



Word Pictures in the New Testament - Matthew

by

A. T. Robertson

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About *Word Pictures in the New Testament - Matthew* by A. T. Robertson

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Matthew

A.T. Robertson

Introduction

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

The passing years do not make it any plainer who actually wrote our Greek Matthew. Papias records, as quoted by Eusebius, that Matthew wrote the *Logia* of Jesus in Hebrew (Aramaic). Is our present Matthew a translation of the Aramaic *Logia* along with Mark and other sources as most modern scholars think? If so, was the writer the Apostle Matthew or some other disciple? There is at present no way to reach a clear decision in the light of the known facts. There is no real reason why the Apostle Matthew could not have written both the Aramaic *Logia* and our Greek Matthew, unless one is unwilling to believe that he would make use of Mark's work on a par with his own. But Mark's book rests primarily on the preaching of Simon Peter. Scholfield has recently (1927) published *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*. We know quite too little of the origin of the Synoptic Gospels to say dogmatically that the Apostle Matthew was not in any real sense the author.

If the book is genuine, as I believe, the date becomes a matter of interest. Here again there is nothing absolutely decisive save that it is later than the Gospel according to Mark which it apparently uses. If Mark is given an early date, between A.D. 50 to 60, then Matthew's book may be between 60 and 70, though many would place it between 70 and 80. It is not certain whether Luke wrote after Matthew or not, though that is quite possible. There is no definite use of Matthew by Luke that has been shown. One guess is as good as another and each decides by his own predilections. My own guess is that A.D. 60 is as good as any.

In the Gospel itself we find Matthew the publican (Mt 9:9; 10:3) though Mark (Mr 2:14) and Luke (Lu 5:27) call him Levi the publican. Evidently therefore he had two names like John Mark. It is significant that Jesus called this man from so disreputable a business to follow him. He was apparently not a disciple of John the Baptist. He was specially chosen by Jesus to be one of the Twelve Apostles, a business man called into the ministry as was true of the fishermen James and John, Andrew and Simon. In the lists of the Apostles he comes either seventh or eighth. There is nothing definite told about him in the Gospels apart from the circle of the Twelve after the feast which he gave to his fellow publicans in honor of Jesus.

Matthew was in the habit of keeping accounts and it is quite possible that he took notes of the sayings of Jesus as he heard them. At any rate he gives much attention to the teachings of Jesus as, for instance, the Sermon on the Mount in chapters Mt 5-7, the parables in Mt 13, the denunciation of the Pharisees in Mt 23, the great eschatological discourse in Mt 24; 25. As a publican in Galilee he was not a narrow Jew and so we do not expect a book prejudiced in favor of the Jews and against the Gentiles. He does seem to show that Jesus is the Messiah of Jewish expectation and hope and

so makes frequent quotations from the Old Testament by way of confirmation and illustration. There is no narrow nationalism in Matthew. Jesus is both the Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world.

There are ten parables in Matthew not in the other Gospels: The Tares, the Hid Treasure, the Net, the Pearl of Great Price, the Unmerciful Servant, the Labourers in the Vineyard, the Two Sons, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Ten Virgins, the Talents. The only miracles in Matthew alone are the Two Blind Men, the Coin in the Mouth of the Fish. But Matthew gives the narrative of the Birth of Jesus from the standpoint of Joseph while Luke tells that wonderful story from the standpoint of Mary. There are details of the Death and Resurrection given by Matthew alone.

The book follows the same general chronological plan as that in Mark, but with various groups like the miracles in Mt 8; 9, the parables in Mt 13.

The style is free from Hebraisms and has few individual peculiarities. The author is fond of the phrase the kingdom of heaven and pictures Jesus as the Son of man, but also as the Son of God. He sometimes abbreviates Mark's statements and sometimes expands them to be more precise.

Plummer shows the broad general plan of both Mark and Matthew to be the same as follows:

Introduction to the Gospel: Mr 1:1-13; Mt 3:1-4:11.

Ministry in Galilee: Mr 1:14-6:13; Mt 4:12-13:58.

Ministry in the Neighborhood: Mr 6:14-9:50; Mt 14:1-18:35.

Journey through Perea to Jerusalem: Mr 10:1-52; Mt 19:1-20:34.

Last week in Jerusalem: Mr 11:1-16:8; Mt 21:1-28:8.

The Gospel of Matthew comes first in the New Testament, though it is not so in all the Greek manuscripts. Because of its position it is the book most widely read in the New Testament and has exerted the greatest influence on the world. The book deserves this influence though it is later in date than Mark, not so beautiful as Luke, nor so profound as John. Yet it is a wonderful book and gives a just and adequate portraiture of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The author probably wrote primarily to persuade Jews that Jesus is the fulfilment of their Messianic hopes as pictured in the Old Testament. It is thus a proper introduction to the New Testament story in comparison with the Old Testament prophecy.

THE TITLE

The Textus Receptus has "The Holy Gospel according to Matthew" [*to kata Matthaion hagian Euaggelion*], though the Elzevirs omit "holy," not agreeing here with Stephanus, Griesbach, and Scholz. Only minuscules (cursive Greek manuscripts) and all late have the adjective. Other

minuscules and nine uncials including W (the Washington Codex of the fifth century), C of the fifth century (the palimpsest manuscript) and Delta of the ninth together with most Latin manuscripts have simply “Gospel according to Matthew” [*Euaggelion kata Matthaion*]. But Aleph and B the two oldest and best Greek uncials of the fourth century have only “According to Matthew” [*Kata Maththaion*] (note double th) and the Greek uncial D of the fifth or sixth century follows Aleph and B as do some of the earliest Old Latin manuscripts and the Curetonian Syriac. It is clear, therefore, that the earliest form of the title was simply “According to Matthew.” It may be doubted if Matthew (or the author, if not Matthew) had any title at all. The use of “according to” makes it plain that the meaning is not “the Gospel of Matthew,” but the Gospel as given by Matthew, [*secundum Matthaeum*], to distinguish the report by Matthew from that by Mark, by Luke, by John. Least of all is there any authority in the manuscripts for saying “Saint Matthew,” a Roman Catholic practice observed by some Protestants.

The word Gospel [*Euaggelion*] comes to mean good news in Greek, though originally a reward for good tidings as in Homer’s *Odyssey* XIV. 152 and in 2Ki 4:10. In the New Testament it is the good news of salvation through Christ. The English word Gospel probably comes from the Anglo-Saxon Godspell, story or narrative of God, the life of Christ. It was early confused with the Anglo-Saxon godspell, good story, which seems like a translation of the Greek [*euaggelion*]. But primarily the English word means the God story as seen in Christ which is the best news that the world has ever had. One thinks at once of the use of “word” [*Logos*] in Joh 1:1,14. So then it is, according to the Greek, not the Good News of Matthew, but the Good News of God, brought to us in Christ the Word, the Son of God, the Image of the Father, the Message of the Father. We are to study this story first as presented by Matthew. The message is God’s and it is as fresh to us today in Matthew’s record as when he first wrote it.

Chapter 1

1:1 **The Book** [*biblos*]. There is no article in the Greek, but the following genitives make it definite. It is our word Bible that is here used, *the Book* as Sir Walter Scott called it as he lay dying. The usual word for book is a diminutive form [*biblion*], a little book or roll such as we have in Lu 4:17, “The roll of the prophet Isaiah.” The pieces of papyrus [*papuros*], our paper, were pasted together to make a roll of varying lengths according to one’s needs. Matthew, of course, is not applying the word book to the Old Testament, probably not to his own book, but to “the genealogical table of Jesus Christ” [*biblos gene se s I sou Christou*], “the birth roll of Jesus Christ” Moffatt translates it. We have no means of knowing where the writer obtained the data for this genealogy. It differs radically from that in Lu 3:23-38. One can only give his own theory of the difference. Apparently in Matthew we have the actual genealogy of Joseph which would be the legal pedigree of Jesus according to Jewish custom. In Luke we apparently have the actual genealogy of Mary which would be the real line of Jesus which Luke naturally gives as he is writing for the Gentiles. **Jesus Christ.** Both words are used. The first is the name [*I sous*] given by the angel to Mary (Mt 1:21) which describes the mission of the child. The second was originally a verbal adjective [*christos*] meaning anointed from the verb to anoint [*chri*]. It was used often in the Septuagint as an adjective like “the anointed priest” (1Ki 2:10) and then as a substantive to translate the Hebrew word “Messiah” [*Messias*]. So Andrew said to Simon: “We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, Christ” (Joh 1:41). In the Gospels it is sometimes “the Anointed One,” “the Messiah,” but finally just a proper name as here, Jesus Christ. Paul in his later Epistles usually has it “Christ Jesus.”

The Son of David, the son of Abraham [*huiou Daueid huiou Abraam*]. Matthew proposes to show that Jesus Christ is on the human side the son of David, as the Messiah was to be, and the son of Abraham, not merely a real Jew and the heir of the promises, but the promise made to Abraham. So Matthew begins his line with Abraham while Luke traces his line back to Adam. The Hebrew and Aramaic often used the word son [*b n*] for the quality or character, but here the idea is descent. Christians are called sons of God because Christ has bestowed this dignity upon us (Ro 8:14; 9:26; Ga 3:26; 4:5-7). Verse 1 is the description of the list in verses 2-17. The names are given in three groups, Abraham to David (2-6), David to Babylon Removal (6-11), Jechoniah to Jesus (12-16). The removal to Babylon [*metoikesias Babul nos*] occurs at the end of verse 11, the beginning of verse 12, and twice in the resume in verse 17. This great event is used to mark off the two last divisions from each other. It is a good illustration of the genitive as the case of genus or kind. The Babylon removal could mean either to Babylon or from Babylon or, indeed, the removal of Babylon. But the readers would know the facts from the Old Testament, the removal of the Jews to Babylon. Then verse 17 makes a summary of the three lists, fourteen in each by counting David twice and omitting several, a sort of mnemonic device that is common enough. Matthew does not mean to

say that there were only fourteen in actual genealogy. The names of the women (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba the wife of Uriah) are likewise not counted. But it is a most interesting list.

1:2 **Begat** [*egenn sen*]. This word comes, like some of the early chapters of Genesis, with regularity through verse 16, until the birth of Jesus is reached when there is a sudden change. The word itself does not always mean immediate parentage, but merely direct descent. In verse 16 we have “Joseph the husband of Mary, from whom was begotten Jesus who is called Christ” [*ton I s ph ton andra Marias ex h s egenn th I sous ho legomenos Christos*]. The article occurs here each time with the object of “begat,” but not with the subject of the verb to distinguish sharply the proper names. In the case of David the King (1:6) and Joseph the husband of Mary (1:16) the article is repeated. The mention of the brethren of Judah (1:2) and of both Phares and Zara (1:3) may show that Matthew was not copying a family pedigree but making his own table. All the Greek manuscripts give verse 16 as above save the Ferrar Group of minuscules which are supported by the Sinaitic Syriac Version. Because of this fact Von Soden, whose text Moffatt translates, deliberately prints his text “*Jacob begat Jesus*” [*I s ph de egenn sen I soun*]. But the Sinaitic Syriac gives the Virgin Birth of Jesus in Mt 1:18-25. Hence it is clear that “begat” here in 1:16 must merely mean line of descent or the text has been tampered with in order to get rid of the Virgin Birth idea, but it was left untouched in 1:18-25. I have a full discussion of the problem in chapter XIV of *Studies in the Text of the New Testament*. The evidence as it now stands does not justify changing the text of the Greek uncials to suit the Sinaitic Syriac. The Virgin Birth of Jesus remains in 1:16. The spelling of these Hebrew names in English is usually according to the Hebrew form, not the Greek. In the Greek itself the Hebrew spelling is often observed in violation of the Greek rules for the ending of words with no consonants save *n*, *r*, *s*. But the list is not spelled consistently in the Greek, now like the Hebrew as in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, now like the Greek as in Judah, Solomon, Hezekiah, though the Hebrew style prevails.

1:18 **The birth of Jesus Christ** [*tou [I sou] Christou h genesis*]. In the Greek Jesus Christ comes before birth as the important matter after 1:16. It is not certain whether “Jesus” is here a part of the text as it is absent in the old Syriac and the Old Latin while the Washington Codex has only “Christ.” The Vatican Codex has “Christ Jesus.” But it is plain that the story of the birth of Jesus Christ is to be told briefly as follows, “on this wise” [*hout s*], the usual Greek idiom. The oldest and best manuscripts have the same word genealogy [*genesis*] used in 1:1, not the word for birth (begotten) as in 1:16 [*genn sis*]. “It is in fact the word Genesis. The evangelist is about to describe, not the genesis of the heaven and the earth, but the genesis of Him who made the heaven and the earth, and who will yet make a new heaven and a new earth” (Morison).

Betrothed to Joseph [*Mn steutheis s t i I s ph*]. Matthew proceeds to explain his statement in 1:16 which implied that Joseph, though the legal father of Jesus in the royal line, was not the actual father of Mary’s Son. Betrothal with the Jews was a serious matter, not lightly entered into and not lightly broken. The man who betrothed a maiden was legally husband (Ge 29:21; De 22:23f.) and

“an informal cancelling of betrothal was impossible” (McNeile). Though they did not live together as husband and wife till actual marriage, breach of faithfulness on the part of the betrothed was treated as adultery and punished with death. *The New Testament in Braid Scots* actually has “mairry’t till Joseph” for “betrothed to Joseph.” Matthew uses the genitive absolute construction here, a very common Greek idiom.

Of the Holy Ghost [*ek pneumatos hagiou*]. The discovery that Mary was pregnant was inevitable and it is plain that she had not told Joseph. She “was found with child” [*heureth en gastri echousa*]. This way of putting it, the usual Greek idiom, plainly shows that it was the discovery that shocked Joseph. He did not as yet know what Matthew plainly asserts that the Holy Ghost, not Joseph and not any man, was responsible for the pregnancy of Mary. The problem of the Virgin Birth of Jesus has been a disturbing fact to some through all the ages and is today to those who do not believe in the pre-existence of Christ, the Son of God, before his Incarnation on earth. This is the primal fact about the Birth of Christ. The Incarnation of Christ is clearly stated by Paul (2Co 8:9; Php 2:5-11; and involved in Col 1:15-19) and by John (Joh 1:14; 17:5). If one frankly admits the actual pre-existence of Christ and the real Incarnation, he has taken the longest and most difficult step in the matter of the supernatural Birth of Christ. That being true, no merely human birth without the supernatural element can possibly explain the facts. Incarnation is far more than the Indwelling of God by the Holy Spirit in the human heart. To admit real incarnation and also full human birth, both father and mother, creates a greater difficulty than to admit the Virgin Birth of Jesus begotten by the Holy Spirit, as Matthew here says, and born of the Virgin Mary. It is true that only Matthew and Luke tell the story of the supernatural birth of Jesus, though Joh 1:14 seems to refer to it. Mark has nothing whatever concerning the birth and childhood of Jesus and so cannot be used as a witness on the subject. Both Matthew and Luke present the birth of Jesus as not according to ordinary human birth. Jesus had no human father. There is such a thing in nature as parthenogenesis in the lower orders of life. But that scientific fact has no bearing here. We see here God sending his Son into the world to be the world’s Saviour and he gave him a human mother, but not a human father so that Jesus Christ is both Son of God and Son of Man, the God Man. Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from the standpoint of Joseph as Luke gives it from the standpoint of Mary. The two narratives harmonize with each other. One credits these most wonderful of all birth narratives according as he believes in the love and power of Almighty God to do what he wills. There is no miracle with God who has all power and all knowledge. The laws of nature are simply the expression of God’s will, but he has not revealed all his will in the laws that we discover. God is Spirit. He is Person. He holds in his own power all life. Joh 3:16 is called the Little Gospel because it puts briefly the love of God for men in sending his own Son to live and die for us.

1:19 **A Righteous Man** [*dikaios*]. Or just, not benignant or merciful. The same adjective is used of Zacharias and Elizabeth (Lu 1:6) and Simeon (Lu 2:25). “An upright man,” the *Braid Scots* has it. He had the Jewish conscientiousness for the observance of the law which would have been death by stoning (De 22:23). Though Joseph was upright, he would not do that. “As a good Jew he would

have shown his zeal if he had branded her with public disgrace” (McNeile). **And yet not willing** [*kai m thel n*]. So we must understand [*kai*] here, “and yet.” Matthew makes a distinction here between “willing” [*thel n*] and “wishing” [*eboul th*], that between purpose [*thel*] and desire [*boulomai*] a distinction not always drawn, though present here. It was not his purpose to “make her a public example” [*deigmatissai*], from the root [*deiknumi*] to show), a rare word (Col 2:15). The Latin Vulgate has it *traducere*, the Old Latin *divulgare*, Wycliff *pupplische* (publish), Tyndale *defame*, Moffatt *disgrace*, Braid Scots “Be i the mooth o’ the public.” The substantive [*deigmatismos*] occurs on the Rosetta Stone in the sense of “verification.” There are a few instances of the verb in the papyri though the meaning is not clear (Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary*). The compound form appears [*paradeigmatiz*] in Heb 6:6 and there are earlier instances of this compound than of the uncompounded, curiously enough. But new examples of the simple verb, like the substantive, may yet be found. The papyri examples mean to furnish a sample (P Tebt. 5.75), to make trial of (P Ryl. I. 28.32). The substantive means exposure in (P Ryl. I. 28.70). At any rate it is clear that Joseph “was minded to put her away privily.” He could give her a bill of divorcement [*apolusai*], the [*g t*] laid down in the Mishna, without a public trial. He had to give her the writ [*g t*] and pay the fine (De 24:1). So he proposed to do this privately [*lathrai*] to avoid all the scandal possible. One is obliged to respect and sympathize with the motives of Joseph for he evidently loved Mary and was appalled to find her untrue to him as he supposed. It is impossible to think of Joseph as the actual father of Jesus according to the narrative of Matthew without saying that Matthew has tried by legend to cover up the illegitimate birth of Jesus. The Talmud openly charges this sin against Mary. Joseph had “a short but tragic struggle between his legal conscience and his love” (McNeile).

1:20 **An angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream** [*aggelos kuriou kat’ onar ephan aut i*]. This expression [*aggelos kuriou*] is without the article in the New Testament except when, as in 1:24, there is reference to the angel previously mentioned. Sometimes in the Old Testament Jehovah Himself is represented by this phrase. Surely Joseph needed God’s help if ever man did. If Jesus was really God’s Son, Joseph was entitled to know this supreme fact that he might be just to both Mary and her Child. It was in a dream, but the message was distinct and decisive for Joseph. He is called “Son of David” as had been shown by Matthew in Mt 1:16. Mary is called his “wife” [*t n gunaika sou*]. He is told “not to become afraid” (ingressive first aorist passive subjunctive in prohibition), [*m phob th is*], “to take to his side” [*paralabein*], ingressive aorist active infinitive) her whom he had planned [*enthum thentos*], genitive absolute again, from [*en*] and [*thumos*] to send away with a writ of divorce. He had pondered and had planned as best he knew, but now God had called a halt and he had to decide whether he was willing to shelter Mary by marrying her and, if necessary, take upon himself whatever stigma might attach to her. Joseph was told that the child was begotten of the Holy Spirit and thus that Mary was innocent of any sin. But who would believe it now if he told it of her? Mary knew the truth and had not told him because she could not expect him to believe it.

1:21 **Thou shalt call his name Jesus** [*Kalesies to onoma autou I soun*]. The rabbis named six whose names were given before birth: “Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, Solomon, Josiah, and the name of the Messiah, whom may the Holy One, blessed be His name, bring in our day.” The angel puts it up to Joseph as the putative father to name the child. “Jesus is the same as Joshua, a contraction of Jehoshuah (Nu 13:16; 1Ch 7:27), signifying in Hebrew, ‘Jehovah is helper,’ or ‘Help of Jehovah’” (Broadus). So Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua (Heb 4:8). He is another Joshua to lead the true people of God into the Promised Land. The name itself was common enough as Josephus shows. Jehovah is Salvation as seen in Joshua for the Hebrews and in Jesus for all believers. “The meaning of the name, therefore, finds expression in the title *Saviour* applied to our Lord (Lu 1:47; 2:11; Joh 4:42)” (Vincent). He will save [*s sei*] his people from their sins and so be their Saviour [*S t r*]. He will be prophet, priest, and king, but “Saviour” sums it all up in one word. The explanation is carried out in the promise, “for he is the one who [*autos*] will save [*s sei*] with a play on the name Jesus) his people from their sins.” Paul will later explain that by the covenant people, the children of promise, God means the spiritual Israel, all who believe whether Jews or Gentiles. This wonderful word touches the very heart of the mission and message of the Messiah. Jesus himself will show that the kingdom of heaven includes all those and only those who have the reign of God in their hearts and lives. **From their sins** [*apo t n hamarti n aut n*]. Both sins of omission and of commission. The substantive [*hamartia*] is from the verb [*hamartanein*] and means missing the mark as with an arrow. How often the best of us fall short and fail to score. Jesus will save us away from [*apo*] as well as out of [*ex*] our sins. They will be cast into oblivion and he will cover them up out of sight.

1:22 **That it may be fulfilled** [*hina pl r th i*]. Alford says that “it is impossible to interpret [*hina*] in any other sense than in order that.” That was the old notion, but modern grammarians recognize the non-final use of this particle in the *Koin* and even the consecutive like the Latin *ut*. Some even argue for a causal use. If the context called for result, one need not hesitate to say so as in Mr 11:28; Joh 9:36; 1Jo 1:9; Re 9:20; 13:13. See discussion in my *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, pp. 997–9. All the same it is purpose here, God’s purpose, Matthew reports the angel as saying, spoken “by [*hupo*], immediate agent) the Lord through [*dia*], intermediate agent) the prophet.” **“All this has happened”** [*touto de holon gegonen*], present perfect indicative), stands on record as historical fact. But the Virgin Birth of Jesus is not due to this interpretation of Isa 7:14. It is not necessary to maintain (Broadus) that Isaiah himself saw anything more in his prophecy than that a woman then a virgin, would bear a son and that in the course of a few years Ahaz would be delivered from the king of Syria and Israel by the coming of the Assyrians. This historical illustration finds its richest fulfilment in the birth of Jesus from Mary. “Words of themselves are empty. They are useful only as vessels to convey things from mind to mind” (Morison). The Hebrew word for young woman is translated by virgin [*parthenos*], but it is not necessary to conclude that Isaiah himself contemplated the supernatural birth of Jesus. We do not have to say that the idea of the Virgin Birth of Jesus came from Jewish sources. Certainly it did not come from the pagan myths so foreign to this environment, atmosphere and spirit. It is far

simpler to admit the supernatural fact than try to explain the invention of the idea as a myth to justify the deification of Jesus. The birth, life, and death of Jesus throw a flood of light on the Old Testament narrative and prophecies for the early Christians. In Matthew and John in particular we often see “that the events of Christ’s life were divinely ordered for the express purpose of fulfilling the Old Testament” (McNeile). See Mt 2:15, 23; 4:14-17; 8:17; 12:17-21; 13:25; 21:4f.; Joh 12:38f.; 13:18; 19:24, 28, 36f.

1:23 **They shall call** [*kalesousin*]. Men, people, will call his name Immanuel, God with us. “The interest of the evangelist, as of all New Testament writers, in prophecy, was purely religious” (Bruce). But surely the language of Isaiah has had marvellous illustration in the Incarnation of Christ. This is Matthew’s explanation of the meaning of Immanuel, a descriptive appellation of Jesus Christ and more than a mere motto designation. God’s help, Jesus=the Help of God, is thus seen. One day Jesus will say to Philip: “He that has seen me has seen the Father” (Joh 14:9).

1:24 **Took unto him his wife** [*parelaben t n gunaika autou*]. The angel had told him not to be afraid to “take to his side” Mary his wife (1:20). So when he awoke from his sleep he promptly obeyed the angel and “took his wife home” (Moffatt). One can only imagine the relief and joy of Mary when Joseph nobly rose to his high duty toward her. I have tried to sketch Mary’s problems in *Mary the Mother of Jesus: Her Problems and Her Glory*.

1:25 **And knew her not** [*kai ouk egin sken aut n*]. Note the imperfect tense, continuous or linear action. Joseph lived in continence with Mary till the birth of Jesus. Matthew does not say that Mary bore no other children than Jesus. “Her firstborn” is not genuine here, but is a part of the text in Lu 2:7. The perpetual virginity of Mary is not taught here. Jesus had brothers and sisters and the natural meaning is that they were younger children of Joseph and Mary and not children of Joseph by a previous marriage. So Joseph “called his name Jesus” as the angel had directed and the child was born in wedlock. Joseph showed that he was an upright man in a most difficult situation.

Chapter 2

2:1 **Now when Jesus was born** [*tou de I sou genn thentos*]. The fact of the birth of Jesus is stated by the genitive absolute construction (first aorist passive participle of the same verb [*genna*] used twice already of the birth of Jesus, 1:16, 20, and used in the genealogy, 1:2-16). Matthew does not propose to give biographic details of the supernatural birth of Jesus, wonderful as it was and disbelieved as it is by some today who actually deny that Jesus was born at all or ever lived, men who talk of the Jesus Myth, the Christ Myth, etc. “The main purpose is to show the reception given by the world to the new-born Messianic King. Homage from afar, hostility at home; foreshadowing the fortunes of the new faith: reception by the Gentiles, rejection by the Jews” (Bruce).

In Bethlehem of Judea [*en B thleem t s Ioudaias*]. There was a Bethlehem in Galilee seven miles northwest of Nazareth (Josephus, *Antiquities* XIX. 15). This Bethlehem (house of bread, the name means) of Judah was the scene of Ruth’s life with Boaz (Ru 1:1f.; Mt. 1:5) and the home of David, descendant of Ruth and ancestor of Jesus (Mt. 1:5). David was born here and anointed king by Samuel (1Sa 17:12). The town came to be called the city of David (Lu 2:11). Jesus, who was born in this House of Bread called himself the Bread of Life (Joh 6:35), the true Manna from heaven. Matthew assumes the knowledge of the details of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem which are given in Lu 2:1-7 or did not consider them germane to his purpose. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem from Nazareth because it was the original family home for both of them. The first enrolment by the Emperor Augustus as the papyri show was by families [*kat’ oikian*]. Possibly Joseph had delayed the journey for some reason till now it approached the time for the birth of the child.

In the days of Herod the King [*en h merais H r idou tou Basile s*]. This is the only date for the birth of Christ given by Matthew. Luke gives a more precise date in his Gospel (Lu 2:1-3), the time of the first enrolment by Augustus and while Cyrenius was ruler of Syria. More will be said of Luke’s date when we come to his Gospel. We know from Matthew that Jesus was born while Herod was king, the Herod sometimes called Herod the Great. Josephus makes it plain that Herod died B.C. 4. He was first Governor of Galilee, but had been king of Judaea since B.C. 40 (by Antony and Octavius). I call him “Herod the Great Pervert” in *Some Minor Characters in the New Testament*. He was great in sin and in cruelty and had won the favour of the Emperor. The story in Josephus is a tragedy. It is not made plain by Matthew how long before the death of Herod Jesus was born. Our traditional date A.D. 1, is certainly wrong as Matthew shows. It seems plain that the birth of Jesus cannot be put later than B.C. 5. The data supplied by Luke probably call for B.C. 6 or 7.

Wise men from the east [*magoi apo anatol n*]. The etymology of [*Magi*] is quite uncertain. It may come from the same Indo-European root as (*megas*) *magnus*, though some find it of Babylonian origin. Herodotus speaks of a tribe of Magi among the Medians. Among the Persians there was a priestly caste of Magi like the Chaldeans in Babylon (Da 1:4). Daniel was head of such an order (Da 2:48). It is the same word as our “magician” and it sometimes carried that idea as in the case

of Simon Magus (Ac 8:9,11) and of Elymas Barjesus (Ac 13:6,8). But here in Matthew the idea seems to be rather that of astrologers. Babylon was the home of astrology, but we only know that the men were from the east whether Arabia, Babylon, Persia, or elsewhere. The notion that they were kings arose from an interpretation of Is 60:3; Re 21:24. The idea that they were three in number is due to the mention of three kinds of gifts (gold, frankincense, myrrh), but that is no proof at all. Legend has added to the story that the names were Caspar, Balthasar, and Melchior as in *Ben Hur* and also that they represent Shem, Ham, and Japhet. A casket in the Cologne Cathedral actually is supposed to contain the skulls of these three Magi. The word for east [*apo anatol n*] means “from the risings” of the sun.

2:2 For we saw his star in the east [*eidomen gar autou ton asteran en t i anatol i*]. This does not mean that they saw the star which was in the east. That would make them go east to follow it instead of west from the east. The words “in the east” are probably to be taken with “we saw” i.e. we were in the east when we saw it, or still more probably “we saw his star at its rising” or “when it rose” as Moffatt puts it. The singular form here [*t i anatol i*] does sometimes mean “east” (Re 21:13), though the plural is more common as in Mt 2:1. In Lu 1:78 the singular means dawn as the verb [*aneteilen*] does in Mt 4:16 (Septuagint). The Magi ask where is the one born king of the Jews. They claim that they had seen his star, either a miracle or a combination of bright stars or a comet. These men may have been Jewish proselytes and may have known of the Messianic hope, for even Vergil had caught a vision of it. The whole world was on tiptoe of expectancy for something. Moulton (*Journal of Theological Studies*, 1902, p. 524) “refers to the Magian belief that a star could be the *fravashi*, the counterpart or angel (cf. Mt 18:10) of a great man” (McNeile). They came to worship the newly born king of the Jews. Seneca (*Epistle* 58) tells of Magians who came to Athens with sacrifices to Plato after his death. They had their own way of concluding that the star which they had seen pointed to the birth of this Messianic king. Cicero (*De Divin.* i. 47) “refers to the constellation from which, on the birthnight of Alexander, Magians foretold that the destroyer of Asia was born” (McNeile). Alford is positive that no miracle is intended by the report of the Magi or by Matthew in his narrative. But one must be allowed to say that the birth of Jesus, if really God’s only Son who has become Incarnate, is the greatest of all miracles. Even the methods of astrologers need not disturb those who are sure of this fact.

2:3 He was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him [*etarachth kai p sa Ierosoluma met’ autou*]. Those familiar with the story of Herod the Great in Josephus can well understand the meaning of these words. Herod in his rage over his family rivalries and jealousies put to death the two sons of Mariamne (Aristobulus and Alexander), Mariamne herself, and Antipater, another son and once his heir, besides the brother and mother of Mariamne (Aristobulus, Alexandra) and her grandfather John Hyrcanus. He had made will after will and was now in a fatal illness and fury over the question of the Magi. He showed his excitement and the whole city was upset because the people knew only too well what he could do when in a rage over the disturbance of his plans. “The foreigner and

usurper feared a rival, and the tyrant feared the rival would be welcome” (Bruce). Herod was a hated Idumaeon.

2:4 He inquired of them where the Christ should be born [*epunthaneto par' aut n pou ho Christos genn tai*]. The prophetic present [*genn tai*] is given, the very words of Herod retained by Matthew's report. The imperfect tense (*epunthaneto*) suggests that Herod inquired repeatedly, probably of one and another of the leaders gathered together, both Sadducees (chief priests) and Pharisees (scribes). McNeile doubts, like Holtzmann, if Herod actually called together all the Sanhedrin and probably “he could easily ask the question of a single scribe,” because he had begun his reign with a massacre of the Sanhedrin (Josephus, *Ant.* XIV. ix. 4). But that was thirty years ago and Herod was desperately in earnest to learn what the Jews really expected about the coming of “the Messiah.” Still Herod probably got together not the Sanhedrin since “elders” are not mentioned, but leaders among the chief priests and scribes, not a formal meeting but a free assembly for conference. He had evidently heard of this expected king and he would swallow plenty of pride to be able to compass the defeat of these hopes.

2:5 And they said unto him [*hoi de eipan aut i*]. Whether the ecclesiastics had to search their scriptures or not, they give the answer that is in accord with the common Jewish opinion that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem and of the seed of David (Joh 7:42). So they quote Mic 5:2, “a free paraphrase” Alford calls it, for it is not precisely like the Hebrew text or like the Septuagint. It may have come from a collection of *testimonia* with which J. Rendel Harris has made the world familiar. He had consulted the experts and now he has their answer. Bethlehem of Judah is the place. The use of the perfect passive indicative [*gegraptai*] is the common form in quoting scripture. It stands written. **Shall be shepherd** [*poimanei*]. The Authorized Version had “shall rule,” but “shepherd” is correct. “Homer calls kings ‘the shepherds of the people’” (Vincent). In Heb 13:20 Jesus is called “the great shepherd of the sheep.” Jesus calls himself “the good shepherd” (Joh 10:11). Peter calls Christ “the chief shepherd” (1Pe 2:25). “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd” (Re 7:17). Jesus told Peter to “shepherd” the lambs (Joh 21:16). Our word pastor means shepherd.

2:7 Then Herod privily called the wise men [*tote H r id s lathrai kalesas tous magous*]. He had manifestly not told members of the Sanhedrin why he was concerned about the Messiah. So he conceals his motives to the Magi. And yet he “learned of them carefully” [*ekrib sen*], “learned exactly” or “accurately.” He was anxious to see if the Jewish prophecy of the birthplace of the Messiah agreed with the indications of the star to the Magi. He kept to himself his purpose. The time of the appearing star [*ton chronon tou phainomenou asteros*] is not “the time when the star appeared,” but the age of the star's appearance.

2:8 Sent them to Bethlehem and said [*pempsas autous eis B thleem eipen*]. Simultaneous aorist participle, “sending said.” They were to “search out accurately” [*exetasate akrib s*] concerning the child. Then “bring me word, that I also may come and worship him.” The deceit of Herod seemed

plausible enough and might have succeeded but for God's intervention to protect His Son from the jealous rage of Herod.

2:9 **Went before them** [*pro gen autous*]. Imperfect tense, kept on in front of them, not as a guide to the town since they now knew that, but to the place where the child was, the inn according to Lu 2:7. Justin Martyr says that it was in a cave. The stall where the cattle and donkeys stayed may have been beneath the inn in the side of the hill.

2:10 **They rejoiced with exceeding great joy** [*echar san charan megal n sphodra*]. Second aorist passive indicative with cognate accusative. Their joy was due to the success of the search.

2:11 **Opening their treasures** [*anoixantes tous th saurous aut n*]. Here "treasures" means "caskets" from the verb [*tith mi*], receptacle for valuables. In the ancient writers it meant "treasury" as in 1Macc. 3:29. So a "storehouse" as in Mt 13:52. Then it means the things laid up in store, treasure in heaven (Mt 6:20), in Christ (Col 2:3). In their "caskets" the Magi had gold, frankincense, and myrrh, all found at that time in Arabia, though gold was found in Babylon and elsewhere.

2:12 **Warned in a dream** [*chr matisthentes kat' onar*]. The verb means to transact business [*chr matiz*] from [*chr ma*], and that from [*chraomai*], to use. Then to consult, to deliberate, to make answer as of magistrates or an oracle, to instruct, to admonish. In the Septuagint and the New Testament it occurs with the idea of being warned by God and also in the papyri (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 122). Wycliff puts it here: "An answer taken in sleep."

2:15 **Until the death of Herod** [*he s t s teleut s H r idou*]. The Magi had been warned in a dream not to report to Herod and now Joseph was warned in a dream to take Mary and the child along [*mellei z tein tou apolesai*] gives a vivid picture of the purpose of Herod in these three verbs). In Egypt Joseph was to keep Mary and Jesus till the death of Herod the monster. Matthew quotes Ho 11:1 to show that this was in fulfilment of God's purpose to call his Son out of Egypt. He may have quoted again from a collection of *testimonia* rather than from the Septuagint. There is a Jewish tradition in the Talmud that Jesus "brought with him magic arts out of Egypt in an incision on his body" (*Shabb. 104b*). "This attempt to ascribe the Lord's miracles to Satanic agency seems to be independent of Matthew, and may have been known to him, so that one object of his account may have been to combat it" (McNeile).

2:16 **Slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem** [*aneilen pantas tous paidas tous en B thleem*]. The flight of Joseph was justified, for Herod was violently enraged [*ethum th lian*] that he had been mocked by the Magi, deluded in fact [*enepaichth*]. Vulgate *illus esset*. Herod did not know, of course, how old the child was, but he took no chances and included all the little boys [*tous paidas*, masculine article) in Bethlehem two years old and under, perhaps fifteen or twenty. It is no surprise that Josephus makes no note of this small item in Herod's chamber of horrors. It was another fulfilment of the prophecy in Jer 31:15. The quotation (2:18) seems to be from the

Septuagint. It was originally written of the Babylonian captivity but it has a striking illustration in this case also. Macrobius (*Sat.* II. iv. II) notes that Augustus said that it was better to be Herod's sow [*hus*] than his son [*huios*], for the sow had a better chance of life.

2:20 **For they are dead** [*tethn kasin*]. Only Herod had sought to kill the young child, but it is a general statement of a particular fact as is common with people who say: "They say." The idiom may be suggested by Ex 4:19: "For all are dead that sought thy life."

2:22 **Warned in a dream** [*chr matistheis kat' onar*]. He was already afraid to go to Judea because Archelaus was reigning (ruling, not technically king, [*basileuei*]). In a fret at last before his death Herod had changed his will again and put Archelaus, the worst of his living sons, in the place of Antipas. So Joseph went to Galilee. Matthew has had nothing about the previous dwelling of Joseph and Mary in Nazareth. We learn that from Luke who tells nothing of the flight into Egypt. The two narratives supplement one another and are in no sense contradictory.

2:23 **Should be called a Nazarene** [*Naz raios kl th setai*]. Matthew says "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets" [*dia t n proph t n*]. It is the plural and no single prophecy exists which says that the Messiah was to be called a Nazarene. It may be that this term of contempt (Joh 1:46; 7:52) is what is meant, and that several prophecies are to be combined like Ps. 22:6,8; 69:11,19; Isa 53:2,3,4. The name Nazareth means a shoot or branch, but it is by no means certain that Matthew has this in mind. It is best to confess that we do not know. See Broadus on Matthew for the various theories. But, despised as Nazareth was at that time, Jesus has exalted its fame. The lowly Nazarene he was at first, but it is our glory to be the followers of the Nazarene. Bruce says that "in this case, therefore, we certainly know that the historic fact suggested the prophetic reference, instead of the prophecy creating the history." The parallels drawn by Matthew between the history of Israel and the birth and infancy of Jesus are not mere fancy. History repeats itself and writers of history find frequent parallels. Surely Matthew is not beyond the bounds of reason or of fact in illustrating in his own way the birth and infancy of Jesus by the Providence of God in the history of Israel.

Chapter 3

3:1 **And in those days cometh John the Baptist** [*en de tais h merais paraginetai I an s ho Baptist s*]. Here the synoptic narrative begins with the baptism of John (Mt. 3:1; Mr 1:2; Lu 3:1) as given by Peter in Ac 1:22, “from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us” (cf. also Ac 10:37-43, Peter’s summary to Cornelius very much like the outline of Mark’s Gospel). Matthew does not indicate the date when John appeared as Luke does in ch. 3 (the fifteenth year of Tiberius’s reign). It was some thirty years after the birth of John, precisely how long after the return of Joseph and Mary to Nazareth we do not know. Moffatt translates the verb [*paraginetai*] “came on the scene,” but it is the historical present and calls for a vivid imagination on the part of the reader. There he is as he comes forward, makes his appearance. His name John means “Gift of Jehovah” (cf. German *Gotthold*) and is a shortened form of Johanan. He is described as “the Baptist,” “the Baptizer” for that is the rite that distinguishes him. The Jews probably had proselyte baptism as I. Abrahams shows (*Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, p. 37). But this rite was meant for the Gentiles who accepted Judaism. John is treating the Jews as Gentiles in demanding baptism at their hands on the basis of repentance.

Preaching in the wilderness of Judea [*K russ n en t i e r m i t s Ioudaias*]. It was the rough region in the hills toward the Jordan and the Dead Sea. There were some people scattered over the barren cliffs. Here John came in close touch with the rocks, the trees, the goats, the sheep, and the shepherds, the snakes that slipped before the burning grass over the rocks. He was the Baptizer, but he was also the Preacher, heralding his message out in the barren hills at first where few people were, but soon his startling message drew crowds from far and near. Some preachers start with crowds and drive them away.

3:2 **Repent** [*metanoete*]. Broadus used to say that this is the worst translation in the New Testament. The trouble is that the English word “repent” means “to be sorry again” from the Latin *repenitet* (impersonal). John did not call on the people to be sorry, but to change (think afterwards) their mental attitudes [*metanoete*] and conduct. The Vulgate has it “do penance” and Wycliff has followed that. The Old Syriac has it better: “Turn ye.” The French (Geneva) has it “Amendez vous.” This is John’s great word (Bruce) and it has been hopelessly mistranslated. The tragedy of it is that we have no one English word that reproduces exactly the meaning and atmosphere of the Greek word. The Greek has a word meaning to be sorry [*metamelomai*] which is exactly our English word repent and it is used of Judas (Mt 27:3). John was a new prophet with the call of the old prophets: “Turn ye” (Joe 2:12; Isa. 55:7; Eze 33:11,15).

For the kingdom of heaven is at hand [*ggiken gar h Basileia t n ouran n*]. Note the position of the verb and the present perfect tense. It was a startling word that John thundered over the hills and it re-echoed throughout the land. The Old Testament prophets had said that it would come some day in God’s own time. John proclaims as the herald of the new day that it has come, has drawn

near. How near he does not say, but he evidently means very near, so near that one could see the signs and the proof. The words “the kingdom of heaven” he does not explain. The other Gospels use “the kingdom of God” as Matthew does a few times, but he has “the kingdom of heaven” over thirty times. He means “the reign of God,” not the political or ecclesiastical organization which the Pharisees expected. His words would be understood differently by different groups as is always true of popular preachers. The current Jewish apocalypses had numerous eschatological ideas connected with the kingdom of heaven. It is not clear what sympathy John had with these eschatological features. He employs vivid language at times, but we do not have to confine John’s intellectual and theological horizon to that of the rabbis of his day. He has been an original student of the Old Testament in his wilderness environment without any necessary contact with the Essenes who dwelt there. His voice is a new one that strikes terror to the perfunctory theologians of the temple and of the synagogue. It is the fashion of some critics to deny to John any conception of the spiritual content of his words, a wholly gratuitous criticism.

For this is he that was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet [*houtos gar estin ho rh theis dia Esaiou tou proph tou*]. This is Matthew’s way of interpreting the mission and message of the Baptist. He quotes Isa 40:3 where “the prophet refers to the return of Israel from the exile, accompanied by their God” (McNeile). He applies it to the work of John as “a voice crying in the wilderness” for the people to make ready the way of the Lord who is now near. He was only a voice, but what a voice he was. He can be heard yet across the centuries.

3:4 Now John himself [*autos de ho I an s*]. Matthew thus introduces the man himself and draws a vivid sketch of his dress (note [*eichen*], imperfect tense), his habit, and his food. Would such an uncouth figure be welcome today in any pulpit in our cities? In the wilderness it did not matter. It was probably a matter of necessity with him, not an affectation, though it was the garb of the original Elijah (2Ki 1:8), rough sackcloth woven from the hair of camels. Plummer holds that “John consciously took Elijah as a model.”

3:6 And they were baptized [*kai ebaptizonto*]. It is the imperfect tense to show the repetition of the act as the crowds from Judea and the surrounding country kept going out to him [*exeporeueto*], imperfect again, a regular stream of folks going forth. Moffatt takes it as causative middle, “got baptized,” which is possible. “The movement of course was gradual. It began on a small scale and steadily grew till it reached colossal proportions” (Bruce). It is a pity that baptism is now such a matter of controversy. Let Plummer, the great Church of England commentator on Matthew, speak here of John’s baptising these people who came in throngs: “It is his office to bind them to a new life, symbolized by immersion in water.” That is correct, symbolized, not caused or obtained. The word “river” is in the correct text, “river Jordan.” They came “confessing their sins” [*exomologoumenoi*], probably each one confessing just before he was baptized, “making open confession” (Weymouth). Note [*ex*]. It was a never to be forgotten scene here in the Jordan. John

was calling a nation to a new life. They came from all over Judea and even from the other side of El Ghor (the Jordan Gorge), Perea. Mark adds that finally all Jerusalem came.

3:7 The Pharisees and Sadducees [*t n Pharisai n kai Saddoukai n*]. These two rival parties do not often unite in common action, but do again in Mt 16:1. “Here a strong attraction, there a strong repulsion, made them for the moment forget their differences” (McNeile). John saw these rival ecclesiastics “coming for baptism” [*erchomenous epi to baptisma*]. Alford speaks of “the Pharisees representing hypocritical superstition; the Sadducees carnal unbelief.” One cannot properly understand the theological atmosphere of Palestine at this time without an adequate knowledge of both Pharisees and Sadducees. The books are numerous besides articles in the Bible dictionaries. I have pictured the Pharisees in my first (1916) Stone Lectures, *The Pharisees and Jesus*. John clearly grasped the significance of this movement on the part of the Pharisees and Sadducees who had followed the crowds to the Jordan. He had welcomed the multitudes, but right in the presence of the crowds he exposes the hypocrisy of the ecclesiastics. **Ye offspring of vipers** [*genn mata echidn n*]. Jesus (Mt 12:34; 23:33) will use the same language to the Pharisees. Broods of snakes were often seen by John in the rocks and when a fire broke out they would scurry [*phugein*] to their holes for safety. “The coming wrath” was not just for Gentiles as the Jews supposed, but for all who were not prepared for the kingdom of heaven (1Th 1:10). No doubt the Pharisees and Sadducees winced under the sting of this powerful indictment.

3:8 Fruit worthy of repentance [*Karpon axion t s metanoias*]. John demands proof from these men of the new life before he administers baptism to them. “The fruit is not the change of heart, but the acts which result from it” (McNeile). It was a bold deed for John thus to challenge as unworthy the very ones who posed as lights and leaders of the Jewish people. “Any one can do [*poi sate, vide*] Ge 1:11) acts externally good but only a good man can grow a crop of right acts and habits” (Bruce).

3:9 And think not to say within yourselves [*kai m dox te legein en heautois*]. John touched the tender spot, their ecclesiastical pride. They felt that the “merits of the fathers,” especially of Abraham, were enough for all Israelites. At once John made clear that, reformer as he was, a breach existed between him and the religious leaders of the time. **Of these stones** [*ek t n lith n tout n*]. “Pointing, as he spoke to the pebbles on the beach of the Jordan” (Vincent).

3:10 Is the axe laid [*h axin keitai*]. This verb [*keitai*] is used as the perfect passive of [*tith mi*]. But the idea really is, “the axe lies at [*pros*], before) the root of the trees.” It is there ready for business. The prophetic present occurs also with “is hewn down” and “cast.”

3:11 Mightier than I [*ischuroteros mou*]. Ablative after the comparative adjective. His baptism is water baptism, but the Coming One “will baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire.” “Life in the coming age is in the sphere of the Spirit. Spirit and fire are coupled with one preposition as a double baptism” (McNeile). Broadus takes “fire” in the sense of separation like the use of the fan. As the humblest

of servants John felt unworthy to take off the sandals of the Coming One. About [*bastaz*] see on Mt 8:17.

3:12 **Will burn up with unquenchable fire** [*katakausei puri asbest i*]. Note perfective use of [*kata*]. The threshing floor, the fan, the wheat, the garner, the chaff [*achuron*], chaff, straw, stubble), the fire furnish a life-like picture. The “fire” here is probably judgment by and at the coming of the Messiah just as in verse 11. The Messiah “will thoroughly cleanse” [*diakatharisei*], Attic future of [-*iz*] and note [*dia*-]. He will sweep from side to side to make it clean.

3:13 **Then cometh Jesus** [*tote paragnetai ho I sous*]. The same historical present used in 3:1. He comes all the way from Galilee to Jordan “to be baptized by him” [*tou baptisth nai hupo autou*]. The genitive articular infinitive of purpose, a very common idiom. The fame of John had reached Nazareth and the hour has come for which Jesus has waited.

3:14 **Would have hindered** [*diek luen*]. Rather “tried to prevent” as Moffatt has it. It is the conative imperfect. The two men of destiny are face to face for the first time apparently. The Coming One stands before John and he recognizes him before the promised sign is given.

3:15 **To fulfil all righteousness** [*pl r sai p san dikaiosun n*]. The explanation of Jesus satisfies John and he baptizes the Messiah though he has no sins to confess. It was proper [*prepon*] to do so else the Messiah would seem to hold aloof from the Forerunner. Thus the ministries of the two are linked together.

3:16 **The Spirit of God descending as a dove** [*pneuma theou katabainon h sei peristeran*]. It is not certain whether Matthew means that the Spirit of God took the form of a dove or came upon Jesus as a dove comes down. Either makes sense, but Luke (Lu 3:22) has it “in bodily form as a dove” and that is probably the idea here. The dove in Christian art has been considered the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

3:17 **A voice out of the heavens** [*ph n ek t n ouran n*]. This was the voice of the Father to the Son whom he identifies as His Son, “my beloved Son.” Thus each person of the Trinity is represented (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) at this formal entrance of Jesus upon his Messianic ministry. John heard the voice, of course, and saw the dove. It was a momentous occasion for John and for Jesus and for the whole world. The words are similar to Ps 2:7 and the voice at the Transfiguration (Mt 17:5). The good pleasure of the Father is expressed by the timeless aorist [*eudok sa*].

Chapter 4

4:1 **To be tempted of the devil** [*peirasth nai hupo tou diabolou*]. Matthew locates the temptation at a definite time, “then” [*tote*] and place, “into the wilderness” [*eis t n er mon*], the same general region where John was preaching. It is not surprising that Jesus was tempted by the devil immediately after his baptism which signified the formal entrance upon the Messianic work. That is a common experience with ministers who step out into the open for Christ. The difficulty here is that Matthew says that “Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil.” Mark (Mr 1:12) puts it more strongly that the Spirit “drives” [*ekballei*] Christ into the wilderness. It was a strong impulsion by the Holy Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness to think through the full significance of the great step that he had now taken. That step opened the door for the devil and involved inevitable conflict with the slanderer [*tou diabolou*]. Judas has this term applied to him (Joh 6:70) as it is to men (2Ti 3:3; Tit 2:3) and women (she devils, 1Ti 3:11) who do the work of the arch slanderer. There are those today who do not believe that a personal devil exists, but they do not offer an adequate explanation of the existence and presence of sin in the world. Certainly Jesus did not discount or deny the reality of the devil’s presence. The word “tempt” here [*peiraz*] and in 4:3 means originally to test, to try. That is its usual meaning in the ancient Greek and in the Septuagint. Bad sense of [*ekpeiraz*] in 4:7 as in De 6:16. Here it comes to mean, as often in the New Testament, to solicit to sin. The evil sense comes from its use for an evil purpose.

4:2 **Had fasted** [*n steusas*]. No perfunctory ceremonial fast, but of communion with the Father in complete abstention from food as in the case of Moses during forty days and forty nights (Ex 34:28). “The period of the fast, as in the case of Moses was spent in a spiritual ecstasy, during which the wants of the natural body were suspended” (Alford). “He afterward hungered” and so at the close of the period of forty days.

4:3 **If thou art the Son of God** [*ei huios ei tou theou*]. More exactly, “If thou art Son of God,” for there is no article with “Son.” The devil is alluding to the words of the Father to Jesus at the baptism: “This is my Son the Beloved.” He challenges this address by a condition of the first class which assumes the condition to be true and deftly calls on Jesus to exercise his power as Son of God to appease his hunger and thus prove to himself and all that he really is what the Father called him. **Become bread** [*artoi gen ntai*]. Literally, “that these stones (round smooth stones which possibly the devil pointed to or even picked up and held) become loaves” (each stone a loaf). It was all so simple, obvious, easy. It would satisfy the hunger of Christ and was quite within his power. **It is written** [*gegraptai*]. Perfect passive indicative, stands written and is still in force. Each time Jesus quotes Deuteronomy to repel the subtle temptation of the devil. Here it is De 8:3 from the Septuagint. Bread is a mere detail (Bruce) in man’s dependence upon God.

4:5 **Then the devil taketh him** [*tote paralambanei auton ho diabolos*]. Matthew is very fond of this temporal adverb [*tote*]. See already 2:7; 3:13; 4:1, 5. Note historic present with vivid

picturesqueness. Luke puts this temptation third, the geographical order. But was the person of Christ allowed to be at the disposal of the devil during these temptations? Alford so holds. **On the pinnacle of the temple** [*epi to pterugion tou hierou*]. Literally “wing:” the English word “pinnacle” is from the Latin *pinnaculum*, a diminutive of *pinna* (wing). “The temple” [*tou hierou*] here includes the whole temple area, not just the sanctuary [*ho naos*], the Holy Place and Most Holy Place. It is not clear what place is meant by “wing.” It may refer to Herod’s royal portico which overhung the Kedron Valley and looked down some four hundred and fifty feet, a dizzy height (Josephus, *Ant.* XV. xi. 5). This was on the south of the temple court. Hegesippus says that James the Lord’s brother was later placed on the wing of the temple and thrown down therefrom.

4:6 Cast thyself down [*bale seauton kat*]. The appeal to hurl himself down into the abyss below would intensify the nervous dread that most people feel at such a height. The devil urged presumptuous reliance on God and quotes Scripture to support his view (Ps 91:11f.). So the devil quotes the Word of God, misinterprets it, omits a clause, and tries to trip the Son of God by the Word of God. It was a skilful thrust and would also be accepted by the populace as proof that Jesus was the Messiah if they should see him sailing down as if from heaven. This would be a sign from heaven in accord with popular Messianic expectation. The promise of the angels the devil thought would reassure Jesus. They would be a spiritual parachute for Christ.

4:7 Thou shall not tempt [*ouk ekpeiraseis*]. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy again (De 6:16) and shows that the devil has wholly misapplied God’s promise of protection.

4:8 And showeth him [*kai deiknusin aut i*]. This wonderful panorama had to be partially mental and imaginative, since the devil caused to pass in review “all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.” But this fact does not prove that all phases of the temptations were subjective without any objective presence of the devil. Both could be true. Here again we have the vivid historical present [*deiknusin*]. The devil now has Christ upon a very high mountain whether the traditional Quarantania or not. It was from Nebo’s summit that Moses caught the vision of the land of Canaan (De 34:1-3). Luke (Lu 4:5) says that the whole panorama was “in a moment of time” and clearly psychological and instantaneous.

4:9 All these things will I give thee [*tauta soi panta d s*]. The devil claims the rule of the world, not merely of Palestine or of the Roman Empire. “The kingdoms of the cosmos” (4:8) were under his sway. This word for world brings out the orderly arrangement of the universe while [*h oikoumen*] presents the inhabited earth. Jesus does not deny the grip of the devil on the world of men, but the condition [*ean*] and aorist subjunctive, second class undetermined with likelihood of determination), was spurned by Jesus. As Matthew has it Jesus is plainly to “fall down and worship me” [*pes n prokun s is moi*], while Luke (Lu 4:7) puts it, “worship before me” [*en pion emou*], a less offensive demand, but one that really involved worship of the devil. The ambition of Jesus is thus appealed to at the price of recognition of the devil’s primacy in the world. It was compromise that involved surrender of the Son of God to the world ruler of this darkness. “The temptation was threefold: to

gain a temporal, not a spiritual, dominion; to gain it at once; and to gain it by an act of homage to the ruler of this world, which would make the self-constituted Messiah the vice-regent of the devil and not of God” (McNeile).

4:10 **Get thee hence, Satan** [*Hupage, Satan*]. The words “behind me” [*opis mou*] belong to Mt 16:23, not here. “Begone” Christ says to Satan. This temptation is the limit of diabolical suggestion and argues for the logical order in Matthew. “Satan” means the adversary and Christ so terms the devil here. The third time Jesus quotes Deuteronomy, this time De 6:13, and repels the infamous suggestion by Scripture quotation. The words “him alone thou shalt serve” need be recalled today. Jesus will warn men against trying to serve God and mammon (Mt 6:24). The devil as the lord of the evil world constantly tries to win men to the service of the world and God. This is his chief camouflage for destroying a preacher’s power for God. The word here in Mt 4:10 for serve is [*latreuseis*] from [*latris*] a hired servant, one who works for hire, then render worship.

4:11 **Then the devil leaveth him** [*tote aphi sin auton ho diabolos*]. Note the use of “then” [*tote*] again and the historical present. The movement is swift. “And behold” [*kai idou*] as so often in Matthew carries on the life-like picture. “**Angels came** (aorist tense [*pros lthon*] punctiliar action) **and were ministering** [*di konoun*], picturesque imperfect, linear action) **unto him.**” The victory was won in spite of the fast of forty days and the repeated onsets of the devil who had tried every avenue of approach. The angels could cheer him in the inevitable nervous and spiritual reaction from the strain of conflict, and probably also with food as in the case of Elijah (1Ki 19:6f.). The issues at stake were of vast import as the champions of light and darkness grappled for the mastery of men. Lu 4:13 adds, that the devil left Jesus only “until a good opportunity” [*achri kairou*].

4:12 **Now when he heard** [*akousas de*]. The reason for Christ’s return to Galilee is given here to be that John had been delivered up into prison. The Synoptic Gospels skip from the temptation of Jesus to the Galilean ministry, a whole year. But for Joh 1:19-3:36 we should know nothing of the “year of obscurity” (Stalker). John supplies items to help fill in the picture. Christ’s work in Galilee began after the close of the active ministry of the Baptist who lingered on in prison for a year or more.

4:13 **Dwelt in Capernaum** [*Kat ik sen eis Kapharnaoum*]. He went first to Nazareth, his old home, but was rejected there (Lu 4:16-31). In Capernaum (probably the modern [*Tell H-m*] Jesus was in a large town, one of the centres of Galilean political and commercial life, a fishing mart, where many Gentiles came. Here the message of the kingdom would have a better chance than in Jerusalem with its ecclesiastical prejudices or in Nazareth with its local jealousies. So Jesus “made his home” [*kat ik sen*] here.

4:16 **Saw a great light** [*ph s eiden mega*]. Matthew quotes Isa 9:1f., and applies the words about the deliverer from Assyria to the Messiah. “The same district lay in spiritual darkness and death

and the new era dawned when Christ went thither” (McNeile). Light sprang up from those who were sitting in the region and shadow of death [*en chor i kai ski i thanatou*]. Death is personified.

4:17 Began Jesus to preach [*rxato ho I sous k russein*]. In Galilee. He had been preaching for over a year already elsewhere. His message carries on the words of the Baptist about “repentance” and the “kingdom of heaven” (Mt 3:2) being at hand. The same word for “preaching” [*k russein*] from [*k rux*], herald, is used of Jesus as of John. Both proclaimed the good news of the kingdom. Jesus is more usually described as the Teacher, [*ho didaskalos*] who taught [*edidasken*] the people. He was both herald and teacher as every preacher should be.

4:18 Casting a net into the sea [*ballantas amphibl stron eis t n thalassan*]. The word here for net is a casting-net (compare [*amphiball*] in Mr 1:16, casting on both sides). The net was thrown over the shoulder and spread into a circle [*amphi*]. In 4:20 and 4:21 another word occurs for nets [*diktua*], a word used for nets of any kind. The large drag-net [*sag n*] appears in Mt 13:47.

4:19 Fishers of men [*haleeis anthr p n*]. Andrew and Simon were fishers by trade. They had already become disciples of Jesus (Joh 1:35-42), but now they are called upon to leave their business and to follow Jesus in his travels and work. These two brothers promptly [*euthe s*] accepted the call and challenge of Jesus.

4:21 Mending their nets [*katartizontas ta diktua aut n*]. These two brothers, James and John, were getting their nets ready for use. The verb [*katartiz*] means to adjust, to articulate, to mend if needed (Lu 6:40; Ro 9:22; Ga 6:1). So they promptly left their boat and father and followed Jesus. They had also already become disciples of Jesus. Now there are four who follow him steadily.

4:23 Went about in all Galilee [*peri gen en hol i t i Galilaiiai*]. Literally Jesus “was going around (imperfect) in all Galilee.” This is the first of the three tours of Galilee made by Jesus. This time he took the four fishermen whom he had just called to personal service. The second time he took the twelve. On the third he sent the twelve on ahead by twos and followed after them. He was teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom in the synagogues chiefly and on the roads and in the streets where Gentiles could hear. **Healing all manner of diseases and all manner of sickness** [*therapeu n p san noson kai p san malakian*]. The occasional sickness is called [*malakian*], the chronic or serious disease [*noson*].

4:24 The report of him went forth into all Syria [*ap lthen h ako autou eis hol n t n Syrian*]. Rumour [*ako*] carries things almost like the wireless or radio. The Gentiles all over Syria to the north heard of what was going on in Galilee. The result was inevitable. Jesus had a moving hospital of patients from all over Galilee and Syria. **Those that were sick** [*tous kak s echontas*], literally “those who had it bad,” cases that the doctors could not cure. **Holden with divers diseases and torments** [*poikilais nosois kai basanois sunechomenous*]. “Held together” or “compressed” is the idea of the participle. The same word is used by Jesus in Lu 12:50 and by Paul in Php 1:23 and of

the crowd pressing on Jesus (Lu 8:45). They brought these difficult and chronic cases (present tense of the participle here) to Jesus. Instead of “divers” say “various” [*poikilais*] like fever, leprosy, blindness. The adjective means literally many colored or variegated like flowers, paintings, jaundice, etc. Some had “torments” [*basanois*]. The word originally (oriental origin) meant a touchstone, “Lydian stone” used for testing gold because pure gold rubbed on it left a peculiar mark. Then it was used for examination by torture. Sickness was often regarded as “torture.” These diseases are further described “in a descending scale of violence” (McNeile) as “demoniacs, lunatics, and paralytics” as Moffatt puts it, “demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics” as Weymouth has it, [*daimonizomenous kai sel niazomenous kai paralutikous*], people possessed by demons, lunatics or “moon-struck” because the epileptic seizures supposedly followed the phases of the moon (Bruce) as shown also in Mt 17:15, paralytics (our very word). Our word “lunatic” is from the Latin *luna* (moon) and carries the same picture as the Greek [*sel niazomai*] from [*sel n*] (moon). These diseases are called “torments.”

4:25 **Great multitudes** [*ochloi polloi*]. Note the plural, not just one crowd, but crowds and crowds. And from all parts of Palestine including Decapolis, the region of the Ten Greek Cities east of the Jordan. No political campaign was equal to this outpouring of the people to hear Jesus and to be healed by Jesus.

Chapter 5

5:1 **He went up into the mountain** [*aneb eis to oros*]. Not “a” mountain as the Authorized Version has it. The Greek article is poorly handled in most English versions. We do not know what mountain it was. It was the one there where Jesus and the crowds were. “Delitzsch calls the Mount of Beatitudes the Sinai of the New Testament” (Vincent). He apparently went up to get in closer contact with the disciples, “seeing the multitudes.” Luke (Lu 6:12) says that he went out into the mountain to pray, Mark (Mr 3:13) that he went up and called the twelve. All three purposes are true. Luke adds that after a whole night in prayer and after the choice of the twelve Jesus came down to a level place on the mountain and spoke to the multitudes from Judea to Phoenicia. The crowds are great in both Matthew and in Luke and include disciples and the other crowds. There is no real difficulty in considering the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke as one and the same. See full discussion in my *Harmony of the Gospels*.

5:2 **Taught them** [*edidasken*]. Inchoative imperfect, began to teach. He sat down on the mountain side as the Jewish rabbis did instead of standing. It was a most impressive scene as Jesus opened his mouth wide and spoke loud enough for the great throng to hear him. The newly chosen twelve apostles were there, “a great number of disciples and a great number of the people” (Lu 6:17).

5:3 **Blessed** [*makarioi*]. The English word “blessed” is more exactly represented by the Greek verbal [*eulog toi*] as in Lu 1:68 of God by Zacharias, or the perfect passive participle [*eulog menos*] as in Lu 1:42 of Mary by Elizabeth and in Mt 21:9. Both forms come from [*euloge*], to speak well of [*eu, logos*]. The Greek word here [*makarioi*] is an adjective that means “happy” which in English etymology goes back to hap, chance, good-luck as seen in our words haply, hapless, happily, happiness. “Blessedness is, of course, an infinitely higher and better thing than mere happiness” (Weymouth). English has thus ennobled “blessed” to a higher rank than “happy.” But “happy” is what Jesus said and the *Braid Scots New Testament* dares to say “Happy” each time here as does the *Improved Edition of the American Bible Union Version*. The Greek word is as old as Homer and Pindar and was used of the Greek gods and also of men, but largely of outward prosperity. Then it is applied to the dead who died in the Lord as in Re 14:13. Already in the Old Testament the Septuagint uses it of moral quality. “Shaking itself loose from all thoughts of outward good, it becomes the express symbol of a happiness identified with pure character. Behind it lies the clear cognition of sin as the fountain-head of all misery, and of holiness as the final and effectual cure for every woe. For knowledge as the basis of virtue, and therefore of happiness, it substitutes faith and love” (Vincent). Jesus takes this word “happy” and puts it in this rich environment. “This is one of the words which have been transformed and ennobled by New Testament use; by association, as in the Beatitudes, with unusual conditions, accounted by the world miserable, or with rare and difficult” (Bruce). It is a pity that we have not kept the word “happy” to the high and holy plane where Jesus placed it. “If you know these things, happy [*makarioi*] are you if you do them” (Joh 13:17). “Happy [*makarioi*] are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (Joh 20:29). And

Paul applies this adjective to God, “according to the gospel of the glory of the happy [*makariou*] God” (1Ti 1:11. Cf. also Tit 2:13). The term “Beatitudes” (Latin *beatus*) comes close to the meaning of Christ here by [*makarioi*]. It will repay one to make a careful study of all the “beatitudes” in the New Testament where this word is employed. It occurs nine times here (3-11), though the beatitudes in verses 10 and 11 are very much alike. The copula is not expressed in either of these nine beatitudes. In each case a reason is given for the beatitude, “for” [*hoti*], that shows the spiritual quality involved. Some of the phrases employed by Jesus here occur in the Psalms, some even in the Talmud (itself later than the New Testament, though of separate origin). That is of small moment. “The originality of Jesus lies in putting the due value on these thoughts, collecting them, and making them as prominent as the Ten Commandments. No greater service can be rendered to mankind than to rescue from obscurity neglected moral commonplaces” (Bruce). Jesus repeated his sayings many times as all great teachers and preachers do, but this sermon has unity, progress, and consummation. It does not contain all that Jesus taught by any means, but it stands out as the greatest single sermon of all time, in its penetration, pungency, and power. **The poor in spirit** [*hoi pt choi t i pneumati*]. Luke has only “the poor,” but he means the same by it as this form in Matthew, “the pious in Israel, for the most part poor, whom the worldly rich despised and persecuted” (McNeile). The word used here [*pt choi*] is applied to the beggar Lazarus in Lu 16:20, 22 and suggests spiritual destitution (from [*pt ss*] to crouch, to cower). The other word [*pen s*] is from [*penomai*], to work for one’s daily bread and so means one who works for his living. The word [*pt chos*] is more frequent in the New Testament and implies deeper poverty than [*pen s*]. “The kingdom of heaven” here means the reign of God in the heart and life. This is the *summum bonum* and is what matters most.

5:4 **They that mourn** [*hoi penthountes*]. This is another paradox. This verb “is most frequent in the LXX for mourning for the dead, and for the sorrows and sins of others” (McNeile). “There can be no comfort where there is no grief” (Bruce). Sorrow should make us look for the heart and hand of God and so find the comfort latent in the grief.

5:5 **The meek** [*hoi praeis*]. Wycliff has it “Blessed be mild men.” The ancients used the word for outward conduct and towards men. They did not rank it as a virtue anyhow. It was a mild equanimity that was sometimes negative and sometimes positively kind. But Jesus lifted the word to a nobility never attained before. In fact, the Beatitudes assume a new heart, for the natural man does not find in happiness the qualities mentioned here by Christ. The English word “meek” has largely lost the fine blend of spiritual poise and strength meant by the Master. He calls himself “meek and lowly in heart” (Mt 11:29) and Moses is also called meek. It is the gentleness of strength, not mere effeminacy. By “the earth” [*t n g n*] Jesus seems to mean the Land of Promise (Ps 37:11) though Bruce thinks that it is the whole earth. Can it be the solid earth as opposed to the sea or the air?

5:6 **They that hunger and thirst after righteousness** [*hoi pein ntes kai dips ntes t n dikaiosun n*]. Here Jesus turns one of the elemental human instincts to spiritual use. There is in all men hunger for food, for love, for God. It is passionate hunger and thirst for goodness, for holiness. The word

for “filled” [*chortasth sontai*] means to feed or to fatten cattle from the word for fodder or grass like Mr 6:39 “green grass” [*chortos chl ros*].

5:7 **Obtain mercy** [*ele th sontai*] “Sal win pitie theirsels” (*Braid Scots*). “A self-acting law of the moral world” (Bruce).

5:8 **Shall see God** [*ton theon opsontai*]. Without holiness no man will see the Lord in heaven (Heb 12:14). The Beatific Vision is only possible here on earth to those with pure hearts. No other can see the King now. Sin befogs and beclouds the heart so that one cannot see God. Purity has here its widest sense and includes everything.

5:9 **The peacemakers** [*hoi eir nopoioi*]. Not merely “peaceable men” (Wycliff) but “makkers up o’ strife” (*Braid Scots*). It is hard enough to keep the peace. It is still more difficult to bring peace where it is not. “The perfect peacemaker is the Son of God (Eph 2:14f.)” (McNeile). Thus we shall be like our Elder Brother.

5:10 **That have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake** [*hoi dedi gmenoi heneken dikaiosun s*]. Posing as persecuted is a favourite stunt. The kingdom of heaven belongs only to those who suffer for the sake of goodness, not who are guilty of wrong.

5:11 **Falsely, for my sake** [*pseudomenoi heneken emou*]. Codex Bezae changes the order of these last Beatitudes, but that is immaterial. What does matter is that the bad things said of Christ’s followers shall be untrue and that they are slandered for Christ’s sake. Both things must be true before one can wear a martyr’s crown and receive the great reward [*misthos*] in heaven. No prize awaits one there who deserves all the evil said of him and done to him here.

5:13 **Lost its savour** [*m ranth i*]. The verb is from [*m ros*] (dull, sluggish, stupid, foolish) and means to play the fool, to become foolish, of salt become tasteless, insipid (Mr 9:50). It is common in Syria and Palestine to see salt scattered in piles on the ground because it has lost its flavour, “hae tint its tang” (*Braid Scots*), the most worthless thing imaginable. Jesus may have used here a current proverb.

5:15 **Under the bushel** [*hupo ton modion*]. Not a bushel. “The figure is taken from lowly cottage life. There was a projecting stone in the wall on which the lamp was set. The house consisted of a single room, so that the tiny light sufficed for all” (Bruce). It was not put under the bushel (the only one in the room) save to put it out or to hide it. The bushel was an earthenware grain measure. **”The stand”** [*t n luchnian*], not “candlestick.” It is “lamp-stand” in each of the twelve examples in the Bible. There was the one lamp-stand for the single room.

5:16 **Even so** [*hout s*]. The adverb points backward to the lamp-stand. Thus men are to let their light shine, not to glorify themselves, but “your Father in heaven.” Light shines to see others by, not to call attention to itself.

5:17 **I came not to destroy, but to fulfil** [*ouk lthon katalusai alla pl r sai*]. The verb “destroy” means to “loosen down” as of a house or tent (2Co 5:1). Fulfil is to fill full. This Jesus did to the ceremonial law which pointed to him and the moral law he kept. “He came to fill the law, to reveal the full depth of meaning that it was intended to hold” (McNeile).

5:18 **One jot or one tittle** [*i ta hen mia kerea*]. “Not an iota, not a comma” (Moffatt), “not the smallest letter, not a particle” (Weymouth). The iota is the smallest Greek vowel, which Matthew here uses to represent the Hebrew *yod* (jot), the smallest Hebrew letter. “Tittle” is from the Latin *titulus* which came to mean the stroke above an abbreviated word, then any small mark. It is not certain here whether [*kerea*] means a little horn, the mere point which distinguishes some Hebrew letters from others or the “hook” letter *Vav*. Sometimes *yod* and *vav* were hardly distinguishable. “In *Vay. R.* 19 the guilt of altering one of them is pronounced so great that if it were done the world would be destroyed” (McNeile).

5:19 **Shall do and teach** [*poi s i kai didax i*]. Jesus puts practice before preaching. The teacher must apply the doctrine to himself before he is qualified to teach others. The scribes and Pharisees were men who “say and do not” (Mt 23:3), who preach but do not perform. This is Christ’s test of greatness.

5:20 **Shall exceed** [*perisseus i pleion*]. Overflow like a river out of its banks and then Jesus adds “more” followed by an unexpressed ablative [*t s dikaiosun s*], brachylogy. A daring statement on Christ’s part that they had to be better than the rabbis. They must excel the scribes, the small number of regular teachers (5:21-48), and the Pharisees in the Pharisaic life (6:1-18) who were the separated ones, the orthodox pietists.

5:22 **But I say unto you** [*eg de leg humin*]. Jesus thus assumes a tone of superiority over the Mosaic regulations and proves it in each of the six examples. He goes further than the Law into the very heart. “**Raca**” [*Raka*] and “**Thou fool**” [*M re*]. The first is probably an Aramaic word meaning “Empty,” a frequent word for contempt. The second word is Greek (dull, stupid) and is a fair equivalent of “raca.” It is urged by some that [*m re*] is a Hebrew word, but Field (*Otium Norvicense*) objects to that idea. “*Raca* expresses contempt for a man’s head=you stupid! *M re* expresses contempt for his heart and character=you scoundrel” (Bruce). “**The hell of fire**” [*t n geennan tou puros*], “the Gehenna of fire,” the genitive case [*tou puros*] as the genus case describing Gehenna as marked by fire. Gehenna is the Valley of Hinnom where the fire burned continually. Here idolatrous Jews once offered their children to Molech (2Ki 23:10). Jesus finds one cause of murder to be abusive language. Gehenna “should be carefully distinguished from Hades [*h id s*] which is never used for the place of punishment, but for the *place of departed spirits*, without reference to their moral condition” (Vincent). The place of torment is in Hades (Lu 16:23), but so is heaven.

5:24 **First be reconciled** [*pr ton diallag thi*]. Second aorist passive imperative. Get reconciled (ingressive aorist, take the initiative). Only example of this compound in the New Testament where usually [*katallass*] occurs. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 187, New Ed.) gives a papyrus example second century A.D. A prodigal son, Longinus, writes to his mother Nilus: "I beseech thee, mother, be reconciled [*dialag ti*] with me." The boy is a poor speller, but with a broken heart he uses the identical form that Jesus does. "The verb denotes mutual concession after mutual hostility, an idea absent from [*katallass*]" (Lightfoot). This because of [*dia*] (two, between two).

5:25 **Agree with** [*isthi euno n*]. A present periphrastic active imperative. The verb is from [*eunoos*] (friendly, kindly disposed). "Mak up wi' yere enemy" (*Braid Scots*). Compromise is better than prison where no principle is involved, but only personal interest. It is so easy to see principle where pride is involved. **The officer** [*t i hup ret i*]. This word means "under rower" on the ship with several ranks of rowers, the bottom rower [*hupo*] under and [*ress*], to row), the galley-slave, then any servant, the attendant in the synagogue (Lu 4:20). Luke so describes John Mark in his relation to Barnabas and Saul (Ac 13:5). Then it is applied to the "ministers of the word" (Lu 1:2).

5:26 **The last farthing** [*ton eschaton kodrant n*]. A Latin word, *quadrans*, 1/4 of an *as* [*assarion*] or two mites (Mr 12:42), a vivid picture of inevitable punishment for debt. This is emphasized by the strong double negative [*ou m*] with the aorist subjunctive.

5:27 **Thou shalt not commit adultery** [*ou moicheuseis*]. These quotations (verses 21, 27, 33) from the Decalogue (Ex 20 and De 5) are from the Septuagint and use [*ou*] and the future indicative (volitive future, common Greek idiom). In 5:43 the positive form, volitive future, occurs [*agap seis*]. In 5:41 the third person [*dot*] singular second aorist active imperative is used. In 5:38 no verb occurs.

5:28 **In his heart** [*en t i kardi i autou*]. Not just the centre of the blood circulation though it means that. Not just the emotional part of man's nature, but here the inner man including the intellect, the affections, the will. This word is exceedingly common in the New Testament and repays careful study always. It is from a root that means to quiver or palpitate. Jesus locates adultery in the eye and heart before the outward act. Wunsche (*Beitrag*) quotes two pertinent rabbinical sayings as translated by Bruce: "The eye and the heart are the two brokers of sin." "Passions lodge only in him who sees." Hence the peril of lewd pictures and plays to the pure.

5:29 **Causeth thee to stumble** [*skandalizei se*]. This is far better than the Authorized Version "Offend thee." *Braid Scots* has it rightly "ensnare ye." It is not the notion of giving offence or provoking, but of setting a trap or snare for one. The substantive [*skandalon*], from [*skandal thron*] means the stick in the trap that springs and closes the trap when the animal touches it. Pluck out the eye when it is a snare, cut off the hand, even the right hand. These vivid pictures are not to be taken literally, but powerfully plead for self-mastery. Bengel says: *Non oculum, sed scandalizentem*

oculum. It is not mutilating of the body that Christ enjoins, but control of the body against sin. The man who plays with fire will get burnt. Modern surgery finely illustrates the teaching of Jesus. The tonsils, the teeth, the appendix, to go no further, if left diseased, will destroy the whole body. Cut them out in time and the life will be saved. Vincent notes that “the words scandal and slander are both derived from [*skandalon*]. And Wyc. renders, ‘if thy right eye *slander* thee.’” Certainly slander is a scandal and a stumbling-block, a trap, and a snare.

5:31 **A writing of divorcement** [*apostasion*], “a divorce certificate” (Moffatt), “a written notice of divorce” (Weymouth). The Greek is an abbreviation of [*biblion apostasiou*] (Ma 19:7; Mr 10:4). Vulgate has here *libellum repudii*. The papyri use [*suggraph apostasiou*] in commercial transactions as “a bond of release” (see Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary*, etc.) The written notice [*biblion*] was a protection to the wife against an angry whim of the husband who might send her away with no paper to show for it.

5:32 **Saving for the cause of fornication** [*parektos logou porneias*]. An unusual phrase that perhaps means “except for a matter of unchastity.” “Except on the ground of unchastity” (Weymouth), “except unfaithfulness” (Goodspeed), and is equivalent to [*m epi pornei i*] in Mt 19:9. McNeile denies that Jesus made this exception because Mark and Luke do not give it. He claims that the early Christians made the exception to meet a pressing need, but one fails to see the force of this charge against Matthew’s report of the words of Jesus. It looks like criticism to meet modern needs.

5:34 **Swear not at all** [*m omosai hol s*]. More exactly “not to swear at all” (indirect command, and aorist infinitive). Certainly Jesus does not prohibit oaths in a court of justice for he himself answered Caiaphas on oath. Paul made solemn appeals to God (1Th 5:27; 1Co 15:31). Jesus prohibits all forms of profanity. The Jews were past-masters in the art of splitting hairs about allowable and forbidden oaths or forms of profanity just as modern Christians employ a great variety of vernacular “cuss-words” and excuse themselves because they do not use the more flagrant forms.

5:38 **An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth** [*ophthalmon anti ophthalmou kai odonta anti odontos*]. Note [*anti*] with the notion of exchange or substitution. The quotation is from Ex 21:24; De 19:21; Le 24:20. Like divorce this *jus talionis* is a restriction upon unrestrained vengeance. “It limited revenge by fixing an exact compensation for an injury” (McNeile). A money payment is allowed in the Mishna. The law of retaliation exists in Arabia today.

5:39 **Resist not him that is evil** [*me antist nai t i pon r i*]. Here again it is the infinitive (second aorist active) in indirect command. But is it “the evil man” or the “evil deed”? The dative case is the same form for masculine and neuter. Weymouth puts it “not to resist a (the) wicked man,” Moffatt “not to resist an injury,” Goodspeed “not to resist injury.” The examples will go with either view. Jesus protested when smitten on the cheek (Joh 18:22). And Jesus denounced the Pharisees (Mt 23) and fought the devil always. The language of Jesus is bold and picturesque and is not to be pressed too literally. Paradoxes startle and make us think. We are expected to fill in the other

side of the picture. One thing certainly is meant by Jesus and that is that personal revenge is taken out of our hands, and that applies to “lynch-law.” Aggressive or offensive war by nations is also condemned, but not necessarily defensive war or defence against robbery and murder. Professional pacifism may be mere cowardice.

5:40 **Thy coat ... thy cloke also** [*ton chit na sou kai to himation*]. The “coat” is really a sort of shirt or undergarment and would be demanded at law. A robber would seize first the outer garment or cloke (one coat). If one loses the undergarment at law, the outer one goes also (the more valuable one).

5:41 **Shall compel thee** [*aggareusei*]. The Vulgate has *angariaverit*. The word is of Persian origin and means public couriers or mounted messengers [*aggaroi*] who were stationed by the King of Persia at fixed localities, with horses ready for use, to send royal messages from one to another. So if a man is passing such a post-station, an official may rush out and compel him to go back to another station to do an errand for the king. This was called impressment into service. This very thing was done to Simon of Cyrene who was thus compelled to carry the cross of Christ (Mt 27:32, [*ggareusan*]).

5:42 **Turn not thou away** [*m apostroph is*]. Second aorist passive subjunctive in prohibition. “This is one of the clearest instances of the necessity of accepting the spirit and not the letter of the Lord’s commands (see vv. 32,34,38). Not only does indiscriminate almsgiving do little but injury to society, but the words must embrace far more than almsgiving” (McNeile). Recall again that Jesus is a popular teacher and expects men to understand his paradoxes. In the organized charities of modern life we are in danger of letting the milk of human kindness dry up.

5:43 **And hate thine enemy** [*kai mis seis*]. This phrase is not in Le 19:18, but is a rabbinical inference which Jesus repudiates bluntly. The Talmud says nothing of love to enemies. Paul in Ro 12:20 quotes Pr 25:22 to prove that we ought to treat our enemies kindly. Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies and did it himself even when he hung upon the cross. Our word “neighbour” is “nigh-bor,” one who is nigh or near like the Greek word [*pl sion*] here. But proximity often means strife and not love. Those who have adjoining farms or homes may be positively hostile in spirit. The Jews came to look on members of the same tribe as neighbours as even Jews everywhere. But they hated the Samaritans who were half Jews and lived between Judea and Galilee. Jesus taught men how to act as neighbours by the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lu 10:29ff.).

5:48 **Perfect** [*teleioi*]. The word comes from [*telos*], end, goal, limit. Here it is the goal set before us, the absolute standard of our Heavenly Father. The word is used also for relative perfection as of adults compared with children.

Chapter 6

6:1 **Take heed** [*prosechete*]. The Greek idiom includes “mind” [*noun*] which is often expressed in ancient Greek and once in the Septuagint (Job 7:17). In the New Testament the substantive [*nous*] is understood. It means to “hold the mind on a matter,” take pains, take heed. “Righteousness” [*dikaiousun n*] is the correct text in this verse. Three specimens of the Pharisaic “righteousness” are given (alms, prayer, fasting). **To be seen** [*theath nai*]. First aorist passive infinitive of purpose. Our word *theatrical* is this very word, spectacular performance. **With your Father** [*para t i patri hum n*]. Literally “beside your Father,” standing by his side, as he looks at it.

6:2 **Sound not a trumpet** [*m salpis is*]. Is this literal or metaphorical? No actual instance of such conduct has been found in the Jewish writings. McNeile suggests that it may refer to the blowing of trumpets in the streets on the occasion of public fasts. Vincent suggests the thirteen trumpet-shaped chests of the temple treasury to receive contributions (Lu 21:2). But at Winona Lake one summer a missionary from India named Levering stated to me that he had seen Hindu priests do precisely this very thing to get a crowd to see their beneficences. So it looks as if the rabbis could do it also. Certainly it was in keeping with their love of praise. And Jesus expressly says that “the hypocrites” [*hoi hupokritai*] do this very thing. This is an old word for actor, interpreter, one who personates another, from [*hupokrinomai*] to answer in reply like the Attic [*apokrinomai*]. Then to pretend, to feign, to dissemble, to act the hypocrite, to wear a mask. This is the hardest word that Jesus has for any class of people and he employs it for these pious pretenders who pose as perfect. **They have received their reward** [*apechousin ton misthon aut n*]. This verb is common in the papyri for receiving a receipt, “they have their receipt in full,” all the reward that they will get, this public notoriety. “They can sign the receipt of their reward” (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 229). So *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 110f. [*Apoch*] means “receipt.” So also in 6:5.

6:4 **In secret** [*t i krupt i*]. The Textus Receptus added the words [*en t i phaner i*] (openly) here and in 6:6, but they are not genuine. Jesus does not promise a *public* reward for private piety.

6:5 **In the synagogues and in the corners of the streets** [*en tais sunag gais kai en tais g niais t n platei n*]. These were the usual places of prayer (synagogues) and the street corners where crowds stopped for business or talk. If the hour of prayer overtook a Pharisee here, he would strike his attitude of prayer like a modern Moslem that men might see that he was pious.

6:6 **Into thy closet** [*eis to tameion*]. The word is a late syncopated form of [*tamieion*] from [*tamias*] (steward) and the root [*tam-*] from [*temn*], to cut. So it is a store-house, a separate apartment, one’s private chamber, closet, or “den” where he can withdraw from the world and shut the world out and commune with God.

6:7 **Use not vain repetitions** [*m battalog s te*]. Used of stammerers who repeat the words, then mere babbling or chattering, empty repetition. The etymology is uncertain, but it is probably

onomatopoetic like “babble.” The worshippers of Baal on Mount Carmel (1Ki 8:26) and of Diana in the amphitheatre at Ephesus who yelled for two hours (Ac 19:34) are examples. The Mohammedans may also be cited who seem to think that they “will be heard for their much speaking” [*en t i polulogi i*]. Vincent adds “and the Romanists with their *paternosters* and *avast*.” The Syriac Sinaitic has it: “Do not be saying idle things.” Certainly Jesus does not mean to condemn all repetition in prayer since he himself prayed three times in Gethsemane “saying the same words again” (Mt 26:44). “As the Gentiles do,” says Jesus. “The Pagans thought that by endless repetitions and many words they would inform their gods as to their needs and weary them (*fatigare deos*) into granting their requests” (Bruce).

6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye [*hout s oun proseuchesthe humeis*]. “You” expressed in contrast with “the Gentiles.” It should be called “The Model Prayer” rather than “The Lord’s Prayer.” “Thus” pray as he gives them a model. He himself did not use it as a liturgy (cf. Joh 17). There is no evidence that Jesus meant it for liturgical use by others. In Lu 11:2-4 practically the same prayer though briefer is given at a later time by Jesus to the apostles in response to a request that he teach them how to pray. McNeile argues that the form in Luke is the original to which Matthew has made additions: “The tendency of liturgical formulas is towards enrichment rather than abbreviation.” But there is no evidence whatever that Jesus designed it as a set formula. There is no real harm in a liturgical formula if one likes it, but no one sticks to just one formula in prayer. There is good and not harm in children learning and saying this noble prayer. Some people are disturbed over the words “Our Father” and say that no one has a right to call God Father who has not been “born again.” But that is to say that an unconverted sinner cannot pray until he is converted, an absurd contradiction. God is the Father of all men in one sense; the recognition of Him as the Father in the full sense is the first step in coming back to him in regeneration and conversion.

Hallowed be thy name [*hagiasth t to onoma sou*]. In the Greek the verb comes first as in the petitions in verse 10. They are all aorist imperatives, punctiliar action expressing urgency.

6:11 Our daily bread [*ton arton h m n ton epiouision*]. This adjective “daily” [*epiouision*] coming after “Give us this day” [*dos h mEn s meron*] has given expositors a great deal of trouble. The effort has been made to derive it from [*epi*] and [*n*] [*ousa*]. It clearly comes from [*epi*] and [*i n*] [*epi*] and [*eimi*] like [*t i epiou i*] (“on the coming day,” “the next day,” Ac 16:12). But the adjective [*epiouios*] is rare and Origen said it was made by the Evangelists Matthew and Luke to reproduce the idea of an Aramaic original. Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary* say: “The papyri have as yet shed no clear light upon this difficult word (Mt 6:11; Lu 11:3), which was in all probability a new coinage by the author of the Greek Q to render his Aramaic Original” (this in 1919). Deissmann claims that only about fifty purely New Testament or “Christian” words can be admitted out of the more than 5,000 used. “But when a word is not recognizable at sight as a Jewish or Christian new formation, we must consider it as an ordinary Greek word until the contrary is proved. [*Epiouios*] has all the appearance of a word that originated in trade and traffic of the everyday life of the people

(cf. my hints in *Neutestamentliche Studien Georg Heinrichi dargebracht*, Leipzig, 1914, pp. 118f.). The opinion here expressed has been confirmed by A. Debrunner's discovery (*Theol. Lit. Ztg.* 1925, Col. 119) of [*epiousios*] in an ancient housekeeping book" (*Light from the Ancient East*, New ed. 1927, p. 78 and note 1). So then it is not a word coined by the Evangelist or by Q to express an Aramaic original. The word occurs also in three late MSS. after 2Macc. 1:8, [*tous epiousious*] after [*tous artous*]. The meaning, in view of the kindred participle [*epious i*] in Ac 16:12, seems to be "for the coming day," a daily prayer for the needs of the next day as every housekeeper understands like the housekeeping book discovered by Debrunner.

6:12 **Our debts** [*ta opheil mata h m n*]. Luke (Lu 11:4) has "sins" [*hamartias*]. In the ancient Greek [*opheil ma*] is common for actual legal debts as in Ro 4:4, but here it is used of moral and spiritual debts to God. "Trespases" is a mistranslation made common by the Church of England Prayer Book. It is correct in verse 14 in Christ's argument about prayer, but it is not in the Model Prayer itself. See Mt 18:28, 30 for sin pictured again by Christ "as debt and the sinner as a debtor" (Vincent). We are thus described as having wronged God. The word [*opheil*] for moral obligation was once supposed to be peculiar to the New Testament. But it is common in that sense in the papyri (Deismann, *Bible Studies*, p. 221; *Light from the Ancient East*, New ed., p. 331). We ask forgiveness "in proportion as" [*h s*] we *also* have forgiven those in debt to us, a most solemn reflection. [*Aph kamen*] is one of the three k aorists [*eth ka, ed ka, h ka*]. It means to send away, to dismiss, to wipe off.

6:13 **And bring us not into temptation** [*kai m eisenegk is eis peirasmon*]. "Bring" or "lead" bothers many people. It seems to present God as an active agent in subjecting us to temptation, a thing specifically denied in Jas 1:13. The word here translated "temptation" [*peirasmon*] means originally "trial" or "test" as in Jas 1:2 and Vincent so takes it here. *Braid Scots* has it: "And lat us no be siftit." But God does test or sift us, though he does not tempt us to evil. No one understood temptation so well as Jesus for the devil tempted him by every avenue of approach to all kinds of sin, but without success. In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus will say to Peter, James, and John: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Lu 22:40). That is the idea here. Here we have a "Permissive imperative" as grammarians term it. The idea is then: "Do not allow us to be led into temptation." There is a way out (1Co 10:13), but it is a terrible risk.

From the evil one [*apo tou pon rou*]. The ablative case in the Greek obscures the gender. We have no way of knowing whether it is [*ho pon ros*] (the evil one) or [*to pon ron*] (the evil thing). And if it is masculine and so [*ho pon ros*], it can either refer to the devil as the Evil One *par excellence* or the evil man whoever he may be who seeks to do us ill. The word [*pon ros*] has a curious history coming from [*ponos*] (toil) and [*pone*] (to work). It reflects the idea either that work is bad or that this particular work is bad and so the bad idea drives out the good in work or toil, an example of human depravity surely.

The Doxology is placed in the margin of the Revised Version. It is wanting in the oldest and best Greek manuscripts. The earliest forms vary very much, some shorter, some longer than the one in the Authorized Version. The use of a doxology arose when this prayer began to be used as a liturgy to be recited or to be chanted in public worship. It was not an original part of the Model Prayer as given by Jesus.

6:14 **Trespases** [*parapt mata*]. This is no part of the Model Prayer. The word “trespass” is literally “falling to one side,” a lapse or deviation from truth or uprightness. The ancients sometimes used it of intentional falling or attack upon one’s enemy, but “slip” or “fault” (Ga 6:1) is the common New Testament idea. [*Parabasis*] (Ro 5:14) is a positive violation, a transgression, conscious stepping aside or across.

6:16 **Of a sad countenance** [*skuthr poi*]. Only here and Lu 24:17 in the N.T. It is a compound of [*skuthros*] (sullen) and [*ops*] (countenance). These actors or hypocrites “put on a gloomy look” (Goodspeed) and, if necessary, even “disfigure their faces” [*aphanizousin ta pros pa aut n*], that they may look like they are fasting. It is this pretence of piety that Jesus so sharply ridicules. There is a play on the Greek words [*aphanizousi*] (disfigure) and [*phan sin*] (figure). They conceal their real looks that they may seem to be fasting, conscious and pretentious hypocrisy.

6:18 **In secret** [*en t i kruphai i*]. Here as in 6:4, 6 the Textus Receptus adds [*en t i phaner i*] (openly), but it is not genuine. The word [*kruphaios*] is here alone in the New Testament, but occurs four times in the Septuagint.

6:19 **Lay not up for yourselves treasures** [*m th saurizete humin th saurous*]. Do not have this habit [*m*] and the present imperative). See on Mt 2:11 for the word “treasure.” Here there is a play on the word, “treasure not for yourselves treasures.” Same play in verse 20 with the cognate accusative. In both verses [*humin*] is dative of personal interest and is not reflexive, but the ordinary personal pronoun. Wycliff has it: “Do not treasure to you treasures.”

Break through [*diorussousin*]. Literally “dig through.” Easy to do through the mud walls or sun-dried bricks. Today they can pierce steel safes that are no longer safe even if a foot thick. The Greeks called a burglar a “mud-digger” [*toichoruchos*].

6:20 **Rust** [*br sis*]. Something that “eats” [*bibr sk*] or “gnaws” or “corrodes.”

6:22 **Single** [*haplous*]. Used of a marriage contract when the husband is to repay the dowry “pure and simple” [*t n phern n hapl n*], if she is set free; but in case he does not do so promptly, he is to add interest also (Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary*, etc.). There are various other instances of such usage. Here and in Lu 11:34 the eye is called “single” in a moral sense. The word means “without folds” like a piece of cloth unfolded, *simplex* in Latin. Bruce considers this parable of the eye difficult. “The figure and the ethical meaning seem to be mixed up, moral attributes ascribed to the physical eye which with them still gives light to the body. This confusion may be due to the

fact that the eye, besides being the organ of vision, is the seat of expression, revealing inward dispositions.” The “evil” eye [*pon ros*] may be diseased and is used of stinginess in the LXX and so [*haplous*] may refer to liberality as Hatch argues (*Essays in Biblical Greek*, p. 80). The passage may be elliptical with something to be supplied. If our eyes are healthy we see clearly and with a single focus (without astigmatism). If the eyes are diseased (bad, evil), they may even be cross-eyed or cock-eyed. We see double and confuse our vision. We keep one eye on the hoarded treasures of earth and roll the other proudly up to heaven. Seeing double is double-mindedness as is shown in verse 24.

6:24 **No man can serve two masters** [*oudeis dunatai dusi kuriois douleuein*]. Many try it, but failure awaits them all. Men even try “to be slaves to God and mammon” [*The i douleuein kai mam n i*]. Mammon is a Chaldee, Syriac, and Punic word like *Plutus* for the money-god (or devil). The slave of mammon will obey mammon while pretending to obey God. The United States has had a terrible revelation of the power of the money-god in public life in the Sinclair-Fall-Teapot-Air-Dome-Oil case. When the guide is blind and leads the blind, both fall into the ditch. The man who cannot tell road from ditch sees falsely as Ruskin shows in *Modern Painters*. He will hold to one [*henos anthexetai*]. The word means to line up face to face [*anti*] with one man and so against the other.

6:25 **Be not anxious for your life** [*m merimnate t i psuch i h-m n*]. This is as good a translation as the Authorized Version was poor; “Take no thought for your life.” The old English word “thought” meant anxiety or worry as Shakespeare says:

“The native hue of resolution Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.”

Vincent quotes Bacon (Henry VII): “Harris, an alderman of London, was put in trouble and died with thought and anguish.” But words change with time and now this passage is actually quoted (Lightfoot) “as an objection to the moral teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, on the ground that it encouraged, nay, commanded, a reckless neglect of the future.” We have narrowed the word to mere planning without any notion of anxiety which is in the Greek word. The verb [*merimna*] is from [*meris, meriz*], because care or anxiety distracts and divides. It occurs in Christ’s rebuke to Martha for her excessive solicitude about something to eat (Lu 10:41). The notion of proper care and forethought appears in 1Co 7:32; 12:25; Php 2:20. It is here the present imperative with the negative, a command not to have the habit of petulant worry about food and clothing, a source of anxiety to many housewives, a word for women especially as the command not to worship mammon may be called a word for men. The command can mean that they must stop such worry if already indulging in it. In verse 31 Jesus repeats the prohibition with the ingressive aorist subjunctive: “Do not become anxious,” “Do not grow anxious.” Here the direct question with the deliberative subjunctive occurs with each verb [*phag men, pi men, peribal metha*]. This deliberative subjunctive of the direct question is retained in the indirect question employed in verse 25. A different verb for

clothing occurs, both in the indirect middle [*peribal metha*], fling round ourselves in 31, [*endus sthe*], put on yourselves in 25).

For your life [*t i psuch i*]. “Here [*psuch i*] stands for the life principle common to man and beast, which is embodied in the [*s ma*]: the former needs food, the latter clothing” (McNeile). [*Psuch*] in the Synoptic Gospels occurs in three senses (McNeile): either the life principle in the body as here and which man may kill (Mr 3:4) or the seat of the thoughts and emotions on a par with [*kardia*] and [*dianoia*] (Mt 22:37) and [*pneuma*] (Lu 1:46; cf. Joh 12:27; 13:21) or something higher that makes up the real self (Mt 10:28; 16:26). In Mt 16:25 (Lu 9:25) [*psuch*] appears in two senses paradoxical use, saving life and losing it.

6:27 **Unto his stature** [*epi t n h likian autou*]. The word [*h likian*] is used either of height (stature) or length of life (age). Either makes good sense here, though probably “stature” suits the context best. Certainly anxiety will not help either kind of growth, but rather hinder by auto-intoxication if nothing more. This is no plea for idleness, for even the birds are diligent and the flowers grow.

6:28 **The lilies of the field** [*ta krina tou agrou*]. The word may include other wild flowers besides lilies, blossoms like anemones, poppies, gladioli, irises (McNeile).

6:29 **Was not arrayed** [*oude periebaleto*]. Middle voice and so “did not clothe himself,” “did not put around himself.”

6:30 **The grass of the field** [*ton chorton tou agrou*]. The common grass of the field. This heightens the comparison.

6:33 **First his kingdom** [*pr ton t n basileian*]. This in answer to those who see in the Sermon on the Mount only ethical comments. Jesus in the Beatitudes drew the picture of the man with the new heart. Here he places the Kingdom of God and his righteousness before temporal blessings (food and clothing).

6:34 **For the morrow** [*eis ten aurion*]. The last resort of the anxious soul when all other fears are allayed. The ghost of tomorrow stalks out with all its hobgoblins of doubt and distrust.

Chapter 7

7:1 **Judge not** [*m krinete*]. The habit of censoriousness, sharp, unjust criticism. Our word critic is from this very word. It means to separate, distinguish, discriminate. That is necessary, but pre-judice (prejudgment) is unfair, captious criticism.

7:3 **The mote** [*to karpfos*]. Not dust, but a piece of dried wood or chaff, splinter (Weymouth, Moffatt), speck (Goodspeed), a very small particle that may irritate. **The beam** [*t n dokon*]. A log on which planks in the house rest (so papyri), joist, rafter, plank (Moffatt), pole sticking out grotesquely. Probably a current proverb quoted by Jesus like our people in glass houses throwing stones. Tholuck quotes an Arabic proverb: “How seest thou the splinter in thy brother’s eye, and seest not the cross-beam in thine eye?”

7:5 **Shalt thou see clearly** [*diablepseis*]. Only here and Lu 6:42 and Mr 8:25 in the New Testament. Look through, penetrate in contrast to [*blepeis*], to gaze at, in verse 3. Get the log out of your eye and you will see clearly how to help the brother get the splinter out [*ekbalein*] of his eye.

7:6 **That which is holy unto the dogs** [*to hagion tois kusin*]. It is not clear to what “the holy” refers, to ear-rings or to amulets, but that would not appeal to dogs. Trench (*Sermon on the Mount*, p. 136) says that the reference is to meat offered in sacrifice that must not be flung to dogs: “It is not that the dogs would not eat it, for it would be welcome to them; but that it would be a profanation to give it to them, thus to make it a *skubalon*, Ex 22:31.” The yelping dogs would jump at it. Dogs are kin to wolves and infest the streets of oriental cities. **Your pearls before the swine** [*tous margaritas h-m n emprosthen t n choir n*]. The word pearl we have in the name Margarita (Margaret). Pearls look a bit like peas or acorns and would deceive the hogs until they discovered the deception. The wild boars haunt the Jordan Valley still and are not far removed from bears as they trample with their feet and rend with their tusks those who have angered them.

7:9 **Loaf—stone** [*arton—lithon*]. Some stones look like loaves of bread. So the devil suggested that Jesus make loaves out of stones (Mt 4:3).

7:10 **Fish—serpent** [*ichthun—ophin*]. Fish, common article of food, and water-snakes could easily be substituted. Anacoluthon in this sentence in the Greek.

7:11 **How much more** [*pos i mallon*]. Jesus is fond of the *a fortiori* argument.

7:12 **That men should do unto you** [*hina poi sin h-mEn hoi anthr poi*]. Luke (Lu 6:31) puts the Golden Rule parallel with Mt 5:42. The negative form is in Tobit 4:15. It was used by Hillel, Philo, Isocrates, Confucius. “The Golden Rule is the distilled essence of that ‘fulfilment’ (5:17) which is taught in the sermon” (McNeile). Jesus puts it in positive form.

7:13 **By the narrow gate** [*dia t s sten s pul s*]. The Authorized Version “at the strait gate” misled those who did not distinguish between “strait” and “straight.” The figure of the Two Ways had a wide circulation in Jewish and Christian writings (cf. De 30:19; Jer 21:8; Ps 1). See the *Didache* i-vi; Barnabas xviii-xx. “The narrow gate” is repeated in verse 14 and **straitened the way** [*tethlimmen h hodos*] added. The way is “compressed,” narrowed as in a defile between high rocks, a tight place like [*stenoch ria*] in Ro 8:35. “The way that leads to life involves straits and afflictions” (McNeile). Vincent quotes the *Pinax* or *Tablet* of Cebes, a contemporary of Socrates: “Seest thou not, then, a little door, and a way before the door, which is not much crowded, but very few travel it? This is the way that leadeth unto true culture.” “The broad way” [*euruch ros*] is in every city, town, village, with the glaring white lights that lure to destruction.

7:15 **False prophets** [*t n pseudoproph t n*]. There were false prophets in the time of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus will predict “false Messiahs and false prophets” (Mt 24:24) who will lead many astray. They came in due time posing as angels of light like Satan, Judaizers (2Co 11:13ff.) and Gnostics (1Jo 4:1; 1Ti 4:1). Already false prophets were on hand when Jesus spoke on this occasion (cf. Ac 13:6; 2Pe 2:1). In outward appearance they look like sheep in the sheep’s clothing which they wear, but within they are “ravening wolves” [*lukoi harpages*], greedy for power, gain, self. It is a tragedy that such men and women reappear through the ages and always find victims. Wolves are more dangerous than dogs and hogs.

7:16 **By their fruits ye shall know them** [*apo t n karp n aut n epign sesthe*]. From their fruits you will recognize them.” The verb “know ” [*gin sk*] has [*epi*] added, fully know. The illustrations from the trees and vines have many parallels in ancient writers.

7:20 See on Mt 7:16.

7:21 **Not—but** [*ou—all*’]. Sharp contrast between the mere talker and the doer of God’s will.

7:22 **Did we not prophesy in thy name?** [*ou t i s i onomati eproph teusamen;*]. The use of [*ou*] in the question expects the affirmative answer. They claim to have prophesied (preached) in Christ’s name and to have done many miracles. But Jesus will tear off the sheepskin and lay bare the ravening wolf. “I never knew you” [*oudepote egn n h–m s*]. “I was never acquainted with you” (experimental knowledge). Success, as the world counts it, is not a criterion of one’s knowledge of Christ and relation to him. “I will profess unto them” [*homolog s autois*], the very word used of profession of Christ before men (Mt 10:32). This word Jesus will use for public and open announcement of their doom.

7:24 **And doeth them** [*kai poiei autous*]. That is the point in the parable of the wise builder, “who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock” (Lu 6:48).

7:25 **Was founded** [*tethemeli to*]. Past perfect indicative passive state of completion in the past. It had been built upon the rock and it stood. No augment.

7:26 **And doeth them not** [*kai m poi n autous*]. The foolish builder put his house on the sands that could not hold in the storm. One is reminded of the words of Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon in 5:19 about the one “who does and teaches.” Hearing sermons is a dangerous business if one does not put them into practice.

7:28 **The multitudes were astonished** [*exeplassonto hoi ochloi*]. They listened spell-bound to the end and were left amazed. Note the imperfect tense, a buzz of astonishment. The verb means literally “were struck out of themselves.”

7:29 **And not as their scribes** [*kai ouch h s hoi grammateis aut n*]. They had heard many sermons before from the regular rabbis in the synagogues. We have specimens of these discourses preserved in the Mishna and Gemara, the Jewish Talmud when both were completed, the driest, dullest collection of disjointed comments upon every conceivable problem in the history of mankind. The scribes quoted the rabbis before them and were afraid to express an idea without bolstering it up by some predecessor. Jesus spoke with the authority of truth, the reality and freshness of the morning light, and the power of God’s Spirit. This sermon which made such a profound impression ended with the tragedy of the fall of the house on the sand like the crash of a giant oak in the forest. There was no smoothing over the outcome.

Chapter 8

8:2 **If thou wilt** [*ean thel is*]. The leper knew that Jesus had the power to heal him. His doubt was about his willingness. “Men more easily believe in miraculous power than in miraculous love” (Bruce). This is a condition of the third class (undetermined, but with prospect of being determined), a hopeful doubt at any rate. Jesus accepted his challenge by “I will.” The command to “tell no one” was to suppress excitement and prevent hostility.

8:5 **Unto him** [*aut i*]. Dative in spite of the genitive absolute [*eiselthontos autou*] as in verse 1, a not infrequent Greek idiom, especially in the *koin* .

8:6 **Grievously tormented** [*dein s basanizomenos*]. Participle present passive from root [*basanos*] (see on Mt 4:24). The boy [*pais*], slave [*doulos*], Lu 7:2), was a bedridden [*bebl tai*], perfect passive indicative of [*ball*] paralytic.

8:7 **I will come and heal him** [*eg elth n therapeus auton*]. Future indicative, not deliberative subjunctive in question (McNeile). The word here for heal [*therapeus*] means first to serve, give medical attention, then cure, restore to health. The centurion uses the more definite word for healing [*iath setai*] 8:8) as Matthew does in 8:13 [*iath*]. Luke (Lu 9:11), like a physician, says that Jesus healed [*iato*] those in need of treatment [*therapeias*], but the distinction is not always observed. In Ac 28:8 Luke uses [*iasato*] of the miraculous healings in Malta by Paul while he employs [*etherapeuonto*] (Ac 28:9) apparently of the practice of Luke the physician (so W. M. Ramsay). Matthew represents the centurion himself as speaking to Jesus while Luke has it that two committees from the centurion brought the messages, apparently a more detailed narrative. What one does through others he does himself as Pilate “scourged Jesus” (had him scourged).

8:9 **For I also am a man under authority** [*kai gar eg anthr pos hupo exousian*]. “Also” is in the text, though the [*kai*] here may mean “even,” even I in my subordinate position have soldiers under me. As a military man he had learned obedience to his superiors and so expected obedience to his commands, instant obedience (aorist imperatives and aoristic present indicatives). Hence his faith in Christ’s power over the illness of the boy even without coming. Jesus had only to speak with a word (8:8), say the word, and it would be done.

8:10 **So great faith** [*tosaut n pistin*]. In a Roman centurion and greater than in any of the Jews. In like manner Jesus marvelled at the great faith of the Canaanitish woman (Mt 15:28).

8:11 **Sit down** [*anaklith sontai*]. Recline at table on couches as Jews and Romans did. Hence Leonardo da Vinci’s famous picture of the Last Supper is an anachronism with all seated at table in modern style.

8:12 **The sons of the kingdom** [*hoi huioi t s basileias*]. A favourite Hebrew idiom like “son of hell” (Mt 23:15), “sons of this age” (Lu 16:8). The Jews felt that they had a natural right to the

privileges of the kingdom because of descent from Abraham (Mt 3:9). But mere natural birth did not bring spiritual sonship as the Baptist had taught before Jesus did.

Into the outer darkness [*eis to skotos to ex teron*]. Comparative adjective like our “further out,” the darkness outside the limits of the lighted palace, one of the figures for hell or punishment (Mt 23:13; 25:30). The repeated article makes it bolder and more impressive, “the darkness the outside,” there where the wailing and gnashing of teeth is heard in the thick blackness of night.

8:14 **Lying sick of a fever** [*bibl men n kai puressousan*]. Two participles, bedridden (perfect passive of [*ball*]) and burning with fever (present active). How long the fever had had her we have no means of knowing, possibly a sudden and severe attack (Mr 1:30), as they tell Jesus about her on reaching the house of Peter. We are not told what kind of fever it was. Fever itself was considered a disease. “Fever” is from German *feuer* (fire) like the Greek [*pur*].

8:15 **Touched her hand** [*h psato t s cheiros aut s*]. In loving sympathy as the Great Physician and like any good doctor today.

Ministered [*di konei*]. “Began to minister” (conative imperfect) at once to Jesus at table in gratitude and love.

8:16 **When even was come** [*opsias genomen s*]. Genitive absolute. A beautiful sunset scene at the close of the Sabbath day (Mr 1:21). Then the crowds came as Jesus stood in the door of Peter’s house (Mr 1:33; Mt 8:14) as all the city gathered there with the sick, “all those who had it bad” (see on Mt 4:24) and he healed them “with a word” [*log i*]. It was a never to be forgotten memory for those who saw it.

8:17 **Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases** [*autos tas astheneias elaben kai tas nosous ebastasen*]. A quotation from Isa 53:4. It is not clear in what sense Matthew applies the words in Isaiah whether in the precise sense of the Hebrew or in an independent manner. Moffatt translates it: “He took away our sicknesses, and bore the burden of our diseases.” Goodspeed puts it: “He took our sickness and carried away our diseases.” Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, pp. 102f.) thinks that Matthew has made a free interpretation of the Hebrew, has discarded the translation of the Septuagint, and has transposed the two Hebrew verbs so that Matthew means: “He took upon himself our pains, and bore our diseases.” Plummer holds that “It is impossible, and also unnecessary, to understand what the Evangelist understood by ‘took’ [*elaben*] and ‘bare’ [*ebastasen*]. It at least must mean that Christ removed their sufferings from the sufferers. He can hardly have meant that the diseases were transferred to Christ.” [*Bastaz*] occurs freely in the papyri with the sense of lift, carry, endure, carry away (the commonest meaning, Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*), pilfer. In Mt 3:11 we have the common vernacular use to take off sandals. The Attic Greek did not use it in the sense of carrying off. “This passage is the cornerstone of the faith-cure theory, which claims that the atonement of Christ includes provision for *bodily* no less than for spiritual healing, and

therefore insists on translating ‘took away’” (Vincent). We have seen that the word [*bastaz*] will possibly allow that meaning, but I agree with McNeile: “The passage, *as Mt. employs it*, has no bearing on the doctrine of the atonement.” But Jesus does show his sympathy with us. “Christ’s sympathy with the sufferers was so intense that he really felt their weaknesses and pains.” In our burdens Jesus steps under the load with us and helps us to carry on.

8:19 **A scribe** [*heis grammateus*]. One [*heis*] = “a,” indefinite article. Already a disciple as shown by “another of the disciples” [*heteros t n math t n*] in 8:21. He calls Jesus “Teacher” [*didaskale*], but he seems to be a “bumptious” brother full of self-confidence and self-complacency. “Even one of that most unimpressible class, in spirit and tendency utterly opposed to the ways of Jesus” (Bruce). Yet Jesus deals gently with him.

8:20 **Holes** [*ph leous*]. A lurking hole, burrow. **Nests** [*katask n seis*]. “Roosts, i.e. leafy, [*sk nai*] for settling at night (*tabernacula, habitacula*), not nests” (McNeile). In the Septuagint it is used of God tabernacling in the Sanctuary. The verb [*katask no*] is there used of birds (Ps 103:12).

The Son of man [*tho huios tou anthr pou*]. This remarkable expression, applied to himself by Jesus so often, appears here for the first time. There is a considerable modern literature devoted to it. “It means much for the Speaker, who has chosen it deliberately, in connection with private reflections, at whose nature we can only guess, by study of the many occasions on which the name is used” (Bruce). Often it means the Representative Man. It may sometimes stand for the Aramaic *barnasha*, the man, but in most instances that idea will not suit. Jesus uses it as a concealed Messianic title. It is possible that this scribe would not understand the phrase at all. Bruce thinks that here Jesus means “the unprivileged Man,” worse off than the foxes and the birds. Jesus spoke Greek as well as Aramaic. It is inconceivable that the Gospels should never call Jesus “the Son of man” and always credit it to him as his own words if he did not so term himself, about eighty times in all, thirty-three in Matthew. Jesus in his early ministry, except at the very start in Joh 4, abstains from calling himself Messiah. This term suited his purpose exactly to get the people used to his special claim as Messiah when he is ready to make it openly.

8:21 **And bury my father** [*kai thapsai ton patera mou*]. The first man was an enthusiast. This one is overcautious. It is by no means certain that the father was dead. Tobit urged his son Tobias to be sure to bury him: “Son, when I am dead, bury me” (Tobit 4:3). The probability is that this disciple means that, after his father is dead and buried, he will then be free to follow Jesus. “At the present day, an Oriental, with his father sitting by his side, has been known to say respecting his future projects: ‘But I must first bury my father!’” (Plummer). Jesus wanted first things first. But even if his father was not actually dead, service to Christ comes first.

8:22 **Leave the dead to bury their own dead** [*aphes tous nekrous thapsai tous heaut n nekrous*]. The spiritually dead are always on hand to bury the physically dead, if one’s real duty is with Jesus. Chrysostom says that, while it is a good deed to bury the dead, it is a better one to preach Christ.

8:24 **But he was asleep** [*autos de ekatheuden*]. Imperfect, was sleeping. Picturesque scene. The Sea of Galilee is 680 feet below the Mediterranean Sea. These sudden squalls come down from the summit of Hermon with terrific force [*seismos megas*] like an earthquake. Mark (Mr 4:37) and Luke (Lu 8:23) term it a whirlwind [*lailaps*] in furious gusts.

8:25 **Save, Lord; we perish** [*Kurie, s son, apollumetha*]. More exactly, “Lord, save us at once (aorist), we are perishing (present linear).”

8:27 **Even the winds and the sea obey him** [*Kai hoi an moi kai h thalassa aut i hupakouousin*]. A nature miracle. Even a sudden drop in the wind would not at once calm the sea. “J. Weiss explains that by ‘an astonishing coincidence’ the storm happened to lull at the moment that Jesus spoke!” (McNeile). Some minds are easily satisfied by their own stupidities.

8:28 **The country of the Gadarenes** [*ten ch ran t n Gadara n n*]. This is the correct text in Matthew while in Mr 5:1 and Lu 8:26 it is “the country of the Gerasenes.” Dr. Thomson discovered by the lake the ruins of Khersa (Gerasa). This village is in the district of the city of Gadara some miles southeastward so that it can be called after Gerasa or Gadara. So Matthew speaks of “two demoniacs” while Mark and Luke mention only one, the leading one. “**The tombs**” [*t n mn mei n*] were chambers cut into the mountain side common enough in Palestine then and now. On the eastern side of the lake the precipitous cliffs are of limestone formation and full of caves. It is one of the proofs that one is a maniac that he haunts the tombs. People shunned the region as dangerous because of the madmen.

8:29 **Thou Son of God** [*huie tou theou*]. The recognition of Jesus by the demons is surprising. The whole subject of demonology is difficult. Some hold that it is merely the ancient way of describing disease. But that does not explain the situation here. Jesus is represented as treating the demons as real existences separate from the human personality. Missionaries in China today claim that they have seen demons cast out. The devil knew Jesus clearly and it is not strange that Jesus was recognized by the devil’s agents. They know that there is nothing in common between them and the Son of God [*h min kai soi*, ethical dative) and they fear torment “before the time” [*pro kairou*]. Usually [*ta daimonia*] is the word in the New Testament for demons, but in 8:31 we have [*hoi daimones*] (the only example in the N.T.). [*Daimonion*] is a diminutive of [*daim n*]. In Homer [*daim n*] is used synonymously with [*theos*] and [*thea*]. Hesiod employed [*daim n*] of men of the golden age as tutelary deities. Homer has the adjective [*daimonios*] usually in an evil sense. Empedocles considered the demons both bad and good. They were thus used to relieve the gods and goddesses of much rascality. Grote (*History of Greece*) notes that the Christians were thus by pagan usage justified in calling idolatry the worship of demons. See 1Co 10:20f.; 1Ti 4:1; Re 9:20; 16:13f. In the Gospels demons are the same as unclean spirits (Mr 5:12,15; 3:22,30; Lu 4:33). The demons are disturbers (Vincent) of the whole life of man (Mr 5:2f.; 7:25; Mt 12:45; Lu 13:11, 16).

8:32 **Rushed down the steep** [*h rm sen kata tou kr mnou*]. Down from the cliff (ablative case) into the sea. Constative aorist tense. The influence of mind on matter is now understood better than formerly, but we have the mastery of the mind of the Master on the minds of the maniacs, the power of Christ over the demons, over the herd of hogs. Difficulties in plenty exist for those who see only folk-lore and legend, but plain enough if we take Jesus to be really Lord and Saviour. The incidental destruction of the hogs need not trouble us when we are so familiar with nature's tragedies which we cannot comprehend.

8:34 **That he would depart** [*hop s metab i*]. The whole city was excited over the destruction of the hogs and begged Jesus to leave, forgetful of the healing of the demoniacs in their concern over the loss of property. They cared more for hogs than for human souls, as often happens today.

Chapter 9

9:1 **His own city** [*t n idian polin*]. Capernaum (Mr 2:1; Mt 4:13).

9:2 **They brought** [*prosepheron*]. Imperfect, “were bringing,” graphic picture made very vivid by the details in Mr 2:1-4 and Lu 5:17. **”Lying on a bed”** (stretched on a couch), perfect passive participle, a little bed or couch [*klinidion*] in Lu 5:19, “a pallet” [*krabatos*] in Mr 2:4, 9, 11. **Thy sins are forgiven** [*aphientai*]. Present passive indicative (aoristic present). Luke (Lu 5:21) has [*aphe ntai*], Doric and Ionic perfect passive indicative for the Attic [*apheintai*], one of the dialectical forms appearing in the *Koin* .

9:3 **This man blasphemeth** [*houtos blasph mei*]. See the sneer in “this fellow.” “The prophet always is a scandalous, irreverent blasphemer from the conventional point of view” (Bruce).

9:6 **That ye may know** [*hina eid te*]. Jesus accepts the challenge in the thoughts of the scribes and performs the miracle of healing the paralytic, who so far only had his sins forgiven, to prove his Messianic power on earth to forgive sins even as God does. The word [*exousia*] may mean either power or authority. He had both as a matter of fact. Note same word in 9:8. **Then saith he to the sick of the palsy** [*tote legei t i paralutik i*]. These words of course, were not spoken by Jesus. Curiously enough Matthew interjects them right in the midst of the sayings of Jesus in reply to the scorn of the scribes. Still more remarkable is the fact that Mark (Mr 2:10) has precisely the same words in the same place save that Matthew has added [*tote*], of which he is fond, to what Mark already had. Mark, as we know, largely reports Peter’s words and sees with Peter’s eyes. Luke has the same idea in the same place without the vivid historical present [*legei (eipen t i paralelumen i)*] with the participle in place of the adjective. This is one of the many proofs that both Matthew and Luke made use of Mark’s Gospel each in his own way. **Take up thy bed** [*ron sou t n klin n*]. Pack up at once (aorist active imperative) the rolled-up pallet.

9:9 **At the place of toll** [*epi to tel nion*]. The tax-office or custom-house of Capernaum placed here to collect taxes from the boats going across the lake outside of Herod’s territory or from people going from Damascus to the coast, a regular caravan route. **”Called Matthew”** [*Maththaion legomenon*] and in 10:3 Matthew the publican is named as one of the Twelve Apostles. Mark (Mr 2:14) and Luke (Lu 5:27) call this man Levi. He had two names as was common, Matthew Levi. The publicans [*tel nai*] get their name in English from the Latin *publicanus* (a man who did public duty), not a very accurate designation. They were detested because they practised graft. Even Gabinius the proconsul of Syria was accused by Cicero of relieving Syrians and Jews of legitimate taxes for graft. He ordered some of the tax-officers removed. Already Jesus had spoken of the publican (5:46) in a way that shows the public disfavour in which they were held.

9:10 **Publicans and sinners** [*tel nai kai hamart loi*]. Often coupled together in common scorn and in contrast with the righteous [*dikaioi*] in 9:13). It was a strange medley at Levi’s feast (Jesus and

the four fisher disciples, Nathanael and Philip; Matthew Levi and his former companions, publicans and sinners; Pharisees with their scribes or students as on-lookers; disciples of John the Baptist who were fasting at the very time that Jesus was feasting and with such a group). The Pharisees criticize sharply “your teacher” for such a social breach of “reclining” together with publicans at Levi’s feast.

9:12 **But they that are sick** [*alla hoi kak s echontes*]. Probably a current proverb about the physician. As a physician of body and soul Jesus was bound to come in close touch with the social outcasts.

9:13 **But go ye and learn** [*poreuthentes de mathete*]. With biting sarcasm Jesus bids these preachers to learn the meaning of Ho 6:6. It is repeated in Mt 12:7. Ingressive aorist imperative [*mathete*].

9:14 **The disciples of John** [*hoi math tai I anou*]. One is surprised to find disciples of the Baptist in the role of critics of Christ along with the Pharisees. But John was languishing in prison and they perhaps were blaming Jesus for doing nothing about it. At any rate John would not have gone to Levi’s feast on one of the Jewish fast-days. “The strict asceticism of the Baptist (11:18) and of the Pharisaic rabbis (Lu 18:12) was imitated by their disciples” (McNeile).

9:15 **The sons of the bride-chamber** [*hoi huioi tou numph nos*]. It is a late Hebrew idiom for the wedding guests, “the friends of the bridegroom and all the sons of the bride-chamber” (*Tos. Berak.* ii. 10). Cf. Joh 2:29.

9:16 **Undressed cloth** [*rhakous agnaphou*]. An unfulled, raw piece of woollen cloth that will shrink when wet and tear a bigger hole than ever. **A worse rent** [*cheiron schisma*]. Our word “schism.” The “**patch**” [*pl r ma*, filling up) thus does more harm than good.

9:17 **Old wineskins** [*askous palaious*]. Not glass “**bottles**” but wineskins used as bottles as is true in Palestine yet, goatskins with the rough part inside. “Our word *bottle* originally carried the true meaning, being a bottle of leather. In Spanish *bota* means a *leather bottle*, a *boot*, and a *butt*. In Spain wine is still brought to market in pig-skins ” (Vincent). The new wine will ferment and crack the dried-up old skins. **The wine is spilled** [*ekcheitai*], poured out.

9:18 **Is even now dead** [*arti eteleut sen*]. Aorist tense with [*arti*] and so better, “just now died,” “just dead” (Moffatt). Mark (Mr 5:23) has it “at the point of death,” Luke (Lu 8:42) “lay a dying.” It is not always easy even for physicians to tell when actual death has come. Jesus in 9:24 pointedly said, “The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth,” meaning that she did not die to stay dead.

9:20 **The border of his garment** [*tou kraspedou tou himatiou*]. The hem or fringe of a garment, a tassel or tuft hanging from the edge of the outer garment according to Nu 15:38. It was made of twisted wool. Jesus wore the dress of other people with these fringes at the four corners of the outer garment. The Jews actually counted the words *Jehovah One* from the numbers of the twisted white

threads, a refinement that Jesus had no concern for. This poor woman had an element of superstition in her faith as many people have, but Jesus honours her faith and cures her.

9:23 **The flute-players** [*tous aul tas*]. The girl was just dead, but already a crowd “making a tumult” [*thoruboumenon*] with wild wailing and screaming had gathered in the outer court, “brought together by various motives, sympathy, money, desire to share in the meat and drink going at such a time” (Bruce). Besides the several flute-players (voluntary or hired) there were probably “some hired mourning women (Jer 9:17) *praeficae*, whose duty it was to sing *naenia* in praise of the dead” (Bruce). These when put out by Jesus, “laughed him to scorn” [*kategel n*], in a sort of loud and repeated (imperfect) guffaw of scorn. Jesus overcame all this repellent environment.

9:27 **As Jesus passed by** [*paragonti I sou*]. Associative instrumental case with [*kolouth san*]. It was the supreme opportunity of these two blind men. Note two demoniacs in Mt 8:28 and two blind men in Mt 20:30. See the same word [*parag n*] used of Jesus in 9:9.

9:29 **Touched their eyes** [*h psato t n ophthalm n*]. The men had faith (9:28) and Jesus rewards their faith and yet he touched their eyes as he sometimes did with kindly sympathy.

9:30 **Were opened** [*ne ichth san*]. Triple augment (on [*oi= i, e*] and then on preposition [*an = n*]). **Strictly charged them** [*enebrim th autois*]. A difficult word, compound of [*en*] and [*brimaomai*] (to be moved with anger). It is used of horses snorting (Aeschylus, *Theb.* 461), of men fretting or being angry (Da 11:30). Allen notes that it occurs twice in Mark (Mr 1:43; 14:5) when Matthew omits it. It is found only here in Matthew. John has it twice in a different sense (Joh 11:33 with [*en heaut i*]). Here and in Mr 1:32 it has the notion of commanding sternly, a sense unknown to ancient writers. Most manuscripts have the middle [*enebrim sato*], but Aleph and B have the passive [*enebrim th*] which Westcott and Hort accept, but without the passive sense (cf. [*apekrith*]). “The word describes rather a rush of deep feeling which in the synoptic passages showed itself in a vehement injunctive and in Joh 11:33 in look and manner” (McNeile). Bruce translates Euthymius Zigabenus on Mr 1:32: “Looked severely, contracting His eyebrows, and shaking His head at them as they are wont to do who wish to make sure that secrets will be kept.” “See to it, let no one know it” [*horate, m deis gin sket*]. Note elliptical change of persons and number in the two imperatives.

9:32 **A dumb man** [*k phon*]. Literally blunted in tongue as here and so dumb, in ear as in Mt 11:5 and so deaf. Homer used it of a blunted dart (*Iliad* xi. 390). Others applied it to mental dulness.

9:34 **By the prince of the devils** [*en t i archonti t n daimoni n*]. Demons, not devils. The codex Bezae omits this verse, but it is probably genuine. The Pharisees are becoming desperate and, unable to deny the reality of the miracles, they seek to discredit them by trying to connect Jesus with the devil himself, the prince of the demons. They will renew this charge later (Mt 12:24) when Jesus will refute it with biting sarcasm.

9:35 **And Jesus went about** [*kai peri gen ho I sous*]. Imperfect tense descriptive of this third tour of all Galilee.

9:36 **Were distressed and scattered** [*san eskulmenoi kai erimmenoi*]. Periphrastic past perfect indicative passive. A sad and pitiful state the crowds were in. Rent or mangled as if by wild beasts. [*Skull*] occurs in the papyri in sense of plunder, concern, vexation. “Used here of the common people, it describes their religious condition. They were harassed, importuned, bewildered by those who should have taught them; hindered from entering into the kingdom of heaven (23:13), laden with the burdens which the Pharisees laid upon them (23:3). [*Erimmenoi*] denotes men cast down and prostrate on the ground, whether from drunkenness, Polyb. v. 48.2, or from mortal wounds” (Allen): This perfect passive participle from [*rhipt*], to throw down. The masses were in a state of mental dejection. No wonder that Jesus was moved with compassion [*esplagchnisth*].

9:38 **That he send forth labourers** [*hop s ekbal i ergatas*]. Jesus turns from the figure of the shepherdless sheep to the harvest field ripe and ready for the reapers. The verb [*ekball*] really means to drive out, to push out, to draw out with violence or without. Prayer is the remedy offered by Jesus in this crisis for a larger ministerial supply. How seldom do we hear prayers for more preachers. Sometimes God literally has to push or force a man into the ministry who resists his known duty.

Chapter 10

10:1 **His twelve disciples** [*tous d deka math tas autou*]. First mention of the group of “learners” by Matthew and assumed as already in existence (note the article) as they were (Mr 3:14). They were chosen before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered, but Matthew did not mention it in connection with that sermon.

Gave them authority [*ed ken autois exousian*]. “Power” (Moffatt, Goodspeed). One may be surprised that here only the healing work is mentioned, though Luke (Lu 9:2) has it “to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.” And Matthew says (Mt 10:7), “And as ye go, preach.” Hence it is not fair to say that Matthew knows only the charge to heal the sick, important as that is. The physical distress was great, but the spiritual even greater. Power is more likely the idea of [*exousia*] here. This healing ministry attracted attention and did a vast deal of good. Today we have hospitals and skilled physicians and nurses, but we should not deny the power of God to bless all these agencies and to cure disease as he wills. Jesus is still the master of soul and body. But intelligent faith does not justify us in abstaining from the help of the physician who must not be confounded with the quack and the charlatan.

10:2 **The names of the twelve apostles** [*t n d deka apostol n ta onomata*]. This is the official name (missionaries) used here by Matthew for the first time. The names are given here, but Matthew does not say that they were chosen at this time. Mark (Mr 3:13-19) and Luke (Lu 6:12-16) state that Jesus “chose” them, “appointed” them after a night of prayer in the mountain and came down with them and then delivered the Sermon (Lu 6:17). Simon heads the list [*pr tos*] in all four lists including Ac 1:13f. He came to be first and foremost at the great Pentecost (Ac 2 and Ac 3). The apostles disputed a number of times as to which was greatest. Judas Iscariot comes last each time save that he is absent in Acts, being already dead. Matthew calls him the betrayer [*ho paradidous*]. Iscariot is usually explained as “man of Kerioth” down near Edom (Jos 15:25). Philip comes fifth and James the son of Alphaeus the ninth. Bartholomew is the name for Nathanael. Thaddaeus is Judas the brother of James. Simon Zelotes is also called Simon the Canaanite (Zealous, Hebrew word). This is apparently their first preaching and healing tour without Jesus. He sends them forth by twos (Mr 6:7). Matthew names them in pairs, probably as they were sent out.

10:5 **These twelve Jesus sent forth** [*toutous tous d deka apesteilen ho I sous*]. The word “sent forth” [*apesteilen*] is the same root as “apostles.” The same word reappears in 10:16. **Way of the Gentiles** [*hodon ethn n*]. Objective genitive, way leading to the Gentiles. This prohibition against going among the Gentiles and the Samaritans was for this special tour. They were to give the Jews the first opportunity and not to prejudice the cause at this stage. Later Jesus will order them to go and disciple all the Gentiles (Mt 28:19).

10:6 **The lost sheep** [*ta probata ta apol lota*]. The sheep, the lost ones. Mentioned here first by Matthew. Jesus uses it not in blame, but in pity (Bruce). Bengel notes that Jesus says “lost” more frequently than “led astray.” “If the Jewish nation could be brought to repentance the new age would dawn” (McNeile).

10:7 **As ye go, preach** [*poreuomenoi k russete*]. Present participle and present imperative. They were itinerant preachers on a “preaching tour,” heralds [*k rukes*] proclaiming good news. The summary message is the same as that of the Baptist (3:2) that first startled the country, “the kingdom of heaven has drawn nigh.” He echoed it up and down the Jordan Valley. They are to shake Galilee with it as Jesus had done (4:17). That same amazing message is needed today. But “the apprentice apostles” (Bruce) could tell not a little about the King of the Kingdom who was with them.

10:9 **Get you no gold** [*m kt s sthe*]. It is not, “Do not possess” or “own,” but “do not acquire” or “procure” for yourselves, indirect middle aorist subjunctive. Gold, silver, brass (copper) in a descending scale (nor even bronze). **In your purses** [*eis tas z nas h-m n*]. In your girdles or belts used for carrying money.

10:10 **No wallet** [*m p ran*]. Better than “scrip.” It can be either a travelling or bread bag. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 108f.) shows that it can mean the beggar’s collecting bag as in an inscription on a monument at Kefr Hanar in Syria: “While Christianity was still young the beggar priest was making his rounds in the land of Syria on behalf of the national goddess.” Deissmann also quotes a pun in the *Didaskalia=Const. Apost.* 3, 6 about some itinerant widows who said that they were not so much [*ch rai*] (spouseless) as [*p rai*] (pouchless). He cites also Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* III. iii. 145: “Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back, wherein he puts alms for oblivion.” **For the labourer is worthy of his food** [*axios gar ho ergat s t s troph s autou*]. The sermon is worth the dinner, in other words. Luke in the charge to the seventy (Lu 10:7) has the same words with [*misthou*] (reward) instead of [*troph s*] (food). In 1Ti 5:18 Paul quotes Luke’s form as scripture [*h graph*] or as a well-known saying if confined to the first quotation. The word for workman here [*ergat s*] is that used by Jesus in the prayer for labourers (Mt 9:38). The well-known *Didach* or *Teaching of the Twelve* (xiii) shows that in the second century there was still a felt need for care on the subject of receiving pay for preaching. The travelling sophists added also to the embarrassment of the situation. The wisdom of these restrictions was justified in Galilee at this time. Mark (Mr 6:6-13) and Luke (Lu 9:1-6) vary slightly from Matthew in some of the details of the instructions of Jesus.

10:13 **If the house be worthy** [*ean i h oikia axia*]. Third class condition. What makes a house worthy? “It would naturally be readiness to receive the preachers and their message” (McNeile). Hospitality is one of the noblest graces and preachers receive their share of it. The apostles are not to be burdensome as guests.

10:14 **Shake off the dust** [*ektinaxate ton koniorton*]. Shake out, a rather violent gesture of disfavour. The Jews had violent prejudices against the smallest particles of Gentile dust, not as a purveyor of disease of which they did not know, but because it was regarded as the putrescence of death. If the apostles were mistreated by a host or hostess, they were to be treated as if they were Gentiles (cf. Mt 18:17; Ac 18:6). Here again we have a restriction that was for this special tour with its peculiar perils.

10:15 **More tolerable** [*anektoteron*]. The papyri use this adjective of a convalescent. People in their vernacular today speak of feeling “tolerable.” The Galileans were having more privileges than Sodom and Gomorrah had.

10:16 **As sheep in the midst of wolves** [*h s probata en mes i luk n*]. The presence of wolves on every hand was a fact then and now. Some of these very sheep (10:6) at the end will turn out to be wolves and cry for Christ’s crucifixion. The situation called for consummate wisdom and courage. The serpent was the emblem of wisdom or shrewdness, intellectual keenness (Ge 3:1; Ps 58:5), the dove of simplicity (Ho 7:11). It was a proverb, this combination, but one difficult of realization. Either without the other is bad (rascality or gullibility). The first clause with [*arnas*] for [*probata*] is in Lu 10:3 and apparently is in a *Fragment of a Lost Gospel* edited by Grenfell and Hunt. The combination of wariness and innocence is necessary for the protection of the sheep and the discomfiture of the wolves. For “harmless” [*akeraioi*] Moffatt and Goodspeed have “guileless,” Weymouth “innocent.” The word means “unmixed” [*a*] privative and [*kerannumi*], “unadulterated,” “simple,” “unalloyed.”

10:17 **Beware of men** [*prosechete apo t n anthr p n*]. Ablative case with [*apo*]. Hold your mind [*noun*] understood) away from. The article with [*anthr p n*] points back to [*luk n*] (wolves) in 10:16.

To councils [*eis sunedria*]. The local courts of justice in every Jewish town. The word is an old one from Herodotus on for any deliberative body [*concilium*]. The same word is used for the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. **In their synagogues** [*en tois sunag gais aut n*]. Here not merely as the place of assembly for worship, but as an assembly of justice exercising discipline as when the man born blind was cast out of the synagogue (Joh 9:35). They were now after the exile in every town of any size where Jews were.

10:19 **Be not anxious** [*m merimn s te*]. Ingressive aorist subjunctive in prohibition. “Do not become anxious” (Mt 6:31). “Self-defence before Jewish kings and heathen governors would be a terrible ordeal for humble Galileans. The injunction applied to cases when preparation of a speech would be impossible” (McNeile). “It might well alarm the bravest of these simple fishermen to be told that they would have to answer for their doings on Christ’s behalf before Jewish councils and heathen courts” (Plummer). Christ is not talking about preparation of sermons. **”In that hour”** [*en ekein i t i h r i*], if not before. The Spirit of your Father will speak to you and through you (10:20).

Here is no posing as martyr or courting a martyr's crown, but real heroism with full loyalty to Christ.

10:22 **Ye shall be hated** [*esesthe misoumenoi*]. Periphrastic future passive, linear action. It will go on through the ages. **For my name's sake** [*dia to onoma mou*]. In the O.T. as in the Targums and the Talmud "the name" as here stands for the person (Mt 19:29; Ac 5:41; 9:16; 15:26). "He that endureth to the end" [*ho hupomeinas eis telos*]. Effective aorist participle with future indicative.

10:23 **Till the Son of man be come** [*he s elth i ho huios tou anthr pou*]. Moffatt puts it "before the Son of man arrives" as if Jesus referred to this special tour of Galilee. Jesus could overtake them. Possibly so, but it is by no means clear. Some refer it to the Transfiguration, others to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, others to the Second Coming. Some hold that Matthew has put the saying in the wrong context. Others bluntly say that Jesus was mistaken, a very serious charge to make in his instructions to these preachers. The use of [*he s*] with aorist subjunctive for a future event is a good Greek idiom.

10:25 **Beelzebub** [*beezeboul*] according to B, [*beelzeboul*] by most Greek MSS., [*beelzeboub*] by many non-Greek MSS.). The etymology of the word is also unknown, whether "lord of a dwelling" with a pun on "the master of the house" [*oikodespot n*] or "lord of flies" or "lord of dung" or "lord of idolatrous sacrifices." It is evidently a term of reproach. "An opprobrious epithet; exact form of the word and meaning of the name have given more trouble to commentators than it is all worth" (Bruce). See Mt 12:24.

10:26 **Fear them not therefore** [*m oun phob th te autous*]. Repeated in verses 28 and 31 [*m phobeisthe*] present middle imperative here in contrast with aorist passive subjunctive in the preceding prohibitions). Note also the accusative case with the aorist passive subjunctive, transitive though passive. See same construction in Lu 12:5. In Mt 10:28 the construction is with [*apo*] and the ablative, a translation Hebraism as in Lu 12:4 (Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek N.T. in the Light of Historical Research*, p. 577).

10:28 **Destroy both soul and body in hell** [*kai psuch n kai s ma apolesai en geenn i*]. Note "soul" here of the eternal spirit, not just life in the body. "Destroy" here is not annihilation, but eternal punishment in Gehenna (the real hell) for which see on 5:22. Bruce thinks that the devil as the tempter is here meant, not God as the judge, but surely he is wrong. There is no more needed lesson today than the fear of God.

10:29 **Two sparrows** [*duo strouthia*]. Diminutive of [*strouthos*] and means any small bird, sparrows in particular. They are sold today in the markets of Jerusalem and Jaffa. "For a farthing" [*assariou*] is genitive of price. Only here and Lu 12:6 in the N.T. Diminutive form of the Roman *as*, slightly more than half an English penny. **Without your Father** [*aneu tou patros h-m n*]. There is comfort in this thought for us all. Our father who knows about the sparrows knows and cares about us.

10:31 **Than many sparrows** [*poll n strouthi n*]. Ablative case of comparison with [*diapherete*] (our differ).

10:32 **Shall confess me** [*homolog sei en emoi*]. An Aramaic idiom, not Hebrew, see also Lu 12:8. So also here, “him will I also confess” [*homolog s k’ag en aut i*]. Literally this Aramaic idiom reproduced in the Greek means “confess in me,” indicating a sense of unity with Christ and of Christ with the man who takes the open stand for him.

10:33 **Shall deny me** [*arn s tai me*]. Aorist subjunctive here with [*hostis*], though future indicative [*homolog sei*] above. Note accusative here (case of extension), saying “no” to Christ, complete breach. This is a solemn law, not a mere social breach, this cleavage by Christ of the man who repudiates him, public and final.

10:34 **I came not to send peace, but a sword** [*ouk lthon balein eir n n, alla machairan*]. A bold and dramatic climax. The aorist infinitive means a sudden hurling of the sword where peace was expected. Christ does bring peace, not as the world gives, but it is not the force of compromise with evil, but of conquest over wrong, over Satan, the triumph of the cross. Meanwhile there will be inevitably division in families, in communities, in states. It is no namby-pamby sentimentalism that Christ preaches, no peace at any price. The Cross is Christ’s answer to the devil’s offer of compromise in world dominion. For Christ the kingdom of God is virile righteousness, not mere emotionalism.

10:35 **Set at variance** [*dichasai*]. Literally divide in two, [*dicha*]. Jesus uses Mic 7:1-6 to describe the rottenness of the age as Micah had done. Family ties and social ties cannot stand in the way of loyalty to Christ and righteous living. **The daughter-in-law** [*numph n*]. Literally bride, the young wife who is possibly living with the mother-in-law. It is a tragedy to see a father or mother step between the child and Christ.

10:38 **Doth not take his cross** [*ou lambanei ton stauron autou*]. The first mention of cross in Matthew. Criminals were crucified in Jerusalem. It was the custom for the condemned person to carry his own cross as Jesus did till Simon of Cyrene was impressed for that purpose. The Jews had become familiar with crucifixion since the days of Antiochus Epiphanes and one of the Maccabean rulers (Alexander Jannaeus) had crucified 800 Pharisees. It is not certain whether Jesus was thinking of his own coming crucifixion when he used this figure, though possible, perhaps probable. The disciples would hardly think of that outcome unless some of them had remarkable insight.

10:39 **Shall lose it** [*apolesei aut n*]. This paradox appears in four forms according to Allen (I) Mt 10:39 (2) Mr 8:35; Mt 16:25; Lu 9:24 (3) Lu 17:33 (4) Joh 12:25. *The Wisdom of Sirach* (Hebrew text) in 51:26 has: “He that giveth his life findeth her (wisdom).” It is one of the profound sayings of Christ that he repeated many times. Plato (*Gorgias* 512) has language somewhat similar though

not so sharply put. The article and aorist participles here [*ho heur n, ho apolesas*] are timeless in themselves just like [*ho dechomenos*] in verses 40 and 41.

10:41 **In the name of a prophet** [*eis onoma proph tou*]. “Because he is a prophet” (Moffatt). In an Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 37 (A.D. 49) we find [*onomati eleutherou*] in virtue of being free-born. “He that receiveth a prophet from no ulterior motive, but simply *qua* prophet (*ut prophetam*, Jer.) would receive a reward in the coming age equal to that of his guest” (McNeile). The use of [*eis*] here is to be noted. In reality [*eis*] is simply [*en*] with the same meaning. It is not proper to say that [*eis*] has always to be translated “into.” Besides these examples of [*eis onoma*] in verses 41 and 43 see Mt 12:41 [*eis to k rugma I n*] (see Robertson’s *Grammar*, p. 593). **Unto one of these little ones** [*hena t n mikr n tout n*]. Simple believers who are neither apostles, prophets, or particularly righteous, just “learners,” “in the name of a disciple” [*eis onoma math tou*]. Alford thinks that some children were present (cf. Mt 18:2-6).

Chapter 11

11:1 **He departed thence to teach and preach** [*meteb ekeithen tou didaskein kai k russein*]. In five instances (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1) after great discourses by Jesus “the transition to what follows is made with the formula, ‘And it came to pass when Jesus had ended’” (McNeile). This is a wrong chapter division, for 11:1 belongs with the preceding section. **”Commanding”** [*diatass n*], complementary participle with [*etelesen*], means giving orders in detail [*dia-*] for each of them. Note both “teach and preach” as in 4:23. Where did Jesus go? Did he follow behind the twelve as he did with the seventy “whither he himself was about to come” (Lu 10:1)? Bruce holds with Chrysostom that Jesus avoided the places where they were, giving them room and time to do their work. But, if Jesus himself went to the chief cities of Galilee on this tour, he would be compelled to touch many of the same points. Jesus would naturally follow behind at some distance. At the end of the tour the apostles come together in Capernaum and tell Jesus all that they had done and that they had taught (Mr 6:30). Matthew follows the general outline of Mark, but the events are not grouped in chronological order here.

11:2 **John heard in the prison** [*ho de I an s akousas en t i desm t ri i*]. Probably (Lu 7:18) the raising of the son of the widow of Nain. The word for prison here is the place where one was kept bound (Ac 5:21,23; 16:26). See Mt 4:12. It was in Machaerus east of the Dead Sea which at this time belonged to the rule of Herod Antipas (Jos. *Ant.* XVIII. v.2). John’s disciples had access to him. So he sent word by [*dia*], not [*duo*] as in Lu 7:19) them to Jesus.

11:3 **He that cometh** [*ho erchomenos*]. This phrase refers to the Messiah (Mr 11:9; Lu 13:35; 19:38; Heb 10:37; Ps 118:26; Da 7:13). Some rabbis applied the phrase to some forerunner of the kingdom (McNeile). Was there to be “another” [*heteron*] after Jesus? John had been in prison “long enough to develop a *prison mood*” (Bruce). It was once clear enough to him, but his environment was depressing and Jesus had done nothing to get him out of Machaerus (see chapter IX in my *John the Loyal*). John longed for reassurance.

11:4 **The things which ye do hear and see** [*ha akouete kai blepete*]. This symbolical message was for John to interpret, not for them.

11:5 **And the dead are raised up** [*kai nekroi egeirontai*]. Like that of the son of the widow of Nain. Did he raise the dead also on this occasion? “Tell John your story over again and remind him of these prophetic texts, Isa 35:5; 61:1” (Bruce). The items were convincing enough and clearer than mere eschatological symbolism. “The poor” in particular have the gospel, a climax.

11:6 **Whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me** [*hos an m skandalisth i en emoi*]. Indefinite relative clause with first aorist passive subjunctive. This beatitude is a rebuke to John for his doubt even though in prison. Doubt is not a proof of superior intellect, scholarship, or piety.

John was in the fog and that is the time not to make serious decisions. “In some way even the Baptist had found some occasion of stumbling in Jesus” (Plummer).

11:7 **As these went their way** [*tout n poreuomen n*]. Present participle genitive absolute. The eulogy of Jesus was spoken as the two disciples of John were going away. Is it a matter of regret that they did not hear this wondrous praise of John that they might cheer him with it? “It may almost be called the funeral oration of the Baptist, for not long afterwards Herodias compassed his death” (Plummer). **A reed shaken by the wind** [*kalamon hupo anemou saleuomenon*]. Latin *calamus*. Used of the reeds that grew in plenty in the Jordan Valley where John preached, of a staff made of a reed (Mt 27:29), as a measuring rod (Re 11:1), of a writer’s pen (3Jo 1:13). The reeds by the Jordan bent with the wind, but not so John.

11:9 **And much more than a prophet** [*kai perissoteron proph tou*]. Ablative of comparison after [*perissoteron*] itself comparative though meaning exceeding (surrounded by, overflowing). John had all the great qualities of the true prophet: “Vigorous moral conviction, integrity, strength of will, fearless zeal for truth and righteousness” (Bruce). And then he was the Forerunner of the Messiah (Mal 3:1).

11:11 **He that is but little** [*ho mikroteros*]. The Authorized Version here has it better, “he that is least.” The article with the comparative is a growing idiom in the vernacular *Koin* for the superlative as in the modern Greek it is the only idiom for the superlative (Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek N.T.*, p. 668). The papyri and inscriptions show the same construction. The paradox of Jesus has puzzled many. He surely means that John is greater [*meiz n*] than all others in character, but that the least in the kingdom of heaven surpasses him in privilege. John is the end of one age, “until John” (11:14), and the beginning of the new era. All those that come after John stand upon his shoulders. John is the mountain peak between the old and the new.

11:12 **Suffereth violence** [*biazetai*]. This verb occurs only here and in Lu 16:16 in the N.T. It seems to be middle in Luke and Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, p. 258) quotes an inscription “where [*biazomai*] is without doubt reflexive and absolute” as in Lu 16:16. But there are numerous papyri examples where it is passive (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*, etc.) so that “there seems little that promises decisive help for the difficult Logion of Mt 11:12; Lu 16:16.” So then in Mt 11:12 the form can be either middle or passive and either makes sense, though a different sense. The passive idea is that the kingdom is forced, is stormed, is taken by men of violence like “men of violence take it by force” [*biastai harpazousin aut n*] or seize it like a conquered city. The middle voice may mean “experiences violence” or “forces its way” like a rushing mighty wind (so Zahn holds). These difficult words of Jesus mean that the preaching of John “had led to a violent and impetuous thronging to gather round Jesus and his disciples” (Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 26).

11:14 **This is Elijah** [*autos estin Eleias*]. Jesus here endorses John as the promise of Malachi. The people understood Mal 4:1 to mean the return of Elijah in person. This John denied as to himself

(Joh 1:21). But Jesus affirms that John is the Elijah of promise who has come already (Mt 17:12). He emphasizes the point: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

11:17 **Children sitting in the market places** [*paidiois kath menois en tais agorais*]. This parable of the children playing in the market place is given also in Lu 7:31f. Had Jesus as a child in Nazareth not played games with the children? He had certainly watched them often since. The interest of Christ in children was keen. He has really created the modern child’s world out of the indifference of the past. They would not play wedding or funeral in a peevish fret. These metaphors in the Gospels are vivid to those with eyes to see. The [*agora*] was originally the assembly, then the forum or public square where the people gathered for trade or for talk as in Athens (Ac 17:17) and in many modern towns. So the Roman Forum. The oriental bazaars today are held in streets rather than public squares. Even today with all the automobiles children play in the streets. In English the word “cheap” (Cheapside) meant only barter and price, not cheap in our sense. The word for mourn [*ekopsasthe*] means to beat the heart, direct middle, after the fashion of eastern funeral lamentations.

11:19 **Wisdom is justified by her works** [*edikai th apo t n erg n aut s*]. A timeless aorist passive (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 836f.). The word “justified” means “set right” Luke (Lu 7:35) has “by all her children” as some MSS. have here to make Matthew like Luke. These words are difficult, but understandable. God’s wisdom has planned the different conduct of both John and Jesus. He does not wish all to be just alike in everything. “This generation” (verse 16) is childish, not childlike, and full of whimsical inconsistencies in their faultfinding. They exaggerate in each case. John did not have a demon and Jesus was not a glutton or a winebibber. “And, worse than either, for [*philos*] is used in a sinister sense and implies that Jesus was the comrade of the worst characters, and like them in conduct. A malicious nickname at first, it is now a name of honour: the sinner’s lover” (Bruce). Cf. Lu 15:2. The plan of God is justified by results.

11:20 **Most of his mighty works** [*hai pleistai dunameis autou*]. Literally, “His very many mighty works” if relative as usual in the papyri (Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 79; Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 670). But the usual superlative makes sense here as the Canterbury translation has it. This word [*dunamis*] for miracle presents the notion of *power* like our *dynamite*. The word [*teras*] is wonder, portent, *miraculum* (miracle) as in Ac 2:19. It occurs only in the plural and always with [*s meia*]. The word [*s meion*] means sign (Mt 12:38) and is very common in John’s Gospel as well as the word [*ergon*] (work) as in Joh 5:36. Other words used are [*paradoxon*], our word *paradox*, strange (Lu 5:26), [*endoxon*], glorious (Lu 13:17), [*thaumasion*], wonderful (Mt 21:15).

11:21 **Chorazin** [*Chorazein*]. Mentioned only here and in Lu 10:13. Proof of “the meagreness of our knowledge of Judaism in the time of Christ” (Plummer) and of the many things not told in our Gospels (Joh 21:25). We know something of Bethsaida and more about Capernaum as places of privilege. But [*pl n*], howbeit) neither of these cities repented, changed their conduct. Note condition of the second class, determined as unfulfilled in verses 21 and 23.

11:25 **At that season Jesus answered and said** [*en ekein i t i kair i apokritheis eipen*]. Spoke to his Father in audible voice. The time and place we do not know. But here we catch a glimpse of Jesus in one of his moods of worship. “It is usual to call this golden utterance a prayer, but it is at once prayer, praise, and self-communing in a devout spirit” (Bruce). Critics are disturbed because this passage from the Logia of Jesus or Q of Synoptic criticism (Mt 11:25-30; Lu 10:21-24) is so manifestly Johannine in spirit and very language, “the Father” [*ho pat r*], “the son” [*ho huios*], whereas the Fourth Gospel was not written till the close of the first century and the Logia was written before the Synoptic Gospels. The only satisfying explanation lies in the fact that Jesus did have this strain of teaching that is preserved in John’s Gospel. Here he is in precisely the same mood of elevated communion with the Father that we have reflected in John 14 to 17. Even Harnack is disposed to accept this Logion as a genuine saying of Jesus. The word “thank” [*homologoumai*] is better rendered “praise” (Moffatt). Jesus praises the Father “not that the [*sophoi*] were ignorant, but that the [*n pioi*] knew” (McNeile).

11:26 **Wellpleasing in thy sight** [*eudokia emprosthen sou*]. “For such has been thy gracious will” (Weymouth).

11:27 **All things have been delivered unto me of my Father** [*panta moi paredoth hupo tou patros mou*]. This sublime claim is not to be whittled down or away by explanations. It is the timeless aorist like [*edoth*] in 28:18 and “points back to a moment in eternity, and implies the pre-existence of the Messiah” (Plummer). The Messianic consciousness of Christ is here as clear as a bell. It is a moment of high fellowship. Note [*epigin skei*] twice for “fully know.” Note also [*boul tai*] =wills, is willing. The Son retains the power and the will to reveal the Father to men.

11:28 **Come unto me** [*deute pros me*]. Verses 28 to 30 are not in Luke and are among the special treasures of Matthew’s Gospel. No sublimer words exist than this call of Jesus to the toiling and the burdened [*pephortismenoi*], perfect passive participle, state of weariness) to come to him. He towers above all men as he challenges us. “I will refresh you” [*k’ago anapaus h-mas*]. Far more than mere rest, rejuvenation. The English slang expression “rest up” is close to the idea of the Greek compound [*ana-pau*]. It is causative active voice.

11:29 **Take my yoke upon you and learn of me** [*arate ton zugon mou eph’humas kai mathete ap’emou*]. The rabbis used yoke for school as many pupils find it now a yoke. The English word “school” is Greek for leisure [*schol*]. But Jesus offers refreshment [*anapausin*] in his school and promises to make the burden light, for he is a meek and humble teacher. Humility was not a virtue among the ancients. It was ranked with servility. Jesus has made a virtue of this vice. He has glorified this attitude so that Paul urges it (Php 2:3), “in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself.” In portions of Europe today people place yokes on the shoulders to make the burden easier to carry. Jesus promises that we shall find the yoke kindly and the burden lightened by his help. “Easy” is a poor translation of [*chr stos*]. Moffatt puts it “kindly.” That is the meaning in the

Septuagint for persons. We have no adjective that quite carries the notion of kind and good. The yoke of Christ is useful, good, and kindly. Cf. So 1:10.

Chapter 12

12:1 **On the sabbath day through the cornfields** [*tois sabbasin dia t n sporim n*]. This paragraph begins exactly like 11:25 “at that season” [*en ekein i t i kair i*], a general statement with no clear idea of time. So also 14:1. The word [*kairos*] means a definite and particular time, but we cannot fix it. The word “cornfields” does not mean our maize or Indian corn, but simply fields of grain (wheat or even barley).

12:2 **Thy disciples do** [*hoi math tai sou poiou sin*]. These critics are now watching a chance and they jump at this violation of their Pharisaic rules for Sabbath observance. The disciples were plucking the heads of wheat which to the Pharisees was reaping and were rubbing them in their hands (Lu 6:1) which was threshing.

12:3 **What David did** [*ti epoi sen Daueid*]. From the necessity of hunger. The first defence made by Christ appeals to the conduct of David (2Sa 21:6). David and those with him did “what was not lawful” [*ho ouk exon n*] precisely the charge made against the disciples [*ho ouk exestin*] in verse 2).

12:6 **One greater than the temple** [*tou hierou meizon*]. Ablative of comparison, [*tou hierou*]. The Textus Receptus has [*meiz n*], but the neuter is correct. Literally, “something greater than the temple.” What is that? It may still be Christ, or it may be: “The work and His disciples were of more account than the temple” (Plummer). “If the temple was not subservient to Sabbath rules, how much less the Messiah!” (Allen).

12:7 **The guiltless** [*tous anaitious*]. So in verse 5. Common in ancient Greek. No real ground against, it means [*an*] + [*aitios*]. Jesus quotes Ho 6:6 here as he did in Mt 9:13. A pertinent prophecy that had escaped the notice of the sticklers for ceremonial literalness and the letter of the law.

12:9 **Lord of the Sabbath** [*kurios tou sabbatou*]. This claim that he as the Son of Man is master of the Sabbath and so above the Pharisaic regulations angered them extremely. By the phrase “the Son of man” here Jesus involves the claim of Messiahship, but as the Representative Man he affirms his solidarity with mankind, “standing for the human interest” (Bruce) on this subject.

12:10 **Is it lawful?** [*ei exestin*]. The use of [*ei*] in direct questions is really elliptical and seems an imitation of the Hebrew (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 916). See also Mt 19:3. It is not translated in English.

12:12 **How much then is a man** [*pos i oun diapherei anthr pos*]. Another of Christ’s pregnant questions that goes to the roots of things, an *a fortiori* argument. “By how much does a human being differ from a sheep? That is the question which Christian civilization has not even yet adequately answered” (Bruce). The poor pettifogging Pharisees are left in the pit.

12:13 **Stretch forth thy hand** [*ekteinon sou t n cheira*]. Probably the arm was not withered, though that is not certain. But he did the impossible. “He stretched it forth,” straight, I hope, towards the Pharisees who were watching Jesus (Mr 3:2).

12:14 **Took counsel against him** [*sumboulion elabon kat' autou*]. An imitation of the Latin *concilium capere* and found in papyri of the second century A.D. (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 238.) This incident marks a crisis in the hatred of the Pharisees toward Jesus. They bolted out of the synagogue and actually conspired with their hated rivals, the Herodians, how to put Jesus to death (Mr 3:6; Mt 12:14; Lu 6:11). By “destroy” [*apoles sin*] they meant “kill.”

12:15 **Perceiving** [*gnous*]. Second aorist active participle of [*gin sk*]. Jesus read their very thoughts. They were now plain to any one who saw their angry countenances.

12:17 **That it might be fulfilled** [*hina pl r th i*]. The final use of [*hina*] and the sub-final just before (verse 16). The passage quoted is Isa 42:1-4 “a very free reproduction of the Hebrew with occasional side glances at the Septuagint” (Bruce), possibly from an Aramaic collection of *Testimonia* (McNeile). Matthew applies the prophecy about Cyrus to Christ.

12:18 **My beloved** [*ho agap tos mou*]. This phrase reminds one of Mt 3:17 (the Father’s words at Christ’s baptism).

12:20 **A bruised reed** [*kalamon suntetrimmenon*]. Perfect passive participle of [*suntrib*]. A crushed reed he will not break. The curious augment in [*kateaxei*] (future active indicative) is to be noted. The copyists kept the augment where it did not belong in this verb (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1212) even in Plato. “Smoking flax” [*linon tuphomenon*]. The wick of a lamp, smoking and flickering and going out. Only here in N.T. Flax in Ex 9:31. Vivid images that picture Jesus in the same strain as his own great words in Mt 11:28-30.

12:23 **Is this the Son of David?** [*m ti houtos estin ho huios Daueid?*]. The form of the question expects the answer “no,” but they put it so because of the Pharisaic hostility towards Jesus. The multitudes “were amazed” or “stood out of themselves” [*existanto*], imperfect tense, vividly portraying the situation. They were almost beside themselves with excitement.

12:24 **The Pharisees** [*hoi de Pharisaioi*]. Already (Mt 9:32-34) we have had in Matthew the charge that Jesus is in league with the prince of demons, though the incident may be later than this one. See on 10:25 about “Beelzebub.” The Pharisees feel that the excited condition of the crowds and the manifest disposition to believe that Jesus is the Messiah (the Son of David) demand strenuous action on their part. They cannot deny the fact of the miracles for the blind and dumb men both saw and spoke (12:22). So in desperation they suggest that Jesus works by the power of Beelzebub the prince of the demons.

12:25 **Knowing their thoughts** [*eid s de tas enthum seis aut n*]. What they were revolving in their minds. They now find out what a powerful opponent Jesus is. By parables, by a series of conditions (first class), by sarcasm, by rhetorical question, by merciless logic, he lays bare their hollow insincerity and the futility of their arguments. Satan does not cast out Satan. Note timeless aorist passive [*emeristh*] in 26, [*ephthasen*] in 28 (simple sense of arriving as in Php 3:16 from [*phthan*]). Christ is engaged in deathless conflict with Satan the strong man (29). “Goods” [*skeu*] means house-gear, house furniture, or equipment as in Lu 17:36 and Ac 27:17, the tackling of the ship.

12:30 **He that is not with me** [*ho m n met' emou*]. With these solemn words Jesus draws the line of cleavage between himself and his enemies then and now. Jesus still has his enemies who hate him and all noble words and deeds because they sting what conscience they have into fury. But we may have our choice. We either gather with [*sunag n*] Christ or scatter [*skorpizei*] to the four winds. Christ is the magnet of the ages. He draws or drives away. “Satan is the arch-waster, Christ the collector, Saviour” (Bruce).

12:31 **But the blasphemy against the Spirit** [*h de tou pneumatou blasphemia*]. Objective genitive. This is the unpardonable sin. In 32 we have [*kata tou pneumatou tou hagiou*] to make it plainer. What is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? These Pharisees had already committed it. They had attributed the works of the Holy Spirit by whose power Jesus wrought his miracles (12:28) to the devil. That sin was without excuse and would not be forgiven in their age or in the coming one (12:32). People often ask if they can commit the unpardonable sin. Probably some do who ridicule the manifest work of God’s Spirit in men’s lives and attribute the Spirit’s work to the devil.

12:34 **Ye offspring of vipers** [*genn mata echidn n*]. These same terrible words the Baptist had used to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism (Mt 3:7). But these Pharisees had deliberately made their choice and had taken Satan’s side. The charge against Jesus of being in league with Satan reveals the evil heart within. The heart “spurts out” [*ekballei*] good or evil according to the supply (treasure, [*th saourou*] within. verse 33 is like Mt 7:17-19. Jesus often repeated his crisp pungent sayings as every teacher does.

12:36 **Every idle word** [*pan rh ma argon*]. An ineffective, useless word [*a*] privative and [*ergon*]. A word that does no good and so is pernicious like pernicious anaemia. It is a solemn thought. Jesus who knows our very thoughts (12:25) insists that our words reveal our thoughts and form a just basis for the interpretation of character (12:37). Here we have judgment by words as in 25:31-46 where Jesus presents judgment by deeds. Both are real tests of actual character. Homer spoke of “winged words” [*pteroenta epea*]. And by the radio our words can be heard all round the earth. Who knows where they stop?

12:38 **A sign from thee** [*apo sou s meion*]. One wonders at the audacity of scribes and Pharisees who accused Jesus of being in league with Satan and thus casting out demons who can turn round

and blandly ask for a “sign from thee.” As if the other miracles were not signs! “The demand was impudent, hypocritical, insulting” (Bruce).

12:39 **An evil and adulterous generation** [*genea pon ra kai moichalis*]. They had broken the marriage tie which bound them to Jehovah (Plummer). See Ps 73:27; Isa 57:3ff.; 62:5; Eze 23:27; Jas 4:4; Re 2:20. What is “the sign of Jonah?”

12:40 **The whale** [*tou k tous*]. Sea-monster, huge fish. In Jon 2:1 the LXX has [*k tei megal i*]. “Three days and three nights” may simply mean three days in popular speech. Jesus rose “on the third day” (Mt 16:21), not “on the fourth day.” It is just a fuller form for “after three days” (Mr 8:31; 10:34).

12:41 **In the judgment** [*en t i krisei*]. Except here and in the next verse Matthew has “day of judgment” [*h mera krise s*] as in 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36. Luke (Lu 10:14) has [*en t i krisei*]. **They repented at the preaching of Jonah** [*meteno son eis to k rugma I na*]. Note this use of [*eis*] just like [*en*]. Note also [*pleion*] (neuter), not [*plei n*] (masc.). See the same idiom in 12:6 and 12:48. Jesus is something greater than the temple, than Jonah, than Solomon. “You will continue to disbelieve in spite of all I can say or do, and at last you will put me to death. But I will rise again, a sign for your confusion, if not for your conversion” (Bruce).

12:44 **Into my house** [*eis ton oikon mou*]. So the demon describes the man in whom he had dwelt. “The demon is ironically represented as implying that he left his victim voluntarily, as a man leaves his house to go for a walk” (McNeile). “Worse than the first” is a proverb.

12:46 **His mother and his brothers** [*h m t r kai hoi adelphoi autou*]. Brothers of Jesus, younger sons of Joseph and Mary. The charge of the Pharisees that Jesus was in league with Satan was not believed by the disciples of Jesus, but some of his friends did think that he was beside himself (Mr 3:21) because of the excitement and strain. It was natural for Mary to want to take him home for rest and refreshment. So the mother and brothers are pictured standing outside the house (or the crowd). They send a messenger to Jesus.

12:47 Aleph, B, L, Old Syriac, omit this verse as do Westcott and Hort. It is genuine in Mr 3:32; Lu 8:20. It was probably copied into Matthew from Mark or Luke.

12:49 **Behold my mother and my brothers** [*idou h m t r mou kai hoi adelphoi mou*]. A dramatic wave of the hand towards his disciples (learners) accompanied these words. Jesus loved his mother and brothers, but they were not to interfere in his Messianic work. The real spiritual family of Jesus included all who follow him. But it was hard for Mary to go back to Nazareth and leave Jesus with the excited throng so great that he was not even stopping to eat (Mr 3:20).

Chapter 13

13:1 **On that day** [*en t i h merai ekein i*]. So this group of parables is placed by Matthew on the same day as the blasphemous accusation and the visit of the mother of Jesus. It is called “the Busy Day,” not because it was the only one, but simply that so much is told of this day that it serves as a specimen of many others filled to the full with stress and strain. **Sat by the seaside** [*ekath to para t n thalassan*]. The accusative case need give no difficulty. Jesus came out of the stuffy house and took his seat [*ekath to*, imperfect) along the shore with the crowds stretched up and down, a picturesque scene.

13:2 **And all the multitude stood on the beach** [*kai pas ho ochlos epi ton aigialon hist kei*]. Past perfect tense of [*hist mi*] with imperfect sense, had taken a stand and so stood. Note accusative also with [*epi*] upon the beach where the waves break one after the other [*aigialos*] is from [*hals*], sea, and [*agnumi*], to break, or from [*aiss*], to rush). Jesus had to get into a boat and sit down in that because of the crush of the crowd.

13:3 **Many things in parables** [*polla en parabolais*]. It was not the first time that Jesus had used parables, but the first time that he had spoken so many and some of such length. He will use a great many in the future as in Luke 12 to 18 and Matt. 24 and 25. The parables already mentioned in Matthew include the salt and the light (5:13-16), the birds and the lilies (6:26-30), the splinter and the beam in the eye (7:3-5), the two gates (7:13f.), the wolves in sheep’s clothing (7:15), the good and bad trees (7:17-19), the wise and foolish builders (7:24-27), the garment and the wineskins (9:16f.), the children in the market places (11:16f.). It is not certain how many he spoke on this occasion. Matthew mentions eight in this chapter (the Sower, the Tares, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Hid Treasure, the Pearl of Great Price, the Net, the Householder). Mark adds the Parable of the Lamp (Mr 4:21; Lu 8:16), the Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself (Mr 4:26-29), making ten of which we know. But both Mark (Mr 4:33) and Matthew (13:34) imply that there were many others. “Without a parable spake he nothing unto them” (Mt 13:34), on this occasion, we may suppose. The word parable [*parabol*] from [*paraball*], to place alongside for measurement or comparison like a yardstick) is an objective illustration for spiritual or moral truth. The word is employed in a variety of ways (a) as for sententious sayings or proverbs (Mt 15:15; Mr 3:23; Lu 4:23; 5:36-39; 6:39), for a figure or type (Heb. 9:9; 11:19); (b) a comparison in the form of a narrative, the common use in the Synoptic Gospels like the Sower; (c) “A narrative illustration not involving a comparison” (Broadus), like the Rich Fool, the Good Samaritan, etc. “The oriental genius for picturesque speech found expression in a multitude of such utterances” (McNeile). There are parables in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, in sermons in all ages. But no one has spoken such parables as these of Jesus. They hold the mirror up to nature and, as all illustrations should do, throw light on the truth presented. The fable puts things as they are not in nature, Aesop’s Fables, for instance. The parable may not be actual fact, but it could be so. It is harmony with the nature of the case. The allegory [*all goría*] is a speaking parable that is self-explanatory all along

like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. All allegories are parables, but not all parables are allegories. The Prodigal Son is an allegory, as is the story of the Vine and Branches (Joh 15). John does not use the word parable, but only [*paroimia*], a saying by the way (Joh 10:6; 16:25,29). As a rule the parables of Jesus illustrate one main point and the details are more or less incidental, though sometimes Jesus himself explains these. When he does not do so, we should be slow to interpret the minor details. Much heresy has come from fantastic interpretations of the parables. In the case of the Parable of the Sower (13:3-8) we have also the careful exposition of the story by Jesus (18-23) as well as the reason for the use of parables on this occasion by Jesus (9-17).

Behold, the sower went forth [*idou lthen ho speir n*]. Matthew is very fond of this exclamation [*idou*]. It is "the sower," not "a sower." Jesus expects one to see the man as he stepped forth to begin scattering with his hand. The parables of Jesus are vivid word pictures. To understand them one must see them, with the eyes of Jesus if he can. Christ drew his parables from familiar objects.

13:4 **As he sowed** [*en t i speirein auton*]. Literally, "in the sowing as to him," a neat Greek idiom unlike our English temporal conjunction. Locative case with the articular present infinitive. **By the wayside** [*para t n hodon*]. People will make paths along the edge of a ploughed field or even across it where the seed lies upon the beaten track. **Devoured** [*katephagen*]. "Ate down." We say, "ate up." Second aorist active indicative of [*katesthi*] (defective verb).

13:5 **The rocky places** [*ta petr d*]. In that limestone country ledges of rock often jut out with thin layers of soil upon the layers of rock. **Straightway they sprang up** [*euthe s exaneteilen*]. "Shot up at once" (Moffatt). Double compound [*ex*], out of the ground, [*ana*], up). Ingressive aorist of [*exanatell*].

13:6 **The sun was risen** [*h liou anateilantos*]. Genitive absolute. "The sun having sprung up" also, same verb except the absence of [*ex*] [*anatell*, *exanatell*].

13:7 **The thorns grew up** [*aneb san hai akanthai*]. Not "sprang up" as in verse 5, for a different verb occurs meaning "came up" out of the ground, the seeds of the thorns being already in the soil, "upon the thorns" [*epi tas akanthas*] rather than "among the thorns." But the thorns got a quick start as weeds somehow do and "choked them" [*apepnixan auta*], effective aorist of [*apopnig*], "choked them off" literally. Luke (Lu 8:33) uses it of the hogs in the water. Who has not seen vegetables and flowers and corn made yellow by thorns and weeds till they sicken and die?

13:8 **Yielded fruit** [*edidou karpon*]. Change to imperfect tense of [*did mi*], to give, for it was continuous fruit-bearing. **Some a hundredfold** [*ho men hekaton*]. Variety, but fruit. This is the only kind that is worth while. The hundredfold is not an exaggeration (cf. Ge 26:12). Such instances are given by Wetstein for Greece, Italy, and Africa. Herodotus (i. 93) says that in Babylonia grain yielded two hundredfold and even to three hundredfold. This, of course, was due to irrigation as in the Nile Valley.

13:9 **He that hath ears let him hear** [*ho ech n ta akouet*], So also in 11:15 and 13:43. It is comforting to teachers and preachers to observe that even Jesus had to exhort people to listen and to understand his sayings, especially his parables. They will bear the closest thought and are often enigmatical.

13:10 **Why speakest thou unto them in parables?** [*dia ti en parabolais laleis autois*]. Already the disciples are puzzled over the meaning of this parable and the reason for giving them to the people. So they “came up” closer to Jesus and asked him. Jesus was used to questions and surpassed all teachers in his replies.

13:11 **To know the mysteries** [*gn nai ta must ria*]. Second aorist active infinitive of [*gin sk*]. The word [*must rion*] is from [*must s*], one initiated, and that from [*mue*] [*mu*], to close or shut (Latin, *mutus*). The mystery-religions of the east had all sorts of secrets and signs as secret societies do today. But those initiated knew them. So the disciples have been initiated into the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Paul will use it freely of the mystery once hidden, but now revealed, now made known in Christ (Ro 16:25; 1Co 2:7, etc.). In Php 4:12 Paul says: “I have learned the secret or been initiated” [*memu mai*]. So Jesus here explains that his parables are open to the disciples, but shut to the Pharisees with their hostile minds. In the Gospels [*must rion*] is used only here and in the parallel passages (Mr 4:11; Lu 8:10).

13:13 **Because seeing** [*hoti blepontes*]. In the parallel passages in Mr 4:12 and Lu 8:10 we find [*hina*] with the subjunctive. This does not necessarily mean that in Mark and Luke [*hina=hoti*] with the causal sense, though a few rare instances of such usage may be found in late Greek. For a discussion of the problem see my chapter on “The Causal Use of *Hina*” in *Studies in Early Christianity* (1928) edited by Prof. S.J. Case. Here in Matthew we have first “an adaptation of Isa 6:9f. which is quoted in full in v. 14f.” (McNeile). Thus Matthew presents “a striking paradox, ‘though they see, they do not (really) see’” (McNeile). Cf. Joh 9:41. The idiom here in Matthew gives no trouble save in comparison with Mark and Luke which will be discussed in due turn. The form [*suniousin*] is an omega verb form [*sun i*] rather than the [*mi*] verb [*sun i mi*] as is common in the *Koin*.

13:14 **Is fulfilled** [*anapl routai*]. Aoristic present passive indicative. Here Jesus points out the fulfilment and not with Matthew’s usual formula [*hina*] or [*hop s pl r th i to rh then*] (see 1:22). The verb [*anapl ro*] occurs nowhere else in the Gospels, but occurs in the Pauline Epistles. It means to fill up like a cup, to fill another’s place (1Co 14:16), to fill up what is lacking (Php 2:30). Here it means that the prophecy of Isaiah is fully satisfied in the conduct of the Pharisees and Jesus himself points it out. Note two ways of reproducing the Hebrew idiom (infinitive absolute), one by [*ako i*] the other by [*blepontes*]. Note also the strong negative [*ou m*] with aorist subjunctive.

13:15 **Is waxed gross** [*epachunth*]. Aorist passive tense. From [*pachus*], thick, fat, stout. Made callous or dull — even fatty degeneration of the heart. **Dull of hearing** [*tois sin bare s kousan*].

Another aorist. Literally, “They heard (or hear) heavily with their ears.” The hard of hearing are usually sensitive. **Their eyes they have closed** [*tous ophthalmous aut n ekammusan*]. The epic and vernacular verb [*kammu*] is from [*katamu*] (to shut down). We say shut up of the mouth, but the eyes really shut down. The Hebrew verb in Isa 6:10 means to smear over. The eyes can be smeared with wax or cataract and thus closed. “Sealing up the eyes was an oriental punishment” (Vincent). See Isa 29:10; 44:18. **Lest** [*m pote*]. This negative purpose as a judgment is left in the quotation from Isaiah. It is a solemn thought for all who read or hear the word of God. **And I should heal them** [*kai iasomai autous*]. Here the LXX changes to the future indicative rather than the aorist subjunctive as before.

13:16 **Blessed are your eyes** [*hum n de makarioi hoi ophthalmoi*]. A beatitude for the disciples in contrast with the Pharisees. Note position of “Happy” here also as in the Beatitudes in Mt 5.

13:18 **Hear then ye the parable** [*humeis oun akousate t n parabol n*]. Jesus has given in 13:13 one reason for his use of parables, the condemnation which the Pharisees have brought on themselves by their spiritual dulness: “Therefore I speak to them in parables” [*dia touto en parab lais antois lal*]. He can go on preaching the mysteries of the kingdom without their comprehending what he is saying, but he is anxious that the disciples really get personal knowledge [*gn nai*], verse 11) of these same mysteries. So he explains in detail what he means to teach by the Parable of the Sower. He appeals to them (note position of [*h-meis*] to listen as he explains.

13:19 **When anyone heareth** [*pantos akouontos*]. Genitive absolute and present participle, “while everyone is listening and not comprehending” [*m sunientos*], “not putting together” or “not grasping.” Perhaps at that very moment Jesus observed a puzzled look on some faces.

Cometh the evil one and snatcheth away [*erchetai ho pon ros kai harpazei*]. The birds pick up the seeds while the sower sows. The devil is busy with his job of snatching or seizing like a bandit or rogue the word of the kingdom before it has time even to sprout. How quickly after the sermon the impression is gone. “This is he” [*houtos estin*]. Matthew, like Mark, speaks of the people who hear the words as the seed itself. That creates some confusion in this condensed form of what Jesus actually said, but the real point is clear. **The seed sown in his heart** [*to esparmenon en t i kardi i autou*], perfect passive participle of [*speir*], to sow) and “the man sown by the wayside” [*ho para t n hodon spareis*], aorist passive participle, along the wayside) are identified. The seed in the heart is not of itself responsible, but the man who lets the devil snatch it away.

13:21 **Yet hath he not root in himself** [*ouk echei de rhizan en heaut i*]. Cf. Col 2:7 and Eph 3:18 [*erriz memoi*]. Stability like a tree. Here the man has a mushroom growth and “endureth for a while” [*proskairos*], temporary, quick to sprout, quick to stumble [*skandalizetai*]. What a picture of some converts in our modern revivals. They drop away overnight because they did not have the root of the matter in them. This man does not last or hold out.

Tribulation [*thlipse s*]. From [*thlib*], to press, to oppress, to squeeze (cf. 7:14). The English word is from the Latin *tribulum*, the roller used by the Romans for pressing wheat. Cf. our “steam roller” Trench (*Synonyms of the N.T.*, pp. 202–4): “When, according to the ancient law of England, those who wilfully refused to plead, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally [*thlipsis*].” The iron cage was [*stenoch ria*].

13:22 **Choke the word** [*sunpnigei ton logon*]. We had [*apepnixan*] (choked off) in 13:7. Here it is [*sunpnigei*] (choke together), historical present and singular with both subjects lumped together. “Lust for money and care go together and between them spoil many an earnest religious nature” (Bruce), “thorns” indeed. The thorns flourish and the character sickens and dies, choked to death for lack of spiritual food, air, sunshine.

13:23 **Verily beareth fruit** [*d karpophorei*]. Who in reality [*d*] does bear fruit (cf. Mt 7:16-20). The fruit reveals the character of the tree and the value of the straw for wheat. Some grain must come else it is only chaff, straw, worthless. The first three classes have no fruit and so show that they are unfruitful soil, unsaved souls and lives. There is variety in those who do bear fruit, but they have some fruit. The lesson of the parable as explained by Jesus is precisely this, the variety in the results of the seed sown according to the soil on which it falls. Every teacher and preacher knows how true this is. It is the teacher’s task as the sower to sow the right seed, the word of the kingdom. The soil determines the outcome. There are critics today who scout this interpretation of the parable by Jesus as too allegorical with too much detail and probably not that really given by Jesus since modern scholars are not agreed on the main point of the parable. But the average Christian sees the point all right. This parable was not meant to explain all the problems of human life.

13:24 **Set he before them** [*pareth ken*]. So again in 13:31. He placed another parable beside [*para*] the one already given and explained. The same verb [*paratheinai*] occurs in Lu 9:16. **Is likened** [*h moi th*]. Timeless aorist passive and a common way of introducing these parables of the kingdom where a comparison is drawn (18:23; 22:2; 25:1). The case of [*anthr p i*] is associative instrumental.

13:25 **While men slept** [*en t i katheudein tous anthr pous*]. Same use of the articular present infinitive with [*en*] and the accusative as in 13:4. **Sowed tares also** [*epespeiren ta zizania*]. Literally “sowed upon,” “resowed” (Moffatt). The enemy deliberately sowed “the darnel” [*zizania*] is not “tares,” but “darnel,” a bastard wheat) over [*epi*] the wheat, “in the midst of the wheat.” This bearded darnel, *lolium temulentum*, is common in Palestine and resembles wheat except that the grains are black. In its earlier stages it is indistinguishable from the wheat stalks so that it has to remain till near the harvest. Modern farmers are gaining more skill in weeding it out.

13:26 **Then appeared also** [*tote ephan kai*]. The darnel became plain [*ephan*], second aorist passive, effective aorist of [*phain*] to show) by harvest.

13:29 **Ye root up the wheat with them** [*ekriz s te hama autois ton siton*]. Literally, “root out.” Easy to do with the roots of wheat and darnel intermingled in the field. So [*sullegontes*] is not “gather up,” but “gather together,” here and verses 28 and 30. Note other compound verbs here, “grow together” [*sunauxanesthai*], “burn up” [*katakausai*], burn down or completely), “bring together” [*sunagete*].

13:30 **My barn** [*t n apoth k n mou*]. See already 3:12; 6:26. Granary, storehouse, place for putting things away.

13:31 **Is like** [*homoia estin*]. Adjective for comparison with associative instrumental as in 13:13, 44, 45, 47, 52. **Grain of mustard seed** [*kokk i sinape s*]. Single grain in contrast with the collective [*sperma*] (17:20). **Took and sowed** [*lab n espeiren*]. Vernacular phrasing like Hebrew and all conversational style. In *Koin* .

13:32 **A tree** [*dendron*]. “Not in nature, but in size” (Bruce). “An excusable exaggeration in popular discourse.”

13:33 **Is like unto leaven** [*homoia estin zum i*]. In its pervasive power. Curiously enough some people deny that Jesus here likens the expanding power of the Kingdom of heaven to leaven, because, they say, leaven is the symbol of corruption. But the language of Jesus is not to be explained away by such exegetical jugglery. The devil is called like a lion by Peter (1Pe 5:8) and Jesus in Revelation is called the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Re 5:5). The leaven permeates all the “wheat meal” [*aleurou*] till the whole is leavened. There is nothing in the “three measures,” merely a common amount to bake. Dr. T.R. Glover in his *Jesus of History* suggests that Jesus used to notice his mother using that amount of wheat flour in baking bread. To find the Trinity here is, of course, quite beside the mark. The word for leaven, [*zum*], is from [*ze*], to boil, to seethe, and so pervasive fermentation.

13:35 **I will utter** [*ereuxomai*]. To cast forth like a river, to gurgle, to disgorge, the passion of a prophet. From Ps 19:2; 78:2. The Psalmist claims to be able to utter “things hidden from the foundation of the world” and Matthew applies this language to the words of Jesus. Certain it is that the life and teaching of Jesus throw a flood of light on the purposes of God long kept hidden [*kekrummena*].

13:36 **Explain unto us** [*diasaph son h min*]. Also in 18:31. “Make thoroughly clear right now” (aorist tense of urgency). The disciples waited till Jesus left the crowds and got into the house to ask help on this parable. Jesus had opened up the Parable of the Sower and now they pick out this one, passing by the mustard seed and the leaven.

13:38 **The field is the world** [*ho de agros estin ho kosmos*]. The article with both “field” and “world” in Greek means that subject and predicate are coextensive and so interchangeable. It is extremely important to understand that both the good seed and the darnel (tares) are sown in the

world, not in the Kingdom, not in the church. The separation comes at the consummation of the age [*sunteleia ai nos*], 39), the harvest time. They all grow together in the field (the world).

13:41 **Out of his kingdom** [*ek t s basileias autou*]. Out from the midst of the kingdom, because in every city the good and the bad are scattered and mixed together. Cf. [*ek mesou t n dikai n*] in 13:49 “from the midst of the righteous.” What this means is that, just as the wheat and the darnel are mixed together in the field till the separation at harvest, so the evil are mixed with the good in the world (the field). Jesus does not mean to say that these “stumbling-blocks” [*ta skandala*] are actually in the Kingdom of heaven and really members of the Kingdom. They are simply mixed in the field with the wheat and God leaves them in the world till the separation comes. Their destiny is “the furnace of fire” [*t n kaminon tou puros*].

13:43 **Shine forth** [*eklampousin*]. Shine out as the sun comes from behind a cloud (Vincent) and drive away the darkness after the separation has come (cf. Da 12:3).

13:44 **And hid** [*kai ekrupsen*]. Not necessarily bad morality. “He may have hid it to prevent it being stolen, or to prevent himself from being anticipated in buying a field” (Plummer). But if it was a piece of sharp practice, that is not the point of the parable. That is, the enormous wealth of the Kingdom for which any sacrifice, all that one has, is not too great a price to pay.

13:46 **He went and sold** [*apelth n pepraken*]. Rather eagerly and vividly told thus, “He has gone off and sold.” The present perfect indicative, the dramatic perfect of vivid picture. Then he bought it. Present perfect, imperfect, aorist tenses together for lively action. [*Empor i*] is a merchant, one who goes in and out, travels like a drummer.

13:47 **A net** [*sag n i*]. Drag-net. Latin, *sagena*, English, seine. The ends were stretched out and drawn together. Only example of the word in the N.T. Just as the field is the world, so the drag-net catches all the fish that are in the sea. The separation comes afterwards. Vincent pertinently quotes Homer’s *Odyssey* (xxii. 384-389) where the slain suitors in the halls of Ulysses are likened to fishes on the shore caught by nets with myriad meshes.

13:48 **Vessels** [*agg*]. Here only in the N.T. In Mt 25:4 we have [*aggeia*].

13:52 **Made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven** [*matheteutheis t i basilei i t n ouran n*]. First aorist passive participle. The verb is transitive in 28:19. Here a scribe is made a learner to the kingdom. “The mere scribe, Rabbinical in spirit, produces only the old and stale. The disciple of the kingdom like the Master, is always fresh-minded, yet knows how to value all old spiritual treasures of Holy Writ, or Christian tradition” (Bruce). So he uses things fresh [*kaina*] and ancient [*palaia*]. “He hurls forth” [*ekballei*] both sorts.

13:54 **Is not this the carpenter’s son?** [*ouch houtos estin ho tou tekt nos huios?*]. The well-known, the leading, or even for a time the only carpenter in Nazareth till Jesus took the place of Joseph as

the carpenter. What the people of Nazareth could not comprehend was how one with the origin and environment of Jesus here in Nazareth could possess the wisdom which he appeared to have in his teaching [*edidasken*]. That has often puzzled people how a boy whom they knew could become the man he apparently is after leaving them. They knew Joseph, Mary, the brothers (four of them named) and sisters (names not given). Jesus passed here as the son of Joseph and these were younger brothers and sisters (half brothers and sisters technically).

13:57 **And they were offended in him** [*kai eskandalizonto en aut i*]. Graphic imperfect passive. Literally, “They stumbled at him,” “They were repelled by him” (Moffatt), “They turned against him” (Weymouth). It was unpardonable for Jesus not to be commonplace like themselves. **Not without honour** [*ouk estin atimos*]. This is a proverb found in Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers. Seen also in the *Logia of Jesus* (*Oxyr. Papyri* i. 3).

13:58 **Mighty works** [*dunameis*]. Powers. The “disbelief” [*apistian*] of the townspeople blocked the will and the power of Jesus to work cures.

Chapter 14

14:1 **Herod the tetrarch** [*H r i d s tetraarch s*]. Herod Antipas ruler of Galilee and Perea, one-fourth of the dominion of Herod the Great. **The report concerning Jesus** [*t n akou n I sou*]. See on 4:24. Cognate accusative, heard the hearing (rumour), objective genitive. It is rather surprising that he had not heard of Jesus before.

14:2 **His servants** [*tois paisin autou*]. Literally “boys,” but here the courtiers, not the menials of the palace. **Work in him** [*energousin*]. Cf. our “energize.” “The powers of the invisible world, vast and vague in the king’s imagination” (Bruce). John wrought no miracles, but one *redivivus* might be under the control of the unseen powers. So Herod argued. A guilty conscience quickened his fears. Possibly he could see again the head of John on a charger. “The King has the Baptist on the brain” (Bruce). Cf. Josephus (*War*, I. xxx. 7) for the story that the ghosts of Alexander and Aristobulus haunted the palace of Herod the Great. There were many conjectures about Jesus as a result of this tour of Galilee and Herod Antipas feared this one.

14:3 **For the sake of Herodias** [*dia H r idiada*]. The death of John had taken place some time before. The Greek aorists here [*ed sen, apetheto*] are not used for past perfects. The Greek aorist simply narrates the event without drawing distinctions in past time. This Herodias was the unlawful wife of Herod Antipas. She was herself a descendant of Herod the Great and had married Herod Philip of Rome, not Philip the Tetrarch. She had divorced him in order to marry Herod Antipas after he had divorced his wife, the daughter of Aretas King of Arabia. It was a nasty mess equal to any of our modern divorces. Her first husband was still alive and marriage with a sister-in-law was forbidden to Jews (Le 18:16). Because of her Herod Antipas had put John in the prison at Machaerus. The bare fact has been mentioned in Mt 4:12 without the name of the place. See 11:2 also for the discouragement of John [*en t i desm t ri i*] (place of bondage), here [*en t i phulak i*] (the guard-house). Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 5.2) tells us that Machaerus is the name of the prison. On a high hill an impregnable fortress had been built. Tristram (*Land of Moab*) says that there are now remains of “two dungeons, one of them deep and its sides scarcely broken in” with “small holes still visible in the masonry where staples of wood and iron had once been fixed. One of these must surely have been the prison-house of John the Baptist.” “On this high ridge Herod the Great built an extensive and beautiful palace” (Broadus). “The windows commanded a wide and grand prospect, including the Dead Sea, the course of the Jordan, and Jerusalem” (Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*).

14:4 **For John said unto him** [*elegen gar I an s aut i*]. Possibly the Pharisees may have put Herod up to inveigling John to Machaerus on one of his visits there to express an opinion concerning his marriage to Herodias (Broadus) and the imperfect tense [*elegen*] probably means that John said it repeatedly. It was a blunt and brave thing that John said. It cost him his head, but it is better to have a head like John’s and lose it than to have an ordinary head and keep it. Herod Antipas was a

politician and curbed his resentment toward John by his fear of the people who still held [*eichon*, imperfect tense) him as a prophet.

14:6 **When Herod's birthday came** [*genesiois genomenois tou H r idou*]. Locative of time (cf. Mr 6:21) without the genitive absolute. The earlier Greeks used the word [*genesia*] for funeral commemorations (birthdays of the dead), [*genethlia*] being the word for birthday celebrations of living persons. But that distinction has disappeared in the papyri. The word [*genesia*] in the papyri (*Fayum Towns*, 114-20, 115-8, 119-30) is always a birthday feast as here in Matthew and Mark. Philo used both words of birthday feasts. Persius, a Roman satirist (*Sat. V. 180-183*), describes a banquet on Herod's Day. **Danced in the midst** [*rch sato en t i mes i*]. This was Salome, daughter of Herodias by her first marriage. The root of the verb means some kind of rapid motion. "Leaped in the middle," Wycliff puts it. It was a shameful exhibition of lewd dancing prearranged by Herodias to compass her purpose for John's death. Salome had stooped to the level of an [*almeh*], or common dancer.

14:7 **Promised with an oath** [*meta horkou h molog sen*]. Literally, "confessed with an oath." For this verb in the sense of promise, see Ac 7:17. Note middle voice of [*ait s tai*] (ask for herself). Cf. Es 5:3; 7:2.

14:8 **Put forward** [*probibastheisa*]. See Ac 19:33 for a similar verb [*probalont n*], "pushing forward." Here (Acts) the Textus Receptus uses [*probibaz*]. "It should require a good deal of 'educating' to bring a young girl to make such a grim request" (Bruce). **Here** [*h de*]. On the spot. Here and now. **In a charger** [*epi pinaki*]. Dish, plate, platter. Why the obsolete "charger"?

14:9 **Grieved** [*lup theis*]. Not to hurt, for in verse 5 we read that he wanted [*thel n*] to put him to death [*apokteinai*]. Herod, however, shrank from so dastardly a deed as this public display of brutality and bloodthirstiness. Men who do wrong always have some flimsy excuses for their sins. A man here orders a judicial murder of the most revolting type "for the sake of his oath" [*dia tous horkous*]. "More like profane swearing than deliberate utterance once for all of a solemn oath" (Bruce). He was probably maudlin with wine and befuddled by the presence of the guests.

14:10 **Beheaded John** [*apekephalisen I an n*]. That is, he had John beheaded, a causative active tense of a late verb [*apokephaliz*]. Took his head off.

14:11 **She brought it to her mother** [*negken t i m tri aut s*]. A gruesome picture as Herodias with fiendish delight witnesses the triumph of her implacable hatred of John for daring to reprove her for her marriage with Herod Antipas. A woman scorned is a veritable demon, a literal she-devil when she wills to be. Kipling's "female of the species" again. Legends actually picture Salome as in love with John, sensual lust, of which there is no proof.

14:12 **And they went and told Jesus** [*kai elthontes ap ggeilan t i I sou*]. As was meet after they had given his body decent burial. It was a shock to the Master who alone knew how great John

really was. The fate of John was a prophecy of what was before Jesus. According to Mt 14:13 the news of the fate of John led to the withdrawal of Jesus to the desert privately, an additional motive besides the need for rest after the strain of the recent tour.

14:13 **In a boat** [*en ploi i*] “on foot” [*pez i*], some MSS. [*pez i*]. Contrast between the lake and the land route.

14:14 **Their sick** [*tous arr stous aut n*]. “Without strength” [*rh nnumi*] and [*a*] privative). [*Esplagchnisth*] is a deponent passive. The verb gives the oriental idea of the bowels [*splagchna*] as the seat of compassion.

14:15 **When even was come** [*opsias genomen s*]. Genitive absolute. Not sunset about 6 P.M. as in 8:16 and as in 14:23, but the first of the two “evenings” beginning at 3 P.M. **The place is desert** [*er mos estin ho topos*]. Not a desolate region, simply lonely, comparatively uninhabited with no large towns near. There were “villages” [*k mas*] where the people could buy food, but they would need time to go to them. Probably this is the idea of the disciples when they add: **The time is already past** [*h h ra d par lthen*]. They must hurry.

14:16 **Give ye them to eat** [*dote autois h-meis phagein*]. The emphasis is on [*h-meis*] in contrast (note position) with their “send away” [*apoluson*]. It is the urgent aorist of instant action [*dote*]. It was an astounding command. The disciples were to learn that “no situation appears to Him desperate, no crisis unmanageable” (Bruce).

14:17 **And they say unto him** [*hoi de legousin aut i*]. The disciples, like us today, are quick with reasons for their inability to perform the task imposed by Jesus.

14:18 **And he said** [*ho de eipen*]. Here is the contrast between the helpless doubt of the disciples and the confident courage of Jesus. He used “*the* five loaves and two fishes” which they had mentioned as a reason for doing nothing. “Bring them hither unto me.” They had overlooked the power of Jesus in this emergency.

14:19 **To sit down on the grass** [*anaklith nai epi tou chortou*]. “Recline,” of course, the word means, first aorist passive infinitive. A beautiful picture in the afternoon sun on the grass on the mountain side that sloped westward. The orderly arrangement (Mark) made it easy to count them and to feed them. Jesus stood where all could see him “break” [*klasas*] the thin Jewish cakes of bread and give to the disciples and they to the multitudes. This is a nature miracle that some men find it hard to believe, but it is recorded by all four Gospels and the only one told by all four. It was impossible for the crowds to misunderstand and to be deceived. If Jesus is in reality Lord of the universe as John tells us (Joh 1:1-18) and Paul holds (Col 1:15-20), why should we balk at this miracle? He who created the universe surely has power to go on creating what he wills to do.

14:20 **Were filled** [*echortasth san*]. Effective aorist passive indicative of [*chortaz*]. See Mt 5:6. From the substantive [*chortos*] grass. Cattle were filled with grass and people usually with other food. They all were satisfied. **Broken pieces** [*t n klasmat n*]. Not the scraps upon the ground, but the pieces broken by Jesus and still in the “twelve baskets” [*d deka kophinous*] and not eaten. Each of the twelve had a basketful left over [*to perisseuon*]. One hopes that the boy (Joh 6:9) who had the five loaves and two fishes to start with got one of the basketsful, if not all of them. Each of the Gospels uses the same word here for baskets [*kophinos*], a wicker-basket, called “coffins” by Wycliff. Juvenal (*Sat.* iii. 14) says that the grove of Numa near the Capenian gate of Rome was “let out to Jews whose furniture is a basket (*cophinus*) and some hay” (for a bed). In the feeding of the Four Thousand (Matthew and Mark) the word [*sphuris*] is used which was a sort of hamper or large provisions basket.

14:21 **Beside women and children** [*ch ris gunaik n kai paidi n*]. Perhaps on this occasion there were not so many as usual because of the rush of the crowd around the head of the lake. Matthew adds this item and does not mean that the women and children were not fed, but simply that “the eaters” [*hoi esthiontes*] included five thousand men [*andres*] besides the women and children.

14:22 **Constrained** [*nagkasen*]. Literally, “compelled” or “forced.” See this word also in Lu 14:23. The explanation for this strong word in Mr 6:45 and Mt 14:22 is given in Joh 6:15. It is the excited purpose of the crowd to take Jesus by force and to make him national king. This would be political revolution and would defeat all the plans of Jesus about his kingdom. Things have reached a climax. The disciples were evidently swept off their feet by the mob psychology for they still shared the Pharisaic hope of a political kingdom. With the disciples out of the way Jesus could handle the crowd more easily, **till he should send the multitudes away** [*he s hou apolus i tous ochlous*]. The use of the aorist subjunctive with [*he s*] or [*he s hou*] is a neat and common Greek idiom where the purpose is not yet realized. So in 18:30; 26:36. “While” sometimes renders it well. The subjunctive is retained after a past tense instead of the change to the optative of the ancient Attic. The optative is very rare anyhow, but Luke uses it with [*prin*] in Ac 25:16.

14:23 **Into the mountain** [*eis to oros*]. After the dismissal of the crowd Jesus went up alone into the mountain on the eastern side of the lake to pray as he often did go to the mountains to pray. If ever he needed the Father’s sympathy, it was now. The masses were wild with enthusiasm and the disciples wholly misunderstood him. The Father alone could offer help now.

14:24 **Distressed** [*basanizomenon*]. Like a man with demons (8:29). One can see, as Jesus did (Mr 6:48), the boat bobbing up and down in the choppy sea.

14:25 **Walking upon the sea** [*peripat n epi t n thalassan*]. Another nature miracle. Some scholars actually explain it all away by urging that Jesus was only walking along the beach and not on the water, an impossible theory unless Matthew’s account is legendary. Matthew uses the accusative (extension) with [*epi*] in verse 25 and the genitive (specifying case) in 26.

14:26 **They were troubled** [*etarachth san*]. Much stronger than that. They were literally “terrified” as they saw Jesus walking on the sea. **An apparition** [*phantasma*], or “ghost,” or “spectre” from [*phantaz*] and that from [*phain*]. They cried out “from fear” [*apo tou phobou*] as any one would have done. “A little touch of sailor superstition” (Bruce).

14:28 **Upon the waters** [*epi ta hudata*]. The impulsiveness of Peter appears as usual. Matthew alone gives this Peter episode.

14:30 **Seeing the wind** [*blep n ton anemon*]. Cf. Ex 20:18 and Re 1:12 “to see the voice” [*tn ph n n*]. “It is one thing to see a storm from the deck of a stout ship, another to see it in the midst of the waves” (Bruce). Peter was actually beginning to sink [*katapontizesthai*] to plunge down into the sea, “although a fisherman and a good swimmer” (Bengel). It was a dramatic moment that wrung from Peter the cry: “Lord, save me” [*Kurie, s son me*], and do it quickly the aorist means. He could walk on the water till he saw the wind whirl the water round him.

14:31 **Didst thou doubt?** [*edistasas?*]. Only here and 28:17 in the N.T. From [*distaz*] and that from [*dis*] (twice). Pulled two ways. Peter’s trust in the power of Christ gave way to his dread of the wind and waves. Jesus had to take hold of Peter [*epelabeto*, middle voice] and pull him up while still walking on the water.

14:32 **Ceased** [*ekopasen*]. From [*kopos*], toil. The wind grew weary or tired, exhausted itself in the presence of its Master (cf. Mr 4:39). Not a mere coincidence that the wind ceased now.

14:33 **Worshipped him** [*prosekun san aut i*]. And Jesus accepted it. They were growing in appreciation of the person and power of Christ from the attitude in 8:27. They will soon be ready for the confession of 16:16. Already they can say: “Truly God’s Son thou art.” The absence of the article here allows it to mean a Son of God as in 27:54 (the centurion). But they probably mean “the Son of God” as Jesus was claiming to them to be.

14:34 **Gennesaret** [*Genn saret*]. A rich plain four miles long and two broad. The first visit of Jesus apparently with the usual excitement at the cures. People were eager to touch the hem of Christ’s mantle like the woman in 9:20. Jesus honoured their superstitious faith and “as many as touched were made whole” [*hosoi h psanto dies thesan*], completely [*di-*] healed.

Chapter 15

15:1 **From Jerusalem** [*apo Ierosolum n*]. Jerusalem is the headquarters of the conspiracy against Jesus with the Pharisees as the leaders in it. Already we have seen the Herodians combining with the Pharisees in the purpose to put Jesus to death (Mr 3:6; Mt 12:14; Lu 6:11). Soon Jesus will warn the disciples against the Sadducees also (Mt 16:6). Unusual order here, “Pharisees and scribes.” “The guardians of tradition in the capital have their evil eye on Jesus and co-operate with the provincial rigorists” (Bruce), if the Pharisees were not all from Jerusalem.

15:2 **The tradition of the elders** [*t n paradosin t n presbuter n*]. This was the oral law, handed down by the elders of the past in *ex cathedra* fashion and later codified in the Mishna. Handwashing before meals is not a requirement of the Old Testament. It is, we know, a good thing for sanitary reasons, but the rabbis made it a mark of righteousness for others at any rate. This item was magnified at great length in the oral teaching. The washing [*nipontai*, middle voice, note) of the hands called for minute regulations. It was commanded to wash the hands before meals, it was one’s duty to do it after eating. The more rigorous did it between the courses. The hands must be immersed. Then the water itself must be “clean” and the cups or pots used must be ceremonially “clean.” Vessels were kept full of clean water ready for use (Joh 2:6-8). So it went on *ad infinitum*. Thus a real issue is raised between Jesus and the rabbis. It was far more than a point of etiquette or of hygienics. The rabbis held it to be a mortal sin. The incident may have happened in a Pharisee’s house.

15:3 **Ye also** [*kai h-meis*]. Jesus admits that the disciples had transgressed the rabbinical traditions. Jesus treats it as a matter of no great importance in itself save as they had put the tradition of the elders in the place of the commandment of God. When the two clashed, as was often the case, the rabbis transgress the commandment of God “because of your tradition” [*dia t n paradosin h-m n*]. The accusative with [*dia*] means that, not “by means of.” Tradition is not good or bad in itself. It is merely what is handed on from one to another. Custom tended to make these traditions binding like law. The Talmud is a monument of their struggle with tradition. There could be no compromise on this subject and Jesus accepts the issue. He stands for real righteousness and spiritual freedom, not for bondage to mere ceremonialism and tradition. The rabbis placed tradition (the oral law) above the law of God.

15:5 **But ye say** [*h-meis de legete*]. In sharp contrast to the command of God. Jesus had quoted the fifth commandment (Ex 20:12,16) with the penalty “die the death” [*thanat i teleutat*], “go on to his end by death,” in imitation of the Hebrew idiom. They dodged this command of God about the penalty for dishonouring one’s father or mother by the use “Corban” [*korban*] as Mark calls it (Mr 7:11). All one had to do to evade one’s duty to father or mother was to say “Corban” or “Gift” [*D ron*] with the idea of using the money for God. By an angry oath of refusal to help one’s parents, the oath or vow was binding. By this magic word one set himself free [*ou m tim sei*], he shall not

honour) from obedience to the fifth commandment. Sometimes unfilial sons paid graft to the rabbinical legalists for such dodges. Were some of these very faultfinders guilty?

15:6 **Ye have made void the word of God** [*ekur sate ton logon tou theou*]. It was a stinging indictment that laid bare the hollow pretence of their quibbles about handwashing. [*Kuros*] means force or authority, [*akuros*] is without authority, null and void. It is a late verb, [*akuro*] but in the LXX, Gal 3:17; and in the papyri Adjective, verb, and substantive occur in legal phraseology like cancelling a will, etc. The moral force of God's law is annulled by their hairsplitting technicalities and immoral conduct.

15:7 **Well did Isaiah prophesy of you** [*kal s eproph teusen peri h-m n Esaias*]. There is sarcasm in this pointed application of Isaiah's words (Isa 29:13) to these rabbis. He "beautifully pictured" them. The portrait was to the very life, "teaching as their doctrines the commandments of men." They were indeed far from God if they imagined that God would be pleased with such gifts at the expense of duty to one's parents.

15:11 **This defileth the man** [*touto koinoi ton anthr pon*]. This word is from [*koinos*] which is used in two senses, either what is "common" to all and general like the *Koin* Greek, or what is unclean and "common" either ceremonially or in reality. The ceremonial "commonness" disturbed Peter on the housetop in Joppa (Ac 10:14). See also Ac 21:28; Heb 9:13. One who is thus religiously common or unclean is cut off from doing his religious acts. "Defilement" was a grave issue with the rabbinical ceremonialists. Jesus appeals to the crowd here: **Hear and understand** [*akouete kai suniete*]. He has a profound distinction to draw. Moral uncleanness is what makes a man common, defiles him. That is what is to be dreaded, not to be glossed over. "This goes beyond the tradition of the elders and virtually abrogates the Levitical distinctions between clean and unclean" (Bruce). One can see the pettifogging pretenders shrivel up under these withering words.

15:12 **Were offended** [*eskandalisth san*]. First aorist passive. "Were caused to stumble," "have taken offence" (Moffatt), "have turned against you" (Weymouth), "were shocked" (Goodspeed), "War ill-pleased" (Braid Scots). They took umbrage at the public rebuke and at such a scorpion sting in it all. It cut to the quick because it was true. It showed in the glowering countenances of the Pharisees so plainly that the disciples were uneasy. See on 5:29.

15:14 **They are blind guides** [*tuphloi eisin hod goi*]. Graphic picture. Once in Cincinnati a blind man introduced me to his blind friend. He said that he was showing him the city. Jesus is not afraid of the Pharisees. Let them alone to do their worst. Blind leaders and blind victims will land in the ditch. A proverbial expression in the O.T.

15:15 **Declare unto us the parable** [*phrason h-min t n parabol n*]. Explain the parable (pithy saying) in verse 11, not in verse 14. As a matter of fact, the disciples had been upset by Christ's powerful exposure of the "Corban" duplicity and the words about "defilement" in verse 11.

15:16 **Are ye also even yet without understanding?** [*Akm n kai h-meis asunetoi este*]. [*Akm n*] is an adverbial accusative (classic [*aichm*], point (of a weapon)= [*akm n chronou*] at this point of time, just now= [*eti*]). It occurs in papyri and inscriptions, though condemned by the old grammarians. “In spite of all my teaching, are ye also like the Pharisees without spiritual insight and grasp?” One must never forget that the disciples lived in a Pharisaic environment. Their religious world-outlook was Pharisaic. They were lacking in spiritual intelligence or sense, “totally ignorant” (Moffatt).

15:17 **Perceive ye not?** [*ou noeite*]. Christ expects us to make use of our [*nous*], intellect, not for pride, but for insight. The mind does not work infallibly, but we should use it for its God-given purpose. Intellectual laziness or flabbiness is no credit to a devout soul.

15:18 **Out of the mouth** [*ek tou stomatos*]. Spoken words come out of the heart and so are a true index of character. By “heart” [*kardias*] Jesus means not just the emotional nature, but the entire man, the inward life of “evil thoughts” [*dialogismoi pon roi*] that issue in words and deeds. “These defile the man,” not “eating with unwashed hands.” The captious quibblings of the Pharisees, for instance, had come out of evil hearts.

15:22 **A Canaanitish woman** [*gun Chananaia*]. The Phoenicians were descended from the Canaanites, the original inhabitants of Palestine. They were of Semitic race, therefore, though pagan. **Have pity on me** [*ele son me*]. She made her daughter’s case her own, “badly demonized.”

15:23 **For she crieth after us** [*hoti krazei opisthen h m n*]. The disciples greatly disliked this form of public attention, a strange woman crying after them. They disliked a sensation. Did they wish the woman sent away with her daughter healed or unhealed?

15:24 **I was not sent** [*ouk apostal n*]. Second aorist passive indicative of [*apostell*]. Jesus takes a new turn with this woman in Phoenicia. He makes a test case of her request. In a way she represented the problem of the Gentile world. He calls the Jews “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” in spite of the conduct of the Pharisees.

15:27 **Even the dogs** [*kai ta kunaria*]. She took no offence at the implication of being a Gentile dog. The rather she with quick wit took Christ’s very word for little dogs [*kunaria*] and deftly turned it to her own advantage, for the little dogs eat of the crumbs [*psichi n*], little morsels, diminutive again) that fall from the table of their masters [*kuri n*], the children.

15:28 **As thou wilt** [*h s theleis*]. Her great faith and her keen rejoinder won her case.

15:29 **And sat there** [*ekath to ekei*]. “Was sitting there” on the mountain side near the sea of Galilee, possibly to rest and to enjoy the view or more likely to teach.

15:30 **And they cast them down at his feet** [*kai eripsan autous para tous podas autou*]. A very strong word, flung them down, “not carelessly, but in haste, because so many were coming on the same errand” (Vincent). It was a great day for “they glorified the God of Israel.”

15:32 **Three days** [*h merai treis*]. A parenthetic nominative (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 460). **What to eat** [*ti phag sin*]. Indirect question with the deliberative subjunctive retained. In the feeding of the five thousand Jesus took compassion on the people and healed their sick (14:14). Here the hunger of the multitude moves him to compassion [*splagchnizomai*], in both instances). So he is unwilling [*ou thel*] to send them away hungry. **Faint** [*ekluth sin*]. Unloosed, [*eklu*] exhausted.

15:33 **And the disciples say to him** [*kai legousin aut i hoi math tai*]. It seems strange that they should so soon have forgotten the feeding of the five thousand (Mt 14:13-21), but they did. Soon Jesus will remind them of both these demonstrations of his power (16:9, 10). They forgot both of them, not just one. Some scholars scout the idea of two miracles so similar as the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand, though both are narrated in detail by both Mark and Matthew and both are later mentioned by Jesus. Jesus repeated his sayings and wrought multitudes of healings. There is no reason in itself why Jesus should not on occasion repeat a nature miracle like this elsewhere. He is in the region of Decapolis, not in the country of Philip [*Trachonitis*].

15:34 **A few small fishes** [*oliga ichthudia*], diminutive again).

15:35 **On the ground** [*epi t n g n*]. No mention of “grass” as in 14:19 for this time, midsummer, the grass would be parched and gone.

15:36 **Gave thanks** [*eucharist sas*]. In 14:19 the word used for “grace” or “blessing” is [*eulog sen*]. Vincent notes that the Jewish custom was for the head of the house to say the blessing only if he shared the meal unless the guests were his own household. But we need not think of Jesus as bound by the peccadilloes of Jewish customs.

15:39 **The borders of Magadan** [*eis ta horia Magadan*]. On the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and so in Galilee again. Mark terms it Dalmanutha (Mr 8:10). Perhaps after all the same place as Magdala, as most manuscripts have it.

Chapter 16

16:1 **The Pharisees and Sadducees** [*hoi Pharisaioi kai Saddoukaioi*]. The first time that we have this combination of the two parties who disliked each other exceedingly. Hate makes strange bedfellows. They hated Jesus more than they did each other. Their hostility has not decreased during the absence of Jesus, but rather increased. **Tempting him** [*peirazontes*]. Their motive was bad. **A sign from heaven** [*s meion ek tou ouranou*]. The scribes and Pharisees had already asked for a sign (12:38). Now this new combination adds “from heaven.” What did they have in mind? They may not have had any definite idea to embarrass Jesus. The Jewish apocalypses did speak of spectacular displays of power by the Son of Man (the Messiah). The devil had suggested that Jesus let the people see him drop down from the pinnacle of the temple and the people expected the Messiah to come from an unknown source (Joh 7:27) who would do great signs (Joh 7:31). Chrysostom (*Hom. liii.*) suggests stopping the course of the sun, bridling the moon, a clap of thunder.

16:2 **Fair weather** [*eudia*]. An old poetic word from [*eu*] and [*Zeus*] as the ruler of the air and giver of fair weather. So men today say “when the sky is red at sunset.” It occurs on the Rosetta Stone and in a fourth century A.D. Oxyr. papyrus for “calm weather” that made it impossible to sail the boat. Aleph and B and some other MSS. omit verses 2 and 3. W omits part of verse 2. These verses are similar to Lu 12:54-56. McNeile rejects them here. Westcott and Hort place in brackets. Jesus often repeated his sayings. Zahn suggests that Papias added these words to Matthew.

16:3 **Lowring** [*stugnaz n*]. A sky covered with clouds. Used also of a gloomy countenance as of the rich young ruler in Mr 10:22. Nowhere else in the New Testament. This very sign of a rainy day we use today. The word for “foul weather” [*cheim n*] is the common one for winter and a storm. **The signs of the times** [*ta s meia t n kair n*]. How little the Pharisees and Sadducees understood the situation. Soon Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Jewish state overturned. It is not always easy to discern [*diakrinein*, discriminate) the signs of our own time. Men are numerous with patent keys to it all. But we ought not to be blind when others are gullible.

16:4 Same words in 12:39 except [*tou proph tou*], a real doublet.

16:5 **Came** [*elthontes*]. Probably= “went” as in Lu 15:20 [*ire*], not [*venire*]. So in Mr 8:13 [*ap lthen*]. **Forgot** [*epelathonto*]. Perhaps in the hurry to leave Galilee, probably in the same boat by which they came across from Decapolis.

16:7 **They reasoned** [*dielogizonto*]. It was pathetic, the almost jejune inability of the disciples to understand the parabolic warning against “the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (verse 6) after the collision of Christ just before with both parties in Magadan. They kept it up, imperfect tense. It is “loaves” [*artous*] rather than “bread.”

16:8 Jesus asks four pungent questions about the intellectual dulness, refers to the feeding of the five thousand and uses the word [*kophinous*] (14:20) for it and [*sphuridas*] for the four thousand (15:37), and repeats his warning (16:11). Every teacher understands this strain upon the patience of this Teacher of teachers.

16:12 **Then understood they** [*tote sun kan*]. First aorist active indicative of [*suni mi*], to grasp, to comprehend. They saw the point after this elaborate rebuke and explanation that by “leaven” Jesus meant “teaching.”

16:13 **Caesarea Philippi** [*Kaisarias t s Philippou*]. Up on a spur of Mt. Hermon under the rule of Herod Philip. **He asked** [*r t*]. Began to question, inchoative imperfect tense. He was giving them a test or examination. The first was for the opinion of men about the Son of Man.

16:14 **And they said** [*hoi de eipan*]. They were ready to respond for they knew that popular opinion was divided on that point (14:1f.). They give four different opinions. It is always a risky thing for a pastor to ask for people’s opinions of him. But Jesus was not much concerned by their answers to this question. He knew by now that the Pharisees and Sadducees were bitterly hostile to him. The masses were only superficially following him and they looked for a political Messiah and had vague ideas about him. How much did the disciples understand and how far have they come in their development of faith? Are they still loyal?

16:15 **But who say ye that I am?** [*h-meis de tina me legete einai?*]. This is what matters and what Jesus wanted to hear. Note emphatic position of **h-meis**, “But *you*, who say ye that I am?”

16:16 Peter is the spokesman now: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” [*Su ei ho Christos ho huios tou theou tou z ntos*]. It was a noble confession, but not a new claim by Jesus. Peter had made it before (Joh 6:69) when the multitude deserted Jesus in Capernaum. Since the early ministry (John 4) Jesus had avoided the word Messiah because of its political meaning to the people. But now Peter plainly calls Jesus the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Son of the God the living one (note the four Greek articles). This great confession of Peter means that he and the other disciples believe in Jesus as the Messiah and are still true to him in spite of the defection of the Galilean populace (John 6).

16:17 **Blessed art thou** [*makarios ei*]. A beatitude for Peter. Jesus accepts the confession as true. Thereby Jesus on this solemn occasion solemnly claims to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God, his deity in other words. The disciples express positive conviction in the Messiahship or Christhood of Jesus as opposed to the divided opinions of the populace. “The terms in which Jesus speaks of Peter are characteristic—warm, generous, unstinted. The style is not that of an ecclesiastical editor laying the foundation for church power, and prelatic pretensions, but of a noble-minded Master eulogizing in impassioned terms a loyal disciple” (Bruce). The Father had helped Peter get this spiritual insight into the Master’s Person and Work.

16:18 **And I also say unto thee** [*k'ag de soi leg*]. “The emphasis is not on ‘Thou art Peter’ over against ‘Thou art the Christ,’ but on [*Kag*]: ‘The Father hath revealed to thee one truth, and I also tell you another’ (McNeile). Jesus calls Peter here by the name that he had said he would have (Joh 1:42). Peter [*Petros*] is simply the Greek word for Cephas (Aramaic). Then it was prophecy, now it is fact. In verse 17 Jesus addresses him as “Simon Bar-Jonah,” his full patronymic (Aramaic) name. But Jesus has a purpose now in using his nickname “Peter” which he had himself given him. Jesus makes a remarkable play on Peter’s name, a pun in fact, that has caused volumes of controversy and endless theological strife. **On this rock** [*epi taut i t i petr i*] Jesus says, a ledge or cliff of rock like that in 7:24 on which the wise man built his house. [*Petros*] is usually a smaller detachment of the massive ledge. But too much must not be made of this point since Jesus probably spoke Aramaic to Peter which draws no such distinction [*K ph*]. What did Jesus mean by this word-play?

I will build my church [*oikodom s mou t n ekkl sian*]. It is the figure of a building and he uses the word [*ekkl sian*] which occurs in the New Testament usually of a local organization, but sometimes in a more general sense. What is the sense here in which Jesus uses it? The word originally meant “assembly” (Ac 19:39), but it came to be applied to an “unassembled assembly” as in Ac 8:3 for the Christians persecuted by Saul from house to house. “And the name for the new Israel, [*ekkl sia*], in His mouth is not an anachronism. It is an old familiar name for the congregation of Israel found in Deut. (De 18:26; 23:2) and Psalms (Ps 22:36), both books well known to Jesus” (Bruce). It is interesting to observe that in Ps 89 most of the important words employed by Jesus on this occasion occur in the LXX text. So [*oikodom s*] in Ps 89:5; [*ekkl sia*] in Ps 89:6; [*katischu*] in Ps 89:22; [*Christos*] in Ps 89:39,52; [*h id s*] in Ps 89:49 [*ek cheiros h idou*]. If one is puzzled over the use of “building” with the word [*ekkl sia*] it will be helpful to turn to 1Pe 2:5. Peter, the very one to whom Jesus is here speaking, writing to the Christians in the five Roman provinces in Asia (1Pe 1:1), says: “You are built a spiritual house” [*oikodomeisthe oikos pneumatikos*]. It is difficult to resist the impression that Peter recalls the words of Jesus to him on this memorable occasion. Further on (1Pe 2:9) he speaks of them as an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, showing beyond controversy that Peter’s use of building a spiritual house is general, not local. This is undoubtedly the picture in the mind of Christ here in 16:18. It is a great spiritual house, Christ’s Israel, not the Jewish nation, which he describes. What is the rock on which Christ will build his vast temple? Not on Peter alone or mainly or primarily. Peter by his confession was furnished with the illustration for the rock on which His church will rest. It is the same kind of faith that Peter has just confessed. The perpetuity of this church general is guaranteed.

The gates of Hades [*pulai h idou*] **shall not prevail against it** [*ou katischusousin aut s*]. Each word here creates difficulty. Hades is technically the unseen world, the Hebrew Sheol, the land of the departed, that is death. Paul uses [*thanate*] in 1Co 15:55 in quoting Ho 13:14 for [*h id*]. It is not common in the papyri, but it is common on tombstones in Asia Minor, “doubtless a survival of its use in the old Greek religion” (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*). The ancient pagans divided Hades [*a*] privative and [*idein*], to see, abode of the unseen) into Elysium and Tartarus as

the Jews put both Abraham's bosom and Gehenna in Sheol or Hades (cf. Lu 16:25). Christ was in Hades (Ac 2:27,31), not in Gehenna. We have here the figure of two buildings, the Church of Christ on the Rock, the House of Death (Hades). "In the Old Testament the 'gates of Hades' (Sheol) never bears any other meaning (Isa 38:10; Wisd. 16:3; 3Macc. 5:51) than death," McNeile claims. See also Ps 9:13; 107:18; Job 38:17 [*pulai thanatou pul roi h idou*]. It is not the picture of Hades attacking Christ's church, but of death's possible victory over the church. "The [*ekkl sia*] is built upon the Messiahship of her master, and death, the gates of Hades, will not prevail against her by keeping Him imprisoned. It was a mysterious truth, which He will soon tell them in plain words (verse 21); it is echoed in Ac 2:24, 31" (McNeile). Christ's church will prevail and survive because He will burst the gates of Hades and come forth conqueror. He will ever live and be the guarantor of the perpetuity of His people or church. The verb [*katischu*] (literally have strength against, [*ischu*] from [*ischus*] and [*kat-*] occurs also in Lu 21:36; 23:23. It appears in the ancient Greek, the LXX, and in the papyri with the accusative and is used in the modern Greek with the sense of gaining the mastery over. The wealth of imagery in Mt 16:18 makes it difficult to decide each detail, but the main point is clear. The [*ekkl sia*] which consists of those confessing Christ as Peter has just done will not cease. The gates of Hades or bars of Sheol will not close down on it. Christ will rise and will keep his church alive. *Sublime Porte* used to be the title of Turkish power in Constantinople.

16:19 **The Keys of the kingdom** [*tas kleidas t s basileias*]. Here again we have the figure of a building with keys to open from the outside. The question is raised at once if Jesus does not here mean the same thing by "kingdom" that he did by "church" in verse 18. In Re 1:18; 3:7 Christ the Risen Lord has "the keys of death and of Hades." He has also "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" which he here hands over to Peter as "gatekeeper" or "steward" [*oikonomos*] provided we do not understand it as a special and peculiar prerogative belonging to Peter. The same power here given to Peter belongs to every disciple of Jesus in all the ages. Advocates of papal supremacy insist on the primacy of Peter here and the power of Peter to pass on this supposed sovereignty to others. But this is all quite beside the mark. We shall soon see the disciples actually disputing again (Mt 18:1) as to which of them is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven as they will again (20:21) and even on the night before Christ's death. Clearly neither Peter nor the rest understood Jesus to say here that Peter was to have supreme authority. What is added shows that Peter held the keys precisely as every preacher and teacher does. To "bind" [*ds is*] in rabbinical language is to forbid, to "loose" [*lus is*] is to permit. Peter would be like a rabbi who passes on many points. Rabbis of the school of Hillel "loosed" many things that the school of Schammai "bound." The teaching of Jesus is the standard for Peter and for all preachers of Christ. Note the future perfect indicative [*estai dedemenon, estai lelumenon*], a state of completion. All this assumes, of course, that Peter's use of the keys will be in accord with the teaching and mind of Christ. The binding and loosing is repeated by Jesus to all the disciples (18:18). Later after the Resurrection Christ will use this same language to all the disciples (Joh 20:23), showing that it was not a special prerogative of Peter. He is simply first

among equals, *primus inter pares*, because on this occasion he was spokesman for the faith of all. It is a violent leap in logic to claim power to forgive sins, to pronounce absolution, by reason of the technical rabbinical language that Jesus employed about binding and loosing. Every preacher uses the keys of the kingdom when he proclaims the terms of salvation in Christ. The proclamation of these terms when accepted by faith in Christ has the sanction and approval of God the Father. The more personal we make these great words the nearer we come to the mind of Christ. The more ecclesiastical we make them the further we drift away from him.

16:20 **That they should tell no man** [*hina m deni eip sin*]. Why? For the very reason that he had himself avoided this claim in public. He was the Messiah [*ho Christos*], but the people would inevitably take it in a political sense. Jesus was plainly profoundly moved by Peter's great confession on behalf of the disciples. He was grateful and confident of the final outcome. But he foresaw peril to all. Peter had confessed him as the Messiah and on this rock of faith thus confessed he would build his church or kingdom. They will all have and use the keys to this greatest of all buildings, but for the present they must be silent.

16:21 **From that time began** [*apo tote rxato*]. It was a suitable time for the disclosure of the greatest secret of his death. It is now just a little over six months before the cross. They must know it now to be ready then. The great confession of Peter made this seem an appropriate time. He will repeat the warnings (17:22f. with mention of betrayal; 20:17-19 with the cross) which he now "began." So the necessity [*dei*, must) of his suffering death at the hands of the Jerusalem ecclesiastics who have dogged his steps in Galilee is now plainly stated. Jesus added his resurrection "on the third day" [*t i trit i h mer i*], not "on the fourth day," please observe. Dimly the shocked disciples grasped something of what Jesus said.

16:22 **Peter took him** [*proslabomenos auton ho Petros*]. Middle voice, "taking to himself," aside and apart, "as if by a right of his own. He acted with greater familiarity after the token of acknowledgment had been given. Jesus, however, reduces him to his level" (Bengel). "Peter here appears in a new character; a minute ago speaking under inspiration from heaven, now under inspiration from the opposite quarter" (Bruce). Syriac Sinaitic for Mr 8:32 has it "as though pitying him." But this exclamation and remonstrance of Peter was soon interrupted by Jesus. **God have mercy on thee** [*hile s*]. Supply [*ei*] or [*est ho theos*]. **{This shall never be** [*ou m estai soi touto*]. Strongest kind of negation, as if Peter would not let it happen. Peter had perfect assurance.

16:23 **But he turned** [*ho de strapheis*]. Second aorist passive participle, quick ingressive action, away from Peter in revulsion, and toward the other disciples (Mr 8:33 has [*epistrapheis*] and [*id n tous math tas autou*]). **Get thee behind me, Satan** [*Hupage opis mou, Satan*]. Just before Peter played the part of a rock in the noble confession and was given a place of leadership. Now he is playing the part of Satan and is ordered to the rear. Peter was tempting Jesus not to go on to the cross as Satan had done in the wilderness. "None are more formidable instruments of temptation than well-meaning friends, who care more for our comfort than for our character" (Bruce). "In

Peter the banished Satan had once more returned” (Plummer). **A stumbling-block unto me** [*skandalon ei emou*]. Objective genitive. Peter was acting as Satan’s catspaw, in ignorance, surely, but none the less really. He had set a trap for Christ that would undo all his mission to earth. “Thou art not, as before, a noble block, lying in its right position as a massive foundation stone. On the contrary, thou art like a stone quite out of its proper place, and lying right across the road in which I must go—lying as a stone of stumbling” (Morison). **Thou mindest not** [*ou phroneis*]. “Your outlook is not God’s, but man’s” (Moffatt). You do not think God’s thoughts. Clearly the consciousness of the coming cross is not a new idea with Jesus. We do not know when he first foresaw this outcome any more than we know when first the Messianic consciousness appeared in Jesus. He had the glimmerings of it as a boy of twelve, when he spoke of “My Father’s house.” He knows now that he must die on the cross.

16:24 **Take up his cross** [*arat ton stauron autou*]. Pick up at once, aorist tense. This same saying in 10:38, which see. But pertinent here also in explanation of Christ’s rebuke to Peter. Christ’s own cross faces him. Peter had dared to pull Christ away from his destiny. He would do better to face squarely his own cross and to bear it after Jesus. The disciples would be familiar with cross-bearing as a figure of speech by reason of the crucifixion of criminals in Jerusalem. **Follow** [*akaloutheit*]. Present tense. Keep on following.

16:25 **Save his life** [*t n psuch n autou s sai*]. Paradoxical play on word “life” or “soul,” using it in two senses. So about “saving” and “losing” [*apolesei*].

16:26 **Gain** [*kerd s i*] and **profit** [*z mi th i*]. Both aorist subjunctives (one active, the other passive) and so punctiliar action, condition of third class, undetermined, but with prospect of determination. Just a supposed case. The verb for “forfeit” occurs in the sense of being fined or mulcted of money. So the papyri and inscriptions. **Exchange** [*antallagma*]. As an exchange, accusative in apposition with [*ti*]. The soul has no market price, though the devil thinks so. “A man must give, surrender, his life, and nothing less to God; no [*antallagma*] is possible” (McNeile). This word [*antallagma*] occurs twice in the *Wisdom of Sirach*: “There is no exchange for a faithful friend” (6:15); “There is no exchange for a well-instructed soul” (26:14).

16:28 **Some of them that stand here** [*tines t n hode hest t n*]. A *crux interpretum* in reality. Does Jesus refer to the Transfiguration, the Resurrection of Jesus, the great Day of Pentecost, the Destruction of Jerusalem, the Second Coming and Judgment? We do not know, only that Jesus was certain of his final victory which would be typified and symbolized in various ways. The apocalyptic eschatological symbolism employed by Jesus here does not dominate his teaching. He used it at times to picture the triumph of the kingdom, not to set forth the full teaching about it. The kingdom of God was already in the hearts of men. There would be climaxes and consummations.

Chapter 17

17:1 **After six days** [*meth' h mer s hex*]. This could be on the sixth day, but as Luke (Lu 9:28) puts it “about eight days” one naturally thinks of a week as the probable time, though it is not important. **Taketh with him** [*paralambanei*]. Literally, **takes along**. Note historical present. These three disciples form an inner group who have shown more understanding of Jesus. So at Gethsemane. **Apart** [*kat' idian*] means “by themselves” ({alone}, [*monous*], Mark has it) up [*anapherei*] into a high mountain, probably Mount Hermon again, though we do not really know. “The Mount of Transfiguration does not concern geography” (Holtzmann).

17:2 **He was transfigured before them** [*metemorph th emprosten aut n*]. The word is the same as the metamorphoses (cf. Ovid) of pagan mythology. Luke does not use it. The idea is change [*meta-*] of form [*morph*]. It really presents the essence of a thing as separate from the [*sch ma*] (fashion), the outward accident. So in Ro 12:2 Paul uses both verbs, [*sunschematizesthe*] (be not fashioned) and [*metamorphousthe*] (be ye transformed in your inner life). So in 1Co 7:31 [*sch ma*] is used for the fashion of the world while in Mr 16:12 [*morph*] is used of the form of Jesus after his resurrection. The false apostles are described by [*metasch matisomai*] in 2Co 11:13-15. In Php 2:6 we have [*en morph i*] used of the Preincarnate state of Christ and [*morph n doulou*] of the Incarnate state (Php 2:7), while [*sch mati h s anthr pos*] emphasizes his being found “in fashion as a man.” But it will not do in Mt 17:2 to use the English transliteration [*metamorph sis*] because of its pagan associations. So the Latin *transfigured* (Vulgate *transfiguratus est*) is better. “The deeper force of [*metamorphousthai*] is seen in 2Co 3:18 (with reference to the shining on Moses’ face), Ro 12:2” (McNeile). The word occurs in a second-century papyrus of the pagan gods who are invisible. Matthew guards against the pagan idea by adding and explaining about the face of Christ “as the sun” and his garments “as the light.”

17:3 **There appeared** [*phth*]. Singular aorist passive verb with Moses (to be understood also with Elijah), but the participle [*sunlalountes*] is plural agreeing with both. “Sufficient objectivity is guaranteed by the vision being enjoyed by all three” (Bruce). The Jewish apocalypses reveal popular expectations that Moses and Elijah would reappear. Both had mystery connected with their deaths. One represented law, the other prophecy, while Jesus represented the gospel (grace). They spoke of his decease (Lu 9:31), the cross, the theme uppermost in the mind of Christ and which the disciples did not comprehend. Jesus needed comfort and he gets it from fellowship with Moses and Elijah.

17:4 **And Peter answered** [*apokritheis de ho Petros*]. “Peter to the front again, but not greatly to his credit” (Bruce). It is not clear what Peter means by his saying: “It is good for us to be here” [*kalon estin h m s h de einai*]. Luke (Lu 9:33) adds “not knowing what he said,” as they “were heavy with sleep.” So it is not well to take Peter too seriously on this occasion. At any rate he makes a definite proposal. **I will make** [*pai s*]. Future indicative though aorist subjunctive has same form.

Tabernacles [*sk nas*], booths. The Feast of Tabernacles was not far away. Peter may have meant that they should just stay up here on the mountain and not go to Jerusalem for the feast.

17:5 **Overshadowed** [*epeskiasen*]. They were up in cloud-land that swept round and over them. See this verb used of Mary (Lu 1:35) and of Peter's shadow (Ac 5:15). **This is** [*houtos estin*]. At the baptism (Mt 3:17) these words were addressed to Jesus. Here the voice out of the bright cloud speaks to them about Jesus. **Hear ye him** [*akouete autou*]. Even when he speaks about his death. A sharp rebuke to Peter for his consolation to Jesus about his death.

17:7 **And touched them** [*kai hapsamenos aut n*]. Tenderness in their time of fear.

17:8 **Lifting up their eyes** [*eparantes tous ophthalmous aut n*]. After the reassuring touch of Jesus and his words of cheer. **Jesus only** [*I soun monon*]. Moses and Elijah were gone in the bright cloud.

17:9 **Until** [*he s hou*]. This conjunction is common with the subjunctive for a future event as his Resurrection [*egerth i*] was. Again (Mr 9:10) they were puzzled over his meaning. Jesus evidently hopes that this vision of Moses and Elijah and his own glory might stand them in good stead at his death.

17:10 **Elijah must first come** [*Eleian dei elthein pr ton*]. So this piece of theology concerned them more than anything else. They had just seen Elijah, but Jesus the Messiah had come before Elijah. The scribes used Mal 4:5. Jesus had also spoken again of his death (resurrection). So they are puzzled.

17:12 **Elijah is come already** [*Eleias d lthen*]. Thus Jesus identifies John the Baptist with the promise in Malachi, though not the real Elijah in person which John denied (Joh 1:21). **They knew him not** [*ouk epign san auton*]. Second aorist active indicative of [*epigin sk*], to recognize. Just as they do not know Jesus now (Joh 1:26). They killed John as they will Jesus the Son of Man.

17:13 **Then understood** [*tote sun kan*]. One of the three k aorists. It was plain enough even for them. John was Elijah in spirit and had prepared the way for the Messiah.

17:15 **Epileptic** [*sel niazetai*]. Literally, "moonstruck," "lunatic." The symptoms of epilepsy were supposed to be aggravated by the changes of the moon (cf. 4:24). **He has it bad** [*kak s echei*] as often in the Synoptic Gospels.

17:17 **Perverse** [*diestrammen*]. Distorted, twisted in two, corrupt. Perfect passive participle of [*diastreph*].

17:20 **Little faith** [*oligopistian*]. A good translation. It was less than "a grain of mustard seed" [*kokkon sinape s*]. See 13:31 for this phrase. They had no miracle faith. Bruce holds "this mountain" to be the Mount of Transfiguration to which Jesus pointed. Probably so. But it is a parable. Our

trouble is always with “this mountain” which confronts our path. Note the form [*metaba*] [*meta*] and [*b thi*].

17:23 **And they were exceeding sorry** [*kai elup th san sphodra*]. So they at last understood that he was talking about his death and resurrection.

17:24 **They that received the half-shekel** [*hoi ta didrachma lambanontes*]. This temple tax amounted to an Attic drachma or the Jewish half-shekel, about one-third of a dollar. Every Jewish man twenty years of age and over was expected to pay it for the maintenance of the temple. But it was not a compulsory tax like that collected by the publicans for the government. “The tax was like a voluntary church-rate; no one could be compelled to pay” (Plummer). The same Greek word occurs in two Egyptian papyri of the first century A.D. for the receipt for the tax for the temple of Suchus (Milligan and Moulton’s *Vocabulary*). This tax for the Jerusalem temple was due in the month Adar (our March) and it was now nearly six months overdue. But Jesus and the Twelve had been out of Galilee most of this time. Hence the question of the tax-collectors. The payment had to be made in the Jewish coin, half-shekel. Hence the money-changers did a thriving business in charging a small premium for the Jewish coin, amounting to some forty-five thousand dollars a year, it is estimated. It is significant that they approached Peter rather than Jesus, perhaps not wishing to embarrass “Your Teacher,” “a roundabout hint that the tax was overdue” (Bruce). Evidently Jesus had been in the habit of paying it (Peter’s).

17:25 **Jesus spake first to him** [*proepthasen auton ho I sous leg n*]. Here only in the N.T. One example in a papyrus B.C. 161 (Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary*). The old idiomatic use of [*phthan*] with the participle survives in this example of [*prophthan*] in Mt 17:25, meaning to anticipate, to get before one in doing a thing. The *Koin* uses the infinitive thus with [*phthan*] which has come to mean simply to arrive. Here the anticipation is made plain by the use of [*pro-*]. See Robertson’s *Grammar*, p. 1120. The “prevent” of the Authorized Version was the original idea of *praevenire*, to go before, to anticipate. Peter felt obliged to take the matter up with Jesus. But the Master had observed what was going on and spoke to Peter first. **Toll or tribute** [*tel k nson*]. Customs or wares collected by the publicans (like [*phoros*], Ro 13:7) and also the capitation tax on persons, indirect and direct taxation. [*K nsos*] is the Latin *census*, a registration for the purpose of the appraisal of property like [*h apograph*] in Lu 2:2; Ac 5:37. By this parable Jesus as the Son of God claims exemption from the temple tax as the temple of his Father just as royal families do not pay taxes, but get tribute from the foreigners or aliens, subjects in reality.

17:26 **The sons** [*hoi huioi*]. Christ, of course, and the disciples also in contrast with the Jews. Thus a reply to Peter’s prompt “Yes.” Logically [*arage*] free from the temple tax, but practically not as he proceeds to show.

17:27 **Lest we cause them to stumble** [*hina m skandalis men autous*]. He does not wish to create the impression that he and the disciples despise the temple and its worship. Aorist tense (punctiliar

single act) here, though some MSS. have present subjunctive (linear). “A hook” [*agkistron*]. The only example in the N.T. of fishing with a hook. From an unused verb [*agkiz*], to angle, and that from [*agkos*], a curve (so also [*agkal*] the inner curve of the arm, Lu 2:38). **First cometh up** [*ton anabanta pr ton ichthun*]. More correctly, “the first fish that cometh up.” **A shekel** [*stat ra*]. Greek stater = four drachmae, enough for two persons to pay the tax. **For me and thee** [*anti emou kai sou*]. Common use of [*anti*] in commercial transactions, “in exchange for.” Here we have a miracle of foreknowledge. Such instances have happened. Some try to get rid of the miracle by calling it a proverb or by saying that Jesus only meant for Peter to sell the fish and thus get the money, a species of nervous anxiety to relieve Christ and the Gospel of Matthew from the miraculous. “All the attempts have been in vain which were made by the older Rationalism to put a non-miraculous meaning into these words” (B. Weiss). It is not stated that Peter actually caught such a fish though that is the natural implication. Why provision is thus only made for Peter along with Jesus we do not know.

18:1 **Who then is greatest** [*tis ara meiz n estin*]. The [*ara*] seems to point back to the tax-collection incident when Jesus had claimed exemption for them all as “sons” of the Father. But it was not a new dispute, for jealousy had been growing in their hearts. The wonderful words of Jesus to Peter on Mount Hermon (Mt 16:17-19) had evidently made Peter feel a fresh sense of leadership on the basis of which he had dared even to rebuke Jesus for speaking of his death (16:22). And then Peter was one of the three (James and John also) taken with the Master up on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter on that occasion had spoken up promptly. And just now the tax-collectors had singled out Peter as the one who seemed to represent the group. Mark (Mr 9:33) represents Jesus as asking them about their dispute on the way into the house, perhaps just after their question in Mt 18:1. Jesus had noticed the wrangling. It will break out again and again (Mt 20:20-28; Lu 22:24). Plainly the primacy of Peter was not yet admitted by the others. The use of the comparative [*meiz n*] (so [*ho meiz n*] in verse 4) rather than the superlative [*megistos*] is quite in accord with the *Koin* idiom where the comparative is displacing the superlative (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 667ff.). But it is a sad discovery to find the disciples chiefly concerned about their own places (offices) in the political kingdom which they were expecting.

18:2 **Called to him** [*proskalesamenos*]. Indirect middle voice aorist participle. It may even be Peter’s “little child” [*paidion*] as it was probably in Peter’s house (Mr 9:33). **Set him** [*est sen*]. Transitive first aorist active indicative, not intransitive second aorist, [*est*]. **In the midst of them** [*en mes i aut n*]. Luke adds (Lu 9:47) “by his side” [*par’ heaut i*]. Both are true.

18:3 **Except ye turn and become** [*ean m straph te kai gen sthe*]. Third-class condition, undetermined but with prospect of determination. [*Straph te*] is second aorist passive subjunctive and [*gen sthe*] second aorist middle subjunctive. They were headed in the wrong direction with their selfish ambition. “His tone at this time is markedly severe, as much as when He denounces the Pharisaism in the bud He had to deal with” (Bruce). The strong double negative [*ou m eiselth te*] means that they will otherwise not get into the kingdom of heaven at all, let alone have big places in it.

18:4 **This little child** [*to paidion touto*]. This saying about humbling oneself Jesus repeated a number of times as for instance in Mt 23:12. Probably Jesus pointed to the child by his side. The ninth-century story that the child was Ignatius is worthless. It is not that the child humbled himself, but that the child is humble from the nature of the case in relation to older persons. That is true, however “bumptious” the child himself may be. Bruce observes that to humble oneself is “the most difficult thing in the world for saint as for sinner.”

18:5 **In my name** [*epi t i onomati mou*]. For “one such little child” [*any believer in Christ*] Luke (Lu 9:48) has “this little child” as a representative or symbol. “On the basis or ground of my name,” “for my sake.” Very much like [*eis onoma*] in 10:41 which does not differ greatly from [*en onomati*] (Ac 10:48).

18:6 **These little ones** [*t n mikr n tout n*]. In the same sense as “one such little one” above. The child is the type of believers. **A great millstone** [*mulos onikos*], literally, “a millstone turned by an ass.” The upper millstone was turned by an ass [*onos*]. There were no examples of the adjective [*onikos*] (turned by an ass) outside the N.T. until the papyri revealed several for loads requiring an ass to carry them, stones requiring an ass to move them, etc. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 81) notes it also in papyri examples about the sale of an ass and tax for an ass’s burden of goods. **The depth of the sea** [*t i pelagei t s thalass s*]. “The sea of the sea.” [*Pelagos*] probably from [*pl sso*], to beat, and so the beating, splashing waves of the sea. “Far out into the open sea, a vivid substitute for [*eis t n thalassan*]” (McNeile).

18:7 **Through whom** [*di’ ou*]. Jesus recognizes the inevitableness of stumbling-blocks, traps, hindrances, the world being as it is, but he does not absolve the man who sets the trap (cf. Lu 17:1).

18:8 In verses 8 and 9 we have one of the dualities or doublets in Matthew (5:29-30). Jesus repeated his pungent sayings many times. Instead of [*eis geennan*] (5:29) we have [*eis to pur to ai nion*] and at the end of verse 9 [*tou puros*] is added to [*t n geennan*]. This is the first use in Matthew of [*ai nios*]. We have it again in 19:16, 29 with [*zo*], in 25:41 with [*pur*], in 25:46 with [*kolasin*] and [*zo n*]. The word means ageless, without beginning or end as of God (Ro 16:26), without beginning as in Ro 16:25, without end as here and often. The effort to make it mean “[*aeonian*]” fire will make it mean “[*aeonian*]” life also. If the punishment is limited, *ipso facto* the life is shortened. In verse 9 also [*monophthalmon*] occurs. It is an Ionic compound in Herodotus that is condemned by the Atticists, but it is revived in the vernacular *Koin* . Literally one-eyed. Here only and Mr 9:47 in the New Testament.

18:10 **Despise** [*kataphron s te*]. Literally, “think down on,” with the assumption of superiority. **Their angels** [*hoi aggeloi aut n*]. The Jews believed that each nation had a guardian angel (Da 10:13, 20f.; 12:1). The seven churches in Revelation (Re 1:20) have angels, each of them, whatsoever the meaning is. Does Jesus mean to teach here that each little child or child of faith had a special angel who appears in God’s presence, “see the face of my Father” [*blepousin to pros pon tou patros mou*] in special intimacy? Or does he simply mean that the angels do take an interest in the welfare of God’s people (Heb 1:14)? There is comfort to us in that thought. Certainly Jesus means that the Father takes special care of his “little ones” who believe in Him. There are angels in God’s presence (Lu 1:19).

18:12 **Leave the ninety and nine** [*aph sei ta enen konta ennea epi ta or kai poreutheis z tei to plan menon?*]. This is the text of Westcott and Hort after BL, etc. This text means: “Will he not leave the ninety and nine upon the mountains and going does he not seek (change to present tense) the wandering one?” On the high pastures where the sheep graze at will one has wandered afield. See this parable later in Lu 15:4-7. Our word “planet” is from [*planaomai*], wandering (moving) stars they were called as opposed to fixed stars. But now we know that no stars are fixed. They are all moving and rapidly.

18:14 **The will of your Father** [*thel ma emprosthen*]. Observe that Westcott and Hort read [*mou*] here rather than [*h-m n*] after B Sahidic Coptic. Either makes good sense, though “your” carries on the picture of God’s care for “each one of these little ones” [*hen t n mikr n tout n*] among God’s children. The use of [*emprosthen*] with [*thel ma*] is a Hebraism like [*emprosthen sou*] in 11:25 with [*eudokia*], “before the face” of God.

18:15 **If thy brother sin against thee** [*ean hamart s i adelphos sou*]. Literally, commit a sin (ingressive aorist subjunctive of [*hamartan*]). Aleph B Sahidic do not have “against thee” [*eis se*]. **Shew him his fault** [*elegxon*]. Such private reproof is hard to do, but it is the way of Christ. **Thou hast gained** [*ekerd sas*]. Aorist active indicative of [*kerdain*] in conclusion of a third-class condition, a sort of timeless aorist, a blessed achievement already made.

18:16 **Take with thee** [*paralabe meta sou*]. Take alone [*para*] with [*meta*] thee.

18:17 **Refuse to hear** [*parakous i*]. Like Isa 65:12. Many papyri examples for ignoring, disregarding, hearing without heeding, hearing aside [*para-*], hearing amiss, overhearing (Mr 5:36). **The church** [*t i ekkl si i*]. The local body, not the general as in Mt 16:18 which see for discussion. The problem here is whether Jesus has in mind an actual body of believers already in existence or is speaking prophetically of the local churches that would be organized later (as in Acts). There are some who think that the Twelve Apostles constituted a local [*ekkl sia*], a sort of moving church of preachers. That could only be true in essence as they were a band of ministers and not located in any one place. Bruce holds that they were “the nucleus” of a local church at any rate.

18:18 **Shall be bound in heaven** [*estai dedemena en ouran i*]. Future passive periphrastic perfect indicative as in “shall be loosed” [*estai lelumena*]. In 16:19 this same unusual form occurs. The binding and the loosing is there addressed to Peter, but it is here repeated for the church or for the disciples as the case may be.

18:19 **Shall agree** [*sumph n s sin*]. Our word “symphony” is this very root. It is no longer looked at as a concord of voices, a chorus in harmony, though that would be very appropriate in a church meeting rather than the rasping discord sometimes heard even between two brethren or sisters. **Of my Father** [*para tou patros mou*]. From the side of, “by my Father.”

18:20 **There am I** [*ekei eimi*]. This blessed promise implies that those gathered together are really disciples with the spirit of Christ as well as “in his name” [*eis to emon onoma*]. One of the Oxyrhynchus *Sayings of Our Lord* is: “Wherever there are (two) they are not without God, and wherever there is one alone I say I am with him.” Also this: “Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me, cleave the wood and there am I.” See Mal 3:16.

18:21 **Until seven times?** [*he s heptakis?*] Peter thought that he was generous as the Jewish rule was three times (Am 1:6). His question goes back to verse 15. “Against me” is genuine here. “The man who asks such a question does not really know what forgiveness means” (Plummer).

18:22 **Until seventy times seven** [*he s hebdom kontakis hepta*]. It is not clear whether this idiom means seventy-seven or as the Revised Version has it (490 times). If [*heptakis*] were written it would clearly be 490 times. The same ambiguity is seen in Ge 4:24, the LXX text by omitting [*kai*]. In the Test. of the Twelve Patriarchs, Benj. vii. 4, it is used in the sense of seventy times seven. But it really makes little difference because Jesus clearly means unlimited forgiveness in either case. “The unlimited revenge of primitive man has given place to the unlimited forgiveness of Christians” (McNeile).

18:23 **Make a reckoning** [*sun rai logon*]. Seen also in 25:19. Perhaps a Latinism, *rationes conferre*. First aorist active infinitive of [*sunair*], to cast up accounts, to settle, to compare accounts with. Not in ancient Greek writers, but in two papyri of the second century A.D. in the very sense here and the substantive appears in an ostrakon from Nubia of the early third century (Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 117).

18:24 **Ten thousand talents** [*muri n talant n*]. A talent was 6,000 denarii or about a thousand dollars or 240 pounds. Ten thousand times this is about ten or twelve million dollars, an enormous sum for that period. We live today in the age of national debts of billions of dollars or even of pounds sterling. The imperial taxes of Judea, Idumea, and Samaria for one year were only 600 talents while Galilee and Perea paid 200 (Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 4). But oriental kings were free in the use of money and in making debts like the native kings of India today.

18:25 **Had not wherewith to pay** [*m echontos autou apodounai*]. There is no “wherewith” in the Greek. This idiom is seen in Lu 7:42; 14:14; Heb 6:13. Genitive absolute though [*auton*] in the same clause as often in the N.T. **To be sold** [*prath nai*]. First aorist passive infinitive of [*piprask*]. This was according to the law (Ex 22:3; Le 25:39,47). Wife and children were treated as property in those primitive times.

18:27 **The debt** [*to danion*]. The loan. Common in the papyri for a loan. The interest had increased the debt enormously. “This heavy oriental usury is of the scenery of the parable” (McNeile).

18:28 **A hundred pence** [*hekaton d naria*]. A denarius was worth about eight and a half pence. The hundred denarii here were equal to some “fifty shillings” (Bruce), “about 4 pounds” (McNeile), “twenty pounds” (Moffatt), “twenty dollars” (Goodspeed), “100 shillings” (Weymouth) . These are various efforts to represent in modern language the small amount of this debt compared with the big one. **Took him by the throat** [*epnigen*]. “Held him by the throat” (Allen). It is imperfect, probably inchoative, “began to choke or throttle him.” The Roman law allowed this indignity. Vincent quotes Livy (iv. 53) who tells how the necks were twisted (*collum torsisset*) and how Cicero (*Pro Cluentio*, xxi.) says: “Lead him to the judgment seat with twisted neck (*collo obtorto*).” **What thou owest** [*ei ti ophheileis*]. Literally, “if thou owest anything,” however little. He did not even know how much it was, only that he owed him something. “The ‘if’ is simply the expression of a pitiless logic” (Meyer).

18:30 **And he would not** [*ho de ouk thelen*]. Imperfect tense of persistent refusal. **Till he should pay** [*he s apod i*]. This futuristic aorist subjunctive is the rule with [*he s*] for a future goal. He was to stay in prison till he should pay. “He acts on the instinct of a base nature, and also doubtless in accordance with long habits of harsh tyrannical behaviour towards men in his power” (Bruce). On imprisonment for debt among the Greeks and Romans see Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 270,330.

18:31 **Told** [*diesaph san*]. Made wholly clear to their own lord. That is the usual result in the long run. There is a limit to what people will put up with.

18:33 **Shouldst thou not?** [*ouk edei se?*] “Was it not necessary?” The king fits the cap on this wicked slave that he put on the poor debtor.

18:34 **The tormentors** [*tois basanistais*]. Not to prison simply, but to terrible punishment. The papyri give various instances of the verb [*basaniz*], to torture, used of slaves and others. “Livy (ii. 23) pictures an old centurion complaining that he was taken by his creditor, not into servitude, but to a workhouse and torture, and showing his back scarred with fresh wounds” (Vincent). **Till he should pay all** [*he s [hou] apod i pan*]. Just as in verse 30, his very words. But this is not purgatorial, but punitive, for he could never pay back that vast debt.

18:35 **From your hearts** [*apo t n kardi n h-m n*]. No sham or lip pardon, and as often as needed. This is Christ’s full reply to Peter’s question in 18:21. This parable of the unmerciful servant is surely needed today.

Chapter 19

19:1 **He departed** [*met ren*]. Literally, to lift up, change something to another place. Transitive in the LXX and in a Cilician rock inscription. Intransitive in 13:53 and here, the only N.T. instances. Absence of [*hoti*] or [*kai*] after [*kai egeneto*], one of the clear Hebraisms in the N.T. (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 1042f.). This verse is a sort of formula in Matthew at the close of important groups of [*logia*] as in 7:28; 11:1; 13:53. **The borders of Judea beyond Jordan** [*eis ta horia t s Ioudaias peran tou Iordanou*]. This is a curious expression. It apparently means that Jesus left Galilee to go to Judea by way of Perea as the Galileans often did to avoid Samaria. Luke (Lu 17:11) expressly says that he passed through Samaria and Galilee when he left Ephraim in Northern Judea (Joh 11:54). He was not afraid to pass through the edge of Galilee and down the Jordan Valley in Perea on this last journey to Jerusalem. McNeile is needlessly opposed to the trans-Jordanic or Peraan aspect of this phase of Christ's work.

19:3 **Pharisees tempting him** [*Pharisaioi peirazontes auton*]. They "could not ask a question of Jesus without sinister motives" (Bruce). See 4:1 for the word [*peiraz*]. **For every cause** [*kata pasan aitian*]. This clause is an allusion to the dispute between the two theological schools over the meaning of De 24:1. The school of Shammai took the strict and unpopular view of divorce for unchastity alone while the school of Hillel took the liberal and popular view of easy divorce for any passing whim if the husband saw a prettier woman (modern enough surely) or burnt his biscuits for breakfast. It was a pretty dilemma and meant to do Jesus harm with the people. There is no real trouble about the use of [*kata*] here in the sense of [*propter*] or because of (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 509).

19:5 **Shall cleave** [*koll th setai*]. First future passive, "shall be glued to," the verb means. **The twain shall become one flesh** [*esontai hoi duo eis sarka mian*]. This use of [*eis*] after [*eimi*] is an imitation of the Hebrew, though a few examples occur in the older Greek and in the papyri. The frequency of it is due to the Hebrew and here the LXX is a direct translation of the Hebrew idiom.

19:6 **What therefore God hath joined together** [*ho oun ho theos sunezeuxen*]. Note "what," not "whom." The marriage relation God has made. "The creation of sex, and the high doctrine as to the cohesion it produces between man and woman, laid down in Gen., interdict separation" (Bruce). The word for "joined together" means "yoked together," a common verb for marriage in ancient Greek. It is the timeless aorist indicative [*sunezeuxen*], true always. **Bill** [*biblion*]. A little [*biblos*] (see on 1:1), a scroll or document (papyrus or parchment). This was some protection to the divorced wife and a restriction on laxity.

19:8 **For your hardness of heart** [*pros t n skl rokardian h-m n*]. The word is apparently one of the few Biblical words (LXX and the N.T.). It is a heart dried up [*skl ros*], hard and tough. **But from the beginning it hath not been so** [*ap' arch s de ouk gegonen hout s*]. The present perfect

active of [*ginomai*] to emphasize the permanence of the divine ideal. “The original ordinance has never been abrogated nor superseded, but continues in force” (Vincent). “How small the Pharisaic disputants must have felt in presence of such holy teaching, which soars above the partisan view of controversialists into the serene region of ideal, universal, eternal truth” (Bruce).

19:9 **Except for fornication** [*parektos logou porneias*]. This is the marginal reading in Westcott and Hort which also adds “maketh her an adulteress” [*poiei aut n moicheuth nai*] and also these words: “and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery” [*kai ho apolelumen n gam sas moichatai*]. There seems to be a certain amount of assimilation in various manuscripts between this verse and the words in 5:32. But, whatever reading is accepted here, even the short one in Westcott and Hort [*m epi pornei i*, not for fornication), it is plain that Matthew represents Jesus in both places as allowing divorce for fornication as a general term [*porneia*] which is technically adultery [*moicheia*] from [*moicha or moicheu*]. Here, as in 5:31f., a group of scholars deny the genuineness of the exception given by Matthew alone. McNeile holds that “the addition of the saving clause is, in fact, opposed to the spirit of the whole context, and must have been made at a time when the practice of divorce for adultery had already grown up.” That in my opinion is gratuitous criticism which is unwilling to accept Matthew’s report because it disagrees with one’s views on the subject of divorce. He adds: “It cannot be supposed that Matthew wished to represent Jesus as siding with the school of Shammai.” Why not, if Shammai on this point agreed with Jesus? Those who deny Matthew’s report are those who are opposed to remarriage at all. Jesus by implication, as in 5:31, does allow remarriage of the innocent party, but not of the guilty one. Certainly Jesus has lifted the whole subject of marriage and divorce to a new level, far beyond the petty contentions of the schools of Hillel and Shammai.

19:10 **The disciples say unto him** [*legousin aut i hoi math tai*]. “Christ’s doctrine on marriage not only separated Him [*toto caelo*] from Pharisaic opinions of all shades, but was too high even for the Twelve” (Bruce). **The case** [*h aitia*]. The word may refer to the use in verse 3 “for every cause.” It may have a vague idea here = [*res*], condition. But the point clearly is that “it is not expedient to marry” [*ou sumpherei gam sai*] if such a strict view is held. If the bond is so tight a man had best not commit matrimony. It is a bit unusual to have [*anthr pos*] and [*gun*] contrasted rather than [*an r*] and [*gun*].

19:11 **But they to whom it is given** [*all’ hois dedotai*]. A neat Greek idiom, dative case of relation and perfect passive indicative. The same idea is repeated at the close of verse 12. It is a voluntary renunciation of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. “Jesus recognizes the severity of the demand as going beyond the capacity of all but a select number.” It was a direct appeal to the spiritual intelligence of the disciples not to misconceive his meaning as certainly the monastic orders have done.

19:13 **Rebuked them** [*epetim sen autois*]. No doubt people did often crowd around Jesus for a touch of his hand and his blessing. The disciples probably felt that they were doing Jesus a kindness.

How little they understood children and Jesus. It is a tragedy to make children feel that they are in the way at home and at church. These men were the twelve apostles and yet had no vision of Christ's love for little children. The new child world of today is due directly to Jesus.

19:14 **Suffer** [*aphete*]. "Leave them alone." Second aorist active imperative. **Forbid them not** [*m k luete*]. "Stop hindering them." The idiom of [*m*] with the present imperative means just that. **Of such** [*t n toiout n*]. The childlike as in 18:3f.

19:16 **What good thing** [*ti agathon*]. Mark (Mr 10:17) has the adjective "good" with "Teacher." **May have** [*sch*]. Ingressive aorist subjunctive, "may get," "may acquire."

19:17 **Concerning that which is good** [*peri tou agathou*]. He had asked Jesus in verse 16 "what good thing" he should do. He evidently had a light idea of the meaning of [*agathos*]. "This was only a teacher's way of leading on a pupil" (Bruce). So Jesus explains that "One there is who is good," one alone who is really good in the absolute sense.

19:20 **What lack I yet?** [*ti eti huster ?*] Here is a psychological paradox. He claims to have kept all these commandments and yet he was not satisfied. He had an uneasy conscience and Jesus called him to something that he did not have. He thought of goodness as quantitative (a series of acts) and not qualitative (of the nature of God). Did his question reveal proud complacency or pathetic despair? A bit of both most likely.

19:21 **If thou wouldst be perfect** [*ei theleis teleios einai*]. Condition of the first class, determined as fulfilled. Jesus assumes that the young man really desires to be perfect (a big adjective that, perfect as God is the goal, 5:48). **That thou hast** [*sou ta huparchonta*]. "Thy belongings." The Greek neuter plural participle used like our English word "belongings." It was a huge demand, for he was rich.

19:22 **Went away sorrowful** [*ap lthen lupoumenos*]. "Went away grieved." He felt that Jesus had asked too much of him. He worshipped money more than God when put to the test. Does Jesus demand this same test of every one? Not unless he is in the grip of money. Different persons are in the power of different sins. One sin is enough to keep one away from Christ.

19:23 **It is hard** [*duskol s*]. With difficulty. Adverb from [*duskolos*], hard to find food, fastidious, faultfinding, then difficult.

19:24 **It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye** [*eukop teron estin kam lon dia tr matos rhapsidos eisethein*]. Jesus, of course, means by this comparison, whether an eastern proverb or not, to express the impossible. The efforts to explain it away are jejune like a ship's cable, [*kamilon*] or [*rhapsis*] as a narrow gorge or gate of entrance for camels which recognized stooping, etc. All these are hopeless, for Jesus pointedly calls the thing "impossible" (verse 26). The Jews in the Babylonian Talmud did have a proverb that a man even in his dreams did not see an elephant pass

through the eye of a needle (Vincent). The Koran speaks of the wicked finding the gates of heaven shut “till a camel shall pass through the eye of a needle.” But the Koran may have got this figure from the New Testament. The word for an ordinary needle is [*rhapsis*], but, Luke (Lu 18:25) employs [*belon*], the medical term for the surgical needle not elsewhere in the N.T.

19:25 **Were astonished** [*exepi ssonto*]. Imperfect descriptive of their blank amazement. They were literally “struck out.”

19:26 **Looking on them** [*emblemsas*]. Jesus saw their amazement.

19:27 **What then shall we have?** [*ti ara estai h min?*] A pathetic question of hopeless lack of comprehension.

19:28 **In the regeneration** [*en t i palingenesi i*]. The new birth of the world is to be fulfilled when Jesus sits on his throne of glory. This word was used by the Stoics and the Pythagoreans. It is common also in the mystery religions (Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, pp. 95ff.). It is in the papyri also. We must put no fantastic ideas into the mouth of Jesus. But he did look for the final consummation of his kingdom. What is meant by the disciples also sitting on twelve thrones is not clear.

19:29 **A hundredfold** [*hekatoplasiona*]. But Westcott and Hort read [*pollaplasiona*], manifold. Eternal life is the real reward.

19:30 **The last first and the first last** [*hoi eschatoi pr toi kai hoi pr toi eschatoi*]. This paradoxical enigma is probably in the nature of a rebuke to Peter and refers to ranks in the kingdom. There are many other possible applications. The following parable illustrates it.

Chapter 20

20:1 **For** [*gar*]. The parable of the house illustrates the aphorism in 19:30. **A man that is a householder** [*anthr p i oikodespot i*]. Just like [*anthr p i basilei*] (18:23). Not necessary to translate [*anthr p i*], just “a householder.”

Early in the morning [*hama pr i*]. A classic idiom. [*Hama*] as an “improper” preposition is common in the papyri. [*Pr i*] is just an adverb in the locative. At the same time with early dawn, break of day, country fashion for starting to work. **To hire** [*misth sasthai*]. The middle voice aorist tense, to hire for oneself.

20:2 **For a penny a day** [*ek d nariou t n h meran*]. See on 18:28. “Penny” is not adequate, “shilling” Moffatt has it. The [*ek*] with the ablative represents the agreement [*sunph n sas*] with the workmen [*ergat n*]. “The day” the Greek has it, an accusative of extent of time.

20:3 **Standing in the marketplace idle** [*hest tas agor i argous*]. The market place was the place where men and masters met for bargaining. At Hamadan in Persia, Morier in *Second Journey through Persia*, as cited by Trench in his *Parables*, says: “We observed every morning, before the sun rose, that a numerous band of peasants were collected, with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired for the day to work in the surrounding fields.”

20:4 **Whatever is right** [*ho ean i dikaion*]. “Is fair” (Allen), not anything he pleased, but a just proportionate wage. Indefinite relative with subjunctive [*ean=an*].

20:6 **All the day idle** [*hol n t n h meran argoi*]. Extent of time (accusative) again. [*Argoi*] is [*a*] privative and [*ergon*], work, no work. The problem of the unemployed.

20:10 **Every man a penny** [*ana d narion kai autoi*]. Literally, “themselves also a denarius apiece” (distributive use of [*ana*]). Bruce asks if this householder was a humorist when he began to pay off the last first and paid each one a denarius according to agreement. False hopes had been raised in those who came first who got only what they had agreed to receive.

20:11 **They murmured** [*egogguzon*]. Onomatopoeic word, the meaning suiting the sound. Our words murmur and grumble are similar. Probably here inchoative imperfect, began to grumble. It occurs in old Ionic and in the papyri.

20:12 **Equal unto us** [*isous autous h min*]. Associative instrumental case [*h min*] after [*isous*]. It was a regular protest against the supposed injustice of the householder. **The burden of the day and the scorching wind** [*to baros t s h meras kai ton kaus na*]. These last “did” work for one hour. Apparently they worked as hard as any while at it. A whole day’s work on the part of these sweat-stained men who had stood also the sirocco, the hot, dry, dust-laden east wind that blasted

the grain in Pharaoh's dream (Ge 41:6), that withered Jonah's gourd (Jon 4:8), that blighted the vine in Ezekiel's parable (Eze 17:10). They seemed to have a good case.

20:13 **To one of them** [*heni aut n*]. Evidently the spokesman of the group. "Friend" [*hetaire*]. Comrade. So a kindly reply to this man in place of an address to the whole gang. Ge 31:40; Job 27:21; Ho 13:15. The word survives in modern Greek.

20:14 **Take up** [*aron*]. First aorist active imperative of [*air*]. Pick up, as if he had saucily refused to take it from the table or had contemptuously thrown the denarius on the ground. If the first had been paid first and sent away, there would probably have been no murmuring, but "the murmuring is needed to bring out the lesson" (Plummer). The [*d narius*] was the common wage of a day labourer at that time. **What I will** [*ho thel*]. This is the point of the parable, the *will* of the householder. **With mine own** [*en tois emois*]. In the sphere of my own affairs. There is in the *Koin* an extension of the instrumental use of [*en*].

20:15 **Is thine eye evil?** [*ho ophthalmos sou pon ros estin?*] See on 6:22-24 about the evil eye and the good eye. The complainer had a grudging eye while the householder has a liberal or generous eye. See Ro 5:7 for a distinction between [*dikaios*] and [*agathos*].

20:16 **The last first and the first last** [*hoi esch toi pr toi kai hoi pr toi eschatoi*]. The adjectives change places as compared with 19:30. The point is the same, though this order suits the parable better. After all one's work does not rest wholly on the amount of time spent on it. "Even so hath Rabbi Bun bar Chija in twenty-eight years wrought more than many studious scholars in a hundred years" (Jer. *Berak.* ii. 5c).

20:17 **Apart** [*kat' idian*]. This is the prediction in Matthew of the cross (16:21; 17:22; 20:17). "Aside by themselves" (Moffatt). The verb is [*parelaben*]. Jesus is having his inward struggle (Mr 10:32) and makes one more effort to get the Twelve to understand him.

20:19 **And to crucify** [*kai staur sai*]. The very word now. The details fall on deaf ears, even the point of the resurrection on the third day.

20:20 **Then** [*tote*]. Surely an inopportune time for such a request just after the pointed prediction of Christ's crucifixion. Perhaps their minds had been preoccupied with the words of Jesus (19:28) about their sitting on twelve thrones taking them in a literal sense. The mother of James and John, probably Salome, possibly a sister of the Master's mother (Joh 19:25), apparently prompted her two sons because of the family relationship and now speaks for them. **Asking a certain thing** [*aitousa ti*]. "Asking something," "plotting perhaps when their Master was predicting" (Bruce). The "something" put forward as a small matter was simply the choice of the two chief thrones promised by Jesus (19:28).

20:22 **Ye know not what ye ask** [*ouk oidate ti aiteisthe*]. How often that is true. [*Aiteisthe*] is indirect middle voice, “ask for yourselves,” “a selfish request.” **We are able** [*dunametha*]. Amazing proof of their ignorance and self-confidence. Ambition had blinded their eyes. They had not caught the martyr spirit.

20:23 **Ye shall drink** [*piesthe*]. Future middle from [*pin*]. Christ’s cup was martyrdom. James was the first of the Twelve to meet the martyr’s death (Ac 12:2) and John the last if reports are true about him. How little they knew what they were saying.

20:24 **Moved with indignation** [*ganakt san*]. A strong word for angry resentment. In the papyri. The ten felt that James and John had taken advantage of their relation to Jesus.

20:25 **Called them unto him** [*proskalesamenos autous*]. Indirect middle again, calling to him.

20:26 **Would become great** [*hos an thel i megas genesthai*]. Jesus does not condemn the desire to become great. It is a laudable ambition. There are “great ones” [*megaloi*] among Christians as among pagans, but they do not “lord it over” one another [*katakuriuousin*], a LXX word and very expressive, or “play the tyrant” [*katexousiazousin*], another suggestive word. **Your minister** [*h-m n diakonos*]. This word may come from [*dia*] and [*konis*] (dust), to raise a dust by one’s hurry, and so to minister. It is a general word for servant and is used in a variety of ways including the technical sense of our “deacon” in Php. 1:1. But it more frequently is applied to ministers of the Gospel (1Co 3:5). The way to be “first” [*pr tos*], says Jesus, is to be your “servant” [*doulos*], “bond-servant” (verse 27). This is a complete reversal of popular opinion then and now.

20:28 **A ransom for many** [*lutron anti poll n*]. The Son of man is the outstanding illustration of this principle of self-abnegation in direct contrast to the self-seeking of James and John. The word translated “ransom” is the one commonly employed in the papyri as the price paid for a slave who is then set free by the one who bought him, the purchase money for manumitting slaves. See examples in Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary* and Deissmann’s *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 328f. There is the notion of exchange also in the use of [*anti*]. Jesus gave his own life as the price of freedom for the slaves of sin. There are those who refuse to admit that Jesus held this notion of a substitutionary death because the word in the N.T. occurs only here and the corresponding passage in Mr 10:45. But that is an easy way to get rid of passages that contradict one’s theological opinions. Jesus here rises to the full consciousness of the significance of his death for men.

20:29 **From Jericho** [*apo Iereich*]. So Mr 10:46. But Luke (Lu 18:35) places the incident as they were drawing near to Jericho [*eis Iereich*]. It is probable that Mark and Matthew refer to the old Jericho, the ruins of which have been discovered, while Luke alludes to the new Roman Jericho. The two blind men were apparently between the two towns. Mark (Mr 10:46) and Luke (Lu 18:35) mention only one blind man, Bartimaeus (Mark). In Kentucky there are two towns about a half mile apart both called Pleasureville (one Old Pleasureville, the other New Pleasureville).

20:30 **That Jesus was passing by** [*hoti I sous paragei*]. These men “were sitting by the wayside” [*kath menoï para ten hodon*] at their regular stand. They heard the crowd yelling that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by [*paragei*], present indicative of direct discourse retained in the indirect). It was their one opportunity, now or never. They had heard of what he had done for other blind men. They hail him as “the son of David” (the Messiah). It is just one of many such incidents when Jesus stood still and opened their eyes, so many that even the multitude was impatient with the cries of these poor men that their eyes be opened [*anoig sin*], second aorist passive subjunctive).

20:34 **Touched their eyes** [*h psato t n ommat n*]. A synonym for [*ophthalm n*] in Mr 8:23 and here alone in the N.T. In the LXX and a common poetic word (Euripides) and occurs in the papyri. In modern Greek [*matia mou*] (abbreviation) means “light of my eye,” “my darling.” The verb [*haptomai*] is very common in the Synoptic Gospels. The touch of Christ’s hand would sooth the eyes as they were healed.

Chapter 21

21:1 **Unto Bethphage** [*eis Bethphag*]. An indeclinable Aramaic name here only in O.T. or N.T. (Mr 11:1; Lu 19:29). It means “house of unripe young figs.” It apparently lay on the eastern slope of Olivet or at the foot of the mountain, a little further from Jerusalem than Bethany. Both Mark and Luke speak of Christ’s coming “unto Bethphage and Bethany” as if Bethphage was reached first. It is apparently larger than Bethany. **Unto the Mount of Olives** [*eis to oros t n Elai n*]. Matthew has thus three instances of [*eis*] with Jerusalem, Mount of Olives. Mark and Luke use [*pros*] with Mount of Olives, the Mount of Olive trees [*elai n*] from [*elaia*], olive tree), the mountain covered with olive trees.

21:2 **Into the village that is over against you** [*eis t n k m n t n katenanti h–m n*]. Another use of [*eis*]. If it means “into” as translated, it could be Bethany right across the valley and this is probably the idea. **And a colt with her** [*kai p lon met’ aut s*]. The young of any animal. Here to come with the mother and the more readily so.

21:3 **The Lord** [*ho kurios*]. It is not clear how the word would be understood here by those who heard the message though it is plain that Jesus applies it to himself. The word is from [*kuros*], power or authority. In the LXX it is common in a variety of uses which appear in the N.T. as master of the slave (Mt 10:24), of the harvest (9:38), of the vineyard (20:8), of the emperor (Ac 13:27), of God (Mt 11:20; 11:25), and often of Jesus as the Messiah (Ac 10:36). Note Mt 8:25. This is the only time in Matthew where the words [*ho kurios*] are applied to Jesus except the doubtful passage in 28:6. A similar usage is shown by Moulton and Milligan’s *Vocabulary* and Deissmann’s *Light from the Ancient East*. Particularly in Egypt it was applied to “the Lord Serapis” and Ptolemy and Cleopatra are called “the lords, the most great gods” [*hoi kurioi theoi megistoi*]. Even Herod the Great and Herod Agrippa I are addressed as “Lord King.” In the west the Roman emperors are not so termed till the time of Domitian. But the Christians boldly claimed the word for Christ as Jesus is here represented as using it with reference to himself. It seems as if already the disciples were calling Jesus “Lord” and that he accepted the appellative and used it as here.

21:4 **By the prophet** [*dia tou proph tou*]. The first line is from Isa 62:11, the rest from Zec 9:9. John (Joh 12:14f.) makes it clear that Jesus did not quote the passage himself. In Matthew it is not so plain, but probably it is his own comment about the incident. It is not Christ’s intention to fulfil the prophecy, simply that his conduct did fulfil it.

21:5 **The daughter of Zion** [*t i thugatri Si n*]. Jerusalem as in Isa 22:4 (daughter of my people). So Babylon (Isa 47:1), daughter of Tyre for Tyre (Ps 45:12). **Riding** [*epibeb k s*]. Perfect active participle of [*epibain*], “having gone upon.” **And upon a colt the foal of an ass** [*kai epi p lon huion hupozugiou*]. These words give trouble if [*kai*] is here taken to mean “and.” Fritzsche argues that Jesus rode alternately upon each animal, a possible, but needless interpretation. In the Hebrew

it means by common Hebrew parallelism “upon an ass, even upon a colt.” That is obviously the meaning here in Matthew. The use of [*hupozugiou*] (a beast of burden, under a yoke) for ass is common in the LXX and in the papyri (Deissmann, *Bible Studies* p. 161).

21:7 **And he sat thereon** [*kai epekathisen epan aut n*], Mark (Mr 11:7) and Luke (Lu 19:35) show that Jesus rode the colt. Matthew does not contradict that, referring to the garments [*ta himatia*] put on the colt by “them” [*aut n*]. not to the two asses. The construction is somewhat loose, but intelligible. The garments thrown on the animals were the outer garments [*himatia*], Jesus “took his seat” [*epekathisen*], ingressive aorist active) upon the garments.

21:8 **The most part of the multitude** [*ho pleistos ochlos*]. See 11:20 for this same idiom, article with superlative, a true superlative (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 670). **In the way** [*en t i hod i*]. This the most of the crowd did. The disciples put their garments on the asses. Note change of tenses (constative aorist [*estr san*], descriptive imperfects [*ekopton kai estr nnuon*] showing the growing enthusiasm of the crowd). When the colt had passed over their garments, they would pick the garments up and spread them again before.

21:9 **That went before him and that followed** [*hoi proagontes auton kai hoi akolouthountes*]. Note the two groups with two articles and the present tense (linear action) and the imperfect [*ekrazon*] “were crying” as they went. **Hosanna to the Son of David** [*Hosanna t i hui i Daueid*]. They were now proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah and he let them do it. “Hosanna” means “Save, we pray thee.” They repeat words from the *Hallel* (Ps 148:1) and one recalls the song of the angelic host when Jesus was born (Lu 2:14). “Hosanna in the highest” (heaven) as well as here on earth.

21:10 **Was stirred** [*eseisth*]. Shaken as by an earthquake. “Even Jerusalem frozen with religious formalism and socially undemonstrative, was stirred with popular enthusiasm as by a mighty wind or by an earthquake” (Bruce).

21:12 **Cast out** [*exebalen*]. Drove out, assumed authority over “the temple of God” (probably correct text with [*tou theou*], though only example of the phrase). John (Joh 2:14) has a similar incident at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. It is not impossible that he should repeat it at the close after three years with the same abuses in existence again. It is amazing how short a time the work of reformers lasts. The traffic went on in the court of the Gentiles and to a certain extent was necessary. Here the tables of **the money-changers** [*t n kollubist n*], from [*kollubos*], a small coin) were overturned. See on 17:24 for the need of the change for the temple tax. The doves were the poor man’s offering.

21:13 **A den of robbers** [*sp laion l ist n*]. By charging exorbitant prices.

21:15 **The children** [*tous paidas*]. Masculine and probably boys who had caught the enthusiasm of the crowd.

21:16 **Hearest thou** [*akoueis*]. In a rage at the desecration of the temple by the shouts of the boys they try to shame Jesus, as responsible for it.

Thou hast perfected [*kat rtis*]. The quotation is from Ps 8:3 (LXX text). See 4:21 where the same verb is used for mending nets. Here it is the timeless aorist middle indicative with the perfective use of [*kata-*]. It was a stinging rebuke.

21:17 **To Bethany** [*eis B thanian*]. House of depression or misery, the Hebrew means. But the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus there was a house of solace and comfort to Jesus during this week of destiny. He **lodged there** [*ulisth ekei*] whether at the Bethany home or out in the open air. It was a time of crisis for all.

21:18 **He hungered** [*epeinasen*]. Ingressive aorist indicative, became hungry, felt hungry (Moffatt). Possibly Jesus spent the night out of doors and so had no breakfast.

21:19 **A fig tree** [*suk n mian*]. “A single fig tree” (Margin of Rev. Version). But [*heis*] was often used = [*tis*] or like our indefinite article. See Mt 8:10; 26:69. The Greek has strictly no indefinite article as the Latin has no definite article. **Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever** [*ou m keti sou karpos gen tai eis ton ai na*]. Strictly speaking this is a prediction, not a prohibition or wish as in Mr 11:14 (optative [*phagoi*]. “On you no fruit shall ever grow again” (Weymouth). The double negative [*ou m*] with the aorist subjunctive (or future indicative) is the strongest kind of negative prediction. It sometimes amounts to a prohibition like [*ou*] and the future indicative (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 926f.). The early figs start in spring before the leaves and develop after the leaves. The main fig crop was early autumn (Mr 11:14). There should have been figs on the tree with the crop of leaves. It was a vivid object lesson. Matthew does not distinguish between the two mornings as Mark does (Mr 11:13,20), but says “immediately” [*parachr ma*] twice (21:19, 20). This word is really [*para to chr ma*] like our “on the spot” (Thayer). It occurs in the papyri in monetary transactions for immediate cash payment.

21:21 **Doubt not** [*m diakrith te*]. First aorist passive subjunctive, second-class condition. To be divided in mind, to waver, to doubt, the opposite of “faith” [*pistin*], trust, confidence. **What is done to the fig tree** [*to t s suk s*]. The Greek means “the matter of the fig tree,” as if a slight matter in comparison with **this mountain** [*t i orei tout i*]. Removing a mountain is a bigger task than blighting a fig tree. “The cursing of the fig-tree has always been regarded as of symbolic import, the tree being in Christ’s mind an emblem of the Jewish people, with a great show of religion and no fruit of real godliness. This hypothesis is very credible” (Bruce). Plummer follows Zahn in referring it to the Holy City. Certainly “this mountain” is a parable and one already reported in Mt 17:20 (cf. sycamine tree in Lk 17:6). Cf. Zec 17:4.

21:22 **Believing** [*pisteuontes*]. This is the point of the parable of the mountain, “faith in the efficacy of prayer” (Plummer).

21:24 **One question** [*logon hena*]. Literally “one word” or “a word.” The answer to Christ’s word will give the answer to their query. The only human ecclesiastical authority that Jesus had come from John.

21:25 **The baptism of John** [*to baptisma to I anou*]. This represents his relation to Jesus who was baptized by him. At once the ecclesiastical leaders find themselves in a dilemma created by their challenge of Christ. **They reasoned with themselves** [*dielogizonto*]. Picturesque imperfect tense describing their hopeless quandary.

21:29 **I will not** [*ou thel*]. So many old manuscripts, though the Vatican manuscript (B) has the order of the two sons reversed. Logically the “I, sir” [*eg, kurie*] suits better for the second son (verse 30) with a reference to the blunt refusal of the first. So also the manuscripts differ in verse 31 between the first [*ho pr tos*] and the last [*ho husteros*] or [*eschatos*]. But the one who actually did the will of the father is the one who **repented and went** [*metamel theis ap lthen*]. This word really means “repent,” to be sorry afterwards, and must be sharply distinguished from the word [*metanoe*] used 34 times in the N.T. as in Mt 3:2 and [*metanoia*] used 24 times as in Mt 3:8. The verb [*metamelomai*] occurs in the N.T. only five times (Mt 21:29,32; 27:3; 2Co 7:8; Heb 7:21 from Ps 109:4). Paul distinguishes sharply between mere sorrow and the act “repentance” which he calls [*metanoian*] (2Co 7:9). In the case of Judas (Mt 27:3) it was mere remorse. Here the boy got sorry for his stubborn refusal to obey his father and went and obeyed. Godly sorrow leads to repentance [*metanoian*], but mere sorrow is not repentance.

21:31 **Go before you** [*proagousin*]. “In front of you” (Weymouth). The publicans and harlots march ahead of the ecclesiastics into the kingdom of heaven. It is a powerful indictment of the complacency of the Jewish theological leaders.

21:32 **In the way of righteousness** [*en hod i dikaiosun s*]. In the path of righteousness. Compare the two ways in Mt 7:13,14 and “the way of God” (22:16).

21:33 **A hedge** [*phragmon*]. Or fence as a protection against wild beasts. **Dugged a winepress** [*ruxen l non*]. Out of the solid rock to hold the grapes and wine as they were crushed. Such wine-vats are to be seen today in Palestine. **Built a tower** [*ikodom sen purgon*]. This for the vinedressers and watchmen (2Ch 26:10). Utmost care was thus taken. Note “a booth in a vineyard” (Isa 1:8). See also Isa 24:20; Job 27:18. Let it out [*exedeto, exedoto*] the usual form). For hire, the terms not being given. The lease allowed three forms, money-rent, a proportion of the crop, or a definite amount of the produce whether it was a good or bad year. Probably the last form is that contemplated here.

21:34 **His servants** [*tous doulous autou*]. These slaves are distinguished from **the husbandmen** [*ge rgoi*], workers of the soil) or workers of the vineyard who had leased it from the householder before he went away. The conduct of the husbandmen towards the householder’s slaves portrays

the behaviour of the Jewish people and the religious leaders in particular towards the prophets and now towards Christ. The treatment of God's prophets by the Jews pointedly illustrates this parable.

21:35 **They will reverence my son** [*entrap sontai ton huion mou*]. Second future passive from [*entrep*], to turn at, but used transitively here as though active or middle. It is the picture of turning with respect when one worthy of it appears.

21:38 **Take his inheritance** [*sch men t n kl ronomian autou*]. Ingressive aorist active subjunctive (hortatory, volitive) of [*ech*]. Let us get his inheritance.

21:41 **He will miserably destroy those miserable men** [*kakous kak s apolesei autous*]. The paronomasia or assonance is very clear. A common idiom in literary Greek. "He will put the wretches to a wretched death" (Weymouth). **Which** [*hoitines*]. Who, which very ones of a different character.

21:42 **The stone which** [*lithon hon*]. Inverse attraction of the antecedent into the case of the relative. **The builders rejected** [*apedokimasan hoi oikodomountes*]. From Ps 118:22. A most telling quotation. These experts in building God's temple had rejected the corner-stone chosen by God for his own house. But God has the last word and sets aside the building experts and puts his Son as the Head of the corner. It was a withering indictment.

21:43 **Shall be taken away from you** [*arth setai aph' h-m n*]. Future passive indicative of [*air*]. It was the death-knell of the Jewish nation with their hopes of political and religious world leadership.

21:44 **Shall be broken to pieces** [*sunthlasth setai*]. Some ancient manuscripts do not have this verse. But it graphically pictures the fate of the man who rejects Christ. The verb means to shatter. We are familiar with an automobile that dashes against a stone wall, a tree, or a train and the ruin that follows. **Will scatter him as dust** [*likm sei*]. The verb was used of winnowing out the chaff and then of grinding to powder. This is the fate of him on whom this Rejected Stone falls.

21:45 **Perceived** [*egn san*]. Ingressive second aorist active of [*gin sk*]. There was no mistaking the meaning of these parables. The dullest could see the point.

21:46 **Took him** [*eichon*]. Descriptive imperfect of [*ech*], to hold. This fear of the people was all that stayed the hands of the rabbis on this occasion. Murderous rage was in their hearts towards Jesus. People do not always grasp the application of sermons to themselves.

Chapter 22

22:1 **Again in parables** [*palin en parabolais*]. Matthew has already given two on this occasion (The Two Sons, The Wicked Husbandmen). He alone gives this Parable of the Marriage Feast of the King's Son. It is somewhat similar to that of The Supper in Lu 14:16-23 given on another occasion. Hence some scholars consider this merely Matthew's version of the Lucan parable in the wrong place because of Matthew's habit of grouping the sayings of Jesus. But that is a gratuitous indictment of Matthew's report which definitely locates the parable here by [*palin*]. Some regard it as not spoken by Jesus at all, but an effort on the part of the writer to cover the sin and fate of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, and God's demand for righteousness. But here again it is like Jesus and suits the present occasion.

22:2 **A marriage feast** [*gamous*]. The plural, as here (2, 3, 4, 9), is very common in the papyri for the wedding festivities (the several acts of feasting) which lasted for days, seven in Jud 14:17. The very phrase here, [*gamous poiein*], occurs in the Doric of Thera about B.C. 200. The singular [*gamos*] is common in the papyri for the wedding contract, but Field (*Notes*, p. 16) sees no difference between the singular here in 22:8 and the plural (see also Ge 29:22; Es 9:22; Macc. 10:58).

22:3 **To call them that were bidden** [*kalesai tous kekl menous*]. "Perhaps an unconscious play on the words, lost in both A.V. and Rev., **to call the called**" (Vincent). It was a Jewish custom to invite a second time the already invited (Es 5:8; 6:14). The prophets of old had given God's invitation to the Jewish people. Now the Baptist and Jesus had given the second invitation that the feast was ready. **And they would not come** [*kai ouk thelon elthein*]. This negative imperfect characterizes the stubborn refusal of the Jewish leaders to accept Jesus as God's Son (Joh 1:11). This is "The Hebrew Tragedy" (Conder).

22:4 **My dinner** [*to ariston mou*]. It is breakfast, not dinner. In Lu 14:12 both [*ariston*] (breakfast) and [*deipnon*] (dinner) are used. This noon or midday meal, like the French breakfast at noon, was sometimes called [*deipnon mes mbrinon*] (midday dinner or luncheon). The regular dinner [*deipnon*] came in the evening. The confusion arose from applying [*ariston*] to the early morning meal and then to the noon meal (some not eating an earlier meal). In Joh 21:12,15 [*arista*] is used of the early morning meal, "Break your fast" [*arist sate*]. When [*ariston*] was applied to luncheon, like the Latin *prandium*, [*akratisma*] was the term for the early breakfast. **My fatlings** [*ta sitista*]. Verbal from [*sitiz*], to feed with wheat or other grain, to fatten. Fed-up or fatted animals.

22:5 **Made light of it** [*amel santes*]. Literally, neglecting, not caring for. They may even have ridiculed the invitation, but the verb does not say so. However, to neglect an invitation to a wedding feast is a gross discourtesy. **One to his own farm** [*hos men eis ton idion agron*] or field, **another to his merchandise** [*hos de epi t n emporian autou*] only example in the N.T., from [*emporos*], merchant, one who travels for traffic [*emporeuomai*], a drummer.

22:7 **Armies** [*strateumata*]. Bands of soldiers, not grand armies.

22:9 **The partings of the highways** [*tas diexodous t n hod n*]. Vulgate, *exitus viarum*. [*Diodoi*] are cross-streets, while [*diexodoi*] (double compound) seem to be main streets leading out of the city where also side-streets may branch off, “by-ways.”

22:10 **The wedding** [*ho gamos*]. But Westcott and Hort rightly read here [*ho numph n*], marriage dining hall. The same word in 9:15 means the bridechamber.

22:12 **Not having a wedding-garment** [*m ech n enduma gamou*]. [*M*] is in the *Koin* the usual negative with participles unless special emphasis on the negative is desired as in [*ouk endedumenon*]. There is a subtle distinction between [*m*] and [*ou*] like our subjective and objective notions. Some hold that the wedding-garment here is a portion of a lost parable separate from that of the Wedding Feast, but there is no evidence for that idea. Wunsche does report a parable by a rabbi of a king who set no time for his feast and the guests arrived, some properly dressed waiting at the door; others in their working clothes did not wait, but went off to work and, when the summons suddenly came, they had no time to dress properly and were made to stand and watch while the others partook of the feast.

22:13 **Was speechless** [*epsim th*]. Was muzzled, dumb from confusion and embarrassment. It is used of the ox (1Ti 5:18). **The outer darkness** [*to skotos to ex teron*]. See Mt 8:12. All the blacker from the standpoint of the brilliantly lighted banquet hall. **There shall be** [*ekei estai*]. Out there in the outer darkness.

22:14 **For many are called, but few chosen** [*polloi gar eisin kl toi oligoi de eklektoi*]. This crisp saying of Christ occurs in various connections. He evidently repeated many of his sayings many times as every teacher does. There is a distinction between the called [*kl toi*] and the chosen [*eklektoi*] called out from the called.

22:15 **Went** [*poreuthentes*]. So-called deponent passive and redundant use of the verb as in 9:13: “Go and learn.” **Took counsel** [*sumboulion elabon*]. Like the Latin *consilium capere* as in 12:14. **Ensnare in his talk** [*pagideus sin en log i*]. From [*pagis*], a snare or trap. Here only in the N.T. In the LXX (1Ki 28:9; Ec 9:12; Test. of Twelve Patriarchs, Joseph 7:1). Vivid picture of the effort to trip Jesus in his speech like a bird or wild beast.

22:16 **Their disciples** [*tous math tas aut n*]. Students, pupils, of the Pharisees as in Mr 2:18. There were two Pharisaic theological seminaries in Jerusalem (Hillel, Shammai). **The Herodians** [*t n Her idian n*]. Not members of Herod’s family or Herod’s soldiers, but partisans or followers of Herod. The form in [*-ianos*] is a Latin termination like that in [*Christianos*] (Ac 11:26). Mentioned also in Mr 3:6 combining with the Pharisees against Jesus. **The person of men** [*pros pon anthr p n*]. Literally, face of men. Paying regard to appearance is the sin of partiality condemned by James

(Jas 2:1,9) when [*pros pol mpsia, pros pol mptein*] are used, in imitation of the Hebrew idiom. This suave flattery to Jesus implied “that Jesus was a reckless simpleton” (Bruce).

22:19 **Tribute money** [*to nomisma tou k nsou*]. [*K nsos*], Latin *census*, was a capitation tax or head-money, *tributum capitis*, for which silver denaria were struck, with the figure of Caesar and a superscription, e.g. “Tiberiou Kaisaros” (McNeile). [*Nomisma*] is the Latin *numisma* and occurs here only in the N.T., is common in the old Greek, from [*nomiz*] sanctioned by law or custom.

22:20 **This image and superscription** [*h eik n haut kai h epigraph*]. Probably a Roman coin because of the image (picture) on it. The earlier Herods avoided this practice because of Jewish prejudice, but the Tetrarch Philip introduced it on Jewish coins and he was followed by Herod Agrippa I. This coin was pretty certainly stamped in Rome with the image and name of Tiberius Caesar on it.

22:21 **Render** [*apodote*]. “Give back” to Caesar what is already Caesar’s.

22:24 **Shall marry** [*epigambreusei*]. The Sadducees were “aiming at amusement rather than deadly mischief” (Bruce). It was probably an old conundrum that they had used to the discomfiture of the Pharisees. This passage is quoted from De 25:5,6. The word appears here only in the N.T. and elsewhere only in the LXX. It is used of any connected by marriage as in Ge 34:9; 1Sa 18:22. But in Ge 38:8 and De 25:5 it is used specifically of one marrying his brother’s widow.

22:33 **They were astonished** [*exeplassonto*]. Descriptive imperfect passive showing the continued amazement of the crowds. They were struck out (literally).

22:34 **He had put the Sadducees to silence** [*ephim sen tous Saddoukaious*]. Muzzled the Sadducees. The Pharisees could not restrain their glee though they were joining with the Sadducees in trying to entrap Jesus. **Gathered themselves together** [*sun chth san epi to auto*]. First aorist passive, were gathered together. [*Epi to auto*] explains more fully [*sun-*]. See also Ac 2:47. “Mustered their forces” (Moffatt).

22:36 **The great commandment in the law** [*entol megal en t i nom i*]. The positive adjective is sometimes as high in rank as the superlative. See [*me gas*] in Mt 5:19 in contrast with [*elachistos*]. The superlative [*megistos*] occurs in the N.T. only in 2Pe 1:4. Possibly this scribe wishes to know which commandment stood first (Mr 12:28) with Jesus. “The scribes declared that there were 248 affirmative precepts, as many as the members of the human body; and 365 negative precepts, as many as the days in the year, the total being 613, the number of letters in the Decalogue” (Vincent). But Jesus cuts through such pettifogging hair-splitting to the heart of the problem.

22:42 **The Christ** [*tou Christou*]. The Messiah, of course, not Christ as a proper name of Jesus. Jesus here assumes that Ps 110 refers to the Messiah. By his pungent question about the Messiah

as David's son and Lord he really touches the problem of his Person (his Deity and his Humanity). Probably the Pharisees had never faced that problem before. They were unable to answer.

Chapter 23

23:2 **Sit on Moses' seat** [*epi t s M use s kathedras ekathisan*]. The gnomic or timeless aorist tense, [*ekathisan*], not the aorist “for” the perfect. The “seat of Moses” is a brief form for the chair of the professor whose function it is to interpret Moses. “The heirs of Moses’ authority by an unbroken tradition can deliver *ex cathedra* pronouncements on his teaching” (McNeile).

23:3 **For they say and do not** [*legousin kai ou poiousin*]. “As teachers they have their place, but beware of following their example” (Bruce). So Jesus said: “Do not ye after their works ” [*m poieite*]. Do not practice their practices. They are only preachers. Jesus does not here disapprove any of their teachings as he does elsewhere. The point made here is that they are only teachers (or preachers) and do not practice what they teach as God sees it.

23:4 **With their finger** [*t i daktul i aut n*]. A picturesque proverb. They are taskmasters, not burden-bearers, not sympathetic helpers.

23:5 **To be seen of men** [*pros to theath nai tois anthr pois*]. See 6:1 where this same idiom occurs. Ostentation regulates the conduct of the rabbis. **Phylacteries** [*phulakt ria*]. An adjective from [*phulakt r, phulass*] (to guard). So a fortified place, station for garrison, then a safeguard, protecting charm or amulet. The rabbis wore [*tephillin*] or prayer-fillets, small leather cases with four strips of parchment on which were written the words of Ex 13:1-10,11-16; De 6:4-9; 11:13-21. They took literally the words about “a sign unto thy hand,” “a memorial between thine eyes,” and “frontlets.” “That for the head was to consist of a box with four compartments, each containing a slip of parchment inscribed with one of the four passages. Each of these strips was to be tied up with a well-washed hair from a calf’s tail; lest, if tied with wool or thread, any fungoid growth should ever pollute them. The phylactery of the arm was to contain a single slip, with the same four passages written in four columns of seven lines each. The black leather straps by which they were fastened were wound seven times round the arm and three times round the hand. They were revered by the rabbis as highly as the scriptures, and, like them, might be rescued from the flames on a sabbath. They profanely imagined that God wore the *tephillin*” (Vincent). It is small wonder that Jesus ridiculed such minute concern for pretentious externalism and literalism. These *tephillin* “are still worn at the present day on the forehead and left arm by Jews at the daily Morning Prayer” (McNeile) . “The size of the phylacteries indexed the measure of zeal, and the wearing of large ones was apt to take the place of obedience” (Bruce). Hence they made them “broad.” The superstitious would wear them as mere charms to ward off evil. **Enlarge the borders** [*megalunousin ta kraspeda*]. In 9:20 we see that Jesus, like the Jews generally, wore a tassel or tuft, hem or border, a fringe on the outer garment according to Nu 15:38. Here again the Jewish rabbi had minute rules about the number of the fringes and the knots (see on 9:20). They made a virtue of the size of the fringes also. “Such things were useful as reminders; they were fatal when they were regarded as charms” (Plummer).

23:6 **The chief place at feasts** [*t n pr toklisian en tois deipnois*]. Literally, the first reclining place on the divan at the meal. The Persians, Greeks, Romans, Jews differed in their customs, but all cared for the post of honour at formal functions as is true of us today. Hostesses often solve the point by putting the name of each guest at the table. At the last passover meal the apostles had an ugly snarl over this very point of precedence (Lu 22:24; Joh 13:2-11), just two days after this exposure of the Pharisees in the presence of the apostles. **The chief seats in the synagogues** [*tas pr tokathedrias en tais sunag gais*]. “An insatiable hunger for prominence” (Bruce). These chief seats (Zuchermandel) were on the platform looking to the audience and with the back to the chest in which were kept the rolls of scripture. The Essenes had a different arrangement. People today pay high prices for front seats at the theatre, but at church prefer the rear seats out of a curious mock-humility. In the time of Jesus the hypocrites boldly sat up in front. Now, if they come to church at all, they take the rear seats.

23:7 **Salutations** [*aspasmous*]. The ordinary courtiers were coveted because in public. They had an itch for notice. There are occasionally today ministers who resent it if they are not called upon to take part in the services at church. They feel that their ministerial dignity has not been recognized.

23:8 **But be not ye called Rabbi** [*humeis de m kl th te Rabbei*]. An apparent aside to the disciples. Note the emphatic position of [*humeis*]. Some even regard verses 8-10 as a later addition and not part of this address to the Pharisees, but the apostles were present. Euthymius Zigabenus says: “Do not seek to be called (ingressive aorist subjunctive), if others call you this it will not be your fault.” This is not far from the Master’s meaning. Rabbi means “my great one,” “my Master,” apparently a comparatively new title in Christ’s time.

23:9 **Call no man your father** [*patera m kales te h-m n*]. Jesus meant the full sense of this noble word for our heavenly Father. “Abba was not commonly a mode of address to a living person, but a title of honour for Rabbis and great men of the past” (McNeile). In Gethsemane Jesus said: “Abba, Father” (Mr 14:36). Certainly the ascription of “Father” to pope and priest seems out of harmony with what Jesus here says. He should not be understood to be condemning the title to one’s real earthly father. Jesus often leaves the exceptions to be supplied.

23:10 **Masters** [*kath g tai*]. This word occurs here only in the N.T. It is found in the papyri for teacher (Latin, *doctor*). It is the modern Greek word for professor. “While [*didaskalos*] represents [*Rab*], [*kath g tes*] stands for the more honourable [*Rabban, -b n*]” (McNeile). Dalman (*Words of Jesus*, p. 340) suggests that the same Aramaic word may be translated by either [*didaskalos*] or [*kath g tes*]. **The Christ** [*ho Christos*]. The use of these words here by Jesus like “Jesus Christ” in his Prayer (Joh 17:3) is held by some to show that they were added by the evangelist to what Jesus actually said, since the Master would not have so described himself. But he commended Peter for calling him “the Christ the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16f.). We must not empty the consciousness of Jesus too much.

23:12 **Exalt himself** [*hups sei heauton*]. Somewhat like 18:4; 20:26. Given by Luke in other contexts (14:11; 18:14). Characteristic of Christ.

23:13 **Hypocrites** [*hupokritai*]. This terrible word of Jesus appears first from him in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:2,5,16; 7:5), then in 15:7 and 22:18. Here it appears “with terrific iteration” (Bruce) save in the third of the seven woes (23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29). The verb in the active [*hupokrin*] meant to separate slowly or slightly subject to gradual inquiry. Then the middle was to make answer, to take up a part on the stage, to act a part. It was an easy step to mean to feign, to pretend, to wear a masque, to act the hypocrite, to play a part. This hardest word from the lips of Jesus falls on those who were the religious leaders of the Jews (Scribes and Pharisees), who had justified this thunderbolt of wrath by their conduct toward Jesus and their treatment of things high and holy. The *Textus Receptus* has eight woes, adding verse 14 which the Revised Version places in the margin (called verse 13 by Westcott and Hort and rejected on the authority of Aleph B D as a manifest gloss from Mr 12:40 and Lu 20:47). The MSS. that insert it put it either before 13 or after 13. Plummer cites these seven woes as another example of Matthew’s fondness for the number seven, more fancy than fact for Matthew’s Gospel is not the Apocalypse of John. These are all illustrations of Pharisaic saying and not doing (Allen). **Ye shut the kingdom of heaven** [*kleiete t n basileian t n ouran n*]. In Lu 11:52 the lawyers are accused of keeping the door to the house of knowledge locked and with flinging away the keys so as to keep themselves and the people in ignorance. These custodians of the kingdom by their teaching obscured the way to life. It is a tragedy to think how preachers and teachers of the kingdom of God may block the door for those who try to enter in [*tous eiserchomenous*], conative present middle participle). **Against** [*emprosthen*]. Literally, before. These door-keepers of the kingdom slam it shut in men’s faces and they themselves are on the outside where they will remain. They hide the key to keep others from going in.

23:15 **Twofold more a son of hell than yourselves** [*huion geenn s diploteron h-m n*]. It is a convert to Pharisaism rather than Judaism that is meant by “one proselyte” [*hena pros luton*], from [*proserchomai*], newcomers, aliens. There were two kinds of proselytes: of the gate (not actual Jews, but God-fearers and well-wishers of Judaism, like Cornelius), of righteousness who received circumcision and became actual Jews. But a very small per cent of the latter became Pharisees. There was a Hellenistic Jewish literature (Philo, Sibylline Oracles, etc.) designed to attract Gentiles to Judaism. But the Pharisaic missionary zeal (compass, [*periag te*], go around) was a comparative failure. And success was even worse, Jesus says with pitiless plainness. The “son of Gehenna” means one fitted for and so destined for Gehenna. “The more converted the more perverted” (H.J. Holtzmann). The Pharisees claimed to be in a special sense sons of the kingdom (Mt 8:12). They were more partisan than pious. [*Diplous*] (twofold, double) is common in the papyri. The comparative here used, as if from [*diplos*], appears also in Appian. Note the ablative of comparison h-m n. It was a withering thrust.

23:16 **Ye blind guides** [*hod goi tuphloi*]. Note omission of “Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites” with this third woe. In 15:14 Jesus had already called the Pharisees “blind guides” (leaders). They split hairs about oaths, as Jesus had explained in 5:33-37, between the temple and the gold of the temple. **He is a debtor** [*opheilei*]. He owes his oath, is bound by his oath. A.V., **is guilty**, is old English, obsolete sense of guilt as fine or payment.

23:17 **Ye fools** [*m roi*]. In 5:22 Jesus had warned against calling a man [*m ros*] in a rage, but here he so terms the blind Pharisees for their stupidity, description of the class. “It shows that not the word but the spirit in which it is uttered is what matters” (McNeile).

23:23 **Ye tithe** [*apodekatoute*]. The tithe had to be paid upon “all the increase of thy seed” (De 14:22; Le 27:30). The English word tithe is tenth. These small aromatic herbs, mint [*to h duosmon*], sweet-smelling), anise or dill [*an thon*], cummin [*kuminon*], with aromatic seeds), show the Pharisaeic scrupulous conscientiousness, all marketable commodities. “The Talmud tells of the ass of a certain Rabbi which had been so well trained as to refuse corn of which the tithes had not been taken” (Vincent). **These ye ought** [*tauta edei*]. Jesus does not condemn tithing. What he does condemn is doing it to the neglect of the **weightier matters** [*ta barutera*]. The Pharisees were externalists; cf. Lu 11:39-44.

23:24 **Strain out the gnat** [*diulizontes ton k n pa*]. By filtering through [*dia*], not the “straining at” in swallowing so crudely suggested by the misprint in the A.V. **Swallow the camel** [*t n de kam lon katapinontes*]. Gulping or drinking down the camel. An oriental hyperbole like that in 19:24. See also 5:29, 30; 17:20; 21:21. Both insects and camels were ceremonially unclean (Le 11:4, 20, 23, 42). “He that kills a flea on the Sabbath is as guilty as if he killed a camel” (Jer. *Shabb.* 107).

23:25 **From extortion and excess** [*ex harpag s kai akrasias*]. A much more serious accusation. These punctilious observers of the external ceremonies did not hesitate at robbery [*harpages*] and graft [*akrasias*], lack of control. A modern picture of wickedness in high places both civil and ecclesiastical where the moral elements in life are ruthlessly trodden under foot. Of course, the idea is for both the outside [*ektos*] and the inside [*entos*] of the cup and the platter (fine side dish). But the inside is the more important. Note the change to singular in verse 26 as if Jesus in a friendlier tone pleads with a Pharisee to mend his ways.

23:27 **Whited sepulchre** [*taphois kekoniamenois*]. The perfect passive participle is from [*konia*] and that from [*konia*], dust or lime. Whitened with powdered lime dust, the sepulchres of the poor in the fields or the roadside. Not the rock-hewn tombs of the well-to-do. These were whitewashed a month before the passover that travellers might see them and so avoid being defiled by touching them (Nu 19:16). In Ac 23:3 Paul called the high priest a whited wall. When Jesus spoke the sepulchres had been freshly whitewashed. We today speak of whitewashing moral evil.

23:29 **The tombs of the prophets** [*tous taphous t n proph t n*]. Cf. Lu 11:48-52. They were bearing witness against themselves [*heautois*], verse 31) to “the murder-taint in your blood” (Allen). “These men who professed to be so distressed at the murdering of the Prophets, were themselves compassing the death of Him who was far greater than any Prophet” (Plummer). There are four monuments called Tombs of the Prophets (Zechariah, Absalom, Jehoshaphat, St. James) at the base of the Mount of Olives. Some of these may have been going up at the very time that Jesus spoke. In this seventh and last woe Jesus addresses the Jewish nation and not merely the Pharisees.

23:32 **Fill ye up** [*pl r sate*]. The keenest irony in this command has been softened in some MSS. to the future indicative [*pl r sete*]. “Fill up the measure of your fathers; crown their misdeeds by killing the prophet God has sent to you. Do at last what has long been in your hearts. The hour is come” (Bruce).

23:33 **Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers** [*opheis genn mata echidn n*]. These blistering words come as a climax and remind one of the Baptist (3:17) and of the time when the Pharisees accused Jesus of being in league with Beelzebub (12:34). They cut to the bone like whip-cords. **How shall ye escape** [*p s phug te*]. Deliberate subjunctive. There is a curse in the Talmud somewhat like this: “Woe to the house of Annas! Woe to their serpent-like hissings.”

23:35 **Zachariah son of Barachiah** [*Zachariou huiou Barachiou*]. Broadus gives well the various alternatives in understanding and explaining the presence of “son of Barachiah” here which is not in Lu 11:51. The usual explanation is that the reference is to Zachariah the son of Jehoiada the priest who was slain in the court of the temple (2Ch 24:20ff.). How the words, “son of Barachiah,” got into Matthew we do not know. A half-dozen possibilities can be suggested. In the case of Abel a reckoning for the shedding of his blood was foretold (Ge 4:10) and the same thing was true of the slaying of Zachariah (2Ch 24:22).

23:37 **How often would I have gathered** [*posakis thel sa episunagein*]. More exactly, how often did I long to gather to myself (double compound infinitive). The same verb [*episunagei*] is used of the hen with the compound preposition [*hupokat*]. Everyone has seen the hen quickly get together the chicks under her wings in the time of danger. These words naturally suggest previous visits to Jerusalem made plain by John’s Gospel.

Chapter 24

24:1 **Went out from the temple** [*exelth n apo tou hierou*]. All the discourses since Mt 21:23 have been in the temple courts [*hieron*], the sacred enclosure). But now Jesus leaves it for good after the powerful denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees in chapter 23. His public teaching is over. It was a tragic moment. As he was going out [*eporeueto*], descriptive imperfect) the disciples, as if to relieve the thought of the Master came to him [*pros lthon*] to show [*epideixai*], ingressive aorist infinitive) the buildings of the temple [*tas oikodomas tou hierou*]. They were familiar to Jesus and the disciples, but beautiful like a snow mountain (Josephus, *Wars* V,5,6), the monument that Herod the Great had begun and that was not yet complete (Joh 2:20). Great stones were there of polished marble.

24:2 **One stone upon another** [*lithos epi lithon*]. Stone upon stone. A startling prediction showing that the gloomy current of the thoughts of Jesus were not changed by their words of admiration for the temple.

24:3 **As he sat** [*kath menou*]. Genitive absolute. Picture of Jesus sitting on the Mount of Olives looking down on Jerusalem and the temple which he had just left. After the climb up the mountain four of the disciples (Peter, James, John, Andrew) come to Jesus with the problem raised by his solemn words. They ask these questions about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, his own second coming [*parousia*], presence, common in the papyri for the visit of the emperor), and the end of the world. Did they think that they were all to take place simultaneously? There is no way to answer. At any rate Jesus treats all three in this great eschatological discourse, the most difficult problem in the Synoptic Gospels. Many theories are advanced that impugn the knowledge of Jesus or of the writers or of both. It is sufficient for our purpose to think of Jesus as using the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem which did happen in that generation in A.D. 70, as also a symbol of his own second coming and of the end of the world [*sunteleias tou ai nos*] or consummation of the age. In a painting the artist by skilful perspective may give on the same surface the inside of a room, the fields outside the window, and the sky far beyond. Certainly in this discourse Jesus blends in apocalyptic language the background of his death on the cross, the coming destruction of Jerusalem, his own second coming and the end of the world. He now touches one, now the other. It is not easy for us to separate clearly the various items. It is enough if we get the picture as a whole as it is here drawn with its lessons of warning to be ready for his coming and the end. The destruction of Jerusalem came as he foretold. There are some who would date the Synoptic Gospels after A.D. 70 in order to avoid the predictive element involved in the earlier date. But that is to limit the fore-knowledge of Jesus to a merely human basis. The word [*parousia*] occurs in this chapter alone (3, 27, 37, 39) in the Gospels, but often in the Epistles, either of presence as opposed to absence (Php 2:12) or the second coming of Christ (2Th 2:1).

24:4 **Lead you astray** [*h-m s plan s i*]. This warning runs all through the discourse. It is amazing how successful deceivers have been through the ages with their eschatological programs. The word in the passive appears in 18:12 when the one sheep wanders astray. Here it is the active voice with the causative sense to lead astray. Our word planet comes from this root.

24:5 **In my name** [*epi t i onomati mou*]. They will arrogate to themselves false claims of Messiahship in (on the basis of) the name of Christ himself. Josephus (*Wars* VI, 54) gives there false Christs as one of the reasons for the explosion against Rome that led to the city's destruction. Each new hero was welcomed by the masses including Barcochba. "I am the Messiah," each would say. Forty odd years ago two men in Illinois claimed to be Messiah, each with followers (Schlatter, Schweinfurth). In more recent years Mrs. Annie Besant has introduced a theosophical Messiah and Mrs. Eddy made claims about herself on a par with those of Jesus.

24:6 **See that ye be not troubled** [*horate m throeisthe*]. Asyndeton here with these two imperatives as Mr 8:15 [*orate blepete*] (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 949). Look out for the wars and rumours of wars, but do not be scared out of your wits by them. [*Throe*] means to cry aloud, to scream, and in the passive to be terrified by an outcry. Paul uses this very verb [*m de throeisthai*] in 2Th 2:2 as a warning against excitement over false reports that he had predicted the immediate second coming of Christ. **But the end is not yet** [*all' oup estin to telos*]. It is curious how people overlook these words of Jesus and proceed to set dates for the immediate end. That happened during the Great War and it has happened since.

24:8 **The beginning of travail** [*arch odin n*]. The word means birth-pangs and the Jews used the very phrase for the sufferings of the Messiah which were to come before the coming of the Messiah (Book of Jubilees, 23:18; Apoc. of Baruch 27-29). But the word occurs with no idea of birth as the pains of death (Ps 18:5; Ac 2:24). These woes, says Jesus, are not a proof of the end, but of the beginning.

24:9 **Ye shall be hated** [*esesthe misoumenoi*]. Periphrastic future passive to emphasize the continuous process of the linear action. For tribulation [*thlipsin*] see 13:21), a word common in the Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse for the oppression (pressure) that the Christians received. **For my name's sake** [*dia to onoma mou*]. The most glorious name in the world today, but soon to be a byword of shame (Ac 5:41). The disciples would count it an honour to be dishonoured for the Name's sake.

24:11 **False prophets** [*pseudoproph tai*]. Jesus had warned against them in the Sermon on the Mount (7:15). They are still coming.

24:12 **Shall wax cold** [*psug setai*]. Second future passive indicative from [*psuch*]. To breathe cool by blowing, to grow cold, "spiritual energy blighted or chilled by a malign or poisonous wind" (Vincent). **The love of many** [*h agap t n poll n*]. Love of the brotherhood gives way to mutual hatred and suspicion.

24:14 **Shall be preached** [*keruchth setai*]. Heralded in all the inhabited world. [*En holi ti oikoumen i*] supply [*g i*]. It is not here said that all will be saved nor must this language be given too literal and detailed an application to every individual.

24:15 **The abomination of desolation** [*to bdelugma t s erem se s*]. An allusion to Da 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. Antiochus Epiphanes erected an altar to Zeus on the altar of Jehovah (1Macc. 1:54, 59; 6:7; 2Macc. 6:1-5). The desolation in the mind of Jesus is apparently the Roman army (Lu 21:20) in the temple, an application of the words of Daniel to this dread event. The verb [*bdelussomai*] is to feel nausea because of stench, to abhor, to detest. Idolatry was a stench to God (Lu 16:15; Re 17:4). Josephus tells us that the Romans burned the temple and offered sacrifices to their ensigns placed by the eastern gate when they proclaimed Titus as Emperor.

Let him that readeth understand [*ho anaginosk n noeit*]. This parenthesis occurs also in Mr 13:14. It is not to be supposed that Jesus used these words. They were inserted by Mark as he wrote his book and he was followed by Matthew.

24:16 **Flee unto the mountains** [*pheuget san eis ta or*]. The mountains east of the Jordan. Eusebius (*H.E.* iii,5,3) says that the Christians actually fled to Pella at the foot of the mountains about seventeen miles south of the Sea of Galilee. They remembered the warning of Jesus and fled for safety.

24:17 **On the housetop** [*epi tou d matos*]. They could escape from roof to roof and so escape, “the road of the roofs,” as the rabbis called it. There was need for haste.

24:18 **In the field** [*en t i agr i*]. The peasant worked in his time and left his mantle at home then as now.

24:20 **In winter nor on a sabbath** [*cheim nos*], genitive of time, [*m de sabbat i*], locative of time). In winter because of the rough weather. On a sabbath because some would hesitate to make such a journey on the sabbath. Josephus in his *Wars* gives the best illustration of the horrors foretold by Jesus in verse 21.

24:22 **Had been shortened** [*ekolob th san*]. From [*kolobos*], lopped, mutilated, as the hands, the feet. It is a second-class condition, determined as unfulfilled. It is a prophetic figure, the future regarded as past. **For the elect’s sake** [*dia tous eklektous*]. See Mt 22:14 for another use of this phrase by Jesus and also 24:31. The siege was shortened by various historical events like the stopping of the strengthening of the walls by Herod Agrippa by orders from the Emperor, the sudden arrival of Titus, the neglect of the Jews to prepare for a long siege. “Titus himself confessed that God was against the Jews, since otherwise neither his armies nor his engines would have availed against their defences” (Vincent).

24:23 **Lo, here is the Christ, or here** [*idou h de ho Christos h de*]. The false prophets (24:11) create the trouble and now false Christs [*pseudo-Christoi*], verse 24) offer a way out of these troubles. The deluded victims raise the cries of “Lo, here,” when these false Messiahs arise with their panaceas for public ills (political, religious, moral, and spiritual).

24:24 **Great signs and wonders** [*s meia megala kai terata*]. Two of the three words so often used in the N.T. about the works [*erga*] of Jesus, the other being [*dunamis*] (powers). They often occur together of the same work (Joh 4:48; Ac 2:22; 4:30; 2Co 12:12; Heb 2:4). [*Teras*] is a wonder or prodigy, [*dunamis*], a mighty work or power, [*s meion*], a sign of God’s purpose. Miracle [*miraculum*] presents only the notion of wonder or portent. The same deed can be looked at from these different angles. But the point to note here is that mere “signs and wonders” do not of themselves prove the power of God. These charlatans will be so skilful that they will, **if possible** [*ei dunaton*], lead astray the very elect. The implication is that it is not possible. People become excited and are misled and are unable to judge of results. Often it is *post hoc, sed non propter hoc*. Patent-medicine men make full use of the credulity of people along this line as do spiritualistic mediums. Sleight-of-hand men can deceive the unwary.

24:26 **In the wilderness** [*en t i e r m i*]. Like Simon son of Gioras (Josephus, *War*, IV ,9, 5, & 7). **In the inner chambers** [*en tois tameiois*]. Like John of Giscala (Josephus, *War*, V,6,1). False Messiahs act the role of the Great Unseen and Unknown.

24:27 **As seen** [*phainetai*]. Visible in contrast to the invisibility of the false Messiahs. Cf. Re 1:7. Like a flash of lightning.

24:28 **Carcase** [*pt ma*]. As in 14:12, the corpse. Originally a fallen body from [*pipt*], to fall, like Latin *cadaver* from *cado*, to fall. The proverb here as in Lu 17:37, is like that in Job 39:30; Pr 30:17. **Eagles** [*aetoi*]. Perhaps the griffon vulture, larger than the eagle, which (Aristotle) was often seen in the wake of an army and followed Napoleon’s retreat from Russia.

24:29 **Immediately** [*euthe s*]. This word, common in Mark’s Gospel as [*euthus*], gives trouble if one stresses the time element. The problem is how much time intervenes between “the tribulation of those days” and the vivid symbolism of verse 29. The use of [*en tachei*] in Re 1:1 should make one pause before he decides. Here we have a prophetic panorama like that with foreshortened perspective. The apocalyptic pictures in verse 29 also call for sobriety of judgment. One may compare Joel’s prophecy as interpreted by Peter in Ac 21:16-22. Literalism is not appropriate in this apocalyptic eschatology.

24:30 **The sign of the Son of Man in heaven** [*to s meion tou huiou tou anthr pou en ouran i*]. Many theories have been suggested like the cross in the sky, etc. Bruce sees a reference to Da 7:13 “one like the Son of man” and holds that Christ himself is the sign in question (the genitive of apposition). This is certainly possible. It is confirmed by the rest of the verse: “They shall see the

Son of man coming.” See Mt 16:27; 26:64. The Jews had repeatedly asked for such a sign (Broadus) as in Mt 12:38; 16:1; Joh 2:18.

24:31 **With a great sound of a trumpet** [*meta salpiggos ph n s megal s*]. Some MSS. omit [*ph n s*] “sound.” The trumpet was the signal employed to call the hosts of Israel to march as to war and is common in prophetic imagery (Isa 27:13). Cf. the seventh angel (Re 11:15). Clearly “the coming of the son of man is not to be identified with the judgment of Jerusalem but rather forms its preternatural background” (Bruce).

24:32 **Putteth forth its leaves** [*ta phulla ekphu i*]. Present active subjunctive according to Westcott and Hort. If accented [*ekphu i*] (last syllable), it is second aorist passive subjunctive (Erasmus).

24:34 **This generation** [*h genea haut*]. The problem is whether Jesus is here referring to the destruction of Jerusalem or to the second coming and end of the world. If to the destruction of Jerusalem, there was a literal fulfilment. In the Old Testament a generation was reckoned as forty years. This is the natural way to take verse 34 as of 33 (Bruce), “all things” meaning the same in both verses.

24:36 **Not even the Son** [*oude ho huios*]. Probably genuine, though absent in some ancient MSS. The idea is really involved in the words “but the Father only” [*ei m ho pat r monos*]. It is equally clear that in this verse Jesus has in mind the time of his second coming. He had plainly stated in verse 34 that those events (destruction of Jerusalem) would take place in that generation. He now as pointedly states that no one but the Father knows the day or the hour when these things (the second coming and the end of the world) will come to pass. One may, of course, accuse Jesus of hopeless confusion or extend his confession of ignorance of the date of the second coming to the whole chain of events. So McNeile: “It is impossible to escape the conclusion that Jesus as Man, expected the End, within the lifetime of his contemporaries.” And that after his explicit denial that he knew anything of the kind! It is just as easy to attribute ignorance to modern scholars with their various theories as to Jesus who admits his ignorance of the date, but not of the character of the coming.

24:37 **The days of Noah** [*hai h merai tou N e*]. Jesus had used this same imagery before to the Pharisees (Lu 17:26-30). In Noah’s day there was plenty of warning, but utter unpreparedness. Most people are either indifferent about the second coming or have fanciful schemes or programs about it. Few are really eager and expectant and leave to God the time and the plans.

24:38 **Were eating** [*san tr gontes*]. Periphrastic imperfect. The verb means to chew raw vegetables or fruits like nuts or almonds.

24:41 **At the mill** [*en t i mul i*]. So Westcott and Hort and not [*mul ni*] (millhouse) Textus Receptus. The millstone and then hand-mill which was turned by two women [*al thousai*] as in Ex 11:5. This verb is a late form for [*ale*]. There was a handle near the edge of the upper stone.

24:42 **Watch therefore** [*gr g reite oun*]. A late present imperative from the second perfect [*egr gora*] from [*egeir*]. Keep awake, be on the watch “therefore” because of the uncertainty of the time of the second coming. Jesus gives a half dozen parables to enforce the point of this exhortation (the Porter, the Master of the House, the Faithful Servant and the Evil Servants, the Ten Virgins, the Talents, the Sheep and the Goats). Matthew does not give the Parable of the Porter (Mr 13:35-37).

24:43 **In what watch** [*poi i phulak i*]. As in 14:25 (four watches of the night). **Broken through** [*dioruchth nai*]. Digged through the tile roof or under the floor (dirt in the poorer houses).

24:44 **That ye think not** [*h i ou dokeite h r i*]. It is useless to set the day and hour for Christ’s coming. It is folly to neglect it. This figure of the thief will be used also by Paul concerning the unexpectedness of Christ’s second coming (1Th 5:2). See also Mt 24:50 for the unexpectedness of the coming with punishment for the evil servant.

24:48 **My lord tarrieth** [*chronizei mou ho kurios*]. That is the temptation and to give way to indulge in fleshly appetites or to pride of superior intellect. Within a generation scoffers will be asking where is the promise of the coming of Christ (2Pe 3:4). They will forget that God’s clock is not like our clock and that a day with the Lord may be a thousand years or a thousand years as one day (2Pe 3:8).

Chapter 25

25:1 **Ten virgins** [*deka parthenois*]. No special point in the number ten. The scene is apparently centered round the house of the bride to which the bridegroom is coming for the wedding festivities. But Plummer places the scene near the house of the bridegroom who has gone to bring the bride home. It is not pertinent to the point of the parable to settle it. **Lamps** [*lampadas*]. Probably torches with a wooden staff and a dish on top in which was placed a piece of rope or cloth dipped in oil or pitch. But sometimes [*lampas*] has the meaning of oil lamp [*luchnos*] as in Ac 20:8. That may be the meaning here (Rutherford, *New Phrynichus*).

25:3 **Took no oil with them** [*ouk elabon meth' heaut n elaion*]. Probably none at all, not realizing their lack of oil till they lit the torches on the arrival of the bridegroom and his party.

25:4 **In their vessels** [*en tois aggeiois*]. Here alone in the N.T., through [*agg*] in 13:48. Extra supply in these receptacles besides the oil in the dish on top of the staff.

25:5 **They all slumbered and slept** [*enustaxan p sai kai ekatheudon*]. They dropped off to sleep, nodded (ingressive aorist) and then went on sleeping (imperfect, linear action), a vivid picture drawn by the difference in the two tenses. Many a preacher has seen this happen while he is preaching.

25:6 **There is a cry** [*kraug gegonen*]. A cry has come. Dramatic use of the present perfect (second perfect active) indicative, not the perfect for the aorist. It is not [*estin*], but [*gegonen*] which emphasizes the sudden outcry which has rent the air. The very memory of it is preserved by this tense with all the bustle and confusion, the rushing to the oil-venders. **Come ye forth to meet him** [*exerchesthe eis apant sin*]. Or, Go out for meeting him, dependent on whether the cry comes from outside the house or inside the house where they were sleeping because of the delay. It was a ceremonial salutation neatly expressed by the Greek phrase.

25:7 **Trimmed** [*ekosm san*]. Put in order, made ready. The wicks were trimmed, the lights being out while they slept, fresh oil put in the dish, and lit again. A marriage ceremony in India is described by Ward (*View of the Hindoos*) in Trench's *Parables*: "After waiting two or three hours, at length near midnight it was announced, as in the very words of Scripture, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.'"

25:8 **Are going out** [*sbennuntai*]. Present middle indicative of linear action, not punctiliar or aoristic. When the five foolish virgins lit their lamps, they discovered the lack of oil. The sputtering, flickering, smoking wicks were a sad revelation. "And *perhaps* we are to understand that there is something in the coincidence of the lamps going out just as the Bridegroom arrived. Mere outward religion is found to have no illuminating power" (Plummer).

25:9 **Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you** [*m pote ou m arkesei h mEn kai humEn*]. There is an elliptical construction here that is not easy of explanation. Some MSS. Aleph A L Z have [*ouk*] instead of [*ou m*]. But even so [*m pote*] has to be explained either by supplying an imperative like [*ginesth*] or by a verb of fearing like [*phoboumetha*] (this most likely). Either [*ouk*] or [*ou m*] would be proper with the futuristic subjunctive [*arkesei*] (Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 192; Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 1161,1174). “We are afraid that there is no possibility of there being enough for us both.” This is a denial of oil by the wise virgins because there was not enough for both. “It was necessary to show that the foolish virgins could not have the consequences of their folly averted at the last moment” (Plummer). It is a courteous reply, but it is decisive. The compound Greek negatives are very expressive, [*m pote—ou m*].

25:10 **And while they went away** [*aperchomen n de aut n*]. Present middle participle, genitive absolute, while they were going away, descriptive linear action. Picture of their inevitable folly. **Was shut** [*ekleisth*]. Effective aorist passive indicative, shut to stay shut.

25:11 **Afterward** [*husteron*]. And find the door shut in their faces. **Lord, Lord, open to us** [*Kurie, Kurie, anoixon h min*]. They appeal to the bridegroom who is now master whether he is at the bride’s house or his own.

25:12 **I know you not** [*ouk oida hum s*]. Hence there was no reason for special or unusual favours to be granted them. They must abide the consequences of their own negligence.

25:13 **Watch therefore** [*gr goreite oun*]. This is the refrain with all the parables. Lack of foresight is inexcusable. Ignorance of the time of the second coming is not an excuse for neglect, but a reason for readiness. Every preacher goes up against this trait in human nature, putting off till another time what should be done today.

25:14 **Going into another country** [*apod m n*]. About to go away from one’s people [*d mos*], on the point of going abroad. This word in ancient use in this sense. There is an ellipse here that has to be supplied, **It is as when** or **The kingdom of heaven is as when**. This Parable of the Talents is quite similar to the Parable of the Pounds in Lu 19:11-28, but they are not variations of the same story. Some scholars credit Jesus with very little versatility. **His goods** [*ta huparchonta autou*]. His belongings, neuter participle used as a substantive.

25:15 **To one** [*h i men, h i de, h i de*]. Demonstrative [*hos*], not the relative. Neat Greek idiom. **According to his several ability** [*kata t n idian dunamin*]. According to his own ability. Each had all that he was capable of handling. The use that one makes of his opportunities is the measure of his capacity for more. One talent represented a considerable amount of money at that time when a [*denarius*] was a day’s wage. See on 18:24 for the value of a talent.

25:16 **Straightway** [*euthe s*]. Beginning of verse 16, not the end of verse 15. The business temper of this slave is shown by his promptness. **With them** [*en autois*]. Instrumental use of [*en*]. He

worked [*rgasato*], did business, traded with them. “The virgins wait, the servants work” (Vincent). **Made** [*epoi sen*]. But Westcott and Hort read [*ekerd sen*], gained, as in verse 17. [*Kerdos*] means interest. This gain was a hundred per cent.

25:19 **Maketh a reckoning** [*sunairei logon*]. As in 18:23. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 117) gives two papyri quotations with this very business idiom and one Nubian ostrakon with it. The ancient Greek writers do not show it.

25:21 **The joy of thy lord** [*t n charin tou kuriou sou*]. The word [*chara*] or joy may refer to the feast on the master’s return. So in verse 23.

25:24 **That had received the one talent** [*ho to talenton eil ph s*]. Note the perfect active participle to emphasize the fact that he still had it. In verse 20 we have [*ho—lab n*] (aorist active participle). **I knew thee** [*egn n se*]. Second aorist active indicative. Experimental knowledge [*gin sk*] and proleptical use of [*se*]. **A hard man** [*skl ros*]. Harsh, stern, rough man, worse than [*aust ros*] in Lu 19:21, grasping and ungenerous. **Where thou didst not scatter** [*hothen ou dieskorpisas*]. But this scattering was the chaff from which wheat was winnowed, not the scattering of seed.

25:26 **Thou wicked and slothful servant** [*pon re doule kai okn re*]. From [*ponos*] (work, annoyance, disturbance, evil) and [*okne*] (to be slow, “poky,” slothful). Westcott and Hort make a question out of this reply to the end of verse 26. It is sarcasm.

25:27 **Thou oughtest therefore** [*edsi se oun*]. His very words of excuse convict him. It was a necessity [*edei*] that he did not see. **The bankers** [*tois trapezeitais*]. The benchers, money-changers, brokers, who exchanged money for a fee and who paid interest on money. Word common in late Greek. **I should have received back** [*eg ekomisam n an*]. Conclusion of a condition of the second class (determined as unfulfilled). The condition is not expressed, but it is implied. “If you had done that.” **With interest** [*sun tok i*]. Not with “usury” in the sense of extortion or oppression. Usury only means “use” in itself. The word is from [*tikt*], to bring forth. Compound interest at six per cent doubles the principal every twenty years. It is amazing how rapidly that piles up if one carries it on for centuries and millenniums. “In the early Roman Empire legal interest was eight per cent, but in usurious transactions it was lent at twelve, twenty-four, and even forty-eight” (Vincent). Such practices exist today in our cities. The Mosaic law did not allow interest in dealings between Hebrews, but only with strangers (De 23:19,20; Ps 15:5).

25:30 **The unprofitable** [*ton achreion*]. Useless [*a*] privative and [*chreios*], useful) and so unprofitable, injurious. Doing nothing is doing harm.

25:32 **All the nations** (*panta ta ethn*). Not just Gentiles, but Jews also. Christians and non-Christians. This program for the general judgment has been challenged by some scholars who regard it as a composition by the evangelist to exalt Christ. But why should not Christ say this if he is the Son of Man and the Son of God and realized it? A “reduced” Christ has trouble with all the Gospels,

not merely with the Fourth Gospel, and no less with Q and Mark than with Matthew and Luke. This is a majestic picture with which to close the series of parables about readiness for the second coming. Here is the program when he does come. "I am aware that doubt is thrown on this passage by some critics. But the doubt is most wanton. Where is the second brain that could have invented anything so original and so sublime as vv. 35-40,42-45?" (Sanday, *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 128). **As the shepherd separates** [*h sper ho poim n aphorizei*]. A common figure in Palestine. The sheep are usually white and the goats black. There are kids [*eriph n, eriphia*] which have grazed together. The goats devastate a field of all herbage. "Indeed they have extirpated many species of trees which once covered the hills" (Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, pp. 89f.). The shepherd stands at the gate and taps the sheep to go to the right and the goats to the left.

25:34 **From the foundation of the world** [*apo katabol s kosmou*]. The eternal purpose of the Father for his elect in all the nations. The Son of Man in verse 31 is the King here seated on the throne in judgment.

25:36 **Clothed me** [*periebalete me*]. Second aorist middle indicative, cast something around me. **Visited me** [*epeskepsasthe me*]. Looked after, came to see. Our "visit" is from Latin *viso, video*. Cf. our English "go to see."

25:40 **Ye did it unto me** [*emoi epoi sate*]. Dative of personal interest. Christ identifies himself with the needy and the suffering. This conduct is proof of possession of love for Christ and likeness to him.

25:42 **No meat** [*ouk ed kate moi phagein*]. You did not give me anything to eat. The repetition of the negative [*ou*] in 42 and 43 is like the falling of clods on the coffin or the tomb. It is curious the surprise here shown both by the sheep and the goats. Some sheep will think that they are goats and some goats will think that they are sheep.

25:46 **Eternal punishment** [*kolasin ai nion*]. The word [*kolasin*] comes from [*kolaz*], to mutilate or prune. Hence those who cling to the larger hope use this phrase to mean age-long pruning that ultimately leads to salvation of the goats, as disciplinary rather than penal. There is such a distinction as Aristotle pointed out between [*m ria*] (vengeance) and [*kolasis*]. But the same adjective [*ai nios*] is used with [*kolasin*] and [*z n*]. If by etymology we limit the scope of [*kolasin*], we may likewise have only age-long [*z n*]. There is not the slightest indication in the words of Jesus here that the punishment is not coeval with the life. We can leave all this to the King himself who is the Judge. The difficulty to one's mind about conditional chastisement is to think how a life of sin in hell can be changed into a life of love and obedience. The word [*ai nios*] (from [*ai n*], age, [*aeuum, aei*] means either without beginning or without end or both. It comes as near to the idea of eternal as the Greek can put it in one word. It is a difficult idea to put into language. Sometimes we have "ages of ages" [*ai nes t n ai n n*].

Chapter 26

26:2 **Cometh** [*ginetai*]. Futuristic use of the present middle indicative. This was probably our Tuesday evening (beginning of Jewish Wednesday). The passover began on our Thursday evening (beginning of Jewish Friday). **After two days** [*meta duo h meras*] is just the familiar popular mode of speech. The passover came technically on the second day from this time. **Is delivered up** [*paradidotai*]. Another instance of the futuristic present passive indicative. The same form occurs in verse 24. Thus Jesus sets a definite date for the coming crucifixion which he has been predicting for six months.

26:3 **Then were gathered together the chief priests and elders of the people** [*Tote sun chth san hoi archiereis kai hoi presbuteroi tou laou*]. A meeting of the Sanhedrin as these two groups indicate (cf. 21:23). **Unto the court** [*eis t n aul n*]. The *atrium* or court around which the palace buildings were built. Here in this open court this informal meeting was held. Caiaphas was high priest A.D. 18 to 36. His father-in-law Annas had been high priest A.D. 6 to 15 and was still called high priest by many.

26:4 **They took counsel together** [*sunebouleusanto*]. Aorist middle indicative, indicating their puzzled state of mind. They have had no trouble in finding Jesus (Joh 11:57). Their problem now is how to **take Jesus by subtilty and kill him** [*hina ton I soun dol i krat sosin kai apoktein sin*]. The Triumphal Entry and the Tuesday debate in the temple revealed the powerful following that Jesus had among the crowds from Galilee.

26:5 **A tumult** [*thorubos*]. They feared the uprising in behalf of Jesus and were arguing that the matter must be postponed till after the feast was over when the crowds had scattered. Then they could catch him “by craft” [*dol i*] as they would trap a wild beast.

26:6 **In the house of Simon the leper** [*en oiki i Sim nos tou leprou*]. Evidently a man who had been healed of his leprosy by Jesus who gave the feast in honour of Jesus. All sorts of fantastic theories have arisen about it. Some even identify this Simon with the one in Lu 7:36ff., but Simon was a very common name and the details are very different. Some hold that it was Martha’s house because she served (Joh 12:2) and that Simon was either the father or husband of Martha, but Martha loved to serve and that proves nothing. Some identify Mary of Bethany with the sinful woman in Lu 7 and even with Mary Magdalene, both gratuitous and groundless propositions. For the proof that Mary of Bethany, Mary Magdalene, and the sinful woman of Lu 7 are all distinct see my *Some Minor Characters in the New Testament*. John (Joh 12:1) apparently locates the feast six days before the passover, while Mark (Mr 14:3) and Matthew (26:6) seem to place it on the Tuesday evening (Jewish Wednesday) just two days before the passover meal. It is possible that John anticipates the date and notes the feast at Bethany at this time because he does not refer to Bethany again. If not,

the order of Mark must be followed. According to the order of Mark and Matthew, this feast took place at the very time that the Sanhedrin was plotting about the death of Jesus (Mr 14:1f.).

26:7 An alabaster cruse of exceeding precious ointment [*alabastron murou barutimou*]. The flask was of alabaster, a carbonate of lime or sulphate of lime, white or yellow stone, named alabaster from the town in Egypt where it was chiefly found. It was used for a phial employed for precious ointments in ancient writers, inscriptions and papyri just as we speak of a glass for the vessel made of glass. It had a cylindrical form at the top, as a rule, like a closed rosebud (Pliny). Matthew does not say what the ointment [*murou*] was, only saying that it was “exceeding precious” [*barutimou*], of weighty value, selling at a great price. Here only in the N.T. “An alabaster of nard [*murou*] was a present for a king” (Bruce). It was one of five presents sent by Cambyses to the King of Ethiopia (Herodotus, iii. 20). **She poured it upon his head** [*katecheen epi t s kephal s autou*]. So Mark (Mr 14:3), while John (Joh 12:3) says that she “anointed the feet of Jesus.” Why not both? The verb [*katecheen*] is literally to pour down. It is the first aorist active indicative, unusual form.

26:8 This waste [*h ap leia haut*]. Dead loss [*ap leia*] they considered it, nothing but sentimental aroma. It was a cruel shock to Mary of Bethany to hear this comment. Matthew does not tell as John does (Joh 12:4) that it was Judas who made the point which the rest endorsed. Mark explains that they mentioned “three hundred pence,” while Matthew (26:9) only says “for much” [*pollou*].

26:10 Why trouble ye the woman? [*ti kopous parechete t i gunaiki?*] A phrase not common in Greek writers, though two examples occur in the papyri for giving trouble. [*Kopos*] is from [*kopt*], to beat, smite, cut. It is a beating, trouble, and often work, toil. Jesus champions Mary’s act with this striking phrase. It is so hard for some people to allow others liberty for their own personalities to express themselves. It is easy to raise small objections to what we do not like and do not understand. **A good work upon me** [*ergon kalon eis eme*]. A beautiful deed upon Jesus himself.

26:12 To prepare me for burial [*pros to entaphiasai me*]. Mary alone had understood what Jesus had repeatedly said about his approaching death. The disciples were so wrapped up in their own notions of a political kingdom that they failed utterly to sympathize with Jesus as he faced the cross. But Mary with the woman’s fine intuitions did begin to understand and this was her way of expressing her high emotions and loyalty. The word here is the same used in Joh 19:40 about what Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did for the body of Jesus before burial with the addition of [*pros to*] showing the purpose of Mary (the infinitive of purpose). Mary was vindicated by Jesus and her noble deed has become a “memorial of her” [*eis mn mosumon aut s*] as well as of Jesus.

26:15 What are ye willing to give me? [*ti thelete moi dounai?*] This “brings out the chaffering aspect of the transaction” (Vincent). “Mary and Judas extreme opposites: she freely spending in love, he willing to sell his Master for money” (Bruce). And her act of love provoked Judas to his despicable deed, this rebuke of Jesus added to all the rest. **And I will deliver him unto you** [*kag h-min parad s auton*]. The use of [*kai*] with a co-ordinate clause is a colloquialism (common in

the *Koin* as in the Hebrew use of *wav*. “A colloquialism or a Hebraism, the traitor mean in style as in spirit” (Bruce). The use of [*eg*] seems to mean “I though one of his disciples will hand him over to you if you give me enough.” **They weighed unto him** [*hoi de est san auto*]. They placed the money in the balances or scales. “Coined money was in use, but the shekels may have been weighed out in antique fashion by men careful to do an iniquitous thing in the most orthodox way” (Bruce). It is not known whether the Sanhedrin had offered a reward for the arrest of Jesus or not. **Thirty pieces of silver** [*triakonta arguria*]. A reference to Zec 11:12. If a man’s ox gored a servant, he had to pay this amount (Ex 21:32). Some manuscripts have [*stat ras*] (staters). These thirty silver shekels were equal to 120 [*denarii*], less than five English pounds, less than twenty-five dollars, the current price of a slave. There was no doubt contempt for Jesus in the minds of both the Sanhedrin and Judas in this bargain.

26:16 **Sought opportunity** [*ez tei eukarian*]. A good chance. Note imperfect tense. Judas went at his business and stuck to it.

26:17 **To eat the passover** [*phagein to pascha*]. There were two feasts rolled into one, the passover feast and the feast of unleavened bread. Either name was employed. Here the passover meal is meant, though in Joh 18:28 it is probable that the passover feast is referred to as the passover meal (the last supper) had already been observed. There is a famous controversy on the apparent disagreement between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel on the date of this last passover meal. My view is that the five passages in John (Joh 13:1f., 27; 18:28; 19:14, 31) rightly interpreted agree with the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 26:17,20; Mr 14:12,17; Lu 22:7,14) that Jesus ate the passover meal at the regular time about 6 P.M. beginning of 15 Nisan. The passover lamb was slain on the afternoon of 14 Nisan and the meal eaten at sunset the beginning of 15 Nisan. According to this view Jesus ate the passover meal at the regular time and died on the cross the afternoon of 15 Nisan. See my *Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ*, pp.279-284. The question of the disciples here assumes that they are to observe the regular passover meal. Note the deliberative subjunctive [*hetoimas men*] after [*theleis*] with [*hina*]. For the asyndeton see Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 935.

26:18 **To such a man** [*pros ton deina*]. The only instance in the N.T. of this old Attic idiom. The papyri show it for “Mr. X” and the modern Greek keeps it. Jesus may have indicated the man’s name. Mark (Mr 14:13) and Luke (Lu 22:10) describe him as a man bearing a pitcher of water. It may have been the home of Mary the mother of John Mark. **I keep the passover at thy house** [*pros se poi to pascha*]. Futuristic present indicative. The use of [*pros se*] for “at thy house” is neat Greek of the classic period. Evidently there was no surprise in this home at the command of Jesus. It was a gracious privilege to serve him thus.

26:20 **He was sitting at meat** [*anekeito*]. He was reclining, lying back on the left side on the couch with the right hand free. Jesus and the Twelve all reclined. The paschal lamb had to be eaten up entirely (Ex 12:4,43).

26:21 **One of you** [*heis ex hum n*]. This was a bolt from the blue for all except Judas and he was startled to know that Jesus understood his treacherous bargain.

26:22 **Is it I, Lord?** [*m ti eg eimi, Kurie;*]. The negative expects the answer No and was natural for all save Judas. But he had to bluff it out by the same form of question (verse 25). The answer of Jesus, **Thou hast said** [*su eipas*], means Yes.

26:23 **He that dipped** [*ho embapsas*]. They all dipped their hands, having no knives, forks, or spoons. The aorist participle with the article simply means that the betrayer is the one who dips his hand in the dish [*en t i trubli i*] or platter with the broth of nuts and raisins and figs into which the bread was dipped before eating. It is plain that Judas was not recognized by the rest as indicated by what Jesus has said. This language means that one of those who had eaten bread with him had violated the rights of hospitality by betraying him. The Arabs today are punctilious on this point. Eating one's bread ties your hands and compels friendship. But Judas knew full well as is shown in verse 25 though the rest apparently did not grasp it.

26:24 **Good were it for that man** [*kalon n aut i*]. Conclusion of second-class condition even though [*an*] is not expressed. It is not needed with verbs of obligation and necessity. There are some today who seek to palliate the crime of Judas. But Jesus here pronounces his terrible doom. And Judas heard it and went on with his hellish bargain with the Sanhedrin. Apparently Judas went out at this stage (Joh 13:31).

26:26 **And blessed and brake it** [*eulog sas eklasen*]. Special "Grace" in the middle of the passover meal, "as they were eating," for the institution of the Supper. Jesus broke one of the passover wafers or cakes that each might have a piece, not as a symbol of the breaking of his body as the Textus Receptus has it in 1Co 11:24. The correct text there has only to [*huper hum n*] without [*kl menon*]. As a matter of fact the body of Jesus was not "broken" (Joh 19:33) as John expressly states. **This is my body** [*touto estin to s ma mou*]. The bread as a symbol *represents* the body of Jesus offered for us, "a beautifully simple, pathetic, and poetic symbol of his death" (Bruce). But some have made it "run into fetish worship" (Bruce). Jesus, of course, does not mean that the bread actually becomes his body and is to be worshipped. The purpose of the memorial is to remind us of his death for our sins.

26:28 **The Covenant** [*t s diath k s*]. The adjective [*kain s*] in Textus Receptus is not genuine. The covenant is an agreement or contract between two [*dia, duo, th ke*], from [*tith mi*]. It is used also for will (Latin, *testamentum*) which becomes operative at death (Heb 9:15-17). Hence our *New Testament*. Either covenant or will makes sense here. Covenant is the idea in Heb 7:22; 8:8 and often. In the Hebrew to make a covenant was to cut up the sacrifice and so ratify the agreement (Ge 15:9-18). Lightfoot argues that the word [*diath ke*] means covenant in the N.T. except in Heb 9:15-17. Jesus here uses the solemn words of Ex 24:8 "the blood of the covenant" at Sinai. "My blood of the covenant" is in contrast with that. This is the New Covenant of Jer 31; Heb 8. **Which**

is shed for many [*to peri poll n ekchunnomenon*]. A prophetic present passive participle. The act is symbolized by the ordinance. Cf. the purpose of Christ expressed in 20:28. There [*anti*] and here [*peri*]. **Unto remission of sins** [*eis aphesin hamarti n*]. This clause is in Matthew alone but it is not to be restricted for that reason. It is the truth. This passage answers all the modern sentimentalism that finds in the teaching of Jesus only pious ethical remarks or eschatological dreamings. He had the definite conception of his death on the cross as the basis of forgiveness of sin. The purpose of the shedding of his blood of the New Covenant was precisely to remove (forgive) sins.

26:29 **When I drink it new with you** [*hotan auto pin meth' hum n kaimon*]. This language rather implies that Jesus himself partook of the bread and the wine, though it is not distinctly stated. In the Messianic banquet it is not necessary to suppose that Jesus means the language literally, "the fruit of the vine." Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, pp. 109f.) gives an instance of [*gen ma*] used of the vine in a papyrus 230 B.C. The language here employed does not make it obligatory to employ wine rather than pure grape juice if one wishes the other.

26:30 **Sang a hymn** [*humn santes*]. The *Hallel*, part of Ps 115-118. But apparently they did not go out at once to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus tarried with them in the Upper Room for the wonderful discourse and prayer in Joh 14-17. They may have gone out to the street after Joh 14:31. It was no longer considered obligatory to remain in the house after the passover meal till morning as at the start (Ex 12:22). Jesus went out to Gethsemane, the garden of the agony, outside of Jerusalem, toward the Mount of Olives.

26:33 **I will never be offended** [*eg oudepote skandalisth somai*]. "Made to stumble," not "offended." Volitive future passive indicative. Peter ignored the prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus and the promised meeting in Galilee (32). The quotation from Zec 13:7 made no impression on him. He was intent on showing that he was superior to "all" the rest. Judas had turned traitor and all were weak, Peter in particular, little as he knew it. So Jesus has to make it plainer by pointing out "this night" as the time (34). **Before the cock crows** [*prin alektora ph n sai*]. No article in the Greek, "before a cock crow." Mark (Mr 14:30) says that Peter will deny Jesus thrice before the cock crows twice. When one cock crows in the morning, others generally follow. The three denials lasted over an hour. Some scholars hold that chickens were not allowed in Jerusalem by the Jews, but the Romans would have them.

26:35 **Even if I must die with thee** [*k...n de i me sun soi apothanein*]. Third-class condition. A noble speech and meant well. His boast of loyalty is made still stronger by [*ou m se aparn somai*]. The other disciples were undoubtedly embarrassed by Peter's boast and lightheartedly joined in the same profession of fidelity.

26:36 **Gethsemane** [*Geths manei*]. The word means oil-press in the Hebrew, or olive vat. The place [*ch rion*] was an enclosed plot or estate, "garden," or orchard [*k pos*]. It is called *villa* in the Vulgate according to Joh 18:1. It was beyond the torrent Kedron at the foot of the Mount of Olives about

three-fourths of a mile from the eastern walls of Jerusalem. There are now eight old olive trees still standing in this enclosure. One cannot say that they are the very trees near which Jesus had his Agony, but they are very old. “They will remain so long as their already protracted life is spared, the most venerable of their race on the surface of the earth. Their guarded trunks and scanty foliage will always be regarded as the most affecting of the sacred memorials in or about Jerusalem” (Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*). **Here** [*autou*], **Yonder** [*ekei*]. Jesus clearly pointed to the place where he would pray. Literally “there.”

26:37 **He took with him** [*paralab n*]. Taking along, by his side [*para-*], as a mark of special favour and privilege, instead of leaving this inner circle of three (Peter, James, and John) with the other eight. The eight would serve as a sort of outer guard to watch by the gate of the garden for the coming of Judas while the three would be able to share the agony of soul already upon Jesus so as at least to give him some human sympathy which he craved as he sought help from the Father in prayer. These three had been with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and now they are with him in this supreme crisis. The grief of Christ was now severe. The word for **sore troubled** [*ad monein*] is of doubtful etymology. There is an adjective [*ad mos*] equal to [*apod mos*] meaning “not at home,” “away from home,” like the German *unheimisch*, *unheimlich*. But whatever the etymology, the notion of intense discomfort is plain. The word [*ad monein*] occurs in P.Oxy. II, 298,456 of the first century A.D. where it means “excessively concerned.” See Php 2:26 where Paul uses it of Epaphroditus. Moffatt renders it here “agitated.” The word occurs sometimes with [*apore*] to be at a loss as to which way to go. The *Braid Scots* has it “sair putten-about.” Here Matthew has also “to be sorrowful” [*lupeisthai*], but Mark (Mr 14:33) has the startling phrase **greatly amazed and sore troubled** [*ekthambeisthai kai ad monein*], a “feeling of terrified surprise.”

26:38 **Watch with me** [*gr goreite met' emou*]. This late present from the perfect [*egr gora*] means to keep awake and not go to sleep. The hour was late and the strain had been severe, but Jesus pleaded for a bit of human sympathy as he wrestled with his Father. It did not seem too much to ask. He had put his sorrow in strong language, “even unto death” [*he s thanatou*] that ought to have alarmed them.

26:39 **He went forward a little** [*proelth n mikron*]. As if he could not fight the battle in their immediate presence. He was on his face, not on his knees (McNeile). **This cup** [*to pot rion touto*]. The figure can mean only the approaching death. Jesus had used it of his coming death when James and John came to him with their ambitious request, “the cup which I am about to drink” (Mt 20:22). But now the Master is about to taste the bitter dregs in the cup of death for the sin of the world. He was not afraid that he would die before the Cross, though he instinctively shrank from the cup, but instantly surrendered his will to the Father’s will and drank it to the full. Evidently Satan tempted Christ now to draw back from the Cross. Here Jesus won the power to go on to Calvary.

26:40 **What** [*hout s*]. The Greek adverb is not interrogation or exclamatory [*ti*], but only “so” or “thus.” There is a tone of sad disappointment at the discovery that they were asleep after the earnest

plea that they keep awake (verse 38). “Did you not thus have strength enough to keep awake one hour?” Every word struck home.

26:41 **Watch and pray** [*gr goreite kai proseuchesthe*]. Jesus repeats the command of verse 38 with the addition of prayer and with the warning against the peril of temptation. He himself was feeling the worst of all temptations of his earthly life just then. He did not wish then to enter such temptation [*peirasmon*], here in this sense, not mere trial). Thus we are to understand the prayer in Mt 6:13 about leading (being led) into temptation. Their failure was due to weakness of the flesh as is often the case. **Spirit** [*pneuma*] here is the moral life [*intellect, will, emotions*] as opposed to the flesh (cf. Isa 31:3; Ro 7:25). **Except I drink it** [*ean m auto pi*]. Condition of the third class undetermined, but with likelihood of determination, whereas **if this cannot pass away** [*ei ou dunatai touto parelthein*] is first-class condition, determined as fulfilled, assumed to be true. This delicate distinction accurately presents the real attitude of Jesus towards this subtle temptation.

26:43 **For their eyes were heavy** [*san gar aut n hoi ophthalmoi bebar menoi*]. Past perfect passive indicative periphrastic. Their eyes had been weighted down with sleep and still were as they had been on the Mount of Transfiguration (Lu 9:32).

26:45 **Sleep on now and take your rest** [*katheudete loipon kai anapauesthe*]. This makes it “mournful irony” (Plummer) or reproachful concession: “Ye may sleep and rest indefinitely so far as I am concerned; I need no longer your watchful interest” (Bruce). It may be a sad query as Goodspeed: “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?” So Moffatt. This use of [*loipon*] for now or henceforth is common in the papyri. **The hour is at hand** [*ggiken h h ra*]. Time for action has now come. They have missed their chance for sympathy with Jesus. He has now won the victory without their aid. “The Master’s time of weakness is past; He is prepared to face the worst” (Bruce). **Is betrayed** [*paradidotai*]. Futuristic present or inchoative present, the first act in the betrayal is at hand. Jesus had foreseen his “hour” for long and now he faces it bravely.

26:46 **He is at hand** [*ggiken*]. The same verb and tense used of the hour above, present perfect active of [*eggiz*], to draw near, the very form used by John the Baptist of the coming of the kingdom of heaven (Mt 3:2). Whether Jesus heard the approach of the betrayer with the crowd around him or saw the lights or just felt the proximity of the traitor before he was there (J. Weiss), we do not know and it matters little. The scene is pictured as it happened with lifelike power.

26:47 **While he yet spake** [*eti autou lalountos*]. It was an electric moment as Jesus faced Judas with his horde of helpers as if he turned to meet an army. **Let us go** [*ag men*], Jesus had said. And here he is. The eight at the gate seemed to have given no notice. Judas is described here as “one of the twelve” [*heis t n d deka*] in all three Synoptic Gospels (Mr 14:43; Mt 26:47; Lu 22:47). The very horror of the thing is thus emphasized, that one of the chosen twelve apostles should do this dastardly deed. **A great multitude** [*ochlos polus*]. The chief priests and Pharisees had furnished Judas a band of soldiers from the garrison in Antonia (Joh 18:3) and the temple police (Lu 22:52)

with swords (knives) and staves (clubs) with a hired rabble who had lanterns also (Joh 18:3) in spite of the full moon. Judas was taking no chances of failure for he well knew the strange power of Jesus.

26:48 **Gave them a sign** [*ed ken autois s meion*]. Probably just before he reached the place, though Mark (Mr 14:44) has “had given” [*ded kei*] which certainly means before arrival at Gethsemane. At any rate Judas had given the leaders to understand that he would kiss [*phil s*] Jesus in order to identify him for certain. The kiss was a common mode of greeting and Judas chose that sign and actually “kissed him fervently” [*katophil sen*, verse 49), though the compound verb sometimes in the papyri has lost its intensive force. Bruce thinks that Judas was prompted by the inconsistent motives of smouldering love and cowardice. At any rate this revolting ostentatious kiss is “the most terrible instance of the [*hekousia phil mata echthrou*] (Pr 27:6),” the profuse kisses of an enemy (McNeile). This same compound verb occurs in Lu 7:38 of the sinful woman, in Lu 15:20 of the Father’s embrace of the Prodigal Son, and in Ac 20:37 of the Ephesian elders and Paul.

26:50 **Do that for which thou art come** [*eph’ ho parei*]. Moffatt and Goodspeed take it: “Do your errand.” There has been a deal of trouble over this phrase. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 125 to 131) has proven conclusively that it is a question, [*eph’ ho*] in late Greek having the interrogative sense of [*epi ti*] (Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 725). The use of [*eph’ ho*] for “why here” occurs on a Syrian tablet of the first century A.D. 50 that it “was current coin in the language of the people” (Deissmann). Most of the early translations (Old Latin, Old Syriac) took it as a question. So the Vulgate has *ad quid venisti*. In this instance the Authorized Version is correct against the Revised. Jesus exposes the pretence of Judas and shows that he does not believe in his paraded affection (Bruce).

26:51 **One of them that were with Jesus** [*heis t n meta I sou*]. Like the other Synoptics Matthew conceals the name of Peter, probably for prudential reasons as he was still living before A.D. 68. John writing at the end of the century mentions Peter’s name (Joh 18:10). The sword or knife was one of the two that the disciples had (Lu 22:38). Bruce suggests that it was a large knife used in connexion with the paschal feast. Evidently Peter aimed to cut off the man’s head, not his ear [*tion*] is diminutive in form, but not in sense, as often in the *Koin*). He may have been the leader of the band. His name, Malchus, is also given by John (Joh 18:10) because Peter was then dead and in no danger.

26:52 **Put up again thy sword** [*apostrepson t n machairan sou*]. Turn back thy sword into its place. It was a stern rebuke for Peter who had misunderstood the teaching of Jesus in Lu 22:38 as well as in Mt 5:39 (cf. Joh 18:36). The reason given by Jesus has had innumerable illustrations in human history. The sword calls for the sword. Offensive war is here given flat condemnation. The Paris Pact of 1928 (the Kellogg Treaty) is certainly in harmony with the mind of Christ. The will to peace is the first step towards peace, the outlawing of war. Our American cities are often ruled by gangsters who kill each other off.

26:53 **Even now** [*arti*]. Just now, at this very moment. **Legions** [*legi nas*]. A Latin word. Roman soldiers in large numbers were in Palestine later in A.D. 66, but they were in Caesarea and in the tower of Antonia in Jerusalem. A full Roman legion had 6,100 foot and 726 horse in the time of Augustus. But Jesus sees more than twelve legions at his command (one for each apostle) and shows his undaunted courage in this crisis. One should recall the story of Elisha at Dothan (2Ki 6:17).

26:54 **Must be** [*dei*]. Jesus sees clearly his destiny now that he has won the victory in Gethsemane.

26:55 **As against a robber** [*h s epi list n*]. As a robber, not as a thief, but a robber hiding from justice. He will be crucified between two robbers and on the very cross planned for their leader, Barabbas. They have come with no warrant for any crime, but with an armed force to seize Jesus as if a highway robber. Jesus reminds them that he used to sit (imperfect, [*ekathezom n*]) in the temple and teach. But he sees God's purpose in it all for the prophets had foretold his "cup." The desertion of Jesus by the disciples followed this rebuke of the effort of Peter. Jesus had surrendered. So they fled.

26:58 **To see the end** [*idein to telos*]. Peter rallied from the panic and followed afar off [*makrothen*], "more courageous than the rest and yet not courageous enough" (Bruce). John the Beloved Disciple went on into the room where Jesus was. The rest remained outside, but Peter "sat with the officers" to see and hear and hoping to escape notice.

26:59 **Sought false witness against Jesus** [*ez toun pseudomarturian*]. Imperfect tense, kept on seeking. Judges have no right to be prosecutors and least of all to seek after false witness and even to offer bribes to get it.

26:60 **They found it not** [*kai ouch heuron*]. They found false witnesses in plenty, but not the false witness that would stand any sort of test.

26:61 **I am able to destroy the temple of God** [*dunamai katalusai ton naon tou theou*]. What he had said (Joh 2:19) referred to the temple of his body which they were to destroy (and did) and which he would raise again in three days as he did. It was a pitiful perversion of what Jesus had said and even so the two witnesses disagreed in their misrepresentation (Mr 14:59).

26:63 **Held his peace** [*esi pa*]. Kept silent, imperfect tense. Jesus refused to answer the bluster of Caiaphas. **I adjure thee by the living God** [*exorkiz se kata tou theou tou z ntos*]. So Caiaphas put Jesus on oath in order to make him incriminate himself, a thing unlawful in Jewish jurisprudence. He had failed to secure any accusation against Jesus that would stand at all. But Jesus did not refuse to answer under solemn oath, clearly showing that he was not thinking of oaths in courts of justice when he prohibited profanity. The charge that Caiaphas makes is that Jesus claims to be the Messiah, the Son of God. To refuse to answer would be tantamount to a denial. So Jesus answered knowing full well the use that would be made of his confession and claim.

26:64 **Thou hast said** [*su eipas*]. This is a Greek affirmative reply. Mark (Mr 14:62) has it plainly, “I am” [*eimi*]. But this is not all that Jesus said to Caiaphas. He claims that the day will come when Jesus will be the Judge and Caiaphas the culprit using the prophetic language in Da 7:13 and Ps 109:1. It was all that Caiaphas wanted.

26:65 **He hath spoken blasphemy** [*eblasph m sen*]. There was no need of witnesses now, for Jesus had incriminated himself by claiming under oath to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Now it would not be blasphemy for the real Messiah to make such a claim, but it was intolerable to admit that Jesus could be the Messiah of Jewish hope. At the beginning of Christ’s ministry he occasionally used the word Messiah of himself, but he soon ceased, for it was plain that it would create trouble. The people would take it in the sense of a political revolutionist who would throw off the Roman yoke. If he declined that role, the Pharisees would have none of him for that was the kind of a Messiah that they desired. But the hour has now come. At the Triumphal Entry Jesus let the Galilean crowds hail him as Messiah, knowing what the effect would be. Now the hour has struck. He has made his claim and has defied the High Priest.

26:66 **He is worthy of death** [*enochos thanatou estin*]. Held in the bonds of death [*en, ech*] as actually guilty with the genitive [*thanatou*]. The dative expresses liability as in Mt 5:21 [*t i krisei*] and as [*eis*] and the accusative (Mt 5:22). They took the vote though it was at night and they no longer had the power of death since the Romans took it away from them. Death was the penalty of blasphemy (Le 24:15). But they enjoyed taking it as their answer to his unanswerable speeches in the temple that dreadful Tuesday a few days before. It was unanimous save that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did not agree. They were probably absent and not even invited as being under suspicion for being secret disciples of Christ.

26:68 **Thou Christ** [*Christe*]. With definite sneer at his claims under oath in 26:63. With uncontrolled glee and abandon like a lot of hoodlums these doctors of divinity insulted Jesus. They actually spat in his face, buffeted him on the neck [*ekolaphisan*], from [*kolaphos*] the fist), and struck him in the face with the palms of their hands [*erapisan*], from [*rapis*], a rod), all personal indignities after the legal injustice already done. They thus gave vent to their spite and hatred.

26:69 **Thou also** [*kai su*]. Peter had gone within [*es*] the palace (26:58), but was sitting **without** [*ex*] the hall where the trial was going on in the open central court with the servants or officers [*hup ret n*], under rowers, literally, 26:58) of the Sanhedrin. But he could possibly see through the open door above what was going on inside. It is not plain at what stage of the Jewish trial the denials of Peter took place nor the precise order in which they came as the Gospels give them variously. This maid [*paidisk*], slave girl) stepped up to Peter as he was sitting in the court and pointedly said: “Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean.” Peter was warming himself by the fire and the light shone in his face. She probably had noticed Peter come in with John the Beloved Disciple who went on up into the hall of trial. Or she may have seen Peter with Jesus on the streets of Jerusalem.

26:70 **I know not what thou sayest** [*ouk oida ti legeis*]. It was an affectation of extreme ignorance (Bruce) that deceived no one. It was an easy and ancient dodge and easy subterfuge. Dalman (*Words of Jesus*, 80f.) suggests that Peter used the Galilean Aramaean word for know instead of the Judean Aramaean word which betrayed at once his Galilean residence.

26:71 **Into the porch** [*eis ton pul na*]. But Peter was not safe out here, for another maid recognized him and spoke of him as “this fellow” [*houtos*] with a gesture to those out there.

26:72 **With an oath** [*meta horkou*]. This time Peter added an oath, probably a former habit so common to the Jews at that time, and denied acquaintance with Jesus. He even refers to Jesus as “the man” [*ton anthr pon*], an expression that could convey contempt, “the fellow.”

26:73 **They that stood by** [*hoi hest tes*]. The talk about Peter continued. Luke (Lu 22:59) states that the little while was about an hour. The bystanders came up to Peter and bluntly assert that he was “of a truth” [*al th s*] one of the followers of Jesus for his speech betrayed him. Even the Revised Version retains “bewrayeth,” quaint old English for “betrayeth.” The Greek has it simply “makes thee evident” [*d lon se poiei*]. His dialect [*lalia*] clearly revealed that he was a Galilean. The Galileans had difficulty with the gutturals and Peter’s second denial had exposed him to the tormenting raillery of the loungers who continued to nag him.

26:74 **Then began he to curse and to swear** [*tote rxato katathematizein kai omnuein*]. He repeated his denial with the addition of profanity to prove that he was telling the truth instead of the lie that they all knew. His repeated denials gave him away still more, for he could not pronounce the Judean gutturals. He called down on himself [*katathematizein*] imprecations in his desperate irritation and loss of self-control at his exposure. **The cock crew** [*alekt n eph n sen*]. No article in the Greek, just “a cock crew” at that juncture, “straightway” [*euthus*]. But it startled Peter.

26:75 **Peter remembered** [*emn sth ho Petros*]. A small thing, but *magna circumstantia* (Bengel). In a flash of lightning rapidity he recalled the words of Jesus a few hours before (Mt 26:34) which he had then scouted with the proud boast that “even if I must die with thee, yet will I not deny thee” (26:35). And now this triple denial was a fact. There is no extenuation for the base denials of Peter. He had incurred the dread penalty involved in the words of Jesus in Mt 10:33 of denial by Jesus before the Father in heaven. But Peter’s revulsion of feeling was as sudden as his sin. **He went out and wept bitterly** [*exelth n ex eklausen pikr s*]. Luke adds that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter (Lu 22:61). That look brought Peter back to his senses. He could not stay where he now was with the revilers of Jesus. He did not feel worthy or able to go openly into the hall where Jesus was. So outside he went with a broken heart. The constative aorist here does not emphasize as Mark’s imperfect does (Mr 14:72, [*eklaien*]) the continued weeping that was now Peter’s only consolation. The tears were bitter, all the more so by reason of that look of understanding pity that Jesus gave him. One of the tragedies of the Cross is the bleeding heart of Peter. Judas was a total wreck and

Peter was a near derelict. Satan had sifted them all as wheat, but Jesus had prayed specially for Peter (Lu 22:31f.). Will Satan show Peter to be all chaff as Judas was?

Chapter 27

27:1 **Now when morning was come** [*pr ias de genomen s*]. Genitive absolute. After dawn came the Sanhedrin held a formal meeting to condemn Jesus and so ratify the illegal trial during the night (Mr 15:1; Lu 22:66-71). Luke gives the details of this second ratification consultation. The phrase used, **took counsel** [*sumboulion elabon*] is a Latin idiom (*consilium ceperunt*) for [*sunebouleusanto*].

27:2 **Delivered him up to Pilate the governor** [*pared kan Peilat i t i h gemoni*]. What they had done was all a form and a farce. Pilate had the power of death, but they had greatly enjoyed the condemnation and the buffeting of Jesus now in their power bound as a condemned criminal. He was no longer the master of assemblies in the temple, able to make the Sanhedrin cower before him. He had been bound in the garden and was bound before Annas (Joh 18:12,24), but may have been unbound before Caiaphas.

27:3 **Repented himself** [*metamel theis*]. Probably Judas saw Jesus led away to Pilate and thus knew that the condemnation had taken place. This verb (first aorist passive participle of [*metamelomai*]) really means to be sorry afterwards like the English word *repent* from the Latin *repenitet*, to have pain again or afterwards. See the same verb [*metamel theis*] in Mt 21:30 of the boy who became sorry and changed to obedience. The word does not have an evil sense in itself. Paul uses it of his sorrow for his sharp letter to the Corinthians, a sorrow that ceased when good came of the letter (2Co 7:8). But mere sorrow avails nothing unless it leads to change of mind and life [*metanoia*], the sorrow according to God (2Co 7:9). This sorrow Peter had when he wept bitterly. It led Peter back to Christ. But Judas had only remorse that led to suicide.

27:4 **See thou to it** [*su ops i*]. Judas made a belated confession of his sin in betraying innocent blood to the Sanhedrin, but not to God, nor to Jesus. The Sanhedrin ignore the innocent or righteous blood [*haima ath ion*] or [*dikaion*] and tell Judas to look after his own guilt himself. They ignore also their own guilt in the matter. The use of [*su ops i*] as a volitive future, an equivalent of the imperative, is commoner in Latin (*tu videris*) than in Greek, though the *Koin* shows it also. The sentiment is that of Cain (Grotius, Bruce).

27:5 **Hanged himself** [*ap gxato*]. Direct middle. His act was sudden after he hurled the money into the sanctuary [*eis ton naon*], the sacred enclosure where the priests were. The motives of Judas in the betrayal were mixed as is usually the case with criminals. The money cut a small figure with him save as an expression of contempt as the current price of a slave.

27:6 **Into the treasury** [*eis ton korban n*]. Josephus (*War II. 9,4*) uses this very word for the sacred treasury. *Korban* is Aramaic for *gift* [*d ron*] as is plain in Mr 7:11. The price of blood (blood-money) was pollution to the treasury (De 23:18f.). So they took the money out and used it for a secular

purpose. The rabbis knew how to split hairs about *Korban* (Mr 7:1-23; Mt 15:1-20), but they balk at this blood-money.

27:7 The potter's field [*tou agrou tou kerame s*]. Grotius suggests that it was a small field where potter's clay was obtained, like a brickyard (Broadus). Otherwise we do not know why the name exists. In Ac 1:18 we have another account of the death of Judas by bursting open (possibly falling after hanging himself) after he obtained the field by the wages of iniquity. But it is possible that [*ekt sato*] there refers to the rabbinical use of *Korban*, that the money was still that of Judas though he was dead and so he really "acquired" the field by his blood-money.

27:8 The field of blood [*agros haimatos*]. This name was attached to it because it was the price of blood and that is not inconsistent with Ac 1:18f. Today potter's field carries the idea here started of burial place for strangers who have no where else to lie [*eis taph n tois xenois*], probably at first Jews from elsewhere dying in Jerusalem. In Ac 1:19 it is called **Aceldama** or **place of blood** [*ch rion haimatos*] for the reason that Judas' blood was shed there, here because it was purchased by blood money. Both reasons could be true.

27:9 By Jeremiah the prophet [*dia Ieremiou*]. This quotation comes mainly from Zec 11:13 though not in exact language. In Jer 18:18 the prophet tells of a visit to a potter's house and in Jer 32:6ff. of the purchase of a field. It is in Zechariah that the thirty pieces of silver are mentioned. Many theories are offered for the combination of Zechariah and Jeremiah and attributing it all to Jeremiah as in Mr 1:2f. the quotation from Isaiah and Malachi is referred wholly to Isaiah as the more prominent of the two. Broadus and McNeile give a full discussion of the various theories from a mere mechanical slip to the one just given above. Matthew has here (27:10) "the field of the potter" [*eis ton agron tou kerame s*] for "the potter the house of the Lord" in Zec 11:13. That makes it more parallel with the language of Mt 27:7.

27:11 Now Jesus stood before the governor [*ho de I sous estath emprosthen tou h gemonos*]. Here is one of the dramatic episodes of history. Jesus stood face to face with the Roman governor. The verb [*estath*], not [*est*] (second aorist active), is first aorist passive and can mean "was placed" there, but he stood, not sat. The term [*h gem n*] (from [*h geomai*], to lead) was technically a *legatus Caesaris*, an officer of the Emperor, more exactly procurator, ruler under the Emperor of a less important province than propraetor (as over Syria). The senatorial provinces like Achaia were governed by proconsuls. Pilate represented Roman law. **Art thou the King of the Jews?** [*Su ei ho basileus t n Ioudai n;*]. This is what really mattered. Matthew does not give the charges made by the Sanhedrin (Lu 23:2) nor the private interview with Pilate (Joh 18:28-32). He could not ignore the accusation that Jesus claimed to be King of the Jews. Else he could be himself accused to Caesar for disloyalty. Rivals and pretenders were common all over the empire. So here was one more. By his answer ({thou sayest}) Jesus confesses that he is. So Pilate has a problem on his hands. What sort of a king does this one claim to be? **Thou** [*su*] the King of the Jews?

27:14 **And he gave him no answer, not even to one word** [*kai ouk apekrith aut i pros oude hen rh ma*]. Jesus refused to answer the charges of the Jews (verse 12). Now he continued silent under the direct question of Pilate. The Greek is very precise besides the double negative. “He did not reply to him up to not even one word.” This silent dignity amazed Pilate and yet he was strangely impressed.

27:17 **Barabbas or Jesus which is called Christ?** [*Barabb n I soun ton legomenon Christon;*]. Pilate was catching at straws or seeking any loophole to escape condemning a harmless lunatic or exponent of a superstitious cult such as he deemed Jesus to be, certainly in no political sense a rival of Caesar. The Jews interpreted “Christ” for Pilate to be a claim to be King of the Jews in opposition to Caesar, “a most unprincipled proceeding” (Bruce). So he bethought him of the time-honoured custom at the passover of releasing to the people “a prisoner whom they wished” [*desmion hon thelon*]. No parallel case has been found, but Josephus mentions the custom (*Ant. xx. 9,3*). Barabbas was for some reason a popular hero, a notable [*epis mon*], if not notorious, prisoner, leader of an insurrection or revolution (Mr 15:7) probably against Rome, and so guilty of the very crime that they tried to fasten on Jesus who only claimed to be king in the spiritual sense of the spiritual kingdom. So Pilate unwittingly pitted against each other two prisoners who represented the antagonistic forces of all time. It is an elliptical structure in the question, “whom do you wish that I release?” [*tina thelete apolus ;*], either two questions in one (asyndeton) or the ellipse of [*hina*] before [*apolus*]. See the same idiom in verse 21. But Pilate’s question tested the Jews as well as himself. It tests all men today. Some manuscripts add the name Jesus to Barabbas and that makes it all the sharper. Jesus Barabbas or Jesus Christ?

27:18 **For envy** [*dia phthonon*]. Pilate was dense about many things, but he knew that the Jewish leaders were jealous of the power of Jesus with the people. He may have heard of the events of the Triumphal Entry and the Temple Teaching. The envy, of course, came primarily from the leaders.

27:19 **His wife** [*h gun autou*]. Poor Pilate was getting more entangled every moment as he hesitated to set Jesus free whom he knew to be free of any crime against Caesar. Just at the moment when he was trying to enlist the people in behalf of Jesus against the schemes of the Jewish leaders, his wife sent a message about her dream concerning Jesus. She calls Jesus “that righteous man” [*t i dikai i ekein i*] and her psychical sufferings increased Pilate’s superstitious fears. Tradition names her Procla and even calls her a Christian which is not probable. But it was enough to unnerve the weak Pilate as he sat on the judgment-seat [*epi tou b matos*] up over the pavement.

27:20 **Persuaded** [*epeisan*]. The chief priests (Sadducees) and elders (Pharisees) saw the peril of the situation and took no chances. While Pilate wavered in pressing the question, they used all their arts to get the people to “ask for themselves” [*ait s ntai*], indirect middle ingressive aorist subjunctive) and to choose Barabbas and not Jesus.

27:22 **What then shall I do unto Jesus which is called Christ?** [*ti oun poi s I soun ton legomenon Christon*;]. They had asked for Barabbas under the tutelage of the Sanhedrin, but Pilate pressed home the problem of Jesus with the dim hope that they might ask for Jesus also. But they had learned their lesson. Some of the very people who shouted “Hosannah” on the Sunday morning of the Triumphal Entry now shout **Let him be crucified** [*staur th t*]. The tide has now turned against Jesus, the hero of Sunday, now the condemned criminal of Friday. Such is popular favour. But all the while Pilate is shirking his own fearful responsibility and trying to hide his own weakness and injustice behind popular clamour and prejudice.

27:23 **Why, what evil hath he done?** [*ti gar kakon epoi sen*]. This was a feeble protest by a flickering conscience. Pilate descended to that level of arguing with the mob now inflamed with passion for the blood of Jesus, a veritable lynching fiasco. But this exhibition of weakness made the mob fear refusal by Pilate to proceed. So they “kept crying exceedingly” [*periss s ekrazon*], imperfect tense of repeated action and vehemently) their demand for the crucifixion of Jesus. It was like a gladiatorial show with all thumbs turned down.

27:24 **Washed his hands** [*apenipsato tas cheiras*]. As a last resort since the hubbub [*thorubos*] increased because of his vacillation. The verb [*aponipt*] means to wash off and the middle voice means that he washed off his hands for himself as a common symbol of cleanliness and added his pious claim with a slap at them. **I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man** (or {this blood}); **see ye to it.** [*Ath ios eimi apo tou haimatos tou dikaiou toutou*] or [*tou haimatos toutou*] as some manuscripts have it, [*humeis opsesthe*].) The Jews used this symbol (De 21:6; Ps 26:6; 73:13). Plummer doubts if Pilate said these words with a direct reference to his wife’s message (26:19), but I fail to see the ground for that scepticism. The so-called *Gospel of Peter* says that Pilate washed his hands because the Jews refused to do so.

27:25 **His blood be upon us and upon our children** [*to haima autou kai epi ta tekna h m n*]. These solemn words do show a consciousness that the Jewish people recognized their guilt and were even proud of it. But Pilate could not wash away his own guilt that easily. The water did not wash away the blood of Jesus from his hands any more than Lady Macbeth could wash away the blood-stains from her lily-white hands. One legend tells that in storms on Mt. Pilatus in Switzerland his ghost comes out and still washes his hands in the storm-clouds. There was guilt enough for Judas, for Caiaphas and for all the Sanhedrin both Sadducees and Pharisees, for the Jewish people as a whole [*pas ho laos*], and for Pilate. At bottom the sins of all of us nailed Jesus to the Cross. This language is no excuse for race hatred today, but it helps explain the sensitiveness between Jew and Christians on this subject. And Jews today approach the subject of the Cross with a certain amount of prejudice.

27:26 **Scourged** [*phragell sas*]. The Latin verb *flagellare*. Pilate apparently lost interest in Jesus when he discovered that he had no friends in the crowd. The religious leaders had been eager to get Jesus condemned before many of the Galilean crowd friendly to Jesus came into the city. They had apparently succeeded. The scourging before the crucifixion was a brutal Roman custom. The

scourging was part of the capital punishment. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 269) quotes a Florentine papyrus of the year 85 A.D. wherein G. Septimius Vegetus, governor of Egypt, says of a certain Phibion: “Thou hadst been worthy of scourging ... but I will give thee to the people.”

27:27 Into the palace [*eis to prait rion*]. In Rome the praetorium was the camp of the praetorian (from praetor) guard of soldiers (Php 1:13), but in the provinces it was the palace in which the governor resided as in Ac 23:35 in Caesarea. So here in Jerusalem Pilate ordered Jesus and all the band or cohort [*hol n t n speiran*] of soldiers to be led into the palace in front of which the judgment-seat had been placed. The Latin *spira* was anything rolled into a circle like a twisted ball of thread. These Latin words are natural here in the atmosphere of the court and the military environment. The soldiers were gathered together for the sport of seeing the scourging. These heathen soldiers would also enjoy showing their contempt for the Jews as well as for the condemned man.

27:28 A scarlet robe [*chlamuda kokkin n*]. A kind of short cloak worn by soldiers, military officers, magistrates, kings, emperors (2Macc. 12:35; Josephus, *Ant.* V. 1,10), a soldier’s *sagum* or scarf. Carr (*Cambridge Gk. Test.*) suggests that it may have been a worn-out scarf of Pilate’s. The scarlet colour [*kokkin n*] was a dye derived from the female insect [*kermes*] which gathered on the [*ilex coccifera*] found in Palestine. These dried clusters of insects look like berries and form the famous dye. The word occurs in Plutarch, Epictetus, Herodas, and late papyri besides the Septuagint and New Testament. Mark (Mr 15:17) has “purple” [*porphuran*]. There are various shades of purple and scarlet and it is not easy to distinguish these colours or tints. The manuscripts vary here between “stripped” [*ekdusantes*] and “clothed” [*endusantes*]. He had been stripped for the scourging. If “clothed” is correct, the soldiers added the scarlet (purple) mantle. Herodotus (iii. 139) relates that Darius richly rewarded a Samian exile for a rare scarlet robe which he obtained from him. This scarlet mantle on Jesus was mock imitation of the royal purple.

27:29 A crown of thorns [*stephanon ex akanth n*]. They wove a crown out of thorns which would grow even in the palace grounds. It is immaterial whether they were young and tender thorn bushes, as probable in the spring, or hard bushes with sharp prongs. The soldiers would not care, for they were after ridicule and mockery even if it caused pain. It was more like a victor’s garland [*stephanon*] than a royal diadem [*diad ma*], but it served the purpose. So with the reed [*kalamon*], a stalk of common cane grass which served as sceptre. The soldiers were familiar with the *Ave Caesar* and copy it in their mockery of Jesus: **Hail, King of the Jews** [*chaire, Basileu t n Ioudai n*]. The soldiers added the insults used by the Sanhedrin (Mt 26:67), spitting on him and smiting him with the reed. Probably Jesus had been unbound already. At any rate the garments of mockery were removed before the *via dolorosa* to the cross (verse 31).

27:32 Compelled [*ggareusan*]. This word of Persian origin was used in Mt 5:41, which see. There are numerous papyri examples of Ptolemaic date and it survives in modern Greek vernacular. So

the soldiers treat Simon of Cyrene (a town of Libya) as a Persian courier [*aggaros*] and impress him into service, probably because Jesus was showing signs of physical weakness in bearing his own Cross as the victims had to do, and not as a mere jest on Simon. “Gethsemane, betrayal, the ordeal of the past sleepless night, scourging, have made the flesh weak” (Bruce). Yes, and the burden of sin of the world that was breaking his heart. **His cross** [*ton stauron autou*]. Jesus had used the term cross about himself (16:24). It was a familiar enough picture under Roman rule. Jesus had long foreseen and foretold this horrible form of death for himself (Mt 20:19; 23:24; 26:2). He had heard the cry of the mob to Pilate that he be crucified (27:22) and Pilate’s surrender (27:26) and he was on the way to the Cross (27:31). There were various kinds of crosses and we do not know precisely the shape of the Cross on which Jesus was crucified, though probably the one usually presented is correct. Usually the victim was nailed (hands and feet) to the cross before it was raised and it was not very high. The crucifixion was done by the soldiers (27:35) in charge and two robbers were crucified on each side of Jesus, three crosses standing in a row (27:38).

27:33 **Golgotha** [*Golgotha*]. Chaldaic or Aramaic *Gulgatha*, Hebrew *Gulgoleth*, place of a skull-shaped mount, not place of skulls. Latin Vulgate *Calvariae locus*, hence our Calvary. Tyndale misunderstood it as a place of dead men’s skulls. Calvary or Golgotha is not the traditional place of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, but a place outside of the city, probably what is now called Gordon’s Calvary, a hill north of the city wall which from the Mount of Olives looks like a skull, the rock-hewn tombs resembling eyes in one of which Jesus may have been buried.

27:34 **Wine mingled with gall** [*oinon meta chol s memigmenon*]. Late MSS. read **vinegar** [*oxos*] instead of wine and Mark (Mr 15:23) has myrrh instead of gall. The myrrh gave the sour wine a better flavour and like the bitter gall had a narcotic and stupefying effect. Both elements may have been in the drink which Jesus tasted and refused to drink. Women provided the drink to deaden the sense of pain and the soldiers may have added the gall to make it disagreeable. Jesus desired to drink to the full the cup from his Father’s hand (Joh 18:11).

27:36 **Watched him there** [*et roun auton ekei*]. Imperfect tense descriptive of the task to prevent the possibility of rescue or removal of the body. These rough Roman soldiers casting lots over the garments of Christ give a picture of comedy at the foot of the Cross, the tragedy of the ages.

27:37 **His accusation** [*t n aitian autou*]. The title [*titlos*], Joh 19:19) or placard of the crime (the inscription, [*he epigraph*] which was carried before the victim or hung around his neck as he walked to execution was now placed above [*ep’ an*] the head of Jesus on the projecting piece [*crux immurus*]. This inscription gave the name and home, **Jesus of Nazareth**, and the charge on which he was convicted, **the King of the Jews** and the identification, **This is**. The four reports all give the charge and vary in the others. The inscription in full was: This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. The three languages are mentioned only by John (Joh 19:20), Latin for law, Hebrew (Aramaic) for the Jews, Greek for everybody. The accusation (charge, cause, [*aitia*] correctly told the facts of the condemnation.

27:38 **Robbers** [*l istai*]. Not thieves [*kleptai*] as in Authorized Version. See Mt 26:55. These two robbers were probably members of the band of Barabbas on whose cross Jesus now hung.

27:39 **Wagging their heads** [*kinountes tas kephalas aut n*]. Probably in mock commiseration. “Jews again appear on the scene, with a malice like that shewn in the trial before the Sanhedrin” (McNeile). “To us it may seem incredible that even his worst enemies could be guilty of anything so brutal as to hurl taunts at one suffering the agonies of crucifixion” (Bruce). These passers-by [*parat roumenoi*] look on Jesus as one now down and out. They jeer at the fallen foe.

27:40 **If thou art the Son of God** [*ei huios ei tou theou*]. More exactly, “If thou art a son of God,” the very language of the devil to Jesus (Mt 4:3) in the early temptations, now hurled at Jesus under the devil’s prompting as he hung upon the Cross. There is allusion, of course, to the claim of Jesus under oath before the Sanhedrin “the Son of God” [*ho huios tou theou*] and a repetition of the misrepresentation of his words about the temple of his body. It is a pitiful picture of human depravity and failure in the presence of Christ dying for sinners.

27:41 **The chief priests mocking** [*hoi archiereis empaizontes*]. The Sanhedrin in fact, for “the scribes and elders” are included. The word for mocking [*empaizontes, en,*] and [*paiz*], from [*pais*], child) means acting like silly children who love to guy one another. These grave and reverend seniors had already given vent to their glee at the condemnation of Jesus by themselves (Mt 26:67f.).

27:42 **He saved others; himself he cannot save** [*allous es sen; heauton ou dunatai s sai*]. The sarcasm is true, though they do not know its full significance. If he had saved himself now, he could not have saved any one. The paradox is precisely the philosophy of life proclaimed by Jesus himself (Mt 10:39). **Let him now come down** [*katabat nun*]. Now that he is a condemned criminal nailed to the Cross with the claim of being “the King of Israel” (the Jews) over his head. Their spiteful assertion that they would then believe upon Jesus [*ep’ auton*] is plainly untrue. They would have shifted their ground and invented some other excuse. When Jesus wrought his greatest miracles, they wanted “a sign from heaven.” These “pious scoffers” (Bruce) are like many today who make factitious and arbitrary demands of Christ whose character and power and deity are plain to all whose eyes are not blinded by the god of this world. Christ will not give new proofs to the blind in heart.

27:43 **Let him deliver him now** [*rhusasth nun*]. They add the word “now” to Ps 21; 22:8. That is the point of the sneer at Christ’s claim to be God’s son thrown in his teeth again and at the willingness and power of God to help his “son.” The verb [*thel*] here may mean **love** as in the Septuagint (Ps 18:20; 41:12) or “cares for” (Moffatt), “gin he cares ocht for him” (*Braid Scots*).

27:44 **The robbers also** [*kai hoi l istai*]. Probably “even the robbers” (Weymouth) who felt a momentary superiority to Jesus thus maligned by all. So the inchoative imperfect [*neidizon*] means “began to reproach him.”

27:45 **From the sixth hour** [*apo hekt s h ras*]. Curiously enough McNeile takes this to mean the trial before Pilate (Joh 18:14). But clearly John uses Roman time, writing at the close of the century when Jewish time was no longer in vogue. It was six o'clock in the morning Roman time when the trial occurred before Pilate. The crucifixion began at the third hour (Mr 15:25) Jewish time or nine A.M. The darkness began at noon, the sixth hour Jewish time and lasted till 3 P.M. Roman time, the ninth hour Jewish time (Mr 15:33; Mt 27:45; Lu 23:44). The dense darkness for three hours could not be an eclipse of the sun and Luke (Lu 23:45) does not so say, only "the sun's light failing." Darkness sometimes precedes earthquakes and one came at this time or dense masses of clouds may have obscured the sun's light. One need not be disturbed if nature showed its sympathy with the tragedy of the dying of the Creator on the Cross (Ro 8:22), groaning and travailing until now.

27:46 **My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?** [*Thee mou, thee mou, hina ti me egkatelipes*]. Matthew first transliterates the Aramaic, according to the Vatican manuscript (B), the words used by Jesus: *El i, el i, lema sabachthanei*; Some of the MSS. give the transliteration of these words from Ps 22:1 in the Hebrew (*Eli, Eli, lama Zaphthanei*). This is the only one of the seven sayings of Christ on the Cross given by Mark and Matthew. The other six occur in Luke and John. This is the only sentence of any length in Aramaic preserved in Matthew, though he has Aramaic words like amen, corban, mammon, pascha, raca, Satan, Golgotha. The so-called Gospel of Peter preserves this saying in a Docetic (Cerinthian) form: "My power, my power, thou hast forsaken me!" The Cerinthian Gnostics held that the *aeon* Christ came on the man Jesus at his baptism and left him here on the Cross so that only the man Jesus died. Nothing from Jesus so well illustrates the depth of his suffering of soul as he felt himself regarded as sin though sinless (2Co 5:21). Joh 3:16 comes to our relief here as we see the Son of God bearing the sin of the world. This cry of desolation comes at the close of the three hours of darkness.

27:48 **Gave him to drink** [*epotizen*]. Imperfect of conative action, **offered him a drink** of vinegar on the sponge on a reed. Others interrupted this kindly man, but Jesus did taste this mild stimulant (Joh 19:30) for he thirsted (Joh 19:28).

27:49 **Whether Elijah cometh to save him** [*ei erchetai Eleias s s n auton*]. The excuse had a pious sound as they misunderstood the words of Jesus in his outcry of soul anguish. We have here one of the rare instances [*s s n*] of the future participle to express purpose in the N.T. though a common Greek idiom. Some ancient MSS. add here what is genuine in Joh 19:34, but what makes complete wreck of the context for in verse 50 Jesus cried with a loud voice and was not yet dead in verse 49. It was a crass mechanical copying by some scribe from Joh 19:34. See full discussion in my *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the N.T.*

27:50 **Yielded up his spirit** [*aph ken to pneuma*]. The loud cry may have been Ps 31:5 as given in Lu 23:46: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." John (Joh 19:30) gives **It is finished** [*tetelestai*], though which was actually last is not clear. Jesus did not die from slow exhaustion, but with a loud cry. **He breathed out** [*exepneusen*, Mr 15:37), **sent back his spirit** (Mt 27:50), **gave**

up his spirit [*pared ken to pneuma*], Joh 19:30). “He gave up his life because he willed it, when he willed it, and as he willed it” (Augustine). Stroud (*Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*) considers the loud cry one of the proofs that Jesus died of a ruptured heart as a result of bearing the sin of the world.

27:51 **Was rent** [*eschisth*]. Both Mark (Mr 15:38) and Luke (Lu 23:45) mention also this fact. Matthew connects it with the earthquake, “the earth did quake” [*h g eseisth*]. Josephus (*War VI. 299*) tells of a quaking in the temple before the destruction and the Talmud tells of a quaking forty years before the destruction of the temple. Allen suggests that “a cleavage in the masonry of the porch, which rent the outer veil and left the Holy Place open to view, would account for the language of the Gospels, of Josephus, and of the Talmud.” This veil was a most elaborately woven fabric of seventy-two twisted plaits of twenty-four threads each and the veil was sixty feet long and thirty wide. The rending of the veil signified the removal of the separation between God and the people (Gould).

27:52 **The tombs were opened** [*ta mn meia ane ichth san*]. First aorist passive indicative (double augment). The splitting of the rocks by the earthquake and the opening of tombs can be due to the earthquake. But the raising of the bodies of the dead after the resurrection of Jesus which appeared to many in the holy city puzzles many today who admit the actual bodily resurrection of Jesus. Some would brand all these portents as legends since they appear in Matthew alone. Others would say that “after his resurrection” should read “after their resurrection,” but that would make it conflict with Paul’s description of Christ as the first fruits of them that sleep (1Co 15:20). Some say that Jesus released these spirits after his descent into Hades. So it goes. We come back to miracles connected with the birth of Jesus, God’s Son coming into the world. If we grant the possibility of such manifestations of God’s power, there is little to disturb one here in the story of the death of God’s Son.

27:54 **Truly this was the Son of God** [*al th s theou huios n houtos*]. There is no article with God or Son in the Greek so that it means “God’s Son,” either “the Son of God” or “a Son of God.” There is no way to tell. Evidently the centurion [*hekatontarchos*] here, ruler of a hundred, Latin word *kenturi n* in Mr 15:39) was deeply moved by the portents which he had witnessed. He had heard the several flings at Jesus for claiming to be the Son of God and may even have heard of his claim before the Sanhedrin and Pilate. How much he meant by his words we do not know, but probably he meant more than merely “a righteous man” (Lu 23:47). Petronius is the name given this centurion by tradition. If he was won now to trust in Christ, he came as a pagan and, like the robber who believed, was saved as Jesus hung upon the Cross. All who are ever saved in truth are saved because of the death of Jesus on the Cross. So the Cross began to do its work at once.

27:55 **Many women** [*gunaikes pollai*]. We have come to expect the women from Galilee to be faithful, last at the Cross and first at the tomb. Luke (Lu 23:49) says that “all his acquaintance” [*pantes hoi gn stoi aut i*] stood at a distance and saw the end. One may hope that the apostles were

in that sad group. But certainly many women were there. The Mother of Jesus had been taken away from the side of the Cross by the Beloved Disciple to his own home (Joh 19:27). Matthew names three of the group by name. Mary Magdalene is mentioned as a well-known person though not previously named in Matthew's Gospel. Certainly she is not the sinful woman of Lu 7 nor Mary of Bethany. There is another Mary, the mother of James and Joseph (Joses) not otherwise known to us. And then there is the mother of the sons of Zebedee (James and John), usually identified with Salome (Mr 15:40). These noble and faithful women were "beholding from afar" [*apo makrothen the rousai*]. These three women may have drawn nearer to the Cross for Mary the Mother of Jesus stood beside the Cross [*para t i staur i*] with Mary of Clopas and Mary Magdalene (Joh 19:25) before she left. They had once ministered unto Jesus [*diakonousai aut i*] and now he is dead. Matthew does not try to picture the anguish of heart of these noble women nor does he say as Luke (Lu 23:48) does that "they returned smiting their breasts." He drops the curtain on that saddest of all tragedies as the loyal band stood and looked at the dead Christ on Golgotha. What hope did life now hold for them?

27:57 And when even was come [*opsias de genomen s*]. It was the Preparation [*paraskeu*], the day before the sabbath (Mr 15:42; Lu 23:54; Joh 31:42). [*Paraskeu*] is the name in modern Greek today for Friday. The Jews were anxious that these bodies should be taken down before the sabbath began at 6 P.M. The request of Joseph of Arimathea for the body of Jesus was a relief to Pilate and to the Jews also. We know little about this member of the Sanhedrin save his name Joseph, his town Arimathea, that he was rich, a secret disciple, and had not agreed to the death of Jesus. Probably he now wished that he had made an open profession. But he has courage now when others are cowardly and asked for the personal privilege [*it sato*], middle voice, asked for himself) of placing the body of Jesus in his new tomb. Some today identify this tomb with one of the rock tombs now visible under Gordon's Calvary. It was a mournful privilege and dignity that came to Joseph and Nicodemus (Joh 19:39-41) as they wrapped the body of Jesus in clean linen cloth and with proper spices placed it in this fresh [*kain i*] tomb in which no body had yet been placed. It was cut in the rock [*elatom sen*] for his own body, but now it was for Jesus. But now (verse 60) he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and departed. That was for safety. But two women had watched the sad and lonely ceremony, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (mother of James and Joseph). They were sitting opposite and looking in silence.

27:63 Sir, we remember [*kurie, emnesth men*]. This was the next day, on our Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, the day after the Preparation (Mt 27:62). Ingressive aorist indicative, we have just recalled. It is objected that the Jewish rulers would know nothing of such a prediction, but in Mt 12:40 he expressly made it to them. Meyer scouts as unhistorical legend the whole story that Christ definitely foretold his resurrection on the third day. But that is to make legendary much of the Gospels and to limit Jesus to a mere man. The problem remains why the disciples forgot and the Jewish leaders remembered. But that is probably due on the one hand to the overwhelming grief of the disciples coupled with the blighting of all their hopes of a political Messiah in Jesus, and on the other hand

to the keen nervous fear of the leaders who dreaded the power of Jesus though dead. They wanted to make sure of their victory and prevent any possible revival of this pernicious heresy. **That deceiver** [*ekeinos ho planos*] they call him, a vagabond wanderer [*planos*] with a slur in the use of **that** [*ekeinos*], a picturesque sidelight on their intense hatred of and fear of Jesus.

27:64 **The last error** [*h eschat plan*]. The last delusion, imposture (Weymouth), fraud (Moffatt). Latin *error* is used in both senses, from *errare*, to go astray. The first fraud was belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, the second belief in his resurrection.

27:65 **Make it as sure as you can** [*asphalisasthe h s oidate*]. “Make it secure for yourselves (ingressive aorist middle) as you know how.” **Have a guard** [*echete koust dian*], present imperative, a guard of Roman soldiers, not mere temple police. The Latin term *koust dia* occurs in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus of A.D. 22. “The curt permission to the Jews whom he despised is suitable in the mouth of the Roman official” (McNeile).

27:66 **Sealing the stone, the guard being with them** [*sphragisant s ton lithon meta t s koust dias*]. Probably by a cord stretched across the stone and sealed at each end as in Da 6:17. The sealing was done in the presence of the Roman guard who were left in charge to protect this stamp of Roman authority and power. They did their best to prevent theft and the resurrection (Bruce), but they overreached themselves and provided additional witness to the fact of the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus (Plummer).

Chapter 28

28:1 **Now late on the sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week** [*opse de sabbat n, t i epiph skous i eis mian sabbat n*]. This careful chronological statement according to Jewish days clearly means that before the sabbath was over, that is before six P.M., this visit by the women was made “to see the sepulchre” [*theor sai ton taphon*]. They had seen the place of burial on Friday afternoon (Mr 15:47; Mt 27:61; Lu 23:55). They had rested on the sabbath after preparing spices and ointments for the body of Jesus (Lu 23:56), a sabbath of unutterable sorrow and woe. They will buy other spices after sundown when the new day has dawned and the sabbath is over (Mr 16:1). Both Matthew here and Luke (Lu 23:54) use dawn [*epiph sk*] for the dawning of the twenty-four hour-day at sunset, not of the dawning of the twelve-hour day at sunrise. The Aramaic used the verb for dawn in both senses. The so-called Gospel of Peter has [*epiph sk*] in the same sense as Matthew and Luke as does a late papyrus. Apparently the Jewish sense of “dawn” is here expressed by this Greek verb. Allen thinks that Matthew misunderstands Mark at this point, but clearly Mark is speaking of sunrise and Matthew of sunset. Why allow only one visit for the anxious women?

28:2 **There was a great earthquake** [*seismos egeneto megas*]. Clearly not the earthquake of 27:51. The precise time of this earthquake is not given. It was before sunrise on the first day of the week when the women made the next visit. Matthew alone relates the coming of the angel of the Lord who rolled away the stone and was sitting upon it [*apekulise ton lithon kai ekath to epan autou*]. If one is querulous about these supernatural phenomena, he should reflect that the Resurrection of Jesus is one of the great supernatural events of all time. Cornelius ... Lapide dares to say: “The earth, which trembled with sorrow at the Death of Christ as it were leaped for joy at His Resurrection.” The Angel of the Lord announced the Incarnation of the Son of God and also His Resurrection from the grave. There are apparent inconsistencies in the various narratives of the Resurrection and the appearances of the Risen Christ. We do not know enough of the details to be able to reconcile them. But the very variations strengthen the independent witness to the essential fact that Jesus rose from the grave. Let each writer give his own account in his own way. The stone was rolled away not to let the Lord out, but to let the women in to prove the fact of the empty tomb (McNeile).

28:3 **Appearance** [*eidea*]. Here only in the N.T. Compare [*morph*] and [*sch ma*].

28:4 **The watchers did quake** [*eseisth san hoi t rountes*]. And no wonder that they became as dead men and fled before the women came.

28:5 **Unto the women** [*tais gunaixin*]. According to John, Mary Magdalene had left to go and tell Peter and John of the supposed grave robbery (Joh 20:1f.). But the other women remained and had the interview with the angel (or men, Luke) about the empty tomb and the Risen Christ. **Jesus the**

Crucified [*I soun ton estaur menon*]. Perfect passive participle, state of completion. This he will always be. So Paul will preach as essential to his gospel “and this one crucified” [*kai touton estaur menon*], 1Co 2:2).

28:6 **Risen from the dead** [*gerth apo t n nekr n*]. **Jesus the Risen**. This is the heart of the testimony of the angel to the women. It is what Paul wishes Timothy never to forget (2Ti 2:8), “Jesus Christ risen from the dead” [*I soun Christon eg germenon ek nekr n*]. They were afraid and dazzled by the glory of the scene, but the angel said, “Come, see the place where the Lord lay” [*deute idete ton topon hopou ekeito ho Kurios*]. Some MSS. do not have [*ho Kurios*], but he is the subject of [*ekeito*]. His body was not there. It will not do to say that Jesus arose in spirit and appeared alive though his body remained in the tomb. The empty tomb is the first great fact confronting the women and later the men. Various theories were offered then as now. But none of them satisfy the evidence and explain the survival of faith and hope in the disciples that do not rest upon the fact of the Risen Christ whose body was no longer in the tomb.

28:7 **He goeth before you into Galilee** [*proagei humas eis t n Galilaian*]. Jesus did appear to the disciples in Galilee on two notable occasions (by the beloved lake, Joh 21, and on the mountain, Mt 28:16-20). Probably before the women were permitted to tell this story in full to the disciples who scouted as idle talk (Joh 24:11) their first accounts, Jesus appeared to various disciples in Jerusalem on this first great Sunday. Jesus did not say that he would not see any of them in Jerusalem. He merely made a definite appointment in Galilee which he kept.

28:8 **With fear and great joy** [*meta phobou kai charas megal s*]. A touch of life was this as the excited women ran quickly [*tachu edramon*] as they had been told “to bring his disciples word” [*apaggeilai tois math tais autou*]. They had the greatest piece of news that it was possible to have. Mark calls it fear and ecstasy. Anything seemed possible now. Mark even says that at first they told no one anything for they were afraid (Mr 16:9), the tragic close of the text of Mark in Aleph and B, our two oldest manuscripts. But these mingled emotions of ecstasy and dread need cause no surprise when all things are considered.

28:9 **Jesus met them** [*I sous hup nt sen autais*]. Came suddenly face to face [*anta , hupo*] with them as they brooded over the message of the angel and the fact of the empty tomb (associative instrumental, [*autais*]). Cf. 8:34; 24:1-6. Probably the lost portion of Mark’s Gospel contained the story of this meeting with Jesus which changed their fears into joy and peace. His greeting was the ordinary “Hail” [*chairete*]. They fell at his feet and held them in reverence while they worshipped him. Jesus allowed this act of worship though he forbade eager handling of his body by Mary Magdalene (Joh 20:17). It was a great moment of faith and cheer.

28:10 **Fear not** [*m phobeisthe*]. They were still afraid for joy and embarrassment. Jesus calms their excitement by the repetition of the charge from the angel for the disciples to meet him in

Galilee. There is no special mention of Peter (“and Peter”) as in Mr 16:7, but we may be sure that the special message to Peter was delivered.

28:11 **Told unto the chief priests** [*ap ggeilan tois archiereusin*]. These Roman soldiers had been placed at the disposal of the Sanhedrin. They were probably afraid also to report to Pilate and tell him what had happened. They apparently told a truthful account as far as they understood it. But were the Sanhedrin convinced of the resurrection of Jesus?

28:12 **They gave large money** [*arguria hikana ed kan*]. The use of the plural for pieces of silver [*arguria*] is common. The papyri have many instances of [*hikana*] for considerable (from [*hikan*], to reach to, attain to). These pious Sanhedrists knew full well the power of bribes. They make a contract with the Roman soldiers to tell a lie about the resurrection of Jesus as they paid Judas money to betray him. They show not the slightest tendency to be convinced by the facts though one had risen from the dead.

28:13 **Stole him away while we slept** [*eklepsan auton h m n koim men n*]. Genitive absolute. An Irish bull on the face of it. If they were asleep they would not know anything about it.

28:14 **We will persuade him, and rid you of care** [*h meis peisomen kai humas amerimnous poi somen*]. They would try money also on Pilate and assume all responsibility. Hence the soldiers have no anxiety [*amerimnous*], alpha privative and [*merimna*], to be anxious). They lived up to their bargain and this lie lives on through the ages. Justin (*Dial.* 108) accuses the Jews of spreading the charge. Bengel: *Quam laboriosum bellum mendacii contra veritatem. It was spread about* [*dieph misth*] diligently by the Jews to excuse their disbelief in the Messiahship of Jesus.

28:17 **But some doubted** [*hoi de edistasan*]. From [*dis*] (in two, divided in mind). Cf. Mt 14:31. The reference is not to the eleven who were all now convinced after some doubt, but to the others present. Paul states that over five hundred were present, most of whom were still alive when he wrote (1Co 15:6). It is natural that some should hesitate to believe so great a thing at the first appearance of Jesus to them. Their very doubt makes it easier for us to believe. This was the mountain where Jesus had promised to meet them. This fact explains the large number present. Time and place were arranged beforehand. It was the climax of the various appearances and in Galilee where were so many believers. They worshipped [*prosekun san*] Jesus as the women had done (28:9). He is now their Risen Lord and Saviour.

28:18 **All authority** [*p sa exousia*]. Jesus came close to them [*proselth n*] and made this astounding claim. He spoke as one already in heaven with a world-wide outlook and with the resources of heaven at his command. His authority or power in his earthly life had been great (7:29; 11:27; 21:23f.). Now it is boundless and includes earth and heaven. **Hath been given** [*edoth*] is a timeless aorist (Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 836f.). It is the sublimist of all spectacles to see the Risen Christ without money or army or state charging this band of five hundred men and women with world

conquest and bringing them to believe it possible and to undertake it with serious passion and power. Pentecost is still to come, but dynamic faith rules on this mountain in Galilee.

28:19 **All the nations** [*panta ta ethn*]. Not just the Jews scattered among the Gentiles, but the Gentiles themselves in every land. And not by making Jews of them, though this point is not made plain here. It will take time for the disciples to grow into this *Magna Charta* of the missionary propaganda. But here is the world program of the Risen Christ and it should not be forgotten by those who seek to foreshorten it all by saying that Jesus expected his second coming to be very soon, even within the lifetime of those who heard. He did promise to come, but he has never named the date. Meanwhile we are to be ready for his coming at any time and to look for it joyfully. But we are to leave that to the Father and push on the campaign for world conquest. This program includes making disciples or learners [*math teusate*] such as they were themselves. That means evangelism in the fullest sense and not merely revival meetings. Baptism in [*eis*], not *into*) the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in the name of the Trinity. Objection is raised to this language in the mouth of Jesus as too theological and as not a genuine part of the Gospel of Matthew for the same reason. See Mt 11:27, where Jesus speaks of the Father and the Son as here. But it is all to no purpose. There is a chapter devoted to this subject in my *The Christ of the Logia* in which the genuineness of these words is proven. The name of Jesus is the essential part of it as is shown in the Acts. Trine immersion is not taught as the Greek Church holds and practices, baptism in the name of the Father, then of the Son, then of the Holy Spirit. The use of name [*onoma*] here is a common one in the Septuagint and the papyri for power or authority. For the use of [*eis*] with [*onoma*] in the sense here employed, not meaning *into*, see Mt 10:41f. (cf. also 12:41).

28:20 **Teaching them** [*didaskontes autous*]. Christians have been slow to realize the full value of what we now call religious education. The work of teaching belongs to the home, to the church (sermon, Sunday school, young people's work, prayer-meeting, study classes, mission classes), to the school (not mixing of church and state, but moral instruction if not the reading of the Bible), good books which should be in every home, reading of the Bible itself. Some react too far and actually put education in the place of conversion or regeneration. That is to miss the mark. But teaching is part, a weighty part, of the work of Christians.

I am with you [*eg meta hum n*]. This is the amazing and blessed promise. He is to be with the disciples when he is gone, with all the disciples, with all knowledge, with all power, with them all the days (all sorts of days, weakness, sorrows, joy, power), till the consummation of the age [*he s t s sunteleias tou ai nos*]. That goal is in the future and unknown to the disciples. This blessed hope is not designed as a sedative to an inactive mind and complacent conscience, but an incentive to the fullest endeavor to press on to the farthest limits of the world that all the nations may know Christ and the power of his Risen Life. So Matthew's Gospel closes in a blaze of glory. Christ is conqueror in prospect and in fact. Christian history from that eventful experience on the Mountain in Galilee has been the fulfilment of that promise in as far as we allow God's power to work in us

for the winning of the world to Christ, the Risen, all powerful Redeemer, who is with his people all the time. Jesus employs the prophetic present here [*eimi*], I am). He is with us all the days till he comes in glory.

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- divulgare: 1
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- illusus esset: 1
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