how the apostle conceived this work of grace, 1 Cor. xv. 22 compared with 23 f. puts us on the track. If, according to Paul, there is but one resurrection unto life, and if, at the parousia, only at first *οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, those who on earth had become believers, are to be raised (ver. 23), and yet if all are to be made alive in Christ who have died in Adam (ver. 22), it follows that, in his view, the conversion of those who have died without Christ, which leads to the final blessed resurrection, must take place between the parousia and the end, in the period of the judgment of the world conducted by Christ and His triumphant Church. This is to him the judgment of the world, that Christ revealed in His glory, and His Church glorified with Him, bring to mankind, as yet unredeemed, the correcting grace of God, and deliver them, *ὡς διὰ πυρός*, from the judgment which had become a fire of purification (1 Cor. iii. 15). But does this imagination of judgment, as issuing in the grandest victory, not deny human freedom, and does it not change the free process of salvation into a natural and necessary one? No; Paul has only carried through to the end that relation between freedom and grace which we have pointed out as a fundamental feature of his whole view of the world. He attributes to God the supreme power that whilst He regards the freedom of His creatures, He can yet lead them from their wanderings, even by the most indirect means and in a truly moral way, by the power of His wise love (Rom. xi. 33). He believed in the superiority of the eternal love in its struggle with human freedom and sin; he believed that though man is free to meet in his own way every appeal of God in providence, yet God's loving wisdom can narrow his choice, and finally, like a victorious chess player, can shut him up to the one course. And this thought completed the circle of Paul's system. He saw before him the majesty of a God who, in His creation of a free world, made no error



in His calculations. He saw in spirit a divine kingdom of perfection, in which no soul was lacking that belonged to it in its original plan, an eternal house of God, corresponding to His original idea, without any gaps or imperfections in its walls.

## BOOK V

### CONTINUATION OF THE PRIMITIVE APOSTOLIC METHOD OF TEACHING



#### I. *THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS*

#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

#### § 1. GENERAL POINTS

THE Apostle Paul has no equal in the New Testament history of doctrine, or in the history and the apostolic Church, and we can easily understand, therefore, that his doctrinal system was not understood in the succeeding age. The power of understanding Paul was only recovered fifteen hundred years later at the Reformation, which was guided almost exclusively by him in its doctrinal development. Yet in the apostolic age Paul does not occupy such a solitary position over against the undeveloped beginnings of primitive apostolic teaching as at first sight appears. There was growth in doctrine even in the primitive apostolic circles, no doubt under the influence of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, who cultivated a close intercourse with that circle, but yet in an independent way; it was furthered by the peculiarities of the different teachers, and the progressive experiences of an age which compelled even primitive apostolic teachers to come to a clearer understanding with Judaism, and to satisfy the more mature needs of the Church. The First Epistle of Peter

already bears some traces of this growth, as it undoubtedly originated from Pauline suggestions and in a post-Pauline period; yet it manifests so many of the primitive apostolic characteristics, and has so close a relation with the Epistle of James and the Petrine discourses of the Acts of the Apostles, that we preferred to consider it in connection with them. It is different with the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apocalypse, the Johannine Epistles, and the Fourth Gospel, which is akin to them. These writings exhibit modes of teaching which unquestionably arose in the circle of the primitive apostles, and have more affinity with their teaching than with Paul; but, on the other hand, especially in their Christology, they betray a progress which has kept step with Paul's own views. We must consider first of all amongst these the Epistle to the Hebrews, not only because it is nearest to Paul in time, but because it is also nearest in its thought, and because, belonging to the time before Judaism was broken up by the catastrophe of the Jewish war, it aims at explaining Christianity in its relation to Judaism, and so directly invites to a comparison with the Pauline system of doctrine.

## § 2. THE AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

That the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by Paul, as was for centuries accepted on the suggestion of ecclesiastical antiquity, needs no elaborate proof to-day. It is clear from the want of the name, which Paul never omits, from the confession of the author that he is not an apostle, but one who received his gospel "from those who heard" (ii. 4); from his Greek style, which is more classic than that of Paul; from the essentially different world of ideas in which he moves; and, finally, from the Jewish character of his imagery, which takes no account whatever of Gentile Christendom. Whoever the author of this unique and valuable writing may be, whether Barnabas, or Silas, or Apollos, who have been suggested for reasons equally good or bad, he was, at anyrate, a literary Hellenist, such as Stephen once was. That is evident from his style, which is the least Hebraic in the New Testament, and still more from his exclusive use of the Septuagint, for he does not seem to have known anything of the original text.

Now, as he was a man of literary culture, and the Hellenistic learning had its chief seat in Alexandria, this city is suggested as the place of his birth, or at least of his education. Certain images of a seaport town which he uses (ii. 1, vi. 19) point to Alexandria; further, his typological treatment of the Old Testament, which was much less developed by Palestinian scholars; finally, a whole series of Philonic echoes, which do not prove any dependence on the Alexandrian philosophers, but which do prove an affinity with their school.<sup>1</sup> Still the author, not merely as a Christian, but also as an expounder of the Old Testament, stands nearer Paul with his education in Palestine than the purely idealistic Philo; and as he seems from ii. 4 to have belonged to the primitive apostles, and his Epistle presupposes a personal relation to the Palestinian Christians (cf. xiii. 19, 23), he must, notwithstanding his Alexandrian education, be reckoned as belonging to the primitive apostolic group, just as Stephen was. This man was Stephen's theological successor in a fuller sense than the Apostle to the Gentiles, who is often described as such.

### § 3. TO WHOM WAS THE LETTER ADDRESSED ?

The Epistle begins as a treatise without introduction, but it soon shows that it is a real Epistle, addressed to definite readers

<sup>1</sup> The most striking points of contact with Philo, apart from the fact that the whole Epistle in its fundamental view reminds one of the Philonic distinction of the *κόσμος νοήτος* and *αἰσθήτος*, lie in the region of Christology. Like the Logos Christ of the Epistle, the Philonic Logos is the *υἱὸς θεοῦ* simply (cf. Heb. i. 1), the Mediator of creation (i. 2), the *δεύτερος θεός* (i. 9), the Sent of God (*ἀπόστολος*, iii. 1), the great sinless High Priest (iv. 14, 15), and Intercessor for the people (vii. 25); nay, the Logos in Philo, like the pre-existent Christ in our Epistle, is recognised in Melchisedec. On the other hand, Riehm in his *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefs* has shown that all these views, reminding us of Philo, have here a more substantial biblical form than in Philo, and are developed by this author directly from the Old Testament, read, of course, with Alexandrian eyes. Accordingly we may assert a common scholastic Alexandrian element in Philo and our author, but not a dependence of the latter on the former. Such scholastic communion explains how both find Abraham's obedience of faith in the going out to the unknown land of promise, that both have the same variation in a quotation from the Old Testament text, and that both share in the error that the high priest offered sacrifices daily.

who are well known to the author, and answering to definite circumstances and needs of these readers. Who are these readers? The superscription *Ἐπὶ τῶν Ἑβραίων* does not, of course, proceed from the writer of the letter, but is due to tradition. But it may be a correct guess, and correct in the very sense in which *Ἑβραῖοι* stands in Acts vi. 1, as a designation of Hebrew speaking, that is, of Palestinian Jewish Christians as contrasted with the Hellenistic, who in Palestine were only strangers or immigrants. It is impossible to regard the readers as Gentile Christians, notwithstanding a recent attempt to make that out. Such readers could not be conceived as the seed of Abraham, or the (chosen) people, as is done in ii. 16, 17, iv. 9, or as the people who received the Old Testament revelation; nor could they ever without some seduction from without, like that which led the Galatians astray, have been in danger of falling away wholesale into Judaism; and of such influence there is no trace. But our Epistle, as is well known, presupposes such a danger, and the apostasy in question is into the Judaism of the ritual law and the sacrificial worship, — Jewish bonds which proselytes, as a rule, had never borne.<sup>1</sup> We cannot say that the *στοιχεῖα* of Christian doctrine, referred to in vi. 1, 2, suit only Gentile Christians, although at first sight they are somewhat strange for Jewish Christians. The “*μετάνοια*,” from dead works, is that preached by the Baptist; the *πίστις εἰς θεόν*, the faith in the gospel of the kingdom of God, is that which was demanded by Jesus, as the young Christianity ascribed to the antichristian Judaism no faith in the living God (cf. Rev. ii. 9); and even about the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, Christianity had to teach more definitely than Judaism before it. But perhaps the author set forth the elements of Christianity simply in accordance with his Alexandrian custom, without special regard to the catechetical circumstances of the readers. It is also impossible to think of Jewish Christian elements in a mixed

<sup>1</sup> The danger of a falling back into heathenism, such as v. Soden in his *Commentary* (1890) supposes, could not possibly have been met by the references that are made in the Epistle to the inferior authority of the Old Testament. In that case the place which is occupied in our Epistle by the criticism of the Jewish sacrificial worship must have been taken by a reminder of the falsehood and want of consolation of idolatry.

community. There is no trace of the readers living together with Gentile Christians; the author addresses himself rather to communities of absolutely homogeneous composition, of like fortunes, and a Jewish horizon of culture willingly accepted. This at once excludes the idea, which has recently become popular, that the community at Rome is addressed; there is nothing whatever to favour that idea, as the apparent salutation, "those of Italy" (xiii. 24), does not by any means give Italy as the exact destination. Just as groundless is the guess, that the Church at Alexandria is addressed. Alexandrian Judaism would have commanded other and stronger attractions than the sacrificial worship of the secondary temple at Leontopolis. The undeniable fact that it is the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament to which the readers are attached, and from whose bands they are to be delivered, compels us rather to think all through of Palestinian Christians; not only of the Church at Jerusalem, for which some exclusively contend, and whose special condition every word may not suit, but the Christian community of Palestine as a whole (Gal. i. 22), as they with the Church at Jerusalem came under the name *Ἑβραῖοι*, and with it frequented the temple at Jerusalem and viewed it as their sanctuary (Acts xxi. 20). It cannot be seriously maintained that the Epistle could not have been written in good Greek to these Palestinian Christians, and with hope of success on the basis of the Septuagint by a Hellenist and friend of Timothy (xiii. 23); nor is it reasonable to argue that because many who had heard Jesus were still living among them, they could not have been described as those who had received the gospel "from them that heard it." Even the statement that they "had not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (xii. 4), creates no unconquerable difficulty when we consider that the generation in question was at least thirty years after the death of Stephen, that is, they for the most part had not experienced the only systematic and bloody persecution which had been carried on in the land. And that the praise of having ministered to the saints and still continuing to do so (vi. 10) does not suit people for whose poverty Paul had to collect throughout the whole world, is a wonderful assertion; is it then to be supposed that these Palestinian Christians

had on account of their poverty no hospitality for those who came to them from without, and exercised no beneficence whatever among themselves? (Acts xxi. 8, 16, ix. 36). In spite, therefore, of all the wanderings of recent criticism, we must rest content with the statement of the old superscription *πρὸς Ἑβραίους*; and only by clinging to this is the letter illuminated, while the view which makes it be addressed elsewhere thrusts it into complete darkness.

#### § 4. TIME AND CAUSE OF THE COMPOSITION

First of all, it is clear that the composition of the Epistle must have taken place before the destruction of Jerusalem. Not only is there no reference to that judgment of God which would have been so significant in the author's argument, but there is presupposed throughout the continued existence of the Old Testament sacrificial worship which ended for ever in the year 70 in Jerusalem as well as at Leontopolis (viii. 5, ix. 6-10, x. i. 11, xiii. 10, 11). To this it is answered in the interest of the theory which moves the Epistle down into the age of Domitian or Trajan, that the author does not speak out of the historical present, but out of the Old Testament ideas present to him, just as later writers spoke of the sacrificial worship as if it were still practised. But that does not explain how there could be any temptation for the readers to fall back into a sacrificial worship which no longer existed, or how they could have been summoned to go forth from a community of worship (xiii. 13) which was already destroyed. On the other hand, our Epistle cannot have been written long before the catastrophe of Jerusalem. The retrospect of the various experiences of the readers, especially the reproach of their being still babes when for the time they might have been teachers (v. 12), besides the fact that those who spoke to them the word of God are now dead (xiii. 7), point to a comparatively late period. The passage just alluded to makes us think of the death of James, who with other prominent members of the Palestinian Church ended his days as a martyr in the year 62. And the captivity from which Timothy had just been delivered, and the fugitives from Italy who are in the author's

company (xiii. 23, 24), may belong to the Neronian persecution. We are thus with all probability led to the period immediately before the outbreak of the Jewish war. Now that Christianity at this time found itself in a condition of languor and in danger of apostasy, as our Epistle presupposes, corresponds to the prophetic words of Jesus (Matt. xxiv. 12), and is also credible on historical grounds. These Jewish Christians had accepted the gospel with expectations very different from the actual event. They had counted on a complete conversion of their people, on a speedy return of the Lord, and on a setting up of the kingdom of Israel (Acts i. 6). But they remained a poor, oppressed, little flock, and the long continuance of this pressure had wearied them. Conditions of apostasy and decline, such as we see in the Epistle of James at an earlier period in the Jewish Christian diaspora, could not in the long run fail to appear in the Motherland also. A further difficulty lay in their uncertain relation to the old religious community in which their imperfect understanding of the faith of Christ detained them. They had found in Christ a new spiritual life, but remained in the old legal forms of life without noting how they had lost their worth; and even when a man had grasped the cross of Christ as securing pardon, but not as the source of an entirely new relation to God of freedom from the law, he could still continue to seek righteousness partly by the works of the law, and even in the Old Testament institutions of sacrifice and atonement. The first converts of the early Church had indeed, through the power of the Spirit and in their first love, been raised above this Jewish disposition; but a second, and a weaker, generation more and more fell back into it. The time of the first love was followed by the time when there proceeded from the original Church those opponents of Paul to whom Christianity was simply a new patch on the old garment, and who forced their way into the Gentile Christian communities in order to Judaize them, and so appease the hatred of their people against the Christian name (2 Cor. xi. 22; Gal. vi. 12). Even their zeal became languid for want of results, but the Judaizing mode of thought remained; the want of knowledge of the cross of Christ remained;—observe how our Epistle has to expound the doctrine of Christ's High



Priesthood to the Hebrews as something new, that leads from their minority to the maturity of manhood (v. 11—vi. 1). And now when James and other pillars of the Church had fallen, the Jewish leaven in the mass became too strong. Oppressed, disheartened, embarrassed in belief, they were on the point of falling back again to the Judaism they had always partly clung to, of throwing away the confession of Christ which seemed to be so unreliable, and of seeking salvation again in the old sanctuary with its priests and sacrifices which had never really been renounced (Acts xxi. 20—25). That is the state of things which our Epistle presupposes and reflects.

#### § 5. CONTENT AND MODE OF TEACHING OF THE EPISTLE

At this critical moment a foreign friend of Palestinian Christendom, a Hellenist in whom the spirit and ideas of Stephen continue to live, and who is equipped with Alexandrian scholarship, proposes to himself to call them back from the very edge of the abyss, and to urge them to a decisive separation from the fellowship of the Old Testament worship (xiii. 13). The means which he employs are instruction and exhortation, so intertwined that the one is exchanged with the other, and the former at the beginning, the latter at the end, preponderates. The exhortation represents the great danger of apostasy, which would in the history of Israel be pure wilfulness, and would therefore leave no more space for repentance and forgiveness; at the same time, it contrasts this fearful danger with the full glory of the promises and the nearness of their fulfilment, the nearness of the parousia. In these practical arguments lies the primitive trait of our Epistle, in which its affinity with the Petrine speeches and the Epistle of James appears, and this makes the peculiarity of its doctrinal element more striking. For its fundamental idea is the sublimity and perfection of the new covenant in contrast with the unsatisfying and transitory nature of the old; that is, a theme which in substance is closely related to the fundamental thought of Paul, but which is here wrought out in a different way. The superiority of the new covenant to the old is exhibited in the sublimity and perfection of the

Mediator of the New Testament and the high-priestly work. This task is discharged in three assertions, each stronger and more commanding than those before. Already in chap. i. 1–ii. 4 he exhibits the sublimity of the Mediator of the New Testament revelation, the eternal Son of God, as greater than the mediators of the old covenant, the angels, and therefore he exhorts them to hold fast the Christian profession. A second argument (ii. 5–iv. 13) justifies the transient humiliation of this Son of God in suffering and death as necessary to redemption, and at the same time insists upon His superiority to Moses; and with this the author connects the exhortation not to fail to enter into the rest of God, which was not entered at the time of Moses, and which therefore still remains. But the main discussion now follows; it concerns the perfect and imperishable High Priesthood and sin-offering of Christ, as compared with the insufficient high priesthood and sin-offering of the Old Testament. This discussion is announced with exhortations (iv. 14–v. 10); it is introduced by a sermon of stern warning against decline and the tendency to apostasy of the readers (v. 11–vi. 20), and carried out on different sides from vii. 1–x. 18, whilst the rest of the Epistle is occupied with words of exhortation. It is therefore, as in Paul, a discussion of law and gospel which the author undertakes. But he does not, like Paul, conceive the law as a summary of religious and moral requirements which man could not fulfil of his own power, but as the divine way of expiation and mediation between the holy God and sinful man; and he shows the impotence, shadowiness, and merely symbolical and prophetic significance of this institution of atonement. This consideration of the law from its religious and ritual side, which Paul only incidentally refers to, gives our Epistle in form a much more exclusively Jewish character than the Pauline system, which everywhere goes back to human and universal considerations. This may be due to the peculiar Alexandrian theological training of the author, which drew him specially to the exposition of Old Testament symbols; but, at anyrate, it was demanded by the needs and mode of thought of the readers. By regarding the ritual and legal performances of the old covenant as actual prophecies, and by extending this view to history and

to the writings of the Old Testament, the author shows himself related in doctrinal standpoint to Peter, who views the two Testaments as prophecy and fulfilment. Thus he seems to occupy a middle position between Paul and Peter. It seems to me that we shall do most justice to this peculiar system of doctrine if we divide it into the four following heads:—

- I. The covenant God and His promises.
- II. The Son of God and Mediator of the new covenant.
- III. The High Priesthood of Christ.
- IV. The means and end of salvation.

## CHAPTER II

### THE COVENANT GOD AND HIS PROMISES

#### § 1. THE FORMAL PRINCIPLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

We must give special attention to the formal principle of this system of doctrine. Although the author's object is to prove the superiority of the new covenant to the old, yet formally he stands entirely on the revealed documents of the latter, on the Old Testament as the only Holy Scripture which he has. All writers of the New Testament find themselves in this situation; but nowhere does it appear so distinctly as in the author of our Epistle, who, as an Alexandrian scholar, consciously holds an exaggerated principle of Scripture. He regards the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament as God's word in the strictest sense, not merely in the sense that they contain "that which was spoken by God at sundry times and in diverse manners to the fathers" (i. 1), but that they in their wording are the perfect revelation of God, and are prophetically that revelation which in these last days was historically spoken by the Son (i. 1). The author rests upon a belief in inspiration which was peculiar to his time and school, but which is now destroyed for us by the historical study of the Scriptures and their grammatical and historical exposition; he even in a naive way extends it to the Septuagint of whose defects of translation he has no suspicion. In virtue of this

idea of inspiration the human authors of Holy Scripture, whom he only mentions in ii. 6, iv. 7, by way of exception, are to him a matter of indifference; it is God Himself, or, as it is said in a few cases, the Spirit of God, who speaks to him through them, even where in the context God is the person addressed (cf. i. 6, 7, 8, 10, iv. 7, 8, vii. 21, x. 30, etc.). Of course the entire contents of the divine revelation which we have in the New Testament gospel can only be found in the Old Testament text by means of an unconscious self-deception, by frequently putting aside the historical meaning and substituting a deeper meaning elsewhere obtained, and our author does this with greater freedom and boldness than any other New Testament writer. Yet we cannot say that he departed from the line, justified in its way, on which they moved; he does not allegorise like Philo or Origen, that is, he does not, with intellectual caprice, interpret that which is given in the Old Testament context into something else foreign to it on the basis of a purely formal likeness; he typologises, that is, he sees the New Testament idea in such Old Testament statements as are really a prelude, a germ and rudiment of it, in addresses and phenomena whose idea, going beyond the reality of the present, is actually fulfilled only in Christ. Thus, for example, he applies to Christ that which in the Old Testament refers to the theocratic king, or the suffering righteous man, to man as man, or to Jehovah revealing Himself, and he even frequently puts these into Christ's mouth as testimonies to Himself. When he explains the rest of God in the land of promise into which Joshua led the people as yet defective, and as remaining still the eternal inheritance of the true people of God, or sees in Melchisedec that mysterious priest-king before whom Abraham bows in worship, the picture of the eternal High Priest of the New Testament, he is following indications of the Old Testament itself in which these historical phenomena are treated as symbols and types (Ps. xcv. 8 f., cx. 7). That in doing so he overlooks the direct historical meaning, and converts the typical into a directly prophetic, and even the Old Testament into a New Testament, is a formal defect in his treatment of Scripture which he shares with all his fellow-workers. It arose from their unscientific but practical and religious study of the Old Testa-

ment, which they read with eyes so possessed by the facts and truths of the New Testament that they saw them obscurely reflected even in the Old. In fact, the New Testament event is the material source of their knowledge and teaching, the Old Testament is only the formal source; but they could not dispense with the latter, for it supplied the scriptural proof which the needs of their contemporaries demanded of them.

## § 2. THE IDEA OF GOD

Accordingly, the idea of God in our Epistle has a strongly Old Testament colour, though in reality it is the full New Testament idea. The author, with the Old Testament, loves to describe God as the living God (iii. 12, ix. 14, x. 31, xii. 22); to him He is above all infinite, holy energy. "Our God," it is said (xii. 29), "is a consuming fire," not with reference to the ungodly, but to those who draw near to Him in worship; and, according to iv. 12, "His word is quick, and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." His *ὑποστάσις* and His *δόξα* are spoken of as distinct, and yet as harmonious (i. 3); they are His self-existent being and His revealed glory, to which latter idea, as we shall see, the notion of the Logos could be attached. Corresponding to that, He is conceived as exalted above all created existence, and as a force penetrating all things; He is the majesty enthroned on high (*μεγαλωσύνη*, i. 3, viii. 1), exalted also above the heavens, so that he who is to appear before Him must pass through these heavens (iv. 14, vii. 26). He is invisible (xi. 27), unapproachable, till the New Testament High Priest opens up a way of access to Him (ix. 8, xii. 18 f.), in a word, He is *κύριος* simply (viii. 2 and oftener); on the other hand, His "quick and powerful word" penetrates all things (iv. 12, 13); He is not only the last end and first cause of all that is,—the *δι' ὃν καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα*, ii. 10,—but also the agency, the conditioner of all that takes place (cf. ii. 4, v. 7, vi. 3, xi. 19, xiii. 21). That sublimity is more closely defined on its ethical side as holiness (*ἀγιότης*

xii. 10), that is, as the absolute and energetic negation of everything impure and sinful; this holiness is that which is meant also by the phrase "our God is a consuming fire." From it proceeds God's wrath (iii. 11, iv. 3), and even His "hatred" of evil (*προσώχθισα*, iii. 10, 17), His fiery zeal, which makes Him to the wanton offender or blasphemer that fearful Judge "into whose hands it is terrible to fall" (x. 26-31). But here also holiness is only the negative pole of love, in which the perfect goodness asserts and preserves its own character. The God who on the one hand is called a consuming fire, is again *ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης* (xiii. 20), the God of salvation, the God of peace, from whom proceeds such inner harmony as He contains in Himself; a Father of perfect love (xii. 5 f.), who chastens His children for their good (*εἰς τὸ συμφέρον*, xii. 10), viz. "that they may become partakers of His holiness," and thus be capable of His glorious and blessed fellowship (xii. 10, 14). God's nature as holy love appears especially in the idea of the covenant which He makes with man. The idea of the covenant of God with man is nowhere in the New Testament so emphasised as in our Epistle, so that we have ventured to put the covenant of God in the heading of this chapter. The covenant is not, however, as the author conceives it, a covenant relation of equal parties who come to meet each other, but a relation proceeding throughout from God, which opens a way of access to God for man on moral conditions, the way to His eternal blessed fellowship, that is, it is the pure outflow of holy love. This divine love reveals itself in the new covenant as *χάρις*, as grace redeeming from sin, which is mentioned always only in relation to this covenant (ii. 9, iv. 16, x. 29, xii. 15, xiii. 9 and 25), but which, like the new covenant itself, must be originally grounded in God's nature. With it the divine righteousness even here does not come into conflict. Though this righteousness embraces the side of righteous and penal requital (*ἐνδικὸς μισθαποδοσία*, ii. 2), yet it is not merged in the idea of penal righteousness. God, it is said in xi. 6, cf. ver. 26, is a rewarder of those who seek Him; and again in vi. 10: "For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work of faith and labour of love." Accordingly, the righteousness of God has nothing to do with an abstract administration of

law, but is an outflow of the holy love which gives to each according to righteous law his own; it meets lovingly those who seek God; it does not turn from the pious even when he stumbles, and only lets wrath and judgment rule when the wicked man under love grows wanton. As in Rom. iii. 3–5, 1 John i. 9, it is related to the faithfulness of God, His fidelity to His word and covenant, which our author mentions (x. 23, xi. 11).

### § 3. THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE WORLD

The creation of the world may be regarded as the first revelation of this God, for the word (*ῥῆμα*) to which it is traced back (xi. 3) is, according to i. 1, vi. 5 (*ἐλάλησεν—καλὸν θεοῦ ῥῆμα*), the principle of God's revelation. If in the passage already quoted (iv. 12) this word is thought of chiefly in its judicial aspect as God's sentence, which penetrates soul and spirit, joints and marrow, yet the concepts "quick and powerful" have a wider reach, and find their application especially to God's creative activity. The word is, as in the Old Testament, the means by which God the eternal Spirit utters Himself, and calls into being something in which His thoughts gain form outside Himself. But the expression which our author uses in ix. 11 of the visible heavens as *οὐ ταυτης τῆς κτίσεως*, shows that he conceives a twofold creation, an invisible and a visible world. The latter, which as the *κόσμος* or the *οἰκουμένη* he distinguishes from the universe (*οἱ αἰῶνες, τὰ πάντα*, i. 2, iii. 4, xi. 3), he regards as comprehending not merely the earth, but also the visible heaven, the whole world of sense, *τὸ βλεπόμενον* (xi. 3). This *βλεπόμενον* is transitory, and will soon undergo a great transformation; the visible heaven, as well as the earth, waxes old as doth a garment" (i. 10–12, xii. 27). But above it is the invisible heaven in which God is throned (viii. 1). And this invisible heaven again is divided into a series of rising spheres (*οὐρανοί*, plural), corresponding to the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies of the Jewish temple; and God dwells only in the holiest of all, or, as the author again distinguishes God from His ideal kingdom, above it; Christ must pass through the heavens, and "become higher than the

heavens," in order to sit down on the right hand of God (iv. 14, vii. 26). This supersensuous world is the archetype of the earthly world, a relation which reminds us of the views of Platonism which were familiar to the Alexandrians; but at bottom it only expresses a fundamental biblical view. Not all earthly things have their real archetype in heaven, such a view can only be found in the passage xi. 3, by an unwarranted importation;<sup>1</sup> but the genuine holy things of earth are sensuous copies of supersensuous realities. The tabernacle, Mount Zion, Jerusalem the city of God, that is, the places where God dwells and is worshipped on earth, together with the worshipping communities which surround them, have their ideal in heaven; the invisible heaven itself is the ideal tabernacle, the ideal mount of God, "the future city of God with firm foundation," that is, the heavenly Jerusalem (viii. 2, ix. 11, xi. 10, xiii. 14). We have here a simple but great truth expressed in a form which is strange to us. Above this sensuous world of growth and decay God has founded a supersensuous eternal world, in which we believe, for which we hope, and after which we are to seek. The invisible heaven is characterised as this world of faith and hope in the well-known words of xi. 1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The longing, the home-sickness of the human soul go out to this higher world as its true home. The author, in his deeply biblical way, expresses this when he makes the patriarchs dwell in tents in a foreign land, because "they sought for a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God" (xi. 9, 10). Not that that higher world was far off and separated from the earthly and historical. Its symbols and images already existed on earth, in the Old Testament worship of God and the Old Testament city or community of God. But it has sent down its Mediator, the Messenger of God, the High Priest of true blessings, that He might reopen for men the lost way of access to it, and give them to taste even now the heavenly blessings of the Holy Spirit and the powers of the world to come (vi. 4, 5). But

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, the *οὐκ ἐκ φαινομένων τὸ βλεπόμενον γεγονέναι* has been interpreted as if it read *ἐξ οὐ φαινομένων*, or as if it were to be completed by the antithesis *ἀλλ' ἐκ νοητῶν*; but neither is warranted.



the higher world is also the *οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα* (ii. 5), the future in history which ultimately obtains the mastery in the lower. After the final shaking and transformation which awaits the visible heaven together with the earth, the kingdom that cannot be shaken will alone remain, and under Christ its King will comprehend the whole universe (ii. 5, 8, xii. 26–28).

#### § 4. MAN AND ANGEL

This invisible world is inhabited by myriads of angels (xii. 22), who, for the author, come specially into consideration, because he can by them illustrate the sublimity of the eternal Son of God (i. 4–ii. 3). He shares in that view which we found already in Stephen and Paul (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19), that the Old Testament law was mediated by angels. Our Epistle clearly regards this as attributing a lower value to the law as contrasted with the gospel, and even perhaps as contrasted with the promise,<sup>1</sup> and as giving a certain explanation of the not altogether divine character of the law (ii. 2, 3). But the Mediator of the New Testament revelation has become so much better (higher) than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they (i. 4), viz. the name of Son. The fact that the Son of God appears during His life on earth for a short time to be made lower than the angels (ii. 9), favours the notion that the angels in appearance are thought of as more glorious than man; but in nature the reverse is true. The angels are only “ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those, that is, to the children of men, who shall be heirs of salvation” (i. 14). The idea of angels here, as everywhere in the New Testament, hangs in characteristic suspense between the notion of personality and that of impersonal divine power. Our author certainly conceived the angels as persons, just as the eternal Son with whom he compares them; but when, in i. 7, he applies (reversing the original text in subject and predicate) the words of the Septuagint to them, “who maketh His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire,” this changeableness of angels into

<sup>1</sup> It should be observed that, according to i. 1, God Himself has spoken by the prophets, while in ii. 2 the law is called the *δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος*.

powers of nature certainly does not favour any serious conception of their personality, but suggests that they are personified powers of nature. It would also follow, from any serious idea of personality, that God's love should seek to come into personal communion with them; but that is not the case. They are not, according to i. 14, any final purpose of God, but only means which God uses for the salvation of the children of men, and the Son of God—as insisted on in ii. 16—did not become an angel, but a man: *οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀγγέλων ἀντιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἀντιλαμβάνεται*. The angels therefore, even here, are at bottom nothing else than the individual rays of God's glory, rays which He sends out how and where His purpose of love requires. They are the powers of God, of which the ideal world is full, by which He works in the sensuous world of time; but the aims of God lie in the latter, in the world of men. It may seem strange in the passage just quoted that the idea of humanity does not stand out clearly, that instead of human race we have "seed of Abraham." That shows how closely our author holds in his thought to Old Testament forms, that he looks only on the humanity called to salvation as the seed of Abraham,—an idea which we must not translate, after the model of Paul, into the Church of believers. But he certainly had no desire to detract from the universality of the divine purpose and work of salvation. He reckons among the pilgrims to the eternal home the pious men before Abraham, Abel, Enoch, Noah, who represent the undivided human race, and no less the harlot Rahab, who became a believer in the God of Israel (xi. 4, 7, 31); he also undoubtedly conceived the Gentile Christians, of whom there must have been great numbers in his day, but whom he had no occasion to mention, as incorporated in the seed of Abraham by faith, without thereby divesting the notion of its national form. It is also to be observed how much his Christology lays weight on the archetypal humanity in Christ, how he regards Christ as certainly belonging to humanity as such. The passage ii. 14 designates flesh and blood as the characteristics of human nature which the Son of God must bear in Himself in order to be our Redeemer, flesh and blood, of course, as a support of the eternal Spirit (ix. 14). The author regards man as *πνεῦμα*,

a breath from God implanted in the element of earthly life, in flesh and blood, as we may see in his designation of God as the Father of spirits (xii. 9); and the just made perfect as *πνεύματα* (xii. 24). His anthropology otherwise presents no special peculiarity. The distinction of *πνεῦμα* and *ψυχή*, indicated in iv. 12, is not followed up. As a rule, the Epistle speaks of the inward man in popular fashion as *καρδία*, which is the seat of *ἐνθυμήσεις* and *ἐννοίαι* (iv. 12), of the *διανοία*, reason, and the *συνείδησις*, conscience, which appears as often in no other writing of the New Testament. On the other hand, it is worthy of note, as giving his fundamental view in religion, that the author conceives the human race from the beginning, even before any special revelation, which he regards as beginning with Abraham, as dependent on faith and capable of faith. The assurance of things to be hoped for, the conviction of the reality of an invisible world, which embraces these things to be hoped for,—supersensuous blessings,—is to him essentially human. That was the primitive religion of the dawn of humanity before Abraham, when men sought to come to God by believing that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him (xi. 6).

### § 5. SIN

Though men from the very beginning are meant and prepared for the eternal home, yet on their way thither they are met by a grievous hindrance, sin, which prevents them from reaching this goal. For no man can attain to fellowship with the holy God who has not become a partaker of His holiness (xii. 10): "Without holiness no man can see God" (ver. 14). But all men, and this our Epistle simply assumes, are tainted with sin, with one exception, Christ. Sin surrounds man like a wide, heavy garment, hindering his free movement; *ὄγκος* and *εὐπερίστατος ἁμαρτία*, it is called xii. 1, that is, a hindrance, something clinging close which we must put off (cf. x. 11, the expression *περιελεῖν ἁμαρτίας*);<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The question about the origin of sin is not considered here any more than in other parts of the New Testament, apart from Paul; but the common biblical designations of it as *ἁμαρτία*, *ἄδικία*, *ἀνομία*, *παράβασις*, *παρακοή*, *πλανᾶσθαι*, decisively exclude God from it.

and the presupposition throughout is that before Christ and without Him, no man can do so, no man can reach perfection, that is, the eternal goal. Man without Christ performs *ἔργα νεκρά* (vi. 1, ix. 14); that is, as the context shows, not outer works of the law, but sinful works, works which do not contain the true life, but spring from spiritual death, estrangement from God. As already, according to Old Testament notions, the dead body defiles, so these dead works defile the conscience (ix. 14); but with a conscience defiled a man cannot joyfully draw near to God (x. 22). Unless some atonement interpose, the man comes under righteous retribution, eternal judgment and destruction (ii. 2, vi. 2, x. 29). For through death he falls into the hands of him who hath the power of death, the devil (ii. 14). This is the one passage in which the devil is mentioned in our Epistle; and he is, as we see, conceived here as the uniform ungodly principle in which sin and evil meet, as the power of physical and moral corruption which Christ is to destroy (*καταργήση*), which opposes the divine desire for man's sanctification and salvation. In ix. 27, death is conceived simply as the end of life appointed for man by God, and is distinguished from the judgment which follows; but that does not prevent its being perpetuated as *ἀπώλεια* (x. 39) in the case of those who are condemned in judgment, and in this sense manifestly it is (ii. 14) united with the devil. The devil has *τὸ κράτος τοῦ θανάτου*; that is, he makes use of death as his mighty instrument for getting the unredeemed completely and permanently in his power, that is, for destroying them, and already by anticipation alarms them with this, so that "through fear of death they are all their life in bondage," that is, have to spend their life in slavish fear. Not that the author considered all pre-Christian men as mere slaves to the fear of death; they have the counterpoise of faith and hope notwithstanding sin. He appropriates the Old Testament distinction of sins of ignorance and sins of presumption in order to do justice to the great spiritual differences in the pre-Christian world, and avoid the notion of an undistinguished corruption of that world. In the Old Testament, sins of presumption, that is, conscious ungodliness and rebellion against God's commandments, exclude all atonement,

and are punished with death (iii. 15, 19, x. 28 f.). On the other hand, sins of mere weakness and ignorance (*ἀσθένεια*, iv. 15, v. 2, vii. 28; *τὰ τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγνοήματα*, ix. 7) permit of atonement and forgiveness, that is, do not make eternal salvation impossible, and do not exclude a covenant relation with God for the earthly life (xi. 16: "God is not ashamed to be called their God"). And so there have been pious men from the beginning of the world, notwithstanding the universality of sin, who have walked in faith and obedience towards God with their eye fixed on the eternal home, and who therefore in a relative sense were righteous, God-pleasing men (xi. 4-7). And for that very reason, even in the very early period, God was able to give a promise to men even though they were sinful, such as Abraham and his seed, which in its deeper sense refers not to an earthly, but to the heavenly inheritance (xi. 8-16).

#### § 6. THE OLD AND THE NEW COVENANT

This same promise henceforth runs through the entire Old Testament in various forms; and even in the New Testament, as concerns its aim, we have no other gospel than the pious of the old covenant had (iv. 2, 6, ix. 15, x. 36). But the question is as to the power of attaining this goal of producing the nature in which men alone can be partakers of its fulfilment. With this end in view God enters with the seed of Abraham into those closer historical relations which we are accustomed with our Epistle to call the old and new covenants. The old covenant, concluded at Sinai amid sublime and terrifying signs of nature which illustrated the unapproachable holiness of God in contrast with the sinful people (xii. 18-21), was a first step in leading humanity to the eternal goal; for if "without holiness no man can see God" (xii. 14), was it not necessary that man be first of all made sensible of the absolute seriousness of God's commandment, and of the full desert of punishment for its transgression? (ii. 2). But our author does not pursue the path which from this point would have enabled him to show the revealed moral law to be the precondition of salvation; he keeps, as already noted, all but exclusively to the ritual side

of the law and the Levitical worship. The ritual law in a sense gives him more than the moral law; it not merely reminds him of the divine holiness and human sin, but it indicates the way in which the latter can be blotted out and the former satisfied. The very kernel of the Levitical legislation is the idea of atonement. But the weakness and insufficiency (*ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές*) of the Old Testament religion is shown precisely in this point (vii. 18); it can in symbol represent the taking away of sin and the cleansing of the conscience, but it cannot really secure them. All these Old Testament arrangements belong to the sphere of sense and sensuous externals. The tabernacle is an *ἄγιον κοσμικόν*, and the ordinance peculiar to it an *ἐντολὴ σαρκίνη* (ix. 1, vii. 16); things which concern the higher world and the inward life of man are here translated into earthly and external signs according to the very nature of symbol. These Old Testament holy places and institutions of atonement have therefore a spiritual sense; they are *ὑπόδειγμα τῶν ἐπουρανίων, ἡ σκιά τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν* (viii. 3–5, x. 1), though not their exact likeness (*εἰκόν*); but they have no spiritual power. How could the blood of calves, bulls, or he goats take away sin or purify a human conscience (x. 4, 11); how could priests who were themselves sinful, and in need of reconciliation, reconcile their equals with God? (vii. 27, 28). The constant succession of ever new priests, the constant repetition of ever new sacrifices, contained the confession of spiritual inefficacy (x. 1, 2). It is only a yearly reminder of sin (x. 4), or a sensuous (Levitical) purification (ix. 13), which takes place, not a *τελείωσις*, not a guiding of man to his destined aim (vii. 19, ix. 9). From all this the Old Testament ordinance of God can only be a provisional one (*προαγοῦσα*, vii. 18), which points beyond itself to a more perfect and a more effectual. And that is abundantly confirmed by the prophetic contents of the Old Testament, on which with the ritual law our author lays chief stress, and which by use of the methods of exposition described above he discovers in particular in the Psalter. That God did not mean to rest with the old covenant, but wished to found a more perfect and abiding one, He finds in the prophet Jeremiah in the classic passage xxxi. 31–34, which

our Epistle in viii. 8-13, x. 16, 17, emphasises. This passage, in the strictest sense prophetic, gives the author not only the idea of the new covenant (*διαθήκη νέα*, xii. 24, because it is recent; *καινή*, ix. 15, because it is of a different character from the old), but also describes its chief characteristics; in it the law of God is to be written on the heart, the knowledge of God to become a common possession, and sin to be forgiven. There is in it *μετάθεσις νόμου*, an alteration of the law (vii. 12) in virtue of which its ethical content gets justice, while from its outward nature the statutory, the ceremonial remainder, falls away. A second favourite passage of the author is Ps. cx. 4: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." By interpreting this psalm, with his whole age, in a directly Messianic sense, he finds the most expressive image of the Messiah, through whom the covenant is to be established, in that mysterious priest-king before whom (Gen. xiv.) Abraham bowed himself in homage. And, at the same time, the words of the psalm, all the more weighty by the form of the oath, yield to him the solemn declaration of God, that the Old Testament order of priests and high priests is to be replaced by another and a more perfect which shall endure for ever (v. 6, 10, vii. 1-28). A similar declaration about the expiatory sacrifice which corresponds to this New Testament high priesthood is gained by the author from the passage Ps. xl. 7-9, taken in a Messianic sense: "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, To do Thy will, Thou hast prepared for Me a body."<sup>1</sup> The writer of our Epistle by taking these words as a declaration of Messiah when coming into the world, and by keeping to the wording of the Septuagint, which departs from the original text in the closing statement, finds here the evidence that the old covenant with its sacrifices is to be abolished in favour of a new one (*ἀναιρεῖ τὸ πρῶτον, ἵνα τὸ δεύτερον στήσῃ*), and that the sacrifice of this new covenant is to consist of an act of infinite obedience of the Messiah towards God, in His self-surrender, in the sacrifice of His body prepared for Him for this very purpose (x. 5-10). Finally, the

<sup>1</sup> In the original text, "Mine ears hast Thou bored."

passage Ps. xc. 8-11 is to him significant; it supplies him with the proof that the original promise of God regarding the entrance of believers into His own blessed rest was not yet fulfilled in the old covenant, but is reserved for a later period. On the seventh day of creation God rested from His works (Gen. ii. 2, 3), and He has promised to His own a share in this blessed rest of His. That seemed to be fulfilled when the people of the Old Testament covenant entered into their inheritance in the land of promise; but it only seemed so; they did not find there the rest and blessed peace of God. On the contrary, as the history records, and as Ps. xc. reminds us, God then declared: "They shall not enter into My rest." Now, when God's voice in the psalm continues, "To-day, if ye will hear My voice, harden not your hearts, like those to whom I was forced thus to speak," it is clear to the author that a rest is still reserved for the people of God; that after the time of the Old Testament wanderings in the wilderness, God appointed a new "to-day" on which it is possible to become partakers of His promise,—the "to-day," when the gospel of the new covenant is preached. Now therefore, but now finally, has come the decisive time of salvation (iii. 7-iv. 11). To us these are strange because Jewish ways of expressing the fundamental Christian idea, that what God symbolically represented in the Old Testament but did not realise, has its truth and reality in Christ the Mediator of the new, perfect, and eternal covenant of God with humanity.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SON OF GOD AND MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT

##### § 1. CHRISTOLOGICAL PECULIARITY OF THE EPISTLE

The entire devotion of our Epistle is offered to Him whom God from eternity has appointed to be the Mediator of the new covenant, and who has recently fulfilled this calling in time in order to continue it in eternity. But the



Christology of our Epistle is specially remarkable from the fact that it emphasises the true humanity of Christ more clearly and consciously than any other New Testament writing, and yet on the basis of this assertion builds up superhuman declarations which go beyond those of any other New Testament teacher. The simple historical name Jesus is to the author the most familiar, though the name Christ has also become to him a proper name. A favourite designation is the name Son (of God), *υἱός* without the article; but this name wavers between a historical or theocratic and a metaphysical sense. First of all, under the name "Son" (i. 1) we meet with the historical Christ—as distinguished from the prophets—as a last organ of revelation in time; but after the mention of His exaltation the discourse immediately proceeds to designate Him as the Mediator of the creation of the world, and unites it (ver. 3) with historical utterances about Him of such a speculative character that one receives the impression of a superhuman being. Again, the name Son appears in vv. 4, 5 as a name inherited, and consequently received; to which the *κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων* corresponds, and thus the following words which apply to Him directly the name *θεός* are explained from the glory of His exaltation in which He is to come again (comp. ver. 6, the *πάλιν εἰσαγάγη*). But the author goes on to say (ver. 10), "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail,"—words which seem as if they could only be said of God the Father, but are here spoken in reference to the Son. The same double aspect of Christ meets us in the whole further course of the Epistle. We must consider each of the two sides by itself before we discuss the relation of the two.

## § 2. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS

Although not a witness of the historical life of Jesus, our author is most firmly rooted in the historical tradition of the original apostles. He is thoroughly familiar with the several

features of the earthly life of Jesus. He knows and treats it as familiar to all that "Our Lord" (as of the house of David) did not spring from the tribe of Levi, but from that of Judah (vii. 14). He alludes to the fact that the preaching "of the Lord" was accompanied by signs and wonders, and then by communications of the Spirit, by which God bore witness to it (ii. 3, 4). He lays emphasis on the contradiction of sinners which Jesus had to endure (xii. 3). He knows of Gethsemane and Golgotha; he undoubtedly refers to the former in the passage (v. 7) about Jesus' prayers and supplications to Him who could deliver Him from death. He is thinking of the latter when he brings into prominence how Jesus, despising the shame of the cross, suffered death without the gates of Jerusalem (xii. 2, xiii. 12). Finally, "God has brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep (xiii. 20), and given Him to sit down at His own right hand as heir of all things" (i. 2, 3). If in all this our author simply agrees with the traditions of the Gospels and the original apostles, his particular aim beyond this is to make prominent in his teaching the humanity of Jesus. For, he reasons, only a true and perfect man, belonging to us and sharing in all things with us inwardly and outwardly, could be our representative with God, could be the High Priest of humanity, and so its true and abiding Mediator. His communion with our sensuous and mortal nature is therefore from the first emphasised. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (ii. 14). "He must," it is further said, "in all things be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God" (ii. 17); and this, as the closing statement shows, refers not merely to His outer form of life, but still more to His inner life, which in its features was human. The most violent emotions, even strong crying and tears, convulsed Him in Gethsemane (v. 7). His relation to God depends upon genuine human virtues, "blamelessness" (ix. 14), humility (v. 5), piety (v. 7, *εὐλάβεια*, properly, fear of God),<sup>1</sup> merciful-

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation "heard (sc. and delivered) from anguish of soul," which Weizsäcker has preferred in his translation, is in every way inadmissible. Cf. Lünemann on the passage.

ness and faithfulness towards men (ii. 17, iv. 15), obedience and faithfulness towards God (iii. 2, v. 8, x. 5-7), patience and trust in God (ii. 13). So far is faith, the fundamental relation of man to God, from being foreign to Him, that He is set up directly as the grandest example of all faith (xii. 2). Even He suffered in the hope of a heavenly compensation and reward with regard to the *προκειμένη χάρα* (xii. 2) like all believers, and has then in self-denying and confident endurance of the uttermost contradiction of sinners become the Captain (*ἀρχηγός*) of salvation, the "Author and Finisher of our faith"; that is, He who has preceded us in faith, and who at the same time has presented faith in its perfection. This genuine human relation to God reaches its climax in His praying to God, and being heard for His piety (v. 7). The only distinction that remains, then, between Him and His brethren, and without which He could not be their true High Priest, is His perfect sinlessness. And to this, as in the speeches of the original apostles and in the Epistles of Peter, attention is very specially called (iv. 15, vii. 26: *τοιούτος γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ ἔπρεπεν ἀρχιερεύς, ὅσιος, ἄκακος, ἀμίαντος, κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν*). But this sinlessness is not a metaphysical attribute, not a being raised above the possibility of evil, but a true human innocence, which neither excludes the possibility of temptation nor moral development and perfection. As to the first point, the author has a special interest in insisting on the possibility and reality of Christ's temptation: "For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted" (ii. 18). Therefore it is said emphatically (iv. 15): "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling (*συμπαθῆσαι*) of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας*; without sin being in the case, that is, there was no temptation from His own evil desires (Jas. i. 14), and none which ever gained anything from Him; He was passive to temptations from without, which, however, prepared for Him real, but victorious, inward conflicts, the climax of which is therefore always emphasised as His sufferings (ii. 18). But these very temptations complete His moral development and perfection, to which attention is nowhere in the New Testament so

purposely called. Even He, although a Son of God, could not dispense with the school of obedience, the school of suffering, in order to attain perfection: *καίπερ ὢν υἱός, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν, καὶ τελειωθείς ἐγένετο πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου* (v. 8, 9). Not that He had ever been disobedient and needed to learn it; but the positive moral perfection, the holy perfection raised above all temptation which He needed in order to deliver and perfect others, is much more than mere negative innocence and sinlessness; He could only advance from the latter to the former by ever harder moral tasks which were imposed upon Him, and at last by the hardest demand which could be made on His obedience, the absolute self-denial of suffering and death. The unique and Godlike height to which He rose is therefore both a truly human and moral conquest, the reward of a blameless and protracted life conflict, and a free gift of God (i. 2, ii. 5-8, xii. 2).

### § 3. THE HIGHER CHRISTOLOGY OF THE EPISTLE

Very different are the declarations of that higher Christology which is raised over this simple one of the original apostles. If the author, up to this, has satisfied the one christological motive which impels him, the point of view of the full equality of Christ with us, which makes Him fit to be our High Priest before God, another interest, though connected with this, leads him to apparently opposite declarations. The Mediator of the new covenant must be as much exalted above the angels who mediated the old covenant, as the new covenant itself is above the old. In point of fact, the Son of God is to the author a pretemporal eternal being. He calls Him, in vii. 3, under the symbol of Melchisedec: *ἀπάτωρ, ἀμήτωρ, ἀγενεαλόγητος, μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν μήτε ζωῆς τέλος ἔχων*. This Son has not spoken merely *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν* (i. 1), but already in the Old Testament (ii. 12, 13, x. 5).<sup>1</sup> It was He who built the Old Testament

<sup>1</sup> We cannot be certain what point of time the author intends in *κεκληρονομήκεν* (i. 4) and *σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε* (ver. 5), whether the resurrection, or the baptism, or the incarnation of the Son. But it still seems to me, as in my *N. T. Christol.*, that the allusion to the baptism, no doubt

house of God (iii. 3); nay, He has laid the foundation of the heaven and the earth, and upholds them by the word of His power (i. 10, i. 3). The loftiest names that human speech can furnish are therefore conferred on Him. The name *κύριος*, given now to the Father and now to the Son, is for the latter no longer (as in Acts ii. 34 f.) a royal title borrowed from Ps. cx. 1—it is without hesitation transferred to the Son from Old Testament utterances that refer to God (i. 10). Nay, in Old Testament quotations that are applied to Him, He is directly called *ὁ θεός* (i. 8, 9). The name Son therefore is not, as with the original apostles, the name of honour of a man chosen and anointed by God, but becomes the name of a unique higher being next to God. Only this higher being, even in His pretemporal existence, is subordinate to God the Father. As a rule, it is not the Father but simply God that is contrasted with the Son; the Godhead therefore, in the strict sense, is still reserved for the Father. Even in that passage in which the Son is called *ὁ θεός*, the Father is called His God (*ὁ θεός σου*, i. 9). The Son owes everything, even the name of Son, to the freewill of the Father (i. 4); even His introduction to the world (i. 6), His bringing again from the dead (xiii. 20), how much more His glorious exaltation; God “hath put all things under His feet” (ii. 5–8), hath counted Him worthy of greater glory than Moses (iii. 3). This subordination to God certainly brings Him nearer the angels and men. In i. 9 the angels appear as His fellows, save that He is distinguished by God above them through the name Son and all that is connected with it. Just so, He appears—even before His assumption of flesh and blood—related to men; He is “the Man and Son of Man” who is addressed in the eighth Psalm. If He is called *υἱός*, believers are also called *υἱοί*, sons of God (ii. 10, xii. 5, 7, 8), and it is strongly emphasised that He, like them, has His origin in God: *ὁ τε γὰρ ἀγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες* (ii. 11).<sup>1</sup>

well known to the readers, is the most probable. That he had in mind an eternal generation in the *σήμερον*, or that he had no particular meaning at all in it, cannot be accepted.

<sup>1</sup> That Abraham and not God is meant by the *ἐνός*, as Weiss supposes, I hold to be impossible. God is mentioned first and Abraham only afterwards; but an ambiguous expression is always explained by what precedes,

Only He, in contrast with men and angels, is the *πρωτότοκος*, the firstborn Son of God (i. 6) both in time and rank, in which we think of the special privileges of the Hebrew firstborn. This firstborn is more closely characterised (i. 3) by the significant words: *ὃς ὦν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ*,—an utterance which presents itself as the key of the higher Christology of the Epistle. We do not need to seek for some new and unheard of structure of ideas and words in order to translate the first two expressions, as has frequently been done; they are taken, as will be shown, from the then current theological speech, and signify reflection or radiation of the glory and expression (impress) of the nature of God, whereby the synonymity of *δόξα* and *ὑπόστασις* shows that, in both phrases, we have to think of God's glorious being. Both expressions describe the Son as one in whom the glory of God is faithfully reflected, in whom God's hidden nature is revealed; they are therefore paraphrases of the same idea which Paul (in Col. i. 15) expresses in his phrase *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου*. This describes one who, on the one side equal to God, and on the other derived from and dependent on Him, is the summing up of all His revelation, and consequently has to be His instrument in creation as well as in salvation. That this being, although *ἀπαύγασμα* and *χαρακτήρ* are impersonal, is conceived by the author as personal, is clear from the reference of the whole utterance to the *υἱός*; still more clear from the fact that there is ascribed to Him an almighty word supporting the universe, and therefore personal thinking and willing.

#### § 4. THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THIS CHRISTOLOGY

Whoever remembers the corresponding Pauline utterances about the eternal Christ, will have no doubt as to the origin and nature of this higher Christology of our Epistle. Yet it will repay us to re-examine here the question about that origin. These views could not arise from words of Jesus or not by what follows. And besides, as the *ἀγιοζόμενοι* are immediately before described as sons of God, the readers could not think of anyone but God in the *ἐξ ἐνόσ*.

doctrines of the original apostles, for there is no mention in them of Jesus as Creator of the world; neither could the idea of pre-existence, which applies to the tabernacle or the city of God, be applied to the Messiah, or suggest that He was the Creator of the world. Attempts have been made to explain the author's doctrine as a conclusion *à posteriori* from the glory of Jesus' exaltation; he reasoned that He who could be exalted to a position of Godlike dignity must originally have had a corresponding nature;<sup>1</sup> but that is quite impossible. The original apostles never inferred from the exaltation of Christ His eternal superhuman glory; but beyond that the conclusion that anyone who for the merit and sacrifice of His life was raised to a Godlike glory must already have possessed this glory before His life history, is a contradiction so monstrous that it cannot be ascribed to any reasonable man. On the contrary, we cannot mistake here the influence of what in the wider sense is called the Logos idea. We do not say it is Philo's Logos idea, which, with the name Logos, covers a whole system of half-Jewish, half-Gentile philosophic descent; but we recognise the idea of a principle of revelation distinguished from God, and accounting for the creation of the world, such as was developed under different figures and names from Prov. viii. to Philo and the Chaldean paraphrases, in Jewish theology. The same expressions as are used of Christ in Heb. i. 3, or others quite similar, are found again in the records of this Jewish theologoumenon. In the Book of Wisdom the personal σοφία is called the ἀπαύγασμα φωτὸς αἰδίου καὶ ἔσοπτρον τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἐνεργείας καὶ εἰκὼν τῆς ἀγαθωσύνης αὐτοῦ; in a Chaldean Targum the Shechinah that fills the Holy of Holies is called "the brightness of the divine glory"; and Philo says of the human pneuma that it is related to the θεῖος λόγος, that, consequently, it is an ἀπαύγασμα τῆς μακαρίας φύσεως, and that it is stamped with the seal of God, whose χαρακτήρ the αἰδῖος λόγος is.<sup>2</sup> Consequently a personification of an intermediate principle of divine revelation and its first act, the creation of the world, the idea of a "reflection and expression" of the hidden God was there before Jesus appeared. Could a believing Christian who held

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Riehm, *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefs*, pp. 410-414.

such theological views do otherwise than apply this idea to Christ? Was not Christ the personal revelation of God, His image in human form? was not His whole historical appearance "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person"? That eternal and real idea had taken flesh and blood in Him; the Mediator of the perfect revelation and of salvation was also the Mediator of the initial revelation, the creation of the world. This rediscovery of the Logos in Jesus made it easy to apply the name Son to both, and to recognise the double character of the Logos as Archetype of the world and as Archetype especially of man.<sup>1</sup> Just as Jesus in Old Testament religious phraseology was the Son of God simply, so also was the Logos in the speculative metaphysical sense of the word—Philo expressly calls Him the *υἱὸς θεοῦ πρωτόγονος* or *πρεσβύτατος*; and as Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man, and is described by Paul as the second Adam, as the Man from heaven, or heavenly Man; so Philo calls the Logos the *ἄνθρωπος οὐράνιος*, because the world has in man as the microcosm its centre of gravity, the idea of the world must be especially in the ideal of humanity. That even the latter idea, the idea of the archetypal Man, is not unknown to our Epistle, is proved not only in the passage (ii. 6) in which the author applies to Christ words which in Ps. viii. referred to man as such; but still more is it proved by his whole conception of Christ as the *ἀρχηγός* of humanity to the eternal goal, as the high-priestly representative of humanity before God. The two sides of the Son's equality with God and subjection to God are for the author united in the image of the archetypal Man who is to lead many brethren to glory; for, as we have already been reminded in Pauline Christology, the image of God is in the biblical view (Gen. i. 27) the original likeness of humanity.

#### § 5. COMPATIBILITY OF THE TWO MODES OF VIEW

Whether the two Christologies thus brought together, the original apostolic and the speculative, formally agree with each other, is another question. One can easily understand the judgment of Schwegler, that an unsolved and insoluble

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 82 f.



christological contradiction runs through our Epistle, for how can the Eternal and Perfect "learn and be perfected in time"? It has indeed been pointed out that in the passage (v. 8) the *καίπερ ὄν υἱός . . . ἔμαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν* indicates a combination in the author's mind of the two sides of his Christology; and certainly he has not left the contrast of the eternal and the temporal unrelieved. The transition of the one into the other lay for him in the assumption of flesh and blood (ii. 14). By representing the Son as made for a short while lower than the angels, he had to think of Him as translated from the kingdom of heavenly existence into that of earthly development. But does that solve for us the enigma? That a personality eternally perfect, in His divine nature untemptable and perfect, should attain perfection through temptation in time; that the Creator and Preserver of the world should believe, pray, and die like a man,—is a contradiction for our thought, and no kind of Kenotic theory can succeed in solving it. Besides, in attributing such a theory to him one would thrust upon the author a foreign idea (an absurdity); our Epistle does not, like those theories, start from trinitarian presuppositions, and his *βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἐλαττοῦσθαι* means a decrease of honour, the transition to a more humble position in the world, but by no means a giving up of that divine nature which does not even belong to the angels. The difficulty of the Christology of our Epistle lies in this, that the author with naive biblical realism from the first personified the Logos; but undoubtedly he never felt the difficulty which this created, because his thought, like all the thought of antiquity, was not directed to the idea of personality and its preconditions. Just as the Platonist who believed in a pre-existence of the human pneuma had not the least hesitation in representing the spiritual personality, already perfect in itself, as developed in the body, so and not otherwise has he reasoned in making the Son of God a pre-existing pneuma.<sup>1</sup> For us, on the contrary,

<sup>1</sup> Our author possibly conceived the human soul as likewise pre-existent, and had this before him as another likeness in principle between men and their eternal Head. As God, in xii. 9, is called *πατήρ τῶν πνευμάτων*, and in this, as in xii. 23, the existence of human *πνεύματα* is indicated, it is natural to assume that the author, in accordance with his view

the difficulty, long neglected, is removed in a very simple way. We now know that the Logos is not a second divine person, but a theological idea due to the thought of post-canonical but pre-Christian times afterwards applied to Jesus by men such as our author; it is a deep and true idea, but only an idea, which obtains personal existence by being realised in Christ. It does not therefore hinder His personal development and growth, learning, struggling, and being made perfect, but actually in all this it is realised. Though our author was not able to distinguish between an idea bearing personal features and an actual historical personality, we must not treat this imperfection of his theological thinking as a revelation about the nature of God which mocks our thought. Our Epistle itself treats its Logos idea as a theological element which one can make use of or not; alongside of the theological view that God created the world by His Son and rules it by His almighty word, that is, does not Himself directly interfere with it, there stands in the Epistle the simpler biblical view that God created the world by His own impersonal almighty word,—*πίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι θεοῦ* (xi. 3; cf. xi. 10),—and that He Himself, in the more direct way, governs it even in relation to the person and history of Christ (i. 1, 6, ii. 8, 10).<sup>1</sup> Even in the much quoted passage (iv. 12 f.) the word of God, which penetrates and judges the world, is placed as impersonal beside the idea of the personified Logos. It is clear that if the word of God by which the world is created, ruled, and judged is not a person, then the pre-existent Son by whom all this is also said to be done can only be another personification of the same idea. Two distinct modes of thought therefore run through our Epistle, the simple religious view of the original apostles, and the scholastic, theological view of the author; and his higher Christology is simply the attempt,

of a twofold creation of the world, a spiritual and a sensuous, conceived the human *πνεῦμα* as existing before it became partaker of flesh and blood.

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 186, takes his stand on the observation of this fact when he denies that the Logos idea underlies our Epistle. As if the same fact could not be noticed also in the Gospel of John, where the use of the Logos idea is beyond all question. And as if declining to explain Heb. i. 3 by the Logos idea would cause the contradiction with xi. 3 to vanish.

not even thoroughly carried out, to explain by the current theology the secret of the human personality of Jesus, which lies in its unique relation to God and the world. This attempt, in which our author agrees with Paul and John, had, of course, great value, and gave great satisfaction to the first readers of his Epistle and the following centuries; but it is not a universally authoritative element of divine revelation, and it is also quite unknown to the synoptic evangelists and to James and Peter. And indeed our author by his speculative Christology has added nothing to the human historical Christ, as preached by the Synoptists and the original apostles, which could make Him in any higher measure our Saviour. If we take away from our Epistle that higher Christology, and leave only those utterances which refer to the earthly life and the exaltation which grew out of it, this Christ—as the following chapter will prove—would lack nothing necessary to His being our perfect High Priest.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

#### § 1. THE HIGH-PRIESTLY OFFICE IN RELATION TO THE PROPHETIC AND KINGLY

That our author, in his Christology, with all its speculative loftiness, has no desire to overstep the fundamental idea of the archetypal humanity, is confirmed by the fact that the notion of the High Priesthood dominates his view of the work of Christ. For this idea of the high priest, that is, of the atoning representative of sinful humanity with God, requires a human being, though, of course, one who is unique among his fellows, and the author could not regard as a true Saviour one who was not essentially human, but something else. And whether from his own theological bias, or because of the task imposed upon him by his readers, the author comprehends the significance of Jesus' saving work almost wholly in this idea. Allusions to what we call the prophetic and kingly offices of Christ are not, indeed, entirely wanting.

The Epistle begins with the revealing and teaching activity of Jesus (i. 1, ἄ. 3), and calls Him, with reference to this, the *ἀπόστολος καὶ ἀρχιερεύς τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν*. The conclusion of the new covenant must, of course, precede the announcement of its content, and the founding of salvation must go before a new word of revelation; but that to the author is simply an introduction to the decisive work of salvation. On the other hand, his peculiar conception of Christ's high-priestly office involves to some extent the kingly also. To him Christ's High Priesthood consists, not merely in once offering Himself upon the cross, but much more in constantly representing the Church in heaven, and so in a sense it contains Christ's kingdom. The latter finds expression only incidentally, as in an Old Testament quotation (i. 8) where mention is made of the divine throne of the Messiah and the sceptre of His kingdom, or where the Risen One is called (xiii. 20) "the great Shepherd of the sheep." But commonly the sitting at the right hand of God,—repeatedly mentioned,—which in idea must be the expression of His kingly glory, is rather ascribed by our author to Christ the High Priest (viii. 1, x. 12).

## § 2. THE SYMBOLICAL AND THE TRUE HIGH PRIESTHOOD

The author naturally borrowed from the Old Testament the idea of the High Priesthood as the designation of that which really makes Jesus our Saviour, and the task he had undertaken for his readers made it incumbent on him to enter into a detailed proof of the High Priesthood of Christ from the Old Testament. As he exhibits on the one hand that Jesus satisfied the formal requirements of the High Priesthood, he displays on the other the uniqueness and perfection with which He realises that idea by insisting on the distinction between Him and the high priests of the Old Testament. In the first place, he emphasises the fact that a high priest must really belong to those he has to represent before God, so as to sympathise with them in a spirit of tender mercy (*μετριοπαθεῖν, συμπαθεῖν*), that is, he must be a man among men; this enables him to place the humiliation of Christ, from His birth to His death, before his readers in

a true light (iv. 15, v. 1-3). Secondly, a high priest cannot appoint himself, but must be appointed by God (v. 4); hence the high priests of the Old Testament were ordained by God after the order of Aaron, but Jesus after a higher order, the order of Melchisedec (Ps. cx. 4). The superiority of this to the Levitical appears in two points; first, that in Ps. cx. it is confirmed by an oath, that is, it is declared to be unchangeable, as distinguished from the transitory Levitical; and second, that Abraham, the ancestor of Levi, and thus also of Aaron, bowed before Melchisedec, and gave him tithes (vii. 1-23). The third and most peculiar feature of the high priest is that he has to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people on the great Day of Atonement, the body of which sacrifice must be burned without the camp or the holy city, but with the blood of which he enters the Holiest of all to sprinkle it, and make the atonement, as it were, acceptable in God's sight. Jesus has done that by the sacrifice of Himself, by having His body nailed to the cross outside Jerusalem (xiii. 11, 12), and then by entering, in virtue of His resurrection and ascension, into the heavenly Holiest of all, in order to plead the worth of His sacrifice before God for ever (ix. 6-14). The differences contained in this analogy between Jesus and the high priests of the Old Testament are no less made prominent. In the first place, the Old Testament high priests are sinful men, who must first offer sacrifices for their own sins, before they can represent the people before God. But this true High Priest is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners (vii. 26-28). In the second place, those high priests can only offer animal sacrifices whose blood cannot possibly take away sin; and these impotent sacrifices must, for that very reason, be repeated every year; and the priests, who are mortal men, must, in like manner, ever succeed one another. But Jesus has offered Himself, not in virtue of a perishing animal soul, but in virtue of an eternal spirit which was in Him (ix. 14), and "not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life" (vii. 16), so that His self-surrender issued, not in the destruction of His life, but in resurrection and glorification, and so His sacrifice is an effectual and at the same time an imperishable sacrifice offered once for all, and needing no

repetition (x. 1-14, vii. 23, 24, ix. 11, 12). With this is connected the third point, that those Old Testament priests and sacrifices belonged to the kingdom of the sensible (*σάρξ*) and symbolical (*ὑπόδειγμα, σκιά*), but Christ and His sacrifice to the kingdom of spirit and of truth. Here only has a holy human life been truly surrendered to God for the brethren, and therefore here only has a Son of Man "passed through the heavens" (iv. 14), and been able to make His way to God, and into the eternal world of perfection; therefore He can now mediate between God and man, and as the forerunner of His race, as the leader of salvation (vi. 20, ii. 10), He can bring His brethren to God and His eternal kingdom. This wide separation between fleshly symbols and a spiritual fact and truth which fulfilled all such symbols must now guide us in a more thorough investigation of the doctrinal ideas, and must put us on our guard against turning spiritual conceptions into fleshly, because of their figurative Old Testament form. How high our author really stands above the sensuous views of the Old Testament, notwithstanding his strict belief in inspiration, may be seen in the fact that in order to attain a full view of the saving work of Christ he sets the Mosaic covenant sacrifice at Sinai alongside of the Old Testament order of high priests and Day of Atonement (ix. 19-26), and then, playing upon the double sense of the word *διαθήκη* (covenant and testament), finds an emblem of the work of salvation even in the legal relation of death and testament (ix. 15, 16). If we divest his doctrinal idea of its figurative Old Testament form, which thus did not satisfy even himself, we shall find his idea to be that, in virtue of the completion of His life in suffering and death, Christ has become the founder of a new relation between God and man which is infinitely exalted above that of the Old Testament, and is the only perfect and saving one; He is the only and abiding Mediator of a true and blessed communion between God and man. We get the details as to the how and the why when, following the author, we give attention first to the sacrifice once for all, and then to the abiding Priesthood of Christ.

## § 3. THE QUESTION OF THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

As to the Old Testament idea of sacrifice, which our author more than any other writer of the New Testament applies to the death of Jesus, the twofold comparison with the Mosaic sacrifice of the covenant and the high-priestly sacrifice of atonement creates no difficulty. The covenant sacrifice (Ex. xxiv.) certainly means in particular the ratification or sealing of the old covenant, and this is the very meaning which our author urges in his argument from the relation of death and testament (ix. 16-22). This is of importance, as it means that to him the new covenant was not established by the shedding of Christ's blood, and wrung, as it were, from God, but was simply confirmed by that blood, after having been announced by Jesus and His gospel,—just as the old covenant had been by the angels and Moses. Moreover, that covenant sacrifice, with the blood of which Moses sprinkled the people and the sanctuary, had also an atoning significance, as it symbolically removed the sin which separated the people from God, and whose darkening stain must also be taken away from the sanctuary. And so we are led to the idea of the atoning sacrifice, which is more closely expressed in the offering of the high priest on the great Day of Atonement. It would, however, be useless to plunge into the uncertain questions of Old Testament theology about this, as we cannot know whether that conception of the expiatory sacrifice reached by this or that investigator of the Old Testament to-day was shared also by our author. The idea of "expiation," *ἰλάσκεσθαι*, has without doubt the same significance to him as to Paul, viz. to cover, blot out, undo sin in the eyes of God; and the atoning sacrifice is regarded by him, just as by Paul in Rom. iii. 25, as a means graciously offered by God Himself whereby man may approach Him again, notwithstanding sin. But the question which we have to settle here is whether the process of the New Testament reconciliation is to be conceived as taking place outside the sinful man and between Christ and God only, or as affecting the man first, and only thus coming to have worth in the sight of God. Our doctrinal tradition points to the first, as it sees the reconciliation in the punishment of sin vicariously

borne by Christ; but Paul points to the latter, who finds in Christ the *ἰλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως*, that is, a means of reconciliation which satisfies God only because it calls forth in man faith, on the strength of which God can justify (Rom. iii. 26). The question cannot be decided by the one passage in our Epistle in which the word *ἰλάσκεσθαι* appears (ii. 17); in order to answer it we must consider whether the only immediate effect of Christ's death, which the author recognises, is the remission of guilt obtained from God, or at the same time a breaking of the power of sin in man as the presupposition of this remission. That the remission of guilt, the forgiveness of sin, cannot be excluded from the effects, is evident from the idea of *ἰλάσκεσθαι*, which implies a becoming ἴλεως to God again, and appears elsewhere in our Epistle, especially in the fact that the effect of Christ's death is repeatedly related to the *συνειδήσις*, in which sin can only be represented as a sense of guilt (ix. 14, x. 22). But the question is, whether this blotting out of guilt in the conscience is conceived apart from a change in the will, which is the presupposition of forgiveness with God. That this is not the case is shown, first of all, by the expression *ἀφαιρῆν* or *περιελεῖν ἁμαρτίας, ἀπέθῃσι τῆς ἁμαρτίας* (ix. 26, x. 4 and 11), which can indeed be applied merely to *ἄφεσις* (ix. 22, x. 18), but they suggest a wider sense. How surprising the repeated assertion would be that the Old Testament sacrifice could not take away sin, if the point in question was only the remission of guilt! (x. 4 and 11). Why should divine ordinances such as the Old Testament expiatory sacrifice not be able to impart the comfort of forgiveness to those who made a believing use of them? It is very different if the question is not about this comfort only, but about an inner transformation at the same time to be expected from the sacrifice. But the final answer must be found in some other descriptions of the effect of Christ's death which our Epistle sets alongside of *ἰλάσκεσθαι*,—the concepts *καθαρίζειν* (or *ῥαντίζεσθαι*), *ἀγιάζειν*, and *τελειοῦν*.

#### § 4. THE CONCEPTS *καθαρίζειν*, *ἀγιάζειν*, AND *τελειοῦν*

First of all, *καθαρίζειν*, as an effect of the Saviour's death, stands, in ix. 22, as an equivalent to *ἄφεσις*, and so at all



events it includes the purification of the conscience from guilt. It is used likewise, in x. 2, of those who have no more *συνείδησις ἁμαρτιῶν*, and, in x. 22, the synonymous *ῥεραντισμένους* is found in the same way united with *τὰς καρδίας ἀπὸ συνειδήσεως πονηρᾶς*. But this emphasis on deliverance from guilt does not exclude the thought of a contemporaneous purification of the heart from what causes the sense of guilt, that is, the ruling power of sin, and the passage i. 3 favours this, in which the entire effect of Christ's death, which at all events is not limited to deliverance from guilt, is expressed by the words *καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος*. Still more important seems the passage ix. 13, 14: *εἰ γὰρ τὸ αἷμα τράγων καὶ ταύρων καὶ σπόδος δαμάλεως ῥαντίζουσα τοὺς κεκοινωμένους ἀγιάζει πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς καθαρότητα, πόσῳ μᾶλλον τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν ἄωμον τῷ θεῷ, καθαρῶς τὴν συνείδησιν ὑμῶν ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων εἰς τὸ λατρεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι*. Here *καθαρῶς* is synonymous with *ἀγιάζει*, which, as we shall see in its New Testament application, describes, at all events, a moral influence on man; but beyond this the consideration is thrust upon us that the conscience is only purified from "dead works," that is, from sinful deeds, when it not merely experiences pardon, but when these works are put an end to; and this view is confirmed by the closing words, "to serve the living God," which describe the opposite of the "dead works," and are the positive effect of the *καθαρίζειν*.<sup>1</sup> But no decision can ever be won from the idea of *καθαρίζειν* by itself, though such a decision does lie in the synonyms *ἀγιάζειν* and *τελειοῦν*. We find *ἀγιάζειν* in our Epistle, now in the Old Testament and symbolical, and now in the New Testament and actual sense; of course the latter only has importance for our question. Since the *ἀγιότης* of God, to the attainment of which God educates man by trials (xii. 10), and the *ἀγιασμός*, the sanctification without which no man can see God (xii. 14), have undoubtedly their ethical sense, the verb *ἀγιάζειν* must also be conceived in the same sense. Our Epistle distinguishes in the same way as Paul between *ἀγιάζεσθαι*, as a progressive require-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 John i. 9, where *καθαρίζειν* likewise stands before actual purification from sin.

ment of the Christian life (ii. 11, x. 14), and *ἡγιασμένον εἶναι*, as a single fundamental experience in Christ (x. 10, 29). That cannot rest on any twofold understanding of the word, but can only mean that Christians have to become more and more perfectly that which they have already in principle become through Christ as the *ἀγιάζων* (ii. 11); that is, they are sanctified, free from sin in principle, in virtue of His death. We do not deny that the remission of sin, or justification, is inseparable from this deliverance in principle from the dominion of sin, through which Christians in the New Testament are called *ἡγιασμένοι, ἅγιοι*. That appears in the grouping of *ἀγιάζεσθαι* and *καθαρίζεσθαι, καθαρίζεσθαι* and *ἄφεσις*, in ix. 22. But the idea which finds expression in *ἀγιάζειν* is not that of the taking away of guilt, but of cleansing from sin—it is the moral consecration of man according to the divine image (1 Pet. i. 15, 16); and if this is its root meaning, then the synonymity of *ἀγιάζειν* and *καθαρίζειν* favours the notion that the idea of moral purification is not excluded from the latter expression. The most peculiar expression by which our Epistle describes the effect of Christ's death is *τελειώσις, τελειῶν*. Though the literal sense of the word is to lead a man to the goal, yet even it is once employed by the author to describe the effect of Christ's death in principle. When it is said (x. 14): Jesus has by one sacrifice "perfected for ever" them that are being sanctified, the word *τελειῶν* manifestly has the sense of a virtual, not of an actual effect, as believers have neither at once become perfectly righteous (xii. 23), nor will be so here below. The author means that in the sacrifice of Christ there lies the full power and possibility of leading to perfection those who will allow themselves to be sanctified by it (their actual imperfection is recognised by the present *ἡγιαζόμενοι*). This may explain the still more surprising expression in ix. 9, *κατὰ συνείδησιν τελειῶσαι*; the reference is to the Old Testament worship, whose animal sacrifice could not make a man conscious of having really attained sanctification, or of having been delivered from sin. The phrases—also vii. 19, x. 1, "The Old Testament law and sacrifice could make nothing perfect, or could not perfect him who with them drew near (to God)"—can have no other meaning than the inability of

these things to lead a man seeking God to the goal of a holy fellowship with God. It is certainly very tempting to interpret an expression such as *κατὰ συνείδησιν τελειοῦν* in the sense of the Pauline justification, and the element of remission of guilt is undoubtedly here in principle included in the *τελείωσις*; but it was a grave blunder to assert that the idea of *τελείωσις* in our Epistle corresponds accurately to the Pauline conception of *δικαίωσις*,<sup>1</sup> for what has the idea of *τελείωσις* in common with that of *δικαίωσις*? The interpretation of this favourite conception of our author is made perfectly certain by the fact that he also applies it to Christ, in whose case there can be no thought of a taking away of guilt: *ἔπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ* (viz. God) *πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι* (ii. 10),—*καίπερ ὢν υἱός, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν, καὶ τελειωθεὶς ἐγένετο πᾶσιν αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου* (v. 9),—*ὁ νόμος ἀνθρώπους καθίστησιν ἀρχιερεῖς ἔχοντας ἀσθένειαν, ὁ λόγος δὲ τῆς ὀρκωμοσίας μετὰ τὸν νόμον υἱὸν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τετελειωμένον* (vii. 28). There can be no doubt that in all these cases he is thinking of the moral perfection which the sinless Son of God had first to attain in the school of suffering, and which first made Him thoroughly fit to be our eternal High Priest. But that the word is applied to believers with the same meaning lies not only in the nature of the case and in grammar, but is also made clear by the passages (v. 14, vi. 1) where *τελειότης* is opposed to spiritual immaturity and incapacity (just as in vii. 28 to moral *ἀσθένεια*), and is confirmed by xii. 23, where mention is made of the just made perfect in heaven. The synonymity of *ἀγιάζεσθαι* and *τελειοῦσθαι* is therefore once more clear; if without holiness no man can see God, then nothing but moral perfection can lead to the goal to which we are called. And to the author the death of Jesus has its final significance in bringing to man not merely the comfort of forgiveness, but in actually delivering him from sin, in sanctifying him—an idea which we also found in Paul, though expressed in other words. The main distinction is that Paul keeps dialectically apart the two sides of the one effect of salvation, the transformation in principle and the justification once for all, whilst

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 214.

our author uniformly includes both in the conceptions *καθαρίζειν, ἁγιάζειν, τελειοῦν*. But in his choice of expressions which in themselves describe a moral influence and not a religious pacification, which indeed, and especially *τελειοῦν*, can only be applied to the latter by a strained interpretation, he betrays how much his main interest is in the moral effect of the Saviour's death. How was it possible for him to refer the death of Jesus simply to the justification of the sinner, and only to deduce the moral transformation from that justification, when it was through this death, as he insists, that the new covenant was to be brought about? The new covenant, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, which is verbally quoted in our Epistle (Jer. xxxi. 31-34), consists in God's putting His law in the people's hearts, and writing it upon their minds; and only in connection with this are their sins to be forgiven, and their misdeeds no more remembered (x. 15-17). These, then, are the two immediate results which the death of Christ must have, and this is their connection.

#### § 5. THE IDEA OF THE MORALLY EFFECTIVE SACRIFICE

From all this we can understand the sense in which the idea of atonement and the sacrifice of atonement is to be applied to the death of Jesus. We are accustomed in atonement and atoning sacrifice to think of something which takes away guilt in God's eyes, but can exercise no other effect on man than the unburdening of his conscience; but if we applied this idea of atoning sacrifice to the death of Jesus, we should transfer to it the very weakness and impotence of the Old Testament sacrifice, in which our Epistle finds the profound distinction between the shadowy atoning sacrifice of the old covenant and the effectual sacrifice of Christ (vii. 18, x. 11). The sacrifice of Christ guarantees to our author, above all, the comfort of forgiveness, as is manifest from the relation of the concepts *καθαρίζειν, ἁγιάζειν, τελειοῦν* to the *συνείδησις*. The blood of Christ it is said, in a fine poetic figure (xii. 24), "speaketh better things than the blood of Abel"—it cries to Heaven, not for vengeance, but for grace. The idea of *ἀπολύτρωσις* in the passage ix. 15—

ὅπως θανάτου γενομένου εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῶν ἐπὶ τῇ πρώτῃ διαθήκῃ παραβάσεων τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν λάβωσιν οἱ κεκλημένοι τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας—appears also to be essentially related to forgiveness, to the taking away of the debts contracted under the old covenant, which stood in the way of men's attaining salvation. But everywhere, so far as we see, this pardoning effect of the death of Christ is, to our author, only the conscious reflex of a cleansing, sanctifying effect which the death of Christ exercises on the heart. The blood of Christ calls the forgiveness of God down from heaven, yet, only for those whom its touch purifies, it is a *αἷμα ῥαντισμοῦ*, a blood of cleansing which, according to xii. 24, "speaketh better things than that of Abel." The *λύτρωσις*, *ἀπολύτρωσις*, which, in ix. 15, delivers from the transgressions committed under the old covenant, appears, in ix. 12, as redemption not merely from guilt, but also from the power of sin, as a power of *καθάρισις*, of sanctification, as an "eternal redemption" from the bondage of sin, *εἰς τὸ λατρεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι* (ver. 14). And in this context the "purifying of the conscience" (*συνείδησις*) must signify more than the experience of absolution, which was already possible in the Old Testament atoning sacrifice. Along with this it should signify the consciousness of a second birth, the deliverance in principle from the power and dominion of sin. But if that be so, the act of atonement in the death of Christ cannot consist in His expiating the guilt of man before God, and thus making forgiveness instead of punishment possible to the eternal Father, for that would not explain the cleansing and sanctifying effect on men which the author ascribes to the sacrifice of Jesus; the reference would then only be to an immediate effect of this sacrifice upon God, and, in consequence of that, to a pardoning effect on man. The whole notion of a vicarious penal suffering, of an expiation of the punishment of death due to man according to God's righteousness, is unknown to our Epistle. No phrase suggests such a view; there is no mention of any demand of the divine righteousness, or any wrath of God to be propitiated or endured, but the death of Jesus is described simply as an arrangement of God's grace (ii. 9); and though it is often repeated that this death was endured, *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*, for our advantage, yet the only fitting

expression of the idea of substitution, *ἀντὶ ἡμῶν*, never occurs here. The one passage that may be urged with some show of reason in favour of that juridical theory of substitution is (ix. 28) the *ἅπαξ προσενεχθεὶς εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνενεγκεῖν ἁμαρτίας*, if we take *ἀνενεγκεῖν* in the sense of the Hebrew text (Isa. liii. 4) as referring to a vicarious "bearing of sin," that is, of its punishment. But our author here, as everywhere, does not follow the original text but the Septuagint, which had already altered *ἐνεγκεῖν* into *ἀνενεγκεῖν*, bearing away or taking away. This alteration, which also appears in Matt. viii. 17, 1 Pet. ii. 24, makes it possible for our author to transform the patient endurance of suffering for others' sin into an active taking them away, *ἀθέτησις ἁμαρτίας*, on which stress is laid immediately before (ver. 26). Still more, the possibility of that particular doctrine of satisfaction is excluded in our Epistle from the first by its circle of ideas. Our Epistle, that is to say, knows only, as the Old Testament did, the possibility of atonement for sins of weakness (*ἀσθενεῖαι, ἀγνοήματα*, iv. 15, ix. 7), not for mortal sins (*ἐκουσίως ἁμαρτάνειν*, x. 26). But if mortal sins permit of no atonement, and if the sins for which Christ died do not deserve the punishment of death, His atoning death cannot have been, to our author, a vicarious bearing of the punishment of death decreed by God. No doubt, according to the teaching of our Epistle, not merely men, but God also needs an atonement in order to be able to forgive. The symbolical view which we have in ix. 23, that even the heavenly holy things—like the earthly in the covenant sacrifice at Sinai—must be purified from the stain of sin by the blood of sacrifice, expresses the idea that sin has its effect even in heaven, that is, it does not merely trouble our relation to God, but also God's relation to us; and therefore some blotting out, or compensation, must be found to make it morally possible for God to forgive. But our Epistle finds this compensation, not in a vicarious expiation of the guilt of sin, but in an infinite moral act which contains the power of really cleansing from sin, of sanctifying and perfecting the sinners who are to be forgiven. That is the noblest satisfaction, and, according to the Scriptures, it is the only satisfaction which God requires; where the assurance is given that sin will pass away in men there is nothing to

hinder the Holy One in heaven from forgiving them. But that infinite moral act is the self-sacrifice of the sinless Son of God upon the cross. It is the perfection of obedience towards God, the perfection of mercy towards His brethren, and thus on both sides of the spiritual idea it is the perfection of a human life united with God, which surrenders itself to the most shameful death rather than leave a single point of the will of God unfulfilled (x. 9). But this act of perfection has established in humanity and history a power which can break all sin, can sanctify and perfect all men; and therefore He, who is thus henceforth and for ever perfected, is the high-priestly representative of men before God, to Him the eternal assurance of their sanctification, to them the eternal assurance of their forgiveness. Is it necessary to adduce more special proof that this idea of atonement is fundamental in our Epistle? We fail to see the wood for the trees if we do not perceive that our Epistle again and again translates the symbolical sayings about the atoning blood of Christ into expressions of the highest moral act, *ἑαυτὸν προσενέγκας* (vii. 27, ix. 14, 25); it never, in the sufferings of Christ, points to a compensation, but always to the moral perfection therein attained (ii. 10, v. 9, vii. 26 f.); it never puts the centre of gravity of Christ's High Priesthood simply in the sacrifice on Golgotha, where, however, it must rest if the traditional theory of satisfaction were accepted. Just as Paul bases the reconciliation on the death and resurrection of Jesus, our author finds its centre in the eternal perfect life of the Crucified in heaven, in which He is to the Father the living assurance of the sanctification of His brethren, because He is, at the same time, their living *ἀΐτιος τῆς σωτηρίας* (v. 9), their active *ἀγιάζων* (ii. 11). Finally, some passages which treat of the saving death of Jesus without special reference to the high-priestly idea confirm our conception. "It became Him for whom, and through whom, are all things," it is said ii. 10, "in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." God therefore did not ordain Him to bear the world's sin, but to be a victorious pioneer of salvation for all; and suffering was laid upon Him only because it was required for His own perfecting. And in ii. 14 it is said, Christ has taken part in our common human flesh

and blood, "that He might through death destroy him who has the power of death, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The Son of God appears as a mortal at the head of mortals in order to free them from the curse which lies upon them. He resists Satan, the world-ruling principle of selfishness and destruction, unto death, and thus destroys his power and terror with which he holds men in bondage, and changes death from being the entrance to a prison to being a gate of entrance to eternal glory. That is a self-sacrificing appearance for others, but it is not a vicarious penal suffering of one who compensates; it is a Prince and Hero going into death for His people in order to make for them a path to victory and freedom.

### § 6. THE HIGH PRIEST IN HEAVEN

From all this it already follows that in our Epistle, through all apparent differences, there is the same fundamental idea of the saving significance of the death of Jesus as in Paul; the sacrificial death of Jesus is something dynamic; there lies in it the power and possibility of the regeneration, justification, and sanctification of all. But this virtual becomes actual only by means of the working of the death of Jesus on man, an effect which is described in our Epistle as *καθαρίζειν, ραντισμός, ἁγιάζειν, τελειοῦν*. This dynamic character of redemption is sometimes expressed in so many words, as when it is said (vii. 21), not that Jesus has saved men, but that He *σώζειν δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους δι' αὐτοῦ*; but it is most effectively expressed in the fundamental view that the high-priestly calling of Christ is first fulfilled in heaven. So much does this view prevail in our Epistle, that it has occasioned a long theological controversy as to whether the author regards the death of Jesus on the cross as belonging to His high-priestly office;<sup>1</sup> and though, according to the passage ix. 23–26, and according to the analogy of the Old Testament high priest's office, to which the slaying of the sacrifice belongs, this controversy must be settled in the affirmative sense, yet there is no doubt that to our author the centre of gravity of Christ's High Priesthood falls—to speak in his

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Riehm, *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefs*, p. 466 f.



figurative language—in the presenting of the sacrificial blood in the Holiest of all, in His appearing before the presence of God (cf. viii. 1, ix. 12, 14, 23, etc.). It is important to give closer attention to this view for the confirmation and completion of our understanding of his teaching. It is no play of typology, but the earnestness of his doctrinal thought, which drives him to it; this high-priestly activity in heaven is just the making effectual of what was virtually established in the sacrifice upon the cross. The entrance of Jesus into the heavenly sanctuary, corresponding to the entrance of the Old Testament high priest into the symbolical Holiest of all, is on this side of decided significance; how could Christ open for us a way of access into the eternal home, to perfect communion with God, unless He Himself had made His way into it? This throws a most instructive light upon the ascension of Christ, when we understand by it not a visible scene, but the mysterious passing of the Risen One into the world of perfection. Not that, as is sometimes said, the resurrection of Jesus falls into the background in our Epistle; the author recognises its significance, even apart from the passage xiii. 20, by calling to mind the *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον* which dwelt in Christ, His *δύναμις ζωῆς ἀκαταλύτου*, in virtue of which He could devote Himself to death without perishing in death (vii. 16, ix. 14); but indeed the resurrection of Jesus is to him as to the whole New Testament, only the starting-point of His perfection and exaltation to God. But in Him, as its holy and perfect, loving, and all-embracing representative and forerunner, humanity has attained to the eternal goal, which hitherto even the best and most pious could not attain, which was only now attained through Him even by the Old Testament saints (xi. 39, 40); He has entered “within the veil” which conceals the Holiest of all from our earthly eyes as the *ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας* for all who become obedient to Him (ii. 10, v. 9), as our *πρόδρομος* (vi. 20). But in this heavenly sanctuary He is not inactive in the interests of His people. On the contrary, His entrance begins His high-priestly activity there, His *leitourgeîn* (viii. 2, 6), which consists in His now presenting His sacrifice before God’s presence and pleading it in the interests of His people, just as the Old Testament high priest did. To distinguish and emphasise this second high-

priestly act as contrasted with the first, the slaying of the sacrifice, that is, the sacrificial death upon the cross, would be empty and unmeaning if something essential had not to be added to the latter in order to make it effectual. But the author cannot find this essential element in the fact that God, shut up in His heaven, learns of His Son's act of sacrifice only when He enters heaven in glory. The fact rather is that the holy God has the assurance of the sanctification of humanity not in that sacrificial performance as such, but in the living and now all-prevailing person who offered it. For human hearts are "sprinkled with the blood of Christ," and by that are cleansed and sanctified, not as by a law of nature or a mere historical tradition, but only by this, that the glorified Christ through His living Spirit writes on the heart what He has done upon the cross. That is what the author urges in vii. 25 as the meaning of the heavenly life of Jesus: *ὅθεν καὶ σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους δι' αὐτοῦ τῷ θεῷ, πάντοτε ζῶν εἰς τὸ ἐντυγχάνειν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν.* There are two sides of the heavenly activity of the Saviour insisted on here which mutually condition each other; one, the *ἐντυγχάνειν* applied to God, and one, the *σώζειν*, turned towards men. That *ἐντυγχάνειν*, describing the peculiar task of the high priest "who appears in the presence of God" (ix. 24), can only be an anthropomorphic image, as the original source of all grace, needs no continuous intercession in order to be always gracious; it can only consist in the imperishable assurance which Christ as the Living One gives to the Father, that His people, though still affected with sin and weakness, shall be sanctified wholly through Him and His blood; and in virtue of that assurance they are already, as Paul would say, justified children of God, or as our Epistle expresses it, they "can draw near to the holy God through Him." But the exalted Christ can give this assurance to the Father only because He is ever active "to save for all time those who come unto God through Him," that is, to apply to them the fruit of His death of sacrifice, and to make its cleansing and sanctifying power operative in them for their *τελείωσις*. For this side of the saving activity of the Exalted One turned towards the world our author, of course, has nothing corresponding in the example of the Old Testament

high priest; but as that example is to him only a means of teaching, he has no scruple about exposing its insufficiency, and, as above remarked, he introduces kingly features into the scheme of Christ's High Priesthood. Thus he ascribes to the eternal High Priest, whose proper office must be a constant *λειτουργεῖν*, a "sitting at the right hand of God," that is, a kingly position and activity for the realising of salvation upon earth (viii. 1, x. 12, xii. 2); and he also calls Him "the High Priest of good things to come," who "as Son is set over God's house" (ix. 11, iii. 6); that is, he describes Him as the dispenser of all blessings of grace, as governing the family and Church of God. And he entirely passes from the high-priestly idea when, in xiii. 20, he calls Jesus the great Shepherd of the sheep; for that is the kingly function of Jesus in virtue of which He leads His people to the blessings of grace which He has purchased. But even the name of a "Surety" and "Mediator of the new covenant" (vii. 22, viii. 6, ix. 15, xii. 24) is a more comprehensive one than that of High Priest; it describes Christ as bringing in the perfect and happy relation between God and man, first by prophetically announcing it, then as a High Priest founding it, and finally as a King realising it with His whole person, with His death as with His life He answers for the truth of the new covenant. These are clear indications that to the author himself the High Priesthood of Christ was only an image, and indeed an insufficient one, which he used in order to make plain to his Hebrew readers the saving activity of Christ which went beyond every Old Testament figure; and therefore if we press this figure dogmatically we are departing from his intention. Nevertheless, the fact that he preferred this to all other names and types at his disposal, shows how decidedly, in spite of his doctrine of pre-existence, he regards Christ as a man at the head of humanity, and how decidedly he regards the centre of gravity of Christ's work as falling, not in that which He passively suffered on the cross, but in that which He did in death as the perfection of His life, and which thus became an imperishable possession for humanity.

## CHAPTER V

## MEANS AND END OF SALVATION

## § 1. THE CALL

How then does the salvation founded in Christ and prepared in heaven come to the world? First of all by a divine call, by a *κλήσις ἐπουράνιος* (iii. 1), answers our author. And by that he, like Peter and Paul, understands not merely the coming of the gospel to the man, but the effectual drawing of the hearer to the fellowship of salvation; he distinguishes between the *εὐηγγελισμένοι* (iv. 2, 6) and the *κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι* (iii. 1), who are to inherit salvation. Not that he ascribed to God an influence excluding human freedom; though God, according to xi. 39, has reserved to Himself both when and how He will bring His salvation near to each, whether on earth as to the readers, or in the other world as to the pious of the Old Testament, yet the danger of apostasy in which the readers stand manifestly implies that the acceptance and keeping of the proffered salvation is subject to the free self-determination of man. God, as is taught in the arguments of iii. 7–13, iv. 7, has appointed to every man his day in which he is to hear His voice, a time of grace in which the man can accept or reject the proffered salvation. God's eternal purpose of salvation finds application in those who accept it (*βουλή, θέλημα*, vi. 17, x. 10); they are partakers of the heavenly calling (iii. 1) and heirs of the promises (vi. 17); their names are written in heaven (xii. 23). The means of the call is, of course, the word of God, that voice of which it is said: "To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts." Though in the passage (i. 1) this word is conceived as including the whole range of the history of revelation, yet it is distinguished into Old and New Testament (ii. 2, 3). The word which calls to salvation is not that which was spoken by angels, but that spoken in the Son; not the law but the gospel, which because of its saving content is itself called in ii. 3, *τηλικαύτη σωτηρία*; it is the *καλὸν θεοῦ ῥῆμα*, as it is called in vi. 5. To this word baptism is added as a

sign and pledge of the call. It is mentioned in vi. 2 as an article of elementary Christian instruction; it is also undoubtedly meant in x. 23 by the *λελουσμένοι τὸ σῶμα ὕδατι καθαρῶ*, a phrase which, according to the context, describes not a merely sensible, but a symbolical act, representing in the body the cleansing of the soul. What is consummated in the receptive hearing of the word, and symbolised and sealed in the act of baptism, is the cleansing (*καθαρίζεσθαι* or *ἀγιάζεσθαι*) by the blood of Christ's sacrifice. When a man hears and submits to the word, and is baptized in the name of Jesus, the immortal sacrifice of the eternal High Priest touches his heart, disgusts him with his sin, and on that presupposition assures him of its full forgiveness: or, to use the words of the author, it "cleanses the conscience from dead works, and sanctifies the heart to serve the living God" (ix. 14, x. 29). That is the "sprinkling of the heart with the blood of Christ" which is spoken of in x. 22, which corresponds to the sprinkling of the people in the covenant sacrifice at Sinai; as the new covenant, according to Jer. xxxi. 31-34, is to bring with it a change of heart and forgiveness of sin, so both are united in this effect of the *καινὴ διαθήκη* on the heart (x. 29). This, therefore, is the moment, not merely when the consciousness of guilt is destroyed, but when the Holy Spirit enters the heart. Though in vi. 4, x. 29, this is named only as a peculiar gift of God in Christ, yet it is evident that the writing of the divine law on the heart (viii. 10) must coincide with the communication of the Holy Spirit. For that very reason we must by no means conclude from the expression *πνεύματος ἁγίου μερισμοῖς*, which is used in ii. 4, that the Spirit is thought of by the author only as a principle of special gifts of grace: a conception which is contradicted by the *πνευμα τῆς χάριτος*, x. 29. One other representation of the decisive experience by which a man is received into the new covenant is contained in the words, ii. 11: *ὁ τε γὰρ ἀγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἑνός πάντες*. It describes the Christian, like Christ Himself, as descended from God, not as created by Him naturally, but born of Him spiritually; which gives additional proof that what is meant in the phrase *ἀγιάζεσθαι* by the blood of Christ is not merely forgiveness of sin, but regeneration. In consequence of this

regeneration the Christian is now a son of God (ii. 10, πολλοὺς υἱοῦς) and a brother of Christ (ii. 11), a partaker of His glory (iii. 14, Χριστοῦ μέτοχοι γεγονάμεν). This is a present possession of salvation which is perfected in the other world; the Christian is "enlightened" by the Spirit and the word (vi. 4), he tastes the heavenly gift and the powers of the world to come (vi. 4, 5); that is, he enjoys the grace of God, salvation as a personal possession,<sup>1</sup> and has a foretaste of eternal life. One peculiar blessing of the Christian the passage xiii. 10 celebrates: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat who serve the (Old Testament) tabernacle." That is to say, as the Jewish priests live by the sacrifice of their altar, so we live by another and a better, viz. by the cross of Christ; we are in constant living communion with the Saviour who sacrificed Himself for us, so that His life (His body) given for us is the food of our souls. This Christian privilege does not refer to the actual rite of the Lord's Supper, but it certainly suggests the idea of it.

## § 2. FAITH AS A LAYING HOLD OF ETERNAL BLESSINGS

Man's position in this appropriation of salvation is faith. Why? This is explained first of all by the passage (iv. 2) which treats of the Israelites in the wilderness as unbelievers. "We have," it is said there, "the same gospel as they; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them who heard it" (μὴ συγκεκρασμένος τῇ πίστει τοῖς ἀκουσάσιν). Faith, therefore, is the means of connection between the human heart and the word of God; without it that word remains unknown to its hearers; by it the word is united with man, and becomes operative in him. By calling special attention to faith on this side as man's laying hold of and apprehending the divine, our author throws more light on this point than any other New Testament writer. In the celebrated passage xi. 1, he enters into the nature of faith as such, and gives a formal definition of it,—not in its Christian

<sup>1</sup> That the Holy Spirit is meant by "the heavenly gift" is improbable, because He is afterwards named. But the mere forgiveness of sin is not to be thought of, as the author never separates that from the new life which is bestowed on the Christian.

peculiarity but in its wider religious nature: "Ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπίζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων. That is, faith is a firm confidence, a moral certainty with regard to the objects of hope, and a being convinced of things (in themselves) invisible (οὐ—not μὴ—βλεπομένων), facts of a higher supersensuous character. It is evident that the two propositions are not meant to be distinguished as two different things, but to explain one and the same thing in two different ways. Accordingly all religious faith is related to facts of the invisible world, to such facts as are to us ἐλπίζόμενα, objects of hope, blessings to be desired; and these supersensuous facts and blessings can so convince us of their existence, and their existence for us (ἐλεγχός), that a firm reliance on them can arise and become the strongest motive of our life. It is evident that this classic definition of faith is much more than a mere holding for true by the understanding. The understanding, or rather the reason, has its own part in this; *πίστει νοοῦμεν*, it is said immediately after (xi. 3), in a fitting phrase which shows reason and faith in thorough agreement; but as the question is not about facts which might be mere objects of knowledge, but about objects of hope, how could our hearts be uninterested in them? The faith which lays hold of these things with inner sense (cf. the *τὸν ἀόρατον ὡς ὄρων*, xi. 27) is a thinking, a knowing; but it is more than that, it is at the same time a grasping with the will, a laying hold of in order to possess. And further, the author does not think that those ἐλπίζόμενα and οὐ βλεπόμενα could be found by our seeking in thought; they attest themselves, and so they convince us of their existence, and can become to us objects of such firm reliance that the centre of gravity of our inner life can be placed in them. That takes place even before there is a positive historical revelation: "By faith," the author continues (xi. 3), "we understand that the world was formed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The creation itself is God's first revelation; viewed with the reason of faith, an invisible world can be perceived underlying the visible, a word of God which speaks to us from the things that appear, a thought of eternal wisdom and goodness which draws us to itself. That is the primitive religion which lies at the basis of all further developments of

the relation between God and man; the belief that "God is, and that He is the rewarder of all that seek Him" (xi. 6); that He will not be sought in vain, but will be found to save and bless. But the relation between God and man advances by a progressive revelation on God's side and a growing possession through faith on man's side. Already in the case of Noah, and much more in the case of Abraham, there are definite divine disclosures and promises in which the *οὐ βλεπόμενα*, the *ἐλπίζόμενα*, take shape for them; and though at first these revelations concern things which belong to the sphere of sensuous perception and earthly experience, yet they are symbols and pledges of the eternal blessings, in themselves invisible, to which the relation of man to God according to its nature runs up (xi. 7-16). Not that the pious of the early period, the patriarchs and their descendants and successors in the old covenant, could with their faith and hope reach the eternal goal which hovered before them; they only saw the promises from afar and saluted them (xi. 13). For they had not yet the bridge which actually leads across into the world of the eternal possessions, the gospel of Christ which purifies and sanctifies the heart. But it was destined for them also, and when it came it led them also, in another world, to perfection (xi. 39, 40). In thus going back to the wider idea of faith, the author only seems to ignore the uniqueness of Christian faith for salvation. The general nature of faith remains the same in all stages of the divine revelation; but the revelation advances from the elementary beginning to its completion in the Son (i. 1), and faith only becomes partaker of the eternal blessings and heir of the invisible world in which it hopes, when it can appropriate this complete revelation, and in it redemption and sanctification. The only thing that can surprise us in this view is that it has not expressed the specifically Christian faith as distinguished from the universally religious, as in the Pauline phraseology in *πιστεῦεν εἰς Χριστόν, πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Our author has this idea in substance; it lies in passages such as iii. 14, x. 23, and in the context of xiii. 7, 8, just as in the *ὑπακούειν Χριστῷ*, v. 9; and even in the before mentioned eating from the New Testament altar (xiii. 10) there is substantially the deepest Pauline idea of faith, the appropriation of the Crucified in a



growing communion with Him. But in form our Epistle abides by the synoptic and primitive mode of teaching; it makes the gospel, brought near in Christ, or the promises of God, or God Himself as the source and sum of all promises and blessings, the objects of faith. The *πίστις ἐπὶ θεόν*, which is mentioned among the Christian rudiments (vi. 1) is not a mere general trust in God, and still less a mere belief in God's existence, it is a reliance on the God of salvation (*θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης*, xiii. 20) who is revealed in Christ, and who has already inwardly bestowed on the Christian the *ἐλπίζόμενα*, and will bestow them on him for ever. This is a view which refers Christian faith only to its first and last object, and which at the same time permits us to praise Jesus Himself as the "author and finisher," as the highest example of faith (xii. 2, 3).

### § 3. FAITH AS FUNDAMENTAL MORAL CONDUCT

Faith, however, as that which grasps and apprehends the higher world, is an inner act, and indeed the most decisive that is. Although he recognised how the word of God comes to meet a man and works upon him, it is evident that our author makes faith a free act of man, as has already been noted in the idea of the "call," and as we found confirmed by the way in which unbelief and apostasy from faith are viewed as man's guilt, and even as the real *ἐκουσίως ἀμαρτάνειν*, sin of presumption as such (x. 26). That is to say, when God comes to meet man with His word, he can attend to what he hears (*προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθείσιν*, ii. 1), or despise it and refuse to trouble himself about it (*ἀμελεῖν, ἀθετεῖν*, ii. 3, x. 28); and he acts in this according to the inner attitude he has already taken towards God and the world. For a man can seek God without knowing about Christ (xi. 6); and a man may know about Christ without really desiring to know anything about Him, but may reject His salvation and withdraw himself from it (*παραιτεῖσθαι, ὑστερεῖν, ὑποστέλλεσθαι*, x. 39, xii. 15, 19), and even embitter and harden himself against the good word of God (iii. 8, 13, 15, iv. 8). And the decisive inducement to the one or the other will be whether he prefers God and His salvation to "the

treasures of Egypt" (that is, the world), and "the pleasures of sin" (xi. 25, 26), or the reverse. It is evident from this that the *πίστις ἐπὶ θεόν*, as the author meant it, is not conceivable without a breach with sin, without the *μετάνοια ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων*, which, for that very reason, appears in vi. 1, immediately before faith, as an elementary article of Christian instruction. The "turning from dead works" as a free, subjective act, the other side of being cleansed and sprinkled with the blood of Christ, is simply the turning away from the ungodly condition, without which the turning towards God in faith is inconceivable; and if the author, in his doctrine of *πίστις* (chap. xi.), does not go back expressly to the *μετάνοια*, that is only because he regards it as evidently the other side of faith. Yet even in our Epistle, just as in Peter and occasionally in Paul, faith and obedience, unbelief and disobedience, are interchangeable. Believers are *Χριστῷ ὑπακούοντες*, and unbelievers *ὑπενάντιοι* to God (v. 9, x. 27); mention is made of a *καρδία πονηρὰ ἀπιστίας* (iii. 12), and *ἀπειθεια* as well as *ἀπιστία* is opposed to *πιστεύειν* (iii. 18, 19, iv. 6, 11, cf. with ver. 3). This ethical view of faith reaches its climax in the author's conviction that faith is the fundamental moral act of man, the principle of all God-pleasing or righteousness. "Without faith," it is said (xi. 6), "it is impossible to please God"; in x. 38 God says: "*ὁ δὲ δίκαιος μου*" *ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται*. This does not mean as in Paul: faith is reckoned to him for righteousness; but faith itself is in principle righteousness, the fundamental virtue of man before God. Thus God declares Abel to be *δίκαιος* because of the sacrifice which he offered in faith; and Noah, after receiving a revelation by faith, and having acted in accordance with it, became *heir τῆς κατὰ πίστιν δικαιοσύνης* (xi. 4-7). That this is something different from the Pauline doctrine of imputation is evident, not only from the want of the Pauline concepts *δικαιοῦν* and *λογίζεσθαι εἰς δικαιοσύνην*, but still more from the passage (xi. 4) in which God manifestly testifies to Abel as "righteous," because he is so, and does not merely declare him to be so. In the same sense, also, the gospel is called (v. 13) *λόγος δικαιοσύνης*, not because it announces justification (for of that announcement the beginner in Christianity is not *ἄπειρος*), but because it con-

ducts to perfect righteousness such as is understood and possessed only by the *τέλειος*; just as Christ, in vii. 2, is called the "King of Righteousness," because where He rules, righteousness in the moral sense rules. Of course, this *κατὰ πίστιν δικαιοσύνη* (xi. 7), this righteousness according to faith, is only a righteousness in principle that has still to be developed to the perfect righteousness, to the stage of the *δίκαιοι τετελειωμένοι* (xii. 23). But it, and it alone, can thus be developed because, as surrender to God and the eternal blessings, it is the fundamental disposition out of which all obedience and all sanctification grow as from their root.

#### § 4. THE LIFE IN FAITH

But it is not sufficient to have once laid the foundation of faith, we must also stand upon that foundation, and grow, and ripen to perfection (cf. vi. 1). The author had to call attention to this the more urgently as the languor of his readers was threatening to make even their beginnings in Christianity ineffective and retrogressive (v. 11 f.). Hence he exhorts them, first of all, to hold fast what they have by keeping their faith lively and active. In iii. 14 he exclaims, "We are partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence to the end." Not that they could do so without God's aid: it is through grace that the heart is established (xiii. 9), but not by letting the hands hang down or the knees become feeble, but by seeking to draw near to the throne of grace, and to lay hold of the divine help (xii. 12). It is, above all, *παρρησία*, the courage and confidence of faith, which the author requires of his readers (iii. 6, iv. 16, x. 19, 35); the Christian has this for Christ's sake, and yet must be exhorted to have it and to use it. In this assurance of faith the readers are incessantly, as it is repeatedly said, *προσέρχεσθαι* or *ἐγγίξεν τῷ θεῷ* (iv. 16, vii. 19, x. 22, xi. 6), to make continual use of the blessed privilege of "drawing near to God" which they possess through Christ (*δι' αὐτοῦ*, vii. 25); their life is to be a priestly life, a constant intercourse with God, an ever-continued worship. This *λατρεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι* (ix. 14, x. 2, xii. 28) is the glorious privilege of Christians; whilst those who continue at the Jewish stand-

point serve only the *σκηνῆ*, the *σκιᾷ τῶν ἐπουρανίων* (viii. 5, xiii. 10). It is the worship of God in spirit and in truth; but for that very reason it must be offered "through grace" (xii. 28), "with true hearts" (x. 22), "in full assurance of faith" (*πληροφορία πίστεως*), "in holy awe and fear" (xii. 28). The sacrifices of praise which this worship recognises are prayer, confession (*ὁμολογούντων*, xiii. 15), works of mercy (xiii. 16); the blessing which it brings back from the "throne of grace" is divine mercy and grace to help in time of need (iv. 16). But the Christian must not only continue in the relation to God procured by the eternal High Priest, but must also make progress in it in a twofold respect—in knowledge and in holiness. As a believer he is, from the beginning, "enlightened" (vi. 4, x. 32); he has "received the knowledge of the truth" (x. 20); but only as he was able to receive it, as a babe (*νήπιος*) who is fed with milk, with the rudiments of the gospel (*στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ*, v. 12, 13). He is still inexperienced in the *λόγος τῆς δικαιοσύνης*, unacquainted with the full height of the Christian ideal. He must not be content to remain at this position, or he will lose what he has; he must get beyond babyhood and its food to full manhood (*τελειότης*) and strong food (vi. 1); "his spiritual senses must be developed by exercise to discern between good and evil" (v. 14), in order to be a match for the manifold temptations of life. It lay in the special Christian training of the "Hebrews" that the author should regard the doctrine of Christ's High Priesthood as the strong food which is contrasted with the milk; the hardest thing, at all times, for Jewish Christians was to recognise the cross of Christ—this offence to Judaism—as the palladium of Christianity. The author, however, does not view the elements of Christianity enumerated in vi. 1 f. simply as objects of faith, and the High Priesthood of Christ simply as an object of knowledge; but as those rudiments impart "a knowledge of the truth" (x. 26), so also the High Priesthood of Christ, in a very special way, remains an object of *ὑπόστασις* (iii. 14); that is, according to xi. 1, of faith, which only grows to the full *πληροφορία* through the knowledge of this main article of the doctrine of salvation (x. 22). The author does not regard faith and knowledge as following one another, but

as going hand in hand with one another from the beginning to the end. The advancement in knowledge, however, is to serve another and a higher—the advancement in holiness (cf. v. 13, 14). That remains the highest task of the Christian life, because “without holiness no man can see God” (xii. 14); because in it the *τελείωσις* is first reached. It is self-evident that holiness, like everything else in Christian life, may be conceived both as a gift and effect of grace, and as a task of free activity. It is Christ who succours in all temptations those who obey Him (ii. 17, 18); it is God who, from His throne of grace, imparts help in time of need (iv. 16); but the very idea of *βοηθεῖν* presupposes the activity of man. Another conception, including likewise a union of a divine and human exercise of will, which the author applies to the work of salvation, is that of education; God trains His own to holiness. He does so especially by suffering—in the dispensing of which He exhibits Himself to them as a Father, so that they must ever be doubtful of their divine sonship if He does not chasten them: “He chastises them for their good, that they may be partakers of His holiness” (xii. 7–10). For “no chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: afterwards, however, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness (inwardly beneficial, emancipating) to those who are exercised thereby” (xii. 11). Such fruits of righteousness the author, without any falling back on the Old Testament law, recognises in chastity, in the case both of married and unmarried (xiii. 4); contentment and reliance on the care of God (xiii. 5); the doing good and communicating, which is also a kind of sacrifice well-pleasing to God (xiii. 1–6); hospitality without grumbling at its burdens (xiii. 2); sympathy for the captives and the suffering (xiii. 3); a peaceful bearing towards every man (xii. 14); care for those whose faith is endangered (iii. 12, xii. 15), and brotherly love (xiii. 1). For within the general human fellowship there is an inner circle which imposes special duties. The house of God, that is, the fellowship of believers (iii. 6), is essentially spiritual, but is also visible and outward. The Church has its creed, to which it is to hold (iii. 1, iv. 14); its assemblies, which are not to be forsaken (x. 25); its rulers who watch for souls, who are to be obeyed and followed (xiii. 17); its

departed noble witnesses and examples, whose memories are to be gratefully preserved in the community, and their faith followed (xiii. 7).

### § 5. THE HOPE OF THE BELIEVER

But even this ethical side of faith, which makes it the power of the Christian life and walk, does not exhaust its nature. Faith is also a source of eternal life as future: *ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται οὐκ ἐσμέν ὑποστολῆς εἰς ἀπόλειαν, ἀλλὰ πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς* (x. 38, 39). That flows from the nature of faith, which even here on earth is a laying hold of the higher world, and is thus a source of eternal life; but it requires also its special doctrinal expression. This expression is the idea of hope with all its related ideas, *ἀπεκδέχεσθαι, ἐκδέχεσθαι, ἐπιζητεῖν, ὀρέγεσθαι, ἀποβλέπειν* (ix. 28, xi. 10, 15, 16, 26, xiii. 14 f.). It corresponds to the prominence given to the future in the Christianity of the original apostles, that in our Epistle, in the same way as in the First Epistle of Peter, *ἐλπίς*, as the *alter ego* of *πίστις*, has even a more central place in the Christian consciousness than it. The author regards salvation as dependent on a living hope as well as on a living faith; for his readers therefore, in view of their weakened faith and their danger of apostasy, he can desire nothing more than that they might show the same zeal as before *πρὸς τὴν πληροφορίαν τῆς ἐλπίδος* to the end (vi. 11). The *πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως* is in the same way peculiarly a *πληροφορία τῆς ἐλπίδος*; the confession of Christian faith is *ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος* (x. 23); the whole new covenant in relation to the old may be described as the "introduction of a better hope by which we draw near to God" (vii. 19), and membership in the "house of God" can be made dependent on nothing more than on the preservation of the *παρρησία τῆς ἐλπίδος*, the *καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος* (iii. 6). One of the finest passages of our Epistle says (vi. 19): "We have in hope the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, which entereth into that which is within the veil"—that veil which hides the higher world from our view; it keeps the soul in inseparable connection with the higher world, and

with the eternal High Priest who rules there, in spite of all the storms of this world. All this does not contradict the standard significance of faith in the plan of salvation; for, as the explanation of faith as *ὑπόστασις ἐλπίζομένων* (xi. 1) shows, faith and hope are not at bottom two things. Faith is related to blessings which have existed from eternity and have been brought near to us in time, the full possession of which, however, is reserved for the future, and therefore hope becomes necessary; hope is the side of faith which is turned to the future perfection yet to be attained. Hope therefore in our Epistle is connected with the High Priesthood of Christ, which, as the most decisive fact of salvation, supports faith (vi. 19, vii. 19, x. 19, 23), and under the title of "keeping hold of hope" (vi. 18), Christian virtues are demanded which might just as well be traced back to a keeping hold of faith such virtues as *μακροθυμία* and *ὑπομονή*; the former, the steadfast continuance in hoping, as is specially seen in the example of Abraham (vi. 12, 15, cf. xi. 15 f.); the latter, steadfastness in suffering, which again must be stirred by the prospect of the "joy laid up in heaven" (xii. 2). Again, the idea of hope reverts as it were to that of faith, where the point in question is the assurance of Christian hope, for that assurance rests on the experiences of faith which have already been bestowed on the Christian life on earth. "Ye are come," the author exclaims to his readers (xii. 22), "to (the spiritual) Mount Zion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect (of the Old Testament), and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." If they "have received the promise, not merely in the sense of promise, but in the beginning of its fulfilment"; if the inheritance promised them as a "heavenly gift" has already been inwardly communicated to them (ix. 15, vi. 4),—they must also be heirs in the full sense of the word. They are *τετελειωμένοι* in principle, and yet are not so in the sense in which their High Priest and Captain is; what can be more assuring than that the Captain of their salvation (*ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν*) will save them

utterly (*εἰς τὸ παντελές*, vii. 25); that His Father, who is also their Father, will lead them into the same glory to which He has led His firstborn? (ii. 10).

### § 6. THE WARNING AGAINST COMING SHORT

And yet this path of glory moves along the edge of a deep abyss. Our Epistle, with the whole New Testament, has not only to announce a final judgment of God, which may have a twofold issue, *σωτηρία* and *ἀπώλεια* (x. 39), in view of the danger of apostasy on whose brink the readers stand, it has to set forth this final possibility to Christians more pointedly than any other writing of the New Testament. It is probably an error to infer the idea of a double judgment from the passage ix. 27 (*ἀπόκειται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἅπαξ ἀποθανεῖν, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο κρίσις*), an individual judgment immediately after death and a general judgment at the last day (vi. 2, *κρίματος αἰωνίου*); those words undoubtedly mean no more than that after death man is reserved for a divine decision about his eternal worth or worthlessness. This judgment at the end of time, which in harmony with the entire New Testament is conceived as near (x. 37-39), and which both to just and unjust promises an *ἔνδικος μισθαποδοσία*, has been ascribed by the author in a remarkable way, not to Christ, but immediately to God, although it undoubtedly coincides with the (expected) second coming of Christ (i. 6, ix. 28, x. 25); it is as though he shrank from bringing into his picture of the eternal High Priest the inconsistent image of a condemning Judge of the world. And yet he wishes to awe his readers by holding before them this possible condemnation: "Our God is a consuming fire"; "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (xii. 29, x. 31). Not that he regards the unbelieving world as certainly involved in eternal destruction; on the contrary, its sins can always be spoken of as sins of ignorance for which the sacrifice of Christ contains an atonement; and just as the pious of the Old Testament shared in the blessings of this sacrifice in the other world (xi. 39, 40), so it offers the possibility of a *μετάνοια* to the ungodly heathen who died in the early days. On the other hand, our Epistle teaches that



he who has tasted every exhibition of God's grace here on earth, and then falls away from faith, has committed the sin of absolute presumption for which there is no atonement and no conversion, but only a fearful looking for of judgment (vi. 4, x. 26-31). This doctrine, expressed with special severity on account of the special occasion of our Epistle, has an affinity with the utterance of Jesus about the sin against the Holy Ghost, and in it indirectly Christ's office of judging the world is asserted; for, according to this, Christ rejected and "crucified afresh" (vi. 6) is the Judge of the apostates. If we ask for the grounds of that unqualified judgment the Epistle presents it in a twofold way, from the divine and from the human standpoint. The author first appeals to the warning example of Esau, who parted with his birthright for a mess of pottage, and afterwards found no place of repentance (xii. 16, 17). That seems to say that he repented with tears; but his repentance (so far as concerned his father's dying blessing) was not accepted, because it came too late. The solution of the question seems from this to lie in the idea already alluded to, that there is a time of grace appointed by God for every man, "a to-day," the expiry of which is followed by an irrevocable judgment of wrath and rejection. But a deeper psychological proof is given in vi. 4-8, x. 26-31. Here it is emphasised that there is no further means of salvation for him who, as it were, crucifies the Son of God afresh (by going back to the side of His deadly enemies, the unbelieving Jews), and counts the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and tramples under foot the Spirit of grace which he has received, any more than there is a new seed-time for land which has drunk of God's blessing, and brings forth thorns and briars instead of good fruit. In other words, conscious apostasy from the grace of the new covenant which has been experienced, proves a corruption and obduracy of heart which absolutely excludes the possibility of renewal and repentance. The example of Esau is quoted to suggest the mere show and shallowness of a *μετάνοια* which is not maintained; for as it is said, and probably intentionally, he sought repentance (*ἐζήτησεν*), that is, sought but did not find. This whole argument is peculiar to our Epistle, which, like the opposite

Pauline idea of universal restoration, must be submitted to the judgment of the Spirit which breathes through the whole Sacred Scriptures; at anyrate, it is the strongest New Testament protest against a *gratia irresistibilis*.

### § 7. THE BLESSED CONSUMMATION

The universal judgment of men is regarded by the author as coinciding with that catastrophe of the world which "shakes heaven and earth," but sets up "a kingdom (of God) which cannot be shaken" (xii. 26-28); that is, the present imperfect order of the world is dissolved, in order to make way for a new, perfect, and imperishable one. Our author seems to have solved the question as to how the existence of the lost agrees with this, by the notion of their actual destruction through a process of pain; at least the repeated reference to burning can be most simply interpreted as referring to the nature of God's wrath as a consuming fire (vi. 8, x. 27: *πυρὸς ζῆλος ἐσθίειν μέλλοντος τοὺς ὑπεναντίους*). At anyrate, our author conceives only of an *ἀνάστασις δικαίων* (Luke xiv. 14), not of a resurrection of the lost; the expression (xi. 35), used about the resurrection of the dead (vi. 2), *ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν*, in allusion to the martyr story in 2 Macc. vii., in the first instance opposes the resurrection to a mere temporal deliverance from death; but manifestly it does not think of the resurrection as coming of itself to everyone, but as forming a prize to be striven for. The promise which is to be fulfilled by the resurrection is conceived now negatively as full *σωτηρία*, and now positively as *κληρονομία*, that is, the inheritance of the true land of promise, the eternal home, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city built by God on firm foundations (xi. 10). Blessedness is described without a figure, as in the rest of the New Testament, now as participation in the *δόξα* of God, and again as the vision of God (ii. 10, xii. 14). Finally, the idea of eternal blessedness as an entrance into the Sabbath rest of God is peculiar to our Epistle. It is the rest which God Himself entered into after the completion of His work of creation, in which He meant His children to share. The people of God of the old covenant not having attained it by

their entrance into Caanan, it has become the object of the New Testament promise, and is fulfilled in God's eternal kingdom (iv. 1 f.). This profound notion comprehends not only the idea of full and blessed communion with God, but at the same time makes it refer to the life on earth. He who has attained through Christ to *τελείωσις*, to the perfection of his life in God, rests from the works of earth as God did from His in an eternal Sabbath rest.

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## II. *THE APOCALYPSE*

### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

##### § 1. GROUNDS OF ITS ORIGIN IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

The progressive movement of the primitive apostolic spirit produced, as will be shown, the Apocalypse of John, the classic monument of early Christian prophecy, almost at the same time as the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is a writing very different in kind from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and yet in its ideas it has many affinities with it. In the teaching and exhortations of the Epistle, notwithstanding its references to the coming shaking of the world and the heavenly Jerusalem, the chief interest attaches to what God in Christ has done for the salvation of the world; but in the Apocalypse it attaches to what He has yet to do, and will do speedily. It is the epic of Christian hope which we have before us. Great and in itself perfect as the fulfilling of the divine promise which appeared in Christ was, yet the eye could not but be directed by it to the future. Salvation, although in itself perfect, was only secured in possibility in the world, not accomplished, and thus the prophecy of its perfection belonged essentially to the New Testament revelation. Hence Jesus Himself became His own prophet concerning what lay beyond His earthly life, the predictor of the

future of the kingdom and the perfection of the world; and His hints on these points, like His other doctrinal ideas, grew within the apostolic circle to a systematic and complete view. This progressive development is affected by the unavoidably imperfect conception of His parousia which prevailed in the circle of disciples, which viewed it not as a continuous law of the world's history, but as a single event to take place within the next generation. The expectation of this event holding the minds of the early Christians, taught them to look upon the signs of the time as premonitions of the end. In accordance with a simple philosophy of history, it was supposed that the world, as opposed to the kingdom of God which had appeared in Christ, so far as it resisted the preaching of the gospel, must advance to the height of hostility to God, so that the concentration of ungodliness will appear in opposition to the perfect manifestation of the divine among men, a kingdom of Satan in opposition to the kingdom of God, an Antichrist in opposition to the Christ of God. From this stress of opposites it was supposed that there would arise for the Church a tribulation and oppression without equal, and from it would also come the last conflict of the world's history in which the Son of God will triumph over the Prince of this world, and from the flames of the world's judgment thus accomplished will spring like a phœnix the world of perfection, the new heaven and the new earth. But where in the present history of the world were the embryo forms of this near future to be sought? The Jewish view was, that the opposition to the expected visible kingdom of God might be seen in the Romish dominion of the world, which they hated as much as they feared it. Since Pompey had broken up the long enfeebled kingdom of the Selucidæ, and had replaced it by the blood and iron dominion of Rome over Palestine, the fourth monarchy of Daniel, which originally meant the Macedonian kingdom, with Antiochus Epiphanes as its blasphemous head, was applied to the Roman dominion, which the delineation of Daniel seemed to suit much better. This Jewish and apocalyptic view was not prominent in primitive Christianity so long as unbelieving Judaism seemed the most bitter foe of the Church, and the Roman magistrate and the Roman law its protector; Paul especially, after his

experience, could never have thought of referring the old prophetic idea to Rome and the Roman emperor. Rather, as we see from 2 Thess. ii., he saw in the order of the Roman State and its head the *κατέχον* and the *κατέχων* of the "mystery of iniquity which was already working"; probably he regarded "the man of sin," the Antichrist, as proceeding from a vast revolt against the Roman State from the *ἀποστασία* of the world ruled by Rome, and he expected that Christ would come down from heaven to fight against him. But the Pauline view gave way to the Jewish Christian expectation when the tolerant policy of fifty years was changed into a fierce hostility against the Church of Christ, and so there was revealed in Rome the beast with the iron teeth" of the Book of Daniel. This change appeared in the Neronian persecution of the year 64. The monster who sat upon the throne of the Roman world, the murderer of his brother, his mother, and his legal wife, the incendiary of his own capital, in order to turn away popular indignation from himself, inflicted on the Christians in Rome the most frightful tortures, which surpassed the horrors of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the news of which convulsed Christian circles everywhere. Now they recognised the last enemy, that final fruit of hostility to God which must call down from heaven the Judge of the world. And thenceforth the signs of the times were crowded together in a remarkable way. Three years after the beginning of that persecution, insurrection broke out in the East and West at the same time, in Gaul and in Judea, and its flames laid hold of Rome also; Nero perished forsaken by all, and with him ended the Julian race; the framework of the Roman Empire cracked at every joint. And at the same time the iron Vespasian encompassed rebellious Jerusalem; the judgment of God which Jesus had predicted for the city in which the prophets were murdered, and which the Christians viewed as the beginning of the judgment of the world, was in sight. How could Christian prophecy at such a moment doubt that the coming of the Lord was at the door? All the signs of it seemed to be present. And the story which ran through the excited East, that the monster Nero was not dead; that he had fled to Parthia, and would soon

return with an immense army, and take vengeance on apostate Rome (Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 8), furnished the prophetic fancy with the most expressive figure for the personal Antichrist, in whom one looked for the concentration of Rome's opposition to Christ. Nero redivivus in his dying and his miraculous revival, the distorted, dæmonic counterpart of the dead and risen Son of God, must be the Prince of the world, who as Satan's instrument would bring about the final conflict between the divine and its opponents, and call down from heaven the judgment of the world. These are the facts and feelings of the time from which the Apocalypse of John proceeded, and by which it is to be explained.

## § 2. THE KEY OF EXPOSITION

The book itself contains ample proof of this for all whose eyes are not closed by preconceived opinions. We can easily understand that the author, writing in the Roman Empire, was compelled to clothe his views about that empire in figurative and enigmatic language, which none but Christian readers could understand; but he himself put into those readers' hands the key to his mysteries. After portraying in chap. xvi. the war of Antichrist and the kings of the earth against the great city Babylon, he represents, in chap. xvii., Babylon itself as the great courtesan, as the woman royally adorned, who, "drunk with the blood of the saints," sits on the "beast with the seven heads and ten horns"; but he is now to be overtaken by the judgment. Here the author stops, and puts the explanation into the mouth of the angel who had shown him the vision, to which he expressly calls attention in the words *ὦδε ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἔχων σοφίαν* (here is the mind that hath wisdom, ver. 9). "The beast that thou sawest," it is said (ver. 8 ff.), "was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition. . . . The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is (that is, at present reigning), and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is (one) of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which

have received no kingdom as yet ; but they receive power as kings one hour with the beast." There, first of all, the woman who sitteth on the beast and is called "mystic" Babylon (xvii. 5) cannot be mistaken ; it is the capital of the world, which opposes the New Testament Church of God with the same hostility as Babylon did the Church of the Old Testament ; the city of seven hills (ver. 9), which has "dominion over the kings of the earth" (ver. 18), "committing fornication with all the idols of the world, and drunk with the blood of the saints" (the Neronic martyrs, vv. 4, 6), it is Rome. But the "beast" (the expression springs from the Book of Daniel, chap. vii., and symbolises an ungodly, an inhuman and brutal power)—the "beast" is ambiguous : if it has, first, seven horns, and then is itself one of these horns (ver. 11), that is no confusion, but a premeditated play of ideas. The beast is first of all the Roman Empire ; as such it carries the proud Roma, the capital of the world on the seven hills with its glory. But as the maxim *L'état c'est moi* was true of Rome and its emperor, the beast, in the second place, is a definite ruler, in whom the hostility to God and the brutal nature of the empire is embodied. It is not hard to reckon which Roman king, that is, emperor (for the East called the Roman emperor king), is meant ; five, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, have been, the sixth is, Galba, under whose rule, therefore, the seer writes ; a seventh is to come, and continue for a short space, presumably Vespasian, in whom the author, writing in the East, might already perceive the next ruler. But the "beast" is the eighth as well as one of the seven, that is, one who was, and is to come again, the Nero redivivus of current expectation, whose march of vengeance from the Euphrates, in covenant with the ten kings against the revolted Rome, is fancifully described in chap. xvi. 12–21. It may be said that the clearness of this explanation leaves nothing to be desired, and that all other attempts at explanation as contrasted with it are arbitrary, feeble, and lifeless. Even in chap. xiii., where it first appears, we have the same twofold meaning of the beast as an emblem of the Roman Empire and of Nero. For the miracle here indicated, that "to the astonishment of the world the deadly wound of the beast is healed," describes how the empire, which seemed to have received a mortal blow with

the extinction of the imperial race, and the revolution, which broke out in East and West and in the capital itself, arose again full of power; and it also describes the expectation of one like Nero, whom our seer may have regarded as really dead, but expected to return from the abyss, the last and most ungodly of the line of emperors (xiii. 1-8). In the same way may be solved the riddle of the number 666, which the author propounded, at the close of chap. xiii., as the "number of a man," that is, a number whose letters yield a man's name. The two interpretations most worthy of notice are *λατῆϊνος* and *neron kesar*, according as we take the number as written in Greek or Hebrew letters; and presumably both are right. The author undoubtedly sought a double allusion in the number, which in itself was symbolical, for six is the antithesis to the sacred number seven, and 666 is therefore the intensified opposition to the Holy One: there is an allusion to the universal dominion of Rome, and to the person of the Emperor Nero,<sup>1</sup> just as in chap. xvii. Now, if this be the key to the riddle of the Apocalypse, it is manifest that the author has erred in his interpretation of the signs of the time. The crisis of the years 68-70 passed without issuing in the judgment of the world, as the seer imagined; Nero did not return from hell, and Jesus did not come down visibly from heaven. The common error of the apostolic age, of conceiving the parousia as a single historical event instead of the whole course of Christ's victory and triumph over the historical world, dominates also the writer of the Apocalypse. But this error marks simply the necessary limits of prophecy, which Paul describes in the words (1 Cor. xiii. 12): "Now we see (in our prophecy) through a glass in a riddle, but then face to face." To see the things of the future face to face is granted only to the after life; to him who looks forward the future appears only in the mirror of the present; the symbol of the future hovers before him in the signs of his time. Hence the conflict of Christian history

<sup>1</sup> It should not be urged against this that neither solution can be made to fit the number 666 except by a certain violence; instead of *Ρωμαϊος* the unusual *Λατῆϊνος* has to be taken, and the Hebrew *neron kesar* has to be written in a strengthened form; but such violences belong to the very nature of all such contrivances.



and the hope of eternal victory were to the writer of the Apocalypse symbolically reflected in the confusions of his time; and if he saw close at hand the eternal triumph of the kingdom of God, he simply erred in the same way as Isaiah or his greater post-Exilic successor, the former of whom expected that the Assyrian oppression and deliverance from it, and the latter that the Babylonian captivity and deliverance, alone separated them from the Messianic salvation.

### § 3. TRAIN OF THOUGHT FROM CHAP. I.—IX.

The marvellous structure of the book unfolds itself from this standpoint. First of all, we now understand the *ἐν τάχει*, "speedily," which runs through the book from its first sentence to its last (i. 1, xxii. 20), and which it is the grossest perversion to interpret into "within a thousand years." Further, the seer writes of things which he expects as near at hand, not, of course, to gratify curiosity, but to prepare Christendom for the last and hardest conflict. Hence the introductory vision and the Epistles to the seven Churches. The seer dedicates his book to the seven Churches which are in "Asia"; that is, in Western Asia Minor, near to which he himself undoubtedly dwelt, and in which, as representative of the whole of Christendom, he sees its condition as in seven different colours. The exalted Christ, "who walks among the seven golden candlesticks, and holds the seven stars in His right hand," the Lord of the Church (i. 16), has given him this revelation for the seven Churches, and impresses it on each of them in a special Epistle (i. 1-3, 22). After this introduction the seer translates his readers to the higher world, which, in spite of contrary appearances, has in its power the destiny of the earthly and historical; he shows us the glory of the eternal God in heaven throned above the cherubim, the symbol of creation praising God, surrounded by the four and twenty elders, presumably the representatives of the Old and New Testament Churches of God, and celebrated by the united songs of both (chap. iv.). In the right hand of God lies a book with seven seals, the final course of the world's history not yet unfolded; no one can open it but the Lamb, which, as slain and yet alive, and endowed with the

symbols of spiritual omnipresence and royal power, stands midway between the throne of God and the worshipping creatures; the Saviour of the world slain in sacrifice and raised to divine glory, who, as Saviour of the world is also its Judge, can alone open the seals of the future, that is, carry out the decrees of God to the end (chap. v.). The Lamb opens the first six seals, and each time at His call its meaning in history appears. The preliminary signs of the world's judgment, which have already begun, appear in these six seals; and of them it is said (Matt. xxiv. 6-8): "All these are the beginning of sorrows." First, we have a vision of riders copied from the sixth chapter of Zechariah. The first rider on a white horse, with bow that can send its arrows far, is perhaps the symbol of the universal mission of the gospel in its course of victory (Matt. xxiv. 14). The others on a red, a black, and a pale horse, signify war, famine, and pestilence, mournful signs of the government of Caligula and Claudius, of which also Matt. xxiv. 6, 7 reminds us. As the contents of the fifth seal appear a multitude of martyrs, who cry to heaven for vengeance, without doubt the symbol of the Neronic persecution; as the contents of the sixth a mighty earthquake appears, the natural image of the political earthquake of the year 68, when, with the death of Nero and revolution everywhere, the Roman Empire seemed to be falling in pieces (chap. vi.). This brings us to the time of the seer, and his seventh seal contains the last things, which were still future for him. But before it is opened, the storms of the end, desiring to break loose, are restrained for a moment, in order to comfort the elect of God on earth about all the fearful things that are coming; the twelve times twelve thousand servants of God, that is, the full number of the people of the New Testament covenant, are sealed. A second picture immediately added shows what that means; an innumerable company of conquerors stand triumphantly around the throne of God singing praises; "they have passed through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"; that is, sanctified by Christ's blood, they have passed victoriously from the last conflict to eternal glory. This, and not an outward preservation in the coming great tribulation, is the meaning of the sealing;

it is the symbolical presentation of the thought of Jesus (Matt. xxiv. 22), that the elect cannot possibly be overwhelmed by the terrors of the last day. And now the seventh seal is opened: it again unfolds in seven trumpets, the signals, the immediate signs of the judgment of the world. The prayers of the saints on earth are in heaven converted into fire of the divine wrath against their oppressors (viii. 3-5), and so a series of penal judgments break over the impenitent world at the trumpet blasts of judgment, which—still in the future even for the seer—could only be described in a purely fanciful form as monstrous events of nature and of history. The first four trumpets bring terrible phenomena of nature; the fifth, after the Old Testament example (Joel ii.), a plague of locusts; the sixth, an inroad of barbarians fierce as fiends, a Scythian invasion of the cultivated world (chap. ix.). Before the seventh and last trumpet, the seer again pauses. It again should be divided into seven thunders, into the seven thunderbolts of the world's judgment; but these thunders are "sealed up and not described." Instead of that there is given to the seer a little book opened to devour; that is (cf. Ezek. iii. 1-3), a new summary of revelation is given for him to appropriate, pleasant to receive, but hard to master. In this remarkable and obscure phrase the seer probably means to mark his passage from the prophecy, with its numerical symbols, to another and a freer form. He must leave that scheme of symbolic seven, because he could not in that form clearly and suitably express the circumstances and events of the immediate future which he had at heart, and so he makes a new start.

#### § 4. TRAIN OF THOUGHT FROM CHAP. X.—XXII.

He begins by introducing the parties concerned in the final history. In the first place, he is careful to announce the special fate of Israel in the approaching catastrophe of the world's history. The Roman legions were already treading the Holy Land, and surrounding Jerusalem; the eyes of Christendom were turned to the fortunes of the city. Hence the seer in the eleventh chapter anticipated the future

of Israel from the siege of Jerusalem up to the catastrophe of the world's judgment. The outer court will be given up to the heathen, not the sanctuary; that is, probably, the outer form and constitution of the Jewish nationality will be broken up, but not the kernel of the nation and its religious character. On the contrary, God will send two great preachers of repentance, another Moses and Elias, to call the people to repentance. These will indeed fall a sacrifice to the "beast," the Antichrist, who is to appear; but God will gloriously raise them from death, and then, in a second penal judgment (the "second woe," the first was under Vespasian and Titus), the greater part of the nation will be converted immediately before the last trump, that is, before the appearance of the catastrophe of the world's judgment, and with it the "third woe" (xi. 14-19). The seer applies his thought to the world only after this separate prophecy about Israel, in which, of course, he anticipates in a measure his universal revelation of the future. In the first place, he sketches the two main powers opposed, between whom must fall the final decision of the world's history: the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of the old dragon, the prince of this world. The first, conceived in forms taken both from Old and New Testament, is presented in the image of that star-crowned woman, who is clothed with the sun of divine revelation. She has given birth to the Messiah, against whom the old dragon has risen to devour Him: he has not succeeded, the child of God has been caught up into heaven, and Satan cast down from heaven. Hence the decision between God and Satan has already in principle been reached; Satan has been hurled from his heavenly throne by that which Messiah has done on earth, especially by His suffering and death (xii. 11); the dark power which accuses man day and night before God, the power of evil that rules the world, is essentially conquered. But on earth the power of him who has been cast out of heaven is still, for a short time, great, and he gives vent to his rage at his ejection in persecuting the kingdom of God and its members, the brethren of Jesus (chap. xii.). As instrument of this rage he calls forth from the abyss the counterpart of the woman clothed with the sun and her divine Son, the "beast," which means at once the Roman Empire in its complete hostility to

Christ, and its wicked head, the returning Nero. The thirteenth chapter pictures the time of terror that is at hand under this Antichrist; his world-wide power, his blasphemous self-deification, his cruel persecution of the children of God, his union with the lying prophets, that is, the seductive arts of heathen wisdom and magic; finally, the enforcing of His divine worship and its emblem, the mark in forehead and hand. But—the fourteenth chapter continues—the Church of the chosen hundred and forty and four thousand stand on the mount of salvation closely gathered round their Saviour, the name of their Lord and their heavenly Father in their forehead, and sing a song of victory which none but the elect can learn. They come forth from the last tribulation spotless, with virgin purity, amid all the temptations of the world, victorious over all its terrors in following the Lamb of God. When antichristian wickedness and the oppression of the Church reach their height, the judgment comes. In the remainder of the fourteenth chapter this thought is impressed upon the readers in every way both for warning and comfort; by calling on the whole world to repent, by announcing the first act of judgment to be executed on Babylon or Rome, by a sharp warning against following the tyranny of the Antichrist, and by extolling those who resist unto blood. Whereupon the judgment of the world itself, the return of the Son of Man with sickle and pruning knife, is announced in figures taken from the corn and wine harvest; and in connection with Isa. lxiii., the wine-press in particular, with its crimson juice, is employed as the emblem of the slaughter that is to be expected. But all these are merely incidental hints; the real picture of the world's judgment begins with chap. xv., and with it the prophetic poet turns back to his solemn scheme of seven. The history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt serves him for a poetic example. While Christians stand on the shore of this new Red Sea, the sea of the revelation of divine wrath, and sing the triumphant song of victory, "the song of Moses" translated into that of the New Testament, the streams of divine wrath in seven vials are poured over the kingdom of the antitypical Pharaoh, the Antichrist. The first five vials repeat the plagues of Egypt in an intensified form. But the sixth bears a new and

peculiar character; it represents the enormous military expedition from beyond the Euphrates, which was undertaken by the kings of the East in the service of the Antichrist of *Nero redivivus*, against apostate Rome; and the seventh vial of wrath under the image of a fearful earthquake, with lightnings,—the emblem of a world-wide catastrophe, already employed in vi. 12 f.,—brings the expected destruction by burning of the capital, which is the revenge of the incendiary Nero. The seventeenth chapter dwells on the execution of this first act of the world's judgment, and shows the full reason of it in the shameless image of the great courtesan, and at the same time gives the readers hints for understanding it; and the eighteenth, following Old Testament examples, pictures the lamentations of the world over Rome's perished glory. With the nineteenth chapter these lamentations give place to a song of jubilation over the victory of the kingdom of God on earth; for now the kingly Christ on a white horse comes forth from the opened heaven with His heavenly hosts against the Antichrist triumphing over Rome, and in the decisive slaughter already announced (xiv. 19, 20), the hosts of Antichrist are annihilated, but he himself with his lying prophets are taken captive and thrown into the hell of condemnation. That is the second act of the world's judgment; in place of the world-kingdom which was opposed to God appears the victorious kingdom of Christ, the Messianic dominion of the world, which is to endure a thousand years, and to comprehend all faithful members of the militant Church, both those who are alive and those who are to be raised from death. But even this thousand years' kingdom of Christ is not the completion. The evil one is bound during these thousand years, but is not yet annihilated; the elements of a final attack of the old dragon on the kingdom of God still exist. At the end of the thousand years Satan is loosed, and leads the mythical nations, "Gog and Magog," from the ends of the earth (Ezek. xxxviii.—xxxix.) against the kingdom of Christ, the "holy city." Therefore a third and last act of the world's judgment is required; God Himself enters the arena against the old dragon and annihilates him, together with his accomplice death. Then follows the general resurrection of the dead and the final judgment of men, which is

again followed by the transformation of heaven and earth, the setting up of the ideally perfect world. The seer hastens rapidly over the thousand years' kingdom of Christ to this eternal kingdom of the Father (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 28), for the delineation of which he has reserved his brightest colours and his sweetest tones. What has ever been the ideal of faith and hope comes down from heaven to earth, the tabernacle of God among the children of men, the "heavenly Jerusalem," and the wonderful book closes with the sublime delineation of this symbol of the blessed fellowship of the redeemed with God.

### § 5. THE AUTHORSHIP

Some recent critics, who suppose that the best way of removing obscurities in Scripture is by dismemberment, have sought to change this masterpiece of early Christian prophetic poetry into a patchwork from different hands and times. In one case we have two fragments from the years 66 and 68, which were afterwards supplemented on three distinct occasions, under Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus; another views it as entirely a Jewish book, to which a Christian writer supplied the seven Epistles, and which he revised with small interpolations; again, a Christian Apocalypse of the year 70, and two Jewish Apocalypses of the time of Pompey and Caligula, have been brought together in one work by a redactor at the end of the century, etc. We may fairly disregard these so-called discoveries of a bewildered ingenuity, because each of the critics in question refutes his predecessor, in order to be immediately again convicted of an illusion by discoveries entirely different.<sup>1</sup> Even apart from this, a critical hypothesis which makes a book historically meaningless—and every Apocalypse which mixes up different conditions and times is meaningless—is not a solution of any difficulties; on the other hand, the exhibition of a uniform artistic formation of our book proves the unity of its origin and authorship. No doubt the author of the Apocalypse had his models and pre-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the instructive analysis of the Apocalypse in Pfeiderer's *Urchristenthum*, pp. 318–355, which rests upon what was at that time the most recent hypothesis of dismemberment, viz. Vischer's and my Essay against the treatise of Vischer (*Stud. u. Krit.* 1888, 1).

decessors both among the Old Testament prophets whom we know and the New Testament prophets whom we do not know. Both thoughts and forms were at his disposal when an exalted hour of prophetic conception suggested to him, under the influence of the awful condition of the world, the main features of his book. But from this uniform conception he has shaped everything with an independent mind, and with marvellous artistic skill. If the only date which explains all its difficulties is the year of Nero's death, the year 68, as we think we have proved, then its genuineness is beyond question; and the only question that remains is as to who the John was who, living in the circle of the seven Churches of Asia Minor, and well known to them, composed it. There is nothing to favour John Marcus (Acts xii. 25), whom some moderns have adopted; for there is no proof that he was a prophet, or that he had relations with the Churches of Asia Minor, and antiquity knows nothing of his having written anything except the reminiscences of Peter described by Papias. Far more likely is the conjecture of Dionysius of Alexandria, that the author is John *ὁ πρεσβύτερος*, who is mentioned in a fragment of Papias alongside of the Apostle John as a personal disciple of Jesus, and who is likewise said to have lived at Ephesus. It may be urged in favour of this that the writer of the Apocalypse does not describe himself as an apostle, but rather seems to count himself among the "prophets," and to distinguish himself from the apostles whose names he makes the foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. xviii. 20, xix. 10, xxi. 14, xxii. 9). All, therefore, who are convinced of the apostolic composition of the Gospel of John, and yet regard it as impossible to ascribe both writings to the same author, gladly fall back on this conjecture of John the Presbyter. Yet it cannot be denied that it has a very weak foundation. It is a hypothesis, and not a tradition; it conjectures a man of whom, apart from his existence, we know next to nothing; while the sojourn of the Apostle John in Ephesus belongs to the best attested facts of Christian antiquity, and it is opposed by the unanimous tradition, which, even in its Patmos legend, describes this apostle as the author of the Apocalypse. It is particularly difficult to accuse of error and misunderstanding the testimony of Justin,



who lived so near the time, and of Irenæus, who was so well instructed by his teacher Polycarp about the apostle. It cannot be maintained as impossible that the Apostle John, when he spoke as a prophet, should reckon himself among the "prophets," and yet that he should be so proud of the immortal privilege which the Lord had bestowed upon him in receiving him into the number of the Twelve, as to see in spirit his name written on one of the twelve foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem. The difference, both in language and mode of thought (the latter especially in prophetic things), which undeniably exists between the two writings has more weight with one who cannot gainsay the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel. Yet a man of such historical and literary taste as Karl Hase regarded it as possible to conceive both as productions of the same man at different stages of his life; and even Baur has insisted on a certain affinity between the Apocalypse and the Gospel of John. The difference of language is to some extent explained by the difference of the poetic and the historical style, and especially by the effort of the writer of the Apocalypse to imitate many solemn Hebrew formulas in Hebraic and incorrect Greek; besides, it is easy to understand that a native of Palestine, transferred from Jerusalem to Ephesus, would write a purer Greek after twenty years' sojourn among the Greeks than in the first years of his settlement. But as to the different mode of thought about prophetic things, it may be asked whether the destruction of Jerusalem and the period which followed, disappointing the early notion of the parousia, might not have urged such a man as the Apostle John to a reconstruction of his prophetic ideas, to a new and more spiritual understanding of the Lord's words about His second coming, such as we have in the farewell discourses of the Gospel and in the first Epistle, as compared with the Apocalypse. Yet the contrast between the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel is hardly so great as that, for example, between Goëthe's first drama and his *Iphigenia*, and yet the same man wrote both at different stages of his life. The Apostle John, whether judged by the Apocalypse or by the Gospel, was, at anyrate, one of the profoundest minds of early Christianity, and the meagreness of our knowledge of this extraordinary personality must

restrain us from questioning his ability on this or that side. For all that, the difference between the Apocalypse and the rest of the Johannine writings is so great, and the question of authorship so unsettled, that we must consider them for biblical theology separately, as even though the author should be the same, they give expression to a different view of the world. And this makes the question of authorship of little importance for our present task.

The poetic and prophetic character of the book involves that we are not to seek in it developed doctrinal ideas, but only intuitions—for the most part symbolical. For that very reason it is impossible for anyone to expound the Apocalypse aright without some poetic feeling and taste. For the true prophet is a true poet, only he is not moved by his own æsthetic ideas, but by religious ideas sent to him from God: and the writer of the Apocalypse in particular, as the whole arrangement and execution of his work shows, is a poet of the most magnificent and conscious kind. But exegesis has sinned against him to an incredible extent, and at the same time has accumulated unanswerable riddles in his book by always taking in sober earnest the forms of poetry. Nevertheless, important and peculiar doctrinal ideas are implied in the symbolico-poetic views of the book, and still more in its occasional dogmatic indications. We shall best review this doctrinal content by distinguishing the following main points:—

- I. Heaven and earth.
- II. The Lamb of God.
- III. The Church of the saints.
- IV. The final history.

## CHAPTER II

### HEAVEN AND EARTH

#### § 1. IDEA OF GOD

The Apocalypse regards the history of the world as a great drama which is enacted between heaven and earth, and

which, after the conflict of both has reached its height, issues in the harmony of both by means of the judgment of the world. The idea of God is from the first formed in relation to this course of the world; He is called the "Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (i. 8, xxi. 6), or, like Paul's phrase, *ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα*, He is *ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος* (i. 8, iv. 8). That in this formula, which is copied from a Jewish one connected with Ex. iii. 14, we have not *ὁ ἐσόμενος* but *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, is accounted for by the reference to God's coming to judgment. It is also owing to the character of the book that God's elevation above the world, His position of absolute Lordship, is specially insisted on. He is the God who "liveth for ever and ever" (iv. 9, 10, vii. 12, x. 6, xv. 7); He is the Creator by whose will all things are, the source of all life (iv. 11, x. 6, xiv. 7); He is simply the "Lord" (*κύριος*), the Master (*δεσπότης*), the Almighty (i. 8, iv. 8, vi. 10, xi. 17). The only surprising thing in this is, that notwithstanding His omnipotence, power glory, and might are repeatedly desired for Him in the world or ascribed to Him as first received (iv. 11, v. 13, vii. 12, xi. 17); but that is the quite correct distinction between the omnipotence which God has in Himself in the world, and the perfect dominion of God which is the goal of the world's history. In the world of freedom and sin, in spite of all His power of governing, God is not yet the complete and only ruler; but the aim of His government and the prayer of the pious is that He may become so. Guiding His government in the world are His ethical attributes, His holiness, righteousness, and truthfulness. He is the *μόνος ὁσῖος* (xv. 4, xvi. 5), the thrice *ἅγιος* (iv. 8, vi. 10); these designations of holiness, the former of which expresses piety, conscientiousness, and the latter the opposite of what is finite and evil, are accentuations of the ethical perfection of God that can scarcely be distinguished. The "Holy One" is at the same time, according to vi. 10, the true one (*ὁ ἀληθινός*), a word which throughout the whole Apocalypse is used in the sense of *ἀληθής*; cf. xix. 1, xxi. 5, xxii. 6),<sup>1</sup> who keeps His word,

<sup>1</sup> The wish to force into the Apocalypse the meaning "genuine," which *ἀληθινός* has in classic Greek as distinguished from *ἀληθής* (cf. Düsterdieck's *Commentar*), leads to far-fetched and feeble interpretations.

and is faithful to Himself and to His promise. And this divine truthfulness is again, as xvi. 7, xix. 1, 2 shows, related to His righteousness, the moral uprightness in virtue of which He decides and acts only according to the standard of His holy nature. This righteousness, of course, includes the penal requital of evil, as is emphasised in passages such as xv. 3, xvi. 7; but it does not end in that, for the penal righteousness is only an utterance of that more comprehensive moral attribute in virtue of which God at all times does what man as a moral being ought to do (cf. xxii. 11: *ὁ δίκαιος δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω ἔτι*). Of course the peculiar content and aim of our book require that the legal and penal side of God's relation to the world should mainly appear; it is therefore entirely wrong to speak of the God of the Apocalypse as a Jewish God of wrath and revenge. The Apocalypse, in common with the whole New Testament, has the thought that God is angry with evil, and will finally destroy it in judgment (vi. 17, xi. 18, xix. 15). But the revelations of wrath which it announces and paints are regarded by it, also, as simply the other side of the divine revelation of love in Christ; this love preceded those revelations of wrath in order to save all that would submit to be saved; it also outlives and surpasses it in its eternal perfection. All the announcements of our book about wrath and judgment, which, moreover, are always crossed by calls to repentance (xi. 3, xiv. 6, 7), are surpassed by the final aim of the prophecy, the complete fulfilment of the blessed promise: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell among them, and will be their God, and they shall be His people" (xxi. 3). In this coming of the heavenly Jerusalem to earth, the restoration of the world to the eternal and perfect kingdom of God, in which every conqueror is to be a son of God and a fellow-heir with Christ (xxi. 7), the Christian idea of God, the idea of eternal holy love, breaks through the storms of the world's judgment. But it is also the basis of this prophecy; for the Eternal, who is, and was, and is to come, is the "Father of Jesus Christ" (i. 6, ii. 27, iii. 5, 21, xiv. 1), "Our Lord who hath loved and redeemed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto His God and Father" (i. 5, 6).

## § 2. THE HIGHER WORLD

In keeping with its poetical character, the book outlines for us a formal picture of the divine glory. God dwells (xiii. 6), or is throned, in heaven. His appearance is like a jasper and a sardius stone, and round about His throne is a rainbow like an emerald (iv. 3). Thunder and lightnings proceed from this throne (iv. 5); before it burn seven lamps, which are declared to be "the seven Spirits of God" (iv. 5, i. 4); a sea as it were of glass, mingled with fire, is spread out before it (xv. 2). Around the throne stand four living creatures ( $\xi\omega\alpha$ ), full of eyes before and behind, like to a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle, that is, the four cherubim (iv. 6), and again on the same throne are seated "the four and twenty elders" clothed in white raiment, and with crowns of gold (iv. 4). Finally, the throne is surrounded by myriads of angels (v. 11), who praise God with the cherubim and the elders. But there is also in heaven an altar upon which the prayers of the saints come as incense (v. 8, viii. 3, 4), and under which the souls of the martyrs have their place (vi. 9); and even a tabernacle with the mercy-seat, a temple of God in heaven (xi. 19), from which the angels with the seven vials of wrath go forth (xv. 5, 6). And in xxi. 2 the whole eternal city of God, the new Jerusalem, comes down from heaven to earth. The poetic freedom with which all these symbols are conceived is manifest in the fact that an open throne of God and a secret dwelling-place of God stand beside each other in the tabernacle; God is at the same time both hidden and manifest. Hence all these images have a deep significance. The precious stones to which the appearance of God is compared, the bright jasper and the red sardius, seem (as in Ezek. i. 26, 27) to indicate the nature of God as light and fire, His purity and His fiery zeal; and the eternal bow of peace, the sign of the covenant, above His throne shows that even if the fiery red should have to be referred only to His wrath, His love and faithfulness are not forgotten (Gen. ix. 12, 13). The sea of glass before God's throne may be the emblem of His decrees for the government of the world, which are deep as the sea and yet always clear as crystal before Him. This sea is mingled with fire, because the wrath of the

world's judgment is wrapped up in God's decree; in like manner the thunder and lightnings proceeding from His throne signify His revelations and judgments continuously going on in the world. The four cherubim, according to an old interpretation that is certainly suitable here, are the symbols of the creatures who praise God, as the noblest of which appear a lion, a bull, a man, and an eagle; the four and twenty elders are the representatives of the human Church of God—four and twenty either according to the number of the classes of Jewish priests, or in virtue of a counting together of the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of Jesus, as the heads of the Old and New Testament Church. These elders bear the white garments of holiness and the crowns of eternal royalty, which, in iv. 10, they cast at the feet of God, because they owe them to His grace. All this, just as in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the rest of the New Testament, represents heaven as the ideal world in which the glory of God is uninterruptedly displayed, while on earth it has to strive with human freedom and sin for its realisation. But this ideal world is destined to come down into the world of human history and realise itself there. Every Old Testament holy thing is a provisional copy of the heavenly world here on earth; the Son of God, the child of the woman who is clothed with the sun and crowned with stars, descends from heaven, and at last the eternal city of God, in which God and man dwell together, comes down from heaven to earth. In like manner, all decrees of God which the book predicts are first announced and solemnised in heaven, and seen in heaven by the seer, before they are carried out on earth; heaven is the centre of the world's earthly history so far as that history is from God and ends in God.

### § 3. THE SPIRIT AND THE SPIRITS

The Spirit appears as the living bond between the higher and the earthly world. This is a concept which in the manner of the Old Testament is applied sometimes in a wider and a widest sense, and sometimes in a narrower. In the passage (xi. 11) where the "Spirit of life from God" enters into the two slain witnesses and awakens them, and still more

in xiii. 15, where spirit is given to the image of the "beast" so that it can speak, *πνεῦμα* without the article means simply the immaterial principle of life which animates the creature. It is different when the author speaks of the Spirit (*τὸ πνεῦμα*); he then means the Divine Spirit as principle of prophecy. That is the "Spirit" who speaks "to the Churches" in the seven Epistles (ii. 7, 11, 17, 29, iii. 6, 13, 22), who cries to the struggling Churches (xiv. 13): "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth"; who together with the "bride," the Church (xxii. 17), calls to the Lord Jesus, Come! He is called expressly (xix. 10) "the Spirit of prophecy"; and when it is there said "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy," the meaning is that Jesus continues His testimony from heaven through Him, and constantly attests Himself, since the seven Epistles are expressly described both as dictated by Christ and as utterances "of the Spirit." Whoever is laid hold of and filled by this Spirit is "*ἐν πνεύματι*" in an inspired and enraptured condition (i. 10, iv. 2, xvii. 3, xxi. 10). At the same time, however, "Spirits of the prophets" are spoken of in the plural, in recognition of the fact that the Spirit of prophecy individualises Himself in every prophet, and has His special character and limits (xxii. 6; cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 32). God is there called the "God of the Spirits of the prophets"; but Satan also has his spirits of (false) prophets; thus in xvi. 14, three "unclean spirits," *πνεύματα δαιμονίων*, are mentioned, who proceed from the mouth of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet, and go forth to deceive the kings of the earth, that they may aid the beast, and go with him to destruction. From all these Spirits of the prophets, evil and good, we must distinguish the "seven Spirits of God" who, according to i. 4, iv. 5, burn as lamps before His throne, and who at the same time, according to v. 6, are seven eyes in Christ as the Lamb, sent forth into all the earth. Already Zechariah (iii. 9, iv. 10) had spoken of seven eyes of the Lord which run through the whole earth, and of seven eyes of the foundation-stone which God had laid in Jerusalem; and Isaiah (xi. 2) had described in sevenfold attributes the Spirit of the Lord who was to rest upon the offspring of David; this sevenfold or perfect nature of the Spirit of God is in later prophecy expressed by seven eyes of

divine wisdom penetrating the world, or by seven Spirits with which God surveys the world. The fact that the writer of the Apocalypse in i. 4 desires grace and peace from God, from the seven Spirits, and only then from Jesus makes it plain that he means by these seven Spirits the one personal Spirit of God in all His fulness,—he could not have placed created spirits before Jesus as dispensers of grace and peace,—he could have subordinated the historical Saviour only to the eternal Spirit of God who dwelt in Him. But the fact that the seven Spirits of God which burn as lamps before His throne are the seven eyes of the Lamb, speaks still more plainly; Jesus the Lamb of God is the “Christ,” who is anointed with all the fulness of the Spirit of God, as is indicated by the seven eyes beside the seven horns; He is the bearer, not only of the divine kingly power, but of the eternal wisdom of the Holy Spirit. It is evident that in spite of the poetic distinction of the seven Spirits of God from God Himself, there is no intention of ascribing to the Spirit any personality different from God; how could one person be at the same time seven persons, and stand before God, dwell in Jesus, and be sent out over all the earth? On the contrary, it is clear that this figurative notion simply means that the Spirit of God is the eternal light which pertains to God Himself, but which dwells at the same time in all His fulness in Christ, and penetrates the whole world as the principle of the divine immanence and revelation. How far the latter may be meant in the sense of God’s relation to the world as Creator of all life springing from God, or in the sense of the way of salvation, of the new life of the believer, or, finally, of the prophetic enlightenment which proceeds from God, can scarcely be made out. For the first reference we might appeal to the most general sense of *πνεῦμα* as we have it in xi. 11; for the second, to the fact that in i. 4 “grace and peace” are desired from the seven Spirits of God, that is, gifts of the new life in Christ. But the nature of the Apocalypse involves that in it the Spirit of God comes into consideration mostly as the principle of inspiration and prophecy, and that for the most part agrees with the view of the Old Testament and that of the original apostles.



## § 4. THE ANGELS

But the Apocalypse has still another view of the living connection of heaven and earth, viz. the angels. No book of the New Testament makes such abundant use of the notion of angels as this most poetic and symbolic writing, a fact that should at once be noted as reminding us of the poetic and symbolic character of this notion. Seven angels stand before God's presence (viii. 2); the seven Churches have their seven angels, who are symbolised by seven stars, while the Churches are compared to seven golden candlesticks (i. 20). Seven angels sound the trumpets of the world's judgment (viii. 6), and again seven angels pour out the vials of judicial wrath upon the earth (xv. 1). An interpreting angel appears repeatedly at the side of the seer (xvii. 1, 7, xix. 9, 10, xxii. 8, 9); the most of the future events seen in vision are proclaimed or produced by angels; finally, the whole Apocalypse (i. 1) is ascribed to a mediating angel. The number of angels is *μυρίαδες μυριάδων* and *χιλίαδες χιλιάδων* (v. 11); they are at home in heaven, where they praise God; but, as their name declares, they are at the same time messengers of God, middle terms between heaven and earth, media of the divine will in nature and in history. In chap. vii. 1, four angels have the four winds in their power; in xvi. 5, an angel of the water appears; in x. 9, an angel delivers to the seer the new book of revelation; and again, in xiv. 6, one proclaims "the everlasting gospel," etc. But even the destroying locusts are brought on the scene by an angel of the abyss (ix. 11), who is called Apollyon, the destroyer, and he also stands in God's service. The traditional distinction of good and evil angels is as little suitable here as in Paul. In this poetic book they are described, of course, as personal beings; the angels are called "holy" servants of God, fellow-servants with men, and therefore not to be worshipped by men (xix. 10, xxii. 9); on the other hand, just as in the Epistle to the Hebrews they nowhere appear as ends for God, as men are, nor as fellow-citizens in the heavenly Jerusalem, they are instruments of the divine will; they are the divine ideas, which, in the domain of nature and the phenomena of history, form the upholding power and guiding principle. The angels

of the seven Churches are specially notable and instructive in this respect (i. 20, ii. 1, 8, 12, etc.). Only sheer lack of perception could have interpreted them as bishops, or invested them with some sort of Irvingite Church office; they are real angels. The fact that they are represented as stars (i. 20) should not lead us to a contrary opinion; even the seven Spirits of God are symbolised as heavenly lamps, and the fallen angels (xii. 4, 9) as fallen stars. But when one sees how they receive praise and blame in the name of their Church without being in anyway distinguished from these Churches in their character, and without being summoned to influence them, it is evident that they are only their heavenly counterparts, just as the stars as heavenly lights correspond to the lights of the golden candlesticks on earth. In like manner, as in Dan. x. 13, 20, every nation has its own guardian angel or national spirit, which, as it were, represents it before God; and, as in Matt. xviii. 10, every child of man has an "angel," a genius, in which the individual idea of that human life stands in God's presence; so the author has given to each Church its angel or genius, the ideal form of its individuality, the spiritual image in which it stands before the Lord of the Church. In another way "the seven angels who stand before God" (viii. 2) are enigmatical. The seer introduces them with the definite article as powers already well known, and thus at once reminds us of "the seven Spirits which are before the throne of God" (i. 4, iv. 5). Most expositors, indeed, will not hear of their identity; but what right have they to do so, since, according to Heb. i. 14, the angels are *πνεύματα, πνεύματα λειτουργικὰ ἀποστελλόμενα*, in precisely the same way as in Rev. v. 6 the seven Spirits of God are *ἀπεσταλμένα εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν*? But has the writer of the Apocalypse afterwards represented "the seven Spirits," into which he divides the one Spirit of God, as seven throne angels of God? Then the angel through whom God communicated the whole Apocalypse to His servant John, and with whom the expositor knows not what to do, because in the book itself he is replaced partly by heavenly voices and partly by individual appearances of angels, would be best explained; he would be the *πνεῦμα προφητείας* who enables the seer to see his visions. However that may be, we seem to have a

continual interchange of "angels" and "Spirits," though the two notions do not altogether disappear in one another; and so from this side also we have confirmation of the idea that the angels are the several rays of the fulness and glory of the ideal world, which animate and spiritualise the natural world of history.

### § 5. THE DRAGON

The visible world, however, is moved and ruled, not only by divine spirits and powers, but also by ungodly and demonic powers. Satan, the old serpent, as he is called in allusion to Gen. iii., "the deceiver of the whole world" (xii. 9), confronts God, the thrice Holy. He is pictured to us (xii. 3) as a great red dragon, with seven heads and seven crowns, and with ten horns, sweeping with his tail the third part of the stars from heaven. That signifies his murderous disposition (John viii. 44), and that he possesses kingly dominion above every other power on earth; and his is not merely an earthly power, but one that reaches into heaven; he has snatched from this ideal order "the third part of the stars," that is, the angels, the world-supporting powers of God, and made them subject to himself. But it is a complete error because of all this to find in the Apocalypse a mythology of the devil as a fallen angel; the New Testament does not venture on a theory of cosmical evil, either here or elsewhere. The Satan of the Apocalypse, like the Satan of the Bible in general, is not a fallen angel, but is the evil principle actually existent and mighty in the world. He has his angels, the demons or spirits of demons (xvi. 14),<sup>1</sup> who, according to ix. 20, are worshipped by the heathen by means of idols, and, according to xvi. 14, are able to produce lying wonders and predictions. But these angels of Satan again (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 7) are simply the divisions of the evil principle, the manifold powers of corruption which appear in nature and in history (cf. ix. 1, 11, 13, 14, 15). That mythological view about the fall of Satan appeals to the delineation of xii. 7 f. only by

<sup>1</sup> That the passage xvi. 14 means to distinguish the "unclean spirits" from the demons is not probable from the parallel passage, xviii. 2. The expression *πνεῦμα δαιμονίου* is pleonastic here, just as in Luke iv. 33.

a mistake. That delineation, in which Satan and his angels were hurled from heaven by the archangel Michael and his hosts (Dan. x. 13, 21, xii. 1), and thrown to the earth, does not refer to the mythical prehistoric fall of the angels, but, as the connection proves, to the change in principle of Satan's position in the world, which took place in the historical moment of redemption, and was brought about by the earthly life of the Messiah (ver. 5). Up to the moment of Christ's exaltation, that is, of the completed work of redemption, Satan had his station in a certain sense in heaven, where he appears therefore to the seer, ver. 3 (already as the dragon); but he is conquered and hurled down, so that his place can no more be found in heaven (ver. 8): now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of God, and the authority of His Messiah, has come, that is, has appeared and become actual. This may sound strange to our ears, which are more accustomed to mythological than to biblical notions of Satan, and yet we have the same notion in words of Jesus such as Luke x. 18, John xii. 31; and even the fundamental passage about Satan in the Bible, Job i. 6, which makes him appear in heaven among the sons of God as the accuser of the pious, leads us to expect nothing else. The idea in itself is simple and clear enough. Until redemption was completed, evil was a power ruling the world, which forced itself on God's notice, and threw its dark shadow on His countenance; it "accused," as the inhabitants of heaven say (xii. 10), our brethren (men) night and day; it stood as an unbroken wall of partition between God and man, and concealed from the latter, in virtue of the consciousness of unexpiated guilt, the countenance of eternal love. But redemption has changed all that; evil has indeed great power on earth still (vv. 9-12), but it no longer stands before God in heaven, it is abolished, and in principle overcome. It is most significant of the whole relation of heaven and earth as conceived in our book, that the victory of Christ over Satan, which in reality was gained on earth (cf. iii. 21, v. 5), is here represented as a heavenly fact, as a victory of Michael and his angels over the dragon and his followers (xii. 7). That cannot possibly mean another independent event in heaven, as "the blood of the Lamb and the word of His testimony" immediately afterwards (ver. 11)

appear as the powers by which the children of men are henceforth able to overcome Satan. But that *πόλεμος ἐν οὐρανῶ* is simply the heavenly reflex, or the ideal image of the earthly victory which the Crucified and Risen One obtained over the evil one who ruled the world. This therefore confirms what we have said about heaven as an ideal kingdom, and about angels as personified ideas of God. The archangel Michael is not an actual personality distinct from God or Christ, but is the personified divine idea of salvation, the symbol of the divine power of love triumphing over the power of the evil one. And in the same way, in this view, Satan also is a symbolical idea, though the symbol is of a power terribly real. He is conceived as the dark shadow of evil that is in the world, in contrast with the eternal light, the world-nature in its unity opposed to God. Perhaps the writer of the Apocalypse conceived him as a personality; but the notion is not a metaphysical mystery, but the involuntary personification of an actual power, inevitable at the time, which, as we now know, cannot be seriously conceived as personal.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE LAMB OF GOD

##### § 1. THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY OF THE CHRISTOLOGICAL VIEW

It lies in the plan and aim of the Apocalypse that Jesus Christ, by whom God has conquered Satan, should appear chiefly in the kingly glory which He is to show in judging and perfecting the world. But as the account in the twelfth chapter, already alluded to, represents it, this future significance of His rests throughout on His historical appearance and on what He then accomplished. This appears even in the sublime delineation of the fourth and fifth chapters. The book of the future, with its seven seals, lies in the hand of God, who sits upon His throne; the question is raised as to who can loose these seals, that is, not who can divine the riddle of the future, but who can actually solve it, and lead

the history of the world to its goal; and no one in heaven or earth can do so. But in the midst of the throne, and of the cherubim and elders, stands "a Lamb as it had been slain," having seven eyes and seven horns, that is, endowed with perfect spiritual power and authority; He takes the book from God's hand, and in doing so is saluted with a song, continued from heaven to earth and into the underworld: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth." Hence the whole of Christ's unique glory, which is to be revealed in the future, was won by His self-sacrifice as the Lamb of God. The meaning of this picture is that He is the coming Judge of the world, because He is the historical Saviour; all that we are to obtain through Him in the future is simply the carrying out of that work which was achieved in His sufferings and death. Against all contrary impressions, then, we must keep steadily before us that the christological view of the writer of the Apocalypse has its centre of gravity from the first in the human and historical life of Jesus, and, in particular, in the death of sacrifice as its climax. For that very reason the favourite designation, "the Lamb," appears in the book twenty-nine times.

## § 2. THE HISTORICAL CHRIST

The twelfth chapter, with its introduction of the woman in travail, who is clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and the crown of stars around her head, the mother of Messiah, goes further back in the historical contemplation of Jesus. "And she bore a son, who is to rule all nations with a sceptre of iron" (Ps. ii. 9); "and her child, to rescue him from the dragon who wished to devour him, is caught up to God and to His throne." That the *υἱὸς ἄρρνου* here spoken of is the Messiah, needs no proof. We can easily understand how Catholicism should have interpreted the woman, His mother, as the Virgin Mary, and that Murillo should have painted her as such; and yet it is wrong; it is refuted by the

further account of vv. 6, 13, 17. According to these verses the woman flees into the wilderness from the dragon who is pursuing her, where she is nourished three and a half years; she has also other children, viz. "those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus." She is manifestly a symbolical figure,—not indeed the Church, for she did not give birth to the Messiah, but probably, as all intelligent expositors now recognise, the kingdom of God in the unity of its Old and New Testament development, the theocracy as it continued to exist after the birth of Messiah in the Christian communities, and was persecuted by the princes of this world, but could not be destroyed. It is certainly a true Jewish Christian and primitive view to conceive the kingdom of God on earth in this unity of the old and new covenant in contrast with heathendom, in which is seen the kingdom of Satan and of demons; and yet Paul does something similar in Rom. xi., when he represents the Gentile Christians as grafted into the old olive tree, the root of which is God's covenant with the patriarchs. But the christological view which appears here is still more notable; Christ, on the Father's side, is the Son of God, planted, as we shall see, from heaven into the connection of the human race, and yet, on another side, as it were the mother's, He is the child of historical development; that historical development of the old covenant which was founded by God and consummated in the midst of the old world, which was estranged from God, contained Him in embryo to give Him birth at the appointed hour, and then to call into existence innumerable brethren of this firstborn, as the Church of God of the new covenant. Or have we, as a recent criticism has discovered, no mention whatever here of Jesus Christ, but only of a Jewish Messiah, because the child of the woman clothed with the sun is immediately, as it seems, after His birth caught up into heaven; that is, no room is left for the earthly life of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> It needs a profound want of poetic feeling and taste to misunderstand why the poet should thus epitomise that life here, where he seeks, not to narrate the life of Jesus, but to contrast the powers that are contending in the history of the world, the divine founding of salvation and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Vischer, *Die Offenbarung Johannis*, p. 23 f.

the prince of this world. This account, which is not historical but symbolical, is apparently contracted into one moment, and yet contains everything by way of hint; the Messiah issues from the Old Testament kingdom of God; the power of evil that rules the world attempts to destroy Him, but cannot; His earthly life issues in a heavenly exaltation, and He leaves behind a contending Church on earth, which is able to overcome Satan through His blood (ver. 11). Now, if in this passage the historical life of Jesus is indicated only according to its origin, its conflict, and victorious issue, there are added in other places further traces of historical knowledge and appreciation. The historical name Jesus is commonly used alongside of the symbolical name Lamb; the official name "Christ" is more rare, but it is used as a common name (ὁ Χριστὸς θεοῦ, xii. 10, xx. 4, 6); even the double name "Jesus Christ" appears (i. 1). Stress is laid—even apart from chap. xii.—on the Israelitish descent, corresponding to the prophecy: Jesus is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (v. 5; Gen. xlix. 9), "the offspring of David" (v. 5, xxii. 16, after Isa. xi. 1 f.); the designation as "the bright and morning star" (xxii. 16) brings into prominence the dawning of salvation which begins with His appearance. Use is made of the number of His apostles as twelve (xxi. 14), and His death upon the cross in the city of Jerusalem is mentioned (xi. 8). Yet the decisive weight is laid on His ethico-divine character, on His holy and trustworthy nature. He is ὁ ἅγιος, ὁ ἀληθινός (iii. 7), which, according to the parallel passages (vi. 10, xix. 11), is not to be translated "the truly Holy One," but separated by a comma; He is thus characterised as the holy and true.<sup>1</sup> The name "Lamb" represents Him as the obedient and self-denying sufferer, and in i. 5 His voluntary death is expressly traced to His love for us. Beside His sacrificial death, His resurrection is specially insisted on as the transition to heavenly glory and

<sup>1</sup> The grouping of πιστός and ἀληθινός in xix. 11 plainly shows that those expositors are wrong who try to force a distinction between ἀληθής and ἀληθινός in the Apocalypse, and take the latter in its common sense as meaning "corresponding to its idea." The latter conception is absurd in xix. 11; but the signification "true," as a synonym of faithful and righteous (cf. the following words), is palpable.



kingly position towards the world: "I was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of Hades and of death," it is said in i. 18; and in i. 5 He is called "the firstborn of the dead," that is, the first of those who were raised (1 Cor. xv. 20; Col. i. 18). Even His ascension is mentioned in the sense of an exaltation to the right hand of God, not only in the passage in the twelfth chapter (ver. 5), but also in the passage iii. 21: "I have overcome, and am set down with my Father on His throne." The way in which the author imagined the resurrection and ascension of Jesus may be compared with the resurrection and ascension of the two witnesses, described in xi. 8–12, in which, however, we must not forget that this picture also is a poetic one. The doubt as to whether Jesus was to the writer of the Apocalypse "a true man,"<sup>1</sup> implies a complete misunderstanding of the apostolic age, in which the historical fact and the historical impression could never evaporate in religious speculation. The proof of this presupposition of all New Testament Christology does not lie in Daniel's phrase, ὁμοιος σίφι ἀνθρώπου, twice applied to the exalted Christ (i. 13, xiv. 14), which rather sounds docetic; but certainly the opposite finds no support there; the expression marks the human form and appearance in harmony with the meaning of Dan. vii. 13. But there ought to have been no doubt that the writer of the Apocalypse was conscious of the true and full humanity of a person whose birth and death he records. But besides that, in the passages xxi. 7, xii. 17, he has ascribed the same heavenly Father and the same historical mother to believers as to the Messiah, and has therefore excluded all doubt of the human similarity of the Redeemer and the redeemed.

### § 3. THE EXALTED CHRIST

That doubt might be occasioned by the Godlike characteristics ascribed to the exalted Christ in the Apocalypse, which are most prominent where the book of prophecy has to do exclusively with the state of exaltation. Nowhere in the New Testament is the glory of the exalted Christ so

<sup>1</sup> H. Gebhardt, *Der Lehrbegriff der Apokalypse*, p. 108.

emphatically represented as divine as in our book. Not only is He called "the Prince of the kings of the earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (i. 5, xvii. 14, xix. 16), but even the angel of the Apocalypse is described as His angel (i. 1, xxii. 16). In the introductory vision He appears with eyes as a flame of fire walking amid the seven candlesticks of the Churches, and holding their stars in His hand, that is, as the omniscient and omnipotent Lord of the Church. A two-edged sword proceeds out of His mouth; that is, His sentence is God's word, which strikes like a sharp sword, and effectively judges men (Wisd. Sol. xviii. 15, 16; Heb. iv. 12). He has the key of Hades and of death, that is, He is the resurrection and the life. As the Lamb, He is frequently grouped with God, and a common activity ascribed to them (*e.g.* vi. 16); His mediation of salvation continues into the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, up to the final perfection (vii. 17, xxi. 22, 23); the throne of God and of the Lamb stands for ever in the eternal city of God (xxii. 3). Many images and features which are applied to God in the Old Testament are in our book transferred to the exalted Christ (*cf.* for example, i. 14, 15 with Dan. vii. 9 and x. 6; i. 17 with Ex. xxxiii. 20 and Isa. vi. 5; ii. 23 with Ps. vii. 10; iii. 14 with Isa. lxxv. 15; xix. 13 with Isa. lxiii. 1 f., etc. Finally, divine worship is paid directly to the exalted Christ; the same doxology which in vii. 12 is sung to God, is in v. 12 offered to the Lamb; the four and twenty elders, with their golden vials of incense, which "contain the prayers of the saints," fall down before Him (*ver.* 8); while the angels refuse all worship for themselves (xix. 10, xxii. 8, 9), they with all creatures (v. 13) pay homage to "God and the Lamb." But emphatic as all this is, there is nothing in it that goes beyond the common testimony of the whole New Testament, that Christ is exalted to the right hand of God to share in God's own glory; even the Jesus of the Synoptics speaks of "His coming again in the glory of His Father with His holy angels" (Matt. xvi. 27); and it was a common Jewish and early Christian view, which only the boldness of Paul broke through (1 Cor. xv. 28) in favour of a direct government by God in the end, that the kingdom of Messiah will be an everlasting kingdom. It must not be overlooked that even in the Apocalypse the

divine glory of the exalted Christ is one which He has received, one that He has earned by His human self-sacrifice on earth. "To Him who loved us, and redeemed us from our sins," it is said (i. 5, 6), "to Him be glory and power for ever and ever." The divine worship offered to Him has a like basis in the fifth chapter: "Thou art worthy to receive the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood" (v. 9). And in ii. 26-28, where the exalted Christ promises to His own who overcome the world, "power over the heathen," that is, a share in His government and judging of the world, he adds: *ὡς καὶ γὰρ εἴληφα παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μου*. From all this, then, it is manifest that His present and imperishable Godlike glory is not due to an original existence as a person in the Trinity, but to what He accomplished on earth as a man by suffering and dying.<sup>1</sup>

#### § 4. THE CHRIST OF ETERNITY

Even this, however, does not solve the riddle of the Christology of the Apocalypse. We find some statements of a Godlike character which cannot be explained by a divine glory won on earth. Thus it is said in the opening vision (i. 14), in which Christ is pictured as the exalted Lord of the Church: "His head and His hair were white as wool, as white as snow." That is a transference to Christ of the description of God in Dan. vii. 13, where God is pictured as "the Ancient of Days," that is, as the Eternal One. Immediately after, in ver. 17, Christ calls Himself *πρῶτος καὶ ἔσχατος*, that is, He appropriates the predicates which—originating in Isa. xlv. 6—are given, in the passages i. 8, xxi. 6, xxii. 13, to God Himself, and which describe Him as the Origin and End of history; and in this connection the *ὁ ζῶν* which

<sup>1</sup> Gebhardt, *l.c.* p. 110, would fain question this result by comparing Christ's receiving with the idea that appears in xi. 15, 17, xii. 10, that God and Christ had only then received the dominion of the world. That is a mixing up of two different ideas. God through Christ gains in the world that authority which can only be established by the conquest of evil; Christ receives His glory as a reward for having devoted Himself to this divine aim of salvation as instrument and sacrifice. But in both cases the reference certainly is to a dominion not possessed before.

immediately follows cannot be understood merely of the resurrection life which is afterwards described by *ἰδοῦ ζῶν εἰμὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, but is to be understood of the essential life which not merely continues in eternity, but also springs from eternity. There seems then to be nothing more needed to characterise the Messiah as "true God, born of the Father in eternity," as the second person of the Athanasian Trinity; and yet that cannot be the meaning of the writer of the Apocalypse, for, on the other hand, he decidedly subordinates this divine eternal being to God. He does not give Him the name God, but sets it above the "Lamb," and all through reserves it for God the Father only; a fact which of itself keeps us from regarding the Church doctrine of the Trinity as the key to this Christology. Not only has the Father given Him that Godlike glory as a reward of His earthly life and sacrificial death, but even in this glory He is still dependent on God, and in the condition of receiving gifts from Him; the revelation which constitutes the contents of our book is verbally described (i. 1) as *ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεός*. In the same way He is "the Son of God," who can in a unique sense call God His Father (i. 6, ii. 27, iii. 5, 21, xiv. 1), but not as God the Son of ecclesiastical doctrine, but as the firstborn among many brethren; for, according to iii. 21, xxi. 7, everyone who overcometh is to sit with Him on His throne, and be a "son of God." But how do all these seemingly contradictory features of the Christology of the Apocalypse agree? They agree in this, that the author of the Apocalypse, like Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, regarded Christ as a pre-existent intermediate being between God and the world, God and humanity, related to *ὁ θεός* as His unique image, and to the world and humanity as a personal Archetype, and who, after mediating the creation of the world, appeared among His brethren in the fulness of the times as a child of man and offspring of David, in order to gain an eternal kingship over them as Saviour by His life, death, and resurrection,—in a word, the author of the Apocalypse united the Logos idea with the idea of Messiah realised in Jesus. And the evidences for these facts lie plainly before us, although from different motives the representatives of right and left refuse

to recognise them. *Τάδε λέγει ὁ ἀμήν*, it is said (iii. 14), ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ. The expression reminds us of the Pauline *πρωτόκοκος πάσης κτίσεως . . . ὅς ἐστιν ἀρχή, κ.τ.λ.*, in Col. i. 15, 18; it rests even more plainly on the original passage Prov. viii. 22: *κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ*. It is a controverted question whether it should be translated: "beginning (that is, first-fruits) of the creature," or "principle of creation," and it is not easy to decide between the two possible interpretations.<sup>1</sup> "Principle of the creation" would be the clear paraphrase of the Logos idea, but it sounds too abstract and speculative for the style of the Apocalypse. But though we prefer the more concrete and popular interpretation, the same result is given; the author of Prov. viii. looked on wisdom as the first *κτίσις* of God, not as the first individual in a series, but as that production of God in which all others are implied, and by which everything further is accomplished; and that doubtless was also the meaning of the writer of the Apocalypse in his application of the idea of wisdom to the person of Christ. This gives us the Logos idea, without the name Logos. But this also, in all probability, is not foreign to the Apocalypse. In chap. xix. 11 the seer pictures Christ marching out to final victory on a white horse and in blood-stained garments, and he is anxious in this decisive moment to insist on the full majesty of the Returning One. So there it is said of Christ, that He has "a name which no man knows but Himself," that is, a name which no man can think out, whose meaning can only be exhausted by His own mind; and immediately thereafter we are told this name: ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. This has been applied solely to the judicial word of God which comes in Christ; but apart from the fact that this is not stated here, the name would not be so unfathomable and inconceivable as was indicated in the earlier

<sup>1</sup> Gebhardt's (*l.c.* p. 97) objection to the first interpretation, that it would then have to read *ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κτισμάτων*, is not convincing; the concept *ἀρχή*, like *κτίσις*, can be applied concretely as well as abstractly. But *ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως* cannot possibly mean what Weiss finds in it: a being who existed before the whole creation, without being compared with it. I know not how the words *ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως* could express that idea.

references. And when we take into account the fact that in those days *λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* was already current as the name of a Godlike being, and that in the predicate, *ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως*, the author of our book has in advance accepted the idea of this theologoumenon, we cannot doubt that we have here, as in the Epistles to the Colossians and Hebrews, the application of the Logos idea to Jesus. Thus only does the name express what the author manifestly wishes to express, the deepest nature of the reappearing heavenly Victor; thus only it is made clear to the reader that in the second coming God Himself comes, who is repeatedly called in the Apocalypse *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*. Here, then, we have essentially the same idea of pre-existence as we have in Paul and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the application of the idea of the eternal self-revelation of God to the person of the Messiah. But there as here we have a gap in thought; by personifying an idea we may hide from ourselves the fact that, in recognising that idea in the person of Jesus, a historical person is co-ordinated with something which—however realistically conceived—is not a person, but an idea. That this Logos-Christology should be found in the writer of the Apocalypse can no longer surprise us after the precedent of Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews; it only shows how strong the tendency was in the apostolic age to conceive the mystery of Christ's person as far greater than the Jewish idea of Messiah, and so to place Him in an essential relation to humanity, to the universe, and to God. Manifestly we have this formula before us here, not as one newly found or in process of development, but as one that was current and familiar to the readers; but save that the abruptness of its application in two passages of a book which is not doctrinal prevents us from further pursuing its relations to the creation of the world, the idea of humanity, etc. We must not ask how it agrees with the account of the twelfth chapter, in which Christ is the Child of the Theocracy, born in the fulness of time. Formally it agrees as little, and substantially as much, as Paul's one phrase, "born of a woman," agrees with the other, "the firstborn of every creature." The heavenly reality, in which Christ is *ὁ πρῶτος* and *ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως*, is different from the earthly and historical; and just as, in

our book, the heavenly Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth, and yet at bottom is the realisation of the ideal of God's Church accomplished on earth, so also is it with the apocalyptic Christ.

### § 5. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE

As to the work of Christ, the prophetic office, as was to be expected in a personal disciple of Jesus, is first of all insisted on. Jesus is *ὁ Ἀμήν, ὁ μάρτυς, ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός* (i. 5, iii. 14). If these utterances and testimonies of Jesus to Himself in presence of the Churches have to be referred to the whole revelation and guarantee of the divine decrees which He secured for them, His earthly doctrinal testimony is surely not to be excluded. No doubt the idea of the *μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ*, which runs through the whole book, extends also to that which Jesus now speaks to His own through the Spirit, especially to the contents of the Apocalypse itself (i. 2 : *Ἰωάννη, ὃς ἐμαρτύρησεν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅσα εἶδεν*; a passage according to which i. 9, *ἐγενόμην ἐν . . . Πατμῶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ*, must also be interpreted: in order to receive the word of God and the testimony of Jesus). For that very reason the *μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ*, in xix. 10, may be explained as the Spirit of prophecy, since through it Jesus continuously *μαρτυρεῖ* in the Church. But in other passages such a limited interpretation is not sufficient. When, in vi. 9, it is said of the martyrs slain, *διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν, ἣν εἶχον*; of Christians, xii. 17, *τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ*; and xix. 10, *τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ*, we must think, above all, of the gospel of God which Jesus attested. Both may be united, if we assume that the author, like Peter, preferred to regard the gospel of Jesus under the idea of the promise, the proclamation of a salvation which was still for the most part future; the voice of the prophetic Spirit in the Church would then appear simply as the continued address of the exalted Christ (cf. i. 17, 19 with ii. 7).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is questionable whether the author, starting from the idea of Jesus as the eternal Logos, included also in the *μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ* the Old

But he must also have known of an imperative side of the teaching of Jesus, whether he comprehended it in the idea of the *μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ* or not. For when he speaks of *ἐντολαὶ θεοῦ*, which Christians have to keep (xii. 17, xiv. 12), and yet these *ἐντολαί*, as we shall see, could not simply be the Mosaic, he must have had in view a doctrine of righteousness such as that of the Sermon on the Mount (cf. xxii. 11). The *τηρεῖν τὰ ἔργα μου*, which Christ demands of His own in ii. 26, can only be the continuance in the works required by Christ; and the *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον μου*, or the *τὸν λόγον τῆς ὑπομονῆς μου* (iii. 8. 10), only extend to a demand made by Jesus for an active and passive imitation (cf. the *ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ ἀρνίῳ*, xiv. 4).

### § 6. THE HIGH-PRIESTLY OFFICE

But here also, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the prophetic office is only the vestibule to the high-priestly and kingly. In the introductory vision the exalted Christ is represented in long priestly garments and with a golden girdle, that is, the priestly and royal attire (i. 13), in keeping with the fact that He has made His people kings and priests (i. 6, v. 10). But if the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasises the High Priest who devotes Himself as a propitiation, the Apocalypse rather emphasises the Lamb of sacrifice who was slain for us. As to the more detailed notions of the author about this decisive act, we can gather from the name Lamb only the most general idea of sacrifice. Expositors are hopelessly at war as to whether we are to think of the Paschal Lamb, or of the picture of the lamb led to the slaughter, applied in Isa. liii. 7 to the vicarious sufferings of the servant of God: both references had probably before the composition of our book been fused in the religious speech of Christians into a familiar figurative name for the Saviour. Whichever allusion we prefer, both yield the idea of sacrifice, but in a free sense,

Testament words of God, as Gebhardt, *l.c.* p. 144, will have it. It can hardly be proved; and it is improbable, for this reason, that in chap. xii. the author betrays a strong consciousness of the historical *terminus a quo* of the life of Jesus, while the Logos idea only appears as a secondary element of his Christology.



with no reference to any Levitical atonement. The passages i. 5, v. 9, which speak of the meaning and effect of Christ's sacrificial death, carry us further: τῷ ἀγαπῶντι ἡμᾶς καὶ λύσαντι (another reading λούσαντι) ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ—ὅτι ἐτι ἐσφάγης καὶ ἠγόρασας τῷ θεῷ ἐν τῷ αἵματί σου (people) ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς . . . καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλείαν καὶ ἱερεῖς. The first passage shows us, in the first place, that the motive of Jesus' self-sacrifice was His love for us, that is, His voluntary death is conceived as a moral act in the highest sense; and the description of this death in iii. 21 as a victory, viz. over Satan (chap. xii.), over the power of evil that rules the world, perfectly agrees with this; nothing but the perfect self-denial, the self-sacrifice of holy love, can win the victory over the principle of selfishness that rules the world. But further emphasis is laid on the delivering power of this act of love, and on its leading us back into fellowship with God: Christ hath "redeemed" us by His blood (or washed us clean) and "purchased" us for God, and made us kings and priests, consecrated men in intercourse with God. Hence if the reading λύσαντι, in i. 5, is to be preferred (we have still the idea of the λύτρον in the other case, in the ἠγόρασας, v. 9), there is no mention of a "ransom," which God demands and receives in order to set us free from the curse of His wrath, but which redeems us from the fetters of our sin, and purchases us as God's possession. In other words, the "redeeming" (or according to the other reading, the "purifying") power of the blood of Christ lies in the ability of Christ's infinite act of love to free the human heart from the bonds of selfishness, and win it back for God and His eternal kingdom. Here then, as we found in Peter, Paul, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the essential aim of the work of salvation in the death of Jesus is not the blotting out of guilt, but the breaking of the power of sin in us, our moral deliverance or cleansing; and in that the blotting out of guilt is only one, though an indispensable element, in so far as the same act of Christ which purchases the human heart, conquers it and wins it from evil, assures it also of the perfect willingness of God to forgive, without which assurance it could not be brought back

to God. So far as I see, the pardoning and justifying element is expressly indicated only in the passage xii. 10, in the announcement that with the exaltation of the Saviour who died for us, the *κατήγωρ* is cast out of heaven, that is, the evil one ceases to accuse us before God. But even here that only means that the evil is for us virtually overcome; the accuser is cast out of heaven, because—as we are immediately reminded in ver. 11—a power is established in Christ's blood by which believers themselves now conquer Satan, or as it is said in another image (vii. 14), can “cleansing their garments (that is, their walk), and make them white.” It is not a contradiction, but rather a confirmation of this reading, that the actual overthrow of Satan, that is, the finished redemption, is, in xii. 5–10, dated not from the death of Jesus, but from His exaltation, the removal of the Messiah to heaven (ver. 5); just as in the Epistle to the Hebrews the decisive sacrifice of atonement is indeed offered on the cross, but the high-priestly act of atonement consummated only by the entrance of the High Priest into the heavenly Holiest of all. For just as we found in Paul, the salvation founded in the blood of Christ is here also at first a virtual salvation, a power and possibility of moral cleansing and deliverance for those who will appropriate it; it is not a completed fact, as is usually imagined in the one-sided reference to the taking away of guilt. It is realised only when the exalted Christ through His Spirit impresses His sacrifice on susceptible hearts; and therefore there is no contradiction, but only the harmony of that which He founded and that which is to be realised by it, when at one time it is said, He has overcome (for them), cleansed or purchased them by His blood; and again, they must overcome through His blood, and wash their garments white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I regard it as a tasteless misunderstanding of the poetic parallelism of the Apocalypse to distinguish between washing and making white, in the sense of the dogmatic distinction of justification and sanctification. *διὰ τὸ αἷμα* in xii. 11, it seems to me, must be taken in the sense of in virtue of His blood, that is = *διὰ τοῦ αἵματος*; an exchange of *διὰ* c. acc. with *διὰ* c. Gen. which we probably have also in John vi. 57. That the whole picture refers to “baptism,” as Gebhardt supposes, I doubt; we have no right to presuppose in the writer of the Apocalypse the Pauline

## § 7. THE KINGLY OFFICE

Hence the high-priestly office here carries us over to the kingly, in which Christ dispenses what on earth He founded. The conception of the Exalted One now standing before God "in the midst of the (semicircular) throne," now "sitting with His Father on His throne," is a symbol of this connection (v. 6, iii. 21); the former is the position of the High Priest who represents His Church before God; the latter, the sitting of the King who has become God's Co-regent. The transition, however, to this twofold glory is His resurrection, which is celebrated (i. 18), not merely as a personal restoration and perfection of life, but as entrance into a position of power to raise His own also from death. The victor over Satan is also the victor over his accomplices, death and Hades (xx. 10, 14); He has the key of death and of the kingdom of the dead (i. 18). But it is still more significant that He has "the key of David; that He opens, and no man shuts; shuts, and no man opens" (iii. 7; cf. Isa. xxii. 22). The key of David is the key of the Messiahship, that is, the symbol of the Messianic power of admitting or excluding from the kingdom of God; the bearer of that key is therefore the exclusive Mediator of salvation.<sup>1</sup> Jesus exercises this authority as an *alter ego* of God from heaven, that is, according to the writer of the Apocalypse, by means of His Spirit (ii. 7, xix. 10). That this Spirit is conceived in the manner of the original apostles as essentially *πνεῦμα προφητείας*, does not, as already noted, exclude His being a holy and sanctifying Spirit; but the inward ethical effect in believers and Churches is rather ascribed to the glorified Christ Himself. He has "eyes like a flame of fire," with which He looks through each and all (i. 14); He "tries the heart and reins" (ii. 23), and knows the works of His own, whether

idea of being baptized into Christ's death, and the image is explained more simply and more in accordance with the context as denoting sanctification in virtue of Christ's death.

<sup>1</sup> No weight can be laid on the difference of the expressions "key of the house of David" and "key of David." The latter expression is only an abbreviation of the former, but in each case the key and the meaning of the key (access to the King) are the same.

they are good or evil, perfect or defective (ii. 2, 4, 9, 19, iii. 2, etc.). He, through His Spirit, punishes the defects and unfaithfulness of His Churches (ii. 16); but He does so from love and in love (iii. 19). Our book has little occasion for alluding to the mystical relation of the loving Saviour to the individual soul, but the one beautiful saying (iii. 20) attests that it is aware of such a relation: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." From the idea of living fellowship with Christ, appearing here under the image of sharing in a meal, may also be understood the idea of "dying in the Lord," which we meet with in xiv. 13, and which we have no right to tone down to a "dying in the Christian faith"; it is dying in His fellowship, as it were in His arms,—a dying which issues from the living in Christ, reminding us of Rom. xiv. 8. But the writer of the Apocalypse does not limit the kingly government of the exalted Christ to secret workings of the Spirit; to him Christ even now governs the world in communion with His Father. He walks among the candlesticks of His seven Churches, and holds their stars in His hand (i. 13, ii. 1). He has it in His power to take away the candlestick of an unfaithful Church, that is, to quench its light and let it perish (ii. 5). The trials that overtake them, the victories they win, lie in His hand (ii. 21 f., iii. 9, 10). Thus, even now, in a world and history that is manifestly on the whole ruled by ungodly powers, He exercises a silent but true kingly dominion, until the day when He will bring about the judgment of the world, and become sole King and Lord on the earth.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE COMMUNITY OF THE SAINTS

#### § 1. IDEA AND DESCENT OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Those men who, through the blood of Christ, have become God's possession, are, as a rule, called *οἱ ἅγιοι* in our book just as in Paul, since they are separated from the ungodly

world by the experience of redemption, consecrated priests to God, and in the foundation of their life sanctified. The same people are meant by such designations as "servants of God" or "those who fear God" (vii. 3, xix. 2, 5, xxii. 3, 6); by "those who fear God" we are not to understand Gentile Christians alongside of Jewish Christians called saints; on the contrary, these wider designations of Christians only enable us to see that the author, notwithstanding his high esteem for the Old Testament people of God, did not recognise any true religious relation to God in the Jewish nation of his day, which had crucified Messiah, and thereby had made its city a Sodom and an Egypt (cf. iii. 9, xi. 8).<sup>1</sup> The idea of *ἐκκλησία*, which in Paul alternates with *οἱ ἅγιοι* (1 Cor. i. 2), appears again and again in the Epistles of the Apocalypse, but always only in the sense of the individual Churches; therefore the word occurs in i. 4, 20, xxii. 16, only in the plural. But the writer of the Apocalypse has also the idea of the Church as a whole; it is the "bride of the Lamb" (xix. 7, xxi. 2, xxii. 17), which the returning Christ will lead home to the marriage supper. The author represents this Church as redeemed by Christ "out of every tribe, and people, and nation, and tongue, a first-fruits unto God and unto the Lamb" (v. 9, xiv. 4); it is to him, as to the Apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians, a marvellous thing that an undivided people of God should have proceeded from the much divided humanity, a priestly nation in converse with God, who will in future rule the world. Accordingly, a Jewish standpoint of our author, from which he should have distinguished Jewish and Gentile elements in Christendom, and ascribed to the former permanent privileges, is from the

<sup>1</sup> The expression (xi. 18) *δοῦναι τὸν μισθὸν τοῖς δούλοις σου, τοῖς προφῆταις καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα σου*, would certainly in the case of a correct writer lead us to distinguish between *ἅγιοι* and *φοβούμενοι*. But the whole book protests against this by naming Christians in common *ἅγιοι* in so many passages, and again (xix. 5) by describing "all God's servants" as *φοβούμενοι*. Hence, in the expression in xi. 18, we must recognise the incorrectness of a poetic style accumulating predicates. Still less should we, as Gebhardt desires, apply the *λοιποὶ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῆς* (of the woman clothed with the sun, xii. 17) to Gentile Christians; the *λοιπῶν* form a contrast, not to Jewish Christians, but to Christ Himself as the firstborn.

first improbable, and, in point of fact, everything that has been adduced in favour of such a view is misunderstanding. The hundred and forty and four thousand "servants of God," who are sealed in chap. vii.,—twelve thousand from each tribe of Israel,—have been declared to be Jewish Christians; and the innumerable multitude of the triumphant, "out of every people, and tribe, and nation, and tongue," have been declared to be Gentile Christians, who thus appear as Christians of a second rank. This opinion does not take into account the absurdity of representing Jewish Christians only as being sealed, and Gentile Christians only as triumphing. The passage (xiv. 1–5) shows quite clearly that the hundred, forty and four thousand represent the whole Church of the elect which has passed victoriously through the last tribulation; no doubt they are a "Church purchased from among men to be the first-fruits unto God and unto the Lamb," as distinguished from those who are added to the kingdom of God only after the thousand years' reign, at the general resurrection of the dead; but they are chosen without regard to nationality, as the passage (v. 9) has announced in advance. Now, if the hundred, forty and four thousand are, according to xiv. 1 f., the totality of those chosen before the parousia, and if, according to v. 9, these chosen are purchased out of all peoples, and tribes, and nations, and tongues, then we are forced to see that in chap. vii. the groups which seem to be different are one and the same Christendom. Before God, who has numbered them all, and will lose none of them, for that is the meaning of the sealing, they are the full number of the people of the new covenant conceived according to the scheme of the twelve tribes of Israel: before the eyes of men, as they come triumphantly out of the great tribulation, they are a host which no man can number. The author's expectation, in xi. 13, that the majority of the Jews will be converted before the thousand years' kingdom, and his assumption, in xxi. 24 f., xxii. 2, that Gentiles will be converted in the heavenly Jerusalem, are no proof of his Judaism; the susceptible in the Gentile world of the present—outstripping the mass of the Jews—have already, according to v. 9, vii. 9 been converted in great multitudes. Still less should appeal have been made to the fact that in xiv. 1 the Church of the elect

appears on Mount Zion, and that, in xx. 9, Jerusalem is thought of as the capital of the thousand years' kingdom. The latter would be harmless even if it were taken in the strict sense, but both notions are mutually explained as figurative. Mount Zion is the rock of salvation (Rom. ix. 33), on the firm foundation of which believers stand with their Saviour amid all persecution and seduction; and the earthly Jerusalem in which Jesus is to set up His thousand years' kingdom is the Christian Church finally victorious and dominant on earth (Matt. v. 4). The Judaism of our author is the Judaism merely in form which we also see in the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; all that belongs to the New Testament is conceived in the symbolical forms of Old Testament history, and therefore the Church of the perfected is described as a heavenly Jerusalem with twelve gates, according to the scheme of the twelve tribes of the nation. But the meaning in these symbolical forms is throughout a New Testament meaning without Jewish leaven, and a universalistic meaning which amply attests Paul's influence. The Church of God, gathered out of all peoples, and tongues, and tribes, and nations, has detached herself from every national limit; and when the author in chap. xi. still shows a special interest in the Jewish people, he does not, even in this, go beyond the Pauline lines (cf. Rom. iii. 1-4, ix. 1-5, xi. 25 f.).

## § 2. CONDITIONS OF THE CHURCH

It is not our business to examine in detail the purely historical conditions of the Churches of the Apocalypse. The Epistles of exhortation and comfort exhibit the spiritual condition of these Churches partly as a state of progress, partly as one of backsliding. One Church is reproached for having left her first love, another has a name to live but is inwardly dead; yet the recognition of faithful labour, brotherly love, earnest discipline, enduring patience, practical Christianity predominates. Sufferings for Christ's sake are not wanting, though there is no systematic persecution. The Churches stand under the pressure of a heathenism that is still mighty (as, above all, in Pergamos, where Satan's seat is), and the Jews who have long since forfeited all right to the honourable

name "Jews," but are "a synagogue of Satan" (ii. 9, iii. 9), do their utmost to stir up people and magistrates against the Christians by their calumnies. Therefore we are told of imprisonments for Christ's sake (ii. 10), though martyrdom is mentioned only by way of exception (ii. 13). The Churches also appear to be harassed by internal dangers. The prophecy of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian elders (Acts xx. 29, 30) has been fulfilled, and false teachers, as it seems, have made their appearance, forerunners of the subsequent Antinomian Gnosis; for the author reproaches them for having known τὰ βαθέα, not of God, but of Satan (ii. 24), and for teaching practically an unrestrained mode of life, after the manner of the heathen, εἰδωλόθυτα φαγεῖν καὶ πορνεῦσαι (ii. 14, 20). These Nicolaitanes, or Balaamites, as perhaps the author alone calls them, appear to be active in different Churches, and to be here and there even tolerated; a depraved prophetess gives them attractive powers; and to them also, without doubt, must belong the seeming apostles whom the Ephesian Church (ii. 2) has tried and found to be liars. It was an exceedingly far-fetched conceit of the Tübingen school to discover here an attack on the Apostle Paul, whom the alleged Judaistic writer of the Apocalypse wished to characterise as a lying apostle. As if Paul could have taught εἰδωλόθυτα φαγεῖν καὶ πορνεῦσαι; and as if the author with such feelings of hostility against the founder of the Ephesian Church could have reproached them with having left their first love, or could have urged them to do the first works again, the works of their early Pauline period. There is absolutely no evidence of anything anti-Pauline or Judaising in the seven Churches. In the words of warning against the disorderly ways of the Nicolaitanes, "I will lay upon you no other burden; but that which ye have already, hold fast till I come," we have perhaps an allusion to the apostolic decree (Acts xv. 22-29) which forbade chiefly the εἰδωλόθυτα φαγεῖν and πορνεῦσαι; and if so, the character of those Churches as free from the law would be at once determined. But it follows even without this from the total impression of the book. There is nowhere any trace of the ceremonial law. The Old Testament arrangements are, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the shadows of spiritual realities. All believers are priests (i. 6, v. 10), and



the sacrifices which these priests offer are their prayers (v. 8, viii. 3, 4) and their martyrdoms (vi. 9: the souls of the slain under the heavenly altar). The inference from this view, which reminds us of 1 Pet. ii. 9, is that the Mosaic ceremonial law has lost all meaning but this typical one. If all Christians are priests, then the Levitical priesthood has no longer any meaning; and if Christians offer their hearts, and when necessary their lives, as the true sacrifice, then the Old Testament sacrifice is in the New Testament fulfilled, and thus is done away. We do not hear much of new Church arrangements. The *κυριακὴ ἡμέρα* (i. 10) declares the Sunday to be the day of assembly, and in i. 3 a reader is mentioned in the Church. But Church officials proper do not appear, for the angel in chaps. ii., iii., as already noted, has no such meaning. Besides the apostles who are honoured even in the heavenly Jerusalem, the prophets and martyrs are in various ways brought into prominence. They have in a special sense what all Christians possess, the *μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ*; the former as a gift of the Spirit, the latter as a testimony borne by their blood (cf. xix. 10, and, on the other hand, the passages already defining the idea of "martyr," ii. 13, vi. 9, xvii. 6). The author may have had in view the apostles, prophets, and martyrs when he repeatedly distinguishes great and small in the community of believers (xi. 18, xix. 5). The symbol of the four and twenty elders in heaven suggests that the Church on earth had the office of elders, but these in true primitive fashion sink into insignificance before the free gifts of the Spirit and Christian character.

### § 3. WAY OF SALVATION

The conceptions of the way of salvation which appear in our book are more important than the condition of the Churches which it reflects, although from the nature of the book they can only be scanty and incidental. Above all, we come across an image here (also indicated in a saying of Jesus, Luke x. 20), "the book of life," which is derived from the civil arrangement of keeping a list of the living inhabitants, from which the name was blotted out in the event of death. According to xx. 15, xxi. 27, no one enters into the heavenly

Jerusalem whose name is not written in the book of life, but is cast into the lake of fire, that is, is given up to eternal death; and according to xiii. 8, xvii. 8, the names of those who are being saved were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. That seems to indicate an absolute and elective predestination; and against this impression we cannot urge the passage (iii. 5) which speaks of blotting out a name from the book of life, and thus seems to teach that the destination to blessedness is revocable, for the context shows that we are not seriously to think of this recalling of predestination; on the contrary, "he that overcometh" is assured in a sort of meiosis that Christ as Judge of the world will maintain and acknowledge the judgment of God upon him which is written in the book of life. If, on the other hand, we observe how in the judgment of the world (xx. 12) the decision is *κατὰ τὰ ἔργα*, and how these works are registered in books, and the book of life is only compared to see if the account agrees, it follows rather as the meaning of this account that the judgment of the book of life only expresses a judgment of God's omniscience from the creation of the world which does not exclude the free self-determination of the man, but only foresees its result; and this agrees with the idea that the real freedom of human decision is distinctly assumed in the exhortations of the seven Epistles as well as in the call to repentance of the whole book. And this result is not overturned even by the idea of *ἐκλεκτοί*, which appears once in xvii. 14. This stands between the names *κλητοί* and *πιστοί*, as the designation of those who with Christ have gained the victory over Antichrist, and so can designate nothing that would take precedence of the *κλήσις*, or make superfluous the added accentuation of fidelity (*πίστις*), that is, free self-determination. It is to be observed that those here called *ἐκλεκτοί* are not by any means all who are to be saved, but only those who belong to the Church of the first-fruits which is formed up to the parousia (xiv. 4), and enjoy the privilege of reigning with Christ in the thousand years' kingdom, as distinguished from those who are found in the book of life at the general resurrection (xx. 12). Now these are "called," in the sealing (chap. vii.) they are chosen, and as they maintain their fidelity to the end they share in the

triumph of Christ, which is just what the passage xvii. 14 says. The idea of the *κλήσις* meets us once again (xix. 9) in the *μακάριοι οἱ εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τοῦ ἀρνίου κεκλημένοι*; it refers here to the same people who, in xvii. 14, are called *ἐκλεκτοί*; but that it contains, as in Paul, the dogmatic sense of an effectual call, cannot be maintained in an application of the figure of an invitation to a feast. That this invitation, wherever it is addressed, is mediated by the preaching of the gospel is evident, and is also indicated (iii. 3) in the *μνημόνευε, πῶς εἴληφας καὶ ἤκουσας*. Likewise, that which the gospel above all desires to call forth in man is repentance and faith. It harmonises with the prevailing Old Testament colouring of the language of the Apocalypse, and is at the same time an echo of the original apostles, that wider designations such as servants of God, those who fear God, are by preference applied to believers, and that the negative idea of *μετανοεῖν* (or of "giving God the glory," meant in the same sense) prevails over the positive idea of *πιστεῖν* (ix. 20, 21, xi. 13, xvi. 9, 11); but what is meant by it is conversion to the living God of the new covenant, the fear of God which comes from faith in Jesus Christ. *πίστις* as fundamental condition of salvation and Christian calling is throughout familiar to our book (ii. 13, 19, xiii. 10, xiv. 12); that it is conceived also in its peculiar Christian form is attested by the expression *πίστις μου, πίστις Ἰησοῦ*, in ii. 13, xiv. 10, which is to be understood only in the sense of the *genitivus objectivus*, as faith in Jesus<sup>1</sup> (Rom. iii. 26). Certainly a second element of subjective Christianity appears more frequently than *πίστις*, the *ἔργα*,—frequently in the neutral sense of the word as in the Epistles to the seven Churches, but then also in the sense of good works (cf. ii. 26, xiv. 13) when the idea coincides with the "righteous acts of the saints" (*δικαιώματα*, xix. 8), or with the "keeping of God's commandments" (xiv. 12). This accentuation of works, reminding us of the Epistle of James, is in neither case anti-Pauline (cf. Rom. ii. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 19), but is only natural in a book which deals with the common New Testament doctrine of the final judgment as taking place

<sup>1</sup> The translation "faithful to Jesus," which Gebhardt prefers, issues in the same thing, but demands too much of the *gen. objectivus*; but the translation "faithful of Jesus" (*gen. sub.*) does not suit the connection.

*κατὰ τὰ ἔργα.* The "works of Jesus," however, on which our book lays stress (ii. 26), are not outward isolated fulfilments of the law. When He says, "I know thy works," it always extends to the moral character of the Church as a whole, and thus the "works of Jesus" mean rather the practice of Christian virtues, and have nothing to do with the fulfilment of Mosaic precepts. They consist in repentance when one has sinned (iii. 3, 19), in love and faith (ii. 19), in Christian labour, service of love, patience (ii. 2, 19), in the doing of all righteousness, in uninterrupted sanctification (xxii. 11), in watchfulness and fidelity till death (iii. 2, ii. 10). There is no mention of a false asceticism. The *παρθένοι, οἱ μετὰ γυναικῶν οὐκ ἐμολύνθησαν* (xiv. 4) are by no means the unmarried. To regard marriage, in which the apostles themselves lived, as a "stain," would be quite impossible to the New Testament, and especially to our book, which compares the covenant between Christ and the Church to a marriage (xix. 9). The expression simply denotes either sexual purity, or—as the context renders probable (cf. xiii. 9, 14, 15, 16, 17)—the passing unstained through all temptations to unfaithfulness to God and the Saviour, in accordance with the figurative language of the Old Testament, which represents idolatry as adultery. Finally, as to the relation of faith and works, our author by no means regards the latter as proceeding from our own power, or invests works with any merit. On the contrary, the saved have overcome Satan *διὰ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, for the sake of Christ's blood (or more correctly, "in the power of Christ's blood"); they have "washed their robes and made them white (that is, sanctified their walk) in the blood of the Lamb" (xii. 11, vii. 14, xxi. 14), that is, in appropriating the Saviour's life given for them in death. So that here we meet with the same union of God's act of grace and human activity as in the teaching of the rest of the New Testament. Now, since the grace of God in Christ and Christ's blood can only be appropriated by faith, it is clear that faith and works are just as little as in the Epistle of James independent elements of subjective Christianity; but works must be conceived as springing out of faith. Manifestly, then, there is no contradiction when the future glory of believers is represented as a "reward" coming with the

Saviour (xi. 18, xxii. 12); and yet the gracious character of salvation is preserved in that saying which compares eternal life to a reviving draught freely (*δωρεάν*) offered: "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely"; "if any man thirst, let him come and take of the water of life freely" (xxi. 6, xxii. 17).

#### § 4. THE GLORY OF THE CHRISTIAN IN LIFE AND DEATH

The more painful the trials are for which the Apocalypse desires to prepare its readers, the more it seeks to bring into prominence the glory and blessedness which is given to the Christian even now in life and death. Twice it calls special attention to the fact that Christians by the death of Jesus are made a *βασιλεία ἱερείς τῷ θεῷ* (i. 6, v. 10). The obscure expression is manifestly an application of the promise of Ex. xix. 6 to Christians: "And ye shall be a *mamlechet kohanim*, a kingdom of priests"; but the author seems to have purposely translated so freely because he found two suggestions in the original text, a priesthood and a kingdom of Christians, and the latter he brings expressly into prominence (v. 10) by the addition *καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*. That Christians are priests may be understood without any difficulty; they are sanctified people who at all times have freedom of access unto God; their prayers rise to heaven as incense well-pleasing to Him, and find acceptance (v. 8, vi. 11, viii. 3-5). But they are also kings, for they do not bend before the greatest and most terrible powers of this world (xiii. 8-10), they do homage to their God and Saviour alone; therefore they will sit as true conquerors with their Lord on the throne, and will judge and rule the world with Him in the thousand years' reign. The white garment which (iii. 4, 5) is promised to him who overcomes, is another figure of the glory of the Christian; it is a promise of the future, but it is woven in the present. In the passage xix. 8, it is said that the fine linen, white and clean, of the Lamb's Bride, the wedding garment of the triumphant Church, is woven out of the righteous deeds of the saints. A profound view of the connection of the present and the future Christian life appears in this image, and is also expressed without image in the

passage xiv. 13: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . for their works do follow them." From his works done in God, from his righteous deeds, grows that holy character of the believer which shall clothe him in eternity, that is, shall constitute his perfect form and give shape to his glorified body; while the ungodly, who on earth have soiled their garments instead of washing them white in the blood of the Lamb, shall be without any garment before God's judgment, so that the shame of their nakedness will be manifest (iii. 18).<sup>1</sup> A somewhat different application of the same figure meets us in the passage vi. 11, where until the day of perfection a white garment is given to each of the martyrs, whose blood cries to heaven and calls down the final judgment. The garment is given, but in that there is no contradiction to the idea that it represents their actual righteousness and holiness, for even in xix. 7 the Lamb's Bride is given the garment woven out of righteous deeds of the saints; the gift expresses the divine recognition of what exists, the divine *justificatio justi*. And thus in the passage vi. 11 we meet with the idea, specially remarkable in the Apocalypse, that the saved have not to wait for recognition at the day of judgment, but that there is a blessedness and glory for those who are faithful unto death, a crown of everlasting life (ii. 10) even before the last day. The same idea is again expressed without image in the passage xiv. 13, already quoted: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." But while they are allowed to rest from their earthly labours and conflicts, the moral results of these labours abide with them, and they do not need to wait for any last day, but are blessed from the hour of their death.

<sup>1</sup> The same figurative view appears xvi. 15, and lies also at the basis of the obscure passage 2 Cor. v. 3, and corresponds, as a rabbinical parallel of Schöttgen's to the latter passage proves, to a Jewish mode of representation.

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## CHAPTER V

## THE HISTORY OF THE END

But our book aims at describing, not the history of the individual's salvation, but the final history of the world. We have sketched already, in our introduction, its essential contents, by developing the literary plan of the Apocalypse; the point in view here is to call special attention to the religious ideas which are contained in this prophetic history of the end.

## § 1. GENERAL VIEW OF THE LAST TIMES

What is sometimes said of the externality of the apocalyptic history of the end, belongs to the many groundless prejudices which exist against the Book of Revelation. That impression rests on a sort of optical illusion which the epic prophetic form makes on the short-sighted; in reality the seer has conceived a real inner perfection of the world's history in which it is separated into eternal contrasts. The divine salvation that has appeared in Christ forces humanity to a decision, to a fuller appropriation, or to a more final obduracy. A community of believers chosen out of every nation and tongue has been formed, and the gospel with which it is intrusted still sounds through the world in order to call the world to faith and repentance. If the progress of the gospel is not meant in the first image of the Victorious Archer on the white horse (vi. 2), at all events it is reflected in the picture which opens the fifteenth chapter, in the appearing of that strong angel who bears the eternal gospel through the midst of the heavens, and calls men to repentance (xv. 1 f.). On the other hand, the seer beholds in the world which has remained outside the Church, the last expression of ungodliness. The prince of this world, the old dragon, has created his masterpiece in the Roman Empire, in which the pre-Christian history has reached its height; such a power, as frightful and at the same time as heartless, inhuman, brutal and arrogant as the beast with seven heads and ten horns,

had never been known in history before (xiii. 1-6). To the fearful political power of the Roman Empire, crushing everything, was added the demoniac power of seduction, those heathen systems of religion and magic which the prophetic poet figures in the two-headed beast with the horns of a lamb and the speech of a dragon, that is, in the lying prophets, and now this dominating self-deifying power of evil had given birth to its last expression in the imperial incendiary and persecutor, Nero. The seer, who had no presentiment of the caricatures of holiness which the history of the Church was to produce, could see nowhere else than here the climax of the world's opposition to God. Nothing else, then, seems to him to remain but the last decisive conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. In this view of the situation we need not marvel that the seer no longer expects any essential change in the relation of parties. In chap. xi. he expresses the hope that the Jewish nation will in great part be led to repentance by a special visitation, and so be saved. For the heathen society comprehended in the Roman Empire he has no such hopes, but, in spite of God's repeated calls to repentance, expects only the judgment of obduracy on it (ix. 20, xvi. 9, 11, 21). He does not deny salvation to the rest of the Gentile world, and especially to the generations already dead, xv. 4 announces the contrary of that; but he seems to have regarded the Græco-Roman civilised world of his time, in so far as it had not yet opened to the gospel, as incorrigible. In passing through the seven times heated fire of tribulation that awaits it in this obdurate world, the Church obtains the perfection which fits it for coming to the eternal marriage feast.

## § 2. THE PAROUSIA

But the seer did not conceive the day of judgment brought near in this way as a momentary flash; his expression was phantastic, but his thought was of a true historical process which seeks, by degrees and with inner conformity to law, to attain its goal. The beginning of the world's judgment, the judgment on Rome, grows out of the historical conditions of the present. Nero, returning from the abyss, will set up his



kingdom of terror by the help of ten subject kings (perhaps governors of the provinces who take his side). Supported by the kings of the East, he will march against Rome, which has cast him off, defying the vials of wrath which are being poured over the earth (chap. xv.), and by a complete destruction will recompense the New Testament Babylon for all the godless outrages which it has committed (chap. xv. 18). After the destruction of Rome, he, as it seems, turns against Jerusalem, kills the two witnesses who preached repentance in that city after its devastation by Vespasian (chap. xi.), and oppresses the saints in that extreme way described in his first introduction in chap. xiii., until at length the Christ, returning from heaven, comes to their help. This brings us to the parousia, the provisional goal of Christian hope. The author treats it in a noteworthy manner, as something not merely at the end of history; even now every visitation of the Churches, every sovereign and judicial act which Christ exercises in respect of them, is a coming of the Lord (ii. 5, 16, 22, 23, iii. 3, 20); but this provisional and, as it were, invisible coming to judgment, ends in a final coming visible to all. In different images, borrowed from Old Testament passages, this is described as a coming with clouds. Thus in i. 7, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye will see Him, and they also that pierced Him (Zech. xii. 10): and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him," where the murder of the Messiah seems to be viewed as a common crime of the human race, which now beats its breast with a sense of guilt, by seeing in Him whom it slew its almighty Judge. Again, in the fourteenth chapter, with the view of expressing the idea that the world is ripe for judgment, the Son of Man is represented as coming in the clouds with a crown of gold on His head, and in His hand a sharp sickle; and under the figure of the wine-press, borrowed from Isa. lxiii., there is a mysterious reference to an immense battle fought not far from Jerusalem, in which the blood would reach to the horses' bridles. That is the decisive battle between Christ and Antichrist, of which the detailed mention comes only in the nineteenth chapter. From the open heavens, on a white horse, with many crowns on his head, and with eyes like a flame of fire, the faithful and true, the Logos of God, rides forth with the heavenly hosts

to the help of His people; and from His mouth proceeds a two-edged sword, the judgment of God which judges the world. At Armageddon, at Megiddo, where once the last pious son of David, King Josiah, fell under the power of the Pharaohs (xvi. 16), Antichrist and his allies have gathered themselves together, in the hope of once more triumphing over the offspring of David. But their army is annihilated in a great battle; Antichrist and his lying prophets are taken captive, and thrown into the fiery lake of condemnation; but Satan is bound for a thousand years, during which Christ reigns with His own upon the earth.

### § 3. THE THOUSAND YEARS' KINGDOM

Thus our prophecy arrives at that "thousand years' kingdom" which, in fanatical heads and times, has produced so much confusion. One is wont to regard it as an idea peculiar to the writer of the Apocalypse, overlooking the fact that not only does Paul in the same way (1 Cor. xv. 21-28) insert a triumphant kingdom of Christ between the actual condition of the world and the eternal kingdom of God, but that it is a common figure of early Christian thought, borrowed from Judaism. The thousand years' kingdom of the Apocalypse is simply, as is clear in the very wording of xx. 4, the Messianic kingdom of the Jewish and early Christian expectations (cf. Acts i. 6). And the peculiar and suggestive feature of the Apocalypse is rather that it gives this aspiration of Jewish Christianity a secondary place, setting it before the end, and makes the Christian ideal of the perfected kingdom of God overtop the sensuous and earthly ideal of the Messianic hope. For the prophecy does not dwell long on this intermediate stage, still less does it present it in any peculiar images. That only is indicated which was the common Christian hope that Christ shall reign with His own on a purified earth. Of course the communities of the elect who were alive on earth at His coming reign with Him; it is they who are meant in the words, xx. 4: "And they sat upon thrones, and judgment (judicial functions) was given them." That is to say, Christ's faithful ones share in His royal government of the world (v. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 8); and as the general judgment

of the world only takes place afterwards, the judgment is probably only an emblem of the kingly power. But how could the seer limit the participation in this royalty of Christ to the faithful alive at His coming? It was a fixed element in the Christian hope, that those who in the interval had died in the Lord, who had suffered death perhaps for His sake, should not on that account lose anything (1 Thess. iv. 13 f.), and therefore our seer continues (xx. 4): "And the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and (all) those who had not worshipped the beast, nor received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands," they came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. That is to say, there is a first resurrection, limited to those who at the parousia already belonged to Christ (1 Cor. xv. 23), to that first-fruits of humanity redeemed to God and to the Lamb (xiv. 5); and we can understand why at mention of them the seer exclaims, "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection: over such the second death has no power" (xx. 6). The second death is the death of the soul following that of the body, it is eternal destruction; those who have part in the first resurrection are withdrawn from it, and as men perfected they do not come again into judgment. In so far, therefore, as it is ruled by the risen and immortal, the thousand years' kingdom is already of a supernatural character; but in all else it is conceived quite in the forms of early history. Its seat, as it seems, is the Holy Land, while round about to the far off ends of the earth are heathen nations" (xx. 3, 8, 9); the evil principle, Satan, is "bound," so that he "cannot deceive the nations" during the thousand years (xx. 3); but he is not annihilated, he can arise again, and there is yet in store a final conflict between him and the kingdom of God. And thus we may say that this figure of the thousand years' kingdom expresses the presentiment of a victory of Christ's cause in the history of this earth. That the conflict between the ancient heathen world and the young Christianity will, after the utmost hardship, result in victory; that a time of Christian history, of the victory and triumph of Christ over the evil that rules the world will come, and that in this triumph of Christ all His faithful witnesses and

martyrs co-operate until to-day, is the fulfilment of this prophecy.

#### § 4. THE GENERAL JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD

The author, however, saw the real goal of Christian hope in a third and last act of the final history. After the thousand years, Satan is again loosed and gathers Gog and Magog, the immense mass of nations from the four ends of the earth, in order to besiege the Messiah and His people. But fire from heaven consumes them, and then appears the throne of God, before which heaven and earth flee away, and the real and perfect dominion of God begins (xx. 7–11). It begins with the general judgment of the world, and the general resurrection of the dead for that end. "All the dead, great and small, are gathered before the throne of God to be judged according to their works. Books are opened in which these works are recorded, and are compared with the book of life. Whoever is not written in this book is handed over to the second death, cast into the lake of fire, into which they sink with the devil, and with death and Hades. The differences of this eschatological view from the Pauline are noteworthy; they show the freedom and diversity of early Christian thinking, especially in matters of prophecy. First of all, it is clear that although Christ is marked out and glorified in our book as Judge of the world, in the last act of judgment He retires in God's presence, who has reserved for Himself the last victory over Satan, and the final decision about the destiny of human souls. The Apocalypse in this agrees with the Epistle to the Hebrews, against Paul. It does so no less in clinging to a twofold issue for human life. The lake of fire, the counterpart of the Dead Sea, in which Sodom and Gomorrha once sank in fire, signifies the second or eternal death, a destruction from which there is no deliverance. In this the representation wavers between eternal torment and complete annihilation: the first is indeed expressly asserted (xiv. 9–11, xx. 10). But if not merely the devil and Antichrist, but also death and Hades, which are not persons, are cast into the lake of fire, that can only mean the abolition of death as a power, and the annihilation of his

kingdom, as in 1 Cor. xv. 26. With that twofold issue of history agrees further, that the writer of the Apocalypse distinguishes a twofold resurrection,—not only a first and second in time, but in the latter a resurrection to life and a resurrection to condemnation. Paul also has a first resurrection of those belonging to Christ at the parousia (1 Cor. xv. 23); but to him it is only the beginning of a general resurrection which extends throughout the whole kingdom of Christ's triumph in proportion to the gradual belief and deliverance of those who have fallen asleep without Christ. Our author leaves those who have not believed in Christ on earth slumbering till the end of the thousand years' reign, and then all together are raised to come to judgment; in which we must undoubtedly recognise a view more in accordance with Jewish tradition.

#### § 5. THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

But the general judgment of the world is the introduction to the renewal of the world,—the establishment “of the new heavens and the new earth.” “And I saw,” it is said in xxi. 1, “a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” That is the glorified world of nature which is to support the perfected world of men, the new and ideal order of nature which knows of no more evil. For that reason there is in it “no more sea,” the strange deep out of which the ungodly powers of the present are supposed to arise (xiii. 1). But the blessed and perfected humanity is the “new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband” (xxi. 2). It comes down from heaven, for it is the eternal ideal of the kingdom of God which here becomes actual. In its symbolical description of the city of God our book, after so many visions of terror, reaches its climax; and this description is one of the sublimest and profoundest fragments of biblical poetry. The heavenly Jerusalem is described both as a city and a temple, for it signifies both the perfected community and the “tabernacle of God with men” (xxi. 3); in the Church of the perfected there is also the perfect presence of God. By

high walls it is separated from and secured against everything impure (xxi. 27); and yet it has open gates through which all the sanctified can enter (xxi. 25). Its buildings and streets are of transparent gold: it has twelve gates of pearl, and twelve foundations of precious stone; the gates bear the names of the twelve tribes of Israel as the emblem of the full number of the people of God; the foundations, the names of the twelve apostles as the chosen founders of the Christian Churches. The city itself—after the example of the Old Testament sanctuary—is foursquare, or rather cubical, foursquare in every direction, for four is the number of the world, and thrice fourfold is the emblem of an all-sided perfection. Through the city flows a crystal stream, a water of life, on both sides of which grow trees of life, trees of paradise, with delightful fruit and leaves of healing. Eternal life is the food and drink of those who dwell here. Suffering and sorrow no longer touch it; God wipes away all tears from their eyes; and there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, “for the former things are passed away” (xxi. 4). And there is no night there; neither does it need any light of sun or moon to shine in it, for God the Lord lightens it (xxi. 23, xxii. 5); nay, there is no temple in the city of God, “for the Almighty God is its temple, and the Lamb,”—its perfect communion with God and Christ no longer needs any mediation (xxi. 22). The blessed thus serve God, and rule for ever and ever; they see His face, and have His name on their foreheads (xxii. 4); they are His servants and again His sons—“He that overcometh will inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he will be My son” (xxi. 7). The eternal promises of the gospel which run through the whole New Testament are nowhere more eloquently expressed than in these closing chapters. Even here some differences from the Pauline view are manifest; but they are only of a formal nature. The seer seems not to know of Paul’s idea, that the Son gives place in order that the Father may be all in all: in the heavenly Jerusalem, Christ is the eternal bridegroom of His Church, the eternal light of His people, just as the Father is; the eternal throne of God is also the throne of the Lamb (xxii. 3). But it is evident that Paul also conceives the work of Christ in His people and His blessed

communion with them to be imperishable, though there is no further need that He as Mediator should appear before the Father for the perfected; and there is no doubt that at the end of the thousand years' kingdom our author regards the dominion of Christ as passing over into the ideal theocracy. But the greatest difficulty has arisen from the fact that, in contrast with the Pauline universalism, the writer of the Apocalypse seems to make a damaging distinction in the heavenly perfection. He distinguishes between citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem and mere neighbours, citizens without rights, who seem to enter it only as guests. "The nations," it is said, xxi. 24, according to Isa. lx., "will walk in the light of it (the city of God); and kings of the earth will bring their glory into it"; and, according to xxii. 2, the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations, while its fruits seem to be communicated to the citizens. It is clear from v. 9, vii. 9, that the seer did not think of a distinction of Jewish and Gentile Christians extending to heaven, or recognise the Jewish Christians as full citizens of the city of God, and Gentile Christians only as refugees in it; he who so strongly insists that those who overcome are of all nations and tongues, could only understand by the twelve tribes who inhabit the heavenly Jerusalem, the triumphant Church without distinction of descent. Many absurd things have been suggested as to that distinction, and yet the meaning of the author is simple and inoffensive enough. The citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem are the perfected righteous, Christians who are wholly sanctified. But there is also a multitude from the general judgment of the world of such as are to become blessed, but have not yet attained to this goal. They are pardoned on the ground of their works, their names written in the book of life, for "in every nation he that feareth God and doeth righteousness is accepted of Him" (Acts x. 35); but this does not make them Christians, much less perfected Christians. And so our author has conceived the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church of the perfected, as continually receiving new elements, and as welcoming to full rights of citizenship those who are near it and are drawn to it. Undoubtedly the seer in this was thinking chiefly of the pious heathen of the early world, and perhaps also of those

who, without any fault of their own, remained outside the thousand years' kingdom. And thus he expected in the heavenly Jerusalem a progressive fulfilment of the promise which is announced in Isa. lx., and which he himself declares in xv. 4: "All nations shall come and worship before Thee." He very suggestively makes the fruit of the tree of life the food of the perfected, but its leaves are for those who have to be healed and brought to eternal life. We scarcely need to be reminded that this picture of the perfection of the blessed, which according to the epic scheme of prophecy is placed after the thousand years' kingdom, is in reality nothing else than the future world of perfection which already overarches the world of history. Now that in the future world, besides those who have attained, there are many who are still growing, neighbours of the heavenly Jerusalem who will some day become citizens in it, is an idea which we occasionally meet with in the New Testament, and which the apocalyptic view of the future does not confuse, but completes.

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### III. JOHANNINE CONCEPTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE EPISTLES AND THE FOURTH GOSPEL

#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

#### § 1. THE DOCUMENTS

Besides the Apocalypse, we have, as documents of a Johannine system of doctrine, the First Epistle of John with its two small companions, and, in some measure, the Fourth Gospel. There can be no real doubt about the spiritual affinities of these writings. It is true that the two smaller Epistles, even in the early Church, were ascribed, not to the apostle, but to John the Presbyter; but that, undoubtedly, was because the unnamed author describes himself as *ὁ πρεσβύτερος*. But, when more closely considered, this



designation does not lead us to any *alter ego* of the apostle; in the early Church there were many elders, and the mere designation *ὁ πρεσβύτερος* without mention of name can hardly denote an office in the Church, but must reproduce a name familiarly given to the author by others; we must take it as the designation of a venerable man who, in his own circle, was familiarly called the "Elder," and who was pleased with the name. Now as the two little Epistles bear throughout the stamp of the greater, and have too little that is peculiar to them to make them appear intentional imitations, there can be no doubt of their genuineness. Manifestly Epistles, so small and unimportant have been preserved only from veneration for the well-known author. The first Epistle on the other hand, which begins without any self-designation of the author, and therefore presupposes the reader's acquaintance with him, bears the stamp of spiritual individuality. It is prompted by desire to confirm a definite circle of readers in genuine Christianity, especially to keep them true to their faith in love and holiness, and, on the other hand, to warn them against a heresy that destroys the foundations of the faith in denying the identity of Jesus and Christ, in which we cannot help recognising the Cerinthian Gnosis. Now, if we assume that the troubles produced by this heresy occasioned the smaller local Epistles, and that the author then resolved to appeal in a more exhaustive circular letter to a whole group of Churches, all suspicion is removed which may be evoked by the apparent dependence of the lesser Epistles on the greater. Even less than the common descent of the Epistles can connection between the main Epistle and the Fourth Gospel be mistaken, which gives us a much wider basis for a Johannine system of doctrine. Both writings betray an eye-witness of the life of Jesus, and in both the peculiarity, which is very marked, is the same. The suggestion of literary imitation has been made here also, and the original is found sometimes in the Epistle and sometimes in the Gospel; but it may be asked whether such a literary distinction as we have here could be so successfully imitated, especially in the early Church, so little fitted for such feats of literary skill. But between the Epistles and the Gospel, with all their affinities, there exists just so much difference as to

lead to the inference of their being utterances of the same man at different periods, but not to the supposition that one is an attempted imitation of the other. The Epistle therefore, of whose genuineness there is no reasonable doubt, bears important witness also for the Gospel.

## § 2. PECULIARITY OF THE SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE

The mode of thought reflected in these documents is so peculiar that it is not easy to describe it. The relation to the Old Testament is notable. The author is so opposed to Judaism that he speaks of the Jews as the manifest enemies of God. Nevertheless, a true Israelite is to him a name of honour, and the God of the Old Testament is also the God of Jesus Christ (John i. 47, iv. 22, xx. 17). Nay more, the Old Testament is to him, without restriction, the inviolable word of God (John x. 35), in which he lives and moves; in his Gospel he not only quotes one prophetic passage or example after another, but all his fundamental conceptions have grown out of the Old Testament, and his whole speech is formed on the model of it. One divines a writer who was trained from childhood on Moses and the prophets, although he writes in a period and neighbourhood in which the Jews are the declared enemies of the Christians. He has thus never felt the need which Paul felt of coming to some understanding between the old covenant, in which he had grown up, and the new, into which he had grown. The one statement that might be explained in that sense (John i. 17), "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," expresses only the glorious fulfilment which the Old Testament revelation found in Christ. A discussion of the relation of the New Testament *χάρις* and *πίστις* to the Old Testament ideas of *ἐντολαί* and *ἔργα*, might seem to be suggested in the first Epistle; but it is not undertaken, and both are left in the naivest way side by side. This clearly entitles us to comprehend the Johannine system of doctrine under the primitive type; its naive relation to the Old Testament, the mirror of a life not in conflict with Old Testament piety, but which has become a Christian life through the more perfect development of that piety, must remind us of the Epistle of James. On

the other hand, there is one characteristic which stands in direct opposition to James, and which removes the Johannine view altogether from the primitive apostolic sphere. The personal impression of Jesus, which falls so much into the background in James, rules everything here, and produces a Christology which places the Johannine mode of thought in connection with the most advanced. While in the Epistle of James we see the man who was outwardly near Jesus but inwardly far from Him till His resurrection declared Him to be the Messiah of glory, we here feel the pulse of a Christian life which has grown out of the first love of a disciple's heart to the divine Master, and has early found in Him everything after which it yearned. Christ has the central place in Paul's thought and feeling also, but with the significant difference in Paul, the work of Christ, especially His death upon the cross, is central; whilst, on the other hand, it is in the person of Jesus in the strict sense, in His personal glory, that John has learned to see the face of the eternal Father, and to find eternal life. And in this characteristic of John's mind there is manifested the overwhelming impression of personal intercourse, but there is also manifest a peculiar power and glow of susceptibility for that. And with this we come upon the inmost peculiarity of John's mind. This has often been supposed to be a speculative peculiarity, because that Christological characteristic appears most manifestly in the apparently philosophic prologue of the Gospel, as if a single speculative idea, such as that of the Logos, borrowed from the general culture of an age, stamped a man a philosopher. A scientific interest in the understanding of the universe and scientific method is the mark of a philosopher, and of this there is no trace in John. His mode of thought is not speculative but mystical; his is that peculiarly religious thinking which advances not with the mere theoretic powers of the mind, but with the intuition of the heart, and, undistracted by the diversity of the world of phenomena, confines itself to the limits of the inner life. Hence comes that high estimate of knowledge (John xvii. 3) which has nothing in common with the scientific love of inquiry, but is directed to God alone, and is really identical with being in God and God's being in us. And hence came the fundamental Johannine conceptions

of light, life, love, which are not defined in relation to each other, as well as the fusion of theoretical and practical moral meaning in the contrasts of light and darkness, truth and falsehood. Hence, finally, comes the extraordinary absoluteness of judgment in statements such as, "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not known Him," or whosoever believeth hath eternal life, or "our faith is the victory that hath overcome the world." The mystic thinker remaining in his inner world and seeing all phenomena only in their essence, and viewing the things of time under the aspect of eternity, speaks from the standpoint of the idea and not from that of individual perception in world and time. On this inwardness and absolute ideality of view the Johannine Christology finally rests; it is not the human origin of Jesus which occupies the author's mind, but the Divine Being; not the variety of His historical relations, but the character of eternity behind them; and so the Master, with whom he ate and drank, became for him "He that was from the beginning," the "Word which was in the beginning with God" (John i. 1; 1 John ii. 13).

### § 3. THE APOSTLE JOHN

This is not the place to discuss the Johannine question, but we may be allowed to point out how well the character of the doctrinal system in question agrees with what we learn from the New Testament and Church tradition about John the son of Zebedee. That certainly is not much, but it is sufficient to assure us of an uncommon personality of whom we may expect uncommon results, and uncommon in the very direction which is indicated by the peculiarity of this doctrinal system. The synoptic "Son of Thunder," who in the zeal of his love for the Master desires to forbid those exorcists to use the name of Jesus, or wishes to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans who refuse Jesus quarters, reminds us throughout of the writer of the Epistle, who unites the utmost severity against the false teachers with a fatherly cordiality towards those who are one with him in Christ, and the favourite disciple of the fourth Gospel, whose early attraction to the divine led him first into the circle of the Baptist's disciples, and then was allowed to rest on Jesus'

breast as no other was. All this allows us to conjecture the pious student of the Old Testament, who sees in Jesus the complete fulfilment of the law and the prophets, and who finds in close personal affection for Him eternal life already on earth. According to the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Galatians, he enjoyed in the primitive Church an authority equal to that of James and Peter; since, according to the whole tradition of the Church, he owed that neither to the decidedly national type of his Christianity nor to great outward activity like these two, we can scarcely seek the reason of his distinction in anything but the peculiar inwardness of his Christian character. And this agrees with the deep impression which he made upon the Church during his later years which were spent in Ephesus. The fact of this Ephesian sojourn from the days of the Jewish war up to the time of Trajan cannot, according to the testimony of the Church Fathers, be doubted; and this transplantation into Hellenic and Pauline soil must have completed the deliverance of the apostle from Jewish prejudices which had been already begun by his appreciation of the results of Paul's work. We can therefore easily conceive that at the beginning of the Jewish war John brought with him to Ephesus those views about the parousia as at hand which receive an imaginative expression in the Apocalypse; whilst the disillusionment regarding this, which was brought about by the destruction of Jerusalem, and by long years filled with events very unlike what he had expected, led the aged apostle, in reference to the parousia also, to a more inward and spiritual understanding of the words of Jesus, such as is shown in his reproduction of Jesus' ideas of coming again in the farewell discourses of the Gospel. That he lived on in Ephesus into the time of Cerinthus, the author of that docetic Christology which he combats in the first Epistle, is a quite credible tradition; it is a rare but certainly not an unexampled case of intellectual vitality in extreme old age. And if we place his Gospel here as a last and ripest product of the transfiguration of Christ in his heart, as a legacy, composed for the succeeding generation, of the inmost and best which a long life had brought him, the riddle which this incomparable book offers is psychologically solved—which cannot be further expounded here.

## § 4. MODE OF TREATING THE SOURCES

In constructing a Johannine system of doctrine the question arises for biblical theology, How far this Gospel may be made use of, whilst it is regarded as an essentially historical record? We have made use of the sayings of Jesus in it as a secondary source for Jesus' own teaching, and so it seems as if we could only here make use of the prologue and the scattered passages in which the evangelist gives his own views. But in view of the peculiarity of the sayings of Jesus reported by John, which if genuine in substance are at least in form the undeniable production of the evangelist, we must not assume that these sayings contain anything out of harmony with John's own mode of thought. We have traces, it is true, that the distinction of reminiscence and exposition was not quite done away with for the evangelist even in form. He never puts his Logos idea into the mouth of Jesus Himself; he has quoted words of Jesus which ascribe a more immediate relation of God to the world than is shown in the prologue, etc.; and so the sayings of Jesus must always be cautiously used for fixing His own mode of teaching; they are a secondary source, whilst the author's own utterances occupy the first place. As to the division of the doctrinal system, the Christology must form the fundamental article, since it is the expression of the apostle's original experience from which all else has been determined; on this foundation will then be built his doctrine about God, the world, the work of salvation, the Christian life, and the last things.

## CHAPTER II

## THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN

## § 1. FUNDAMENTAL VIEW

The christological thought of the New Testament unquestionably reaches its highest point in John; but it is not essentially different from the other doctrinal systems. Although some, blinded by the prologue of the Gospel, which

seems to favour dogmatic tradition, have sought in John a lofty speculative picture of Christ, it is still an error. John's picture of Christ did not originate in theological speculation, but in the living impression of the historical personality, as that very prologue (ver. 14) attests: "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"; and it is still more emphatically established in the introduction to his Epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; that declare we unto you" (1 John i. 1). But this also excludes the notion that the Johannine Christology, like that of the Church Fathers and the great Councils, starts from the divinity of Christ, and from that passes to His humanity. The converse was the only natural, and indeed the self-evident order. The Jesus who made on the evangelist the impression of being the eternal Word made flesh, was at first for him a man (John viii. 40), the Master from Nazareth, whose father, mother, brothers, and sisters were known to the people and to every disciple (John i. 45, vi. 42, vii. 27). And it would be a complete perversion to suppose that this humanity of Jesus was for John something indifferent or even only apparent. Not only does he prefer, both in the doctrinal and narrative parts of his book, to call Him by His human name Jesus, but we may say that he has made the recognition or denial of the perfect humanity of Jesus the distinguishing point of Christianity and antichristianity. The false teachers of his first Epistle, like those modern teachers who find in Jesus only the historical embodiment of an idea of the Son of God, which was not truly or perfectly realised in Him, represented Jesus only as a temporary embodiment of the heavenly Christ, and thus they taught that the latter had not truly come *ἐν σαρκί*, in a true human nature. To John these are *ἀντίχριστοι* (1 John ii. 8), and he places over against them as the fundamental Christian confession, *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι Χριστόν* (1 John iv. 2).<sup>1</sup> Our study of Jesus' testimony to Himself, according to John, has shown us that the fourth Gospel denies nothing that is

<sup>1</sup> The original text is not "come into the flesh," as Luther inaccurately translated, but "come in the flesh."

innocently human to Jesus, neither hunger nor thirst, weariness nor sadness, suffering nor death, nor struggle of soul, neither the distinction of His will from the divine, nor the exercise of prayer and worship towards God; the Johannine Christ acknowledges all human dependence upon God, and this dependence extends to His state of exaltation (John xiv. 16, 28), nay, on the threshold of that exaltation as the Risen One He still calls the Father His God (John xx. 17). And it is simply not true, what is so often asserted,<sup>1</sup> that John conceived his Christ as omniscient and omnipotent. Wonderful in its extent as His knowledge and His power in John's picture were, yet he had to ask at the grave of Lazarus, "Where have ye laid him?" and He could declare, "I can do nothing of Myself"; and so we cannot say that John represents Him either as omniscient or omnipotent (John v. 19). As in the whole New Testament, so in John, the loftiness and uniqueness of Christ rest on the basis of His human nature; but to him it is not a relative but an absolute uniqueness; Christ is among the children of men the *μονογενής*. First of all, this uniqueness is to him a moral one lying in His perfect sinlessness, *ἀμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* (1 John iii. 5). As Peter does, both in his Epistles and his speeches, John in his Epistle repeatedly accentuates the example of the holiness and righteousness of Jesus; cf. ii. 1: *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δίκαιος*; iii. 3, 7: *πᾶς ὁ ἔχων τὴν ἐλπίδα ταύτην ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ἀγνίζει ἑαυτὸν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος ἀγνός ἐστιν,—ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην δίκαιός ἐστιν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος δίκαιός ἐστιν*. That by this, not metaphysical and divine, but human attributes, which had to be maintained in the conflict of life, are meant, is shown (1 John ii. 6) by the comparison of Jesus' walk with ours; and in itself it cannot be doubtful from what Jesus says of Himself in the Gospel (John v. 30, viii. 29, xv. 10). Now this absolute faultlessness rested, in John's view, on this moral uniqueness, as we have shown from the words of Jesus which he reports, that absolute communion with God, which He describes as a being in the Father, and as a being and dwelling of the Father in Him, from which spring the miraculous works of Jesus as well as His words of life, and all that makes Him the Saviour of the world. "The Father leaves Me not alone

<sup>1</sup> So still Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 340, in text and note.



because I do always the things that are pleasing to Him." "The Father who dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things." "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; the words that I speak, I speak not of Myself." "The Father who sent Me hath given Me commandment what I should speak, and what I should say." "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son also to have life in Himself," etc. That is the fundamental thought of John's Christology, and on it rest those great utterances about Christ which we have to consider more closely; Jesus is *ὁ Χριστός*; Jesus is *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*; Jesus is *ὁ λόγος*, who was in the beginning with God.

## § 2. JESUS THE CHRIST

John repeatedly sums up the Christian confession in the statement, "Jesus is the Christ"; John xx. 31: *ἵνα πιστεύσητε, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός*, 1 Epist. v. 1: *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται*. It is the apostolic and primitive confession in all simplicity which was once made by Peter in a decisive hour, and which corresponds with the expectations of the disciples, based on the Old Testament (John i. 41, 45). It has been maintained that the name "Christ" has not in John, who wrote for Gentile Christians, the sense of primitive Christianity;<sup>1</sup> but this is an error. Nowhere in the New Testament is the Jewish idea of Messiah so frequently made prominent and discussed as in the Fourth Gospel (cf. i. 25, 45, iv. 25, 29, vi. 15, vii. 26, 27, 40, 42, x. 24, etc.). John alone has the Hebraistic name *Μεσσίας*, and translates it twice for his readers (i. 41, iv. 25) into the Greek *ὁ Χριστός*,—a clear sign that he was perfectly conscious of the appellative sense of the latter. In his Epistle and Gospel he repeatedly alludes to the baptism of Jesus (Epist. v. 6; Evang. i. 31–34), and plainly presupposes that there was an actual anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit at the baptism (John iii. 34). The confirmation which is given by this to John's fundamental presupposition of the humanity of

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 338, who converts the "anointed" directly into the eternal Son, that is, into a being in whom anointing with the Holy Spirit would have no more meaning.

Jesus is manifest. To the name of the Anointed are now joined as synonyms, the Holy One of God, the Sent of God, simply, and the Son of Man. The name *ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ* (John vi. 69), according to the right reading, a title of Messiah which appears also in the Synoptists (Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34), describes Jesus as the Chosen of God, chosen to accomplish the greatest work of God on earth, and is echoed in the same sense in the words (John x. 36) in which Jesus defends His right to call Himself God's Son (*ὄν ὁ πατήρ ἡγάσεν καὶ ἀπέστειλεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον*). Even this name presupposes the essential and original affinity of Jesus with humanity, for an individual can only be chosen out of a number of similar individuals. Jesus very frequently describes Himself in the Gospel as the Sent of God simply; most solemnly in the intercessory prayer (xvii. 3). But in the first Epistle we have also an echo of the same idea, which, at any rate, distinguishes Jesus in a genuine way from the God who sends Him (1 John i. 5, iv. 10). It is the superlative of prophetic function which it expresses; Jesus is the perfect Prophet (John iv. 44), through whom God plainly reveals Himself, and announces His whole grace and truth to men (cf. 1 John i. 5, v. 20). The name "Son of Man" is found in John, as in the whole apostolic tradition, only in the mouth of Jesus Himself, and does not therefore come further into consideration here. Just as little does the name *κύριος*; for though John employs it here and there in the Gospel narrative (*e.g.* vi. 23, xi. 2), he does not use it in his Epistle and his teaching.

### § 3. JESUS THE SON OF GOD

The apostle's favourite designation of Jesus when he speaks didactically is *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*. In the mouth of others the expression in John designates Jesus simply as Messiah on the basis of Ps. ii. 7, and the Jewish usage springing from it (John i. 49: *σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*; xi. 27: *σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*); in the mouth of Jesus Himself it signifies the well-beloved of God, to whom the Father intrusts all things, and with whom He stands in the most intimate fellowship and reciprocity (cf. especially John v. 19–26); the two are united in the evangel-

ist's own declarations (John i. 18, xx. 31; 1 John v. 20). Here again the human personality of the "Son," who as such is distinguished from God, is so plainly assumed that John (v. 27) can make it the ground of the distinction of the Son of God, even to the extent of conferring on Him the office of Judge of the world, *ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν*. We have already seen how Jesus Himself in the passage John viii. 34-40, conceives the idea Son of God in the ethical sense of Matt. v. 45, and discusses it throughout the passage x. 34-36 as the designation of an ideal human relation to God. On this line the apostle remains, since he expresses by the name "Son of God" the perfect and absolutely familiar relation of the man Jesus to God the Father, in virtue of which all fellowship with the Father is conditioned by fellowship with the Son (cf. 1 John ii. 23). The addition of *ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς* (John i. 18) to the name Son is expressive in the highest degree; the Son is the Father's bosom friend, who, resting on the heart of the eternal Father, can reveal to us His inmost thoughts and feelings. At the same time, it is one of John's special aims to lay stress on the absolute uniqueness of this relation of the Son. For this reason undoubtedly he avoids what Paul and Jesus Himself did not avoid, the application of the name Son in the plural to believers; he uses instead the word *τέκνα*. But the same endeavour appears still more in the peculiarly Johannine addition to *υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*: *μονογενῆς* (1 John iv. 9; John i. 14, iii. 16). This concept has nothing to do with the trinitarian "eternal generation" of the later Church doctrine; it simply transfers the relation of the only child of human parents (Luke vii. 12) to that of the man Jesus to His heavenly Father. Even in the passage John i. 14, *καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός* (in which the *παρὰ πατρός* seems to belong, not to the *μονογενοῦς*, but to *δόξαν*), it is not the *λόγος ἄσαρκος*, but the historical Christ that is meant by the *μονογενῆς*, whose earthly *δόξα*, as distinguished from His heavenly, can alone be seen, and in whose name the Logos involuntarily disappears as subject from ver. 6 onwards. This connection of *μονογενῆς* with the idea of the human and historical Son is now pretty generally recognised, and it has been justly noted that the apostle would

have felt no need of designating the pre-existent Christ with the name Logos, if he had regarded the concept "only-begotten Son" as signifying a pre-existent being from the first.<sup>1</sup> This original meaning does not, of course, hinder him from thinking of the "Only-begotten" as pre-existent, once the pre-existence idea is prepared; for he does this even with the historical "Jesus" (John xii. 41); but this only dates back a human and historical person into eternity, it does not—as the matter is usually regarded—bring down a superhuman and divine person into humanity and time. And this is not changed by the addition *ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς* which is made to *υἱὸς μονογενῆς* in John i. 18; for that does not mean: "He who (from eternity) was in the bosom of the Father," not even what the logic of the thought forbids: "He who now as the Exalted One is in the bosom of the Father" (=at the right hand of God); but since the object is to show how Christ could reveal to us the invisible God, the meaning must be: "He who (always essentially), resting on the heart of the heavenly Father, is the confidant of God the Father, just as the favourite disciple resting on the Master's bosom (xiii. 23) is the confidant of Jesus." The peculiar "glory" of the Only-begotten of which John i. 14 speaks, *καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξα ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας*, is to the apostle rooted in this relation of communion with the Father. This is not the glory He had with the Father before the world was (John xvii. 5), the kingly glory of the Exalted, but the glory which lies at its basis, which illumined Him already on earth, and which He could communicate to His people here below (John xvii. 22), the glory of the perfect revelation of God, the fulness of the "grace and truth" which is communicated in Him, as is expressly stated; the glory of His miracles (ii. 11) is so far reckoned with it, as it is the actual and symbolical revelation of this very grace and truth. From all this it could not surprise us if the apostle designated the Only-begotten as *θεός*, and he does so by the mouth of Thomas (John xx. 28); but it must not be forgotten that the usage of the Old Testament did not refuse this name even to the king. On the other hand, the reading *μονογενῆς θεός* in John i. 18,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Weiss, *l.c.* p. 609.

though well attested, is on internal grounds very improbable immediately after *θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε*. And I hold it to be quite impossible to refer the *οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεὸς καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος* in John v. 20 to Him who is immediately before named Son, instead of to the Father, who has twice before been designated *ἀληθινός*. The same apostle who makes Jesus describe the Father (John xvii. 3) as the *μόνος ἀληθινὸς θεός*, could not so directly contradict himself as to assert alongside of *μόνος ἀληθινὸς θεός* a second *ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός*.

#### § 4. JESUS THE WORD WHO WAS IN THE BEGINNING

John certainly traced back the person of Jesus to the eternal life and being of the personal God. *Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, κ.τ.λ.* (John i. 1–3). That is not a speculation about God's relation to the world with the view of mediating the transition from the infinite to the finite; it is the highest and profoundest formula in which the apostle can express the being of Christ. The Logos is the most expressive name which he can give to Jesus, and he offers it as the key to the understanding of his narrative about Jesus. The whole plan of the prologue confirms that. In a few brief statements, which will be explained in connection with his doctrine of God and of creation, the evangelist hastens over the statement of the Logos idea, in order, from ver. 6, to advance to the coming of the Logos into the world, introduced by the mission of the Baptist, that is, to the appearance of Jesus and His reception and effect (vv. 6–13), and then, in a third section (vv. 14–18), to emphasise his own and his fellow-apostles', and even his teacher, the Baptist's, personal experience of the incomparable fact of revelation. Now the declaration, Jesus of Nazareth is the Word who was in the beginning, through whom God created the world, is certainly most strange to our thought, and this surprise is only removed by the knowledge of the definite religious meaning which the idea of the divine creative word (Gen. i. 3) had won before the days of John. It should no longer be called in question that the idea of the Logos in this religious

significance, repeatedly alluded to by us, lies at the basis of the prologue of his Gospel. It is unnatural to suppose that the apostle took from the Old Testament the idea of the creative word of God in order to apply it to Jesus. What, then, had Jesus to do with the creative word of God, which is conceived in the history of creation and in the Psalms as the origin of all created existence? Even an apostle does not sit on a spiritual insulator of such a kind, that he must coin afresh from the raw material an idea which the surrounding world of culture has already fashioned. The "Logos" of John is simply one of many forms in which the idea of a hypostatised principle of divine revelation is found in the Old Testament Hagiographa and Apocrypha, in the Chaldean Paraphrases, etc., and is, as we saw, applied already by Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, to Jesus' person; and if John has not begun with the idea of wisdom, or of the likeness or glory of God, but with that of the divine creative word, that is just because this variant of the idea, current in Jewish Christian thinking, was the one most suited to his taste. He could hardly be led to this choice by the Alexandrian Philo, whose Hellenised Logos, half-stoical reason and half-biblical word, forming the world, moreover, out of matter, not calling it forth from nothing, has little in common with the Johannine. Philo did not invent the Logos idea, but found it in existence and gave it a form of his own. John also took it from the common tradition of Jewish theology in a much more simple, more informal way, and for a far different use. We shall not here again repeat what we have already remarked in Paul and others as to the way in which this theological idea of a real self-revelation of God, and the fact of the appearance and personality of Jesus, seemed to attract one another. To whom could the idea that the eternal self-revelation of God had appeared bodily in Jesus have been more evident than to John? This Jesus who could say, "He that seeth Me seeth the Father," was indeed the divine self-revelation in person. And what a light did this knowledge pour on the whole relation of God and the world! It was the same divine thought of love which at the beginning created the world, and which now in Christ poured over it all its fulness. It was the same eternal light

of God's revelation which sends a ray into every human heart by nature, and which finally arose in Christ as the sun in the heaven of history in order to kindle what was only a spark into a strong light in the soul, and thus overcome all indwelling darkness (John i. 4, 5, 9).

### § 5. PRE-EXISTENCE AND TRUE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

The pre-existence of the person of Jesus was for the apostle implied in the application to it of the Logos idea, and thus was created the often-discussed problem of the compatibility of this notion with the belief in a true human nature and development of the Saviour. Not that the Logos idea first led the apostle to the notion of an eternal existence of Christ. According to his Gospel it is probable that Jesus' own words, in which He had expressed a consciousness of eternity (viii. 58, xvii. 5, 24), awoke the idea in him. Even without the co-operation of the Logos idea it was not, as already remarked at an earlier part of this work, remote from Jewish thought to conceive the Messiah—like the tabernacle, the city of Jerusalem, and all genuine holy things on earth—as having descended from heaven. The two passages already discussed, in which John regards Jesus simply as “the Son of Man,” as pre-existent (John iii. 13, vi. 62), specially favour such a genesis of his notion of pre-existence. The Book of Enoch also conceived the Messiah as pre-existent Son of Man, and even the passage in Dan. vii. 13, by making the Son of Man appear first in the clouds of heaven, and there be invested with dominion of the world before He could set up the same on earth, led to the same conclusion. But all this obtained in the Logos idea its confirmation; only as the Word from the beginning, by which God created the world, was Jesus in the strict sense what the apostle (1 John ii. 13, 14) calls Him, *ὁ ἄπ' ἀρχῆς*. The concept word in itself does not yield the notion of a person; but this notion was already produced by the personification of the creative word, which rested on a defective theory of personality; and to an imaginative thinker such as our apostle it was completely given by the identification of this creative word with a living historical personality. After the introduction to his Gospel,

as well as the passage (xii. 41) in which He applies to Jesus the glory of God which appeared to Isaiah, it will not be contested that he imagined the pre-existent Christ as a person distinct from God, though also Godlike. But though the Church Fathers and Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries built on this Johannine account their artificial system of the two natures, and though modern theologians still build on it dogmatic castles, endeavouring to settle by an elaborate Kenotic theory the contradiction between a personal existence before time and a human birth and development, there was nothing of this in the mind of John. He is as little conscious as Paul and the other New Testament representatives of the Logos Christology of difficulties and contradictions which his idea of pre-existence puts in the way of the anthropocentric presupposition of his Christology; and this is due to the fact that he did not construct his Christology from the ideas of pre-existence and the Logos, he simply availed himself of the idea of the Logos to give his Christology a place in heaven, in eternity. To speak more plainly, the Logos idea is not to him the revealed foundation of his idea of Christ—that is rather his *ἑθεασάμεθα*, the personal impression of the human and historical Jesus; but he regards it as a help which he takes from the theology of his time to interpret that personal impression for his own thought and that of his contemporaries. And he had just as little consciousness as his New Testament predecessors that the imperfections inseparable from all human theology would adhere to this theologoumenon, which was called in as a help to the further prosecution of theological thought, and that from it would spring the well-known and variously-discussed christological difficulties. But it is not difficult to prove that he nowhere overrates the value of that borrowed help of his Christology, and still less has made it the basis of his doctrine of Christ. He does indeed begin his Gospel with the Logos idea, but at its close he is satisfied with having shown that *Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*. He calls Jesus *τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*; but he can express what he means by that, the eternal self-revelation of God which appeared in Him personally, just as well impersonally in the neuter: *ὁ ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* (1 John i. 1). The idea of the Logos is to him, as



a plain, biblical thinker, so elastic that he can exchange it in the prologue itself for τὸ φῶς, and in the introduction to his Epistle for ἡ ζωή; while, according to John i. 4, the ζωή was in the Logos and was τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, the Logos itself is in vv. 5-9 τὸ φῶς; and the same is declared of the ζωή (αἰώνιος) in 1 John i. 2 as is said of the Logos in the prologue, that "He was with the Father, and was manifested to us." This is clear evidence that we have here not a distinct dogmatic, and that the point with the author, in the idea formulated now one way and now another, was not so much the element of personality as rather what forms the eternal content of the historical appearance of Jesus, the divine self-revelation (φῶς) and self-communication (ζωή). But the traditional dogmatic use of the Johannine prologue meets with its most decided check in the distinctest proposition of that prologue, ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. Apart from the fact that this proposition only appears in ver. 14, while mention is made of the historical Christ in ver. 9, it does not really contain the incarnation which orthodox expositors seek in it. The concept σὰρξ, that is, the sensuous living substance (cf. John iii. 6, vi. 63), cannot possibly represent here the concept man, where the point is that the historical personality of Jesus reached its climax in the human πνεῦμα. But even a proposition partially expressing the orthodox idea, "He took upon Him a sensuous nature," is not here; ἐγένετο does not mean *assumpsit*, but *existit, factus est*. The only idea which the words, when pressed in the interests of dogmatic, can yield, that the personal Logos transformed Himself into flesh, into sensuous substance, is simply absurd, even in the sense of the evangelist himself, for "it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63). We must accommodate ourselves to the absolutely undogmatic, unscholastic, and popular mode of expression of the evangelist, which here reveals to us the fisherman of the Sea of Genezareth. What he means to say is simply this: the eternal self-revelation of God became (in Jesus) an object of sensuous perception, so that we disciples could see it with our eyes and handle it with our hands. There is no mention here of an "incarnation" or "kenosis"; these ideas are only imported into the text. From all this those will come nearest the christological

meaning of the apostle, who, in taking into account the awkwardness of an unskilled thinker who makes use of a theological idea of his time, understand him thus: In Jesus of Nazareth there appeared personally the self-revelation and self-communication of God; in Him it entered into a human life; so that we may certainly speak of its Godlike character, though we do not mean that a divine was added to a human or a human to a divine personality, but the divine character more closely describes the peculiarity of the human personality. At anyrate, John did not find the condition of being or not being a Christian is this or that formulation of the divinity of Christ, but in the belief that that divine force of life and character, which he describes as *λόγος, φῶς, ζωή*, belonged to a true human personality as its inmost property (cf. 1 John iv. 2). For all docetic theories about Christ, all degrading of His humanity to a mere appearance veiling a divine person, annuls the real entrance of the divine life and being into humanity; and if Christ is not of us, a true member of our race, then what is His is not ours, but Godhead and humanity are separated by the same distance as before.

## CHAPTER III

### GOD AND THE WORLD

#### § 1. THE NEW IDEA OF GOD

John saw God truly only in the face of Jesus Christ, and no man can be more penetrated than he was by the consciousness that through Jesus a new knowledge of God, nay, the only true knowledge of God, has come into the world. "We know," he says (1 John v. 20), "that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we should know Him that is true." Before this knowledge of God in Christ everything that is narrated in the Old Testament of a seeing of God by Moses and the prophets grows pale. "No man hath seen God at any time," it is said (John i. 18) in bold contradiction of such narratives; "the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him." This

new knowledge of God is most simply expressed in the name of God as Father, which, in confirmation of what we have learned about the Johannine Christology, is nowhere narrower in its extent than the name  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ , so as to leave room for a God the Son beside a God the Father; it coincides throughout with  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  (cf. Gosp. xvii. 3, or i. 1, with 1 Epist. i. 2), and gives to the idea of God the character of eternal love made manifest. Therefore he who knows not Christ may know something about God (Gosp. i. 9, vi. 45), but he only has the Father, that is, the God of eternal love, who confesses the Son (1 Epist. ii. 23). Of course the Father belongs, first and foremost, to the only-begotten Son, and only for His sake to His disciples (Gosp. xx. 17); but even here the idea of relation is developed into that of nature. John almost always uses the name Father for God, simply as a designation of nature (specially characteristic in 2 Epist. ver. 3:  $\tau\omicron\upsilon$   $\nu\iota\omicron\upsilon$   $\tau\omicron\upsilon$   $\pi\alpha\tau\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ). But what blessed knowledge this new and perfect name of God contains for him, he tells in his peculiar way by applying to God his favourite conception, God is light, life, and love.

## § 2. GOD IS LIGHT

In the proclamation that "God is light" is comprehended (1 Epist. i. 5) the whole joyful message of Jesus: "This is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." But what does that mean? The light-nature of God is usually applied to His holiness, and the words immediately following are appealed to in favour of that ("if we walk in the darkness—if we walk in the light, as He is in the light"). But it has been objected, not without reason, to this interpretation, that the New Testament, and still less the whole of the Gospel, could not possibly be found in the holiness of God, which was already emphatically taught in the Old Testament. But the explanation urged in place of this, "God has become altogether knowable, so that there remains in Him nothing dark, unknowable,"<sup>1</sup> is still less satisfactory. The statement does not say that God has become light for us, but that He

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 353.

is light in Himself, and the gospel of Christ can neither be comprehended in the abstract knowableness of God, nor does that idea suggest the deduction of walking in the light or in the darkness. This manifestly requires an ethical meaning for light, although one should not be content with the merely negative sense of the holiness of God, but should fix attention on its positive fulfilment, the pure and perfect goodness of God, which, in point of fact (according to Matt. v. 45-48, xix. 17), forms the peculiar content of Jesus' idea of God, and therefore, rightly understood, is the summary of His gospel. God is light, and in Him is no darkness. That is the same idea which James expresses (i. 17) in the words, "Every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of turning." God is the eternally good, the ethically perfect being. Against this it could only perhaps be objected that light and to enlighten have in John, besides the practical ethical sense, also a theoretical sense. But as the good is always the communicative, that which asserts and reveals itself, the above explanation of the nature of God as light does justice even on this side to the figurative conception. Just because God is the simply good, He does not hide Himself from us, but lets His light lighten us, and enlightens us with His good and holy Spirit. Still less to the point is the objection, that in the ethical comprehension God is light, the negative repetition of the idea, and in Him is no darkness, becomes an unmeaning and almost blasphemous tautology.<sup>1</sup> Then James would have spoken unmeaningly and almost blasphemously when he added to the designation of God as the Author alone of good, as the Father of heavenly lights, the assurance that with Him is no change, no alternation of lightening and darkening. On the contrary, in contrast with the unspeakably many dark, evil, and terrible things which surround existence, it is a most necessary and comforting assurance that nothing of this comes from the heart of God, that it is perfectly foreign to His nature. And in point of fact, the idea that in spite of all the evil that is in the world, God is yet the absolutely good, and reveals and proves Himself to be such, may be asserted with John as the summary

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 353, note 2.

of the whole gospel of Jesus. Now, because God in this sense is light, so also is His element the truth, an idea which to John is as inseparable from the light as the rays are from the sun. ἀλήθεια is to him not this and that worldly and finite truth, but the truth of God, the revelation of God as the eternally good, who, as such, is open-hearted to the world, has nothing to hide, and hides nothing from it, but gives Himself as He is. Thus may be understood the character, both intellectual and ethical, of this conception in relation to God as well as to man. The divine ἀλήθεια is, according to the example of the Old Testament, אֱמֶת אֱלֹהִים, the sister of χάρις (Gosp. i. 14), for every revelation of God is a revelation of holy love. And it is given to man, that they may know it (Gosp. viii. 32) as well as walk in it, or, as it is said, do the truth (Gosp. iii. 21; Epist. i. 6). This relation of ideas makes it clear that ἐν φωτὶ περιπατεῖν and ἐν ἀληθείᾳ περιπατεῖν (1 John i. 7; 2 John ver. 3; 3 John ver. 4), or ἐξ ἀληθείας εἶναι (John xviii. 37), and, on the other hand, ἐν σκοτίᾳ περιπατεῖν and ψεύστην εἶναι (1 John ii. 11 and 4), are synonymous.

### § 3. GOD IS LIFE

John designates God as life, that is, the true eternal life, in the closing proposition of his first Epistle: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεὸς καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος. That these words cannot apply to the Son of God, who is named immediately before, because of the absolute contradiction which would then arise with John xvii. 3, we have already noted. But even the train of thought leads throughout to God Himself as subject. "The Son of God," it is said, "is come, and has given us an understanding, that we should know Him that is true; and be in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Manifestly the words refer to the knowledge and communion of the true God in contrast with idols. That the οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός can only refer to Him who is twice before called ὁ ἀληθινός, that is, the God whose Son Jesus Christ is, and that the ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ is only a remark thrown in to remind us that one can only be "in" the true

God by means of His Son, is as clear as possible. But what is meant by saying that this true God whom we have in Christ is eternal life? It will scarcely be necessary to refute here again a misinterpretation of *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, which we had already to reject in the discussion of the Johannine words of Jesus, and which makes eternal life denote the knowledge of God. The statement, "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments," is no more meant to be an explanation of the idea of God's love than the statement of the intercessory prayer, "this is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God," is meant to be an explanation of the idea of eternal life; in both cases we can only maintain an inseparable connection between love and keeping the commandments, between life and the knowledge of God. Or how could it be said of the Father with this explanation of the idea (John v. 26), He has life in Himself, or (1 John i. 2), the life was from the beginning with the Father? or how could Jesus say at the grave of Lazarus, I am the resurrection and the life? could that be translated into: the resurrection and the knowledge of God? But least of all can the passage 1 John v. 20, if it applies to God, be translated, this is the true God, and the knowledge of God. God is eternal life, that is to say: He is its source, it can only be found in communion with Him; for that reason He is *ἀλήθινος θεός* as distinguished from the dead idols. This simplest and most natural explanation is confirmed by the opposite idea, John's idea of death. Just as God's character of light is contrasted with the intellectual and ethical darkness which prevails wherever men refuse to be enlightened by it, so His character of life is contrasted with the moral and spiritual death which prevails wherever men reject the fellowship of God's life (cf. 1 John iii. 14). Nay, as the ideas light and life are synonymous even in the Old Testament, so also in John they cannot be separated in their application to God and to the works of God in man. Both are descriptions of the whole nature of God, but from different sides; the eternally Good One is described as light more from the side of His self-revelation; as life, He is described from the side of His self-communication; in the former He enlightens and sanctifies, in the latter He quickens and makes blessed; but both are inseparable, as Jesus calls

Himself light and life, and condenses the two ideas into one in the promise that he who follows Him "shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12).

#### § 4. GOD IS LOVE

The third designation of the divine nature is also not strictly marked off from the other two: "God is love" (1 John iv. 8). Love is, in fact, goodness revealing itself, life communicating itself. But this third designation, *ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν*, is both the deepest and the most ethically perfect; it is the best exposition of the name Father. If we desire to distinguish we may say that as God enlightens and sanctifies as light, reanimates and makes blessed as life, so He redeems and saves as love. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 16). But it also lies in the nature of the Eternal Love to reveal and sanctify, to renew and make blessed, so that this has justly been always recognised as the most perfect expression of the Christian idea of God. The whole of Christianity may be, as in point of fact it is by John (1 Epist. iv. 8-12), developed from this idea; God the eternal love, Christ the infinite divine proof of love, who is to constrain the heart of man to a responsive love to God and to his brethren for God's sake; that is everything of importance. But especially all that appears in John about the divine attributes is deduced from the idea of the divine nature of love. God is the Holy One according to 1 John ii. 20 (cf. Gosp. xvii. 11), and proves that by giving to believers the anointing, that is, His Holy Spirit. As ethically perfect, the eternal love must be a holy love, that is, must guard itself against every mixture of evil; this holy self-preservation, however, does not annul love's gift of itself, but only marks its character as a sanctifying gift. By communicating Himself in His Holy Spirit, God so communicates Himself that all sinful existence is consumed by His love. Next to the holiness of God comes into prominence, in 1 John i. 9, His faithfulness and righteousness. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The

righteousness of God is here set forth in the most remarkable way, correcting the current idea of penal righteousness. It is united intimately with His faithfulness, and not punishment, but forgiveness of sin in connection with moral cleansing, that is, the justifying and sanctifying procedure of God, is traced back to it. So far, then, is God's righteousness from standing in opposition to His love, that it is here thought of as an outflow of this holy love. God is faithful, keeping His word, and always the same in His goodness, so that even our sins cannot disturb Him in His goodness; they are rather reasons for His helping us out of them if we only reach out our hand to Him for this end. He is righteous, morally true and right; He gives to every one his own, not, however, according to the standard of abstract justice, but of holy love; and thus gives also to the penitent his own, viz. forgiveness, but not forgiveness without cleansing, for they are really one before it. This is the biblical idea of the divine righteousness as we have already found it in Rom. iii. 5, 25, 26, but which lies before us in our present passage more clearly than in any other in the New Testament, and which excludes every idea of a conflict of grace and righteousness in God. We have the same purely ethical conception of righteousness in the passage 1 John ii. 29, whether it refer to God or to Christ: *ἐὰν εἰδῆτε, ὅτι δίκαιός ἐστιν, γινώσκετε, ὅτι καὶ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται.* The doing of righteousness therefore, not the being pronounced righteous, is what makes us of one class with the righteous God or Christ, and therefore righteousness cannot be a merely judicial attribute, but the summary of moral rightness in God as in man.

### § 5. GOD AND THE WORLD

The Logos idea brings a theological element into this purely religious and biblical doctrine of God; its motive is certainly not in speculation but in Christology, but it comes into close connection with the idea of God and the world. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and



without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John i. 1-4). First of all we must make some exegetic notes on these celebrated words. The want of the article shows that in the statement (ver. 1) *καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος*, the *θεὸς* is accentuated predicate, not subject; a different interpretation would yield an absurdity. The *ἐν ἀρχῇ* (Gen. i. 1), for which, according to 1 John i. 1, *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* might have stood, describes, of course, the immemorial point, the "before the world was" (xvii. 5); a philosophic writer would have said from eternity. Inner divine relations are not to be subtilised out of the *ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν*, of which John was not thinking, and *πρός*, which is used in 1 John i. 2 to describe the original relation of the *ζωή* to the Father, might have been just as well exchanged with *παρὰ τῷ θεῷ* or *πατρί* (cf. *παρὰ σοί* in xvii. 5, and *ἡμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς* in Mark xiv. 49); it is meant to express, in opposition to the appearance of the Logos or the *ζωή* to be afterwards emphasised, His being revealed in the creation of the world and in the appearance of Jesus (1 John i. 2: *καὶ ἐφανερώθη ἡμῖν*), the original "being with God," that is, the resting of the Word in God. To understand "with" in the sense of beside, that is, outside God, would be absolutely unsuited to the relation of the *ζωή* to the Father, who is Himself *ζωή*, while the *ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν* manifestly goes back to the *λέγειν πρὸς ἑαυτόν = λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ*.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the idea is that God from eternity has had about Him, that is, has had in Himself, a word which was a perfect expression of His own Divine Being; that this word, this expression of His Being, lies at the basis of creation in all its parts, and that it is the bearer of a divine self-communication (*ζωή*) to the created world, and especially the bearer of His self-communication (*φῶς*) to men. Without forgetting the origin of these ideas in the theology of the time, or the non-theological character of this preacher of them, we cannot but admire their simple sublimity. Everything here is carried back to the word, to the idea of the eternal Spirit uttering Himself, and therewith becoming operative. It is the thought of the personal God, self-conscious and possessed of will, with which

<sup>1</sup> In the same way as in German "es steht bei mir" (it lies with me) expresses not a being "beside me," but a being in me of the deciding power.

the thought of the Christian herald begins ; and this thought in God is not merely an idea of the world, but of Himself (therefore *θεὸς πρὸς τὸν θεόν*), which he lays at the basis of everything, and only thus it becomes the idea of the world, a world which is to become the image of the eternal glory of God. How infinitely does this view of the world stand above so much that is called modern views of the world ! On the other hand, we must not overlook how the Logos idea, as used by John, reveals itself as, in point of form, a foreign element borrowed from the theology of the time, which biblical thinkers received into the world of their revealed ideas. For the presupposition of that idea is that God in Himself is to be conceived as dwelling apart from the world in solitary state, and can only become creative and connected with the world by a medium which is to be distinguished from Him ; but all John's ideas of God, light, life, love, already include in God's essence the self-revealing impulse, that is, they already contain the real substance of the Logos idea, and at the same time they formally exclude it as superfluous. Accordingly, the relation of God to the world is nowhere represented by John, apart from the passages i. 1-4, xii. 41, as brought about by the Logos, as it logically must be, but as throughout an immediate one. "My Father worketh hitherto," exclaims Jesus (John v. 17), "and I work." The Father "draweth men to the Son" (John vi. 44); the Father "teacheth all men" before they know the Son (John vi. 45); He "raises the dead" (John v. 21), etc. We see how little speculative this writer is ; he borrows a single speculative idea, but, as already stated, he does so only as a help for his Christology ; he takes it as a rudimentary basis of his theology and cosmology, but he does not carry it out. His simple biblical and religious thinking comes out even without this idea, which remains half foreign to him.

## § 6. THE WORLD

In the prologue of the Gospel, then, the Logos idea forms the bridge from God to the world. The word "world" has a threefold sense in John which we have in some measure side by side in the passage John i. 10 : *ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ*

*κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.* First, ὁ κόσμος is the whole creation, as in xvii. 5 (*πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι*), and in this sense it is said with reference to the Logos: ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο. But κόσμος is much more frequently the human world in particular, as when Jesus says to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth" (John xviii. 37), where the concept "world"—as frequently in the Gospel—touches on that of public life (cf. John xvii. 18). In this sense it is said (John i. 9, 10), that was the true light about to enter the world when the Baptist appeared; or it "was in the world," that is not; the Logos was in the creation, but Jesus was on the point of entering into the historical world, or was already present. With that, then, is connected the third sense in which "the world" designates humanity in its opposition to God, as when it is said, they (my disciples) are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (John xvii. 16). That is the "world" which, according to John i. 10, knew not the Logos who appeared in it. The relation of God to the world must be more closely considered in these three stages. In the most general sense, as the universe, the world is God's work, it has originated through His real word (Gen. i. 1-3; John i. 3). That is to say, it is throughout the expression of the divine idea and the production of the divine will. The *χωρὶς αὐτοῦ γέγονεν οὐδὲ ἐν, ὃ γέγονεν* does not formally and of necessity exclude the assumption of an eternal matter, since it might be said that an eternal *ἕλη* is not *γεγονός*; yet the author only meant to express what for him was self-evident, the biblical creation out of nothing, and it is mere caprice to substitute for it the contrary Philonic doctrine which he by no means indicates. But he did not suppose that the created world was at once the finished divine ideal, the perfected realisation of the thought of God determined on in the Logos; it is only the sketch, the foundation of this; it is left to be a growth, a history which stands under the control of the Logos, just as its creation. Therefore the prologue continues; *ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν* (or *ἔστιν*),<sup>1</sup> *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.* That is,

<sup>1</sup> The Tischendorf reading *ἔστιν* is the more probable, as the recepta *ἦν* may be suspected of being a copy of the following: *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς.*

God placed in the Logos the fulness of His life, His self-communication, which He intended for the world, in order to make it in the full sense of the word His kingdom, but which can only be really appropriated by a moral and reasonable process, by a history of the world (that is, humanity). And thus out of the wider sense of the *κόσμος* springs the narrower, that of the world of men; it is in humanity made after God's image, the reasonable moral creation, that the eternal thought of God can first be fully realised. Hence the disclosure of a reasonable and moral process of development is emphasised in the words: *καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων*; the divine fulness of life placed in the Logos began its self-communication by way of revelation, by enlightening the reason and the conscience, and it does so till this moment. But the divine intention of love lying in this is not reached without more ado. The next words of the prologue set alongside of the fact of the continuous shining of divine light, the fact of an opposition to it in the world which rejects the divine enlightenment: *καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν*. That the *σκοτία* appearing here cannot be a physico-metaphysical power, the dark power of matter, but only an ethico-historical one, is clear from the context, for it finds utterance, not in the setting up of the universe (ver. 3), but only in the province of humanity, introduced in ver. 4. It is sin, the contrast to the eternal goodness of the God whose nature is light, which is here introduced as a fact plainly opposed to God, as surely as light and darkness are mutually exclusive (cf. 1 John i. 5); and at the same time it is a fact so mighty that it hinders the penetration of the divine light into the world; "the darkness (that is, those ruled by it, those who are found in it) received it not,"—the same idea which Paul expresses (Rom. i. 18): *ἀνθρώπων τὴν ἀληθείαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων*. In virtue of this darkness which fills it, the world which remains the object of the eternal love (John iii. 16) becomes the sum of all ungodliness of which 1 John ii. 15, 16 can say: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is

The difference of reading makes no essential difference in the idea, since in any case the Logos is conceived as an abiding bearer of the *ζωή*.

not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

### § 7. SIN AND DEVIL

We may ask as to the nature and origin of this darkness which rules the world. The first Epistle especially gives hints about the nature of sin. It seems that this Epistle had to do with a weakened notion of sin on the part of its readers, and that in presence of relaxed efforts in Christian life, the freedom of the Christian from the law was misunderstood and abused. For the apostle (v. 17) emphasises not only that every *ἀδικία*, every offence against God's moral order, is also *ἁμαρτία*, but he traces back the idea of sin directly to *ἀνομία*: *πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ, καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία* (iii. 4).<sup>1</sup> Hence sin has its being in moral disorder, in the transgression of the divine law, the essential content of which, as is again and again emphasised, is the love of God and of the brethren. As a special form of *ἀνομία*, the apostle first of all brings into prominence the lust of the world, and especially in those palpable manifestations of it which the surrounding heathen world presented: "lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and pride of life," that is, unchastity, covetousness, and luxury. And of these manifestations of forgetfulness of God, he speaks the stern words of 1 John ii. 15, 16: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"; that is, whoever in this way attaches himself to the evil conditions and customs of the ungodly society, in him there is no room for the love of God. But these are to him neither the only nor the worst manifestations of sin. Behind the sins of sensuality lurks a deeper principle of selfishness, and this has other and distincter forms in which it shows itself, such as lying and hatred. In them the full hostility of sin to God is first made clear; God is the God of truth, of honesty and

<sup>1</sup> We should, perhaps, if *ἀνομία* was a catchword abused by the readers, rather expect the reverse proposition, that every *ἀνομία* is also *ἁμαρτία*. But the conception before us corresponds to the tendency of John, which we see also elsewhere, to fight perverse things indirectly rather than directly.

fidelity; but sin is deceitful. God is the God of love, and as such the dispenser of life; but sin hates, and thus it is in disposition a murderer. If, therefore, the nature of God is light, the nature of sin is darkness, darkening reason and conscience; and if the nature of God is life, the nature of sin is "death," that is, destruction of body and soul (cf. 1 John i. 5, 6, ii. 8-11, 21, 22, 27, iii. 13, 15). In pursuance of this hostility of sin to God the apostle seems to come to its origin, to trace it back, viz. to the devil: *ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν* (1 John iii. 8). He traces back lying and hatred especially to the devil, the liar and murderer from the beginning (John viii. 44), while sins of sensuality are designated in the passage quoted above as being only *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου*. When he now says of the devil that he *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἁμαρτάνει* (iii. 8), and for that reason designates the doer of sin, especially the servants of deceit and hatred, as "of the devil," that manifestly rests on the history of the fall, in which the serpent, that is, according to the later Jewish conception, the devil (Rev. xii. 9), makes the beginning of sin by seducing man with lies, and delivering him into the hands of death. But John does not go beyond this biblical allusion; he asserts no original evil being, for the *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* cannot be referred to the beginning of the devil, but only to the beginning of human history. He does not relate to us any myth of an original good angel, who became a devil through a fall before that of man. He makes no attempt to explain to us how it has happened that the world created by God through the Logos, notwithstanding the continuous divine government, "lies at present wholly in the wicked one" (1 John v. 19). The devil to him is simply a fact, as sin is a fact; he is the *πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης*, who, according to 1 John iv. 6, confronts the *πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας* in the world, the spirit of selfishness, of hatred, and of deceit, the uniform principle of destruction which exists in the world, and possesses such great power in it that it can and must be described as *ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου* (John xii. 31, xvi. 11). That the apostle has conceived this evil spirit of the world, whose existence and power no ethical thinker can deny, as a person, was natural to him, but in no way binds us. But the idea of Satan here gives no further explanation of the origin of evil than that it is

absolutely opposed to God, and so is not in any way derived from God.

### § 8. PRE-CHRISTIAN REVELATION OF GOD

By all this the apostle did not mean that the light of the Logos effects absolutely nothing in the darkness of this world, that God does not rule the world in spite of the *ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*. Sin has not stopped God from having access to the heart of man. The Logos, it is said (John i. 9), "lightens every man" by kindling in him, that is to say, the light of reason and of conscience; or if we speak without reference to the Logos idea, God speaks to every man, and somehow teaches him, even before he comes to know Christ (John vi. 44, 45). And as man is free to listen to this divine voice or not (vi. 45), the distinction of pious and godless among men, without regard to actual committed sin, could be made from the beginning, the type of which is given in the primitive story of Cain and Abel (1 John iii. 12). And further, in the many points at which the Logos touched humanity, which formed a long chain of historical developments, it created for itself a special home in the world, such as John i. 11 describes in the phrase *τὰ ἴδια* (*εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν*), a place of special historical revelation in a chosen people (*οἱ ἴδιοι*). Here, on the soil of the old covenant, men of God have been able to foretell the highest thoughts of God's love. Abraham rejoiced to see the day of blessing promised in his name to all nations (John viii. 56); Moses wrote and spoke of the Messiah; Isaiah in vision saw His glory (John xii. 41); John the Baptist became its first witness, and the friend of the Bridegroom (John i. 6, 15, 29, iii. 27 f.). John's view of the Old Testament as the Holy Scriptures which cannot be broken,—a view which, of course, above all refers to prophecy, but in which the law has its place (cf. John i. 17, v. 45, vii. 17, 23),—is thus seen as indicated in the wide historical consideration of the prologue. And yet the end of the matter is: "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." All these are stars which shine in the night, not suns to give the world the light of life. And the Logos has His saddest experience among His own people. When in the person of Jesus of Nazareth

He comes to His own, His own receive Him not (John i. 11). And He finds not only that they, with the whole world, do not recognise Him, they love the darkness rather than the light; they even hate the light which makes manifest their evil works, and in this murderous hate they undertake to extinguish and destroy it (John iii. 19, 20); and this experience is afterwards repeated in His messengers (John xv. 18-25). On the other hand, these messengers have frequently a wholly different experience in the Gentile world; in it they come upon a true susceptibility for the divine, upon men who, even before they heard the gospel, sought and surmised that which it announced to them; and the result of this experience, which Jesus had predicted, and which John no doubt abundantly realised, coming as he did after Paul, was that the historical contrast of Judaism and heathenism gave place to another and more inward contrast whose lines ran athwart the first, the distinction of the man who seeks God and the man who is opposed to God, in both parts of the religious history of the old world.

#### § 9. PRE-CHRISTIAN DISTINCTION IN THE POSITION TOWARDS GOD

The distinction of two classes of men which runs through the Johannine words of Jesus, those who are from above, who are of the truth and do the truth, and therefore belong to the flock of Jesus though they do not know Him; and those who are from beneath, who do evil, and so are like the primæval liar and murderer, and are therefore incapable of hearing Jesus and believing in Him,—this distinction is most closely formulated in 1 John iii. 10, "Children of God and children of the devil" (cf. ver. 12, where the example of Cain and Abel exhibits the contrast as already existing before Christian times). In the discussion of the Johannine words of Jesus, we have already proved that there is no reference here to a metaphysical opposition excluding the free self-determination of man. But apart from this the strict contrast must seem strange to us. The reflection of the evangelist (John xi. 52) confirms the opinion that he is aware of pre-Christian "children of God," not merely in the Old Testament, but



scattered in the heathen world ; and when, in iii. 20, he makes such heathen children of God "do the truth, and do their works in God," all this seems to exceed the amount of recognition of nobility and piety in ancient heathendom which we regard as possible from the Christian standpoint ; it seems to make not merely the distinction of heathenism and Judaism, but also that of heathenism and Christianity, a matter of indifference. But that, as is evident from the first in our author, is only in appearance. It is his peculiar custom to describe the relative absolutely ; this peculiarity makes him divide pre-Christian humanity into two camps, according to the secret and perhaps unconscious bias of their hearts, there is love for the divine in the one case and antipathy in the other. But the passage John i. 12, 13, "but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them which believe in His name ; who are born not of flesh and blood, but of God," plainly shows the wide distance that lay between that virtual pre-Christian sonship of God and the actual sonship which Jesus first brings about in those who believe on His name. There is nothing wanting to make clear this distance. Whatever the pre-Christian man may have heard or received of light through the Logos, he does not thereby attain to "seeing God," that is, to the pure and perfect knowledge of God as eternal love (John vi. 45, 46) ; and yet this knowledge of the Father is the immediate precondition of having eternal life (John xvii. 3). The result of this is that "no man comes to the Father but by the Son," who alone has seen the Father, and in whom alone one can see the Father as Father (John xiv. 6, 9, i. 18, vi. 46). Even Moses and the prophets "have not seen the Father" ; in their lofty hours of revelation they did not see God as the only-begotten Son sees Him always ; they did not "see His shape or hear His voice" (John v. 37), and so all that was granted to them was symbols, visions, and detached revelations which gave them no living communion with God, no sonship of God, but only the anticipation of salvation (John i. 32, xii. 41). But the deeper reason why no pre-Christian friend of God could attain to the sight of the Father, may be easily divined from the connection of the Johannine thought ; it lies in sin. In

all the sons of men, with the exception of the only-begotten Son, there hangs between the eternal light and their heart the dark veil of the guilt and the power of sin, which can only be denied by self-deception (1 John i. 8),<sup>1</sup> and which is pierced only by broken rays; in this condition the accusation of the heart hinders a man's sense of the eternal love (1 John iii. 20), and a new birth from God is needed before we can believe in a relation of sonship to God and in a fatherly relation of the Holy One to us (John i. 12, iii. 3-5; 1 John iii. 9, v. 1). From this we see in its whole relativity the pre-Christian contrast of children of God and children of the devil which is so absolutely represented. If those who have now become through Christ actual children of God must have, according to 1 John iii. 14, passed from death to life, then before this transition, notwithstanding their features of children of God, they have yet been in some sense and measure children of the devil; and if Christ, according to 1 John ii. 2, has died as a propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world, then there can be no child of the devil in this world incapable of redemption, in whom therefore there may not be a germ of virtual sonship to God, for the awakening and unfolding of which God could give up His Only-begotten. That apostolic distinction in the pre-Christian world is therefore worthy of note, in contrast to an Augustinianism that paints everything pre-Christian of a uniform grey. This distinction in no way alters in John the two fundamental Christian thoughts—first, that without Christ the whole world lieth in the wicked one (1 John v. 19); and second, that God so loved the world as to give up His Only-begotten for its salvation (John iii. 16).

<sup>1</sup> It cannot be decided whether the *ἀμαρτίαν ἣν ἔχομεν* means being infected with sin or having committed sin, as the expression allows both meanings.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE WORK OF SALVATION

## § 1. JESUS THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD

Salvation is thus first secured for all the world by the sending of the only-begotten Son. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son, that we might live through Him" (1 John iv. 9); "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (*ib.* ver. 14). Apart from this sending the world would have remained in death in spite of all the shining of the Logos (1 John iii. 14), and have fallen into destruction (John iii. 16). John, as we have already noticed in the words of Jesus which he records, describes the salvation which God opposes to the condition of death of those estranged from God as eternal life, or as simply the life, which is conceived as present as well as future. Eternal life is brought to the world, not by the Logos as such, although in Him is ζωή (John i. 4), and He is the ζωή itself (1 John i. 2), but only by the historical appearance of the Logos in Jesus; and this is a fresh indication of how little John's mode of thought is gnostic or speculative, and how decidedly it rests upon early Christian experience. But the deeper reason of this is that the eternal life of humanity begotten in the person of Jesus has virtually become the property of humanity in a human personality, which has become its organ; a point of view which helps to explain John's severity against the docetic evaporation of the humanity of Christ, as well as the correctness of our anthropocentric interpretation of his Christology. If the man who was one with God had appeared in Jesus, the man to whom "the Father had given to have life in Himself" (John v. 26), then in the self-communication of this Only-begotten to His brethren was disclosed the ethico-historical path by which all might come to participation in eternal life. That is the aspect under which John viewed and presented the teaching and life of Jesus. He is the vine on which we are to be the branches

in order to receive in ourselves His vital power (John xv. 1 f.); He is the bread of life which we are to eat, that is, to appropriate and transform into flesh and blood (John vi. 35 f.); "I in them, and thou in Me," it is said in the intercessory prayer (xvii. 23).

## § 2. SAVING SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF JESUS

From this point of view the prophetic office of Jesus gains for the apostle an independent saving significance, more perhaps than in any other New Testament system of doctrine, which again attests the eye-witness and intimate who in his earthly intercourse with Jesus discerned the powers of eternal life. Even the Epistle frequently goes back to His message and His earthly walk (cf. i. 1-3, i. 5, ii. 6, 25, etc.); and much more is the Gospel inspired by the thought of presenting to the readers a living view of the teaching activity of Jesus' life as a true means of salvation (John xx. 31). The words, the discourses of Jesus naturally occupy the foremost place here. The self-communication of a man takes place according to the natural law of human intercourse first of all by words; and the communication is perfect if the whole personality of him who speaks and teaches is contained in his speech, and if his word is supported and supplemented by the impression of his personality. Is there any such example of this as in the intercourse of Jesus with His disciples as reported by John? To the question, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answers, "Lord, to whom can we go? Thou hast words of eternal life" (John vi. 68). And Jesus Himself is conscious of this: "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life," He says to His disciples (vi. 63); and in presence of the woman of Samaria He compares His teaching to the living water which if a man drink he shall never thirst again, but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (iv. 14). What John has heard as the deepest content of the Master's discourses is, according to 1 John i. 5, "that God is light, and in Him is no darkness," the new idea of God, of absolute goodness and of holy love; how must this idea of God, shining forth from the words of Jesus, have enlightened

and purified and blessed souls open to receive it. But this message about God as the heavenly Father—and this explains its full power over the hearts of the disciples—is testimony in the deepest sense of the word, testimony from the inmost soul of Jesus (John iii. 11). He does not philosophise with His disciples about God with arguments from the world; what He tells them about God is taken from His own inner life, His own communion with God. In Him God lives just as He proclaims Him; if the eternal light was not reflected in Him, and if His heart were not full of the eternal life, He could not speak and teach as He did. And so His personality is a unique but authentic and convincing proof of His word; still more, it is the source of life out of which the words bid us drink directly and “receive grace for grace” (John i. 16). Therefore even in the intercourse with His disciples the saving significance of His person appears behind the saving significance of His words; the two are inseparable; to believe in His word is to believe in Him, and *vice versa*; the apostle has reason for regarding His speech as essentially testimony to Himself, although the Synoptics let us see that it was not so in form to anything like the same extent. And so there can be no doubt that the Johannine Christ, even before His sufferings and death, thought of His disciples as partakers of salvation and eternal life in virtue of their earthly connection with Him: “Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken to you” (that is, in virtue of our intercourse up till now), He says in His farewell discourse; “I am the vine, ye are the branches: abide in Me, and I in you” (John xiii. 10, xv. 3 f.). The relation in which they already stand to Him is that of living fellowship; and this could have no other influence upon them than to cleanse and sanctify, and to make them partakers of eternal life.

### § 3. THE DEATH OF JESUS AS SAVIOUR

Yet John in his after life as an apostle learned that Jesus' testimony to Himself in doctrine and life was not sufficient for the establishing of salvation and the communication of life; the death of Jesus, which at first sight seemed to destroy the hopes of the disciples, was needed to put the crown on

God's work of love. And this is true, not merely in the sense indicated by many prophetic words of Jesus in the Gospel, such as that the bread of life must be broken in order to be communicated, the seed-corn must die in order to reproduce itself, that is, that the breaking up of the earthly limits of existence will first enable the Saviour to make a perfect dwelling in His people; it also means that a positive saving significance belongs to the death of Jesus. We have a series of definite declarations in this direction, which go beyond Jesus' own indications at least in clearness. No doubt it is chiefly in opposition to the docetic view, that the heavenly Christ, who could not die, left the earthly Jesus before His death, that 1 John v. 6 so strongly emphasises the fact that Jesus came not only *ἐν ὕδατι*, but also *ἐν αἵματι*. And in the declaration which follows, that along with the Spirit witness is borne not merely by water (that is, baptism), but also by the blood which He shed, the blood shedding is, at anyrate, thought of as a proof of His character of Saviour. Other passages speak more definitely. Thus John xi. 52: "Jesus must die *ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους*, for the advantage of the (Jewish) nation; and not only for the nation, but also in order to gather together the children of God who are scattered abroad" (in the Gentile world). Further, 1 John i. 7: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin"; and 1 John ii. 1: "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." This designation of Jesus as *ἱλασμός* *περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν* is repeated in 1 John iv. 10: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And although it should be noted that in both cases Jesus Himself and not His blood or death is described as a propitiation, yet the harmony of the expression with the Old Testament propitiatory sacrifice, and again with the passage about the cleansing blood of Christ (i. 7), forces us to presuppose here also the idea of the bloody death as a means of propitiation. The same is true of the passage 1 John iii. 5: *οἴδατε, ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη ἵνα τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἄρῃ, καὶ*

*ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν*, an utterance which does not speak directly of the death of Jesus, but like the similar *ἴδε ὁ ἄμνός τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου* (John i. 19), was meant as an allusion to Isa. liii. 4, undoubtedly with reference to the death of Jesus. We see that it is the fact of sin which led the apostle to think of the saving significance of the death of Jesus. Though he commonly starts from the susceptibility for light and life, which seems to be rewarded at once with enlightenment and salvation, yet he could not overlook the fact that even in the susceptible sin is a power which excludes the entrance of the divine light and life, and so requires a special overcoming. But in his view this overcoming consists, not in Jesus having to atone for the sin of the world in order that God might be able to pardon it; for not only have we no trace of such a juridical doctrine of satisfaction in John, but we have manifestly the contrary. According to him, God's righteousness does not demand a vicarious satisfaction, but it guarantees help against sin, and is itself sin-forgiving; cf. 1 John i. 9. And if God "is faithful and just to forgive the penitent, and cleanse him from his unrighteousness," then He has always been such; for it lies in His character, and He did not become such through the cross on Golgotha. Finally, how could Jesus even before His death have described His disciples as already "clean" and loved by the Father "because of the word which He had spoken to them," if the *καθάρσις* through His blood (i. 7) were the absolute precondition of divine forgiveness? John deduces the sending of Jesus as the *ἰλασμός περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*, not from the legal claims of God, but only from the guaranteeing love of God (John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 10), and thus his whole view of the saving significance of the death of Jesus is elucidated by the idea of love. The surrender of Jesus in the death upon the cross is the greatest conceivable proof of love, both on the part of God, who sacrifices His dearest for the salvation of the world ("God so loved the world," John iii. 16), and of Christ Himself, who offers Himself a sacrifice for His brethren ("Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," John xv. 13; "Hereby perceive we the love (of God), because He laid down His life for us," 1 John iii. 16). And it needed

this plainest proof of love to overcome sin, both as a power and as guilt. Only the perfect love which gives up its best, and even itself, for sinners is absolutely overpowering; with its passion of death it melts the ice of the selfishness which encircles the human heart, and causes it to die to selfishness and rise to the life of mutual love (1 John iv. 19). And at the same time that infinite proof of love is the only sufficient pledge of divine forgiveness for him in whose conscience the infinitude of his guilt arises; he has to believe in that love both for the necessity and possibility of forgiveness; for had not God in Christ done His uttermost for sinners, they would always have been able to doubt whether the greatness of their guilt did not surpass the greatness of the pardoning love.

#### § 4. IDEA OF PROPITIATION

But is not this interpretation contradicted by the idea of propitiation? On the contrary, we think it is confirmed by it. *Ἰλασμός*, propitiation, is, as we learned from Rom. iii. 25, blotting out, making amends for sin in God's eyes. Now what can "cover" the sin of the world in God's eyes? Only a personality and a deed which contains the power of actually delivering the world from its sin. For the sin which allows itself to be broken and disappear, and only such, God can forgive and consider as no longer existent; that is the general view even of the Old Testament Scriptures. Christ in His death has gained such a power of delivering the world from sin. By preserving His oneness with God, His love to God and the brethren in the conflict, even to blood and death, with the spirit of the world, He has, as the Gospel repeatedly insists, overcome the prince of this world, the spirit of selfishness that rules the world (John xii. 31, xvi. 33), and in consequence of that He is able to overcome it in every heart into which He finds an entrance. He has thus become to the Father the Surety for the purification of humanity, and for His sake the Father can offer men forgiveness if they will receive Him and let Him work within them. Thus "Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world" (1 John ii. 2), in a virtual sense, of course, inasmuch as in Him and His death lies the possibility for all the world



of becoming free from sin and obtaining its forgiveness;—in the actual sense He is so for those who in faith and love become one with Him. That the *ἰλασμός* can only be meant in the virtual sense in relation to the whole world is evident. If the sins of the whole world were actually expiated without more ado, then God could no longer enter into judgment with them, but must forgive them, whether they actually disappear or not. But that He only forgives where at the same time He can purify, that is, where sin is really in process of vanishing, is expressly said in 1 John i. 9. This fundamental thought, in which we find again in John what we have already found generally in the New Testament with respect to the saving meaning of the death of Jesus, opens up to us the relevant utterances of the apostle. It is now clear why he in both passages designated Christ Himself, and not merely His death or His blood, as *ἰλασμός*. It requires the whole Christ, not merely the Christ who died upon the cross, but also the Christ who walked sinless on the earth, and the glorified living Christ who is operative in His own, and continuously appears for them (cf. 1 John ii. 2),—it requires this whole Christ, with His whole being and working, to give the Father the guarantee for the actual and perfect purification of humanity. Two further passages, which apparently favour the onesided reference of the death of Jesus to the forgiveness of sins, prove on closer consideration to favour this view of ours. When it is said (1 John i. 7), “The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin,” that might be applied, without contradicting our interpretation, to the forgiveness of all the transgressions which still lurk even in believers. But the apostle immediately after, in ver. 9, places *καθαρίσῃ ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀδικίας* beside *ἀφῆ ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας*, and thus shows that he means in both moral cleansing, the sanctifying influence of God; and we must recognise the same meaning in ver. 7. We are forced to do so by the fact that in ver. 7 the “cleansing by the blood of Christ” is promised to those who are already walking in the light, and so it cannot possibly describe the justifying effect of the death of Jesus, which makes any walking in the light possible. Consequently, the “blood of Jesus Christ” (1 John i. 5) is conceived as the power of moral cleansing, as a

power of actual purification. It is the same in the other passage to be considered (1 John iii. 5): *οἴδατε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη, ἵνα τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἄρῃ, καὶ ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν*. The allusion to Isa. liii. 4 might here also suggest the idea of a substitutionary bearing or expiation of our guilt. But that *αἶρειν* here does not mean, taking on Himself, but (as in the reproduction of the expression of Isaiah in Matt. viii. 17; Heb. ix. 28) taking away, is recognised even by those who understand by it a taking away of the guilt incurred through sin.<sup>1</sup> But an impartial estimate of the context will make it clear that we are not to think of this, but of an actual doing away with sin. The context does not speak of pardon or justification, but of sanctification (ver. 3: *πᾶς ὁ ἔχων τὴν ἐλπίδα ταύτην ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ἀγνίζει ἑαυτόν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος ἄγνός ἐστιν*), of the absolute incompatibility of doing sin with the fellowship of Him who—Himself sinless—came into the world to destroy sin. So that it requires a very resolute dogmatic prejudice to transform the abolition of sin in this passage into a mere abolition of guilt. Finally, attention should be called to a parallel passage immediately following (iii. 8): *εἰς τοῦτο ἐφανερώθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου*. No proof is needed that the works of Satan are the sins which are done in the world, and not merely the guilt which is thereby incurred with God. From all this we see that John related the death of Jesus directly and essentially to the moral renewal of man, corresponding to the idea of morally effective propitiation, and subordinated its effect in securing pardon to this other idea. That is almost exactly the Petrine and primitive standpoint (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 18, ii. 24) for which we found support in Jesus' own prophetic indications (Matt. xx. 28).

### § 5. THE SAVING ACTIVITY OF THE EXALTED CHRIST

The exalted Christ carries on the work of salvation which the teaching and suffering Christ began. He does so in virtue of a twofold activity, one towards God and one towards men. The first refers directly to the propitiation

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 359.

which He founded. "These things write I unto you," it is said shortly before the main passage about the *ἰλασμός*, "that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate (*παράκλητον*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). The name *παράκλητος*, counsel, here applied to the exalted Christ, which is also given to the Holy Spirit in the farewell discourses in the Gospel, with the addition *ἄλλος*, and which plainly presupposes that Jesus Himself was the first Paraclete of His people, is peculiar to the Epistle;—we have already met with the idea itself in Paul (Rom. viii. 34). The meaning is not, of course, that the Father, who is love itself, needs the continual pleading of the Son in order to forgive; but He needs the warrant of Him who is righteous and yet is most intimately united with transgressors, who covers the arrears of His own by guaranteeing their full and final sanctification. But He can only appear for them in this way because He is at the same time incessantly active in them, communicating to them His own holy life; this is the other side of His continued activity as Saviour, in which John's thought returns from the negative aspect of redemption from sin to the positive aspect, which he loved, of the divine impartation of life. The sinless Son of God passed through death, in which His life was perfected, to the Father, to a higher and divine existence in which He can communicate Himself fully, giving His own victorious life to His people and to all who give themselves to Him. There is thus opened a more inward and blessed fellowship between Him and His people, in which the Parable of the Vine and its Branches is truly realised, a fellowship of a purely spiritual nature, a fellowship in the Holy Spirit. We have already in an earlier part of this work proved that the farewell discourses of the Gospel in their twofold promise of comfort, the promise of the Spirit as a compensation, as another helper to take Christ's place, and the promise of His own return to abiding communion, can have only one meaning. The same twofold mode of presentation, with a single meaning, runs through the apostle's own doctrinal statements. It is true that in the Epistle we meet with a somewhat different mode of speaking about the Holy Spirit from that in the Gospel; while the Paraclete in the farewell discourses

is plainly a personification as a substitute for Jesus, He is repeatedly called in the Epistle objectively τὸ χρίσμα, the (divine) anointing, of which also the name Christ reminds us, —an evidence that even the personification in the Gospel was not meant to be understood of a personality distinct from God and Christ. Now, though χρίσμα, alongside of which, however, τὸ πνεῦμα also repeatedly appears, refers in 1 John ii. 20–27 with primitive simplicity to the enlightening of the Christians, in virtue of which they know the truth and are inwardly instructed about all that concerns their salvation; yet the ethical and sanctifying significance of the Spirit is not excluded, for in John the enlightening and sanctifying influences are inseparably united in the ideas of the light and of the truth. If 1 John ii. 20 reminds us that the anointing is received ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου, or if the passage, iii. 24, brings together the abiding in God and the keeping of the commandments on the one hand, and the possession of the Spirit on the other, it is clear that the author simply presupposes the sanctifying side of the possession of the Spirit. From this it appears that in John, as in Paul, the Holy Spirit is the principle of the life from God which distinguishes the Christian from the natural man. But if that is so there can be no real distinction between the possession of the Spirit and the fellowship of life with Christ, and through Christ with God. The apostle, in his mystical way, loves to speak of a reciprocal εἶναι or μένειν (abiding, dwelling) between the glorified Christ and His people, between the Father and believers (1 John ii. 24, 28, iii. 6, 23, iv. 12–16, v. 20; John xiv. 20, 23, xv. 4–6, xvii. 21, 23). All attempts to make distinctions here between the being and abiding of the believer in Christ or in God, or between the indwelling of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit in them, are quite vain, and in contradiction with the Johannine mode of thinking, which loves to contemplate the blessed mystery of the fellowship with God through Christ (1 John v. 20) from all sides. Or what are we to understand by an immediate personal activity, or communion, whether of God or of Christ, which is not mediated through the Holy Spirit? God is Spirit (John iv. 20), and works only spiritually; of the glorified Christ the same is true, and the Holy Spirit is

just the personal Spirit of God and Christ.<sup>1</sup> It is manifest, besides, that the *μένειν* of believers in God and Christ, and the *μένειν* of God and Christ in them, are the two sides of the same relation conditioning one another, though, of course, the human is brought forward for exhortation, the divine as promise. Thus the apostle's idea of salvation in all these phrases is simply that the self-communication of Christ which was prepared for in the earthly life, but remained limited and imperfect, is now perfected in the Holy Spirit since His exaltation; it is now the communication of His perfect life as a free spiritual possession. From this we may also understand the striking passage, John vii. 39: "The Holy Spirit was not yet; for Jesus was not yet glorified." The Holy Spirit is here taken in the New Testament sense, for in the Old Testament sense He had long been; the Holy Spirit was not yet given as a new source of the divine life in man, as it is described immediately before, ver. 38. He could only come after Jesus had been perfected in His exaltation and glorification, and had become the free principle of the Spirit, the source of eternal life for all (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 45; 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18).

## CHAPTER V

### FAITH AND LOVE

#### § 1. ELASTICITY OF THE CONCEPTS

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit leads us to the subjective side of Christianity, to the Christian life. The first Epistle, in particular, is rich in utterances about this; but, in conformity with the style of the whole Johannine teaching, these utterances belong so little to a fixed system of ideas that it is not easy to put them together. In general, it is clear that to the apostle the appropriation of salvation takes place by faith and its working out by love, and therefore we take these two main ideas as our heading. But beside these two main ideas, which are never expressly brought into relation with each other,

<sup>1</sup> Against Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 373.

we have others, such as knowledge, sonship with God, having eternal life, abiding in God and in Christ, doing righteousness, doing God's will, keeping God's commandments, sanctifying oneself, etc. No one of these concepts is distinguished from the others; but to a large extent they coincide with one another, or with the concepts love and faith, and appear in the most various connections with these and with one another. Here again we have exhibited the freedom and liveliness of a system of theological doctrine entirely unscholastic, but at the same time the difficulty of presenting it theologically. Here more than elsewhere in the New Testament we must be on our guard against seeking to trace back the variation of living views to preconceived ideas, and against drawing conclusions from particular phrases which are not justified by the very next instance of the use of such phrases.

## § 2. FAITH

John also regards faith as the fundamental Christian act by which salvation in Christ is laid hold of. It appears more frequently in the discourses of Jesus in the Gospel than in the Synoptics, and is no less emphasised in the Epistle. But the idea of faith is more indefinite in John than in Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews; he makes the simple primitive phraseology alternate with such more definite conceptions as were gradually formed in the doctrinal speech of the Church. The noun *πίστις* is rarely found (for example, 1 John v. 4), more frequently the verb *πιστεύειν*. The object of this may be first of all the fact of salvation, which is to be regarded as true; for example, *ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, John xx. 31: 1 John v. 1-5. Or it stands with the dative of the thing or person which one has to believe; one believes, or is to believe, a divine testimony in word or work, or the person who bears it, Moses, or Jesus, or God Himself (for example, John v. 46, 47, x. 37, 38). But, then, Jesus and the Father are not mere witnesses to the truth of salvation, they are themselves its content and source, and thus with respect to them faith is *πιστεύειν εἰς Ἰησοῦν, εἰς θεόν* (the two are united with special emphasis in John xiv. 1), or "in the name of Jesus Christ" (John i. 13), that is, in the

revelation of God in Him. Finally, *πιστεύειν* is frequently used by itself, and faith is thus described as the fundamental religious act which Jesus claims for Himself and His gospel (thus, for example, John vi. 64). It is manifest that in all these phrases the two sides of the concept faith, conviction and assurance, are united; and the recent assertion that John, in distinction from Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews, understands by faith only the conviction of the truth of the fact that Jesus is the Christ, and not a trust in the love of God in Christ, is the greatest possible mistake.<sup>1</sup> Not only is it impossible in religious things to separate trust from conviction, as it is always an act of trust to hold anything supersensible for actual: but the question here is not the conviction about facts whose value for us is undecided; they are objects of heart reliance, it is a trust, not merely in the existence of God, but in His truthfulness, faithfulness, and love. Or what did Jesus mean when He exclaimed to His sorrowing disciples (John xiv. 1): *πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεόν, καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε?* Surely something more than that God is, and that He is the Christ; surely He meant that the disciples could rely on Him and on God. Without this element of trust, in the idea of faith, such an expression as *πιστεύειν εἰς θεόν, εἰς Ἰησοῦν* would not have been possible; and that a *πιστεύειν τῷ θεῷ, α πιστεύειν εἰς τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτοῦ* (1 John v. 10), or *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ*, may alternate with it, does not by any means prove that the fuller expression should be narrowed to the meaning of the poorer one. The less so as John traces back to faith the possession of eternal life, or even of the Son of God, the communion of life with Christ, such as is described in the Parable of the Vine and its Branches; *ὁ πιστεύων ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον—ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται—ὁ ἔχων, τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει τὴν ζωὴν* (John vi. 47; 1 John v. 1, 12). One cannot see how a faith which was only a conviction of the Messiahship of Jesus, and not a personal surrender to Him, a trustful laying hold of the eternal love which appeared in Him, should lead to a personal communion of life with Him, and so to the possession of eternal life. Besides, we have words used as equivalents for faith which put it beyond all

<sup>1</sup> So Weiss if I rightly understand him, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 364.

doubt that the meaning is trustful laying hold of and personal appropriation. In the prologue to the Gospel (i. 12, 13), the reception of Jesus and faith in His name are put the one for the other; and in the great discourse on the bread of life (John vi.), the eating of the bread of life, that is, the appropriation of the Saviour (vv. 30, 35, 40), is explained by faith in Him; a faith to which, just because it is an appropriation of the Saviour's life, is promised (ver. 47) the *ἔχειν ζωὴν αἰώνιον*. This, therefore, the laying hold of and appropriating the eternal life presented by God in Jesus, is the full Johannine conception of faith. It does not, of course, hinder the apostle from recognising also first steps, to which he would not award the possession of eternal life. When he ascribes a "believing on Him" to the Samaritans who ran out to Jesus at the report of the woman of Sychar (John iv. 39), or when He makes the disciples believe in His Messiahship from the beginning and yet only come to believe at the miracle of Cana (John i. 50, ii. 11); when Thomas is pointed from the faith which rests on having seen to the faith which can dispense with that, and which alone is to be praised as blessed,—it is clear that the apostle was conscious of a psychological development of faith from stage to stage, which only in its perfection in true Christian faith leads to the possession of eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

### § 3. GENESIS OF FAITH

Christian faith being a belief in divine revelation, can only arise through human or divine testimony to that revelation. The revelation of God in Christ is attested first of all by those who have received it. Thus the Baptist was sent to bear witness to the light coming into the world (John i. 6), and he did bear witness to Him in virtue of the vision granted at Christ's baptism, and so he awakened the faith of the first disciples (John i. 15, 32, 34, iii. 27 f.). Above all, Jesus Himself testified to what He had seen (John iii. 11); He

<sup>1</sup> When Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 365, asserts that the true faith, according to John, produces at every stage eternal life, he is resting upon his unfounded theory that eternal life and the knowledge of God are used as equivalents in John.



testified to men in act and word of what was inwardly communicated to Him (John v. 20); especially He announced the truth of God as Father which had come to Him (John vi. 46) in order that men might believe, and believing, might bear witness of Him also as His messengers (John xiv. 27; 1 John i. 3, 5). This is the sensuous historical side of the testimony on which faith rests; but an inner spiritual side is added. In Jesus, God Himself speaks to us: "He who seeth Him seeth the Father" (John xiv. 9, 10). The Father hath already borne witness to the Son through Moses and the prophets, by making them in spirit point to Him (John v. 37, 46, xii. 41). Then He has borne witness to Him in the works which He gave Him to do, and which as miraculous betray the Father who makes them possible (John v. 36). He has borne witness to Him in the main facts of His earthly life, "the water and the blood" (1 John v. 6 f.), that is, the baptism in Jordan and the death on the cross, inasmuch as in both the glory of the Only-begotten and the purpose of eternal love accomplished in Him are revealed; finally, He bore witness in the Spirit joined with this testimony in water and blood, that is, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which followed on the basis of those facts of salvation (1 John v. 6). And the Spirit, which is here grouped in His historical appearing with the facts of the inauguration and completion of the life of Messiah as a third witness, is, as is expressed in His designation as *ὁ μαρτυρῶν*, the witness of God simply, the witness of God in the prophets, in Christ, in the apostles, and in all believers. For He is *ἀλήθεια* (1 John v. 6), the disclosure of God's very nature, the revelation of God's inward being; as He is the *ζωή*, and therefore the *πνεῦμα*, He can also be described as the *ζωὴ αἰώνιος* which God hath given us in His Son, the one great witness of God for His Son (1 John v. 11). The historical testimony about Christ on which faith arises is therefore inwardly confirmed by the testimony of the Spirit, that is, it is confirmed by the deepest and holiest inward experience—the experience that God through Christ gives a Holy Spirit, and in Him a new and eternal life.

## § 4. FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

In this spiritual origin of faith, which is inseparable from the outer and historical, it lies, that faith can be no blind thing, not a holding for true of what is unintelligible. The Spirit is truly Spirit; as such He does not allow the truth proclaimed, which is itself "spirit and life" (John vi. 63), to remain inwardly foreign to the spirit of the man; His element is light, not darkness: wherever He works, He works enlightenment and knowledge. "To know, to know God, to know Christ," is a favourite concept of John, and he applies it much more frequently than that of faith; it occurs in the first Epistle alone five and twenty times. But faith and knowledge to him are not two things; they are united in the most intimate way; and more than that, they are only different sides of the same movement of the human spirit produced by God. Even the attempt to distinguish them as prior and subsequent cannot be carried out; whether, according to the proposition *fides præcedit intellectum*, we regard knowledge in John as a fruit of faith, or, on the contrary, let faith come as a confirmation, on the ground of external testimony to knowledge, as an intuitive act of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup> It is said, indeed (John vi. 69): "We have believed and known," and this order of the concepts may be so interpreted that the confident apprehension with the heart, as is in point of fact the case, has to precede the deliberative apprehension with the mind. But as 1 John iv. 16 (*ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν*) shows, the apostle can also place knowledge before faith; for no confident reliance can be fixed on anything that is not understood, but only on that which is clear to us and opens itself to our understanding. But the apostle mostly uses "faith" or "knowledge" in cases where the other could equally well be used without any essential change of the idea. "This is eternal life," prays Jesus (John xvii. 3), "to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." According to this, eternal life is not knowledge, but it depends on

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 365. According to this, knowledge arises without preceding testimony, and the faith which follows on the ground of testimony is a mere faith of authority. That seems to me both unpsychological and non-Johannine.

knowledge as its essential precondition; whilst, on the other hand, Jesus preaches, "He that believeth on Me hath eternal life," from which it follows that the apostle did not regard faith and knowledge as two different acts of the mind. The essential unity of the two is understood from his peculiar conception of knowledge, which, however, is only the right conception of religious knowledge. John does not think of a knowledge that is scientifically mediated, or of a mere knowledge of the understanding, but of an immediate knowledge which depends on moral conditions, a seeing God with the pure eyes of the heart (cf. Matt. v. 8). To know and to see spiritually are to him synonymous (John i. 18; 1 John iii. 6), the knowledge of God by seeing Him depends upon a man's being of the truth, or of God, by his "willing to do the will of God" (John viii. 47, xviii. 37, vii. 17). But if that be so, it is clear that knowledge like faith, in John's use of them, is one that establishes communion with Him who is known, with Christ or with God; this is already involved in the general biblical idea of knowledge (cf. 1 John ii. 3, and the *γινώσκωμεν τὸν ἀληθινὸν καὶ ἐσμὲν ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ*, v. 20). If it is, however, when applied to God in Christ, simply an apprehension of the eternal love with heart and mind, what other result could it have than to bring men into the enjoyment of that love, that is, into communion with the Father and the Son? (1 John i. 3).

### § 5. THE LIFE IN GOD; SONSHIP WITH GOD

In the emphasis which is laid on life in God as growing immediately out of believing knowledge, lies what may be called in the best sense the mysticism of the Johannine mode of thought.<sup>1</sup> The apostle regards the coming to faith as the great transition from spiritual death into the true and eternal life of communion with God, *ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν, ὅτι μεταβεβήκαμεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν*, the consciousness of the believer

<sup>1</sup> We do not mean by this to admit any such mystical peculiarity in John's thought as Weiss will have. For *ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι* (Gal. ii. 20) in the full sense, and the indwelling of God Himself in believers (2 Cor. vi. 16), is Pauline also; and that this life communion is mediated by the Spirit in Paul and not in John is quite without foundation.

is thus expressed (1 John iii. 14). From this point may be understood the favourite idea of John of the birth from God and sonship with God. If faith is the transition from death to the true life, then the act of believing is the beginning of a new life which makes the man born of God to be a child of God. It might appear indeed from John i. 12, 13, ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, that believing and becoming a child of God are distinguished in such a way that there is in the former only the entrance, the possibility of sonship with God. But that that cannot be the meaning of ἐξουσία here is clear from the fact that in ver. 13 those who believe are characterised as born of God, and the passage 1 John v. 1, πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται (Perf.), leaves no doubt that the apostle regards believing in Christ and being begotten of God as one and the same.<sup>1</sup> The believer, therefore, in the full Johannine sense, is a child of God; because faith secures eternal life, and this eternal life is nothing else than God's own breath of life which as Holy Spirit fills and animates the believer. The statements "he who believeth hath eternal life," and "he who believeth is born of God," completely coincide, and any real distinction between being a believer and being born of God is excluded.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, John certainly distinguishes permanence and progress in the place and rights of children from entrance upon these. He describes the latter as a new birth by water and the Spirit (John iii. 3, 5), or oftener as being born of God (John i. 13; 1 John ii. 29, iv. 7, v. 1); the former, on the contrary, is an abiding in God or in Christ, and a corresponding abiding of God and Christ in us. As to the first idea of the second birth, it is undoubtedly inherited from Jesus Himself, who gave this deeper meaning to μετάνοια, repentance, which had been preached from the

<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the ἐξουσία in John i. 12 does not express the possibility of sonship with God, but the rights which are involved in that sonship.

<sup>2</sup> Against Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 373. Weiss infers such a distinction from 1 John iv. 7, which, however, does not justify the inference. That being born of God is related, as Weiss says, solely to the outward manifestations of the salvation received, seems to me in idea and language impossible.

beginning. We find it therefore also in James and Peter; only the expression of it as *ἐκ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι* is peculiarly Johannine. In pursuance of this very usage, 1 John iii. 9 speaks of a *σπέρμα θεοῦ* which abides in the man who is born of God. Whether by this is meant the word of God, just as in Jas. i. 18, 1 Pet. i. 13, cf. 1 John ii. 24, or the Spirit of God, according to John iii. 5, is of no material consequence; it means, at anyrate, a divine principle of life implanted in the believer which permanently guarantees his sonship with God. That the divine sonship must be manifested in moral likeness to God,—*πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται*—*πᾶς ὁ γενημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ* (1 John ii. 29, iii. 9)—is evident from the nature of God as holiness and righteousness. As to the *μένειν ἐν Χριστῷ* or *ἐν τῷ πατρὶ* (1 John ii. 6, 27, iii. 24, iv. 13; John xv. 4), and the corresponding *μένειν* of the Father and Son in believers (John xiv. 23; 1 John iii. 24, iv. 12, 13, 15), the idea of abiding first of all emphasises the logical result of a life communion once entered on. When abiding in God and Christ is made the object of exhortation, and their abiding in the believer is presented as a promise dependent on the other (1 John ii. 28, iv. 12, 15), we are forced to remember that here as everywhere in the New Testament communion with God is both a result of human susceptibility and freedom, and, on the other hand, a result of divine grace and faithfulness. That the indwelling of God in man depends upon man's communion with Christ is evident, and is expressly declared in the celebrated passage 1 John v. 20, where it is expounded in the sense we have already shown. But it should never have been questioned that this is a real indwelling,<sup>1</sup> just as real as the *μένειν* of the Father in the Son with which it is compared in the Gospel (xvii. 21). When John on one occasion substitutes for the *μένειν* of God in us a *μένειν* of His *σπέρμα* or His *ἀγάπη* in us (1 John ii. 24, 27, iii. 9, 17), the great word must not be frittered away into a figure. On the contrary, the conclusion (1 John ii. 24),

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 372. The distinction here made between an immediate and a mediate abiding of God in us through the Holy Spirit, I am not able to carry through all the passages, and I doubt whether it was made by the apostle.

*ἐὰν ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἠκούσατε, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν τῷ νίῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μενεῖτε*, shows that the fellowship of believers with the Father and the Son is not to be a mere image of the living presence of the divine word in them, though it may depend on that. On the other hand, that indwelling of God is not wholly mystical and inconceivable; as the God of John is spirit, life, love, so he who keeps the Holy Spirit, the eternal life, the holy love in himself, abides truly in God and God in Him.

### § 6. THE LIFE FROM GOD AND SINFULNESS

That this religious mysticism will issue in a corresponding ethic, is from the first to be expected from the idea of God with which it starts. If God is the ethically perfect being, if He is light, and in Him is no darkness (1 John i. 5), he who is in Him must be in the light and walk in the light; and he who is still in darkness, who still lives and moves in deceit, hatred, and selfishness, cannot be in God, and God cannot be in Him. The apostle therefore draws from that idea of fellowship with God the inference, "if we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 John i. 6). Clear and incontestable as that is, yet the absoluteness with which this inference is carried out surprises us. "Everyone," it is said in a later passage (iii. 6), "who abideth in Him sinneth not"; and again (iii. 9), "Everyone that is born of God doth not commit sin; for His (God's) seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." And once more, v. 18: "We know that everyone that is born of God sinneth not: but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Is that the voice of fanaticism, which fondly imagines on the earthly way that it has already reached the heavenly goal; which overlooks the fact that the believer is not yet wholly sanctified, and thus seduces men to deceive themselves whilst they continue in sin? Impossible; for alongside of these stand the clearest and most emphatic reminders of the sins which yet adhere even to believers. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, He (God) is faithful

and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9; cf. also ii. 1, iii. 20). John supposes two kinds of sin as always possible to the believer and to him who is born of God; a "sin unto death, and a sin which is not unto death" (1 John v. 16, 17). The distinction between the two was already made in the Old Testament; but, in conformity with the Johannine view of the life of the believer in God, it is applied and deepened in a peculiar way. The sin unto death is one in virtue of which the man falls completely out of communion with God, and thus loses again the (eternal) life of which as a believer he had become partaker, and falls back into spiritual death (cf. 1 John iii. 15: οὐκ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἐν ἑαυτῷ μένουσαν). The sin not unto death is every violation of the divine law (πᾶσα ἀνομία or ἀδικία, 1 John iii. 4, v. 17) in which the relation of fellowship with God and Christ still remains unbroken. The man who is born of God may therefore fall even into the sin unto death, an evidence of how far the apostle was from conceiving the state of grace as excluding human freedom and responsibility; but the "sin not unto death" he assumes as still adhering to all believers (1 John v. 16). In the passage just quoted the words καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ ζωὴν indicate that this sin also implies a defect of fellowship with God, of true life, though not an absolute defect. But how does this presupposition of indwelling sin agree with such assertions as: "Whosoever is born of God cannot sin"? Not by ingenious distinctions between different sorts of sinning, between having sin and doing sin, as if the ἁμαρτίαι referred to in i. 6 were not committed, but by the distinction of an ideal and an empiric view. Ideally it is true that whosoever is born of God cannot sin; the life from God and in God absolutely excludes the life in sin. And it is in the highest degree necessary to tell believers that, in order that they may never rest in their imperfection, satisfied with being pardoned sinners instead of pardoned saints. But what is true in idea only gradually becomes true in reality; and so John, who loves antitheses, can, without any contradiction, represent the ideal truth and men's failures in realising it, in order to spur on his readers to work out that which they are in principle.

## § 7. MOTIVES AND RULES OF SANCTIFICATION

His Epistle is above all an exhortation to sanctification, and the word occurs, as in 1 Pet. i. 15, with reference to the imitation of the holiness of God (1 John iii. 3). The exhortation strikingly proceeds along two lines, religious and moral, but in the end they blend into one. The apostle reminds his "little children" first of the salvation which they have attained, and exhorts them to hold it fast, "to abide in the word which they heard from the beginning," in the Saviour who revealed to them the Father, in the God whose nature is love (cf., for example, 1 John ii. 24, 28, iv. 16; 2 John ver. 9). Sanctification thus appears as a growth from the blessing of salvation laid hold of in faith, which, if the readers allow the powers of God to rule in them, must as of itself come to perfection. For "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; the blood of His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 9 and 7). That is the apostle's most characteristic idea which best answers to his peculiar view. But he joins with it one more simple and more practical, which reminds us of James, Peter, and above all of the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus' own mode of teaching. As if with James he wished to combat a dead faith and its supposed justifying power, he cries to his readers (1 John iii. 7): "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He (God) is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." It is a warning against antinomianism, which was undoubtedly abroad among his readers, but at bottom it is simply a repetition of the words of Jesus: "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven." In place of "doing righteousness" we sometimes find "doing the truth" (1 John i. 6), "doing the will of God," or that which is well-pleasing to Him (John vii. 17; 1 John ii. 17, iii. 22); but, as in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Epistle of James, doing is always urged as the condition of eternal life. In connection with this practical treatment of Christian life, Christ, and occasionally God Himself, are regarded, not as the



impelling power inhabiting believers, but the example which we are to follow, the ideal to which we are to be conformed (1 John i. 6, ii. 29, iii. 7, 16); and the mystical *ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν* is transformed, in a way that is very significant of the union of grace and freedom, into an ought (*ὀφείλειν*); *ὁ λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν, ὀφείλει καθὼς ἐκεῖνος περιεπάτησεν καὶ αὐτὸς οὕτως περιπατεῖν* (1 John ii. 6). Accordingly, we can no longer be surprised to find commandments represented as rules of Christian life (1 John ii. 3, iii. 22, v. 3). If we ask for more details of this we are told (1 John iii. 23) that God's commandments are faith and love,—faith in the name of His Son, and love to one another. But chap. ii. 7, 8 speaks of only one old and yet ever new commandment. "That is the word ye have heard from the beginning," that is, as the parallel passage (ii. 24, 25) assures us, the gospel which the readers had heard from the beginning of their Christian life. So near do John and James come to one another, though we are wont to regard them as opposite poles, that both of them can comprehend the gospel under the Old Testament notion of promise and law. It is promise, viz. of eternal life or of the kingdom of God, in 1 John ii. 25 (cf. Jas. ii. 5), and it is law or commandment in 1 John ii. 7 (cf. Jas. i. 25), viz. the revelation of God in Christ, which commands us to walk in the light, as He is in the light (1 John i. 5, 7). From this it follows that the Johannine commandments of God must at the same time be commandments of Christ; and this is expressly said in 1 John ii. 3. Again and again the first Epistle brings into prominence love to God and love to the brethren as a summary of righteousness or the will of God; and thus we recognise here the student of the Sermon on the Mount and the teacher of the greatest commandment; it is Jesus' exposition of the law and fulfilment of the law which is here re-echoed. But John again raises this ideal doctrine of the law into a full gospel of grace and truth, by the fact that he traces back obedience to the law of love to God and the brethren to the love of God in Christ, which guarantees and effects its fulfilment; and with this he turns back from the moral synoptic proclamation to his own peculiar and mystical form. We have already noticed how simply and yet how completely he develops, in 1 John iv. 8–19, the whole of

Christianity, both as a gift and a duty, from the idea of love. "Let us love Him; for He hath first loved us." "Beloved, if God hath so loved us, we also ought to love one another"; in such phrases the "ought" becomes a "can" or "must." And in this view, which reconciles Old and New Testament, the superiority of the latter to the former is expressed in the apostle's words (1 John v. 3): "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." Not grievous, because the love of God in Christ itself puts into our hearts the answering love to Him, and therewith the desire to do His commandments.

### § 8. LOVE

Love thus appears as a power to keep God's commandments, that is, as a principle of righteousness and sanctification, and stands by the side of faith as its equal (cf. iii. 23). It is not formally brought into connection with faith, yet the passage 1 John v. 1 (*πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεννήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ*) shows that to the apostle faith is the fundamental, love that which is built upon it. The believer is a child of God, and as such he loves his Father and his brethren. When it is said (v. 1), *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων . . . ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται*, and iv. 7, *πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται*, we see the inseparableness of faith and love in the apostle's thought. The passage v. 1 shows further that love for the brethren is the result of love to God, which is natural, and appears elsewhere, for example, in 1 John iv. 21: "This commandment have we received, That he who loves God love his brother also." In spite of this, however, love to God and love to the brethren can be made to warrant the genuineness each of the other. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen," it is said (1 John iv. 20), "how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" that is, he who leaves unnoticed the sensible reminders to love which the children of God daily present to him, will certainly not love the God who as such does not sensibly remind him; what he says of love to God is empty words. Conversely, it is said (v. 2): "By this we know that we love the children of God,

when we love God and keep His commandments"; that is, a professed affection is a true Christian love of the brethren only when it flows from love to God in conformity with His commandments. The apostle elsewhere goes into detail in characterising love to God. Above all, he regards it as excluding love for the world: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John ii. 15). He means the surrounding world that "lieth in the wicked one," that ancient society (1 John v. 19) ruled by the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," as appears when he continues his argument. He does not, of course, in forbidding love to the world, mean to exclude pity for its lost estate, but simply attachment to its nature and aims. A chaste mind which seeks not after sensuous but supersensuous blessings, and a humble self-denying habit, are taken as the negative characteristics of love to God. Love must be exhibited positively, first in the religious and then in an ethical form. To the first belongs the joyousness toward God repeatedly demanded by the apostle (*παρρησία*, 1 John iii. 21, v. 14), which shows itself specially in confident and acceptable prayer. This boldness is not obtained without an effort; it has to be won through overcoming the fear which is natural to sinful man in God's presence, and of this the apostle speaks more in detail. Fear, he says (1 John iv. 18), hath *κόλασιν*, sense of punishment, pain; this sense of punishment is out of place in a child of God; for the perfect love (in which he is to stand) drives out fear. It is therefore a Christian duty to put it off, and to become perfect in the love of God, which includes complete confidence (1 John iv. 17-19); and this, according to ver. 20, is possible only if we are sincere in our love for the brethren. This view of the relation of the child of God to his heavenly Father recurs in the difficult passage 1 John iii. 18-22: "Little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby (by doing this) we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him (God). For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (that is, knows that we are of the truth, and forgives us therefore of what our heart cannot forgive

itself). "Beloved, if (in consequence of this forgiveness) our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, and receive from Him what we ask." Here the words, which started from the sincerity of love for our brethren, come back again to active obedience. And so we have the idea, that in the relation of the child of God to the Father the forgiveness of sin, which is needed and prepared, depends not on perfection in sanctification and active love, for then it could not be attained, but on sincerity in these. This relation between our consciousness of justification and sanctification, in spite of any difference in form, corresponds at bottom to the meaning of the Apostle Paul, and not less to the ideas of Jesus Himself when He makes divine forgiveness depend upon the sincerity of our human forgiveness. The moral expression of this love to God, which the apostle desires, is thus indicated. It consists in keeping His commandments (1 John v. 3: "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments"; ii. 5, whosoever keepeth His (Christ's) word, in him verily is the love of God perfected), especially in keeping the one commandment of brotherly love. Again and again the apostle comes back to this as the great evidence of love to God, as if in constant remembrance of the hour when the departing Master cried to His disciples: "A new commandment give I you, That ye love one another as I have loved you; by this shall every one know that ye are My disciples." "This is the message which ye have heard from the beginning," it is said 1 John iii. 11, "that we should love one another." "This commandment have we received from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also," 1 John iv. 21. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness until now; he who loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him," 1 John ii. 9, 10. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren," 1 John iii. 14. "Everyone who hateth his brother is a murderer," ver. 15 (cf. Matt. v. 21, 22); and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (that is, can remain in possession of eternal life). The only details that are made prominent are the duty of active compassion for the brethren who are in need (iii. 17), and the duty of intercession for those who sin (not unto

death), v. 16; it is not the business of the apostolic mystic to enter upon the manifoldness of the ethical relations of life. He contents himself with a few great central ideas, and comes back again and again to the impossibility of loving God without loving our brother; and he measures the depth of brotherly love when, pointing to the measure of Christ's love, he says, 1 John iii. 16: "Hereby perceive we love, that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHURCH AND THE CONSUMMATION

#### § 1. THE APOSTLE'S STANDPOINT

This preaching of brotherly love in John is somewhat individual, inasmuch as, in distinction from Jesus' own teaching, it limits the exhortation of love to the circle of fellow-believers. Of this there can be no doubt; the Johannine idea of "brother" does not embrace, like Jesus' idea of "neighbour," non-disciples and enemies, but refers only to him who is likewise "born of God," who has in Christ the same heavenly Father with us (1 John v. 1). Not that John would have rejected the doctrines of Jesus about the love of neighbours and enemies; when he taught that Christ died, not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John ii. 2), and when he exhorted that we should take Him for an example, he must have recognised that comprehensiveness of love as a Christian duty. But he has not preached it in his Epistle. In it the relation of the Church and the world is considered only from the point of view of opposites. "We know that we are born of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one," it is said (1 John v. 19) with characteristic sharpness. It is as if the aged apostle expected little more of the surrounding world; the time of mission seemed to him as good as closed—the last hour is come (1 John ii. 18). The final conflict is at hand; friend and enemy have to take their positions. And therefore he applies his whole love and labour to strengthening the Christian Churches.

## § 2. THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

The picture of the Church as reflected in the Epistle is throughout ideal. The name *ἐκκλησία* is not found; it only appears in the third Epistle of a local Church, and in the second the *κυρία* addressed (feminine of *κύριος*) is probably a Church such as that by which she is greeted as an elect sister (ver. 13). The readers to whom the first Epistle is addressed are undoubtedly spread over a number of local Churches, the company of those who are united with the apostle in the confession of the one faith, and in the one walking in the light (i. 3, 7). In this circle he stands as a father among children and grandchildren, but not as one on whom their immature faith is dependent; "they have the anointing from the Holy One, and know all things," viz. "the truth," all that belongs to salvation, without needing any man to teach them it (ii. 20, 21, 27). In this communion are felt the powers of forgiveness and sanctification through the blood of Christ (1 John i. 7). Their simple and yet sufficient confession is that Jesus is the Christ; because this confession comes from the heart, from a true faith, it makes them children of God (iv. 2, 4, v. 1). As children of God, Christians are heard when they pray; that is to say, they pray according to God's will (cf. v. 14), manifestly an explanation of praying in the name of Jesus in the Gospel (xiv. 13, xvi. 23 f.). They pray for spiritual things, which he who seeks in faith receives, and knows that he receives (v. 15). In the common dependence upon God their Father they are all, young or old, esteemed as brethren, and their brotherly love exhibits itself in bodily things as well as spiritual; they help one another with their goods (iii. 17), and they pray when one is overtaken by a sin of weakness (v. 16). This Church of brethren stands over against the world which lieth in the wicked one. It hates the children of God, and these need not wonder that the world hateth them. Hate is as natural to the spirit of the world as love is to the Spirit of God (iii. 10, 12, 13). But open persecution is not the worst that the spirit of the world can do to the Church: seduction is worse. The world encompasses the Church with its alluring idolatry (v. 20), with the evil

example of its lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and pride of life (ii. 16), and the spirit of seduction (*πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης*, iv. 6) has even put on Christian garments. If the apostle be the author of the Apocalypse, he had formerly expected the perfection of evil as an offspring of heathenism; but now he has advanced to the knowledge that there is something beyond all that heathenism can produce; a corruption of Christianity which turns it back into heathenism, and that is worst of all. He, the impetuous son of thunder, saw in the elementary tendency the finished evil. To him the "Anti-christ" is no longer a Roman emperor, but false teachers within the Church who divide "Jesus" and "Christ" (iv. 1-5, ii. 18). These false teachers, issuing from the Christian communities, who show by their apostasy that they were never truly of them, are to him the proof that it is a last hour (ii. 18). The Church therefore has before her a struggle with the spirit of the world to which the apostle would fain summon and encourage young and old. It is necessary to hold fast what they have received, the knowledge of forgiveness, the victory over the prince of this world (ii. 13, 14); it is necessary to try the spirits by the fundamental Christian confession whether they are of God (iv. 2, 3); it is necessary to be steadfast in the word, in the light, in love, to be in the world as Jesus was, viz. to be in it but not of it (iv. 17); then the apostle has no fear of victory in this last conflict. For "He who is in them, God, is stronger than he who is in the world," the devil (iv. 4). "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (v. 4). "You have overcome the evil one," exclaimed the apostle (ii. 13, 14) to the young men in reminding them of their becoming believers, when they trod under their feet the spirit of the world in a first decision; in like manner, when he anticipates the victory of the Church in the world in the coming ages, he errs perhaps in time, but he is eternally right, for the Christian faith virtually contains already the victory over the world.

## 3. THE LAST THINGS

It has often, and with reason, been remarked that beyond all the other New Testament teachers John forestalls the future, and brings the eternal into time. He brings eternal life, he even brings the judgment, into the present (1 John iii. 14; John iii. 18); and that undoubtedly corresponds to Jesus' own teaching about the kingdom which is no longer only future, but is already present. But just as the teaching of Jesus about the kingdom as already present does not exclude the prophecy of the future glory, so John by bringing the eternal into the present did not lose his outlook into the perfected future. The opposition of the world and the Church of God still prevails; hatred and deceit are still mighty, and the glory of the children of God has not appeared (iii. 1, 2, 13); therefore the virtual victory over the world which the Christian faith contains must one day be realised in a manifest triumph. All the synoptic and primitive ideas about the consummation of all things are in John also, and no preconceived critical view of the Johannine system can remove it. Though John in the farewell discourses in the Gospel recognises the second coming of the Lord as beginning with Easter and Pentecost, he does not therefore cease to hope, with all the early Church, for a speedy visible parousia of Christ (1 John ii. 28). In his view also the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the world fall at the parousia. There is a double representation of both, which, however, in idea contains no contradiction. In John v. 28, mention is made of a resurrection of all who are in their graves, of a double resurrection, "to life and to condemnation"; yet there is in reality only one resurrection, the full restoration of the personality of those who before have inwardly "passed from death to life" (1 John iii. 14), and in this sense the resurrection at the last day in John vi. 39, 40 is also promised only to believers; for them only there is an exalted existence, a true life beyond the grave. The idea of the judgment is in no way different; according to 1 John ii. 28, iv. 17, believers also must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and they must beware lest they stand "ashamed before Him at His coming." And yet in John v. 24, Jesus can say



that believers will not "come into judgment, but have passed from death to life." There is nothing more to judge in true believers; but only that must be recognised and rewarded which God has wrought in them. Therefore John can describe, sometimes in the popular synoptic manner and sometimes in his own mystic way, the eternal reward which he has to hold before believers; he can speak of rewards in the same way in which he spoke of commandments. "Look to yourselves, that ye do not suffer loss, but receive a full reward (2 John ver. 8). And again he can proclaim it as a law of nature, that the man who is one with God, and he alone, hath eternal life; "The world passeth away, with its lusts; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John ii. 17). He has clothed the Christian hope in the most profound and sublime words in the passage 1 John iii. 2: "Beloved, now are we the children of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He appeareth, we shall be like Him (God); for we shall see Him as He is." Thus without any figure the lofty idea of being perfected in the image of God is held forth as one with the blessedness of seeing God, and each seems to depend on the other. For only the like can see the like, and the glass which reflects the Eternal must be absolutely pure and perfect. And therefore, in an exhortation in which the ethical motive and substance of the Christian hope is expressed, he says: "Whoever hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John iii. 3).

## BOOK VI

### COMMON CHRISTIAN AND POST-APOSTOLIC MODES OF TEACHING

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ALL the systems of doctrine hitherto considered are formations of particular or distinguished men of the apostolic period. They represent neither individually nor collectively the average mode of thought of the early Christian Church. On the contrary, each of these modes of teaching undoubtedly was so far above even the immediate circle of readers and disciples, that what we observe in the case of Paulinism, viz. that it has no true succession, holds good of them all. Alongside of the scholastic dialects, it was natural that there should be from the beginning in the early Church a *κοινή*, a much more simple and more popular language of Christian faith; it was not identical in the early apostolic and in the Pauline communities, but the differences were slighter than in the doctrinal language of the apostles. We hear this common Christian mode of thought and speech first in the synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, as even the Gospel which tradition has baptized with the name of Matthew has for convincing reasons no claim to apostolic origin.<sup>1</sup> Now that common Christian mode of thought continued even into the post-apostolic age, and affected its thought and language more perhaps than the doctrinal writings of the apostles which

<sup>1</sup> The reasons are the employment of written records and legendary narratives, the defective clearness and accuracy of the accounts of time and place, and not least the account of the resurrection in which the experience of the apostles on Easter Day is wanting, which shows that the writer was not an eye-witness.

only gradually attained their full influence. And therefore we are justified by an inner affinity in grouping with the synoptic evangelists the authors of those undoubtedly post-apostolic Epistles which we have yet to consider, the Pastoral Epistles, the Second Epistle of Peter, and the Epistle of Jude, which lies for the most part at the basis of the latter, and which we must assign to the later apostolic period.

## CHAPTER I

### THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS TOGETHER WITH THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

#### § 1. INTRODUCTORY

The synoptic Gospels are not considered here as sources of information for the teaching of and history of Jesus, nor are the Acts of the Apostles considered as a subordinate source of information for the Petrine or Pauline teaching, but only in so far as they reflect the common Christian mode of thought of the later apostolic period. It follows from this that we have only to take account of the incidental and indirect utterances of the personal opinion of their authors. It is hypercritical absurdity to regard what the evangelists communicate in common concerning Jesus as betraying their own mode of thinking, for they transmitted, they did not invent, the historical material. How little the three Synoptists are doctrinaire writers, how simply they transmit, is shown by Mark in his omission of almost every reflection; by Matthew in his discussions, which are friendly to the Gentiles, though his book is unmistakably of Jewish descent; and by Luke in almost the whole of his Gospel; for though he belonged to the Pauline school he makes use of Palestinian sources in the widest extent, and leaves their Judaising colouring almost unchanged. And in the Acts of the Apostles he proceeds in the very same way as in the Gospel. Nevertheless, these reporters betray in many places, directly or indirectly, a standpoint of their own or a common Christian view, and then we have to do with them. We are justified in treating the

three witnesses, not separately, but in common, both by the nearness of time in which they wrote and by the general similarity of their views. Their reproduction of the words of Jesus about His second coming show that they all three wrote near the time of the destruction of Jerusalem; the first evangelist shortly before it, for his statements show that the expectation of the parousia immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem was still unbroken; Mark and Luke shortly after the catastrophe, for they somewhat relax the connection between these two events; but even Luke, the latest, notwithstanding his interposition of "times of the Gentiles," expects the fulfilment of all within "this generation" (Luke xxi. 24, 32). And as to their standpoint, the first represents the Jewish Christian view, the third the Pauline, while the second shows a naive neutrality between them. But this distinction, as we shall see, is subordinate to the affinity existing between them, which cannot be referred merely to their use of common sources. We have to consider, first, the general view of God and the world, then the conception of Christ's person and work, and finally, the indications about the way of salvation.

## § 2. GOD AND THE WORLD

The general views about God and the world are essentially those of the first apostles, as they had grown up on the basis of the Old Testament, of Judaism, and of the New Testament facts. The God of Abraham, of Moses and the prophets, has created the world with the view of finally setting up in it His eternal kingdom; that is, a blessed order of the world without sin and death, a kingdom of eternal life (Acts xiii. 46, 48). God hath prepared this kingdom of His in Israel by Moses and the prophets, but means it for the whole world. Though the first evangelist prefers to call it the "kingdom of heaven," and the others the "kingdom of God," the first name does not imply that it will only be realised in heaven, for Jesus is to bring it visibly to earth in His parousia; and the name, which is pre-Christian and originates in Dan. ii. 44, means that heavenly powers and arrangements will be exhibited in the kingdom of God on earth. The Baptist, the last and greatest of the prophets, announced this kingdom of

God in Israel as near; but Jesus brought it near, and planted it as a seed corn and as a leaven in the life of history. The sin and wickedness of the nation have hitherto hindered its appearance (Luke xix. 11); He will set it up when He comes again in the glory of His Father (Mark ix. 1; Matt. xvi. 28; Luke xxiii. 42). Accordingly, the course of history divides itself into an *αἰὼν οὗτος* and an *αἰὼν μέλλων*, which with the resurrection of the dead and the judgment will also bring a regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) of the world, of heaven, and of earth (Matt. xix. 28). Up till this *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου* (Matt. xiii. 40), sin and death, or, which embraces both, the devil, rule on earth. The idea of Satan, as is natural in popular thought, is very distinct in the Synoptics. In the narrative of the Temptation he appears as the lord of earth, especially of the heathen world, for this is what we are to understand by "the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them" (Luke iv. 5, 6). Satan is the tempter of man and even of Jesus (*ὁ πειράζων*, Matt. iv. 3), the originator of sin; it is he who, according to Luke xxii. 3, enters into Judas when his treachery is ready to manifest itself; and according to Acts v. 3, cf. xiii. 10, Satan fills the heart of Ananias in order to drive him to the lie against the Holy Ghost. But physical evil and sickness are traced back to him (Luke xiii. 16); he is the principle of all evil in the world. With him there follow the whole host of demons, whose chief, Beelzebub, is perhaps thought of as identical with Satan. They are the separate destructive powers of evil which waste both body and soul; they take root in man's inner life like parasitic plants, but they belong by right to the wilderness or even to the abyss (Matt. xii. 43 f.; Mark v. 10; Luke viii. 31). Over against them stand the angels as ministries of God to the world, whom Jesus has treated in a symbolical way, but the evangelists throughout have represented as personal beings like men. The *ἄγγελος τοῦ κυρίου* of Luke (Luke ii. 9; Acts v. 19, xii. 7, 23) reminds us, however, of the Old Testament Maleach Jahve, especially in the narrative of the nativity, where *δόξα κυρίου* runs parallel with him. On the other hand, Gabriel in the preparatory stories (Luke i.) belongs to the more developed angelology of the later Judaism. He is one of the seven throne angels of God (Rev. viii. 2). The

idea of individual guardian angels, figuratively applied in the saying of Jesus (Matt. xviii. 14), appears as a popular representation in Acts xii. 15. As in the mythical histories of the childhood (Matt. i. ; Luke i.), so in the primitive Church tradition of the Acts of the Apostles, which have likewise an element of legend in them, angels are the mediators of revelations and miracles ; in the history of Jesus they appear only in the memories of Easter morning, and in Luke, in a manifestly mythical description of the conflict in Gethsemane ; in the history of Paul only once in the night vision (Acts xxvii. 23). The synoptic evangelists, as we can easily understand, have an almost unlimited belief in miracles. Even where Jesus qualified His prayer by the words "if it be possible," Mark (xiv. 36) felt constrained to put in His mouth the words, "all things are possible with Thee." We cannot think that the evangelists invented anything miraculous, but certainly nothing miraculous would make them suspicious. Many things whose original meaning was poetic or symbolical have been crystallised in their childish belief in miracles into sensuous events. The narrative of Jesus' baptism is so understood by Mark and Luke, though in Matthew it appears as a vision ; and so also with the narrative of His Temptation and Transfiguration. In the story of the travelling star which pointed the way to the Magi, in that of Peter walking on the waves, or of the Old Testament saints rising in the hour of Jesus' death, Matthew has manifestly translated poetic traditions into history. But even Luke has taken for genuine history the legendary traditions of his introductory chapters ; in the baptism of Jesus he interprets the phrase "as a dove," which in Matthew only describes the descending, as a bodily appearance of the Holy Spirit by the addition "in a bodily shape" (Luke iii. 22) ; he conceives the fasting of Jesus in the wilderness as a complete abstinence for forty days (Luke iv. 2), and ascribes to the resurrection body of Jesus "flesh and bones" (Luke xxiv. 39) ; finally, he takes in the literal sense "the return of Jesus in the clouds of heaven" (Acts i. 11), which is given in Matt. xxvi. 64 in symbolical and prophetic style ; so that we cannot fail to notice an advance in childishness and sensuousness of conception even within the synoptic triad.

## § 3. THE PERSON OF CHRIST

All the more noteworthy is the simplicity with which they have grasped and presented the person of Jesus. It is undeniable that the Synoptics are untouched by the so-called higher Christology of the apostolic age, by the idea of pre-existence. The application of Matt. xxiii. 34 to Jesus, a saying which in the sources (cf. Luke xi. 49) seems to have been ascribed to the *σοφία θεοῦ*, can at most be regarded as a first example of the application to Jesus of the Logos idea, and leads in Matthew to no advance in Christology. The freedom of them all, even the Pauline Luke, from the pre-existence idea is remarkable; it proves how little fundamental this idea can have been in the christological thinking of the apostolic teachers, and even of Paul; it was even to them, and how much more to the Church, only an accident of their faith in Christ. In spite of all the miraculous and divine which shone around Jesus, He is to the Synoptists a true and real man; He sits at the feet of the doctors and asks them questions (Luke ii. 46), He grows in wisdom and in favour with God (ver. 52); He can be tempted by Satan, and cannot from the first see through him (Mark i. 13; Matt. iv. 1-11; Luke iv. 1-13). He is as Messiah neither omniscient nor almighty. Mark has no hesitation in making Him seek by mistake for fruit on a fig-tree which had none (Mark xi. 13); and Matthew without hesitation relates His marveling at the faith of the centurion of Capernaum, and the Canaanitish woman, which He therefore did not expect to find so great (Matt. viii. 10, xv. 28). Both make Him openly confess in His prophetic discourse that He knows not the day or hour (of the world's judgment), Mark xiii. 32; Matt. xxiv. 36. And as to His miracles, He does them not by His own power, but by the Spirit or the finger of God (Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20; cf. Matt. xv. 31; Luke viii. 39, ix. 43, xvii. 15, 18); He can only pray the Father that He may send to Him more than twelve legions of angels (Matt. xxvi. 53); all things are possible to Him only as a believer (Mark ix. 23). What distinguishes Jesus from other men is above all His unity with God, His morally faultless character. Though even that is not dogmatically expressed by the

Synoptists, yet it is the manifest presupposition of their whole account. Because of that presupposition Matt. xix. 17 changes the phrase *τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν* of the sources into *τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*, which is less capable of misconstruction. The same evangelist marks Jesus out as the ideally devout man by applying to Him the image of the servant of Jehovah in Isaiah (viii. 17, xii. 17–21), in which he agrees with the primitive and Petrine mode of teaching; and Luke expresses a similar judgment on Him (xxiii. 47), from the mouth of the Roman centurion who saw Jesus die. But the Synoptics conceive the divine in Jesus, the existence of God in Him, as a perfect indwelling of the divine or Holy Spirit. With this Spirit He had in manhood been anointed for the exercise of His calling (Mark i. 10; Matt. iii. 16; Luke iii. 22, iv. 1), and so became simply the “Anointed” the “Christ.” In this name of Messiah, which belongs at first to the Israelitish hope, the christological creed of the Synoptists, even that of Luke, finds its sufficient expression (cf., for example, Mark i. 1, viii. 29; Matt. i. 1, 16, xi. 2; Luke ii. 11, ix. 20, xxiv. 26, etc.); the article or genitive (*θεοῦ* or *κυρίου*, Luke ii. 26) added to *Χριστός* shows that they still use it in its appellative sense. Moreover, the name Son of God, which curiously is wanting only in the first half of the Acts of the Apostles,<sup>1</sup> appears to them as an explanation (cf. Mark i. 1, 11; Matt. iii. 17, xvi. 16; Luke iii. 22). They regard this simply as Messiah’s highest name of honour. It described Jesus, without any metaphysical or trinitarian meaning, as God’s Beloved, whom God prefers to all His human brethren; this is not only contained in the Old Testament phraseology originating in Ps. ii. 7, but is expressly stated in the words, “Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark i. 11; Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22); and it is confirmed by the peculiar expression used by Luke (ix. 35): *ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἐκλελεγμένος*; for no one can be chosen except from a number of his own kind. And it is not probable that in some passages the *υἱὸς θεοῦ* is meant to denote a miraculous origin of the man Jesus from God. Such an inference might be most readily drawn

<sup>1</sup> This is due to the early apostolic sources, in which the *παῖς θεοῦ*, the servant of God, takes the place of the *υἱὸς θεοῦ*.



from the words (Luke i. 35): *διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ*, but even here the *κληθήσεται* rather suggests the meaning: because He is a holy one miraculously begotten, He will one day attain the name and the dignity of the Son of God.

#### § 4. ORIGIN AND CONSUMMATION OF JESUS

But this passage certainly reminds us of a peculiar christological element found in two at least of the Synoptists. While Mark keeps entirely to the lines of the early apostolic Christianity (his *υἱὸς θεοῦ*, i. 1, if it be genuine, certainly does not go beyond the lines of i. 11), Matthew and Luke have gone beyond these lines in what they tell of the origin of Jesus. While on the one hand they make allowance for the desire of Jewish Christians, and trace back Jesus to David, and through David to Abraham, and thus to Adam, they on the other hand, in scarcely veiled contradiction to this human ancestry, report a Fatherless birth of Jesus, a being begotten *ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου* (Matt. i., Luke i.). This is not the place to criticise this tradition historically; only the assertion must be repelled that it cannot be conceived as an ideal formation.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, the ideal motives and elements out of which it has been developed are manifest. The more inwardly one comprehended the personality of Jesus, and the more he reflected on its mystery, the less could he be satisfied with the notion that the Holy Spirit came upon Him at the prime of His life in His thirtieth year, and made of Him this unique and holy personality. What He then was in full development He must have been from the beginning, according to plan; and if the notion respecting the Baptist already existed, that he was filled with the Holy Spirit, not only since his call to be a prophet, but from his mother's womb (Luke i. 15), then a still greater thing must be supposed with respect to one yet greater, even a direct origin from the Holy Spirit. In the notion that He was not *κατὰ σάρκα* but *κατὰ πνεῦμα γεννηθῆναι*, a miraculous supernatural generation was already given, as the passage about Ishmael and Isaac (Gal. iv. 20) shows. Certainly the human father in Isaac's case was not excluded; but to the apostle the real

<sup>1</sup> Against Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. p. 300.

begetter is not Abraham, but the *πνεῦμα*, the *δύναμις ὑψίστου* (cf. Luke i. 35), and so there was but a short step from that to the notion of a purely supernatural generation, a virginal birth. The Septuagint rendering of Isa. vii. 14, which the early Church could not fail to apply to Jesus, undoubtedly caused this step to be taken, but always under the impression of the marvellous God-bestowed character of Jesus. The two evangelists did not originate this application or the whole tradition, they found it already in the poetic thinking of Jewish Christian circles; it was a pious view about the origin of Jesus in which all did not share (the genealogical tree, Matt. i. and Luke iii., and the sources of Luke ii., allow us to see the other natural view of the origin of Jesus; cf. Luke ii. 27, 33, 41, 50), but to them it was clear, because it gave in point of fact a deeper insight into Jesus' nature. For the proper kernel of that tradition which grew with the interest in the childhood of Jesus, was the knowledge that the Spirit of God could not first have come upon Him at a later period, but must have been from the first the principle of His personal life; that in the genesis of this second Adam, the ideal man of the Spirit, natural humanity was not father but mother, it did not beget, it conceived. And in so far that popular view of the origin of Christ was inspired by the same motives as the Logos Christology; both reason *à posteriori*, though they follow different lines, from the uniqueness and divineness of the historical appearance to a supernatural descent. In reference to the completion of the life of Jesus, there also appear in Matthew and in Luke some noteworthy features. In virtue of His resurrection, which is conceived by Matthew as an instantaneous glorification, Jesus became a being to be prayed to (Matt. xxviii. 17). All power in heaven and in earth has been given Him (ver. 18); given, for here once more any idea of glory in a past eternity is excluded, but given in such boundlessness as makes it possible for Him to be in heaven (xxvi. 64), and with His people on earth at the same time (xviii. 20). In consideration of this true divine glory it cannot surprise us to see in the baptismal formula (xxviii. 19) the Son, although originally a human being, placed between the Father and the Holy Spirit; it is the expression, not of an ontological, but of an economic Trinity. This

development of the original baptismal formula which was "in the name of Jesus," and which we see in use throughout the Acts of the Apostles, must have taken place within the apostolic age on the soil from which the first gospel sprang. Luke has not this emphatic use of the name Son; he prefers to use the name *κύριος* in the exalted sense which it had obtained since the glorification of Jesus, and which was suggested by Ps. cx. 1. But Luke did not conceive of the passing of Jesus to this *κυριότης*, in virtue of which He is the kingly founder and governor of His Church quite as the oldest tradition did (Acts ii. 33, 47). While this tradition saw Jesus pass into the state of glory at His resurrection, and knows nothing of a special act of ascension, Luke views the resurrection first as a return to the earthly life, to a body which has "flesh and bones," and which requires nourishment (Luke xxiv. 39-43; Acts x. 41). And this view requires the ascension as it appears in Acts i., a translation into sensible forms of what was at first spiritually meant (cf. ver. 11);<sup>1</sup> and in this form the idea of Christ's exaltation passed over to the faith of the succeeding Christendom.

### § 5. THE WORK OF CHRIST

The synoptic conception of the work of Christ is throughout that of the early apostles as we have it in the Petrine speeches of the Book of Acts, not in dogmatic, but in historico-prophetic form. God has sent His Son to set up His promised kingdom on the earth, at first in Israel. The thoroughly national form in which pious Jewish Christians still imagined this in the later apostolic period is clear from the Psalms of Mary and Zacharias, as well as from the message of the angel of the nativity (Luke i., ii.); and even a Gentile Christian like Luke did not hesitate to reproduce it thus in his Gospel. The destination of Messiah for the Gentile world, announced in Isa. xl. ff., outweighs His Israelitish mission only in the mouth of the prophet Simeon, as he anticipates the powers of resistance which are present in the Jewish nation (Luke ii. 32, 34). As to the public life and work of Jesus, it is

<sup>1</sup> Originally the ascension into heaven was as purely a symbolical expression as the coming in the clouds of heaven.

evident that the evangelists appreciate its significance; but they find that not so much in His doctrine and His miracles, as in His work of preparing the way of the kingdom of heaven, which is done by both. Jesus does not yet appear as Messiah in the full sense, but as a "prophet mighty in word and deed," of whom it is hoped that He will redeem Israel (Luke xxiv. 19, 21), that is, will turn out to be Messiah. Hence the significance of His teaching is that He announces the nearness, the nature, and the conditions of the kingdom of heaven (cf. Mark i. 14 f., iv. 1-11; Matt. ix. 35, xiii. 24, etc.), in which Matthew gives special prominence to the statement of the righteousness required for the kingdom of heaven; Luke, to Jesus' promise of grace, and demands for compassion. The miracles of Jesus appear beside His doctrines as proofs that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. xii. 28). When Mark, in particular, lays stress on the casting out of demons by Jesus and His disciples (i. 39, vi. 7), he does so undoubtedly because he regards them as a conquest of the kingdom of darkness. That the kingdom of God has not yet appeared in the way in which it was popularly expected, is not due to Jesus, but to the insusceptibility and obduracy of the Jewish nation, which has wrought itself up to the rejection of the Messiah sent by God; that is the great apologetic aspect under which all three Synoptists write the history of Jesus. Hence the death upon the cross is not described as the decisive act of salvation; the few words of Jesus pointing to this are quoted, but are never made the text for further remark: the infinite sin of Israel is what governs the narrative, and Matthew in particular, who writes for Jews, brings it sharply into prominence. A bare suggestion of a doctrine of the saving death of Jesus is given in the repeated emphasis laid on the sufferings of Christ as necessary according to the Scriptures (Luke xxiv. 26; Acts xvii. 3), in the phrase *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν* added by Matthew to the words at the Supper (Matt. xxvi. 28), and the phrase quoted from the mouth of Paul (Acts xx. 28), that Jesus purchased the Church by His own blood. The resurrection of Jesus stands out all the more as the divine justification of Him who was innocently condemned, and as the starting-point of His invisible kingly glory (Acts i. 22, iv. 33, etc.).

At the same time the perversion by which Matt. xii. 40 makes the words of Jesus about the sign of Jonah apply to the resurrection of the Son of Man, shows the difficulty the early Church had in reconciling the actual death of Jesus with her Old Testament expectations. By this unexpected end the original expectation of the kingdom of God was changed in various ways. First, instead of a kingdom of Christ, there comes into existence only a Church of Christ; then in this Church the Gentiles more and more take the place of Israel as people of the kingdom; finally, for the setting up of the kingdom a second coming of Messiah is needed. As to the founding, increase, and guidance of the Church announced in Matthew (xvi. 18, xviii. 17), the Acts of the Apostles considers this to be the peculiar work of the exalted Christ. The Lord founds the Church by the outpouring of His Holy Spirit (Acts ii. 33). He adds to it daily those who are being saved (ii. 47); He also guides its undertakings through His Spirit (*πνεῦμα Ἰησοῦ*, xvi. 7), which speaks in and through the apostles, prophets, and believers (cf., for example, xiii. 2, 9, xv. 28, xvi. 7), and gives His mighty blessing thereto (xix. 20 : *κατὰ κράτος τοῦ κυρίου ὁ λόγος ἤξανε καὶ ἰσχυεν*). The Holy Spirit is conceived chiefly as the prophetic principle; but this does not exclude Him from being also the ethical, which exhorts the Church (ix. 31), and keeps it from being defiled (v. 3). The Church had, according to God's counsel and Christ's prediction, to begin at Jerusalem and from the Jewish nation, but to advance to the heathen, to the ends of the earth (Acts i. 8). Matthew and Mark recognise that as Christ's declared will, although they know that He deemed Himself bound to Israel (Mark vii. 27; Matt. xv. 24-26); they tell of His foreseeing the destruction of Jerusalem, and His command to call the heathen world (Matt. viii. 12, xxi. 43, xxii. 9 f., xxviii. 19; Mark xii. 9). But Luke has represented step by step the providential realisation of this will of God and Jesus in his Acts of the Apostles, by bringing to view at the same time the guilty rejection and continued persecution of the gospel on the part of the Jews. Associated with this prophetic and historical view is the synoptic interpretation of the parousia. The apostolic Church had not recognised that Jesus, by His

returning in the clouds of heaven, meant a universal course of victory beginning immediately after His shameful death (Matt. xxvi. 64); they imagined with their childish thinking a single sensible event which would shortly take place, and resume the interrupted work of setting up the kingdom (Acts i. 11). The hope that the Messiah, who was rejected, would be once more given to the Jewish nation in order to bring in "the day of refreshing" (Acts iii. 20), was destroyed by Israel's obduracy; as the Jewish nation advanced towards its judgment, it became certain to those who saw in Israel the turning point in the world's history, that God's judgment on Israel and Jerusalem would involve the judgment of the world, that is, would bring about the visible return of Jesus. Hence the form in which Jesus' prophetic sayings are preserved in the Synoptics, in which Matthew loosely, and Luke more closely, connects the return of Jesus with the destruction of Jerusalem. With this not far distant time are connected the final hopes, the raising of the dead, and the renewal of heaven and earth; with respect to the first, the two current notions of the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection both of the just and the unjust (this latter put in the mouth of Paul) stand in Luke naively side by side (Luke xiv. 14, xx. 35; Acts xxiv. 15).

#### § 6. THE WAY OF SALVATION

The more primitive standpoint of Matthew and Mark, and the Paulinising standpoint of Luke, are more distinctly marked in the occasional indication of the way of salvation than on the objective side of Christian doctrine, though there is no positive contradiction, and there is nothing like the sharpness of the distinction between James and Paul. The fundamental notion in all is, that salvation is conditioned by repentance toward God (*μετάνοια* conversion), and faith in the gospel of Jesus; it appears in the first preaching of Jesus (Mark i. 15), and right on to the Pauline preaching of the second part of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts xx. 21). That the baptism attached to this is not meant as an independent condition of salvation, but as a seal, is clear from the fact that the apostle and the first hundred and twenty disciples received

a baptism of the Spirit but not of water (Acts i. 5). It is further evident that repentance and faith do not render a continuous indwelling superfluous, they are to establish it. The discussions (chap. vii. 1 f., xii. 28 f.) attest for the Gospel of Mark that, apart from the ritual law of the Sabbath (Mark ii. 27, 28), the ten commandments of God are the demands of Jesus also, in the deeper and more spiritual sense which they obtain when they are referred to the two "great commandments." Matthew, in his Sermon on the Mount, deals more with the subjective conditions of the kingdom of heaven; he groups in the beatitudes the features of spiritual susceptibility as a positive divine disposition, as they distinguish the citizen of the kingdom from the man of the world, and then illustrates them by profound explanations and applications of the thoroughly positive relation of Jesus to the revealed law; He demands not a lower but a higher, because a far more inward fulfilment of it. But that does not bind Christian men to the Mosaic letter and the Mosaic ceremonial commandments. Even Matthew and Mark know that Jesus did not regard Himself as under obligation to these; that He declared Himself to be "Lord of the Sabbath"; that He took as His watchword the prophetic saying, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and set aside the Levitical commandments about food in His saying: "Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man." Still more, in the narrative of the temple tax (Matt. xvii.), Matthew makes us see how Jesus knew Himself to be free from the obligations of the Jewish religious government, and only accommodated Himself to it not to offend His people; and the report of the conversation about fasting (Mark ii. and Matt. ix.) shows how both evangelists were conscious of Jesus' intention to bring His disciples also to this standpoint of inner freedom, and not shut up the new wine of the spiritual life in the old skins of Jewish forms. They both know that Christians no longer live in the old covenant but in the new, which the sacrificial blood of Christ has sealed (Mark xiv. 24; Matt. xxvi. 28); that in this new covenant there is no longer a visible temple, but an *ἄλλος ἀχειροποίητος* (Mark xiv. 58), a worship of God in spirit and in truth, in which ritual law has no longer any value; with this new covenant has come a new commandment, no longer a commandment of Moses but

of Jesus; "Teach them to observe all things I have commanded you," are the last words in the first Gospel. Thus, though the Mosaic customs might be reverently observed in the circles for which the Gospel was intended (cf. the consideration for the Sabbath in Matt. xxiv. 20), they could no longer be regarded as means of righteousness before God. That even those virtues which Christ required are not regarded as meritorious performances of one's own power, but as exhibitions of the power of the Holy Spirit and the new life which God supplies, we may assume in Matthew and Mark, though we have no documentary proof, because this question was never discussed by them. The utterances of Luke go further on this point. He has, even in the Gospel, strongly emphasised the free grace of God, the forgiveness of sin communicated to faith, and the lack of any merit in a disciple who does all he ought to do (cf. Luke xv. 11-32, xviii. 9-14, vii. 36-50, xvii. 7-10). Still more has he occasion in the Acts of the Apostles to express his Paulinising view; grace and faith, as may be seen from innumerable passages, are to him the turning points of Christianity (Acts xiv. 3 xx. 24: word of grace, gospel of grace). In particular, he ascribes it to the grace of God that a man should believe; "God hath opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts xiv. 27): "God opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the words of Paul" (xvi. 14); "Which had believed through grace," it is said, xviii. 27. The turn of expression (xiii. 48) sounds almost like predestination, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed"; but the exhortations to abide in the Lord, or to abide in the grace of God (xi. 23, xiii. 43), or the reproach of unbelievers which appears xiii. 46, "Ye deem yourselves unworthy of eternal life," let us see that *τεταρμένοι ἦσαν* is meant, not in the sense of a denial of freedom, but only in the Pauline sense of election and call. As to the idea of faith, Luke uses the primitive "believe the word," "believe on the Lord" (Luke xxiv. 25; Acts xviii. 8), but he also uses the Pauline *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν*, or *ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον* (Acts ix. 42, xxiv. 24); *πιστεύειν* simply is most frequent as characteristic of the Christian man (Luke viii. 12, 13; Acts iv. 4, viii. 13, xvii. 34, etc.). But in him this accentuation of grace and faith goes hand in hand with active Christianity. The demand



of *μετάνοια*, the more ethical expression of the fundamental condition, alternates with that of *πίστις* (Acts ii. 38, xi. 18, *μετάνοια εἰς ζωὴν*). That the Mosaic law in the letter is not to be imposed as a yoke on the Gentiles, that is, not in the Jewish sense as a means of righteousness, is emphatically declared (Acts xv. 10 f.). But the saying of Jesus, that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away, is also found in Luke's Gospel (Luke xvi. 17); which can only have been understood by the evangelist in the sense of a spiritual fulfilment, which is still necessary in the kingdom of Christ. The Christian obligations of love, of forgiveness, and of practical compassion, are of special importance to Luke; and he groups the Sermon on the Mount under these headings, by leaving out the discussions of the law, which he may have supposed were meant for Jews only. He goes so far in the commendation of deeds of kindness as to give the impression that he held an Ebionitic view of earthly goods; the advice which Jesus gives to the rich young man, "Sell what thou hast," appears in Luke xii. 33 f. as a general precept for all disciples of Jesus, and he manifestly saw with special pleasure in the so-called community of goods of the early Church a fulfilment of that precept. Another ascetic feature is the prominence of a regular practice of fasting and prayer (Acts i. 14, xiii. 2, 3, xiv. 23); in this he goes beyond the freedom both of Jesus and of Paul, and reminds us of the beginning of the post-apostolic age. In such circumstances it is remarkable that the most decidedly Pauline doctrine, that of justification by faith, is scarcely hinted at even in the second or Pauline part of the Acts of the Apostles; it is only once expressed in xiii. 39 (*ἀπὸ πάντων, ὧν οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωυσέως δικαιωθῆναι, ἐν τούτῳ (Jesus) πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων δικαιούται*), and here it sounds almost like a reminiscence. Luke's mode of thought is not therefore a clearly expressed Paulinism; it marks the transition to the post-apostolic reconciliation of the teaching of the primitive apostles and Paul in a plain, practical Christianity. His favourite expressions and phrases may be traced everywhere. Christians are called by preference "the disciples," or "the brethren." Their confession is that they "call on the name of the Lord" (Jesus), ix. 14. "The word" is celebrated above all as the saving power of God in the

world (word of God, word of the Lord, words of this life" (iv. 31 f., vi. 7, viii. 14, 25, x. 44, xii. 24, etc.). The preaching of the Lord Jesus (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) is synonymous (v. 42, viii. 35, xi. 20, etc.) with the preaching of the word (xiii. 5). The most peculiar phrase is the designation of Christianity as "the way of the Lord," "way of God," or simply "way" (ix. 2, xviii. 25, 26, xix. 9, 23, xxiv. 14, etc.), a usage which is developed in the post-apostolic "Didache."

## CHAPTER II

### THE EPISTLE OF JUDE AND THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

#### § 1. THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

The New Testament Epistles which we have still to consider illustrate the transition from the apostolic to post-apostolic Christianity in another way than the synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. If the latter writings show us disciples of the apostles engaged in securing reminiscences of the beginnings of the gospel for the succeeding generation, the task has fallen to the authors of these Epistles of defending the simple Christianity of the communities against disturbing innovations. After the danger of an infusion of Pharisaic Judaism had been overcome, the danger of an infusion of Gnostic modes of thought summoned the Church to be on its guard even before the great development of the Gnostic systems. The short fiery Epistle of Jude, enigmatic because of its compactness, is a monument of such defence. It is addressed to the *πετηρημένοι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κλητοί*, to those who have remained faithful in a Church or a circle of Churches which had been affected by a libertine degeneracy of Christianity. The most explicit reproach against this applies to unchastity: "They have turned the grace of God into licentiousness" (*ἀσελγείαν*), it is said (ver. 4), that is, they view the grace of God as a licence for sexual excess. This has occasionally been repeated in the later history of the Church, but it is easily understood in days when every idea

of chastity was dissolved under cover of the Christian ideas of freedom and love (observe the defilement of the Agape mentioned in ver. 12). Moreover, the "denying of our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ," with which those who have gone astray are reproached (ver. 4), can only be meant as an indirect denial in life, as a *κυριότητα* (that is, *τὸν κύριον*, Jesus' majesty) *ἀθετεῖν*, as it is afterwards called; for those people take part in the Christian meal of love (ver. 12), and still maintain a general outer connection with the Church (vv. 22, 23). The Carpocratians of the second century have been thought of; but what is here given would be a very inadequate description of their Gnosis; and who in the second century would have thought of bringing into the lists, against these Hellenising Free Thinkers, the name of the obscure brother of James? It is much more natural to think of the Nicolaitanes or Baalamites of the Epistles of the Apocalypse, an antinomian anticipation of the later Gnosis proceeding perhaps from a degenerate Paulinism, in which the arrogance of "knowledge" freeing from all precepts and prejudices (cf. 1 Cor. viii. 1 f.) had produced the religious and moral corruptions which Paul sought to stifle in germ at Corinth, *εἰδωλόθυτα φαγεῖν καὶ πορνεύσαι*.<sup>1</sup> If such conditions had appeared in Antioch, or some other circle of Gentile Churches in connection with Jerusalem, it is easily conceivable that in days when James was already dead, and there was no longer an apostle active in the region in question (cf. ver. 17), Jude, the brother of the Lord, should feel himself urged to write to the endangered Christians "in respect of the common salvation," as he says (ver. 3).

## § 2. THE IDEAS OF THE EPISTLE

We can scarcely speak of the doctrinal contents of the Epistle from its brevity and terseness; for only the outlines

<sup>1</sup> A connection of the Libertines opposed by Jude with the Nicolaitanes of the Apocalypse might also explain the obscure *δόξας βλασφημεῖν* of ver. 8, in which, according to ver. 9, a railing at fallen angels is thought of. For *εἰδωλόθυτα φαγεῖν*, that is, the taking part in sacrificial feasts in which the Jewish Christians feared that they would fall into the power of demons, that is, of fallen angels, could only take place on the part of those Free Thinkers who arrogantly fancied themselves above these *δόξαι*. On the other hand, Rev. ii. 24 favours a Gnostic character of the Nicolaitanes.

of a Christian view of the world are indicated. There is one God and Father (*μόνω θεῷ*, ver. 25; *θεῷ πατρί*, ver. 1), and He is our *σωτήρ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (ver. 25),—a bringing into prominence of God the Father as the final ground of salvation, which will meet us again in the Pastoral Epistles. Jesus Christ appears in subordination to this only God the Father as the instrument of His will in salvation; and, on the other hand, as “our only Master and Lord” He is set over all His brethren—so set over them that even His own brother Jude calls himself His servant (ver. 1). The divine glory to which this man Jesus has attained is truly reflected in the looking of Christians for *τὸ ἔλεος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, His mercy at that great day of judgment (ver. 6), when in grace He shall open to them the entrance to “eternal life” (ver. 21; cf. ver. 2). To this eternal life Christians are called (ver. 1); they have received the Holy Spirit (ver. 21), while the corrupt *ψυχικοί* are *πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες* (ver. 19), that is, sensuous men without the Holy Spirit of God. In virtue of this possession of the Spirit it is said, ver. 5 (as in 1 John ii. 20), they know all things once for all, that is, all things that belong to salvation, and in virtue of the same Spirit they are *ἅγιοι* (ver. 3), consecrated to God, as distinguished from the lost world. But they are and have all this by the fact “that our most holy faith was delivered to them once for all” (*παραδοθείση*, ver. 3). We might suppose, on the strength of this *παραδοθείση*, that *πίστις* here should be taken in the later sense of *fides, quæ creditur*, the truth of faith; but that would be against the usage of the whole New Testament; and so *πίστις* is rather to be taken as the gift of God, which is once (by divine grace) communicated to us, which, however, we must then preserve (*ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ἅπαξ παραδοθείση πίστει*); as the basis of life laid in us by God on which the whole Christian life has to be built (*ἐποικοδομοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς τῇ ἰγιωτάτῃ ἡμῶν πίστει*, ver. 20). Thus the Christian state appears here also on one side as the work of divine grace (*τῷ δυναμένῳ φυλάξαι ὑμᾶς ἀπταίστους καὶ στῆσαι, κ.τ.λ.*, ver. 24), on the other side as a matter of human freedom (*ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι*), as it is expressed in ver. 21, “praying in the holy spirit,” and “keeping oneself in the love of God.” But the impulse to this abiding

in the love of God is, at anyrate, associated in the *πίστις* with confidence in the divine mercy in Christ; faith is the impelling power of sanctification, and is probably on that account called *ἀγιωπάτη*, because it can only be preserved in a heart and life sanctifying themselves. And here we touch on what is characteristic in the author's Christian thought. Men without moral restraint are to him no longer Christians at all; they are *ἀσεβεῖς*, who turn the grace of God into licentiousness, and who thus deny the Lord Jesus Christ; to him it is a matter of course that Christians should find discipline in the gift of grace, and holiness in faith. For they can only hope to "stand with joy before the presence of the majesty of God, who is their Saviour through Christ," as morally blameless (*ἄμωμοι*, ver. 24). From this point is disclosed the outlook on the approaching "judgment of the great day," with its condemnation and its blessedness. Jude has taken the prophecy of this judgment from the Book of Enoch, which, in the naive way of an unlearned man, he regards as the work of Enoch (ver. 14), though he might just as well have taken it from more genuine sources. And the judgment of God on the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness, on the fallen angels of Gen. vi., whose punishment the Book of Enoch reported, and finally on Sodom and Gomorrah, of which the unchastity of those misguided people remind him, serve as examples of the final judgment which will then overtake these children of Cain and disciples of Balaam, this new band of Korah, in so far as believers do not succeed in plucking them as brands from the burning (vv. 5, 11, 22, 23). But these look for "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 21), not as those who may be still stained with sin on that great day, but as those who, kept by God without stumbling, and keeping themselves in the love of God, are presented by sanctifying grace "before God's presence with exceeding joy." Hence it is the thought of God's sanctifying grace revealed in Christ and grasped by faith which underlies the view of the world in the Epistle; we have here a simple but genuine Christianity not developed after the manner of Paul or John.

## § 3. THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

A man in the second century who wished to strengthen his contemporaries against a similar error of his day, has made the Epistle of Jude the basis of a more elaborate letter to which he gave the form of a Petrine Epistle. That the so-called second Epistle of Peter is not, like the first, a genuine apostolic monument, was already felt by the early Church, which observed an eloquent silence about it up to the third century, but then gave open expression to its doubts of its genuineness. There is no document of the New Testament that is critically disputed with such evident reason. The author already counts the Pauline Epistles among the *γραφαί*, that is, the canonical writings of the New Testament; he combats a doubt of the return of Christ, which could not have arisen among Christians during the lifetime of Peter, or before the destruction of Jerusalem; he meets with an accurate statement of their words false teachers, whose coming, from the standpoint of the apostolic age, he predicts, but he betrays the fact also that they are already in existence (cf. ii. 1-3 with vv. 12, 15; iii. 3 with vv. 4, 5); so we do not need even to consider how striking and far-fetched are the alleged apostolic reminiscences, or how improbable it is that an apostle should borrow his prediction of future seducers from another man's Epistle, in order to discover the real state of the case. The men of the later generation who lived entirely on the memories of the great apostles, and hoped to defend their inheritance more effectively by putting the defence in the mouth of the apostles, did not reckon such a disguise as a deception. Christians who have degenerated into debauchery, preachers of a fleshly freedom which is simply a falling back into the old bondage of sin, are viewed as wanderers who must be opposed in the name of Peter. But it is a new feature in them, that, supported by the long delay of the parousia of Jesus, they mockingly set themselves above the Christian belief in an approaching judgment of the world: "Where is the promise of His coming?" they say; "since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world" (iii. 4). Moreover, there is mention here of false

teachers who shall bring in pernicious heresies (ii. 1); but there are no traces of a more developed form of Gnosis, so that even here we must think of an earlier latitudinarianism belonging to the beginning of the second century.<sup>1</sup> The attacks on the parousia also best fit an age in which, after the death of the last contemporary of Jesus, the apparent falseness of His predictions of return must have specially moved men's mind. To this phase of opinion, otherwise unknown to us, the Epistle of Jude is related in such a way that there can be no doubt of the dependence of the alleged Peter on it. The suspicious quotation of the apocryphal Book of Enoch is avoided, the vigorous style of Jude gives place to a style smooth and undecided, whereby, as it appears, even misunderstandings occur; but the polemic of the Epistle of Jude is almost verbally repeated in the second chapter of our Epistle.<sup>2</sup> Yet our Epistle has its independent centre of interest in opposing those mockers of the parousia. Since the delay of the parousia manifestly threw the Christians into confusion, and, at the same time, threatened to shake the whole idea of the judgment of the world, the Epistle reaches its climax in chap. iii. in the justification of this Christian view of the end of the world. And this apologetic and polemic together are embraced in an admonition to Christendom to hold fast its faith, and holiness in that faith, in order that it may not be given over to destruction with these degenerate men in the surely approaching judgment, but be worthy to share in the new world which will spring out of the destruction of the present. In pursuance of this practical idea, essentially the same as appears in the Epistle of Jude, our document shows a way of thinking which is quite worthy of the rest of the New Testament.

<sup>1</sup> The Gnostic theories could only be alluded to by the *σεσοφισμένοι μῦθοι*, the cunningly devised fables, which the author in the name of the apostle rejects (i. 16); and the closing remark of the Epistle about the misinterpretation of Paul's Epistles might suggest that these Gnostic theories had been fostered by over ambitious followers of Paul, or had been read into Pauline writings.

<sup>2</sup> That it is impossible to reverse the relation, and conceive the Epistle of Jude as dependent on Peter, has been discerned by almost all moderns. Only Spitta has made the contrary attempt; but he can convince no one, in spite of the acuteness he has brought to his attempt.

## § 4. THE FOUNDATION OF SALVATION

The detailed exposition of this fundamental thought divides itself into a view of the foundations of salvation which have been laid and their requirements on the one hand, and an outlook to the consummation on the other. The indications which we get as to the first are simple, and they are only in part particular in their wording. God the Father (*θεοῦ πατρός*, i. 17) is He to whom salvation is traced back. "Through His glory and virtue," it is said (i. 4), "are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of a divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The expression "virtue of God" is perhaps an awkward imitation of 1 Pet. ii. 9; the phrase, *τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς*, traces back the corruption of sin, as is common to the New Testament, to the licentiousness of the flesh. The designation of salvation as *τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγέλματα*, marks that the chief interest lies in the future. To this future salvation God has called the readers (i. 3—without doubt by the gospel), as "in virtue of His righteousness He causes to be communicated to them a like precious faith with the apostle" (i. 1). He has called and chosen them (i. 10); yet so that it is left to their diligence to make their calling and election sure, that is, so that grace and freedom are united, and what was secured by divine grace cannot be laid hold of finally without an exercise of human will. This manifestly makes calling and election synonymous: election is the act of grace which takes one man out of the mass through calling. But the great instrument of the saving grace of God is "our Lord Jesus Christ" (i. 2). His names are *κύριος* and *σωτὴρ ἡμῶν*—the latter, in particular, is frequently used (i. 1, 11, ii. 20, iii. 2, 18). That He is also called God, and indeed *ὁ θεός*, is only a false inference from i. 1, *τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, in which the *ἡμῶν* placed after *θεοῦ* indicates that the article is to be prefixed to *σωτῆρος*; the passage immediately following (ver. 2,) *ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν*, and the general mode of thought and expression of the New Testament, leave no doubt about that. It cannot surprise us in respect of the



glory of Jesus' exaltation which stands before us in both passages, that i. 3 speaks of His *θεῖα δύναμις*, which by means of the knowledge of God has given us all things necessary *πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν*, and that in iii. 18 a doxology is said of Him such as is applied to God in Jude ver. 25. The saving act of Jesus is thought of when He is called (ii. 1) the *ἀγόρασας αὐτοὺς δεσπότης*, the Lord who has done all He could to purchase even those false teachers with His blood. The expression is without doubt meant, in the sense of 1 Pet. i. 18, of the virtual redemption from the power and bondage of sin. On the basis, therefore, of that deed through which Jesus has won for Himself the name of a Master and Saviour (*δεσπότης καὶ σωτήρ*), He could as the exalted, "in divine power," bestow upon the readers the knowledge of the God who called them (i. 3), and the cleansing from their old sins (i. 9); the former undoubtedly by means of the preaching of the gospel, the latter in baptism. Christianity thus established, presents itself to our author on the one hand as an *ὁδὸς ἀληθείας*, on the other as an *ὁδὸς δικαιοσύνης* (ii. 2, 21), passages in which therefore is repeated a post-apostolic designation of Christianity already noted in the Acts of the Apostles. Christianity is "a way," for the question in it is the "entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ" (i. 11); but the keys of this kingdom are truth and righteousness, knowledge and sanctification. The idea of knowledge (*ἐπίγνωσις*, i. 2, 3, 8, ii. 20, 21), perhaps under the influence of an age in which Gnosis was a mighty watchword, is so much a favourite of the author that it has almost supplanted that of faith (*πίστις* only i. 1, 5). But they are closely related to each other. Faith, in i. 1, is conceived as a summary of personal Christianity; in i. 5, as a source of all Christian virtues, even of knowledge. In the same way, in i. 3, the knowledge of God is the means of giving us all things that pertain to life and godliness, and in i. 1 it is the pre-supposition of becoming rich in grace and peace. There is no thought therefore of a speculative knowledge reaching beyond *πίστις*, but of a religious knowledge of God and Christ arising with and in faith (i. 2, 3, 8, ii. 20), a practical knowledge of the way of righteousness, by which one is, as it is expressly said (ii. 20, 21), withdrawn from the pollutions of the world. "The

way of truth" is therefore "the way of righteousness" also; the goal of the Christian profession is, that we "become partakers of a divine nature" (i. 4), that is, that we "become holy as He is holy" (cf. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16). But this striving for holiness affects and is affected by the striving for knowledge; it proceeds from knowledge, and again it reacts on knowledge. "He that lacketh these things," it is said (i. 9), of the Christian excellences enumerated before (vv. 5-7), "is blind, short-sighted, forgetting that he was cleansed from his past sins," that is, his eye for the knowledge of higher things is put out, and he forgets the favour which God has bestowed on him in baptism (cf. the design of stirring up the readers by way of remembrance expressed in i. 13 and iii. 1, of awakening in them the clear discernment and remembrance of the prophetic and apostolic word). Again, it is said (i. 8), "If you have those excellences, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"; that is, the knowledge of the Lord grows along with them, and so it seems to be conceived as a mystical knowledge concerning the whole inner life, it is a bond of communion with the Lord. Now, as Christianity, as an object of knowledge, is the *παροῦσα ἀλήθεια* in which we have to stand fast (i. 12), so it is considered on the side of its ethical claims as the *ἐντολή*, "the holy commandments delivered unto them" (ii. 21), the holy commandments of the Lord handed down through the apostles (iii. 2). This idea in its complete independence from the Mosaic law reminds us of a conception of Christianity as *nova lex* which was already current in the second century. As to its content, this commandment is the *εὐσέβεια* (i. 3, ii. 9) and *δικαιοσύνη* (ii. 21), with all their manifestations "*ἀγίαις ἀναστροφαῖς καὶ εὐσεβείαις*," as it is called (iii. 11); or (iii. 14) "the diligence that one may be found without spot, and blameless." The passage i. 5-7, describes somewhat more in detail the character of the Christian life: "Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, charity." A chain of Christian characteristics which shows how faith is conceived as the root of all Christian

attributes, but the connection which is more rhetorical than psychological exhibits no special law. Here as everywhere the helping hand of divine grace is stretched out to aid men's free activity. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure" (viz. through holiness), it is said (i. 11); "for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,"—a promise which seems to speak not of an entrance only at the last day, or at the end of life, but of a present access "abundantly" permitted to the kingdom of grace already existing.

### § 5. THE END OF THE WORLD

This does not mean that Christianity, in opposition to the frivolous mockers who believe in the unchangeableness and imperishableness of the present world, does not point to the goal of the world's consummation. According to our Epistle, a final consummation of the world, which at the same time contains for the devout man the perfection of his own life, is already guaranteed by the prophetic words of the Old Testament, which to the pious man, who gives attention to them, shine in the darkness of the world and time "as a light in a dark place" (i. 19). For no biblical prophecy is a matter of private *ἐπίλυσις*, of private reading of the future, "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (i. 20, 21). But the appearing of Jesus Christ has "made more sure," that is, confirmed, these prophetic words (i. 19). For this appearing issued in the *δύναμις* and *παρουσία* of Christ, described in i. 16 as the most essential content of the apostolic communication; it ended with His exaltation, in which all power in heaven and on earth was given Him, and with the hope of His coming again in glory. Hence the striking reference of our Epistle to the narrative of the Transfiguration (Mark ix.; Matt. xvii.; Luke ix.); this transfiguration of Jesus during His earthly life is to the author the pledge of His coming again, the revelation in advance of the glory conferred by the Father in which He will appear to judge the world. Now this reappearing has certainly to be waited for, and so the mockers can speak of an imperishableness of the world (iii. 4).

Yet they are wrong even on cosmological grounds. Everything has not remained unchanged since the beginning of the creation; the first world formed by the word of God from water and by water perished in the water of the Flood (iii. 5, 6), so will the present world also perish (*οἱ οὐνοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ*), only in another way, viz. by the fire (iii. 7) of the world's judgment. If the day of judgment seems to men to be delayed, they should consider that with God one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (iii. 8); that He has a different reckoning of time from the children of men. He does not postpone the promise as some men suppose, but is long-suffering, not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance (iii. 9, 15). But the day of the Lord will come; all the judgments of God which in former times have overtaken angels and men, and of which the Old Testament relates, are only preludes to it, for which all godless men are kept in reserve; they are sureties that the evil-doers of the present, who walk in the footsteps of their earliest predecessors, will not escape it (ii. 3, 9 f.). Nay, the appearance of the mockers is itself a sign that the last time and the day of the Lord is at hand (iii. 3). But it will come as a thief in the night. Then the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat, and the earth, together with all that it contains, will perish in the fire (iii. 10). And in this conflagration godless men will also be overtaken by their final judgment (ver. 7). Slaves of the perishable and the sensuous as they are (ii. 19), they naturally fall a prey to destruction (*φθόρα*). But the unspotted and blameless will stand in the general dissolution, those who in purity and constancy wait for the day of the Lord (iii. 11, 12); on them the bright day then breaks, and the morning star, the feeling that the hour of perfection has arrived, arises in their heart (i. 19). For the coming of the great day of God's judgment will be the coming of their Lord and Saviour in His glory (cf. iii. 12 with ver. 4). A new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness (iii. 13), an eternal kingdom of Christ in which there is no more sin, will then embrace heaven and earth (c. i. 11), and only unblamable and unspotted and righteous men made perfect will have part in it (iii. 14). Therefore the closing

exhortation of the Epistle, from the standpoint of the future, summons the present to holiness. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness: but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever" (iii. 17, 18).

## CHAPTER III

### THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

#### § 1. INTRODUCTORY

If the Epistle of Jude is descended from Jewish Christendom, and if the Second Epistle of Peter, dependent on Jude and claiming the name of Peter, proceeds manifestly from those circles in the second century in which the authority of the first apostles predominated, the Pastoral Epistles, on the other hand, represent the Paulinism of the post-apostolic period,—the common Christianity as it was developed in the beginning of the second century in the regions dominated by the name of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. For that these Epistles to Timothy and Titus do not proceed from Paul himself, but can only be historically understood as productions of the post-apostolic period, should no longer be disputed. Whoever, with any appreciation for literary individuality, comes from the undoubtedly Pauline Epistles, and even from the Epistle to the Ephesians, and reads attentively the First Epistle to Timothy, feels himself at once in another world. A wholly different spiritual character meets him, and it is surprising that Schleiermacher was the first to feel this. Now this First Epistle to Timothy is certainly the weakest and most desultory of the three, while the other two show a completer plan and an attitude more worthy of the apostle; but the relation in language, ideas, and aims is so great that the critical judgment on these Epistles must be the same. Only prejudice can fail to appreciate the weight of reasons which turn the scale in favour of a post-apostolic origin.

That the Epistles cannot be placed within the life of the apostle without the assumption of a quite improbable second Roman imprisonment, is the least of these reasons. The thoroughly non-Pauline mode of writing weighs heavier; the fifth part of the words do not appear in the earlier Epistles; the most characteristic Pauline ideas and phrases are wanting, while we come upon a whole series of new peculiarities; neither in the positive teaching, nor in the combating of false teachers, do we recognise the mighty and profound apostle. And just as little do we recognise in them Timothy and Titus, his faithful friends and fellow-labourers. It is inconceivable that Paul in his old age should have treated them in such a manner, as young, inexperienced, and unsettled men, to whom he must write what is evident—like a schoolmaster with his scholars. Still more, these Epistles do not correspond to any natural circumstances or motives. The apostle would not have left Timothy or Titus without having told them by word of mouth what is contained in the first and third Epistles, so far as it was at all necessary to tell them. One cannot conceive the conditions in Ephesus and Crete which should have demanded, immediately after the apostle's departure, such written commissions and exhortations; and even the Second Epistle to Timothy, otherwise the most natural and personal of the three, contradicts itself when the apostle writes to his friend something like a last will, and yet leads him to expect from him a visit. But the Epistles betray themselves completely when they announce in prophetic tone events as future which in other passages they combat as already present (cf. 1 Tim. iv. 1 with i. 3; i. 19 and vi. 20; 2 Tim. iii. 1 and iv. 3 with ii. 16-18, 23). Here it is manifest that offences which belonged to the lifetime of the author, and on account of which he writes, are represented as still future by an artificial reference of authorship to the days of the apostles. Here is unveiled the riddle of the Epistles; they are the first specimens of a literature of Church organisation which afterwards produced the *διδαχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων* and the Apostolic Constitutions. In the anxieties, troubles, and conflicts of the post-apostolic period, the Churches are called, by the authority of the dead apostles, to consider what the writer's own authority did not seem

sufficient to secure. The writer is convinced that he speaks entirely their mind, and therefore he does not feel that it is a wrong to assume their name. A more detailed discussion will show that our Epistles bear throughout the traces of post-apostolic conditions, the traces of an age in which tradition and Church organisation became the watchwords, where, as the expectations of the parousia subsided, the need of a treaty of peace with State and society, and, on the other hand, the need of a completed Church Christianity in presence of the germinating Gnosis, became urgent. We cannot postpone the Epistle to the period of the developed Gnosis in the age of Hadrian; the developed Gnosis is not yet perceptible in them, but an undeveloped Judaising preparation for it (cf. *θέλοντες εἶναι νομοδιδάσκαλοι*, 1 Tim. i. 7), which seemed to the author more like idle dreamings than ruinous errors, although it already appeared in serious departures from the truth (*ἕτεροδιδασκαλεῖν*, 1 Tim. 1 3)—such as that interpretation of the resurrection which explained it away (2 Tim. ii. 18). The Epistles probably originated in the age of Trajan, and by degrees; the earliest is the second, which may be based on a genuine letter of Paul to Timothy from which the many personal references are taken; the latest is the First Epistle to Timothy, which frequently suggests improved conditions, and which has the air of a later work, repeating and supplementing the earlier. A man belonging to the Pauline circle of Churches, who had a thorough knowledge of the life of the Apostle to the Gentiles, undertook to combat the growing Gnosticism in this Epistle, in the spirit of the apostle, by urging a simple, practical, and apostolic Christianity, and a moral and vigorous Church organisation. Here, therefore, we have a memorable picture of the average form of Church doctrine and Church life, as both were developed on the basis of the Pauline activity, perhaps about fifty years after his death,—a picture, that is, of the transition of the Pauline Christianity into the old Catholic. We shall best consider what is peculiar in our Epistles if we fix attention, first on their utterances about the ground and the procuring of salvation, then their conception of subjective Christianity, and finally their ecclesiastical views.

## § 2. THE BASIS OF SALVATION

The first thing that surprises us in the Pastoral Epistles is the exaltation of God as the final cause of salvation; in contrast to the genuine Pauline Epistles, God is more extolled in this matter than Jesus, the Mediator of salvation. That is not due to any disregard of Christ, but from the need, probably already expressed in forms of public worship, of emphatically confessing amid the surrounding heathendom the one true revealed God. We have here a great abundance of solemn utterances about God's being and attributes. Above all, He is the one God (1 Tim. ii. 5); an idea which (according to the connecting *γάρ* in ver. 4) stands in reciprocal relation with the idea of the one humanity, and therefore it is not opposed to Gnosis, but rather to heathenism and its distribution of the many gods to the diverse nations. The exaltation of the one God is further insisted on; He is "King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath (in Himself) immortality"; He "dwells in a light unapproachable," "whom no man hath seen or can see,"—that is, no human spiritual eye can penetrate into the brightness of His glory (1 Tim. vi. 15; cf. i. 17). But this living God (1 Tim. iii. 15, iv. 10) communicates His life (*ζωογονῶν τὰ πάντα*, 1 Tim. vi. 13); although fully satisfied, "blessed" in Himself (1 Tim. i. 11, vi. 15), yet He desires to make His glory appear, and gives us a blessed hope of sharing in it (Tit. ii. 13). This lies in His nature as love, which the name Father, repeatedly applied to Him, expresses (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4). Love is self-impacting, and so God has destined for humanity the "true," that is, "eternal life," the immortality which He Himself has (1 Tim. i. 16, vi. 12, 19; 2 Tim. i. 1, 10; Tit. i. 2, iii. 7). Not as though men had in anyway deserved it of Him; on the contrary, they are sinners (Tit. iii. 3), and as such incur "destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. vi. 9); it is God's "kindness and love" (Tit. iii. 4), His grace and mercy (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Tit. iii. 5, etc., for which the comprehensive Pauline concept, *ἀγάπη θεοῦ*, does not appear). Therefore the salvation of God is essentially *σωτηρία*, deliverance of those who would otherwise be lost; it is a mark of our Epistle, as distinguished from the genuinely Pauline, to



designate God Himself as *σωτήρ* (1 Tim. i. 1, ii. 3, iv. 10; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 3, ii. 10, iii. 4). Two things are insisted on in this salvation,—quite in the sense of Paul,—that it rests on an eternal purpose, and that it is meant for all men. “God has called us,” it is said (2 Tim. i. 9), “not according to our works, but according to His own purpose (*πρόθεσις*) and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.” That this cannot mean a predestination of some to the exclusion of others, but a genuine Pauline purpose of salvation from eternity, which has found a partial realisation through the call of some, and will find a fuller realisation in those not yet called, is attested by the emphatic universalistic passage (1 Tim. ii. 4): *ὁς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἔλθεῖν*. This will of God cannot possibly contain anything different from His eternal *πρόθεσις*.<sup>1</sup> The designation of believers as *ἐκλεκτοί* (2 Tim. ii. 10; Tit. i. 1) cannot contradict the universality of the purpose of grace; for just as the expression “elect angels” (1 Tim. v. 21), means not a choice of some angels to the rejection of others, so the like designation of believers means simply that they are *κατὰ πίστιν* (Tit. i. 1), as believers, God’s chosen favourites, though all other men may and shall become the same. God (1 Tim. iv. 10) is “the Saviour of all men,” but especially (*μάλιστα*) of “those who believe,” which can only be understood as meaning that He is Saviour virtually of all men, but actually of believers; for, according to 1 Tim. iv. 8 (*ἐπαγγελία ζωῆς τῆς νῦν καὶ τῆς μελλούσης*), the true life is not a promise only of the future, but of the present.

### § 3. THE PROCURING OF SALVATION

God, who cannot lie (*ὁ ἀψευδὴς θεός*), promised this salvation before the world began (Tit. i. 2); but He revealed it only at His own time, that is, the time agreeable to Him, in Christ Jesus. In Him the “kindness and love of God towards man” has appeared as “delivering grace” (Tit. ii. 11, iii. 4 f.); He is our historical Saviour (*σωτήρ*) as God is our eternal Saviour (2 Tim. i. 10; Tit. i. 4, ii. 13, iii. 6), and He came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15); next to God the

<sup>1</sup> Against Weiss, *N. T. Theol.* ii. 131.

Father He is our "Lord" (1 Tim. i. 2, 12, vi. 3, 14; 2 Tim. ii. 22, etc.). In other points the Christology of our Epistle is distinguished from the Pauline by its simplicity. Foremost stands the one instructive passage, 1 Tim. ii. 5: *εἰς γὰρ θεός, εἰς καὶ μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*. That Christ is placed here most definitely beside "the one God," and therefore cannot possibly be conceived as in origin a divine being, cannot be denied. The designation *εἰς ἄνθρωπος*, which confirms this, is manifestly related to the *πάντες ἄνθρωποι* (ver. 4), for whom He gave Himself, and is therefore conceived in the sense of Rom. v. 12-19; He is the one Man who embraced all in their lost condition, took all to His soul, which He gave for them, and thus founded a new humanity in union with God. By doing this He became the Mediator between God and man, the Man in whom God has come to meet men, and through whom men can return to God. Some have sought to find, besides, in our Epistles indications of pre-existence, and even utterances about the divinity of Christ. From the expression, "He came into the world," or "He appeared" (1 Tim. i. 15; 2 Tim. i. 10), pre-existence cannot be inferred (cf. John i. 6, 7, xvi. 21); there is more support for the idea in *ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί* (1 Tim. iii. 16), if from this vague expression, originating perhaps in a Church hymn, any dogmatic idea can be derived. The *πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ* is supposed to be pre-existent in the same way as the *πνεῦματα* of all men can be thought as pre-existent in God. That Christ in our Epistle is designated *θεός* is more than doubtful in view of 1 Tim. ii. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16 is confessedly to be read, *ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί*, and not *θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί*; and in the passage Tit. ii. 13, *ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, we must without doubt, in spite of the want of *τοῦ* before *σωτῆρος*, think of two persons, the "great God," and our Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> That, of course, does not prevent our recognising that Jesus Christ, who returns in the glory of the great God, has certainly

<sup>1</sup> The article before *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* is wanting in the same way in the greetings: *ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4). But that the reappearing of Christ is at the same time described as the "appearing of the glory of the great God," that is, of the Father,

become a partaker of divine glory, as to Him also (2 Tim. iv. 18) a formal doxology is devoted. But the Epistles conceive Him as originally and essentially a man, as the man of the seed of David (2 Tim. ii. 8) who "witnessed the good confession under Pontius Pilate," that is, who became the most glorious of all God's martyrs (1 Tim. vi. 13). No doubt His death had another and a higher meaning than a mere *μαρτυρία*; He has given Himself for us an *ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων* (1 Tim. ii. 6), or as paraphrased in Tit. ii. 14: *ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρῃσιν ἑαυτῶ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων*. The *ἀντίλυτρον* (= *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*, Matt. xx. 28) is His sacrifice of Himself in which lies the power of freeing all men from the bonds of sin, and thus setting up a holy people of God, "zealous in good works." The idea of the "people of possession" gives perhaps a closer indication of how this power works; the power of His death to deliver lies in this, that Christ's sacrifice makes men His own and wins their hearts. Of any payment of our debt by a vicarious expiation there is no mention here any more than in 1 Pet. ii. 18, though there is no doubt that the author conceived the moral delivering power of Christ's self-sacrifice as at the same time the pledge of the divine will to forgive. The resurrection of Jesus is expressly mentioned only in 2 Tim. ii. 8, which seems to embody a definitely formulated confession; but the passage (2 Tim. i. 10) undoubtedly refers to the significance of the resurrection, "who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The transfiguration and glorification of Christ are extolled, though in obscure phrases, in that saying (1 Tim. iii. 16) which is introduced as a "confessedly great mystery of godliness." "Who was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, appeared to angels, was preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received into glory." The arrangement of the clauses in this, which is probably a fragment of a hymn, does not seem strict, at least not in its closing part, where the cannot cause the least difficulty, as Christ, according to His own declaration, will come again "in the glory of His Father," and His kingdom then appearing is also the appearance of His glory. Cf. Huther on the passage.

ascension already indicated as it seems in ὥφθη ἀγγέλοις is once more insisted on as a reception into an abiding condition of glory. "Justified in the Spirit" seems to refer to the transfiguration based on the resurrection; Christ the crucified is brought to honour by the resurrection, and as Paul expresses it (1 Cor. xv. 45), He becomes a πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν. That leads over to the mission of the Spirit which Tit. iii. 5, 6 conceives as an act of God through Christ, 2 Tim. i. 14 as a gift which leads to abiding possession; in both passages the Holy Spirit is the principle of the inner life, God's power of "regeneration and renewal," as well as the power by which the grace received is kept. The sensible means by which the glorified Christ works on earth are the gospel and baptism. The κλήσις, which as in Paul is ascribed to God Himself (2 Tim. i. 9), is without doubt to be traced back to the gospel (1 Tim. i. 11; 2 Tim. i. 10), for which also ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀληθείας, or ὁ πιστὸς λόγος, and even οἱ ὑγαίνοντες λόγοι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, are substituted (2 Tim. ii. 9, 15; Tit. i. 3, 9; 1 Tim. vi. 3). Baptism is designated (Tit. iii. 5) "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," that is, the washing which represents and mediates the regeneration and renewal proceeding from the Holy Spirit; a definite notion of this mediation cannot be gathered from the passage. This ruling of Christ in the Spirit, word, and sacrament is not, however, the last element in His saving activity. He also leads the salvation inwardly established towards an appearing in glory, and He is called accordingly in a special sense "our hope" (1 Tim. i. 1). His reappearing (ἐπιφάνεια) is no longer indeed, as in Paul, conceived as at a definite time and near at hand, it is the close of the work of salvation, now as ever expected with certainty (1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8; Tit. ii. 13). Then will He appear "in the glory of the great God" as the righteous Judge of the living and the dead (2 Tim. iv. 1, 8), and will fulfil (1 Tim. iv. 8), to those who love His appearing, the "promise of life in Him" (2 Tim. i. 1), which He has already inwardly fulfilled on earth. He will give them "the crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. iv. 8), that is, He will recognise them as perfected in righteousness; He will preserve them unto His heavenly kingdom as men free from all evil, they shall even reign with

Him (2 Tim. iv. 18, ii. 12). Thus we have throughout an echo of the Pauline gospel, but the form is simple and popular, and there are none of the apostle's high flights of thought.

#### § 4. SUBJECTIVE CHRISTIANITY

More differences from the Pauline mode of teaching appear in the subjective side of Christianity, in which Paul's most distinct peculiarities are noticeable. In significant distinction from Paul, Christianity is not conceived as faith (Gal. iii. 23), but as "doctrine,"—a thought which is not altogether foreign to the apostle (cf. Rom. vi. 17), but does not take the place of prominence in him which it has here. For example, in 1 Tim. vi. 1, "the doctrine" is simply Christianity; cf. also Tit. i. 9, ii. 10. We feel that we are in a period in which already the contrasts of true and false doctrines, of *ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία*, and *ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν* rule the Church (the first a favourite expression of our Epistle, 1 Tim. i. 10, vi. 3; 2 Tim. i. 13, iv. 3; Tit. i. 9, 13, ii. 1, 2, 9; the latter, 1 Tim. i. 3, vi. 3). This does not, however, imply that the prevailing tendency is theoretical and theological. In presence of the "profane" idle dreamings and fabulous speculations of the so-called Gnosis (1 Tim. i. 6, vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16), our Epistles represent in principle a simple practical Christianity which keeps to the sphere of religion and conduct. Its chief watchword is, a word foreign to the Apostle Paul, but descriptive of that practical religious tendency, godliness (*εὐσέβεια*, 1 Tim. ii. 2, iii. 16, iv. 7, 8, vi. 3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. iii. 5; Tit. i. 1); we meet with the idea also in the Second Epistle of Peter, but its wholly practical nature specially appears here in the repeated *εὐσεβῶς ζῆν* (2 Tim. iii. 12; Tit. ii. 12). This *εὐσέβεια*, for which is also substituted (1 Tim. ii. 10) *θεοσέβεια*, fear of God, has, in harmony with the prominence given to God above Christ, the same position in our Epistle as the *πίστις εἰς Χριστόν* in the Pauline system of doctrine; the whole of Christianity is the *κατ' εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλία*. The facts of the Saviour's life are *τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον* (1 Tim. iii. 16); it is the true and sincere relation of surrender to "God our Saviour." Inseparable from it is "the pure heart or pure (good)

conscience" (1 Tim. i. 5, iii. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3, ii. 22), the purity before God (*σεμνότης*, 1 Tim. iii. 4; Tit. ii. 7) which gives to all other expressions of spiritual life, even to faith and love, their truth and value (1 Tim. i. 5, iii. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3, ii. 22). Alongside of this we frequently find also *πίστις* as a designation of the fundamental Christian attitude. It is said of the fables of the false teachers in 1 Tim. i. 4, that they minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith, that is, they lead to disputes rather than to the way of salvation in faith; here, therefore, faith is conceived as the subjective way of salvation. In the course of the Epistle it is sometimes grouped with love, as in 1 Tim. i. 14, vi. 11; 2 Tim. i. 13, ii. 23; sometimes it is conceived as its basis (*ἀγαπή ἐκ πίστεως*, 1 Tim. i. 5), sometimes it is paired with *ἀγνεία* or *εὐσέβεια* (1 Tim. iv. 12, vi. 11), sometimes it is defined by *ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* (1 Tim. iii. 13; 2 Tim. iii. 15; also 1 Tim. i. 16, *πιστεύειν ἐπ' αὐτῷ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*); but the word for the most part stands alone, manifestly as faith in the gospel, as the convinced and trustful appropriation of the truth of salvation (*λόγοι τῆς πίστεως*), or "sound doctrine," as the phrases, falling from faith, keeping the faith, being sound in faith, etc., prove (cf. 1 Tim. i. 19, iv. 1, vi. 10, 21; 2 Tim. iv. 7; Tit. i. 13, ii. 2). One feels how the mysticism of the Pauline idea of faith as the personal bond of communion with the Saviour, has fallen back into the more general idea of a right disposition towards God awakened by Jesus Christ, which trusts His grace and His word. With this agrees the fact that the doctrine of justification by faith is wanting, not indeed in substance, but in its peculiarly Pauline form. That we are saved, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to the divine mercy; that we are "justified," that is, pronounced free from guilt, by God's grace which has appeared in Christ,—is emphatically declared in the Epistles, especially in Tit. iii. 5–7 (cf. ii. 11; 1 Tim. i. 15, 16). But this justification is nowhere traced back to faith, and is made little of in comparison with the moral inferences from faith. On the other hand, there is found, as in John and the Second Epistle of Peter, a stronger insistence on knowledge, whilst its relation with faith is emphasised. The *πιστοί* and the *ἐπεγνωκότες τὴν ἀληθείαν*

are in 1 Tim. iv. 3 grouped as related, so are *πίστις ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ* and *ἐπίγνωσις τῆς ἀληθείας* (Tit. i. 1), and so also are *σωθῆναι* (1 Tim. ii. 4) and *εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν*. By this, of course, is only meant the practical religious knowledge which arises in faith, the knowledge *ἀληθείας τῆς κατ' εὐσέβειαν* (Tit. i. 1), which the corrupt minded disciples of the so-called Gnosis rather lose than have increased in them (1 Tim. vi. 5; 2 Tim. iii. 8; Tit. i. 14). But the essential proof of the true faith is found throughout our Epistles on the side of practice. The end of the preaching, says 1 Tim. i. 5, is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. There is no contradiction of Paul, but prominence is given to a thought which is inseparably bound up with other thoughts on which he insists when the saving grace of God in Christ is unhesitatingly related to the moral transformation and sanctification of the man. "The saving grace of God has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly (*σωφρονῶς*), righteously, and godly in this present world (Tit. ii. 11 f.). It corresponds to the ethical character of *εὐσέβεια*, to the *καθαρὰ καρδιά* and *συνείδησις*, as the fundamental characteristic of sound faith, that in morals the Christian is characterised above all by *δικαιοσύνη* (1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22, iii. 16, iv. 8; cf. 1 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 8). Or rather, he is characterised by *διώκειν δικαιοσύνην, παιδεία ἐν δικαιοσύνη*, since the crown of righteousness is the goal he seeks to reach (1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22, iii. 16, iv. 8). That this means, not an imputed but a moral righteousness to be realised, that is, sanctification (1 Tim. ii. 15), lies in the phrase itself. Only different sides of this *δικαιοσύνη* as an undivided Christian virtue are: *ἀγάπη* (1 Tim. i. 5, 14, ii. 15, iv. 12, vi. 11; 2 Tim. i. 7, 13, ii. 22, iii. 10; Tit. ii. 2), *εἰρήνη* with all believers (2 Tim. ii. 22), *ὑπομονή* (1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 10; Tit. ii. 2), finally *σωφροσύνη*, the reasonable self-discipline and self-mastery (1 Tim. ii. 9, 15; Tit. ii. 12). This genuine Christian ethic obtains a further significant exposition in presence of the false doctrines to be combated. If purity as well as soundness in faith is denied to these false teachers, and all sorts of evil is said of their doings and impulses, and any sanctifying power is

denied to their religion (2 Tim. iii. 5), that is not because they are not occupied with questions of the law besides their fables and dreams (cf. 1 Tim. i. 7). They also have an ethic of their own, though it be unreasonable, dualistic, and ascetic, forbidding things which are lawful. "They forbid to marry, and (command) to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth (1 Tim. iv. 3). These dualistic and ascetic commandments were no doubt deduced from the Mosaic law, its distinctions of clean and unclean, and thus they gave the first Epistle occasion to touch on the question of the law, which half a century after Paul, in a Christendom essentially Greek, had lost its interest. The law, says 1 Tim. i. 8 f., in contrast with those unreasonable expounders of it, "is good if a man use it *νομίμως*, lawfully," by remembering that there is no law for a righteous man but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, etc. The idea is not anti-Pauline, but in this form it is not Pauline; it is that the true Christian is no longer under the law, because he has made the will of God his own, and the law exists for punishing those who are living in sin. But as to the use of natural things, our Epistle teaches, like Paul himself, that everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it be received with thanksgiving (towards God), for it is sanctified (viz. in the domestic use) by the word of God and prayer (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5). The exhortation to Timothy to drink no longer water, but a little wine for the strengthening of his infirmities, has also an anti-ascetic meaning (1 Tim. v. 23). The same sound sense which recognises God's natural ordinances, and on the basis of these, and not in contradiction with them, calls for Christian constancy, appears elsewhere also in the Epistles. The blessing of the State organisation for whose heads one is to pray, is recognised. They enable us to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (1 Tim. ii. 2). Even the relation between master and slave is not to be confused by Christianity. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that



have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather the more do them service" (1 Tim. vi. 1 f.). Most noteworthy are the remarks on the question of women. The author, indeed, pays his tribute to the spirit of the second century in, unlike Paul (1 Cor. vii. 39), forbidding second marriages (1 Tim. iii. 2, 12);<sup>1</sup> in other respects his doctrines, even when they go beyond Paul, are free and sound. The young women, says 1 Tim. v. 14, are to marry, bear children, guide the house, give no occasion to the enemies of the gospel to speak reproachfully, which, according to ver. 13, happens so easily with the idle young widows. And again (ii. 9 f.), "The women are to adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array"; they are to announce their fear of God through good works, but not to (publicly) teach, nor raise themselves above the man. "The woman, although," according to Gen. iii., "the originator of sin, will be saved in child-bearing," that is, become blessed in fulfilling her natural destiny, if she continue in faith, love, and holiness, with sobriety.

### § 5. ECCLESIASTICAL VIEWS

The most decided peculiarity of our Epistles lies in that province which has given them the name "Pastoral Epistles," the ecclesiastical. Here everywhere appear traces of a development beyond the limits of the Pauline and apostolic period. Christian public worship appears more developed. A general prayer of intercession for all men, especially for kings (emperors) and magistrates, is commended (1 Tim. ii. 1 f.); it was probably in use here and there, and is to become universal. In the "give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. iv. 13), we have the first trace of liturgical reading of the Scriptures; in the case of Christians, without doubt the reading of the Old Testament. That the "confessedly great mystery" (1 Tim. iii. 16) might be a fragment of an old Church hymn, has already been remarked. It is hardly accidental that we are repeatedly, in a solemn way, reminded of the apostle's

<sup>1</sup> For that second marriages and not polygamy is meant here, is clear from 1 Tim. v. 9.

creed: "Remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead, of the seed of David according to my gospel." "Jesus Christ, who witnessed a good confession under Pontius Pilate—who will come again to judge the living and the dead" (1 Tim. vi. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 8, iv. 1); these are, without doubt, elements of the *regula fidei* in course of development. More developed, in comparison with the apostolic age, at anyrate, is the Church organisation. We not only hear of episcopi and deacons (as in Phil. i. 1), but also of a special order of widows in the Church, which are by election brought under the special fostering care of the Church (1 Tim. v. 9 f.). As to the bishops, there can be no doubt as to their identity with the "elders," according to Tit. i. 6, 7; the name ἐπίσκοποι, "overseer," is the official name of the presbyter, proceeding from the natural respect given to the older men in the Church; if this were not the case, a special discussion should lie in 1 Tim. iii. 1–13 about the presbyter, between that about the bishops and the deacons. But that the office is no longer new, is attested by the counsel (impossible in the time of the founding of the Church) to intrust no new convert with it (1 Tim. iii. 6); and the same is shown by the moderate requirements imposed, which are rather moral than spiritual (1 Tim. iii.; Tit. i.). Still more in favour of the post-apostolic period is the wish that the elders should undertake the teaching in the church (1 Tim. iii. 2, διδακτικόν; Tit. i. 9). It is not properly their office; it is only exceptionally and incidentally that many elders "labour in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim. v. 17). For teaching in the Church was in apostolic times a matter of free gift, specially the gift of *προφητεία*, of which there is still a trace in 1 Tim. i. 18, iv. 14. But whether it is that this gift of teaching is less common, or whether it has in part proved serviceable to the false teachers, it is thought good that the elders should labour in the word and doctrine. The free gift would thus generally seem to have been subordinated to the regular office. The only mention of "prophets," is to the effect that they have designated "Timothy" as qualified for the office of an "evangelist" (2 Tim. iv. 5). Still more notable is the phrase (1 Tim. iv. 14, 2 Tim. i. 6), according to which a gift is found in Timothy by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery or of Paul.

Paul would never have written anything like that; to him the charism was an effect of the free Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 11), not of the laying on of human hands; the latter conception suggests already an official grace, and marks the transition from the apostolic to the Catholic conception of office. The position of "Timothy" or "Titus," with reference to the episcopate and to the Church, remains enigmatic. Who are meant by these apostolic legates, who in reality no longer exist, who are to induct elders, and, in necessary cases (1 Tim. v. 19), pass judgment on them, that is, to hold a rank above them, and who are yet themselves admonished? They cannot yet be the monarchical bishops of the later second century, for the name *ἐπίσκοπος* still belongs impartially to the elders, while to Timothy is simply given the title of evangelist (2 Tim. iv. 5). Probably we must think of forerunners of the later monarchical bishops, of some prominent successors of the apostles, who, as yet without definite official character, here and there enjoyed supreme authority, and who, in the great anxiety awakened by the rampant Gnosticism, are exhorted in our Epistles to watchfulness, to necessary interference, but at the same time to a blameless and exemplary walk. In such forerunners of the episcopate, which shortly arose from the felt need of the times, the author sees the peculiar champions of sound doctrine in contrast with the false doctrines "eating as a canker" (2 Tim. ii. 17). Christians have indeed a writing inspired by God, which is profitable to them for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness, and which can thus instruct them in the salvation which is attained through faith in Christ, viz. the Old Testament (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16). But this Old Testament does not contain the gospel, the sound doctrine of Christ, in such a way that one could dispense with another more direct source. This more direct source is the apostolic tradition: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learnt and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (2 Tim. iii. 14); Paul, who sought to ground the faith of the Corinthians, not on the words of man's wisdom, but on the demonstration of the Spirit and of power (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5), would not have written thus. It is the remembrance of apostolic authority which sounds in the phrase *παρὰ τίνων*

ἔμαθες, that must guarantee the truth and purity of the doctrine against false doctrines. And we have elsewhere in our Epistles the same buttressing of "sound doctrines" by tradition. "This charge I commit unto thee" (παρατίθεμαί σοι), it is said 1 Tim. i. 18, and again: "The things thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii. 2). The favourite idea of παραθήκη, derived from παρατίθεσθαι, that is, of the "trust," although applied in 2 Tim. i. 12 to Paul himself, appears to describe the pure doctrine almost as a heritage (1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 14). Prominent individuals were not alone to be the champions of sound doctrine; the whole ἐκκλησία, the Church, was to be such, and this leads us, finally, to the advanced idea of the Church which we have in our Epistles. The idea ἐκκλησία appears as in Paul, both in the sense of the individual community (1 Tim. iii. 5) and of the whole Church (iii. 15), but the special interest of the author is connected with the latter. It is "the house of God," the "pillar and stay of the truth" (ἔδραϊωμα), that is, on it depends the continuance of divine truth, of the pure gospel in the world. That is the more noteworthy, as Paul's assumption, that the ἐκκλησία θεοῦ consists of genuine ἄγιοι (1 Cor. i. 2), is given up in 2 Tim. ii. 19. It is said there: "The foundation (θεμέλιος) of God standeth (ἔστηκεν) sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of iron; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." That means that in God's house, the Church, there are worthy and unworthy members; and he only who keeps himself unspotted from the latter, and has, on becoming a Christian (naming the name of Christ), broken with sin, is a genuine child of God. Now, how can a society so mixed be the pillar and ground of the truth? Two possibilities present themselves; we must either distinguish an invisible Church of true Christians from the visible by falling back on the saying, "The Lord knoweth

them that are His," or we can trust that in spite of the untrustworthiness of the visible Church, the officials, in virtue of a charism conveyed to them in the laying on of hands, will at all times preserve the sound doctrine, and hand it down pure. The former is the Protestant, the latter is the Catholic conception of the Church. And the Pastoral Epistles stand at the parting of the ways; and the New Testament, in presence of this parting, stops short, and leaves the rest to the history of the Church and of dogma.



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