

practice; not what he *ought* to do, but what he is doing—a rather different thing!

No doubt we see the Christian's duty in his words; but that is not his point. His point is his practice. And doubtless this manner and character of life was what made his questioners or detractors think they saw weakness in him, and reason to question his apostleship. They saw he was not using physical force and ordinary severe measures against offenders, and set it down as weakness on his part, and that he had no apostolic authority or power. They asked him to show this, and his reply is—We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. This is our power, if you call it weakness. If it is a weakness, it is the weakness of Christ, and therefore an evidence of Christ in us.

GEORGE JOHNSTON.

Marnoch.

Belsazzar.

MR. ROUSE in his note, communicated to THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for October, has misapprehended the meaning of my footnote on p. 400 (June). In the first place, I would remark that "parallel" does not mean "identical"; and in the second, that I intended the parallelism to refer to the *sentence* to which the footnote was appended, beginning, "Owing to the size . . ." and *certainly not* to all the details in the two long paragraphs

that preceded. Hence the misunderstanding. The two points referred to specially are:—

1. There was a festival in Babylon at the time of the capture.

2. That capture was a surprise.

I have no leisure to enter into the further questions with which Mr. Rouse deals. I have long held that the Book of Daniel is the product of the Maccabean age. The overwhelming array of evidence contained in such works as Kuenen's *Einleitung*, and clearly set forth in Driver's *Introduction*, cannot be put aside. Daniel iii. 5 is in itself a strong presumption that Greek civilisation and language largely prevailed. Hävernicks' laboured attempts (1832) to avoid this conclusion are futile. Under these circumstances I think it by no means improbable that a Greek tradition may have indirectly influenced the form of the narrative in Daniel v. I say *indirectly*, because direct Hellenic influence was not so probable in the Maccabean period.

As regards Darius the Mede, I must refer Mr. Rouse to Bevan's admirable *Commentary*, pp. 19, foll. 109. The division of the chapter in the Aramaic (as opposed to the LXX.) will not help us much.

Will readers of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES kindly correct the awkward misprint in my article, p. 402, "expense" into "suspense," occurring five lines from the end?

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Cheshunt, Herts, Oct. 2.

The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. H. H. WENDT, D.D., JENA.

(*Christliche Welt*, April 13, 1893.)

II.

In what way did Jesus conceive the future state of blessedness, or the kingdom of God understood in the sense of this state of blessedness? As a kingdom in course of realisation on the earth, the members of which will enjoy earthly blessings in uninterrupted happiness, and exercise earthly power and dominion over subjects in untroubled peace? Thus the Old Testament prophets and pious Jews in the days of Jesus had pictured to themselves the Messianic kingdom of the last

days. By the great catastrophe which God was to bring about a new system of things would be set up, in consequence of which the pious of Israel would exchange a state of suffering and oppression for one of happy enjoyment and power. Post-apostolic Christianity also, up to the end of the second century, so pictured the "thousand years' reign of Christ" as a kingdom of earthly glory and bliss for Christians; and the pure heavenly state of perfection was only to follow after this. Must not Jesus also, whose teaching

forms the bridge between those expectations of Old Testament Judaism and the expectations of early Christendom, have conceived the "future kingdom of God" in the same way?

The circumstance, that the passages quoted speak of "sitting at table" and "drinking of the fruit of the vine" in the future kingdom of God, seems at first sight to furnish a plain proof that Jesus had in mind a state of earthly, material enjoyment. But we must also take into account how Jesus expressed Himself in other passages respecting the blessings and the life of the future state of blessedness. On the one hand, He described the treasures which His disciples are to seek as imperishable treasures in heaven in opposition to perishable earthly blessings (Matt. vi. 19 f.)—*i.e.* He did not say that His disciples are at present to renounce earthly goods, because in the future great reversal of things they would receive so much greater abundance of blessings of the same kind as compensation for such renunciation; but He taught them to turn away their desire from the blessings of earthly life, which on closer examination prove because of their perishableness to be no true, real blessings (Luke xvi. 11 f.), to such treasures of a heavenly kind as because of this their altogether different, heavenly nature are imperishable and true treasures. On the other hand, in opposition to the Sadducees, He uttered the statement: "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven" (Mark xii. 25). The Sadducees started from the supposition, that if there is a resurrection of the dead, a resurrection to membership in the Messianic kingdom of that time, the risen ones would enter such a state of earthly happiness as, according to Jewish notions, was essentially characteristic of the Messianic kingdom of the last days. On this supposition they pointed out what absurdities would follow if a woman, who in accordance with legal directions (and therefore without any blame attaching to her) had been married seven times, were to rise again with these seven husbands, when yet she cannot at the same time stand in happy marriage-communion of an earthly, sensuous kind with all (Mark xii. 18-23). But Jesus attacks the perverse supposition itself, which forms the groundwork of their inference. The future state, to which the good will rise again, will not be simply a new kind of earthly life, in which

such intercourse of men with one another is carried on, and such enjoyments are sought as correspond to the present earthly and sensuous constitution of human nature. On the contrary, it will be an altogether heavenly life, such as angels live in heaven.

I think we should very imperfectly bring out the force of this significant utterance of Jesus if, while excluding, in keeping with the plain sense, marrying and giving in marriage from the future state of perfection, we were still to hold that (in the mind of Jesus) this future state of blessedness would in other respects be essentially of an earthly nature, and would include an enjoying of earthly goods and associations in correspondence with sensuous appetites. Difficulties and absurdities of the kind the Sadducees invented in reference to married life in the resurrection-state might be imagined also in reference to all other possible earthly relations, if the supposition were admitted that life in the future state of blessedness would be a life of an earthly, sensuous nature. But certainly Jesus would have rejected every such difficulty in the same way, if it had been brought forward as an objection: in the future kingdom of God they shall neither buy nor sell, neither be rulers nor subjects, eat nor drink; "but they are as angels in heaven." Unless we suppose that in different passages Jesus uttered contradictory statements respecting the nature of the future state of blessedness, we must assert that the ideas of "sitting at table" and "drinking of the fruit of the vine" in God's kingdom in the passages quoted before have a *figurative* sense. Just, *e.g.*, as "sitting at the right hand and the left of Jesus" in His glory (Mark x. 40) is in the mouth of Jesus a figurative expression to denote the most direct participation in His heavenly power and glory, so the common "eating and drinking" in God's kingdom is a figurative expression for the common enjoyment of blessedness in that perfect state.

Or shall we say, by a sort of compromise, that Jesus pictured to Himself the future kingdom of God as a state of earthly glory and blessings indeed in course of realisation, not in heaven but on earth, but at the same time conceived this state and these blessings in a peculiarly ideal and spiritual way? So Joh. Weiss thinks, *ibid.* p. 41: "All these precious things, according to the view of Jesus, will be found there *in an entirely different*,

even now calm, quiet, persuade (Matt. xxviii. 14; Acts xii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 11) our heart (here in the sense of conscience), when it is disquieted by the thought of God's holiness, which awakens the accusations of conscience, as we realise His spiritual nearness. Even when conscience accuses us most keenly, we shall find peace with God, provided we really actively love the brethren. *Whereinsoever our heart condemn us.* This clause is far from being superfluous, seeing that the object to which this assuring of our heart refers is by no means self-evident. It is the sum total of all possible accusations of our conscience. The accusing is not exactly a condemning (Gal. ii. 11).

Ver. 20. *Because God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.* These words state the reason why, in the case assumed, *i.e.* on the assumption of our being possessed by genuine, operative, brotherly love, we shall be able to quiet our heart before God, of whatsoever our conscience may accuse us. There must, therefore, in the statements made regarding God be a distinct reference to genuine, sincere, brotherly love. These statements are two. In the first place, *God is greater than our heart.* The term "greater" receives its specific meaning from the subject, in comparison with which God is represented as being greater, which is here our heart. This "greater" must, therefore, be understood as being predicated of God's heart, or of a quality of God's heart; and, indeed, it must naturally be understood of that quality of the heart of which the whole passage treats, *viz.* compassionating love (vers. 16, 17), which is a function of the heart. John says: if *our* small heart loves and compassionates the brethren in truth, we can confidently believe that God, whose heart is by far greater than ours, cherishes compassionating love towards us, of whatsoever our conscience may accuse us. But if the reality of compassionating love is not certain to us from our own experience, we cannot confidently believe in its reality in God, nor find peace in casting ourselves upon His loving compassion. In the second place, *He knoweth all things,* and therefore also the truth that is in us (ver. 19), the genuine, new, Christian, divine nature that is in us, although it is still so weak and elementary that men cannot discern it, and we ourselves may hardly be able to perceive it within us. John says: if we know from our sincere and active love to the brethren that there must really

be in us, though only as a minimum, the true, divine nature, then, when conscience accuses us, the thought of God's omniscience is a great support to us. For we say to ourselves: this beginning of the true, divine nature, which is well-nigh concealed from ourselves, is well known to God; and therefore, notwithstanding all our trespasses, He will deal with us as being of the truth, and will consequently not reject us.

John points here to the blissful and strengthening comfort, which is to be found by us in energetic brotherly love. He does not mean that by it we should seek to establish any claim upon God's grace and forgiveness, or any desert whatever. But he nevertheless reminds us that in this energetic love of the brethren we have a support, which, considering the knowledge we have of God as Christians, secures us against everything that might come near to despair, even under circumstances when our conscience accuses us most keenly of the greatness of our guilt. To the man who has once learned to know the life of love as something real, the thought of the love of God in Christ is unspeakably blissful. We are sorely tempted to question whether there is a pure love, which is not merely disguised selfishness. To believe in pure, unselfish love is infinitely difficult; and so long as we lack this faith, we also lack faith in divine grace. Only by finding divine love experimentally in ourselves, do we attain to faith in love—we ourselves must really love in deed and not merely in word. It is only when we have thus attained to the faith that there is such a thing as genuine love, that we come to know how much consolation there is in the thought that God in Christ is love.

Until we have attained to genuine love, our faith also lacks reality. Not in our love as such does there lie for us any comfort over against the accusations of conscience; but only in this, that it is a sure token to us of our new filial relation to God through faith. Moreover, we find this consolation in every case, of whatsoever our heart may accuse us. And this is something characteristic of the peace of the Christian with God—it is independent of the measure of the sin of which we must accuse ourselves. Apart from Christ we might be able to appease our conscience in relation to small sins; great sins, however, would remain unforgiven upon our conscience. To the man, however, who has attained to any living

limits of God's previous revelation, not in order to dissolve it, but to replace the still imperfect by the perfect (Matt. v. 17). Just as He was conscious of the obligation, in harmony with His fuller knowledge of God, to declare unessential large parts of the Old Testament law of worship and ceremony, which in an outward aspect constituted its main substance (Matt. vii. 14-23; John iv. 23 f.), and as He opposed His "But I say to you," in regard to moral requirements, to what had been said to the ancients (Matt. v. 21 ff.), precisely so He might be conscious of the right and the duty to abolish or to alter the Old Testament hopes of blessedness in so far as they did not correspond to the perfect doctrine of God's fatherly will. He was not slavishly subject to the authority of the Old Testament revelation, but He combined with a dutiful, historical recognition of it a consciousness of His right and power to distinguish freely between the essential and the unessential, the abiding and the perishable, the divine and the human in it (cf., e.g., Mark ii. 28, x. 5-9).

Therefore, from the undoubted fact that the Old Testament prophets conceived the blessed state of the last days as an earthly one, with outward gifts and political power and glory, we must

not simply infer that Jesus also as matter of course must have held the same view. But just as little should we conclude, if He departed in this respect from Old Testament prophecy, that He did not hold the Old Testament promises sacred. He held them sacred, acknowledged their divine truth, and felt Himself called to realise them in so far as in them the pious confidence found expression, that God would one day inaugurate a new state of things, in which the good would enjoy full communion with God, and full salvation through Him, whereas everything evil in humanity would be finally judged and condemned. But this did not preclude His declaring these Old Testament promises defective, in so far as, with a still imperfect apprehension of God's gracious will and His power to initiate quite new forms of life (Mark xii. 24), they assumed that the new blessed state of the last days must again be a state of an earthly nature, with earthly blessings and earthly power. He was certain that He introduced the most glorious and perfect fulfilment of these promises, not by realising their defective elements, but by abolishing their defects, and realising them in a way corresponding perfectly to their true idea and the true nature of God.

Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. RICHARD ROTHE, D.D.

CHAPTER III. 19-24.

"Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him, whereinsoever our heart condemn us; because God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as He gave us commandment. And he that keepeth His commandments abideth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us."

VER. 19. Vers. 19-22 support the exhortation to genuine, active, brotherly love by pointing to the fact that it alone affords rest and peace of soul, confidence towards God, and more especially boldness in prayer and an answer to prayer. *Hereby*, i.e. in loving in deed and in truth, of which the apostle has just spoken (cf. ii. 5; iv. 17). *That we are of the truth*, i.e. that our being is of the truth; or more plainly, that we are really and truly, and not merely in appearance, what we profess to

be both to ourselves and to others, viz. Christians; believers in the Redeemer, children of God redeemed by Him. We have here substantially the same thought as in John xiii. 35.

We shall assure our heart before Him (i.e. before God). What is spoken of here is not our appearing before God in the day of judgment; for ver. 21, which manifestly develops the thought of this verse, compels us to think of our present spiritual appearing before Him. In His presence we shall