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ARTICLE II.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTLES.

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[Continued.]

THE DOCTRINE OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Introduction.

The Author. This Epistle does not bear the name of Paul at its head — a circumstance which admits of no satisfactory explanation. On the contrary, the author intimates, in ii. 3, a decided dependence on the immediate eye-witnesses of the life of Christ. In such a letter, we should have expected Paul to defend himself from the attacks of his Judaistic opponents, and to discuss in detail the relation of the law to the new covenant, and of the Jewish to the heathen Christians. The unmistakable relationship of this to the Pauline Epistles is satisfactorily explained on the hypothesis that the author stood in intimate connection with the Apostle Paul. The external testimony is indecisive. Who the author was — Apollos or Barnabas — is not to be determined; but he is certainly not to be regarded as the Apostle Paul.

The condition of the readers appears to have been one of vacillation between the Old and New Testament worship, and the object of the letter is to show them the greatness of the danger thus arising. It is clear that the continuance of the Old Testament ritual is thus presupposed. Passages which intimate this (c.g. viii. 4) are not to be explained as a vivid reproduction of the past. Had the object been, as Schmid states, to show the fulfilment of the law, now abolished, in Christianity, some definite statement to this effect must have been made. The readers were evidently Jewish Christians, in daily observance of the Mosaic ritual.

The Arrangement. The superiority of the divine revelation in Christ to that of the Old Testament is the main thought of the Epistle. The fact that this is exhibited in the perfection of the New Testament worship, in comparison with that of the Old, indicates a peculiar doctrinal system. This is based, first, on the superiority of the Priest of the new covenant; then, on that of the Sacrifice. In the prominence of the Christological element, this Epistle approaches the doctrine of John. Its anthropological ideas are in essential agreement with those of Paul; but are simply presupposed, not developed.

The Priest and Sacrifice of the New Covenant.

Christ is regarded as entering on his priestly work only after his death, and by the offering of his blood in the sanctuary of heaven. He is, however, in a specific sense, the Son of God, which presupposes his possession of divine glory before his incarnation. He is designated as superior to the angels, because, according to the view shared by the author with his readers, the law and its worship were traced to the mediation of angels. He is not termed the Logos; no suitable reference being found in iv. 12-14 to the pre-existent Christ. But, as in v. 13 the author personifies the Word, and attributes to him omniscience, we may discern here a transition to John's doctrine of the Logos. Apart from Christ's being designated as God in i. 8-10, his being the medium of all created existence implies that he is not himself a creature (i. 2); and in the expression "splendor of God's glory and impress of his essence," we perceive that the author passes from the economic Trinity to the immanent. It is, however, also implied that he stands in a mediate relation to God, which is necessary, in order that he may be the Mediator of sinful humanity.

In order to this, it was necessary for him to leave his condition of equality to God, and enter one of entire dependence, to learn by experience the needs of suffering, because sinful, men. Hence the author lays special weight on the purely

human development of Christ, according to which he attained moral perfection only by continued subjection of his will to the divine (v. 8). His participation in human nature and its *ἀσθένεια* exposed him to continual temptations to sin (iv. 15) through his whole life, and culminating in his death. Only by being able to sin, but never realizing this possibility, could he earn the power of being the Priest of sinful humanity. In ascribing the high-priesthood to Christ only after his ascension to the Father, and in founding it on a realistic, historical basis, the author's idea, as Neander remarks, is essentially distinguished from Philo's high-priesthood of the Logos.

The author takes for granted the necessity of expiation for sin by a pure sacrifice (ii. 14). Man cannot himself offer this; all his acts in a state of sin being *dead works* (vi. 1), which expression includes not merely the works of the law. He does not, in this connection, set forth the resurrection of Christ, only mentioning it once (xiii. 20). There was, indeed, no occasion for this, the general thought being a comparison with the sacrificial work of the priest. As the readers of the Epistle took offence at the death of Christ, it was necessary to illustrate this fact on all hands. His first distinctive view is his conception of it as the *blood of the covenant* (ix. 19–28). The superiority of the new covenant requires it to be sealed, not by the sacrifice of beasts, but by the blood of the Son of God. Another view of the death of Christ regards its necessity, in order that men may enter on the inheritance of the good things promised and typified in the old covenant. It is surprising that, in the passage expressing this view (ix. 16, 17), the author departs from his usual meaning of *διαθήκη*, and uses it for "testament."

It is not the physical sufferings attending the death of Christ which give it its atoning efficacy, but rather the dread of the divine punishment, and the feeling of being forsaken of God, in connection with his holy life, his willing subjection to the divine will, and his love for suffering humanity, which

his participation in human weakness rendered possible (v. 7).

As the priestly vocation presupposes a sanctuary in which it is exercised, Christ enters on his priestly functions only in heaven, the divine abode. Though sin has been expiated by his death, the atonement has to be constantly appropriated anew by men. This appropriation takes place through the intercession of the ascended Saviour, and leads to the complete destruction of sin. When this has been effected, his intercession as High Priest will be no longer needed; and the expression "forever" must therefore not be taken absolutely. With the exception of the second coming to consummate the kingdom of God (ix. 28), no other point, besides the fundamental idea already considered, in the work of Christ is set forth. Paul would assuredly have found occasion to speak of the resurrection and the mission of the Spirit as part of this work.

The Old Testament Worship, and the Advantages of the New.

According to the fundamental idea of the whole Epistle, the Old Testament worship is related to that of the New as copy or shadow, designed to awaken a longing for the reality. In the former, heavenly and purely spiritual relations are represented in an earthly, sensible form. The author thus adopts the distinction of the Alexandrian philosophy between the ideal world, in which all is perfect, and the phenomenal world, in which all is defective — the *κόσμος νοητός* and the *κόσμος αἰσθητός*. It is implied that the Old Testament worship cannot alter the relation of man to God, but simply remind him of the chasm existing between them. The Jewish Christians might continue to observe the ritual for this latter purpose, without attributing to it any saving efficacy. Only when this was done was the observance inconsistent with Christian faith. The readers of the Epistle were believers (x. 32–39), but showed a weakness of faith in still clinging to the shadow, the time for which had

passed away (ix. 9), and which gave them not the least pre-eminence over the Gentile believers.

The priest of the old covenant, being himself sinful, needed to offer sacrifices for himself, and was subject to death. Hence his functions could not be performed without interruption. Wanting in the essential qualities of a true priest, he was such by appointment merely (vii. 16). His priesthood, also, was not the first, but was preceded by that of Melchisedek. The latter is the type of Christ in the uniqueness of his position. Unless we refer the description in vii. 3 to the silence of scripture on these points, we must suppose that the author is transferring to Melchisedek predicates which properly belong only to Christ, though ἀμῆτωρ is not, indeed, strictly applicable to him.

With the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood is connected that of the sacrifices; the offering of beasts being entirely inadequate to restore communion with God (x. 4) and break the power of sin. All it can do is to keep alive the consciousness of guilt (x. 3), and restore the relation to the theocratic church by the removal of outward defilement (ix. 13).

The advantages of the new covenant are spoken of as good things to come, although forgiveness of sins is chief among them, because they will be fully realized only at the second advent. It is implied in the prominence of the death and priesthood of Christ that forgiveness of sins must precede the impartation of new life, and that it is conditioned by a man's own appropriation of the atonement. The new life is developed, according to the author, from hope (vii. 19), which was not produced by the Old Testament sacrifices.

Faith, according to this author, is a firm confidence in the future and invisible (xi. 1) and the general truths of religion (vs. 3, 6). Paul's idea of justification by faith does not definitely appear in the Epistle. There are two passages in which it seems to be presupposed (x. 38; xi. 7), but not necessarily so, since, from the connection of the first, ἐκ

πίστεως must not be connected, as by Paul, with *δίκαιος*, but with *ζήσεται*; and in the second, *δικαιοσύνη κατὰ πίστιν* designates the subjective condition of which justification by faith is a prerequisite. According to this passage, the Old Testament faith differed from the New, not in object, but only in degree. The Old Testament heroes directed their gaze to the consummation of the kingdom of God. It is evident that faith is not here spoken of in the Pauline sense, as effecting the justification of man before God. The author does not definitely distinguish two sides of faith; one, as apprehending the divine grace, which on the ground of Christ's death declares man free from sin and guilt; and the other as in connection with hope, the only condition for the attainment of the glory of the perfected kingdom of God. He expressly sets forth only the latter. Nor does he express the Pauline idea of the fellowship in Christ's death and resurrection involved in faith. Still, the idea of justification by faith is implied in the whole train of thought in the Epistle, as in the milder term *ἀγνοήματα* for the sins of the regenerate (ix. 7), and the impossibility of restoration in case of apostasy (vi. 4-6; x. 26-31; xii. 16, 17). As Paul's doctrine does not appear to exclude such a possibility, we must regard the author as having here in view a condition in which all receptivity of salvation is completely destroyed, and a persistent opposition to known truth.

The Old Testament worship being abolished by Christ, its human priesthood is also. The priesthood of all believers is granted in that of Christ. All can enter the holiest place, without distinction (x. 19). All the acts of believers are regarded as priestly (xiii. 15), though there are also distinctions among them (v. 17). All Christians belonging to the heavenly Jerusalem (xii. 22), and having received the powers of the world to come (vi. 5), they no longer stand in need of any human mediation.

The author, writing to Jewish Christians, speaks only of the relation of the redemptive work to the Jewish people, and does not touch on its relation to the heathen. It is,

however, implied in the abrogation of the old covenant that salvation in Christ is designed for the heathen, as well as the Jews, and is granted to them on the single condition of faith.

The Consummation.

Faith especially removes the chasm between the present and the future. Regarding the *Parousia* as near, the author does not give any special attention to the state of believers between their death and Christ's second coming. In ix. 27, the judgment is represented as following immediately on death, and in xii. 23, glorification is intimated as simultaneous. With the *Parousia*, the worship of the old covenant will reach its end. Already decaying (viii. 13), and having lost their significance, its forms will then cease. From the expression *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* (ix. 28), we might infer that at the time of the second advent there will be no evil remaining among men. It accords with this, that Christ is nowhere expressly designated as Judge in this Epistle. Such a view, however, so divergent from that of Paul, is not to be deduced from a single ambiguous phrase.

THE DOCTRINE OF JOHN.

Introduction.

As sources, we use only the Gospel and First Epistle of John, retaining the Apocalypse for special consideration. Of the Gospel, those portions only are available in which the apostle expresses his own views. Of these, we especially distinguish the passages i. 16-18; iii. 16-21, 31-36. In these it is evident that the apostle neither reports the words of Christ nor of John the Baptist, though, according to his characteristic style, he does not expressly discriminate them from the rest. We may also learn some points distinctive of John's doctrine from his selection of Christ's discourses, and their bearing on the great whole of his representation.

The historical Position of John in the Apostolic Church. According to Gal. ii. 9, he regarded his mission as especially to the Jews. But later in life his teaching evidently exer-

cised greater influence over the heathen. The remarkable absence of any account of his labors in the Book of Acts may be due in part to their quiet, unobtrusive character, and in part to the fact that they were chiefly supplementary to those of Paul. His teaching was especially adapted to unite the Jewish and Gentile churches, being based rather on ardent love than on dialectic acuteness. He regards the doctrines of grace more from the Christological, than from the anthropological point of view, and with reference to the Old Testament prophecy, rather than the law. He emphasizes what is specifically new in the gospel, but not polemically. His intimate relation to the Saviour rendered the person of Christ prominent in his view, and hence, in accordance with the speculative tendency of his mind, all his other doctrinal conceptions are developed from that of the eternal Logos.

The Logos before his Incarnation.

The manner in which John speaks of the Logos indicates that this term was already familiar to his readers. The Alexandrian Jewish philosophy was diffused in the circles of his activity, and, if not the *source*, was undoubtedly the occasion of the *form*, of his doctrine.

By the Logos John does not mean reason or wisdom, but the essence of all the divine powers; for it was "in the beginning," that is, eternal ("before the world was," xvii. 5). Except in the prologue to the Gospel, we find a certain designation of Christ as Logos only in 1 John i. 1 (λόγος τῆς ζωῆς). This fact, and the antithesis to idols in v. 21, is against the reference of ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός, in 1 John v. 20, to Christ. The mass of evidence, also, is adverse to the genuineness of 1 John v. 7. The Logos is not an emanation; for he is himself θεός. In representing him as the organ of creation, John removes the Philonic opposition of the ὕλη, though he may not have had this definitely in view. The Logos stands in a special relation, also, to humanity. He is the Life and the Light of men (John i. 4). As this is

meant before the incarnation, it must be intended to trace man's natural receptivity to good to the illuminating influence of 'the Logos, as well as all positive revelations, though sin was not really vanquished until after his incarnation. It is implied that this preparatory work was especially directed to the Jews, to whom, therefore, we may refer Ἰδιου, in v. 11.

Sin. The Prince of this World.

Sin, according to John, consists in alienation from the truth, light, and life of the Logos, and hence in a condition of falsehood, darkness, and death. The divine is that only which has true reality; the ungodly has only apparent existence.

All men (not merely the Jews) are by nature closely connected with the Logos (John i. 4, 9), and yet in their present condition are all estranged from the light. Ungodliness has become a power in all, which the Logos, before his incarnation, could not overcome (John i. 5). Hence, by the "world" John designates the entirety of all finite relations, in so far as they are not permeated by the relation to God.

Mankind are divided by John into two classes — the children of the world and the children of light. It is evident, however, that he uses the latter designation in two senses (John viii. 47; xi. 52; xviii. 37). In the narrower sense, it applies to those in whom the divine life has a real dominion; in the wider, to those who make an honest endeavor to fulfil the divine will. In this wider sense, the deeds of such may be spoken of as "wrought in God" (iii. 21). In order to be born again of God, man must already have been in communion with him (vii. 17). When man becomes a partaker of salvation, there is an enhanced divine operation within him which releases the existing, but slumbering, germs of the divine. He only whom the Father draws (vi. 44), or gives (xvii. 6), to the Son can enter into full communion with the Father. This, again, presupposes a susceptibility

to the divine operation (John vi. 45). The redemptive work is designed for all, without distinction (1 John ii. 2). When all are not brought to the Son, the reason is, that the enhanced divine operation is excluded by the insusceptibility of a part. The Jews are representatives of this class (John xii. 39), having persistently rejected the divine light of the Logos.

According to John iii. 6, sin is the reigning principle in all men, by reason of their descent from the first man. This state of darkness, however, owes its origin to an evil spirit. John everywhere refers only to him who stands at the head of the kingdom of evil spirits. As he developed his own sin from within, this is more intimately connected with his innermost nature than is the case in man. Hence he is called a murderer from the beginning (viii. 44), i.e. the author of sin and death, not, as in 1 John iii. 12, with reference to the murder of Abel. According to John, every sin has close connection with the devil.

The antagonism between the kingdom of light, whose head Christ is, and the kingdom of darkness, whose head is the devil, is not eternal; being already abolished by the incarnation of the Logos. Nor is it from eternity; for, though John does not definitely speak of the fall of the devil, this is involved in his doctrine of the Logos. All creaturely existence has the ground of its existence in the Logos; this evil spirit, therefore, must have been originally in possession of the divine light. The term *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, then, must be referred, not to the beginning of his existence, but to that of his sin.

As all men are by nature evil, John designates them all as children of the devil; using the term, however, in two senses — of those who are insusceptible of divine influences, and of the unrenewed in general.

The Incarnate Logos. His Person and Work.

Only by the reception of the incarnate Logos, the intimate union implied in eating the flesh and drinking the blood of

the Son of Man, can man become a partaker of the divine life (vi. 53-58) and overcome sin. Though the Logos was the animating principle of all life, even under the old covenant, a new and specific element appears in Christ—his assumption of the *σάρξ*. He is also represented as possessing not only a human *ψυχή* (xii. 27), but also a human *πνεῦμα* (xi. 33).

John portrays the whole human life of Christ as the revelation of the glory of the incarnate Logos (John i. 14). Christ's prayer for his former glory (xvii. 7), however, implies that he did not possess it in the metaphysical sense of the fulness of the divine glory, but only in the ethical sense of the fulness of the divine love and grace. This is the *δόξα* which he shared with his disciples (xvii. 22), and which was revealed by his miracles (John ii. 11), since these are regarded as wrought by the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son (xi. 41).

The incarnate Logos, according to the divine side of his being, is designated as the Son of God. By the added term *μονογενής*, John further designates the perfect unity of Christ with the Father. He has also life in himself (v. 26), that is, not as a communication, but as inherent in his nature. Still, in the designation "Son of God," it is involved that in comparison with the Father the Son possesses life derivatively. The holy life of Christ, the archetype of human life, is only a copy of the holy life of God.

As Christ not only *has* life, but *is* life, his whole work is a self-communication to the world, a revelation of his love to it. The First Epistle, together with his mission of the Spirit, and his second coming, sets forth only the death of Christ, while the Gospel indicates other sides of this work. As John regards Christ's holy life, his miracles, and his testimony as also the revelation of his glory, his death is, according to the Gospel, only a single element in his work. By the greater works referred to in John v. 20, 21, he understands not miracles, but those works which effect the revivification of humanity. Miracles, appealing to the senses,

invite attention, and may be the means of faith; but they may also cause still further alienation from the divine. More important than miracles is Christ's testimony, which, being distinguished from all others as a testimony of himself, exerts a transforming power over human life (viii. 31, 32); he who receives his word entering into a living communion with him.

The Death of Christ.

From the commencement of his ministry, Christ is conscious of the necessity of his death for the redemption of the world. The close of his life is always present to his miraculous vision (John iii. 14, 15; vi. 51; x. 18; xii. 24; xv. 13; xvii. 19). From the first passage it is also evident that he foreknew the manner of his death. Only John xvii. 19 indicates the close connection between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins. The importance ascribed to Christ's testimony is not inconsistent with his regarding Christ's death as the highest revelation of his glory; since this consists in holy love for sinful men (John i. 14), which is perfected in his giving up his life for them. The predominant idea in John is not, as in Paul, the atonement, but the communication of a new divine life. But before this can take place in any man, his sin must be expiated, as is clear from the designation of Christ as *ἱλασμός* (1 John ii. 2), and also from *ἀγιάζω* (John xvii. 19), which must refer to his approaching death. It is evident that John ascribes the same significance to the death of Christ as Paul does, though he presents the doctrine of the atonement in a less developed form.

The resurrection of Christ also occupies a less conspicuous position in John's doctrine than in that of Paul. It is regarded as the greatest of miracles and the divine confirmation of Christ's mission (John ii. 21; cf. also x. 18), but chiefly as the transition to his state of exaltation. His abiding in the flesh involves limitations; his elevation to the Father must therefore take place before he can fully impart his life to men. According to John xiv. 23, indeed, one must already be in the communion of love to Christ before he can receive

the Spirit. This, however, is to be distinguished from that life-communion with the glorified Christ which is effected by the Spirit in believers. John sets forth the second coming of Christ as perfecting this new life, which is still troubled by sin, and the judgment, which has already been passed on the ungodly by the Spirit (John xvi. 8-11).

In speaking of the Spirit, John regards him as the medium of communion with the Father and the Son. In using the masculine pronoun, however, in reference to him, and attributing to him such works as teaching, correcting, witnessing, he evidently teaches that he is a person. We have, therefore, no reason for believing, with Lutz, that John apprehended the Spirit as "only a power of God producing enlightenment and sanctification in the human spirit, to which belongs divinity, but not personality."

The Incarnate Logos and the Revelation of God in the Old Covenant.

The old covenant is abrogated, according to John, not by the *Parousia*, but by the appearance and ministry of Christ in the flesh (John iv. 23). The law is for the Jews (viii. 17; xv. 25). The revelation of God in Christ is more closely connected with the prophecy of the Old Testament (xii. 41), but the fulfilment contains far more than the prediction. The knowledge of God as Love and Light (1 John iv. 16; i. 5), and also as Spirit (John iv. 24), is regarded by this apostle as living and effective only in Christ, in whom religion is freed from dependence on sensible, earthly things, as from time and space (iv. 23; v. 17).

The Separation of Mankind into two Classes.

A moral judgment (which, however, does not exclude the final judgment, cf. 1 John iv. 17) having already taken place, mankind are already divided into children of darkness and children of light. The latter are already partakers of eternal life, i.e. life in itself powerful and indestructible, which, however, may be lost in consequence of certain sins

(1 John v. 16). *Faith* is the sole condition of such participation; the law being presupposed, not expressly proved, to be altogether superseded. John sometimes calls the susceptibility for salvation *faith* (viii. 31); but it is specially characteristic of his idea of faith that it introduces to a life-communion with the Saviour. It is hence indubitable that it involves more than a mere walking according to the pattern of Christ, more than the recognition of his teaching as the pure expression of the divine will, more than any relation to the historical facts of Christ's life. In John's view the object of faith is not so prominently as in Paul's the death of Christ, but rather his whole life as the revelation of his glory. While he regards faith as a principle of new life, it is plain, from 1 John ii. 1, 2, that he does not ascribe man's justification before God to this new life, but to the objective work of redemption. Still, it is the lowest grade of faith which has for its object any single manifestation of Christ's power. Essentially synonymous with the conception of faith is that of knowledge, the same things being predicated of both; but when faith is mentioned as preceding knowledge, it is intended in the wider sense, explained above.

A principle of new life is contained in faith itself (the victory which overcometh the world) and the beginning of this new life is designated by John as "being born of God," which is the immediate result of faith (1 John v. 1).

Love is the soul of the new life of believers. Love is the key-note of John's First Epistle. In its wider sense love may precede the devotion of the heart to Christ (John xvi. 27); but true Christian love is in response to the love of God (1 John iv. 19). God is its first object; it must manifest itself also in love to the brethren, but is not to be confined to them. We thus see that while in its depth and comprehensiveness John's doctrine may be regarded as mystical, it is yet also thoroughly practical in its tendency.

In some passages of his Epistle John seems to regard sin as actually destroyed by the new birth, though in others he speaks of sin in the regenerate (1 John ii. 1). We under-

stand by the former the ideal condition of believers, which is, however, only progressively realized in fact (John xv. 2). John also makes a sharp distinction between sin unto death and sin not unto death. It is evident that intercession is not to be made for the former, because it would be useless, all susceptibility for salvation being destroyed by it.

The *Communion of Believers* is involved in John's designation of their life as one of love (he only mentions the *ἐκκλησία* in a single passage, 3 John 6, and here with reference to a single church); and in Christ's parable of the vine, and his words in John xvii. 21. John also records declarations of Christ concerning a great communion of Jews and heathen (John x. 16; xi. 52), though he regards the Jews as in the great mass wholly inaccessible to the gospel. He further emphasizes the unity, rather than, as Paul, the differences, in the members of Christ's body.

We find no express reference by John to baptism and the supper as means of grace and communion with Christ. They are not referred to in John iii. 5 and vi., for they were not then instituted, nor in 1 John v. 6. In the second passage, also, were such a reference intended, *σῶμα* would be spoken of, instead of *σάρξ*. This silence is in accordance with John's peculiar type of doctrine, which emphasizes by preference the inner divine life.

The members of the church are those who have received the new divine life; but, as others are found in outward connection with the church who have not this life (1 John ii. 19; John xv. 2) we are led to a distinction between the more and the less extended domain of the church. In 1 John v. 16 John seems to teach that even a member may so fall back into sin as to be incapable of restoration.

The Consummation.

As already remarked, John's spiritualization of the idea of Christ's coming and judgment as already taking place does not exclude its future realization. This will be necessary to the perfection of Christian life. John evidently

regards the second advent as close at hand (1 John ii. 18), and we find no disclosures by him concerning the state between death and this event. In designating the life of believers as eternal, it is, however, implied that it will not be interrupted by death. This is also taught in John xiv. 3; the coming of Christ here being a spiritual coming, and referring to the death of believers.

John designates in a manner similar to Paul the tokens of the impending *Parousia*. It will be preceded by a final struggle between the kingdom of evil and the kingdom of God; but this will be, not an outward persecution of the church, but a spiritual power, seeking to destroy it by spiritual weapons (1 John ii. 18 sq.).

THE DOCTRINE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

Introduction.

As the Apocalypse does not itself decide the question of its authorship with certainty, as the external testimony is rather for than against its composition by the Apostle John, but is not conclusive, and as the internal evidence is more against than for this view, we regard it as the more probable hypothesis that this work was not written by the apostle.

It predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the first persecution of the church under Nero. As the Temple was still standing at the time of its composition (xi. 1), this must have been prior to its destruction.

Its Eschatology.

This is its most important feature; all its other points of doctrine are subordinate. This prominence is due to the circumstances of outward oppression of the church in which the Apocalypse was written, and strikingly distinguishes this book from the Gospel and Epistle of John, since there was no occasion in these for excluding this element. The central point is the second coming of Christ. This will be sudden, but is now preparing. The seer therefore describes first the events which must precede the *Parousia* — the

great struggle of the world against the kingdom of God, and the judgments revealing the divine holiness and justice, anticipatory of the last judgment.

As we might expect from the prophecies of Christ in the synoptics, unbelieving Judaism is regarded as one of the antichristian powers; but as the city whose destruction is described in Rev. xvii., xviii., as immediately preceding the second advent must be Rome, the Jewish people is not the first and principal object of divine judgment, but antichristian heathendom.

It is opposed to the view that a judgment on the worldly church is described in xi. 1 sq., and not on Jerusalem, that such a judgment has been already treated of in the seven Epistles; and to the other view, that the judgment is on Jerusalem as rebuilt and inhabited by the Jews, that no former destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple is anywhere mentioned. The only difficulty is that in vs. 2 and 13 a partial destruction only is mentioned, which seems to contradict our Lord's prediction, and has led to the Judaistic notion being attributed to the author that Jerusalem thus purified would remain the centre of God's kingdom. We find no contradiction here, but an intimation that only the outward and accidental element of the theocracy will be removed, while the true and imperishable will remain, and that thus the still susceptible portion of the Jewish people will be won to Christ.

By the emblem of the beast with the seven heads (xiii. 1), we understand Rome, as the Apocalypse itself interprets the seven heads of seven mountains (xvii. 9). The only difficulty seems to be in the designation of the beast as himself the destroyer. One of the seven heads of the beast appears to stand for the beast himself. And as these heads are seven kings, and the one is described as, both one of the seven and the eighth (xvii. 10, 11), the reference must be to a king who reigns twice, which agrees with the legend current in the East concerning Nero. The destruction of Antichrist is the fall of the Roman empire, as the represen-

tative of heathenism and all ungodliness. The author does not distinguish between this single victory and the progressive overthrow of all ungodly antichristian forces. He does, however, distinguish between the coming of Christ for the destruction of Antichrist, and his coming for the general judgment, between which a long period will intervene, wherein some believers who have shared in the great conflict will be already glorified.

The Millennium. This period is designated as a thousand years; but this is no more to be taken literally than the other numbers of the Apocalypse. As the writer passes rapidly over this to his description of the kingdom of God in its perfection, there is much obscurity about it. All we can conclude with certainty is that the condition of the church during this period is essentially different from that which begins with the judgment. There is nothing to indicate that it will be one of sensuous, outward prosperity, but only one of spiritual predominance of the church over heathendom. As living believers are not yet glorified, as a second persecution is to take place at the close of the period, and as the coming of Christ is elsewhere connected with the final judgment, the view is beset with great difficulties that Christ will himself be present on earth during the millennium. For the same reasons, it appears that the opposition between the world and the church will not yet be entirely removed. Antichrist is wholly destroyed, and the kingdom of God perfected only after the final judgment, in which all previous judgments culminate. The description of this perfect state (xxi.-xxiii.) is so purely ideal as to exclude all sensuous conceptions. The central point of its happiness is the communion of believers with God no longer disturbed by sin.

The Doctrine of Christ.

In the Apocalypse Christ is spoken of as he is exalted to the Father, in possession of absolute power and glory, and the object of divine adoration and worship on the part of all creatures. Throughout the book there is a polemic reference

to the deification of creatures in heathendom; it is hence implied that the object of divine worship cannot be himself a creature. This is also involved in his designation, together with God, as *πρῶτος* and *ἔσχατος* (xxii. 13), and by which the other designation as *ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως* is to be interpreted (iii. 14) as expressing the idea of absolute pre-existence. The designation of Christ as *λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* (xix. 13) seems to indicate that the readers were already acquainted with it in the writings of the Apostle John.

There is a reference to the *death* of Christ in the prevalent designation of him as a Lamb—not as the paschal lamb, but rather as the sacrificial lamb of Isaiah.

While the Gospel and Epistle of John emphasize the ethical attributes of God in relation to the atonement, the Apocalypse refers more to his metaphysical attributes in relation to the world. So, also, the Spirit is regarded chiefly in his operation on the world, as comprehending all the forces by which God effects his purposes. A further difference is the prominence given to the higher world of spirits in the Apocalypse. The angels are represented as the agents in the execution of judgment, and Christ as standing at their head. While the Apostle John refers only to an evil spirit as the head of the spirit-world, in this book many members of it are represented as active in promoting sin and heathendom—the kingdom of the devil—and as suffering in the conflict with the kingdom of God.

Those who find a Jewish bias in the Apocalypse find, also, in some passages, a preference of the Jewish over the Gentile Christians, especially in the number one hundred and forty-four thousand, in xiv. 1, supposing it to refer to the converts from Judaism. But it more probably refers to the martyrs under the first persecution, who were mostly Gentile converts.

PART II.—COMPARISON OF THE APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE.

The presentation of the various forms of apostolic doctrine according to their differences does not exclude the idea of scripture as a single divine revelation. In this part,

however, we are not to form a single doctrinal system, this being the work of dogmatic theology, to which our labors are only preparatory. Nor are we to compare merely the express doctrinal statements of the apostles, since their writings were not intended as exhaustive expressions of their views: but must first consider the fundamental conceptions, and then the particular doctrines, as confirming and supplementing each other — the less developed forms presenting no real contradiction to the more developed.

Thus the fundamental conception of James, of the new covenant as a transfigured and spiritualized law, is not altogether foreign to Paul; though the latter emphasizes the differences, rather than the unity, of the two covenants. The same is true of Peter's conception of the gospel as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, since it is involved in this that the fulfilment is more than the prediction. The Epistle to the Hebrews agrees with Paul in regarding salvation as unattainable by adherence to the old covenant, but as prepared for by it; the law being a *παιδαγωγὸς εἰς Χριστόν* (Col. ii. 17). So, also, where the Apostle John regards the old covenant as already passed away, this does not exclude his acceptance of its preliminary character. The views of the Apocalypse, as we have seen, show no trace of a Judaistic character; they therefore present no real opposition to the doctrines of Paul and John.

With respect to the *doctrine of sin*, there is an apparent contradiction between Paul and James, in that the latter applies the term *ἀμαρτία* to actual sin; while Paul refers it also to the sinful *habitus*. This can, however, exist only if James denies this *habitus* as the source of the lust from which he represents sin as springing, of which there is no trace. With respect to the consequences of sin, the difference may be explained, if we suppose James to refer merely to physical death as the result of actual sins. Though James does not develop the doctrine of the atonement, his fundamental view by no means excludes it. All the apostolic views of sin are, indeed, closely connected, because all

are rooted in the doctrine of the Old Testament. The great antitheses of the world and the kingdom of God, of nature and grace, moreover, are common to all; and, according to all, a new birth, or entire transformation of the inner life, is necessary. The same, also, may be said of the hidden connection between the sin of mankind and a kingdom of evil spirits. The new element in the doctrine of the apostles is that the kingdom of evil is conquered by Christ, and its power broken forever.

The Doctrine concerning Christ. According to all the apostles, Christ is in possession of full divine power and glory after his exaltation to the Father; but according to Paul and John, Hebrews and the Apocalypse, he only again received the glory which he had before his incarnation; while in James, Jude, and Peter we find no trace of this view. Nor by these apostles are the expressions "Son" and "Logos" used, as by the others. Still, their distinction of Christ from all other bearers of divine revelation implies that he possessed a unique dignity; the difference being not merely quantitative, but qualitative. All agree in representing that he only who was Mediator of the original creation can be the Mediator of the new moral creation.

The most developed doctrine of Christ is found in John and the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the Apostle Paul we find a progress from his earlier to his later Epistles, but nowhere such explicit statements as John's concerning the Logos, or a certain designation of Christ as *θεός*, as in the Hebrews. Any contradiction as to the renunciation by Christ, on his incarnation, not merely of the unlimited use of the divine power and glory, but of its actual possession, is found only if we fail to distinguish the twofold conception of the *δόξα* held by John.

With respect to the *work* of Christ, we find no definite trace of his prophetic office. Nor is it distinctly set forth by James, though implied in his fundamental conception. There are references to it in the other apostolic writings. On the other hand, we find no reference to the atonement

in James. Yet, if man by faith in Christ receives power to fulfil the law out of free love, Christ must be regarded as not only the Teacher of truth, but the Communicator of a new divine life.

In all the principal writings of the apostles, we find forgiveness of sins closely connected with the death of Christ; though Peter lays greater emphasis on the resurrection, and John on the life-communication with the Saviour. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews agree in representing the death of Christ as an expiatory sacrifice, and Christ himself as a Priest. Some find traces in Paul of the doctrine of Peter concerning Christ's preaching the gospel to the dead; but, while we fail to discover any such reference, we also perceive nothing opposed to it in any of the apostolic teachings.

It is a conception common to all the apostles that Christ's work is continued after his ascension, and will be closed by his second coming. The different sides of this conception are all united in the view of Paul, and are, therefore, not contradictory. Peter, Hebrews, and the Apocalypse regard the work of Christ chiefly as the subject of hope. This, however, is not opposed to the view of John; since he also regards the perfection of Christian life as dependent on the second advent.

The *doctrine of God* appears in essential agreement in all the different forms of doctrine, being founded on the Old Testament. Those forms which are less developed on other points are so also on this. With the exception of James, whose doctrine is least developed, the apostles agree in representing the divine causality of salvation as threefold — the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Spirit. The presence of this doctrine in Jude shows how deeply it is founded in the inner essence of Christian truth.

Another point common to all apostolic forms of doctrine is the *new birth*; though all do not trace it back to election and the eternal divine counsel. Nor do all the apostles distinguish so exactly as Paul between justification and sanctification. James, however, agrees with Paul in setting

forth with the greatest emphasis that God's treatment of men is conditioned by their behavior towards him. The doctrine of election, then, is by no means opposed by the teaching of James. The idea of hardening the heart implies, also, a persistent opposition to the influences of divine grace, which would lead men to salvation, which includes both the ideas of election and the freedom of the will. The absence of any definite statement of the doctrine of justification in Peter, John, and the Epistle to the Hebrews does not exclude it. All the essential elements of Paul's doctrine are found in John and in the Hebrews. John's use of *ἀγιάζεσθαι* in the sense of objective consecration to God is also essentially identical with justification. The representation, by Paul and John, of the new life as founded in a real communion with the glorified Saviour is also due to the greater development of their forms of doctrine.

Faith, according to all the apostles, springs from a change of mind. James, in referring to historical belief as *πίστις*, was merely accommodating his language, as we have shown before, to the usage of his opponents. In Peter, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, the object of faith appears especially as the future perfection of salvation, and the conception of faith is closely allied to hope; while the idea of faith as introducing into life-communion with Christ falls into the background. There is, however, no opposition in this, as some merely set forth more prominently the manifestation of Christian life, and others its innermost principles — faith and love. In accordance with this, James represents faith manifested by works as a necessary condition of justification; while Paul ascribes efficacy to faith which has not yet produced any works. There is, however, essential agreement in their views; since Paul would attribute no value to faith which could not produce works, nor James deny it to faith which is inoperative simply from lack of opportunity.

Of the three elements of the Christian life, Peter, the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse set forth hope most promi-

nently ; Paul, faith ; John, love ; but none of these exclude the others. According to the common doctrine of the apostles, faith is the root of love and of hope.

The *kingdom of God*, according to the common doctrine, includes the higher kingdom of heavenly spirits ; while the church comprises only redeemed humanity in its present earthly development. It is a purely internal, invisible kingdom, since connection with it depends on a purely moral condition. The doctrine of the new covenant, as embracing all nations, is most fully developed by Paul ; but it lies at the basis of all the apostles' teaching.

The *church* is regarded by all as the external community of believers. This is implied in Paul's designation of it as the body of Christ, in Peter's as a holy nation, in the parable of the vine in John, and the idea of the universal priesthood. Some, indeed, appear to be members of the church who have either never received the new life, or, from lack of watchfulness, have fallen back into a life of sin. We are not, therefore, to regard the church as, according to the apostles, consisting of all the baptized, as seems to be indicated by Paul ; for this would be altogether at variance with his designation of it as the body of Christ. All that is necessary is to distinguish between a narrower and wider domain in the church.

The outward means of salvation, baptism and the Lord's supper, are not mentioned by all the apostolic writers. Indeed, the latter is mentioned and defined only by Paul. The greater prominence of baptism accords with the general apostolic tendency to regard chiefly that which relates to the antitheses — world and kingdom of God, sin and grace.

The centre of the eschatological doctrine of all the apostles is the second coming of Christ. This is represented by all as near at hand ; since they do not direct their view more particularly to the condition which lies between the death of individual believers and the *Parousia*, regarding it only as one of higher and more intimate communion with Christ. In the less developed forms of doctrine there seems to be no distinction between the *Parousia* and the final consum-

mation ; while, according to Paul and the Apocalypse, there will be a period of indefinite duration between the *Parousia* and the last judgment, in which all forces hostile to the kingdom of God will be destroyed. The distinction of a first and second resurrection, which we find in the Apocalypse, seems also to be intimated by Paul, as he connects the glorification of believers with the coming of Christ, but the resurrection of unbelievers with the final judgment.

ARTICLE III.

THE CREATIVE PERIOD IN HISTORY.

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THE ORDER OF EVENTS.

THE student of the creative period in history meets, at the starting-point of inquiry, the question of an authentic record. Where is such a record to be found? In geology, and the first two chapters of Genesis—the rocky and the written revelations. This is the best, perhaps the only, general answer which the case allows.

A thoughtful reader of the first verse from the inspired penman is startled by its simplicity, comprehensiveness, and grandeur. “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.” It proclaims the one absolute, originating, and creative will. Thus the written record places itself, in its first announcement, in bold conflict with atheism, polytheism, and pantheism. There is a God, it says, and there is but one. That God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, not the mere distributor, reformer, or manipulator of his own being into a finite universe. He is the originator of a new substance, by a fiat and force clearly personal and infinite.

How comprehensive, yet concise, is this opening of the book of creation and providence! How appropriate this