



Unveiling the Wisdom of the Bible

By Charles Johnston

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Cain and Abel

The Path, November, 1887

“The first step is Sacrifice; the next, Renunciation.”

“*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!’ cries he, elsewhere: ‘there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! was it not to preach forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? which God-inspired doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful afflictions even till thou become contrite and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain; thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated.’”*

The Bibles, poetry, tradition, concur in this verdict. When life has been exalted above mere animalism, a time comes when the Self in thee needs to be annihilated.

Other sacrifices may be difficult; this renunciation is supremely difficult. To destroy what surrounds us is comparatively easy; to rise in the air and destroy the ground we stood on, not so easy, and yet this is what must be done.

* Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, Book II, Chap. IX.

Vices may be abandoned—virtues even may be acquired—for selfish reasons; but to banish once and forever, all selfish motives, all personal objects, to work resolutely for universal ends—this can never be done selfishly.

Can we give a reason for following the good, the beautiful, the true? None, but that we find them good, beautiful, true.

To work in this pure disinterestedness and unselfishness is what is necessary.

The Self in thee needs to be annihilated.

Up to this point of progress, the individual has worked.

After this sacrifice, there is no longer an individual; there is only God, working through what were the powers of the individual.

The cup that separated the water from the ocean has been annihilated. Now, there is only the ocean.

After the sacrifice, it is perceived that only an unreality, a bond, was offered up; but till the sacrifice is consummated, what is to be sacrificed is seen as Self.

This sacrifice of Self is made after the illusory nature of the life of the senses is perceived; after it is seen that within the sensuous world there is a spiritual world, of which the sensuous world is a husk.

This perception, the Orientals call—“overcoming the illusions of the Ten.”*

When the inner world is perceived, these physical senses and organs are superseded by five inner senses, and five inner organs of sense.

This truth is told again and again in the Hebrew Bible. Moses, (the Soul) led the Twelve Tribes (senses, organs, desire, egotism) from bondage in Egypt (sense-life). During the probation in the desert, these Twelve were superseded by Twelve Tribes who had never known bondage, (astral senses, etc.).

But the individual having gone so far, was to cease from individual life.

Moses saw the Land of Promise from afar, but himself entered not in. He died, and another entered in.

The Self was annihilated; there was no longer Man, but God only.

* Eye, ear, nose, etc., and tongue, hands, feet, etc.

Those who have read the *Idyll of the Lotus* have learned the same lesson.

Sensa—the soul—triumphs over Agmahd and the Ten. But Sensa himself perished by the hands of Agmahd and the Ten.

It is the darkest fact in human life, but an inexorable fact, that there is no redemption without sacrifice; the Self needs to be annihilated; and the Christians have rightly made the sacrifice on Calvary the central picture of their religion; Christ had to sacrifice himself before he could ascend to his Father.

This is the meaning of Cain and Abel.

To the Soul (Adam) resting in calm unity, was added Personal desire (Eve). Eve is the type of personal life in its essential character, as recipient of alternate emotions of pleasure and pain, sweet and bitter, good and evil. For Eve tastes the fruit of knowledge of good and evil.

Now, two paths lie open—continued personality through many lives, or redemption through self-sacrifice: Cain is the first; Abel the second.

Cain offers no real sacrifice, and ever after, having chosen egotism and isolated life, he bears the brand of fear, for fear ever follows strife. The brand remains till Cain learns the “perfect love that casts out fear.”

Abel offers the true sacrifice—the whole animal nature. But soul has served Self too long. Before the soul has regained its divinity, the bonds of individuality must be broken by sacrifice. At last the sacrifice is consummated. Abel lies bleeding on the ground, but the liberated soul re-enters Eden, passing the flaming swords of the Cherubim, and advances triumphant to the Tree of Life. There is no longer man, but God only. For this is offered the prayer of the Eastern Saint—

“The dew is on the Lotus;—Rise, Great Sun!
And lift my leaf, and mix me with the wave!
Om mani padme hum, the Sunrise comes!
The dew-drops slips into the shining sea!”

The Sermon on the Mount

Theosophical Quarterly, October, 1906

I.

In studying the Teachings of Jesus, we shall do well ever to bear in mind his words to his disciples: "It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given . . . therefore speak I to them in parables."* And in fact we find this very division running through all the Teachings: on the one hand, the Parables, and chiefly the Parables of the Kingdom, for the multitude; on the other, the direct teaching to disciples. This direct teaching is given most fully in two great discourses: the Sermon on the Mount, at the outset of the ministry; and the Discourse of the Last Supper, recorded by the beloved disciple, on the eve of the Crucifixion.

The Sermon on the Mount is, therefore, the first teaching to disciples. We shall do well to consider its exact position, at the beginning of the Gospel according to Matthew. Levi, the toll-gatherer, also called Matthew, belonged to the town of Capernaum, on the north shore of the Galilean lake, into and out of which flows the stream of the Jordan. In that region about the lake the early events recorded by Matthew are placed. Passing directly from the birth of Jesus to the mystical and symbolical baptism by John, Matthew then records the not less mystical threefold Trial in the Wilderness. After this, Jesus took up his abode at Capernaum, Matthew's own town, and most of the disciples were drawn from the immediate neighbourhood,

* Matthew 13:11

among them being Matthew himself. From this point, Matthew is a first-hand witness of what he records. He tells us that, in this early time, the Master went through the region around the lake, teaching in the synagogues, preaching "the gospel of the Kingdom," and healing all manner of disease. The result was, that his fame went throughout all Syria, and that great crowds of people went about after him, as he passed from town to town.

II.

On a certain occasion, to escape from the multitude, he went, as was his wont, to one of the mountains beside the lake, and ascended to a solitary spot, far away from the throng. Thither also came the recently called disciples, and there the teaching was given to them, which is therefore called the Sermon on the Mount.

The Sermon is divided into three parts. The first part is concerned with the nature of discipleship. Jesus stated the law of discipleship many times. Thus we find him saying: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whoso doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple."* Matthew himself gives a slightly different phrasing: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."†

The first step for the disciple is, therefore, the renunciation of the personal life, personal ambition, personal desires, personal will, to follow the divine will, to obey the divine law, to live the life of the divine Self, the Lord. This is symbolized in the formula used in the call of the disciples: "Follow Me!" And only he who has made that renunciation, who has definitely sacrificed the personal to the divine life, following the divine law, has passed from the multitude and become a disciple.

* Luke 14:26

† Matthew 10:37

As a disciple, he comes under a new law, belonging no longer to the “kingdom of this world,” but having heart and life in the “kingdom not of this world, the kingdom of heaven.” New conditions apply to him. New experiences await him. A new life opens up before him. New powers become manifest to him.

We have seen Jesus stating the first qualification of the disciple in the phrase so constantly used by him: “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”* In the Sermon on the Mount, we may take the verses beginning with the word “Blessed,” called the “Beatitudes,” as a fuller statement of the character and quality of discipleship. We may say that four negative and four positive qualities are recorded. As for the negative, the disciple must be “poor in spirit,” renouncing personal self assertion; he must “mourn,” finding nowhere in the visible world what his soul longs for; he must be “meek” and lowly in heart; he must “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” These are the qualities which make up the losing of his life. Then the positive qualities: he must be “merciful,” loving his neighbour as himself, seeing the one divine Life in both; he must be “pure in heart,” desiring only the Eternal; he must be a “peacemaker,” bringing about the great reconciliation between man and the Divine, between man and his brother. In “keeping his life unto life eternal,” in coming to himself in the new divine life, these new qualities blossom forth in him, not so much as virtues, but rather as the unfolding of his immortal Self.

Then the Master passes on to the next theme: the position of the disciple in the world. The disciple is “the salt of the earth;” he is “the light of the world;” visible representative, in this world, of the Divine and Eternal. He stands for spiritual law, and from his very being and life radiates something of that law. And to such the Master says: “let your *light* so shine before men, that they may see your *good works*, and glorify *your Father which is in heaven.*” A perfect expression of the selfless life of the disciple; it is not he that must shine before men, but the light; it is not he that must be seen, but the good works; it is not he that shall be glorified, but the Father which is in heaven, the Most High, the Eternal.

* John 12:25

Does obedience to this divine Law absolve the disciple from following the laws of men? May he plead that, once on the Path, nothing is for him any longer commanded or forbidden? The Master answers: "I come not to destroy but to fulfil. . . . Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments . . . shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." Moreover, the disciple must fulfil the law with a faithfulness, a scrupulous exactitude, far beyond the fidelity of the men of the world. The disciple must learn respect for law and obedience to law, as typifying the subjection of the lower nature to the higher; an obedience which must first be practised in the heart, and then outwardly expressed in thought and act. Except the righteousness of the disciple exceed the righteousness of the man of the world, he shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.

This thought of law is then taken up and followed. Representative commands from the law: three of the Ten Commandments, and certain of the texts which follow them, are then taken; and the Master shows in what way the disciple must fulfil the law. In every case, the principle is the same. Taking the materialistic command of the law, the Teacher shows its spiritual lining, the principle of the Law which underlies the law. There is the command: "Thou shalt not kill!" It means far more for the disciple than to refrain from slaying the body. It goes deep into the mystery of the soul, to that supreme law of the Oneness of all beings, whose manifestation is perfect love. Two most eloquent illustrations are added: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; *first be reconciled to thy brother*, and then come and offer thy gift." Then, that there may be no pretext for the excuse that we are indeed to be reconciled to our brothers, but may still remain in hostility toward our enemies, the Teacher once more speaks: "*Agree with thine adversary* quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Here again we see, what we see everywhere throughout the teaching of the Master, the stern condemnation of unbrotherliness, of the sense of separateness from others, which was the spirit of the Pharisee, the "man of

separateness.” Unity of heart is a quality without which there can be no discipleship.

Then passing from the root of hate to the root of lust, the Master takes the commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and shows that the heart must be pure, not the act only. Unclean desire is sin already; the impure heart can never hold the light of the Eternal. Lust and desire are a deformation of the longing for joy, that joy which is the very essence of the Soul. Those who find the Soul find joy, and can no longer seek its false image. Therefore, he who seeks the Soul must cleanse the desires that dwell in the heart, and become altogether pure.

The Master touches on marriage. The Mosaic law gave the husband a right to put away his wife for various causes, almost at his pleasure; though no such right of separation was given to the wife. This, says the Master, was because of hardness of heart; therefore the true principle of marriage is gentleness of heart, that very unity and love so perpetually insisted on throughout the teaching.

Then comes a piece of Oriental imagery, concerning unclean desire and hate: “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. . . . If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.” Here the offending eye is the symbol of lust; the offending hand is the symbol of the hate that strikes and the greed that grasps. If, therefore, the disciple is made to stumble by the barriers of lust and hate, let him cut these things out of his heart, as the husbandman cuts away the unfruitful branch of the vine, casting it into the fire.

A third commandment is then quoted, though not verbally; that which we are wont to translate: “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” that is, thou shalt not take the name of God to witness a false oath, or, as Jesus paraphrases: “Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.” On this, the Master comments, with that matchless eloquence which makes him one of the greatest poets: “But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool!”

Then we come to those principles of the law of retaliation: An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; which form the basis of all ruder codes.

To the disciple, the Master says: Seek not to retaliate; “Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” Here many deep principles are involved. The Oriental disciple, believing in the law of Karma: “whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” will hold firmly the thought that whatever blow he suffers, was struck by himself; that whatever is torn from him, is taken by himself; pains suffered are but the return of pains inflicted on others. He will see in the blow, in the loss, a merited punishment; nay more, a debt paid, an account closed. But there is more in the matter than this. The disciple seeks above all things to rid his heart of the great evil and delusion of separateness; to lose his life, that selfish, separate life which he has called himself; to lose this, that he may find the Eternal. Therefore he who strikes the blow is not to be thought of as other than himself. He cannot separate himself from the unclean or evil man. The world’s sin and shame are his sin and shame. The seed of all evil is this delusion of separateness: separateness from the Eternal; separateness from our other selves; and whatever gives the opportunity to pierce this delusion is eminent gain.

Many times it has been said that this rule, if put in force, would disrupt society; that it is not to be taken literally, not to be carried out. But let us recall our first principle of criticism: that the Sermon on the Mount is given to *disciples* not to the multitude, and we shall be freed from this confusion. It is enjoined only on disciples, who have lost their lives, that they may keep them to life eternal; and disciples will be able to keep the rule without causing the least disruption of society; nay, as “the salt of the earth,” they are preservative of whatever is pure, holy and of good report in the life of society. When disciples come to be the majority, so that the rule is widely kept, it will be time for society to be transformed into a brotherhood not of this world, eternal in the heavens.

Then comes a final comment on the old law, closing the first part of the Sermon by the enunciation of the Law: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

III.

The closing words of the first part of the Sermon bring the disciple to the intuitive vision of "the Father which is in Heaven:" the divine Life in the inner world, which begins to be revealed to his inner being after he has made the renunciation of personal desires, losing his life that he may keep it to life eternal.

The second part of the Sermon dwells on this thought: the inwardly revealed divine Life, which dwells with the inner being of the disciple, gradually drawing that inner being into oneness with the Eternal; gradually instilling into the inner life of the disciple the holiness and wisdom and power of the Eternal, with all gentle charity to others.

Having lost his life, the disciple begins to find it, in that new spiritual world called by the Master: "the realm of the heavens." The disciple gradually perceives that this newly opened spiritual world is, as it were, the lining of the visible world; that it is, as it were, the deep ocean of Life, whereon float the foam and bubbles of this visible world. And gradually, from the inner presence of the divine Life, he grows into a new law, new powers, a new consciousness, which carries the intuition of immortal life.

Thereafter the life of the disciple is, as it were, a spiritual intercourse with that divine Life; an interchange carried on incessantly between his inner being and the inwardly revealed Eternal; and the laws of that interchange are now declared by the Master, in the second part of the Sermon.

First concerning alms. The gifts of charity must be given from real love, never from vanity. They must come like the gifts of the Father, who sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. Let not the right hand know what the left hand doeth. Let the gift be secret, "and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Then concerning prayer, as exemplified in "the Master's Prayer." It must be an inward drawing near to the divine Life newly revealed to the inner being of the disciple, an entering into that divine Life, the heart and thought of the disciple becoming one with that divine Life, so that he thinks the thoughts and wills the will of the Eternal, entering into the Eternal as the Eternal enters into him. Thereafter he

will seek to do the will of the Eternal, in the outward life of the world, as perfectly as that will is carried out in the divine inner world. And, seeing that the Eternal rules immediately in every moment, he will trust to the Eternal the daily governance of his life, the daily bread of duties and sustenance. Becoming at one with the Eternal, reconciled with the Eternal, he will be ready for reconciliation with all others, forgiving his debtors as his debts are forgiven. It may well be that the next petition should be rendered thus: "Lead us through our trial, and deliver us from evil," for the whole life of the disciple is a trial, only to be overcome by divine leading. Then the final invocation: "For thine are the realm, the might and the radiance, to everlasting!"

Concerning fasting, the same rule as for alms and prayer. Abstinence must be the pure offering of the inner being to the inwardly revealed Eternal, and never a matter of vanity, for the self-satisfaction of the personal life: "and thy Father who seeth in the hidden, shall reward thee in the manifest." As all through this division of the Sermon, the disciple is brought back to the intuition of "the Father who seeth in secret," the wonderful divine Consciousness and Life which approaches his inner being, in the newly revealed inner world.

Gradually, as the disciple offers up the purest of his thought and will and aspiration and love to that inwardly manifested Life, he will "lay up treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." For where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye. The light of the disciple's life is the spiritual vision of the Eternal, revealed inwardly in the inner world. As his inner life is lit up by that vision, as he receives into himself the splendour of the Eternal, so shall his whole being be full of light. But where the thoughts and desires are set on the things of darkness, the whole life is full of darkness, of misery, of the pain of separation, of the impending menace of death.

Then comes the world-known symbol: the two masters, God and Mammon; a testimony to the eloquence and poetical power of the Master, which has exalted the name of a petty Syrian idol into a universal symbol, just as the Parable of the Good Samaritan turned

an obscure tribe name of the Jordan valley into a symbol of universal gentleness. But the antithesis of God and Mammon testifies to more than the Master's eloquence; it testifies to his profound knowledge of the science of life, based on experience, and to be verified by experience.

We stand between two worlds, able to penetrate both by our consciousness and will. Below us, the world of animal life, of natural forces known through the senses, the world to which we owe our mortal bodies. Above us, the world of divine Life, of spiritual forces known through intuition and inward unveiling, the world which shall bestow on us the life of our immortality. There is no condemnation here of animal life, in its due place and time. The birds of the air, the lilies of the field, are of the Father. Animal life brought us far, and taught us much. But it has its term; and when the hour has struck for us to enter the world of our immortality, we must be ready to pass beyond animal life, to let it fall from us, as the chrysalid husk falls from the winged butterfly. Sin lies, not in animal life, but in the distortion of animal life for self-indulgence, which, to our shame be it said, makes up so great a part of the life we call human. Sin lies not in pure animal reproduction, but in self-indulgent desire, which distorts and corrupts a simple natural power. And so sin lies not in the animal sustenance of the body, the animal preservation of life, but in egotism, vanity, self-assertion, the sense of separateness, which are the psychical distortions of the simple instinct of self-preservation. It is above all this instinct of self-assertion, of separate ambition, of vain self-seeking, which the Master symbolises as Mammon: that very life of personal indulgence which the disciple must lose, before he can find the Life.

But, it will be said, we must all look keenly to our personal well-being, for we are pursued by the wolves of hunger and want and poverty. To this the Master answers, that the disciple's first concern must be, to render inward obedience to "the Father that seeth in secret;" his first concern is with the soul rather than the body; for the soul is more than the body, as the body is more than its raiment. "Be not in anguish about your life," says the Master: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them . . . Consider the lilies of the

field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”

It must never be thought that this command to put away anguish about the morrow is an approval of idleness, unthrift, improvidence; that the multitude are bidden to leave all things to a generous Providence, while they idle and take their ease. As all these rules, this is an injunction to disciples, who are commanded also to fulfil every iota of the law, to render the things of Caesar unto Caesar, to kill out ambition; yet to work as those who are ambitious. But in all work, the heart of the disciple must be set, not on the personal reward, but on the inner vision of the divine Life, the Father who seeth in secret, and who knows that he has need of all these things.

This second division of the Sermon is summed up by the eloquent command: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

IV.

The third and last division of the Sermon is concerned with injunctions for disciples; each injunction a landmark, a guide-post for a difficult turning of the Way. First of these injunctions stands the great command: “Judge not, that ye be not judged”; and no command is more imperatively laid on the disciple. His great task is to kill out the sense of separateness, that he may become one with the Eternal, one with his brothers. The sting of separateness must be cut out of his life, so that he shall see only Oneness in the Divine. The last element of the self-seeking, vain and selfish personality is to be done away with, in order that there may be revealed in him a life spiritual and universal. And no one tendency more markedly strengthens the sense of separateness than the habit of fault-finding, of judging others uncharitably, of condemning others. The mind is thereby narrowed and embittered; the well-spring of generous kindness is dried up, and every magnanimous and heroic virtue is thwarted. Thus it comes that he who judges others with uncharity generates in himself many defects and infirmities, so that he is verily judged by the law as he has judged, and the measure he meted to others is measured back to him in turn.

Therefore we are admonished to seek unity of heart, to love one another; to avoid all criticism, to forgive endlessly, bearing no malice; to seek virtues in each other, not deficiencies; and when obvious deficiencies are manifest, to match them with our own, fault for fault. We are to do all in our power to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and fellowship, for “love is the power that moves the world, the only power that moves the spiritual world.”

The next rule for disciples is: “Ask, and it shall be given you.” This rule goes deep into the spiritual world. When the disciple, losing his life that he may keep it to life eternal, is reborn from above, of the spirit and fire, that new life of his grows in the spiritual world, drawing power and sustenance from the divine, and thereby “building the dwelling,” as Paul says; forming that spiritual body to which Paul gives the name: “The new man, the Lord from heaven.” The life of this new spiritual Self rests in the divine Life, and will there grow by degrees to the perfection of “the Father in heaven.” That it may thus grow, there must be as its life-giving spirit, strong aspiration toward the Eternal, an ardent and unceasing longing to go forth to the Eternal, to enter into the fullness of the Eternal. This ardent and unceasing love is the “asking” of this rule, and he who thus asks receives according to the measure of his faith.

Then comes the rule: “Enter in by the narrow gate,” the gate of the Path, the divine way which leads to the Eternal. That gate is narrow and hard to pass, for none may enter who leaves not himself outside the gate. The gate is barred by the sense of separateness, the sharp ambition to pursue one’s own fortunes, not as a duty, but in order that one may be at an advantage as compared with others, enjoying the keen sense of superior wealth, superior wisdom, superior fortune. One may say that the gate is narrow indeed, too narrow to admit any but a little child; one who has regained the lost child state of innocence and reverence and simple faith. Yet though the gate be narrow, it is wide enough for all mankind to pass through, as soon as the great renunciation is made.

To these rules, two warnings are added. The first, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,” would seem to repeat in forceful imagery, the thought quoted at the outset: “to them it is not given to

know the mysteries of the kingdom.” The second warning, “Beware of false prophets,” introduces the wise rule, that the tree shall be known by its fruit; every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit, “wherefore by their fruits he shall know them.” Nor must this injunction be held to refer solely to judgement of others; it is not less concerned with the manifold counsellors and advocates within ourselves, which would lead us this way and that. These also we may judge by their fruit. Whatever in us brings forth the fruit of the spirit, “love, joy, peace,” is good, a true branch of the vine; but whatever brings forth bitterness, lust, hate, fear, is an evil tree, known by its evil fruit.

It is noteworthy that, among these rules for the disciple, the Golden Rule is given a great place: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

This is the teaching for disciples, as set forth by the Master in the Sermon on the Mount, and with it we may take the promise recorded in the other version of the same Sermon: “The disciple is not above his Master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.”

It may be asked, if these teachings are for disciples, what provision is made for the multitude? The answer is, that the Path of discipleship is open to all; and the way of entrance is thus set forth by the Master: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

The same thought is embodied in a vivid and powerful image: “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.”

A Page of the Apocalypse

Theosophical Quarterly, October, 1907 & January, 1908

I.

One of the purposes of the Theosophical Society is to pursue the comparative study of religions, with a view to making clear the inherent spiritual truths which underlie all religions. Few books offer a more promising field for this method than does the Apocalypse, known in English as "The Revelation of Saint John the Divine." Taken alone, this book is an almost insoluble enigma, so much so that it has been more than once proposed that it should be excluded from the canon of scripture. But taken together with other works of the same class, of which there are some in every religion, its enigmas are found to resolve themselves, yielding clear and valuable spiritual truths.

The first motive of the Apocalypse is John's vision of the Logos. And we shall do well to keep in mind that "the Logos" is peculiarly John's expression for the Divine Man. Not only is this so in the opening passage of the Gospel: "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God . . . And the Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and peace;" but John uses the same phrase in the Epistles: "That which was in the beginning . . . the Logos of Life; and the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;" and we find the same expression in the Apocalypse: "And he was clothed with a

vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Logos of God.” This bears out, what we have ample reason for believing, that the Gospel, the Epistles and the Apocalypse are all the work of the same seer, the “beloved disciple” John.

John was not the originator of this expression: the Logos. It is generally admitted that he took it from Philo Judaeus (circa B.C. 20—A.D. 50) of Alexandria, who in turn found it used by the Stoics and Plato. Philo was one of those who, like Plutarch, Synesius and Iamblichus, was strongly tinged with the Egyptian spirit; and John’s use of this expression, the Logos, brings him into touch with the mystical life of Egypt. In his philosophical, and we may add eminently theosophical writings, Philo develops the teaching of Plato, that all manifested things have their divine originals, their prototypes, which Plato called Ideas. Philo called these same divine originals, or principles, Logoi, and taught, with Plato, that the world-process consists in the orderly manifestation of these Logoi, under the forms of created things with which we are familiar. Philo further taught that these Logoi were summed up in a single collective Life, the host of the Logoi, to which, as a unity, he gave the name Logos. This collective Logos, Host of the divine Thought, stands above the manifested world, and through the Logos the eternal Deity works and becomes manifest.

John teaches exactly the same thing: “The Logos was in the beginning with God; all things came into being through the Logos.” And John further recognizes his Master, Jesus, as being the incarnation of the Logos, the manifestation of the divine Man in human form. This teaching of the incarnation of the divine Man is as old as our knowledge. There is no period of which we have a record, where we do not find exactly the same doctrine, in almost identical terms. It was taught in Egypt long before the time of the First Dynasty. It was taught in the Euphrates valley, among the Sumerians, whom we may call the ancient Chaldeans. It was taught in the hymns of the Rig Veda, and in all later periods of Indian religion. The Logos became incarnate in two ways: primordially, in the divine manifestation which we call the world; and subsequently, in certain divine personages, who bore the message of Divinity to the world.

We therefore find that the main theme of the Apocalypse is this world-old doctrine of the Logos, the divine Thought, the divine Man, both as the collective Spirit above life, and as specially made manifest in the incarnation of the Master, Jesus. Further, the theme of the Apocalypse is John's own vision of the Logos; a divine event, or series of events, through which he entered into the consciousness of the Logos, or became conscious of the Logos; and the Apocalypse is the record of the truths which were thus made known to him. John's own words are:

“I, John, who also am your brother . . . was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great Voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book . . . And I turned to see the Voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

“And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen . . .”

John is further told that the “seven stars” are the spirits of the seven churches, and that the “seven candlesticks” are the seven churches; or, as we may say, the “seven stars” are seven powers or principles of the Logos, and the “seven candlesticks” or “seven churches” are the embodied or manifested forms of these principles. This symbolism is carried out with great beauty and consistency, in the addresses to the seven churches. In each case, one title or attribute of the Logos is mentioned, and with it is associated a certain spiritual power to be

gained by overcoming a defined barrier or obstacle.

Thus we have, first, the aspect of the Logos as “he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand.” With this is associated the virtue, patience, and the sin, inconstancy; and finally the reward of victory: “to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

The second aspect of the Logos is, “the first and the last, which was dead and is alive;” the virtue, endurance of tribulation; the sin, blasphemy; the reward: “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” And there follows a noteworthy phrase, to which we shall return: “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

The third aspect of the Logos is, “he that hath the sharp sword with two edges;” the virtue is “fidelity even in Satan’s seat;” the sin is false understanding, “which thing I hate;” the reward is: “to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

The fourth aspect of the Logos is, “the son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;” the virtue is charity, pure love; the sin is lust; the reward, “he that overcometh, to him will I give power over the nations.”

The fifth aspect of the Logos is, “he that hath the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars;” the virtue is purity; the sin, defilement, a false life—“thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead;” the reward is: “he that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”

The sixth aspect of the Logos is, “he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David (‘the beloved’), he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and that shutteth, and no man openeth”; the virtue is fidelity, “thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name”—“hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”; the sin is lying and deceit; the reward, “him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and my new name.”

The seventh aspect of the Logos is, "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;" the virtue is earnest repentance, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The renewal of life, the transformation, the transfer of allegiance called "repentance," is further symbolized thus: "thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." It is impossible not to be struck with the resemblance to the more familiar passage, in the Sermon on the Mount: "lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Following this suggestion, it will be profitable to compare in detail the sevenfold regeneration above associated with the seven aspects of the Logos, not only with the Sermon on the Mount, but also with other tracts of regeneration, such as the Seven Portals, in *The Voice of the Silence*. Enough has been said to make it clear that we are concerned with a new birth from above, which brings immortality, initiating the new-born into a spiritual life, where he is spoken of as "clad in white raiment," and having a "new name," whereby he is made known to "the Father and his angels."

Let us for a moment draw a comparison with the teaching of Paul, who says:

"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

No doubt it was in the light of the spiritual experience here referred to, that Paul was able to describe the great regeneration, in the well-known passage:

“There are also celestial bodies, and terrestrial bodies: . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a psychic body; it is raised a spiritual body . . . the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven . . . Behold I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”

In the Apocalypse, John is writing of the same transformation from the psychical body to the spiritual body, “the new man, the Lord from heaven.” John considers this transformation as accomplished in seven degrees, which he associates with seven powers of the Logos. The fruit of victory is immortality, in a spiritual realm, which he, like Paul, speaks of as paradise.

II.

After the “Address to the seven churches,” John records a further vision of the Logos:

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first Voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

“And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

“And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the

throne, which are the Seven Spirits of God.

“And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four Lives, full of eyes before and behind. . . . And the first Life was like a lion, and the second Life was like a calf, and the third Life had a face as a man, and the fourth Life was like a flying eagle. And the four Lives had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

“And when those Lives give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord , to receive glory and honour and power; For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

These last words show that John’s teaching of the creative Logos is exactly that of the mystical religions of Egypt and the East.

One cannot fail to be struck with the recurrence of the number seven: the seven stars, seven lamps, seven spirits, seven seals. It is interesting to note that the attendants of the Logos, the Four Lives, and four and twenty elders, again make four groups of seven. It is further said that the four angels stand “on the four corners of the earth,” thus associating the Four Lives with the four cardinal points, like the Four Maharajas, in Eastern mysticism. We shall, therefore, have, as the divine hierarchy around and beneath the Logos, four groups of seven, associated with north, south, east and west; one of the Four Lives being the regent of each group. This vision of the divine hierarchy in seven ascending degrees, up to the Logos, is in complete harmony with Eastern teachings.

A later chapter beautifully supplements this description of the divine hierarchy:

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and

tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the Four Lives, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying:

“Amen: Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Master, thou knowest.

“And he said to me, These are they which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

John is evidently here describing the assembly of those who have passed through the great transformation; who have been reborn from above; who have passed from the psychical to the spiritual body; purifying the psychic body, and thus “washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb,” the spiritual power and life of the Logos, “for the blood is the life.” This is the same symbolism as that of certain Buddhist ascetics, who wear red robes “of the colour of the sunset.”

We can clearly see, therefore, that the main theme of the Apocalypse is the great life of the Logos, in its sevenfold glory, typified by the seven powers above enumerated between the two Amens; and John is primarily concerned with a description of regeneration, initiation into the life of the Logos, and consequent admission into the company of the divine hierarchy, in its seven degrees, under the Four

Lives. Those who are thus admitted wear "white robes," they are immortal, and "go no more out"; and all tears are wiped away from their eyes. We cannot fail to recall the words: "Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears:" strongly suggested also by the words recorded by John: "Anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see."

There is also a close analogy between the words: "Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart," and the regenerate whose robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and who stand before the throne, in the presence of the elders.

III.

The symbolism used by John in describing the sevenfold Logos and the Four Lives was not created by him. We find it used some centuries before our era by Ezekiel. And in Ezekiel we also have a noteworthy suggestion as to the source from which he in his turn drew it: "in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." This carries us back to the region described in Genesis: "Babylon, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, and Shinar," names well known in the ancient history of the Euphrates and Tigris valleys.

Ezekiel thus describes his vision:

"I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. And everyone had four faces, and everyone had four wings . . . their wings were joined one to another . . . as for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side: and they four had the faces of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle . . . and as for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of

the fire went lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning . . .

“And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above . . .

“And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward. I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

“And as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

“And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.”

Here again we are reminded of the words: “Before the soul can stand . . .”

IV.

In the book of Daniel, we have yet another description of the same vision. Daniel was a contemporary of Ezekiel, and like him shared the captivity “in the land of the Chaldeans.” We are further told that Daniel was chosen, as a child “in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science,” to be taught “the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.”

We find Daniel’s vision thus described:

“In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon (circa B.C.

555), Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the words. Daniel spake and said:

“I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another . . .

“And I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened . . .

“I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame . . .

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

“And I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body (or, sheath), and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things . . .”

Some twenty years later, “in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia” (circa B. C. 534), Daniel saw another vision, as he was “by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel (Tigris)”:

“I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude . . . When I heard the

voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face was toward the ground. And behold, an hand touched me . . . and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright . . . and, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my Master, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my Master talk with this my Master? . . . then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and he said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Master speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

One cannot fail to be struck with the likeness of this vision to that which John records perhaps six centuries later: “one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the front, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle . . .” And John’s vision of him whose “hairs were white like wool, as white of snow,” is evidently one with Daniel’s vision of “the Ancient of days, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool.”

This title, the Ancient, is also well known in the Indian books of wisdom: “the immemorial Ancient,” “the Ancient, the Seer,” are phrases used for the Logos in the Bhagavad Gita.

V.

There is yet another source of the same symbolism: the Book of Enoch. That this book was familiar to the disciples of Jesus, we learn from the epistle which immediately precedes the Apocalypse, the Epistle of Jude, the brother of James. Jude writes:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which

ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

The Zohar also, one of the ancient books of the Kabbala of the Hebrews, speaks of the Book of Enoch, considering it a genuine mystical book of high antiquity.

The name of Enoch is known to us primarily from the early chapters of Genesis, where we are told that Enoch lived “three hundred sixty and five years, and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” This mystical personage, who is evidently connected with the cycle of the solar year, belongs to the period before the Deluge; and as the story of the Deluge is admittedly Chaldean in origin, we may well hold that Enoch also takes us back to ancient Chaldea.

For centuries, the Book of Enoch was missing. Nothing was known of it beyond the mention by Jude, the references in ancient Kabbalistic works, and somewhat more recent quotations by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, and a few other early ecclesiastical writers.

In the year 1773, however, the book of Enoch was rediscovered by the traveller Bruce, in the ancient Christian kingdom of Abyssinia, which was converted in the fourth century, and retains many Egyptian and Coptic traditions. The Abyssinians claim to be the descendants of Hebrews who emigrated in the days of Solomon, and at the fall of Jerusalem, and they have undoubtedly a very ancient literary and religious tradition. The book of Enoch thus recovered contains the passage quoted by Jude, practically word for word as he gives it; and also many passages quoted, or alluded to, by the ecclesiastical writers just mentioned. It is, therefore, undoubtedly the genuine ancient scripture, which was in the hands of the disciples of Jesus: The name “Enoch” in Hebrew means “Initiation,” and the masters of the Kabbala always regarded the book of Enoch as a genuine book of the mysteries. In 1821 a translation of the book of Enoch was made by Archbishop Laurence. In Chapter XIV, we read:

“A vision thus appeared to me. Behold, in that vision clouds and a mist invited me; agitated stars and flashes of lightning impelled and pressed me forwards, while winds in the vision assisted my flight, accelerating my progress. They elevated me

aloft to heaven. I proceeded, until I arrived at a wall built with stones of crystal. A vibrating flame surrounded it, which began to strike me with terror. Into this vibrating flame I entered; and drew nigh to a spacious habitation built also with stones of crystal. Its walls too, as well as pavement, were formed with stones of crystal, and crystal likewise was the ground. Its roof had the appearance of agitated stars and flashes of lightning; and among them were cherubim of fire in a stormy sky. A flame burned around its walls; and its portal blazed with fire. When I entered into this dwelling, it was hot as fire and cold as ice. No trace of delight or of life was there. Terror overwhelmed me, and a fearful shaking seized me. Violently agitated and trembling, I fell upon my face.

“In the vision I looked, and behold there was another habitation more spacious than the former, every entrance to which was open before me, erected in the midst of a vibrating flame. So greatly did it excel in all points, in glory, in magnificence, and in magnitude, that it is impossible to describe to you either the splendour or the extent of it. Its floor was on fire; above were lightnings and agitated stars, while its roof exhibited a blazing fire.

“Attentively I surveyed it, and saw that it contained an exalted throne; the appearance of which was like that of frost; while its circumference resembled the orb of the brilliant sun; and there was the voice of the cherubim. From underneath this mighty throne rivers of flame issued. To look upon it was impossible.

“One great in glory sat upon it: whose robe was brighter than the sun, and whiter than snow. No angel was capable of penetrating to view the face of Him, the Glorious and the Effulgent; nor could any mortal behold Him. A fire was flaming around Him. A fire also of great extent continued to rise up before Him; so that not one of those who surrounded Him was capable of approaching Him, among the ten thousands and ten thousands who were before Him. And He required not holy counsel. Yet did not the sanctified, who were near Him, depart far from Him either by night or by day; nor were they removed

from Him.

“I also was so far advanced, with a veil on my face, and trembling. Then the Lord with his own mouth called me, saying, Approach hither, Enoch, at my holy word. And He raised me up, making me draw near even to the entrance . . .”

We cannot fail to recall the words of John: “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.” Equally close to the words of John is Enoch’s description of the tree of life: “the fruit of this tree shall be given to the elect . . .”

Very wonderful also is Enoch’s vision of the habitation of the saints, who, with the angels, and the holy ones,

“were entreating, supplicating, and praying for the sons of men; while righteousness like water flowed before them, and mercy like dew was scattered over the earth. And thus shall it be with them for ever and ever.

“And at that time my eyes beheld the dwelling of the elect, of truth, faith and righteousness. Countless shall be the number of the holy and the elect, in the presence of God for ever and for ever. Their residence I beheld under the wings of the Lord of spirits. All the holy and the elect sang before him, in appearance like a blaze of fire; their mouths being full of blessings, and their lips glorifying the name of the Lord of spirit. And righteousness incessantly dwelt before him.

“There was I desirous of remaining, and my soul longed for that habitation. There was my portion before; for thus had I prevailed before the Lord of spirits. At that time I glorified and extolled the name of the Lord of spirits with blessings and with praise; for he has established it with blessing, and with praise, according to the will of the Lord of spirits. That place long did my eyes contemplate. I blessed and said, Blessed be he, blessed from the beginning for ever. In the beginning, before the world was created, and without end is his knowledge.

“What is this world? Of every existing generation those shall bless thee who do not sleep in the dust, but stand before thy glory, blessing, glorifying, exalting thee, and saying, The holy, holy, Lord of Spirits, fills the whole world of spirits.

“There my eyes beheld all who, without sleeping, stand before him and bless him, saying, Blessed be thou, and blessed be the name of God for ever and ever. Then my countenance became changed, until I was incapable of seeing.

“After this I beheld thousands of thousands, and ten thousands of ten thousands, and an infinite number of people, standing before the Lord of spirits.

“On the four wings likewise of the Lord of spirits, on the four sides, I perceived others, besides those who were standing before him. Their names, too, I know; because the angel who proceeded with me, declared them to me, discovering to me every secret thing.

“Then I heard the voices of those upon the four sides magnifying the Lord of glory.

“The first voice blessed the Lord of spirits for ever and ever.

“The second voice I heard blessing the Elect One, and the elect who suffer on account of the Lord of spirits.

“The third voice I heard petitioning and praying for those who dwell upon earth, and supplicate the name of the Lord of spirits.

“The fourth voice I heard expelling the impious angels, and prohibiting them from entering into the presence of the Lord of spirits, to prefer accusations against the inhabitants of the earth.

“After this I besought the angel of peace, who proceeded with me, to explain all that was concealed . . .”

One more passage from the book of Enoch, which closely resembles the passage quoted from Daniel:

“There I beheld the Ancient of days, whose head was like white wool, and with him another, whose countenance resembled that of man. His countenance was full of grace, like one of the holy angels. Then I inquired of one of the angels who went with me, and who showed every secret thing, concerning this Son of man; who he was; whence he was; and why he accompanied the Ancient of days:

“He answered and said to me, This is the Son of man, to whom righteousness belongs; with whom righteousness has

dwelt; and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed: for the Lord of spirits has chosen him; and his portion has surpassed all before the Lord of spirits . . .

“And I beheld the Ancient of days, while he sat on the throne of his glory, while the book of the living was opened in his presence, and while all the powers which were above the heavens stood around and before him . . .”

This is exactly like the passage quoted from Daniel; and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the book of Enoch, as it is very much fuller and more complete, is the source of the imagery of Daniel, and the older of the two. It has the same strong Chaldean colour which we have already noted in Ezekiel and Daniel, and we are justified in saying that all the substance of these books came from the same ancient Chaldean source. Behind Chaldea stands yet more ancient Egypt.

II. THE SECOND DEATH.

In the address to the Spirits of the Seven Churches, which was discussed at some length in the preceding paper of this series, there is one very perplexing expression which we had to pass lightly over at the time, promising to return to it. This expression is “the Second Death.” It occurs in the address to the Spirit of the Church of Smyrna, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh *shall not be hurt of the second death*. . . .” (ii, 11.)

The same phrase recurs toward the close of the Apocalypse, in a passage of sombre splendour:

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were

in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the Second Death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (xx, 11-15.)

This is recapitulated a little further on, where we are told that the wicked “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the Second Death.” (xxi, 8.) But the central passage concerning the Second Death is undoubtedly the following:

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him up a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed for a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth. . . .”

It happens that this striking expression, the “Second Death,” is very familiar in another region of religious literature: that of the older Brahmanas, which correspond in character to parts of the greatest Upanishad, the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad. We shall not try to fix their date, further than to say that they are centuries older than the Apocalypse from which we have been quoting. Here is a characteristic

passage from the Shatapatha Brahmana:

“Yonder burning Sun is, doubtless, no other than Death; and because he is Death, therefore the creatures that are on this side of him die. But those that are on the other side of him are the gods, and they are, therefore, immortal . . . whosoever goes to yonder world not having escaped that Death, him he causes to die again in yonder world. . . . He who knows that release from Death in the Fire-sacrifice, is freed from the Second Death.” (SB ii, 3, 3, 7-9.)

We can already see a close analogy with the passage of the Apocalypse. The Brahmana clearly implies that there is a spiritual regeneration, which it speaks of as the Fire-sacrifice, and which makes men immortal, bringing them into the divine presence. This symbol strongly reminds us of the baptism “with the holy spirit and fire,” or the Pentecostal tongues of flame. The Brahmana further teaches that those who have not passed through the Fire-sacrifice are subject not only to Death, but, later, to a Second Death. The Fire-sacrifice here parallels the “first resurrection”—“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the Second Death hath no power.”

A few more passages from the Brahmanas. For example, we find the question: “What is done here in the altar, whereby the sacrificer conquers the Second Death?” (SB x, 1, 4, 14.) Or again: “Now hunger ceases through food, thirst through drink, evil through good, darkness through light, and death through immortality; and, in truth, whosoever knows this, from him all these pass away; he conquers the Second Death, and attains to perfect Life.” (SB x, 2, 6, 19.) This picture of those from whom hunger and thirst and evil and darkness have passed away, and who have passed through the Fire-sacrifice into immortality, strongly reminds us of the passage of the Apocalypse, previously quoted: “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. . . .”

We get further insight into the symbol of the Fire-sacrifice from such a passage as this:

“The mystic import of this Fire-altar is Vach (Logos); for it is with Vach it is built. Now this Vach is yonder Sun, and this Fire-altar is Death: hence, whatsoever is on this side of the sun,

all that is held by Death; and he who builds it on this side thereof, builds it as one held by Death; and he surrenders his own self unto Death; but he who builds it there above, conquers the Second Death. . . .” (SB x, 5, 1, 1-4.)

Vach, it should be remembered, is the Logos, the divine Word. It has two symbols: the Sun in the heavens, and Fire on the altar. Both these symbols take us back to most ancient Chaldea, in the far Sumerian days. And this twofold representation of the Logos, the great creative Power, has its parallel in man. There is the divine, creative Power in our immortal nature; there is also the creative flame in our manifested, personal lives. He who builds the altar for the creative flame in the personal, mortal nature becomes subject to the Second Death. He who builds the altar for the creative Fire in his spiritual nature, conquers the Second Death, and becomes immortal. Or, to quote again from the Brahmana:

“Whosoever knows this, conquers the Second Death, and Death has no more dominion over him . . . he attains all Life, and becomes one of the divinities.” (SB x, 16, 5, 8.)

We are beginning to see that a very clear idea, and a very splendid one, is hidden in the quaint imagery of the Brahmana. We may raise the veil a little more, by bringing for comparison such a passage as this:

“Those that are mortal, he causes to pass into birth again from out of the immortal womb; and, verily, whosoever thus knows, or he for whom, knowing this, this sacrificial rite is performed, wards off the Second Death of the Fathers, and the sacrifice is not cut off for him.” (SB xii, 9, 3, 12.)

We shall return in a moment to this strange phrase, the “Second Death of the Fathers.” Meanwhile, let us complete the subject by quoting two more sentences from the Brahmana.

“He finds Mitra (the Solar Lord) and his is the kingdom, he conquers the Second Death and gains all life, whosoever, knowing this, performs this sacrifice.” (SB xi, 4, 3, 20.)

“He is freed from the Second Death, and attains to community of being with the Eternal.” (SB xi, 5, 6, 9.)

The Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad contains several passages of precisely similar import. They do not, however, add anything to what we have already quoted. But there are other passages in this, the greatest of the Upanishads, which shed a flood of light on the whole subject. We noted the strange phrase: "the Second Death of the Fathers," and promised to return to it. This we shall now do.

The phrase, "the Fathers," brings us to that celebrated passage in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, which relates how the young Brahman Shvetaketu came to the Rajput king, Pravahana, who asked him a series of questions on the mystery of life and death. The boy could not answer, and returning, reproached his father for not instructing him.

The father, hearing the questions, declared that he himself did not know the answers, but invited his son to go with him to the king, to learn. The son refused, but the father went. And to him the answers of the questions were revealed. From these answers, the following passage is taken:

"The man is born. He lives as long as he lives. And so, when he dies, they take him to the Fire, and there the bright Powers offer the man as a sacrifice. From this sacrifice, the spirit of man is born of the colour of the Sun.

"They who know this thus, and they who, here in the forest, worship faith and truth, are born into the flame; from the flame they go to the day, from the day to the bright fortnight, from the bright fortnight to the summer, from the summer to the world of the gods, from the world of the gods to the Sun, from the Sun to the lightning; them, become as the lightning, a Spirit, Mind-born, leads into the worlds of the Eternal. In these worlds of the Eternal they dwell supreme, and for them there is no return.

"But they who, by sacrifice, gifts and penance, win their worlds, are born in the smoke; from the smoke to the night, from the night to the dark fortnight, from the dark fortnight to the winter, from the winter to the world of the Fathers, from the world of the Fathers to the lunar world. They, gaining the lunar world, become food; and just as the lunar lord waxes and

wanes, so they are there consumed. And when the time has come round, they descend to the ether, from the ether to the air, from the air to rain, from rain to the earth, and so are born again of woman, and come forth into the world. Thus they return again.”

These are the two paths, Path of the Gods and Path of the Fathers. Those who, spiritually regenerate, full of aspiration and truth, have recognized the divine Spirit within themselves while yet in life, go by the Path of the Gods. They ascend through the flame, the day, the light, the Sun, to the world of the Eternal. And for them there is no return. But those who, self-seeking, barter with the gods by sacrifices, penances and gifts, seeking for selfish blessings in return, go by the Path of the Fathers, the lunar way. From the smoke of the pyre, they go to night and darkness, and thence to the lunar world. There they wax and wane, and in due time descend again to this world, re-entering it through the gates of birth.

We should say, nowadays, that there are a series of ascending planes above the material; that these planes are twofold, or have each two poles, a positive and a negative. These are symbolized thus: of the first plane above the material, “flame” is the positive pole, “smoke” is the negative; of the next, “day” is the positive pole, “night” is the negative; of the next, the “bright fortnight” is the positive pole, the “dark fortnight” is the negative; of the next “summer” is the positive pole, “winter” is the negative; on the positive side, the culmination is the solar world, leading to the world of the Eternal; on the negative side, the culmination is the lunar world, from which the path leads back again, through the same planes, to this material world.

This is, of course, in a sense symbolism; but it is very transparent symbolism. The Sun, as everywhere through the ancient books of the Mysteries, standing for the Logos, while the Moon stands for the psychic realm, which shines by reflected light, drawing all its glow from the Spiritual world above it.

So that this archaic teaching tells us that those who have passed through the spiritual rebirth, and have risen from the Fire, in colour like the Sun, ascend through plane after plane, always dwelling at the positive pole, until they are ushered into the world of the Eternal, and

become one with the Logos, the Divine Life of the Eternal. For them there is no return.

But those who have followed the psychic way, the way of selfish bartering with gods; who have not passed through the great self-sacrifice, ascend at death through the etheric planes, clinging always to the negative pole of each plane; and, reaching the psychic paradise, they wax and wane. The force of aspiration in them expands to enkindle their paradise. But when this force is exhausted, they must descend again, returning to this world to be born of an earthly mother, and so falling again under death's dominion. This is magnificently expressed by king Death himself, in another Upanishad:

“Death said: ‘The better is one thing, the dearer is another; these two bind a man in opposite ways. Of these two, it is well for him who takes the better; he fails of his object, who chooses the dearer.

“‘The better and the dearer approach a man; going round them, the sage discerns between them. The sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession.

“‘Thou indeed, pondering on dear and dearly loved desires, O Nachiketas, hast passed them by. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink.

“‘Far apart are these two ways, un wisdom and what is known as wisdom. I esteem Nachiketas as one seeking wisdom, nor do manifold desires allure thee.

“‘Others, turning about in un wisdom, self-wise and thinking they are learned, fools, stagger, lagging in the way, like the blind led by the blind.

“‘The Great Beyond gleams not for the child, led away by the delusion of possessions. ‘This is the world, there is no other’, he thinks, and so falls again and again under my dominion.”

This strongly reminds us of the words of St. Paul: “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more: Death hath no more dominion over him.” And perhaps at this point we may derive additional light from Paul, and from his teaching as to the psychic and

spiritual bodies, as he explains the matter to the Corinthians. (I Cor. 15)

Paul is concerned with the new birth, the birth from above. He approaches the question by describing the psychic body—the middle nature—and its relation with the spiritual nature above it. For Paul, the psychic nature is the vehicle of egotism and passion; it is the field of what he calls “the mood of the flesh”; the desires of the flesh being mirrored in the mind, and setting up a series of passional reactions, which are foreign to natural, animal life. We may instance drunkenness as characteristically psychic in this sense; as being the pursuit of a sensation, a mode of feeling, which has no parallel in natural, animal life, and which cannot conceivably be considered an expression of natural animal life. Much of what passes for sex feeling is equally psychic, equally apart from natural animal life; and sex sensationalism of this type shows its true character by its voluntary sterility, something which has no existence in natural animal life. It is this perverted growth of the psychic body which is described as the Fall, and a fall from pure animal life it unquestionably is. St. James “the Lord’s brother” expresses his opinion of this force reflected in the middle nature, when he denounces “the wisdom that is from beneath, earthly, psychical, devilish.”

Paul has said much of the psychic nature. He proceeds to describe the gradual undermining of the psychic nature, and its supersession by the spiritual: “It is sown in weakness, it is raised in strength; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown a psychic body, it is raised a spiritual body.” And this new-born spiritual body he calls “the new man, the Lord from heaven.” This is, of course, exactly the regeneration from above with which the Upanishads are perpetually occupied, and which we saw described as the Fire-sacrifice in the Brahmanas. This regeneration is precisely that Path of the Gods, which man mounts as “a spirit, of the colour of the Sun,” and at whose summit he becomes one with the Logos, and enters the Eternal. And such a one, the Upanishads tell us, “has conquered the Second Death.”

Now if we turn to the passages first quoted from the Apocalypse, I think we shall find ourselves driven—irresistibly driven—to the conclusion that the Apocalypse and the Upanishads are talking about exactly the same thing, and mean exactly the same thing by the Second

Death. Both depict a spiritual birth which endows him who has passed through it with present immortality, making of him a divine being, the conscious dweller in immortal worlds. The imagery is almost identical, and the teaching is perfectly clear and convincing.

If we are right, it remains only to consider the condition of those who have not passed through the birth from above, who have not, in the words of the Brahmana, offered the Fire-sacrifice. The Indian teaching is perfectly plain, and is set forth again and again, in the sacred books of all periods. Stated briefly, the teaching is, that the middle nature, which with St. Paul we may call the psychic body, gains a certain spiritual light by reflection from above; and that, at death, it is drawn upwards by this spiritual force. It enters a dream-world which is sometimes called the "lunar paradise," and to which the Tibetan Buddhist books give the name of Devachan. In this dream-paradise it reaps a reward for all good deeds, its sum of aspiration acting as a force which builds up a dream-state of rest and refreshment; while, on the other hand, the strongly earthly part of the passional nature enters a latent condition, becoming for a long period quiescent. But in due time the force of aspiration, the sum of power it represented, becomes exhausted, and the psychic body sinks back towards material life. The passional energies, from being latent, become once more active, and a new bodily birth takes place.

Is not this most probably the meaning of the passage of the Apocalypse, which describes the dead who have not been spiritually reborn, have not passed through "the first resurrection," and who are depicted as dwelling in some middle condition for "a thousand years"? And is not the latency of the passional nature, as taught in the Indian sacred books, exactly similar to the "binding of Satan for a thousand years"?—the later reassertion of the passional nature on reincarnation further corresponding with the release of Satan for a season? If we are right, and the weight of analogy at all points seems irresistible, then we are justified in saying that John, in what he says of the mysterious Second Death, is simply repeating the world-old teaching of the two paths, Path of the Gods and Path of the Fathers—which is the esoteric form of the teaching of Reincarnation, as it was handed down carefully veiled in the Mysteries.

When we turn to the scene of Judgement described by the beloved disciple, we are reminded this time not of India so much as of Egypt. We are all familiar with the broad outlines of the Egyptian teaching; of Osiris represented as Judge of the Dead, seated with his assessors in the hidden world; of the Soul being brought before him, and its deeds being weighed in the immortal scales against the image of Truth. It is exactly in the spirit of John's description of the judgement. Further, we know that, where the soul was wholly pure and free from stain, it went at once to the happy solar divinities, corresponding to the "world of the Eternal," in the Indian Mystery Teaching. The soul which was part pure and part impure went to different regions of the hidden world, for further discipline and development. The soul that was wholly impure suffered miserably for a period, and was then annihilated.

This third fate, of the soul found wholly impure, is also taught in the Indian books. If we translate into Paul's terminology of the spiritual and psychic bodies, we should have to say that, in such a case, the consciousness was concentrated wholly in the lower psychic nature, busied exclusively with sensual images and selfish ends, and reflecting nothing at all of the divine consciousness from above. In such a case, at death, there is no spiritual aspiration to draw the psychic life upward toward the spirit; it has voluntarily detached itself from the spirit. Yet there remain certain force elements in it, "the undying worm, the fire not quenched," and these must work themselves out to their conclusion in the desolate mid-world of psychic life. This is that "outer darkness," that "sea of brimstone," in which the corrupt psychic body finally burns itself away. This is the Second Death in the full sense, and from it there is no resurrection. This terrible destruction only overtakes the psychic self, however, when there is not an atom of spirituality, of aspiration, left. So long as there is the faintest spark, it may one day be fanned into a strong and purifying flame, so that the soul may be saved as by fire.

We hold, therefore, that we are justified in believing that John was completely conversant with this teaching of the Two Paths, as it was taught esoterically in the Mysteries of Egypt and India; and that he is exactly following the ancient mystical teaching, in the passages which we quoted at the outset, concerning the Second Death. This Second Death had two meanings; or rather, the same phrase was used to cover

two truths, the whole being carefully veiled. The first truth was, that the partially pure soul, after having dwelt in a paradise of reward for a season, died again out of paradise, to be reborn in this material world. The other meaning of the Second Death is that to which we have referred above: it is the fate of the psychic self which is wholly impure and brutal; and which is slowly disintegrated in the lower astral world, returning as dust to dust, as ashes to ashes. But we shall be wise to turn our thought rather to the other path, the Path of the Gods, along which ascends the spirit in colour like the sun, to enter the immortal world of the Eternal; to reign, as John says, "a priest unto God." We may well conclude with a sentence or two of what Plutarch tells us of the Mysteries of Osiris, whom we have seen represented popularly as Judge of the Dead:

"The vestments of Osiris are of one uniform shining colour For as He is a first Principle, prior to all other beings, and purely intelligent, he must ever remain wholly pure. . . . By Osiris we are to understand those faculties of the Universal Soul, such as intelligence and reason, which are, as it were, the supreme lords and directors of all good."

The Childhood and Youth of St. Paul

The Open Court, April, 1911

“When I was a child . . .”

The religions of the Orient give us a wide view of life and its progression, drawing back the veil from the upward stairway of consciousness, and showing us how in the fullness of time we may ascend to a far summit of power and wisdom.

Jesus, on the other hand, gives the impression of one who, seeing the long upward pathway of life ascending through the ages, had by a supreme effort of will outstripped time, through intense faith and devotion passing at once to the great consummation. This is, perhaps, the meaning of his words: “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.”*

His life challenges us to a like effort. He touches the will, enkindling it with intense power, urging us also to transcend time, to reach at once through fierce and fiery will the consummation ages might have brought. Such an inspiration works miracles. It invites violent reactions, as shown in the cataclysmic history of Christendom.

A striking example of the direct power of Jesus upon the will is the life of Paul the Pharisee, one of the violent who take the kingdom of heaven by force. Here is Paul’s own summing up of his life: “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed . . .

* Matthew 11:12, A.V.

in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings . . . by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things.”*

Paul’s genius makes for vivid flashes of self-revelation, impressions keenly felt, and recorded in bursts of eloquence. His whole pathway is lit by these lightning-flashes of impression and feeling. There are memories of infancy: of that mother from whose womb God separated him;† perhaps of his father in such a sentence as this: “The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage;”‡ or again: “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.”§ And how many impressions of childhood are gathered in the sentence: “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child . . .”¶

His friend and fellow-traveller records a sentence that bridges the next few years: “My manner of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation, and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, how that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand here to be judged . . .”**

We have a gloss on the words “my youth, which was from the beginning among mine own nation” in the earlier sentence: “I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city;”†† and again, “I am

* 2 Cor. 4:8, 9; 6: 4-10

† Galatians 1:15

‡ Galatians 4:1-3

§ 1 Timothy 3:4

¶ 1 Cor. 13:11

** Acts 26:4-6. (The reading followed by the Revised Version is most valuable, as implying that a considerable part of Paul’s youth was spent at Tarsus.)

†† Acts 21:39

a Roman born.”*

If Paul was “a Roman born,” his father was a Roman citizen before him, perhaps his grandfather also. And Roman citizenship in Cilician Tarsus probably depended on the personal favour of the Caesars, whether of Augustus, whose tutor was a Tarsian, or of great Julius Caesar himself, who passed through Tarsus from Alexandria, where he had met Cleopatra and buried Pompey, on his way to fight the king of Pontus in that swift campaign which begot the epigram: “I came, I saw, I conquered .”

Paul’s family, and Paul him self from childhood, must have been very familiar with the fortunes of the Caesars. Paul’s friend and fellow-traveller mentions by name Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius; and Paul must have known their history as well as he knew the legal rights of Roman citizenship, in its relation to the Caesars. We may be quite certain that in the familiar talk in his father’s house Paul heard as a commonplace of conversation the story of the great doings of the Caesars: the passage of Julius Caesar through Tarsus, his death at the hands of Brutus and the rest, the harsh punishment which Cassius visited on Tarsus for its love for Caesar, the coming of Mark Antony and his fall, and the triumph and favour of Augustus.

Paul must have heard among the tales of his childhood the marvellous coming of Cleopatra to his own Tarsus:

“When she first met Mark Antony
 . . . upon the river of Cydnus.”

The old men and women of the city must have told him that story of the serpent of old Nile that Enobarbus told Agrippa:

“The barge she sat in, like a burnish’d throne,
 Burn’d on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
 Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
 The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
 Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
 The water which they beat to follow faster,
 As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,

* Acts 22:28, R.V.

It beggar'd all description: she did lie
 In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
 O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
 The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
 Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
 With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
 To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
 And what they did undid

From the barge
 A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
 Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
 Her people out upon her; and Antony,
 Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
 Whistling to the air”

One may wonder whether some reminiscence of that early tale may have added colour to the words: “In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment: but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”*

Paul must have played as a boy in the market-place where Mark Antony sat, and wandered along the wharfs where the crowds gathered to see Cleopatra. He must have known very familiarly the hot, clamp plain around Tarsus, overshadowed by the foothills and snow-fringed ridges of Taurus, shaggy with dark cedars, their evergreen dales adorned with glades of saffron. The whole region was set in an atmosphere of romance and legend and tradition, and we may be certain that Paul in his early years breathed this atmosphere. To the traveller through Cilicia and the countries westward toward the Ægean, there were on all hands memories of Homer. Tarsus, says Strabo, was founded by Argives who accompanied Triptolemus in his search after Io. The Cydnus flows through the middle of it, close by the gymnasium of the young men.† One may surmise that Paul, the

* 1 Timothy 2:9, 10, R.V.

† Strabo, XIV, v, 12. Falconer and Hamilton. Vol. III, p . 57.

son of a citizen, that is, one of the aristocracy of Tarsus, was not shut out from this gymnasium close by the icy Cyndus. This may be the origin of such phrases as: "Bodily exercise (*soma-tikē gumnasia*) is profitable for a little;"* or "if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully;"† or "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run, that ye may attain. And every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air."‡ Our version, which has filtered through the Latin, obscures the Greek words, like *gymnasia*, athletics, *stadion*, and so forth. If we kept them in our translations, it would become far clearer that Paul was using the familiar speech of the gymnasium, in speaking of the conditions of training, of boxing, of foot races, and of fair play in athletic contests. There is no violence in the suggestion that all these phrases may be memories of boyhood, words first picked up in the gymnasium of his native Tarsus.

Strabo tells a quaint tale of this gymnasium, which was doubtless current in Paul's day. Mark Antony, he tells us, had promised the people of Tarsus to establish a gymnasium; he appointed Boethus chief director of it, and entrusted to him the expenditure of the funds. He was detected in secreting, among other things, even the oil, and when charged with this offence by his accusers in the presence of Antony, he deprecated his anger by this among other remarks in his speech, that "as Homer sang the praises of Achilles, Agamemnon, and Ulysses, so have I sung yours. I therefore ought not to be brought before you on such a charge." The accuser answered, "Homer did not steal oil from Agamemnon; but you have stolen it from the gymnasium, and therefore you shall be punished." Yet he contrived to avert the displeasure of Antony by courteous offices, and continued to plunder the city until the death of his protector.§

Here again we come across Homeric memories as part of the

* 1 Timothy 4:8

† 2 Timothy 2:5, R.V.

‡ 1 Corinthians 9:24-26

§ Strabo, XIV, v, 14.

commonplace of Tarsian conversation; and Dion Chrysostom, who was a young man of sixteen or eighteen at the time of Paul's death, constantly assumes in his Tarsian auditors a familiarity with the great story that formed the background of all Hellenic culture.

Strabo also tells us that the inhabitants of Tarsus applied themselves to the study of philosophy and to the whole encyclical compass of learning with so much ardour that they surpassed Athens, Alexandria and every other place where there were schools and lectures of philosophers. The Stoics were strongly represented. Among them were Antipater, Archedemus and Nestor; Athenodorits who lived with Marcus Cato, and died at his house; and the other Athenodorus, the son of Sandon, who was the tutor of Augustus Caesar. To him in his old age Augustus entrusted the government of Tarsus. On the other hand, Nestor, who was tutor to Augustus's nephew Marcellus, was a follower of Plato, and he too governed Tarsus, succeeding Athenodorus.

The distinguished author of *The Cities of Saint Paul* well suggests that "Saint Paul may have seen and listened to Nestor:" and this becomes the more probable, when we remember that much of this philosophic culture found its expression out of doors, after the manner made immortal by Socrates. Strabo tells us that the Tarsian philosopher Diogenes went about from city to city, instituting schools of philosophy, and that, as if inspired by Apollo, he composed and rehearsed poems on any subject that was proposed. Further he tells us that Athenodorus in part owed his influence to his gift for extemporaneous speaking, a power that was very general among the inhabitants of Tarsus. There is no improbability in the conjecture that Paul may have owed much of his skill in speaking to the example of the Tarsian orators to whom he listened in his boyhood; he may have gained from them something of that feeling for antithesis, for vivid imagery, for climax, which so heightens the beauty of his words.

In Paul's family life at Tarsus, therefore, there must have been an entire familiarity with the history of the Caesars, of Antony and Cleopatra; and a feeling of loyal attachment to the imperial house, which would have made it impossible for Paul to ask, "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar?" Besides this strong influence of Roman

imperialism, there must have been, with the Greek tongue, an infusion of Hellenic culture, perhaps as great a familiarity with Greek authors as Philo had in Paul's earlier years, or as Josephus had, when Paul was an old man. Paul must have been well acquainted with the story of Alexander of Macedon, whose conquests had so profoundly changed the whole world of Paul's experience, from Athens to Alexandria. He certainly read the outline at least of Alexander's history, in the story of the Maccabees: "It came to pass, after that Alexander the Macedonian, the son of Philip, who came out of the land of Chittim, and smote Darius king of the Persians and Medes, after he had smitten him, reigned in his stead, in former times, over the Greek empire." He doubtless knew that Alexander had passed through his own Tarsus, and had caught a chill from bathing in the Cydnus. So we may assume in Paul, as the background of his thought and imagination, a considerable element of Latin and Hellenic culture, though it was afterwards overlaid by other influences.

There was also a tinge of Orientalism. Dion Chrysostom, who was a boy when Paul wrote his earlier letters, speaks of the Oriental spirit of Tarsus, of its Assyrian cult, and the supremacy of Phoenician music. He records another touch of the Orient: the Tarsian women veiled their faces. May we not find, in Paul's early familiarity with this custom, the source of that famous injunction: "If a woman be not veiled, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled."*

There is a story of another great Oriental, recorded by Strabo, which Paul may well have known. It concerns Anchiale, close to the mouth of the river Cydnus, where the tomb of Sardanapalus was reputed to be. On the tomb was a stone figure of Sardanapalus, snapping his fingers, with an inscription in Assyrian letters: "Sardanapalus, the son of Anacyndaraxes, built Anchiale and Tarsus in one day. Eat, drink, be merry; everything else is not worth a snap of the fingers." Paul may well have had this in mind, as well as the words of the Hebrew prophet, when he wrote: "If the dead be not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."†

* 1 Corinthians 11:6, R.V.

† 1 Corinthians 15:32

The verse which follows is of high interest, for it contains the famous iambic:

φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρῆσθ' ὀμιλίας κακάι.

“Evil communications corrupt good manners.” This line, assigned by tradition to one of the lost comedies of Menander, is one of three quotations in Greek verse in Paul’s letters and speeches. The earliest in point of time he used, speaking to the Stoics and Epicureans, under the shadow of the Acropolis:

“God, who made the universe and all things therein, the Master of heaven and earth, who dwells not in temples made with hands, giving to all life and breath and all things, made of one every race of men to dwell on the whole face of the earth, to seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, and in truth he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live and move and are, as some of your poets have said:

“. . . For his offspring we are.”

Being, then, the offspring of God, we should not think that the Divine is like gold or silver or stone, a carving of human art and imagination. . . .”*

The quotation, part of an iambic, *Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν*, is assigned by tradition to the *Phaenomena of Aratus*. And here we have an interesting point. For Strabo, speaking of Soli, not far from Paul’s own Tarsus, tells us that Chrysippus the Stoic, the son of an inhabitant of Tarsus, who left it to live at Soli, Philemon the comic poet, and Aratus, who composed a poem called the *Phaenomena*, were among the illustrious natives of that place.

It is very likely that Paul may have known something of this illustrious Cilician, and may have picked up this fragment of his verses either from reading or from some public recitation, or, perhaps, from a temple service, for the same words are said to occur in a hymn to Zeus.

The indefiniteness of the formula of quotation, *ὡς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν*, was quite in the spirit of the time, and by no means implies that Paul did not know the author’s name. For the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, quoting, and quoting

* Acts 17:24-29

accurately, two verses of the eighth psalm, introduces them with the words: *διεμαρτύρατο θεέ πού τις λέγων*,* “Someone has borne witness somewhere”; though he must have known perfectly the source of his quotation. In the same way Philo Judaeus, quoting from the Timaeus, says: ὅπερ καὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων εἶπέ τις,† “as one of the ancients has said.” But Philo is thoroughly familiar with Plato, whom he cites by name shortly after: “the mouth through which, as Plato says, mortal things find their entrance, and immortal things their exit.”‡

This quotation, like the other, is from the Timaeus. So that we may contrast Philo’s “as one of the ancients has said” with his “as Plato said”; just as we may contrast the “someone has testified somewhere” of the Epistle to the Hebrews with the precision of Paul’s speech at Antioch in Pisidia: “as it is also written in the second psalm.”§ In neither case is the indefiniteness of the formula of quotation a proof of vagueness of knowledge. It is quite probable that in the speech at Athens, Paul was knowingly quoting from the *Phaenomena* of his fellow-Cilician, Aratus of Soli.

Paul makes one more Greek verse quotation; this time it is a hexameter. It is the famous epigram in the letter to Titus:¶

Κρηῆτες ἀεὶ ψευδοῦνται, κακὰ θηρία γαστέρες ἀργαί,

“The Cretans are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.” Paul this time introduces his quotation with the words: *εἶπέν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης*, “One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said;” and, he adds drily, “this testimony is true.”

This hexameter condemning the Cretans is attributed to Epimenides. Diogenes Laertius, writing in the generation after Paul, shows at least what was the common report of him at that time. A miraculous trance of many years’ duration had caused him to be esteemed the beloved of the gods. Solon invited him to Athens to assist in purifying the city before the promulgation of his laws, and after the lustration Epimenides refused all rewards, taking only a branch of the

* Hebrews 2:6

† Philo, *De Opificio Mundi*, 5.

‡ *Ibid.*, 40: “ὡς εἶπεν Πλάτων.”

§ Acts 13:33

¶ Titus 1:12

sacred olive, and departed to Crete. He was believed to be the author of several poems, one recording the expedition of the Argonauts.* Some such story may well have been in Paul's mind, and may be the reason why he speaks of the author of this verse as a prophet, rather than a poet.

Paul does not mention by name either Aratus, Menander or Epimenides, but this by no means proves that he did not know their names. Silence of this kind is habitual with him. We saw that his friend and fellow-traveller mentions by name Augustus Caesar, Tiberius Caesar and Claudius Caesar. He likewise speaks of the talks of Paul with the Stoics and Epicureans,[†] and, as he was apparently not at Athens on that occasion, he must have had the facts from Paul himself. Luke in like manner speaks of Zeus, Hermes and Artemis.[‡] Here again, he probably got the names from Paul. But Paul himself names neither gods nor sects nor Caesars. His silence, therefore, is quite consonant with the probability that he was familiar with the history of the Roman emperors, the thought of the Greek philosophers, the legends of the Homeric gods. It might well be said of him, as a critic has said of Philo, that he is "*ennemi des désignations précises et des noms propres.*"[§]

We may, therefore, say that in the atmosphere of Paul's boyhood, in the every-day thought of his famed birthplace Tarsus, there was a background of Assyrian and Persian and Homeric legend. There was the authentic memory of the presence of Xenophon, of Alexander, of Julius Caesar, Cassius, Antony and Cleopatra. There was also the active life of the gymnasium, mentioned by Strabo and Dion Chrysostom, in which Paul, as a youth, may well have had a part. There were the famous schools of the Stoa and the Academe. May we not admit that this long tradition, the wisdom of Greece and the splendour of Rome, may have helped to colour Paul's thought and imagination, thus giving a new meaning to his words: "I am a debtor to the Greeks"?

* Diogenes Laertius, I, 12.

† Acts 17:18

‡ Acts 14:12; 14:24

§ Massebieau, *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, LIII, p. 27. Paris, 1906.

This brings us to the close of that period of Paul's boyhood which was in all probability passed in his native city Tarsus, to which he later returned for a space of four or five years.* From Tarsus, as Paul himself tells us, in the words recorded by his fellow-traveller, he went to Jerusalem, and sat at the feet of the distinguished and enlightened Gamaliel,† who seems to have dominated the intellectual life of Jerusalem during Paul's youth.‡

In going to Jerusalem. Paul by no means passed out of the reach of Greek influence. A movement had been in progress for some time whereby the thought of the Hebrews was profoundly influenced by the mind of Hellas, and especially of the Stoics and Plato, just as, a dozen centuries later. Jewish thought was coloured by the method and ideas of Aristotle. To the influence of Hellenic thought on the Hebraism of the period of Paul's boyhood, certain of the Apocrypha bear eloquent witness, and especially the Book of Wisdom. But we see the same forces at work in a far deeper and more lasting way in the philosophical system of a man who is one of the greatest spirits the Hebrew race ever produced, Philo the Jew of Alexandria.

So important is a knowledge of Philo for a true understanding of St. Paul, and especially of the intellectual influences of Paul's early manhood, that we shall be well advised at this point to try to state in their order the leading principles of Philo's philosophy, first considering his world-concept, and then his method of studying and interpreting the Hebrew scriptures.

Philo conceives God exactly as do the Upanishads, as "One, without distinctive quality, uncreated, imperishable, unchangeable;"§ *θεῖ γὰρ ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ ἄποιον αὐτὸν καὶ ἓνα καὶ ἀφθαρτον καὶ ἄτρεπτον.* He speaks of God as "the Father," "to whom all things are possible;"¶ as "the Saviour and Benefactor;"** "the great King;"†† "the

* Acts 9:30; 11:25. Paul was probably at Tarsus A.D. 38-43.

† Acts 22:3

‡ See *Jewish Encyclopedia*, art. "Gamaliel."

§ Philo, *Legum Alleg. lib.* I, 15; ed. L. Cohn, Berlin, 1896, Vol. I, pp. 73-4.

¶ *De Opific. Mundi*, 18; Cohn I, p. 18, l. 21.

** *Legum Alleg.* II; Cohn I, p. 101, l. 18.

†† *De Opific. Mundi*, 23; Cohn I, p. 24, l. 5.

elder, ruler and lord of the universe;”* as “dwelling in pure light;”[†] and “invisible.” We are strongly reminded of this general conception by such a sentence as that in the first letter to Timothy: “The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto.”[‡]

Of this uncreate, immutable God, the universe is shadow.[§] But God did not create the universe directly, out of nothing. Here we come to Philo’s greatest contribution to the thought of the world. God, in Philo’s view, created first an idea of the universe; or, we might say, an idea of the universe arose in the Divine Mind, as the idea of a city may arise in the mind of a “wise architect.” This idea of the universe, this archetypal model, is invisible, subjective, noumenal, perceptible only to the intellect. This archetype of the universe is the Thought or Reason, or “Logos of God.”[¶]

The Logos is “a divine image” of God.** All things were created through the Logos.^{††} “Behold the mightiest dwelling and city, this universe itself. For thou shalt find the cause of it to be God, by whom it came into being; the matter of it, the four elements out of which it was composed: the instrument, the Logos of God, by means of whom it was made.”^{‡‡}

It would seem that we find an equivalent idea in Paul, who also thinks of God as having created first an invisible, noumenal universe and then a visible, phenomenal universe: “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.”^{§§} And the relation between the two is summed up in the words: “The visible things are temporal, the invisible things are eternal.”^{¶¶} So Paul also has

* *De Opific. Mundi*, 23; Cohn I, p. 24, l. 5.

† Philo. *Quod Deus sit immutabilis*, 6; Cohn II, p. 62, l. 14.

‡ 1 Timothy 6:15-16

§ *Legum Alleg.* III, 33; Cohn I, p. 135, l. 17.

¶ *De Opific. Mundi*, 6; Cohn I, p. 8, ll. 2-4.

** *Ibid.*

†† *Legum Alleg.* I, 9; Cohn I, p. 66, l. 15.

‡‡ *De Cherubim*, 35; Cohn I, p. 200, ll. 7-10.

§§ Romans 1:20

¶¶ 2 Corinthians 4:18

the idea of the invisible archetype of the universe, to be known by its shadow or expression, the visible world.

He also thinks of this divine manifestation as “the image of God;”* “the image of the invisible God;”† and of man as “the image and glory of God.”‡

Through the Logos, or through the power of the Logos, according to Philo, the soul and body of man are made. Nothing in Philo is more characteristic of him than his teaching of the dual nature of man: “Dual is the race of men. For one is the heavenly man, and the other is the earthly man. Now the heavenly man, as being born in the image of God, is wholly without part in corruptible and earthly being. But the earthly man is made of matter, which he calls dust.”§ This is almost identical with the wonderful passage of Paul: “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.”¶

For Philo, this heavenly man, this divine image, the soul, is, as it were, dead and buried in the body: “Now, when we are alive, we are as though our soul were dead and buried in our body, as if in a tomb. But if we were to die, our soul would live according to its proper life, being released from the evil and dead body to which it is bound.”** Or again: “He is speaking not of common death, but of that death par excellence, which is the death of the soul, entombed in passions and all kinds of evil.”†† Paul also speaks of being “dead in trespasses and sins.”‡‡ Addressing another group of learners, he writes: “You, being dead in your sins;”§§ and we find him using of himself, the striking image already quoted from Philo: “O wretched man that I am! who

* 2 Corinthians 4:4

† Colossians 1:15

‡ 1 Corinthians 11:7

§ *Legum Alleg.* I, 12; Cohn I, p. 69, ll. 1-4.

¶ 1 Corinthians 15:47-48

** *Legum Alleg.* I, 33; Cohn I, p. 89. l. 8.

†† *Ibid.*, I, p. 99, l. 23.

‡‡ Ephesians 2:1

§§ Colossians 2:13

shall deliver me from the body of this death?”*

The impulses of the earthly man, Philo calls “the flesh.” “There is nothing,” he tells us, “which is so great a hindrance to the growth of the soul as the fleshly nature;”† “The greatest cause of our ignorance is the flesh, and our inseparable connection with the flesh.”‡ And the flesh wars against the spirit: “The indulgences of intemperance and gluttony, and whatever other vices the immoderate and insatiable pleasures, when completely filled with an abundance of all external things, produce and bring forth, do not allow the soul to proceed onwards by the plain and straight road, but compel it to fall into ravines and gulfs, until they utterly destroy it; but those practices which adhere to patience, endurance and moderation, and all other virtues, keep the soul in the straight road, leaving no stumbling-block in the way, against which it can stumble and fall.”§

Philo enumerates the fruits of the flesh: “gluttony, lasciviousness, ambition, the love of money, fear, folly, cowardice, injustice.”¶ He likewise records the fruits of the spirit, “prudence, courage, temperance, justice,” which “spring from the Logos as from one root, which he compares to a river, on account of the unceasing and everlasting flow of salutary words and doctrines, by which it increases and nourishes the souls that love God.”** This is a fair parallel to Paul’s famous lists, as, for instance in the fifth chapter of the letter to the Galatians: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;” with the picture of ceaseless warring of flesh against spirit, and of spirit against flesh.

Human life, indeed, as Philo understands it, is simply the battleground of these two forces, the flesh and the spirit. But in this war, man is not helpless, because†† Therefore man is “an abode or sacred temple for a reasonable soul, the image of which he carries in

* Romans 7:24

† *De Gigantibus*, 7; Cohn II. p. 48, l. 1.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 47, l. 18.

§ *De Agricultura*, 22; Cohn II, p. 115, l. 19.

¶ *De Opific. Mundi*, 26.

** *De Posteritate Caini*, 37; Cohn II, p. 28, l. 16.

†† *De Opific. Mundi*, 51; Cohn I, p. 51, l. 6.

his heart, the most godlike of images.”* “Since, therefore, God invisibly enters into this region of the soul, let us prepare that place in the best way the case admits of, to be an abode worthy of God; for if we do not, he, without our being aware of it, will leave us and migrate to some other habitation, which shall appear to him to be more excellently provided. For if, when we are about to receive kings, we prepare our houses to wear a more magnificent appearance, what sort of habitation ought we to prepare for the King of kings, for God the ruler of the whole universe, condescending in his mercy and loving kindness for man, to visit the beings whom he has created, and to come down from the borders of heaven to the lowest regions of the earth, for the purpose of benefiting our race? Shall we prepare him a house of stone or of wood? . . . No, a pious soul is his fitting abode. If therefore we call the invisible soul the terrestrial habitation of the invisible God, we shall be speaking justly.”† Compare this with Paul: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?”‡ . . . “The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”§ “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”¶

Since it is the spirit, the light of the Logos in the soul, the divine ray, which wars in us for virtue and immortality, speaks of the Logos as the Saviour, the Mediator: “The Father who created the universe has given to his archangelic and most ancient Logos a pre-eminent gift, to stand on the confines of both, and separate the created from the Creator. This same Logos is continually a suppliant to the immortal God on behalf of the mortal race, which is exposed to affliction and misery, and also an ambassador sent by the Ruler of all to the subject race. And the Logos rejoices in the gift.”** Philo develops this idea of ambassadorship still further: “Why do we wonder if God assumes the likeness of angels, as he sometimes assumes even that of men, in order to help those who address their prayers to him? . . . Those who are

* *De Opific. Mundi*, 47; I. p. 48, 4.

† *De Cherubim*, 29, 30; Cohn I, p. 194.

‡ 1 Corinthians 3:16

§ 1 Corinthians 3:17

¶ 1 Corinthians 6:19

** *Quis div. rer. Haeres*, 42.

unable to bear the sight of God, look upon his image, his angel (or messenger), the Logos.”* In exactly the same way Paul holds that “there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men.”†

Therefore we must “believe firmly in God our Saviour,” says Philo, and “take refuge in him.”‡ We must “press forward, putting aside slow and hesitating fear.”§ We must “rest upon the divine Logos, placing the whole of our lives as the lightest burden on him.”¶ In the same way Paul says: “even we have believed;”** he bids us “press toward the mark;”†† he tells us that our “life is hid with Christ in God.”‡‡

We must pass, says Philo, through “a dying as to the life of the body, in order that we may obtain an inheritance of the bodiless and imperishable life which is to be enjoyed in the presence of the uncreate and everlasting God.”§§ We must “lay a firm foundation, and build the house of the soul.”¶¶ Is not this the *nekrosis*, of which Paul says: “I die daily”? Is not this the *oikodomia*, or “edification” whereby we build the house “not made with hands”?

What is the result? According to Philo, we reach the state of “the perfect man, who has rooted out anger from his heart, and is gentle to every one in word and deed.”*** With the perfect man, Philo contrasts the man who is still advancing toward perfection, who has not yet wholly rooted out passion, but has gained the virtues, perspicuity and truth. This irresistibly suggests two sentences of Paul’s: “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”††† “Not as though I had already attained, either

* *De Somniis*, I, 41.

† 1 Timothy 2:5

‡ *De sac. Ab. et C.* 19.

§ *De Somniis*, I, 26.

¶ *Ibid.* 21.

** Galatians 2:16

†† Philippians 3:14

‡‡ Colossians 3:3

§§ *De Gigant.* 3.

¶¶ *De Cherubim*, 30.

*** *Legum Alleg.* III, 47.

††† Ephesians 4:13

were already perfect; but I follow after.”* For Philo, as for Paul, the end is a glorious immortality.

Two more passages in Philo seem to call for special notice.

First, in the tract on the “Confusion of Tongues,” we have this sentence, applied to “that incorporeal being who in no respect differs from the divine image,” that is, the Logos: “The Father of the universe has caused him to spring up as the eldest son, whom, elsewhere, he calls his first-born.”† Secondly, we have in Philo such a sentence as this: “When God, being attended by two of the heavenly powers as guards, to wit, by Authority and Goodness, he himself, the one God being between them, presented an appearance of Three Figures to the visual soul, each of which figures was not measured in any respect; for God cannot be circumscribed, nor are his powers capable of being defined by lines, but he himself measures everything. His Goodness therefore is the measure of all good things, and his Authority is the measure of things in subjection, and the Governor of the universe himself is the measure of all things corporeal and incorporeal.”‡

These two passages seem to me to suggest that we may find in the thought of Philo the first outline of two doctrines, that of the Trinity, Three Persons in one God, and that of the Logos as “the first-born Son.”

The passages I have quoted are very far from illustrating fully the manifold relations between Philo and Paul. But they do, I think, fairly indicate the great outlines of Philo’s world-concept. And I think they show that Paul’s world-concept is closer to Philo’s than it is to any other philosophic or religious cosmogony of which we have any knowledge. I am inclined to think that the closeness amounts to identity.

What conclusions are we to draw? It has, of course, been suggested that Philo is a debtor to Paul and the other writers of the New Testament. But this seems quite untenable, if we consider the dates. The most definite evidence as to the age of Philo is the sentence at the beginning of his account of the embassy to Rome, where he suffered

* Philippians 3:12

† *De Conf. Ling.* 14; Cohn II, 241, l. 19.

‡ *De Sacrif. Ab. et C.* 15; Cohn I, 225, 18.

many slights at the hands of Caligula. Philo writes: "How long shall we, who are aged men, still be like children, being indeed as to our bodies grey-headed through the length of time that we have lived, but as to our souls utterly infantine through our want of sense and sensibility, looking upon fortune, the most unstable of all things, as most invariable, and on nature, the most steadfast, as utterly untrustworthy?"

The embassy took place in the year 40 A.D. Philo apparently wrote his account of it soon after, and was then an aged man, grey haired. From this it is surmised that he was born between the years 20 and 10 B.C. The two scholars who have recently given the subject the most thorough study are Leopold Cohn and Massebieau. The former suggests the dates just given for the limits between which Philo's birth must be placed: "*So fällt seine Geburt etwa 20-10 v. Chr.*"* Massebieau thinks that the treatise from which we have most largely quoted, *De Opificio Mundi*, and the series of works flowing out of it, up to and including *De Specialibus Legibus*, II, were finished by the year A.D. 14, Philo being then under forty.†

We may take it as quite certain, therefore, that Philo's system was completely worked out, and his greatest works, those which embody that system most perfectly, were written while Paul was still a child; some of them, very probably, before Paul was born. Paul was a young man at the time of Stephen's martyrdom. If we take this to mean that he was then twenty-four or twenty-five, we should have to put the year of his birth about 10 A.D., which may well be close to the truth.

Philo's reputation stood high in Alexandria, and his fame must soon have spread throughout the empire, and the whole Jewish world, which was then nearly co-extensive with the empire. Philo himself gives us a bird's-eye view of the Jewish settlements of his day, in a passage quoted from a letter of Agrippa, in which he speaks of Jerusalem: "Concerning the holy city, I must now say what is

* *Philologus*, Supplementband VII, Leipsic, 1899; Leopold Cohn, "Einteilung und Chronologie der Schriften Philo's," p. 426, note 47. This very conservative scholar attributes to Philo's first period the works on "Creation" and the early part of the "Allegories of the Sacred Laws."

† *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, LIII, Paris, 1906. Massebieau, "Chronologie de la vie et des œuvres de Philon," p. 37.

necessary. As I have already stated, it is my native country, and the metropolis, not only of the one country of Judea, but also of many, by reason of the colonies which it has sent out from time to time into the bordering districts of Egypt, Phrenicia, Syria in general, and especially that part of it which is called Coelo-Syria, and also those more distant regions of Pamphylia, Cilicia, the greater part of Asia Minor as far as Bithynia, and the furthest corners of Pontus. And in the same manner into Europe, into Thessaly, and Boeotia, and Macedonia, and Aetolia, and Attica, and Argos, and Corinth and all the most fertile and wealthiest districts of Peloponnesus. And not only are the continents full of Jewish colonies, but also all the most celebrated islands are so too; such as Euboca, and Cyprus, and Crete. I say nothing of the countries beyond the Euphrates, for all of them except a very small portion, and Babylon, and all the satrapies around, which have any advantages whatever of soil or climate, have Jews settled in them.”* This may serve as an admirable summary of the Jewish world, as it must have presented itself in the imagination of St. Paul. “If my native land,” continues the writer, “is, as it may reasonably be, looked upon as entitled to a share of your favour, it is not one city only that would be benefited by you, but ten thousand of them in every region of the habitable world, in Europe, in Asia and in Africa, on the continent, in the islands, on the coasts, and in the inland parts.”

Throughout the whole of this Jewish world, there were, on the one hand, groups of studious scholars, and on the other a ceaseless going and coming, whether of devotees going up to the feasts at Jerusalem, or of merchants, or of travellers. The intercourse of thought and knowledge must have been rapid and extensive, much more extensive than we readily imagine, if our view be formed from the narrowly concentrated events of the four Gospels. Paul’s own view was far wider. His knowledge of geography was considerable, and he covered, in his journeys, a large part of the territory sketched above by Agrippa.

The Alexandrian grain ships often sailed north along the Syrian coast as far as Tarsus, and then turned westward toward Rome. It was only a few days’ sail from Alexandria to Tarsus. We may,

* *Legatio ad Gaium*, ch. 36. See Philo, C. D. Yonge, vol. IV, p. 61. The passage quoted is from the letter of Agrippa to Caligula.

therefore, well believe that there would be nothing improbable in the supposition that Philo's works might be read in Tarsus very soon after they were given out in Alexandria. So that the chief works of Philo, the "Creation," and the "Allegories of the Sacred Laws," may easily have reached Paul's household, while he himself was still a child, under the rather strict rule of his father. From his father, he may easily have learned the idealistic world-concept of Philo, and the method of allegorical interpretation which Paul also probably owes to Philo's teaching.

Or we may suppose that Philo's method and view had found their way to Jerusalem, and had gained the adherence of Gamaliel, before Paul went to the sacred city to sit at the great Rabbi's feet. One is inclined to think that both these suggestions may be true. So thoroughly is Paul saturated with the world-view and the allegorical method of Philo, that his mind and thought must have been formed on them from the beginning.

One interesting point arises. Philo and Paul follow the same lines of thought in the world-concept which we have outlined. But they very often use different words, where one would expect the words used to be the same. Thus, in the passages we have quoted, they use different words for earthly or earthy, for the temple of the spirit, for the mediator. I believe the explanation of this is, that Paul became familiar with Philo's thought at a very early period, so that this thought became a part of his own mental furniture, looked on as his own, and therefore expressed in his own words. This seems more probable than that Paul came across Philo's works comparatively late in life, for then he would have borrowed more unevenly, and would have quoted more accurately. He may well have re-read Philo later in life, perhaps at Caesarea between 60 and 62 A.D., or at Rome after 63. There are indications in some of the later epistles that he did re-read Philo, or that he had become familiar with Philo's later works. But I wish to leave the question somewhat incomplete at present, keeping for a future time the detailed examination of the relation between separate works of Philo and separate epistles.

The relation itself seems to me certain. One may form some estimate of its depth and extent, by comparing, let us say, the world-

concept and theology of the Gospel according to St. Mark with the highly defined world-concept and theology of Paul's letters and speeches. Jesus seems to have refrained of deliberate intent from raising any cosmological or metaphysical questions, not because he did not value cosmology or metaphysics, but, perhaps, because his purpose was to train, not the intellect, but the will; to awaken the spiritual will, and put it in command; holding that only after this had taken place, could any true view of the world and of life be gained.

Paul, on the contrary, came to manhood with defined cosmological and metaphysical views, views derived, as I believe, from Philo; and he interpreted his spiritual experience in the light of these views, and read in the same light what he learned from the elder disciples, of the life and teachings of Jesus. Christendom has largely adopted and followed the thought of Paul, and therefore of Philo; and I am inclined to think that to this cause we must attribute the formulation of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Word as the first-born, and, later, the only begotten Son of the Father.

I believe Paul's view of the Old Testament was not less profoundly coloured by his studies in Philo, and that we must consider in this light what he has to say of Adam and Eve. This is of the highest importance; for from what Paul says of Adam had been developed the Doctrine of the Fall, as the cornerstone of "the plan of salvation." I think it can be shown that Paul was very far from believing, on this subject, what he is generally supposed to have believed; but I must postpone the consideration of this deeply interesting question for another occasion.

The Dogma of the Virgin Birth

Theosophical Quarterly, January, 1912

“A certain woman lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee. . . .

“But He said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.”

The trial of an American clergyman for views held heretical concerning the Virgin Birth of Jesus is in all our memories. And it seems that this is the type of question which will serve as a rallying cry for all those who uphold the letter of the law; that the acceptance of such doctrines as the Virgin Birth will be a test of Orthodoxy for some time to come.

As a student of religion, especially in that vast Orient whence so much of religion has come, I am persuaded that the position of the prosecutors in the trial to which I have alluded rested on a misunderstanding, a materialization of a spiritual truth; that they have misapprehended the nature and meaning of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, and, therefore, that the clergyman whom they condemned was the victim of a judicial error, based, shall we say, on a wrong construction of the statute.

I think the truth is, that the dogma of the Virgin Birth, far from being in any sense peculiar to Christian theology, is of universal extent and of vast antiquity. It is more than a supernatural event in the life of Jesus. It is really an integral part of a much wider doctrine, a doctrine fundamental to all religion: the doctrine of the Incarnation

of the Divine Man.

The universality of this teaching is suggested by Rev. R. J. Campbell, when he writes:

“The idea of a divine Man, the emanation of the infinite, the soul of the universe, the source and goal of all humanity, is ages older than Christian theology. It can be traced in Babylonian religious literature, for instance, at a period older even than the Old Testament. . . . This aspect of the nature of God has been variously described in the course of its history. It has been called the Word (Logos), the Son, and, as we have seen, the second person of the Trinity. For various reasons I prefer to call it—or rather Him—the eternal Christ.”

It has long seemed certain to me that there is a connection between Babylonian religious literature and the hymns of the Rig Veda. Be this as it may, we find the doctrine of the divine Man very eloquently set forth in the Vedic hymns. Thus the *Purusha Sukta* declares:

“. . . Such is his greatness; the divine Man is yet greater—

“The universe of creatures is one part of his being,

“Three parts are immortal in the heavens.

“From him was born the Word. From the Word was born Spiritual Man.

“When the Powers, making the divine Man the offering, accomplished the sacrifice,

“Spring was the oil, Summer was the fuel, Autumn was the oblation.

“From this sacrifice, where he who is the world became the offering, all things were born. . . .

“The Powers, accomplishing the sacrifice, bound the divine Man as sacrificial victim.

“These were the first religious rites. . . .”

The thought is, that the Logos, through self-sacrifice, became manifest as the created universe, in every particle of which the Logos lives and moves. This Incarnation of the divine Man in the world must

be distinguished from the pantheism which sees Deity immersed and absorbed in the universe. For “the universe of creatures is one part of his being; three parts are immortal in the heavens.” These three parts are the three divine Persons: Creator, Preserver, Regenerator, in the One Eternal.

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF OSIRIS

The Incarnation of the divine Man through sacrifice was the religion of ancient Egypt. The central figure of the teaching was Osiris, in the ages before the dynastic kings. Osiris, or Hesiri, was the son of the goddess Nut, and a double paternity, human and divine, was attributed to him. At his birth, a divine voice rang out, proclaiming that “the Lord of all has come into the world.”

During the eight and twenty years of his life, Osiris brought civilization and culture to Egypt, teaching the people the use of corn and the vine, which thus came to be associated with his worship. He left Egypt to carry his message to other lands, and we find independent traces of his teaching in the oldest records of the Euphrates valley. On his return to Egypt, he was ensnared by Set, “the serpent,” slain, and enclosed in a coffin, which was set adrift on the Nile. After long search, his body was found by Isis, or Hes, his sister-wife. Isis opened the coffin, and laid her face on the face of Osiris, kissing him and shedding tears.

Set again seized the body of Osiris, and cutting it into twice seven fragments, cast it into the Nile. Isis found the fragments, bound them together with bandages, and fanned the cold form with her wings.

Osiris was restored to life, and reigned as king of the dead, and judge of souls.

The Egyptians saw in the resurrection of Osiris the evidence of life beyond the grave: “as surely as Osiris lives, shall we live also.” Osiris is at once the type of the divine Man incarnated primordially in the world, his body being cut up by the serpent of Matter, and scattered through the world; and also the divine Man definitely incarnated in Egypt for the good of mankind, offering his body as a sacrifice, and rising from the dead. He is an Avatar, a divine Incarnation, not only in the cosmic, but also in the human sense. And we find that every

spiritual manifestation of religion rests on the same thought of a definite divine Incarnation in human form; the history of every religion is that of a slow decline from the pristine teaching of the incarnate divine Man.

The bas-reliefs of Dendera show Osiris lying swathed on the bier, then gradually raising himself till he stands upright. An ancient inscription declares that: "He gave his body to feed the people; he died that they might live." We are told that Apis, the symbol of the life of Osiris, was born through a divine conception, the impregnation of a divine power. Apis was, therefore, in the symbolical sense, a Virgin Birth.

THE INCARNATION OF KRISHNA

The *Purusha Sukta* depicted the divine Man putting forth the power called the Word, and then causing himself to be born through the Word as spiritual Man. In other words, the Logos, through his own divine power, becomes manifest as the soul. This is the heart of the religion of ancient India.

In the long centuries before the birth of Buddha, when the Three Persons of the Trinity had come to be called Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—Creator, Preserver, Regenerator—the divine Man, who was considered as related in a special way to the Second Person of the Trinity, was called "the Lord." The Lord manifested himself through the power of Maya, the feminine Word. This was his Virgin Birth. The Lord causes Maya to bring him forth, and is himself the child who is brought forth. Thus Maya comes to be symbolized as the Mother of the Lord.

As in Egypt, we have also the particular incarnation of the Logos in human form, the incarnation in India being Krishna, son of Devaki. Krishna is now recognized as a historical person, born several centuries before the Buddha, who was born six centuries before Christ. The incarnation of Krishna was twofold. First, there was the Virgin Birth of the Logos, the Lord, through Maya personified as a goddess. Then there was the human birth of the same Lord, as Krishna, son of Devaki, the wife of Vasudeva. This was a normal human birth, yet it was attended with signs and wonders, which are eloquently described

by the Vishnu Purana: "on the day of his birth, the heavens were irradiated with joy. The winds were hushed. The seas made murmurous music, as the spirits of heaven sang." The voice of an angel sounded in the father's ears, warning him that the child must be taken away, to escape the wrath of the tyrant Kansa, who sought to slay him. The tyrant, enraged at the child's escape, ordered a slaughter of all new-born children, of two years old and under. Krishna escaped this slaughter, and lived to become a great teacher, later revered as the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity.

THE BIRTH OF THE BUDDHA

Several centuries later, and some six hundred years before the birth of Jesus, was born Siddhartha the Compassionate, also esteemed a divine Incarnation. The Buddhist scriptures, Sanskrit and Pali, tell the story with great beauty. I shall try to summarize their narrative.

The Lord, who was to be born as the Buddha, "the Awakened," is depicted as dwelling in heaven, and perceiving that the time had come for him to be born among men, for the salvation of the world, he chose the family of king Suddhodana, in the ancient city of the sage Kapila. "The mother of a Buddha is one who has kept the precepts unbroken from the day of her birth. Now this queen Maya is such a one; and she shall be my mother." Maya the queen falls asleep and in a dream is caught up into Paradise. There she beholds the future Buddha miraculously entering her womb. She awakes and tells her dream. The wise men declare that she has divinely conceived, and that a son will be born to her "who will roll back the clouds of sin and folly from the world." At the moment of her conception, a great light spread through all the world, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, flowers bloomed everywhere, heavenly music was heard in the sky, and the fires of hell were quenched.

Angels guarded queen Maya with drawn swords, until her time was fulfilled. Then she desired to return to her father's home. Between the two cities was a grove of sal trees, and at this time the grove was a mass of flowers, with birds singing among the branches. When queen Maya, passing on her way to her father's house, beheld it, she desired to enter the grove to gather flowers. Going to the foot

of a mighty sal tree, she stretched out her hands toward a branch. The branch bent down to her hand, and formed a canopy of leaves round her. Then the birth-pains came upon her. Four angels received the future Buddha as he was born, and bathed him with streams of miraculous water. Then placing him before his mother, the angels said: "Rejoice, O queen, a mighty son has been born to you!" The future Buddha strode forward seven paces, and said, with a noble voice: "The chief am I in all the world!" The aged saint Kaladevala came to see the new-born babe, and rejoiced over him, lamenting also that he would not live to see his full glory.

There is also a noteworthy passage: "A womb that has been occupied by a future Buddha is like the shrine of a temple, and can never be used again. Therefore the mother of the future Buddha died when he was seven days old, and was reborn in heaven."

Here the two elements of the Incarnation are blended together. The divine Maya becomes queen Maya, and the divine birth is blended with the human birth. Yet we have the conception in Paradise, as well as the birth on earth.

Herodotus notes that the Greek story of Dionysus almost exactly repeats the Egyptian teaching of Osiris. In the same way Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to India, identifies an Indian hero, who seems to be Krishna, first with Dionysus and then with Hercules. Hercules in his turn finds his prototype in ancient Babylon. We thus see that all these divine Incarnations, "goddess-born," who "bruise the head of the serpent," are but different presentations of a single idea.

In western Asia, which was influenced both by Babylon and Egypt, we find several versions of the same primeval teaching, often materialized and overladen with sensuous details, yet recognizably the same in origin. In Syria, the doctrine of the divine Man attached itself to Adonis, whence the rites of Adonis reached Greece. In Phrygia the corresponding divine personage is the hero Attis, and circumstances decided that the worship of Attis should have a marked influence on the religious ideas of Rome.

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF ATTIS

Dr. J. G. Frazer has learnedly set forth the history of Attis, in his recently published book: *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*. He shows that Attis was said to have been a fair young shepherd, beloved of the mother of the gods. His birth was miraculous. His mother Nana was a virgin, who conceived through the power of a sacred tree. The priests of Attis “made themselves eunuchs” in honour of their divinity.

The worship of Attis was brought to Rome at the time of the great struggle with Carthage, two centuries before Christ. At the vernal equinox a pine-tree, cut in the woods, was brought to the sanctuary, and decked with violets. The effigy of Attis was tied to its stem.

On the next day, the “Day of Blood,” the effigy of Attis was buried. Late in the evening, “the tomb was opened; the god had risen from the dead; and, as the priest touched the lips of the mourners with balm, he softly whispered in their ears the glad tidings of salvation.” The next day, March 25, was a public festival in honour of the resurrection.

The sanctuary of Attis and his divine mother was on the Vatican hill, and St. Jerome tells us that the traditional birthplace of Jesus was a cave shaded by a grove sacred to Adonis. It is further noteworthy that in Phrygia and Gaul, and even for a time in Rome, Easter was celebrated on March 25, being thus a fixed solar feast, instead of a movable lunar feast, as Easter now is, in conformity with the Jewish Feast of the Passover. There is also an intimate connection between the celebration of December 25 and the Mithraic festival of the birth of the sun-god.

THE NATIVITY OF JESUS

This brings us to the nativity of Jesus, and the Virgin Birth as a Christian dogma. Let us first consider the negative side of the question.

To begin with, Jesus himself, though clearly affirming his divine incarnation and divine parentage, makes no mention of a miraculous human birth. On the contrary, when the woman cried out: “Blessed is the womb that bare thee!” we find Jesus replying: “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.” In exactly the same

way he says: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? . . . whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." It cannot, therefore, be said that Jesus lays stress on the Virgin Birth, as a necessary article of belief, nor indeed does he ever suggest such a doctrine.

In like manner neither John nor Paul nor Peter have anything to say of the Virgin Birth, either as an article of faith or even as a tradition, though Paul had an admirable opportunity to do so, for example, when he wrote to the Galatians: "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." It is noteworthy that Paul does not write: "made of a virgin," and we know that this epistle is an autograph. Peter also speaks of birth through "incorruptible seed," through the Word of the living God, but refers to the regenerate in general, and not in any special way to the physical birth of Jesus. And John, though writing of "the Word made flesh," says nothing of Virgin Birth in the material sense. The same is true of James, "the Lord's brother," and of Jude "the brother of James."

The only references in the New Testament to the Virgin Birth, as a material fact in the history of Jesus, are in the passages, Matthew I, 18-25, and Luke I, 26-38. The verses in Matthew immediately follow the genealogy of Joseph, whose father is said to have been Jacob, and who was descended from King David through Solomon. We are told that: "the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. . . . Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel."

The reference is to Isaiah VII, 14. Literally, the Hebrew reads: "Behold, the young woman shall conceive, and shall bear a son." On this passage Prof. Toy writes: "The rendering 'virgin' is inadmissible. The Hebrew has a separate word for 'virgin.'" He further points out that a definite historical event, in the eighth century before Christ, is referred to, and that there is no allusion in it to a future time of prosperity for Judah.

In Luke, the essential part of the story is contained in verses 34-35 of the first chapter: "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Only in the third chapter of Luke do we find the genealogy of Joseph. But here the father of Joseph is called Heli, and his descent is derived from David not through Solomon but through Nathan. The occurrence of the genealogy as late as the third chapter of Luke suggests that this gospel originally began with that chapter, thus starting at the mission of John the Baptist, as the second and fourth gospels do. Similarly, the verses 18-25 of the first chapter of Matthew might be omitted without in the least breaking the continuity of the narrative. This is exactly what we should find, if the passage were a later insertion.

THE BROTHERS OF THE LORD

It would seem, therefore, that, with the exception of these two short passages, which bear some evidence of being later additions, we find no allusion to the Virgin Birth, as a material fact in the life of Jesus, in the canon of the New Testament. The real home of that doctrine is in the apocryphal gospels.

There we find the doctrine set forth at great length, and with a multitude of details, to some of which we shall presently recur. It is very significant that, at the same time, we find the appearance of a cognate doctrine, that of the "perpetual virginity" of Mary, which presently becomes of primary importance. As the emergence of this latter doctrine sheds much light on the later insistence on the material Virgin Birth, we may briefly examine it here.

What have the canonical books of the New Testament to say as to Mary's "perpetual virginity"? Bearing on this question, we have such passages as this, in Matthew: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" The parallel passage in Mark reads: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of

Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" Luke also speaks of "the mother and brethren" of Jesus, though without citing the latter by name. John has a noteworthy passage, in which the brethren of Jesus rather ironically urge him to go up to Jerusalem, and show his works publicly. In the Acts, we have the mention of Mary the mother of Jesus and his brethren. And finally we have Paul speaking of James "the Lord's brother," and also of "the brethren of the Lord." I am inclined to think that the mother of Jesus is referred to by Luke, as "Mary the mother of James," who was a witness of the crucifixion, and who is called "Mary the mother of James and Joses" by Matthew. At least it is certain that these passages were taken to refer to the mother of Jesus by writers of the apocryphal gospels who explain them away by telling how Mary had adopted James.

But leaving out these last references, we have nearly a dozen passages in the New Testament (in the four gospels, in the Acts, and in Paul's Epistles) referring to "the brethren of Jesus," and always in connection with Mary. The plain meaning of these passages is, that James and Joses, Jude and Simon were the children of Joseph and Mary, Jesus being the "first-born" son, their elder brother. It is noteworthy that Matthew and Luke both speak of Jesus as the "first-born" son of Mary, at least suggesting that there were later children. Dr. Alford, who examines these passages very fully, comes to the conclusion that the brethren of the Lord were the children of Mary the mother of Jesus, and of Joseph.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS

When we come to the apocryphal gospels, we find the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus occupying a very important place. A whole cycle of narrative confronts us, in which every side of the doctrine is given ample scope. The question of "the brethren of the Lord" is covered by declaring that Joseph was a widower with four sons, James, Joses, Jude and Simon, and two daughters, Assia and Lydia, when he was espoused to Mary. The book called the "Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew" makes Joseph say: "I am an old man, and have children; why do you hand over to me this infant (Mary), who is younger than my grandsons?"

The book called "The History of Joseph the Carpenter" goes even further, and makes Jesus himself narrate the circumstances of his miraculous birth: "Joseph, that righteous man, my father after the flesh, and the spouse of my mother Mary, went away with his sons to his trade, practicing the art of a carpenter. And I chose her (Mary) of my own will, with the concurrence of my Father, and the counsel of the Holy Spirit. And I was made flesh of her, by a mystery which transcends the grasp of created reason." This choice of Mary by the future Saviour strongly reminds us of the choice of Maya by the future Buddha.

When we come to the conception of Jesus, the apocryphal gospels offer us a richly coloured narrative. The dogma of the Virgin Birth is safeguarded by the declaration that, immediately after the formal betrothal in the temple, Joseph departed to the seaside, leaving Mary in his house. Then we have the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, in passages resembling the narrative in Luke, but very much more elaborate. Then, six months after the conception, Joseph returns, and witnesses, human and divine, appear to testify to the virginity of Mary. Joseph and Mary later go up to Jerusalem, and on the way the babe is born, in a cave to which Mary had retired. The cave is filled with miraculous light. The voices of angels are heard. And the babe is born without pain. Several of these ancient books tell us, further, that the virginity of Mary, even after the birth of Jesus, was established by a midwife, or, in some narratives, two midwives, who had been brought by Joseph. All these works at the same time insist on the "perpetual virginity" of Mary, and affirm that "the brethren of Jesus" were children of Joseph by a former wife.

We may complete this part of the story by saying that the Virgin Birth of Jesus, in the material sense, is taught in the Koran, which tells us that Gabriel appeared to Mary, announcing the birth of her son; that he breathed on her, and at that moment she conceived. This breath of the angel is evidently the distorted form of the teaching of conception through "the holy Spirit," which in Greek would be "the holy Breath."

Mirkhond, the Persian historian of the fifteenth century, tells us that Mary brought forth her son while leaning against a palm-tree, and

that angels attended her, and produced a shower of miraculous water to wash the babe. These details, like the choice of Mary by the future Saviour, and the doctrine of the “perpetual virginity,” strongly suggest that the story of the Nativity was influenced by Buddhism in the early centuries, during which the apocryphal gospels were crystallizing out of popular legend. I am inclined to think that these works reacted on the canonical gospels, and that from them the narratives of the Virgin Birth overflowed into Matthew and Luke.

CONCLUSION

We are justified, therefore, in saying that Jesus himself has nothing to say of the Virgin Birth, as an abnormal event in his own life. On the contrary, he brushes aside an attempt to glorify the physical circumstances of his birth.

John and Paul, Peter and Mark, James and Jude are equally silent as to the material Virgin Birth of Jesus, though many occasions for referring to this presented themselves.

On the other hand, Jesus himself, and also John and Paul, Peter and James, have very much to say of the real Virgin Birth, in the spiritual sense, the “birth from above” through the Holy Spirit, the birth of “the new man, the Lord from heaven.” Peter speaks of all the regenerate as thus “begotten of God, of incorruptible seed;” and James speaks of “the Father of Lights,” who “of his own will begat us with the Word of truth.” In this spiritual rebirth, the Virgin Birth from above, Jesus is, as Paul says, “the first-born among many brethren.”

When we come to the apocryphal gospels, we find this idea of the spiritual Virgin Birth materialized into an abnormal physiological event, which is described with abundance of realistic detail, and elaborately developed. We find it in intimate association with two other doctrines, that of the Virgin Birth of Mary, and that of Mary’s “perpetual virginity.” It is evident that this ascetic view of the events of life dates from the period of the hermits and celibates, during which the celibacy of the clergy was also formulated, though we know from the New Testament that Peter and the other apostles, as well as “the brethren of the Lord” were married, and Paul especially recommends the choice of married men as bishops. There is every likelihood that

the material doctrine of the Virgin Birth flowed back from the apocryphal gospels into the early chapters of Matthew and Luke, which are not closely attached to the rest of the New Testament.

This is the conclusion as to the purely Christian side of the dogma. But it is in no sense a peculiarly Christian doctrine. On the contrary, it is already in existence in the oldest records of mankind. We find it as a twofold doctrine, cosmic and particular. As a cosmic doctrine, it gives an account of the formation of the world, by the manifestation of the Logos, the divine Man "immortal in the heavens." As a particular doctrine, we find it applied to divine Incarnations, who are held to be manifestations of the Logos in human form, for the salvation of mankind. These incarnations are always associated with the idea of the Virgin Birth, a "birth without sin."

When Jesus came to be recognized as a divine Incarnation, it was both natural and right that all the characteristics of such Incarnation should be applied to him; that he should be endowed with all the insignia of royalty, including the Virgin Birth, as a spiritual teaching. This was as natural and right as that John should apply to him Philo's doctrine of the Logos, which was but the restatement of the oldest spiritual teaching in the world. It was equally natural that pious but unlearned devotees should materialize this teaching, and turn it into an abnormal physiological event, as we find in the apocryphal gospels.

If these conclusions are just, then we are in no sense called on to accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus as a physiological fact; but on the other hand, the Virgin Birth of Jesus, as of all the regenerate, in the true spiritual sense, is not only true, but is an integral part of religion.

The Story of Adam and Eve

In The New Testament

Theosophical Quarterly, April, 1912

In trying to realize the thought, feeling and aspiration of the people of Palestine in the time of Jesus, with the desire to understand the thought of Jesus himself, we are influenced, perhaps, more than we realize by the form of the English Bible as we are familiar with it. We are led to think of the period described by Matthew as following and growing out of the period of Malachi, thus failing to remind ourselves of the profound change which passed over the life and thought of the Jews between the time when Malachi announced the coming of the messenger and Matthew's record that the messenger had come. If we used the Septuagint, or even some of the older English editions, we should be reminded that after the last prophet delivered his message, the peoples of Palestine, with the whole Eastern shore of the Mediterranean, had been almost transformed by Hellenic influences, spiritual and material, flowing from the campaigns and conquests of Alexander the Great.

Very largely, perhaps, because we omit the Apocryphal books, we come to think of the life and times of the New Testament following with hardly a break upon the Old; whether it be the material energies of the period of the kings, with their ever present tendency toward idolatry, or the passionate fervour of the prophets, poured forth in protest against idolatry and materialism. If we turned over the pages of the first book of the Maccabees, we should at once be reminded of

Alexander's invasions and conquests, and the founding of the Greek empire, with its revolutionizing influence over Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Palestine and Egypt. And in books like the Wisdom of Solomon, or the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, we should find, perhaps, many traces of Greek feeling and Greek thought, with a view of ethical immortality nowhere very clearly set forth in the canon of the Old Testament, but very beautifully taught by Plato. We should remember also that the Jews, during the centuries immediately before the birth of Jesus, had spread eastward as far as Mesopotamia, northward almost to the shore of the Euxine, westward among the isles of Greece, and even as far as Rome, where they had their own colony, and southward into Ptolemaic Egypt. In most of these regions they came into contact with Greek thought, and, returning to Jerusalem to bring gifts to the temple, or to celebrate the great feasts of their religion, they of necessity brought something of the atmosphere of Hellas to the hill of Zion. Perhaps Philo Judaeus and Flavius Josephus, the one coming immediately before the mission of Jesus, and the other immediately after, are our best witnesses to the fascination which the poets and philosophers of Greece exercised over the best minds of the Jews. Both, writing in Greek, quote the Greek poets and the Hebrew prophets side by side, and one of Philo's great arguments for the unity of God is the Homeric verse:

οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίῃ εἷς κοίρανος ἐΐστω

“A multitude of kings is not good.” (Iliad, ii, 204.)

Philo of Alexandria represents the strongest and most luminous stream of thought in Judaism just before, and during, the lifetime of Jesus. He sets forth his views of life and of the world in a wonderful series of treatises which have the general form of a running commentary on the Old Testament. Philo was saturated with Greek philosophy, holding closely to the world-concepts of the Stoics, but above all, perhaps, he was a follower of Plato. He held Plato's view that this visible universe of hills and sea and sky is but the outer presentment and veil of another and finer universe, invisible to the bodily eyes, but visible to the eyes of the mind, for the mind itself is an inhabitant of that finer universe, and of its essence. This idea is closely

akin to the view which is coming to dominate our best science, which divines the invisible ether as the dwelling-place of all forces, and as the womb of matter and of all material things.

For Plato, and for his ardent disciple Philo, there was first an invisible universe, immortal, incorruptible, to be perceived not by the outer senses but by the intellect, which is indeed an inhabitant of that imperishable, invisible world; and after the model of the invisible world the visible world was made, the corruptible in the likeness of the incorruptible. Philo was so saturated and possessed with this idea that things visible are but the outer husk and shell of things invisible, that he takes such outward things as histories, traditions, nay, the very doings of prophets and kings, as being themselves symbols, allegories, figures of finer, impalpable realities. In this spirit Philo bends his whole energies, the powers of a fine intellect and a lofty soul, to the interpretation of the Old Testament narratives in the spirit of Plato's philosophy, dissolving, as it were, the solid realism of the Semitic records in the sea of imagination and pure thought.

We can take no more vital and important illustration of this allegorising method of Philo's than the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall; first, because of the great place which this story has been made to occupy in our theology, and, second, because it is precisely this story which has been made the point of attack in the campaign of materialistic and destructive criticism which followed the discoveries and theories of Darwin. It is no exaggeration to say that hundreds of thousands of thoughtful people have turned away from a traditional belief in Christianity, because they feel convinced that the work of Darwin and his fellow-labourers has proved that the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall is a fable, while they had been taught by the doctors of theology to think of it as the foundation-stone of the plan of salvation, the correlative of the Redemption.

We are, therefore, led to ask whether this story was so regarded by the writers of the New Testament; and, most of all, whether it was so regarded by Jesus himself. We can best approach the solution of this question through the thought and writings of Philo Judaeus

For Philo, the story of Adam and Eve and the serpent takes its natural place in his complete system of allegorical interpretation. But

first he points out, what is often allowed to sink into the background, the fact that we have in the opening chapters of Genesis two wholly distinct accounts of the creation of man. There was first, in the ordered sequence of creative Days, the making of man in the image of God, and then, as a subsequent event, the formation of the man Adam from the red earth. Philo holds that the man first created, in the image of God, was a spiritual and invisible being, a part of that divine prototype or model of the universe, which he calls the Logos, the Word, or rather the Mind of God. And he beautifully illustrates this archetypal world by picturing a powerful king setting about to found a city, and giving the work into the hands of a wise master-builder or architect. The whole plan of the future city is first formed in the mind of the architect: the streets, the walls, the harbour, the market-place, the dwellings; then this invisible city is gradually made manifest in the visible city built by the workmen of the king according to the wise master-builder's plan. So the first universe, immortal, invisible, incorruptible, dwells in the Mind of God, in the Logos; and of this invisible universe, the first man, made in the likeness of God, is a part and an inhabitant.

After this, (says Philo), Moses says that "God made a man, having taken clay from the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life." And by this expression he shows most clearly that there is a vast difference between the man generated at this point, and the first man made in the image of God. For man as formed at this point is perceptible to the external senses, partaking of qualities, consisting of body and soul, male or female, by nature mortal. But man made in the image of God was an idea perceptible only by the intellect, incorporeal, neither male nor female, by nature immortal.*

Philo comes next to the story of the Fall. It is said, he tells us, that the old poisonous and earth-born reptile, the serpent, uttered the voice of a man. And he on one occasion coming to the wife of the first created man, reproached her with her slowness and her excessive prudence, because she delayed and hesitated to gather the fruit which was completely beautiful to look at, and exceedingly sweet to enjoy, and was, moreover, most useful as being a means by which men might

* Philo Judaeus "On the Creation of the World." ch. 46.

be able to distinguish between good and evil. And she, without any inquiry, prompted by an unstable and rash mind, acquiesced in his advice, and ate of the fruit, and gave a portion of it to her husband. And this conduct suddenly changed both of them from innocence and simplicity of character to all kinds of wickedness; at which the Father of all was indignant. For their actions deserved his anger, inasmuch as they, passing by the tree of eternal life, the tree which might have endowed them with perfection of virtue, and by means of which they might have enjoyed a long and happy life, preferred a brief and mortal (I will not call it life, but) time full of unhappiness; and, accordingly, he appointed them such punishment as was fitting.

And these things, comments Philo, are not mere fabulous inventions in which the race of poets and sophists delights, but are rather types shadowing forth some allegorical truth, according to some mystical explanation.

Applying this most valuable and fruitful principle, that the characters in the story of the Fall are types, allegorical characters to be interpreted mystically, Philo goes on to give his own interpretation of the story.* The serpent, he says, is the symbol of self-indulgence, of pleasure, because it crawls, feasts on clay and has poison under its teeth; from it come “drunkenness and voracity and licentiousness,” inflaming the appetites and strengthening the impetuous passions. Using gluttony as an example of self-indulgence, Philo says that immoderate eating is naturally a poisonous and deadly habit, inasmuch as what is so devoured is not capable of digestion, in consequence of the quantity of additional food which is heaped in on top of it, and arrives before what was previously eaten is converted into juice.

And the serpent, Philo says, is said to have uttered a human voice because pleasure employs innumerable champions and defenders, who take care to advocate its interests, and who dare to assert that the power over everything, both small and great, does of right belong to it without any exception whatever. . . . Many other things are said in the way of praise of this inclination, especially that it is one most peculiar

* Philo Judaeus “On the Creation of the World.” ch. 55-56, trs. C. D. Yonge, p. 47.

and kindred to all animals. . . . But its juggleries and deceits pleasure does not venture to bring directly to the man, but first offers them to the woman, and by her means to the man; acting in a very natural and sagacious manner. For in human beings the mind occupies the rank of the man and the sensations that of the woman. And pleasure joins itself to and associates itself with the sensations first of all, and then by their means cajoles also the mind, which is the dominant part. For, after each of the senses has been subjected to the charms of pleasure, and has learnt to delight in what is offered to it, the sight being fascinated by varieties of colours and shapes, the hearing by harmonious sounds, the taste by the sweetness of flowers, and the smell by the delicious fragrance of the odours which are brought before it, these all having received these offerings, like handmaids, bring them to the mind as their master, leading with them persuasion as an advocate, to warn it against rejecting any of them whatever. And the mind being immediately caught by the bait, becomes a subject instead of a ruler, and a slave instead of a master, and an exile instead of a citizen, and a mortal instead of an immortal.

So far the teaching of Philo, with its admirable sanity and philosophical breadth. It is admitted by all critics that these chapters are amongst Philo's earliest writings, belonging to the period of the boyhood of Jesus, so that we may well believe that some such view of the meaning of Adam and Eve and the Fall was accepted by the best Jewish thought not only at Alexandria, but also, in all probability as far as Jerusalem and more distant Tarsus of Cilicia. We are justified in thinking that, for the better educated Jews of the time of Jesus, Adam and Eve were just what Philo calls them, symbols and figures and allegories, hardly to be taken literally, yet yielding a rich mystical meaning, and of high value for edification.

Let us now turn to the New Testament, and see what position is held by the story of Adam and Eve, in the teaching of Jesus and his disciples. When we come to count up, we shall, I think, be not a little surprised to find how very few are the allusions to Adam and Eve and the Fall, in the Gospels and Epistles.

In the four Gospels, Adam is only mentioned once, and without any reference to the Fall, or to any doctrine of original sin. Indeed, as

Professor Toy has pointed out, “no distinct dogma of universal depravity exists in the Old Testament,”* and this view was, without doubt, common to the writers of the Gospels and the Jews of their day. The one reference to Adam in the Gospels is in the genealogy in the third chapter of Luke, and this genealogy is in reality hardly an integral part of the Gospel. Much the same may be said of the words of Jude, who speaks of “Enoch, the seventh from Adam.” The allusion is chronological, not moral; and, as Jude is seeking to identify the author of the apocryphal Book of Enoch with the supernatural patriarch, we cannot safely give much weight to his citation.

In truth, there are only three passages in the New Testament which have any real reference to the story of Adam, and these are all in the Epistles of Paul. Taking them in the order in which they were written, there is, first, the allusion in the splendid chapter of the first letter to Corinth, which we associate with the burial service:

“Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive.”†

We must take this in conjunction with the passage later in the same chapter:

“So also it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”‡

One cannot fail to be struck with the likeness to the earlier teaching of Philo Judaeus, of the two men, the one immortal and incorruptible,

* Crawford Howell Toy: “Quotations in the New Testament,” New York, 1884, p. 132.

† 1 Corinthians 15:21-22. The Greek reads *ἐν τῷ Ἀδᾶμ* and *ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ*. The Revised Version, in a marginal reading, brings out the latter article, but not the former. I have ventured to translate both.

‡ 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47, 48

of the divine nature of the Logos; the other, of the earth, earthy; and to Philo's further teaching that regeneration comes when, mortifying the flesh, we turn from the man of earth, and once more conform to the image of the heavenly man. This regeneration, in Philo's view, constitutes "the perfect man," the immortal, renewed in an imperishable life. Having formerly conformed to the image of the earthy, we are to conform ourselves to the likeness of the heavenly man, who is of the divine nature of the Logos or Reason of God.

The parallelism is close indeed, and we have much warrant for believing that Paul shares the thought of Philo, that Adam is a symbol of the man of flesh, in a wide and general sense: "in the Adam, all die," rather than a definite historical personage, who, by a single sin, condemned the whole human race.

The second allusion in Paul's letters to the story of Adam is in the letter to Rome, written, perhaps, some ten or fifteen years after Philo's death at an advanced age.

"Wherefore," writes Paul, "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. . . .)."*

It is noteworthy and significant that, in this passage, on which the dogma of the Fall is chiefly founded, we find Paul applying to Adam the very word used by Philo. Adam is a "type," a "figure of him that was to come." Paul could hardly tell us in a more explicit way that he is interpreting the story of Adam allegorically, just as he did, in writing to the community at Corinth.

The third and last allusion to Adam is in the first letter to Timothy:

"Let the woman learn in silence and all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in

* Romans 5:12-14

the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing.”*

“Eve shall be saved in childbearing:” surely this makes it plain that Paul is once more using the allegorical method, and taking Eve as a type, a genus, to use Philo’s phrase; and indeed there is the closest resemblance here to the passage of Philo, already quoted, where he points out that Eve was first tempted, and then Adam through Eve.

A striking example of Paul’s use of the Philonic method of allegory is that in the letter to the Galatians, where he writes: “For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. [For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia,] and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”†

This is in the very spirit of Philo’s *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, as, for example, where he writes: “Do you not see that wisdom when dominant, which is Sarah, says, ‘For whosoever shall hear it shall rejoice with me.’ But suppose that any were able to hear that virtue has brought forth happiness, namely, Isaac. . . .”‡ and so on. And this is thoroughly in harmony with the usual Rabbinical method of exegesis, well described by Professor Toy, as “summed up in the principle, that every sentence and every word of the Scripture was credited with any meaning that it could possibly be made to bear; and the interpreter selected the literal or the allegorical sense, or any other that suited his argument.”§

We are, therefore, justified in saying that, during the period in which Jesus and Paul lived and taught, Philo, who was a commanding figure among the Jews, and a recognized leader of religious thought, openly treated the story of Adam as an instructive allegory, a symbol of

* 1 Tim. 2:11-15

† Galatians 4:22-26

‡ Philo, *On the Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, Book II, ch. xxi.

§ *Op. Cit.* Introduction, p, xxiii.

the sensual man; that the three passages in which Paul mentions Adam are all very close to the spirit and thought of Philo, and that in all three passages Paul makes it evident that he is speaking allegorically, calling Adam a type, a figure, just as he makes Eve a symbol of all womankind. And it is on these three passages that the doctrine of original sin, as connected with the Fall of Adam, is founded; for the two other allusions to Adam in the New Testament are purely chronological and have no moral colouring.

But we come to the most striking aspect of the matter, when we ask what meaning the story of Adam had for Jesus himself. The answer is, that Jesus nowhere mentions Adam or Eve or the Fall at all, that Jesus nowhere connects an idea of original sin with Adam's Fall, or in any way suggests that his own coming and teaching, or his death and resurrection, are correlative to Adam's expulsion from Eden. It is most significant and characteristic of the method of Jesus, that he nowhere assigns a general cause to sin, considered as a common heritage of mankind. Indeed, he uses expressions which are hardly compatible with the idea of original or universal sin. For example: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin. . . . If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin."* But it would seem that it was much more characteristic of Jesus to speak, not of sin, but of sins, in the sense of errors, transgressions, of missing the mark, rather than in the theological sense of a condition into which we are born. In the four Gospels, the word sin (Greek *ἁμαρτία*) occurs forty times; it is used in the plural twenty-eight times, while of the twelve occurrences in the singular, only one is in the synoptic Gospels, while several of the occurrences in John seem, as we have shown, directly to negative the idea of universal, original sin caused by Adam's transgression.

The dominant fact, therefore, is that Jesus nowhere connects the idea of sin with the story of the Fall of Adam; Jesus nowhere teaches that his own work is the correlative of that Fall, or that his coming is to be set over against Adam's transgression, as we are accustomed to see it set, in our theology. Jesus takes the fact of sins, of transgressions, of errors, of failures, of death itself, just as he saw them all about him;

* John 15:22-24

and straightway, without theorizing, sets himself to applying the cure, holiness, purity, humility, faith, love, bringing the new birth and immortality. He teaches that certain things are to be done, rather than that certain things are to be believed. The saying that "He that believeth not, shall be damned,"* at the close of Mark, is an interpolation of a later century. The authentic teaching is: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" or this: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."†

If these conclusions be trustworthy, and, as I think, well supported by the evidence brought forward, then it would seem to be certain that the correlation of the Fall with the teaching and life of Jesus is nowhere to be found in that teaching; and that, while this dogma is made to rest on certain phrases in Paul's letters, Paul himself in all probability shared Philo's view that the story of Adam was an allegory, and that Adam was a type or symbol of that mortal nature which we all know at first hand, the passional nature which must be purified, before we can conform to the likeness of the heavenly, putting on the new man, who is of divine and eternal nature.

If these conclusions be trustworthy, then the correlation of Adam's Fall and the life of Jesus, in our theology, is based on a misapprehension as to what Jesus taught, and what Paul meant. The second event does not depend for its significance on the first. The message of Jesus is wholly independent of the story of Adam. That message must be studied in itself, in its immediate and present bearing, apart from the theories of legal theology, burdened as it is with the Roman doctrine of contract, or debtor and creditor, of imputed righteousness, or transferred credit. If we wish to test the validity of the doctrine, we must follow the injunction of the teacher of the doctrine, and test it, not by legal argument, but by obedience, by keeping the commandments, by working the divine will.

* Mark 16:16

† John 7:17

Paul the Disciple

Theosophical Quarterly, July, 1915 & January, October, 1916.

Paul's life is supremely valuable because it shows the method of the Master, after the resurrection, in training his disciples and in carrying forward the work of the church. We have Paul's distinct testimony that, in each decisive hour of his life, from the great awakening on the Damascus road until he stood for the last time in chains before Nero, the Master was with him, teaching, guiding and strengthening him.

Describing his first commission to King Agrippa, Paul told how the Master had appeared to him, and, speaking in the Hebrew tongue, had thus charged him:

“I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

Paul saw the Master and spoke with him face to face, and he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Direct from the Master came his knowledge and his commission. He makes this clear, when writing to the disciples in Galatia, reminding them that, after he had seen the Master, he let three years pass before going up to Jerusalem to

talk with the elder disciples. During the two weeks he then spent at Jerusalem, he talked only with Peter, and with James the brother of Jesus, already beginning to dominate the church at Jerusalem. Perhaps it was on this occasion that James told him that the Master had appeared to him also, after the resurrection, as Paul later wrote to his friends at Corinth.

While at Jerusalem, he again had speech with the Master, as he himself relates:

“It came to pass that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. . . . Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.”

Some years later, Paul “went up by revelation” to the Council of Jerusalem, which debated the great question of admitting the Gentile converts to the church, without compelling them to comply with Jewish rites and customs: the question which lay at the root of the work entrusted by the Master to Paul.

Again, after the door had been opened wide to the non-Jewish disciples, in Asia Minor and in Greece, and when, in consequence, the Jews of Corinth were fiercely assailing Paul, the Master once more spoke to him “in the night, by a vision”: “Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee: for I have much people in this city.”

Once again, when Paul had hardly escaped a violent death at the hands of the mob about the temple at Jerusalem and was still in imminent peril, the Master paid a magnificent compliment to the indomitable courage of his disciple, promising him still further opportunity and danger: “the night following the Master stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

The promise was fulfilled. The disciple went to Rome, with chains on his wrists. And in the last dark days, when many friends had forsaken him, when he was summoned before the judgement seat of Nero, presently to receive sentence of death, he bears this

superb witness:

“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Master, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. . . . At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Master stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Master shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever.”

These are only the most critical events in the long discipleship of Paul. Not only at these times, but constantly, the Master was near him, overshadowing him with inspiring and protecting power, and on many other occasions definitely communicating with him, as Paul testifies in his letters.

These communications referred in part to the earlier work of Jesus, during the period of teaching before his death, as where Paul writes to the disciples at Corinth:

“I have received of the Master that which also I delivered unto you, That the Master Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Or the communications referred to the immediate needs of one or another group of disciples in the growing church, as where Paul, writing to Corinth, says:

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Master, Let not the wife depart from her husband.”

Or the Master spoke concerning Paul's own training as a disciple:

“For this thing I besought the Master thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Through more than thirty years, till the period of active work was closed by Paul's execution, the Master's communication with his disciple was unbroken: a general inspiring influence, with specific, detailed directions, for the immediate need or danger; directions which were decisive in guiding Paul's movements during the vital and critical period in which the doors of the church were thrown wide open to the whole Western world, to the Greeks and Romans as well as to the Jews. At each crisis, the deciding influence was the Master's intervention.

Paul says much which makes clearer the manner of the Master's communication to him. There was articulate speech, so definite that Paul records of the first occasion that the Master spoke to him, not in Greek, but in the Hebrew tongue, the idiom in which the people of Galilee had heard the parables. Paul saw as well as heard. “Have I not seen the Master?” he writes, and he speaks elsewhere of the Master's luminous form: “the Master Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” Paul had written earlier of this transformation:

“It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body . . . and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

The Master, therefore, appeared to him in what Paul himself calls “the spiritual body,” the body of the resurrection, which seems to have taken a form less externally visible after the event which is called the Ascension, though the Master in no sense withdrew from his disciples; he was seen by those who had eyes to see, and heard by those who had ears to hear: the eyes and ears of the spiritual man.

Thus did Paul see and speak with the Master during the long and arduous years of his work as a disciple; and, more than all words, the Master communicated himself, imparting something of his will and

consciousness to Paul, and drawing the life of his disciple closer to his own.

The trials and sufferings which Paul endured were a part of the purification which was necessary for this union of will and consciousness with the Master. As that purification was carried forward, Paul grew able to say: "We have the mind of Christ." And his constant effort for the disciples to whom he brought the word of the Master, was, that they too might break through the external consciousness, and be united with the will and consciousness of the Master: "My little children," he writes to the group of disciples in Galatia, "my little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." It was this uniting of the will and consciousness of the disciple with the will and consciousness of the Master, which transformed the natural man into the spiritual and immortal; and it was the union of many disciples with each other, through their union with the Master, which made the unity and life of the Church.

"We are members one of another. . . . even as the Master nourisheth and cherisheth the church: for we are members of his body. . . . This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

In order that this new consciousness and will may be gained, there must first be a transformation of the external, personal life; a dying and rising again, of which the Master's crucifixion and resurrection are the prototype:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

After this new birth, this birth from above through the power of the Master, comes the gradual growth of the spiritual man, that "up-building" of which Paul speaks so often to the disciples, whereby we are transformed "to the likeness of his glorious body," growing in the

spiritual life “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

To carry the word and power of the Master throughout the whole Western world Paul toiled and suffered: to bring others into touch with the will and consciousness of the Master, thus building up, through their union in him, a divine and immortal life, the spiritual life of the disciples and the Church.

For this work, Paul was chosen and commissioned by the Master, as Paul himself has recorded. The circumstances of his birth and early training, debtor both to the Jews and the Greeks, signally fitted him to carry out the task later entrusted to him.

Paul was a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. He was also a Roman born. As a Roman citizen, he was at home everywhere throughout the Empire from Syria to Spain, and therefore well fitted to carry the word of the Master throughout the Empire. Since he was a Roman born, his father was a Roman citizen before him, perhaps his grandfather also. Tarsus was closely bound up with the Caesarian house; through Tarsus Julius Caesar passed from Alexandria, where he had met Cleopatra and buried Pompey, on his way to fight the king of Pontus in that swift campaign which begot the epigram: I came, I saw, I conquered. To Tarsus also came Mark Antony, and on the river Cydnus, which flows through the city, Cleopatra was borne in that famed progress which outshone Aphrodite:

For her own person,
 It beggar'd all description: she did lie
 In her pavilion—cloth of gold of tissue—
 O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
 The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
 Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
 With divers-colour'd fans . . .

The city cast
 Her people out upon her; and Antony,
 Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
 Whistling to the air.

From Tarsus came Athenodorus the Stoic, son of Sandon, who was the tutor of Augustus, and who, by the favour of Augustus, became governor of his own city, Tarsus. Nestor the Platonist, who succeeded Athenodorus as Governor of Tarsus, had been the tutor of Marcellus, nephew of Augustus. Close bonds like these bound Tarsus to the imperial house; Roman citizenship in Tarsus meant personal service rendered to the Caesars or distinction conferred by them. It meant familiarity with the history and fortunes of the Caesarian house: the martial deeds of the great Julius, the wise statesmanship of Augustus, the long reign of Tiberius. This Paul implied, when he declared himself a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, and a Roman born.

Besides the close relation with the Caesars, Tarsus was famed for Greek culture, with traditions going back to Homer. Strabo narrates that Tarsus was founded by Argives who accompanied Triptolemus in his search after Io. Dion Chrysostom, who was a youth of sixteen or eighteen at the time of Paul's death, when addressing the people of Tarsus, always took for granted that they were familiar with the history and poetry of Hellas.

Strabo relates that the Tarsian philosopher Diogenes went about from city to city, instituting schools of philosophy, and that, as if inspired by Apollo, he composed and recited poems on any subject that was proposed to him. Further, he says that Athenodorus in part owed his influence to his gift for extemporaneous speaking, a power that was general among the inhabitants of Tarsus. One may find here, perhaps, the prototype of the eloquent journeyings of the greatest citizen of Tarsus.

As a boy, Paul must have played in the market-place where Antony had sat enthroned, and wandered along the wharfs where the crowds gathered to hail Cleopatra. He must have known very familiarly the hot, damp plain around the city, overshadowed by the foothills and snow-fringed ridges of Taurus, shaggy with dark cedars, the evergreen vales adorned with glades of saffron. From Taurus flowed the icy Cydnus, passing through the city close to the gymnasium of the young men. The son of a leading citizen, Paul must have had the right to join in the exercises of the gymnasium; and this seems to be the source of his many allusions to athletics, to gymnastic training, to boxing

matches and foot-races. For one who had been an athlete in his youth, it would be natural to sum up his life-work in the words: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my race; henceforth is laid up for me a crown." Paul contrasts the physical training of the athlete with the spiritual training of the disciple: "Bodily exercise profiteth for a little: but godliness is profitable unto all things;" and again, "Every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air." Here, and elsewhere in the New Testament, the crown held out to the disciple is the crown (garland) of the victor in contests and trials rather than the crown (diadem) of hereditary rule. Paul, Peter, James and John all use the symbol: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

It may well be that Paul's early training in the gymnasium by the Cydnus, in whose icy stream Alexander the Great had bathed, prepared him for the bodily hardship of his later work. He must have gone on foot in much of his journeying through Palestine, Asia Minor and Macedonia; as, for example, his fellow-traveller relates: "We went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for s he had appointed, minding himself to go afoot." This journey on foot from Troas, the port of ancient Troy, to Assos was probably characteristic of much of Paul's travel; the type of exertion which led him to write to Timothy: "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Such was the atmosphere of Tarsus, in the midst of which Paul passed the most impressionable years of his boyhood and youth. Though the Cilician city was far from Greece, it was full of the Greek spirit and Greek tradition. The background, as in Greece itself, was made up of the great tradition of the Homeric poems. An amusing tale which Strabo tells, concerning the gymnasium where, if our surmise be sound, Paul got his taste for athletics, shows how Homer was on everybody's tongue, his poems in everyone's mind. According to this tale, it was Mark Antony himself, the friend of Julius Caesar and of Cleopatra, who founded the gymnasium, and made Boethus trustee of a fund for its support. Boethus was a fraudulent trustee, appropriating even the oil which was provided for the athletes to anoint themselves

with. He was accused of his theft, whereupon he made an angry protest to Mark Antony: "As Homer sang the praises of Achilles, Agamemnon and Ulysses, so I have sung yours. I therefore ought not to be brought before you on such a charge." The accuser answered, "Homer did not steal oil from Agamemnon; but you have stolen it from the gymnasium, and therefore you shall be punished." Yet, says Strabo, the crafty Boethus contrived to avert the displeasure of Antony by courteous offices, and continued to plunder the city until the death of his protector.

Tarsus was also a famous seat of Greek philosophy. Paul was, without doubt, not only familiar with the names of the Stoic, Platonic and Epicurean schools, but also with their doctrines. Consider the incident of his stay at Athens:

"Certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him. . . . And they took him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?"

The story is recorded by Luke, the beloved physician and fellow-traveller. But Luke was not with Paul in Athens; therefore the story, with the names of the philosophical schools, must have been given to him by Paul himself.

If we go back to Strabo's account of Tarsus, we shall see how easy it would have been for Paul to be familiar with these and other schools; how difficult, almost impossible, it would have been for him to have been ignorant of them. For the inhabitants of Tarsus, Strabo tells us, applied themselves to the study of philosophy and to the whole encyclical compass of learning with so much ardour that they surpassed Athens, Alexandria and every other place where there were schools and lectures of philosophers. Among the famous Stoics of Tarsus was Athenodorus, tutor of Augustus Caesar, who made him governor of Tarsus. Nestor, who was tutor to Marcellus, the nephew of Augustus, and who succeeded Athenodorus as governor of Tarsus, was equally famous as a Platonist. Since Athenodorus and Nestor were great orators, it is likely that they made the public squares of the city ring with the names and doctrines of Zeno and Plato. Paul, therefore, was quite ready to hold his own with the eloquent philosophers of Athens.

The way in which he faced his audience on the famous Hill of Ares under the Acropolis shows how well he profited by the lessons of the Tarsian orators. It was his custom, when opening his great theme to the Jews who gave him the privilege of speech in their synagogues, to use the Old Testament background, the majestic story of God's dealings with Israel; and here he spoke out of a full heart. But when called to address the critical audience of Athens, he took rather, for the background of his oration, the general philosophic sensibility, the somewhat vague pantheism, which was the broad result of Greek philosophy. Men of Athens, he began, having in mind, no doubt, the famous orations of Demosthenes, Men of Athens, I perceive that ye are somewhat religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To an unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in sanctuaries made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life and breath and all things; and he made of one blood every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, 'For we also are his offspring . . .'

Then he went on to speak of that one among the sons of God, whom God had raised from the dead. . . . It would be hard to conceive of a wiser or more skilful approach to the Athenian mind; of a better way of bringing to that mind the mystery of the resurrection. And it is of record that many of his hearers, both men and women, like Dionysius and Damaris, were in fact led through that speech of his to a knowledge of the Master. It would be difficult to find a better example of the orator's art and secret: to take men where they are; to speak to them first of what is in their own hearts. And it was Paul's early life in Tarsus, when, as a boy, he wandered about the streets and squares of the city, listening to the eloquent words of the Platonists and Stoics, that trained and fitted him thus to make overtures to the mind of Greece, where a man of narrower education and sympathies would have met with nothing but derision.

It has been said that the beauty of Paul's style, as we find it in the

living, breathing pages of his letters, is the beauty of speech, of oratory, rather than of writing. Take the magnificent passage concerning Charity. . . . It rings like a great oration. This quality of eloquence, then, Paul must have learned and absorbed in those same boyhood days, among a people for whom oratory was one of the supreme aesthetic delights.

II.

AT THE FEET OF GAMALIEL

“I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers.”

Paul, as he spoke, was standing on the steps of the Roman guardhouse which overlooked the great courtyard of the temple. Under the shadow of the holy shrine on Mount Moriah, made sacred by the Master’s footsteps, he told the story of his life, inspired by this splendid background for his oration, as, five or six years earlier, he had stood under the shadow of the Acropolis of Athens, and, looking up to the pillared beauty of the Parthenon, had repeated the verse of the great Hymn to Zeus, “For we are also His offspring!” It was the first day of his bondage, the first day of many years when he wore the chains upon his wrists, the chains that clank and rattle through all the epistles of his bondage: “Paul the prisoner, Paul in chains.”

And now, speaking in the contemporary dialect of Hebrew, the current speech of Aram, and for that reason called Aramaic; standing in face of an audience pre-eminently Hebrew, Paul went back in memory to the days, some thirty years before, the great days of his studentship, when, at the feet of Gamaliel, his heart was fired and enkindled by the splendid epic of Israel, the grand story of God’s way with the Nation that centred about this temple on Moriah, about the citadel of Zion, that David made his capital, after the kingdom had passed away from Paul’s prototype, Saul the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin.

We see the Jerusalem of Paul’s youth, of the years, let us say, from 20 to 30, through the terrible clouds of the great tragedy, that darkness

that rested there from the sixth hour to the ninth, when the earth trembled, and the veil of the great shrine on Moriah was rent from top to bottom; we rightly see, in the utter destruction that came, in the year 70, upon the City of the King, the punishment, the righteous Nemesis for the black deed of Golgotha, when the whole nation cried out, invoking their inevitable doom, "His blood be upon our heads and on our children's!" And we think, perhaps, that in the Jerusalem of Paul's student days, there was nothing but the bitter wrath, the iron bigotry, that crucified the Master. Without doubt these were already latent there, but they had not come forth from their lurking-place in passionate, rancorous hearts; and there was much that was full of aspiration, of sunnier, gentler spirit; something of the inspiration that breathes in the more beautiful of the psalms:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff,
they comfort me."

There was such a period of expansion and aspiration, just before the Master began openly to teach. It is foreshadowed in the scene of his own boyhood in the temple; we catch the echo of it in his passionate, heart-breaking outcry of infinite regret: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" There was aspiration; but the age-long tragedy is, that there was not aspiration enough. There was a deep passionate interest in the things of religion, that kept these men about the Master, hanging on his words; but there was the terrible darkness and hardness of heart beneath it, that turned the impulse of religion into passionate hatred.

Of the sunnier years, of which the Master had said, "if I had not come, ye had not had sin," Gamaliel is still remembered as the greatest light; the revered doctor, the man of supreme culture, who gave form to the thought of the age, and incarnated it in himself. He may have been one of those doctors with whom the boy Jesus talked in the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions. As a Pharisee, he held the belief in the resurrection, in the constant ministry of angels, which contrasted with the legalist materialism of the official Sadducees; the one speech of his that is recorded, is full of the spirit of

a wise and gentle tolerance:

“But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honour of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while. And he said unto them, ‘Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do . . . I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: but if it be of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found to be fighting against God.’”

One wonders what would have been the difference in the history of the world, if this wise, honoured doctor, who thus manfully and tolerantly defended Peter and the other apostles, had come forward as courageously a few months earlier, when their Master was on trial in the same way. There was a chance for a man to change all history. He might have held a place in the Creed, not, like Pilate, a place of eternal shame, but of high honour and renown.

Be this as it may, it was at the feet of this wise, gentle, highly honoured doctor that Paul passed his student years, his mind already full of Greek culture, of the orations of the famous Greek Platonists and Stoics of Tarsus; of the Tarsian memories of Alexander the Great, of Julius Caesar, of Antony and Cleopatra and her splendid pageant upon the river Cydnus. Paul’s mind, thus aroused and enkindled, now swung from Hellas to Israel; and during the months and years of his studentship under Gamaliel, he filled his heart and soul, his imagination and his memory, with the splendid passages of his national scriptures; the expounding of which made the substance of Gamaliel’s lectures, as of all the doctors of the law.

During these formative years of Paul’s life, the great genius among the Jews was Philo of Alexandria, who, with the soul of a mystic and a Platonist, re-read the Hebrew scriptures as a magnificent allegory, the revelation of the Logos, the “Mind of God.” It is certain that Philo enjoyed an unrivalled authority throughout the whole Jewish world, which extended from Babylon to Rome, from the shores of the Black Sea to Egypt, and it is impossible that Philo’s works and Philo’s thoughts should not have been known at Jerusalem, during the years

when Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel, which were also the years of the ministry of Jesus. Since the writings of Paul are full of the ideas of Philo, while, at the same time he practically never uses the words and phrases that are most characteristic of Philo, though both are writing Greek, it would seem certain that he came to Philo's ideas, not directly, not by his own reading, but indirectly, through some intermediary; and one may hazard the guess that this intermediary was no other than Paul's master and instructor, Gamaliel, whose spirit, so far as we are able to judge it, is thoroughly in harmony with the spirit of Philo. It is probable that, lecturing at Jerusalem, under the shadow of the great temple, Gamaliel would use the Hebraic dialect which is called Aramaic; that, in quoting Philo in his lectures, if our hypothesis be correct, he would translate his thoughts and phrases from Alexandrian Greek to Aramaic; and that Paul, thus receiving Philo's ideas in Aramaic, later retranslated them for himself into Greek, often choosing other words than those Philo had used, though following Philo's ideas very faithfully.

Be this as it may, it is certain that Paul did study the Law and the Prophets under Gamaliel, and that, in his interpretation of the Law and the Prophets, he follows in Philo's footsteps, besides accepting the whole Platonic background of Philo's thought. But it is not so much with this aspect of Paul's work and thought that I wish just now to deal, but rather with the impression made on his mind by the grandiose Hebrew scriptures. If we take pains, we can almost follow the working of Paul's mind, as he listened to Gamaliel's lectures, almost reproduce the emotions which were awakened in his heart by this or the other famous passage from the Book of the Law.

I have already written very fully of Paul's understanding of the first great story in the Hebrew Scriptures: the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, of the Serpent's temptation, and of the Fall of Man.* It is enough, at present, to say that Paul understood the whole story as an allegory, exactly as Philo did; and that the part which Adam and the Fall have been made to play in dogmatic theology largely rests on a misunderstanding and on the persistent mistranslation of Paul's words: "As in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive."

* See "The Story of Adam and Eve, in the New Testament" [ED.]

The Adam and the Christ mean here the natural and the spiritual man, the latter vivified by, and blended with the very life of the ever-living Christ, the Master.

The next great story in the Books of the Law, which made a profound and indelible impression on the mind and imagination of Paul the student, is the story of the covenant with Abraham, as told in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis:

“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir. And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir: but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord: and he counted it to him for righteousness. . . .”

It is a passage of wonderful beauty, and one may boldly say that no passage in the whole compass of the Scriptures meant so much to Paul, or so greatly swayed his heart and mind. In the first place, it was because of his profound and passionate belief in the miraculous destiny and mission of the seed of Abraham, thus promised to him under the glowing stars of the Arabian desert, that Paul, conceiving this destiny to be in some sense menaced by the mission of Jesus, with the Master's unsparing condemnation of the Jews, thought it his duty to destroy the work of the disciples, the task he had in hand upon the Damascus road. And, in the second place, after Paul, through personal contact with the Master, beginning on the road to Damascus, had divined the splendid truth that precisely in and through the work of the Master was the promise to Abraham spiritually fulfilled, this passage took on for him a new and more majestic meaning: he saw a first covenant merged in a second covenant; an old testament transformed and resurgent in a new testament, and it is precisely through Paul's vision and application of

this splendid metaphor, that the books concerning Jesus the Master are called the books of the New Testament, unto this day.

It was at that very same period of Abraham's life that he came into contact with the great, mysterious figure of Melchizedek King of Salem, and to the study of that meeting, we owe the superb passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which Jesus is magnificently called a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

We may say, therefore, that this period in the life of Abraham, the meeting with Melchizedek, the vision under the starry sky, filled the whole background of Paul's mind; and that through Paul's love for this story, it has become of the first significance in the spiritual history of two thousand years, deeply colouring all subsequent thought concerning the work of Jesus, as the fulfilment of the promise, and the standing of Jesus as the great High Priest. No other passage, therefore, in the whole of scripture, made such an overwhelming impression on the mind and heart of Paul.

In the story of the Exodus, Paul's mind held and brooded over the miraculous manna, which fell from heaven, to feed the Children of Israel in the wilderness; and, with the tendency to see allegory everywhere, which was the essence of the school of Philo, he later turned the story of the manna to a new and unexpected use: The disciples in the regions of northern Greece were well supplied with the good things of the world; the saints at Jerusalem, the first and central group of disciples, were miserably poor; therefore Paul gathered of the abundance of Macedonia, and gave it to the older group of disciples, thus bringing about an equality: As it is written he says, He that had gathered much had nothing over: and he that had gathered little had no lack.

But the central element of the Exodus, for Paul, as for all subsequent time, was the giving of the Commandments, the majority of which Paul quotes, not once but many times, citing, indeed, all those which most closely define personal conduct. The whole majestic narrative of the law-giving on Mount Sinai was vivid and living in Paul's memory, and he made constant use of it in writing to his disciples.

From Leviticus and Numbers, Paul quotes such phrases as these:

“Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgements: which if a man do, he shall live in them. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. . . . I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. . . . The Lord will show who are his. . . . Depart from the tents of these wicked men. . . .”

From the Book of Deuteronomy, Paul quotes more at length. There are detached sentences like these:

“. . . at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. . . . For he that is hanged is accursed of God. . . . Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. . . . Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. . . . Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. . . .”

But the most beautiful passage in Deuteronomy cited by Paul is that in the thirtieth chapter, which he adapts to his own purpose in writing to the Romans:

“For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . .”

This eloquent passage, Paul uses thus:

“For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or,

Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.”

This is a very fair example of the way in which Paul turns to his own uses the texts of the Old Testament, following the spirit, not the letter. It is in entire harmony with the method of Philo, the method which Philo himself calls Allegory; in entire harmony, indeed, with the whole Rabbinical method of exegesis at that time, for which a text meant anything that it could possibly be made to mean, either by a strained literalism or by the most liberal use of allegorical interpretation.

There is another passage in the book of Deuteronomy, which was peculiarly dear to Paul, and indeed to all the devout men of his time and nation: the passage which is beautifully suggested by the author of the Apocalypse, “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.”

The song of Moses comes at the very end of the five Books of the Law, introduced by these words:

“And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended: Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. . . . Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as

the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him. . . .”

From this beautiful song Paul quotes not once but many times; he has a perfect ear for the most eloquent and poetical phrases, images, histories.

This practically completes the list of Paul’s quotations from the five books which we know as the Pentateuch, but which Paul thought of as the Torah, the Books of the Law. As we saw, three great passages stood out in his memory, as being of supreme significance: The story of Adam, which he regarded as an allegory; the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, and which he re-interprets in terms of the new covenant of Christ; and the life of Moses, from the tremendous days on Sinai, with the giving of the law, to the swan-song that closed the great Prophet’s ministry. Of the three, the promise to Abraham stands out in brightest colours; it was so deeply engraven on his heart that, through his love of it, through the constant return of his mind to it, we have come to think of that promise as the first covenant, rather than the old traditional first covenant, which God made with man when the flood abated, setting the rainbow to it as his seal.

From the book of Joshua, Paul quotes the story of Achan and the accursed thing, the wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, which he secretly took from among the spoils; using it to underline the secret sin of one of the disciples at Corinth.

If we are to attribute to Paul the great letter to the Hebrews, as I am convinced that we should, then in a single verse we have summed up Paul’s readings in the book of Judges:

“And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. . . .”

There is here, of course, a summary of the whole later history of Israel and Judah, from the days of the Exodus to the days of Daniel, who “quenched the violence” of the burning fiery furnace. But from the historical books Paul quotes with peculiar love two passages, God’s promise to David, and the splendid protest of Elijah. The former is introduced thus:

“And it came to pass that night that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? . . . I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: . . . and when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. . . .”

The latter passage, the appeal of Elijah, Paul quotes to confirm himself in the hope that, in spite of their putting Jesus to death, a remnant of Israel might be saved. The appeal runs thus:

“And he (Elijah) said, I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou earnest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. . . . Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. . . .”

May we not believe that Paul saw in the majestic, lonely figure of Elijah, whom the people sought to slay, a likeness to his own fate, a prophet in daily danger? And did he not remember, as he pondered over the sending of Elijah to the wilderness of Damascus, his own momentous days in that same wilderness, after the decisive meeting

with the Master, on the high road to the city; the days he thus describes:

“When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. . . .”

From the poetical books, Psalms, Proverbs and Job, Paul quotes so abundantly that, to assemble all the passages he cites, would mean, to transcribe many pages; above all, he chooses those passages which, at that time, were held to be prophecies of the Messiah, for whose coming all Israel looked. Very many quotations from the Psalms are in the epistle to the Hebrews. One cannot lay the same stress on these, as illustrating Paul’s mind, until it is more generally admitted that he is the author of that epistle.

Among the Prophets, Paul quotes from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea, but much more abundantly from Isaiah, and almost always passages of the Messianic hope, in which he loves to find foretellings of the Christ. The most notable of these passages are the following:

“Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence . . . and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken . . . I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel. . . .”

“For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return. . . .”

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his

eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. . . .

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! . . .

“He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. . . .

“Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him. . . .

“And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. . . .”

From the remaining books of the Prophets, Paul quotes a sentence from Ezekiel:

“My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people;”—

and a sentence from Hosea:

“I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. . . .”

Though there be, as has been said, much difference of opinion as to the authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews, we may, on the supposition that it was written by Paul, conclude our citations with a passage from that epistle, which, in a way, sums up the entire Old Testament, as it came to be understood by the writers and followers of the New:

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. . . .”

Here, we have cited the Books of the Law, the Histories, the Prophets; and, without doubt, in the verses that follow, there is a summary of the later national wars, which are detailed in the books; we call Apocrypha.

Out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaketh; and we may confidently hold that this wonderful knowledge of the whole cycle of the Hebrew scriptures, which Paul so continually shows, was gained by him in those student days which he has himself outlined for us, when he studied the Law at the feet of Gamaliel.

In this way, from Paul's own letters, we can glean the treasures of his mind and memory, perceiving the very impress made upon his heart by the great writings of the holy dead. And always it is the most beautiful and significant passage or sentence, the fairest image, the noblest phrase that we find him quoting. He shows himself a great poet in these, his borrowings from the old Hebrew writers, just as, in what he took from Philo, the Platonic background of his thought, he shows himself a profound philosopher.

When we thus trace the debt of Paul to Gamaliel, who first led his footsteps through these devious ways, we cannot but feel once more, with a renewed poignance of regret, the profound tragedy that Gamaliel, who spoke so bravely on behalf of Peter and John, could not have spoken as wisely, as courageously, for their Master, when he was brought to trial only a few months before. To his intercession, Peter and John owed it, that their lives were spared. Peter lived thereafter some three and thirty years; John, nearly twice as long, each of them doing work of world-wide import, writing words that have proven immortal. What, then, might Gamaliel have accomplished, had he won, by his wise eloquence, the conservation of that far greater life; if the work then cut short by death, had been continued; the divine, compassionate, stilt unfinished work?

III.

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

We have three narratives of the decisive event in the life of Paul the disciple, his meeting with the Master, to whom he thenceforth dedicated all the strength and ardour of his indomitable soul, laying, under the Master's immediate personal supervision, the foundations of the new world.

And it happens that, of these three detailed narratives, two are found in a part of the record which is regarded by all critics as especially accurate and objective: the passages in the *Acts* which embody the diaries of Luke who, during much of this period, was in the company of Paul, and one of his most trusted friends. The division of the *Acts* which directly incorporates Luke's travel diaries begins with *Acts* 16, 11:

“Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a (Roman) colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days. And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which were come together. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Master opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul . . .”

A second passage of the travel diary begins with *Acts* 20, 6:

“And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread (March-April), and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together . . . And after these days we made ready our baggage and went up to

Jerusalem. And there went with us also certain of the disciples from Caesarea . . . And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James (the brother of Jesus).”

In the same simple, direct way, Luke’s travel diary goes on to relate that Paul was attacked by the Jews and rescued by Oaudius Lysias, the Roman military tribune; that Paul asked and received permission to address the Jews. Standing on the stair of the Roman guardhouse, Paul spoke, in the current dialect of Hebrew:

“Brethren and fathers, hear ye the apologia which I make unto you . . .

“I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day: and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the High Priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed unto Damascus, to bring them also which were there unto Jerusalem in bonds, for to be punished.

“And it came to pass that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

“And I answered, Who art thou, Master?

“And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

“And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

“And I said, What shall I do, Master?

“And the Master said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

“And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led

by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, came unto me, and standing by me said unto me,

“Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked upon him. And he said,

“The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

“And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance (ecstasy), and saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. And I said, Master, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles . . .”

We have here, therefore, the account in Paul’s own words, as reported by his friend and companion Luke, who was present and who recorded Paul’s address in his travel diary with the same careful accuracy with which we have found him narrating the details of their common journeys.

Paul was speaking with chains on his wrists, and these chains echo through many of his letters: “Paul the prisoner; Paul in bonds; remember my chains . . .” On the following day he was again confronted with his accusers, when Paul was in danger of being torn to pieces. Once more rescued, he was brought to the Roman guardhouse. “And the night following the Master stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

Paul was thereon sent, with a guard of nearly five hundred Roman soldiers, to Caesarea, the seat of the Roman governor, Felix, a city on

the seashore half way between Joppa and Mount Carmel they made the journey thither in two stages of some twenty-five or thirty miles each, stopping at Antipatris on the way. At Caesarea, Paul was fully heard by Felix, remanded, and kept under arrest for more than two years, Luke being still his companion. Then, when King Agrippa, of the family of Herod, came to Caesarea, Paul was given an opportunity to set forth his case before the King. At this time also he gave an account of the great event on the Damascus road:

“I think myself happy, King Agrippa, that I am to make my apology before thee this day touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews: because thou art especially expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

“My manner of life, then, from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation, and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, how that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. And concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, O King! Why is it judged incredible with you, if God raise the dead?

“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death, I gave my vote against them. And punishing them often times in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities.

“On which errand as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I

heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goads.

“And I said, Who art thou, Master?

“And the Master said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are made holy, through faith in me.”

“Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision . . .”

Luke makes it quite clear that he was present as Paul’s companion at this time also, and that we have here once more a page from his diary, for, relating the result of this address, he says:

“The King rose up, and the governor, and Berenice, and they that sat with them: and when they had withdrawn, they spake one to another, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. And Agrippa said unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

“And when it was determined that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan cohort. And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea, Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. And the next day we touched at Sidon: and Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him leave to go unto his friends and receive attention. And putting to sea from thence, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary . . .”

Paul’s narratives, therefore, both at Jerusalem and at the Roman

station of Caesarea on the seashore, come to us as a part of Luke's diary, taken down at the time, and in all likelihood submitted to Paul himself for any necessary revision or correction. So we can feel certain that we have Paul's own words.

Paul, speaking first under the very shadow of the revered Temple at Jerusalem, in which he loved to pray, makes it quite evident that it was his intense love of religion, as he understood religion, that armed him against the teachings and the disciples of the Master Jesus. We have seen Paul sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, his mind already prepared by an early touch with the ideas of Hellenic philosophy, since the Platonists, the Epicureans and the Stoics all had their famous teachers and their public discourses in Paul's native Tarsus. And indeed there was deep study and appreciation of Hellenic thought and philosophy among all the more studious Jews at this period, the period of Paul's student days. Philo, the most eminent living Jewish thinker, had published his widely read works which interpret the older Jewish scriptures according to the thought of Plato's idealism, and his writings had met with immense success, so that he came to be regarded as the representative man among the Jews.

Whether from his teacher at Jerusalem, the learned and liberal minded Gamaliel, or through study and reading of his own—more probably the former—Paul was very familiar with the thought, the Platonic idealism, of Philo, and also with his method of interpreting the Old Testament narratives as allegories. Both the process and the word are found in Paul's letters, as when, writing to the Galatians, he says:

“Which things contain an allegory; for these women are two covenants . . .”

But Paul was even more deeply attached to the older, more literal view, and, above all, to the promise made by Jehovah to Abraham:

“And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be . . .”

It was because Paul's fiery zealous heart, passionately bound up in the sacred tradition of Jehovah's doings with Israel, was so full of ardent longing for the promised Messiah who should restore the

throne of David, making Jerusalem a splendid capital as in the days of Solomon, and spreading the sceptre of Israel over all the nations of the earth, precisely because of this fiery longing for the coming King and Kingdom, that Paul could not endure the Way of the Nazarene, nor for a moment tolerate the claims of his disciples.

For Paul, with the zealous and ardent among his countrymen, looked for a Messiah, a King, strong and mighty, wearing, like David, a crown of gold. These men offered him a King indeed, so announced by Pilate's mocking inscription, but crowned with thorns, with a reed in his right hand for a sceptre; and, instead of a triumphant kingdom, that should rule over all nations, a sect persecuted, reviled, contemned, despicable. Instead of David's throne set up once more on Zion, the Cross set up on Golgotha. We cannot tell for certain, but Paul may have been one of those who cried out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" But every fibre of Paul's zealous and deeply believing soul was outraged and enraged by the claim that this was the fulfilment of the promise to Israel. Rather than accept this King of mockery and disgrace, he would stamp out the very memory of him from among men. So, breathing fire and slaughter, he went down, with armed men and with authority from the High Priest, to Damascus.

On the road, the Master met him. It was no vision of the night, but an appearance in broad daylight, about midday. The Master, Paul's narrative makes it clear, did not appear as a physical body, but in a radiant form, which was so full of light that he and the men with him, blinded, fell on their faces on the ground. We are instantly reminded of that earlier self-revelation of the Master:

"He was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light . . . behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased . . ."

It is evident that, in both cases, the one before, and the other after, the Crucifixion, the Master made himself visible in the "spiritual body;" what Paul, writing to the Corinthian disciples, calls the "celestial body." To make clear Paul's own understanding of this, we shall quote what he himself says:

“Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? . . .

“But some will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own . . .

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial . . .

“So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body . . .”

This, then, is Paul’s teaching concerning the Master: the natural body was laid in the tomb, in corruption, in weakness, in dishonour; the Master rose in the spiritual body, in incorruption, in glory, in power. In this spiritual body, he appeared to the older disciples who had known him in the flesh; only after a time, did they completely recognize him, but, even before that recognition, their hearts burned within them, as they talked with him in the way.

That last wonderful phrase, from the journey of the two disciples to Emmaus, strikes the keynote of the Master’s subsequent appearance to Paul, on the Damascus Road. He did not enter into any disquisition concerning his Incarnation, or his Messiahship, of Paul’s own misunderstanding of the spiritual kingship of that Messiah and the future kingdom of Israel. His appeal was directly to the heart: “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” And Paul’s heart burned within him, as he talked with him on the way.

It must be remembered that Paul was neither irreligious nor indifferent; on the contrary, he was full of a fiery zeal for religion, as he understood it. He was not careless or forgetful of the hope of Israel; rather, he was neglecting every material and temporal interest, in tireless, merciless efforts toward the coming and the triumph of the Messiah, the spiritual King.

And as, burning with fiery zeal for the coming King and his reign among the nations, Paul, at full noontide, came near to Damascus, then as now a city embowered in gardens and groves of trees, but approached through a desert, the Master appeared to him, not a King of mockery and contempt, as, perhaps, Paul had seen him before Pilate, but in the full radiance of the spiritual man, "his face shining as the sun, his raiment white as the light," announcing himself: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest."

And, seeing and hearing, Paul's heart burned within him till the wrath and enmity against the Master and his disciples was melted into a fiery devotion, that was to last his whole life long. And so blinding, so overwhelming was the vision, that for three days Paul went about as one bereft of sight, led by the hand of those who were with him. In one sense, there was no great change in his thought and spirit. He who had said, with ardent and impatient heart, "The King is coming," now reverently whispered with wonderstruck heart, "The Kin has come." But in another sense the change was so complete and sweeping, that Paul was indeed a new man, his whole past washed away, as symbolized in the rite of baptism, awakening to the consciousness that the kingdom had come, not in conquering might but in lowliness, not in triumph, but in humiliation, not upon the throne but upon the Cross. Paul, once brought into touch with the Master, never again lost that living, interior contact. We have already recorded, in connection with the first narrative of his vision, two later and most critical occasions, both at Jerusalem, on which the Master appeared to Paul, speaking to him words that have been exactly recorded. But Paul's relation to the Master meant, on his own testimony, very much more than these striking appearances divided by intervals of years: it meant a continuing inward communion, the mind of the disciple being blended with the mind of the Master, so that Paul could truly say, "We have the mind of Christ." It meant, throughout all the remaining days and years of Paul's life, and especially during the three days' darkness, during which he was as one blind, a deep union with the Master's suffering also, a real sharing of his crucifixion, so that "we being dead together with Christ, shall rise together with him."

In this inner death and rising again, through the final and complete giving up of the external Messianic hope, the dream of the

triumphant earthly kingdom, the dream, perhaps, of a personal share in its domination and glory; and the acceptance, instead, of the outcast lot of the rejected Nazarene—in this inner transformation, this softening and dissolving of Paul's whole nature through humiliation, lies the essence of that death and new birth which thenceforth formed the centre of his thought and teaching. And in this inner transformation we find the second and more general meaning of the sentences already quoted:

“it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly . . . For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

It is in this sense that Paul writes to the Galatian disciples: “I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me . . .” And he looks for exactly the same inner transformation and renewal in the case of those disciples: “My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you . . .” and to another group of disciples: “that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith . . . till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Vicarious Atonement and Karma

Theosophical Quarterly, October, 1926

Students of Theosophy believe that all great religions were founded on the lives and teachings of Masters of Wisdom, men who, through union with the Oversoul, the Logos, had become one with the wisdom and power and love of the Logos, and were therefore able to speak with the wisdom of the Logos and, in their lives, to manifest the power and love of the Logos. The teachings of these Masters and the records of their acts have been transmitted to us through the minds and hearts of their followers, who have defined these teachings and acts in accordance with the limitations of their own minds. In this way dogmas have been developed.

If this be true, it should follow that, within or behind the received dogma, there is a core, a facet of eternal Truth; and it should be the duty of students of Theosophy to discover and point out the Truth of which these dogmas are an inadequate, incomplete or deflected statement.

Let us take, for example, the central dogma of the Christian Church, the doctrine of the Atonement. However much the Churches may differ in other matters, there is very little divergence among them regarding this cardinal tenet. The Greek and Latin Churches, and those springing from the Reformation, all hold and teach substantially the same view, as set forth in the Nicene Creed.

“I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the

Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried: and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.”

Or we may find a simpler and more universal expression in the words of the *Revelation*:

“Jesus Christ, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”

The first expression of the thought on which the doctrine of the Atonement is founded, is the saying of Jesus, recorded in the Gospels according to Matthew and Mark:

“And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, ‘Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again . . . the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.’”

This is in essence what the Nicene creed repeated, three centuries later.

We may pause for a moment to ask what meaning a student of Theosophy would give to these words of Jesus; how could the Master Christ give his life a ransom for many?

If we recognize Jesus as a Master of Wisdom, one who had attained, who had become in essence one with the eternal Logos, we shall interpret his words in accordance with that view.

Two fundamental truths, at first sight contradictory, must be kept in mind: First, the individual existence of each human soul, which makes each one of us responsible for our own acts, as in civil and criminal law each is answerable for his own debts and misdemeanours. Then the second truth, apparently contradicting but really supplementing this: That all souls are bound together in spiritual unity; we are all rays of the same eternal Logos; we are all inlets into

the same infinite Oversoul. Human beings are many; spiritual Humanity is one.

It should follow from this that a Master of Wisdom, who has become one with the eternal Logos, thereby possesses the wisdom and power and love of the Logos, and, as being one with the Logos, gains an inner relation with all human souls, in virtue of which he has the power to draw them toward the Logos by drawing them into his own spiritual life, which is one with the Logos. In this sense, he comes to minister. And if that ministry involves his bodily death, he gives his life a ransom for many. As a Master who has attained oneness with the eternal Logos, death has no hold on him; he must rise again, in the spiritual body. He thus retains and enlarges his power to work for human souls, drawing them toward him with cords of love. But the responsibility of these human souls is not thereby cancelled or lessened. While a Master has power to help us, he can do so only as we help ourselves. The decision and the effort must be ours. The Master's sacrifice is the door, but we must rise and enter.

The all-conquering love of the Master Christ, revealed in his life and death and resurrection, has been in very truth the door by which many have entered into immortal joy, sharing with him the eternal life, the transforming love, the spiritual light of the Logos. For those who have thus drawn near to him in love, because he drew near to them, the Master Christ has been the door of salvation; for them he is salvation.

To the fiery, passionate heart of Paul the Master thus drew near, on the Damascus road. Paul received from the Master transforming love and revealing light. Thereafter, through terrible toil and suffering, but also with immeasurable joy, Paul laboured with all the passion of his heart and will to make known to others that Master's transforming love and enkindling light, that they also with him might enter the life of the Master, with him share the eternal power and infinite wisdom and love of the Logos.

Writing toward the close of his life from Rome to his disciple Timothy, Paul thus sums up his message:

“I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men . . . for

this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come into the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.”

Four or five years earlier, when he was in Corinth, immediately before the journey to Jerusalem and the years of bondage, Paul had written on the same theme to the Jewish disciples of Christ at Rome. Here he had to meet the complex legal minds of the followers of Jewish Rabbis, and could not speak simply from his heart, as when he was writing to his own disciple, Timothy. Therefore, he called upon the resources of his powerful intellect to set forth the truth in terms that would meet their objections, and, as the centuries have passed, and his philosophical interpretations have been handed down through narrower and harder minds, the spirit of his imagery has been largely obscured and its form has crystallized into what we now know as the dogmas of the Latin Church. Paul wrote:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . For when we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. . . .”

This is the only occurrence of the word *Atonement* in the *New Testament*. And it would have been better to translate it “reconciliation,” since it is a form of the same word that has just been translated “reconciled.” The earlier meaning of “atonement” is, in fact, to make “at-one,” to reconcile.

But if the word “atonement” in the legal sense is out of place in this passage, the thought of a legal atonement is present. Paul continues:

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. . . . For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”

Paul is here bearing grateful testimony to the abounding grace and power and love which had come through his transforming contact with the Master; but he is doing more. He is seeking to elaborate an argument that will convince the legalistic minds of Rabbinical Jews; he is expressing his spiritual experience in the forms and images which had been stored in his mind when he studied the books of the *Old Testament* and the religious law of the Jews. He is recalling the story of Adam from the early chapters of Genesis, and at the same time holding in mind such a sentence as this:

“Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of the altar once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements. . . .”

Paul has recognized his Master as divine, as the Son of God. His love for him whom he knows as a living Lord is boundless. But he also sees within the life and death and resurrection of his Lord, a universal significance. It is this which he labours to make clear through the symbolic story of Adam.

Once suggested, the connection between Adam’s sin and Christ’s death gained a hold on men’s minds which it has maintained for almost two millenniums. In the literal view of this relation, there is a danger. Now that it is generally recognized that the story of Adam’s fall, six thousand years ago, is not to be understood historically, insistence on a necessary connection between Adam’s transgression and Christ’s death tends to becloud the Master’s sacrifice, to give it an air of unreality. It is, therefore, wise to remember that Jesus himself never suggested such a connection.

At this point, two notes may be added. Philo of Alexandria, a wise and reverent Jew, writing perhaps ten years before the opening of Christ's ministry, frankly treats the story of Adam not as history but as allegory. Adam is man's intellect, which is allured through the emotional nature, Eve. Thus came the descent of the soul into matter. So we see that the story of Adam was not taken literally by all religious Jews at the time when Paul was writing. There is, indeed, a suggestion of Philo's method, when Paul speaks of Adam as "the figure of him that was to come," and Paul, writing to the Galatians, treats the story of Agar as an allegory, as does Philo.

The second point is that, in connecting the fall of Adam with the death and resurrection of Christ, Paul must have in mind a meaning deeper than the literal story of Adam and its literal interpretation. For Paul, as for Philo, Adam's fall typified the primal fall of Spirit into matter, which is followed by the re-ascent of Spirit, through sacrifice. There is much evidence that, when citing the story of Genesis, Paul, like Philo, used a consistent symbolism throughout, Adam thus meaning the lower self in all men, the carnal man. This would seem to be the case where he writes to the disciples at Corinth:

"As in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive. . . . The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit."

Philo gained wide recognition and acceptance among the Jews, so that he was chosen to represent them as an ambassador to the Emperor; he went to Rome about twenty years before Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans. Philo blended the fundamental principles of Plato and Heraclitus, and used his philosophy to interpret the *Old Testament* in a spiritual and mystical sense. From Plato, he took the thought of a spiritual world, "a world perceptible only to the intellect, the archetypal model, the Idea of ideas, the Logos of God."

From Heraclitus, who first used the word, Logos, in this sense, Philo took the thought of the Logos as the spiritual fire, the universal principle which animates the world. He added ethical elements from Zeno and the Stoics. So we find Philo writing:

"And the Father who created the universe gave to his archangelic and most ancient Logos a pre-eminent gift, to stand

on the confines of both, and separate that which had been created from the Creator. And this same Logos is continually a suppliant to the immortal God on behalf of the mortal race, which is exposed to affliction and misery; and is also the Ambassador, sent by the Ruler of all, to the subject race.”

Paul, though not using the word Logos in this sense, in effect identified Jesus with the Logos as Mediator, and as the Ambassador sent by the Father to mankind. And this identification, with the word Logos added, is accepted in the opening of the Fourth Gospel. The recognition of Jesus as an incarnation of the Logos marks a great advance beyond the view of the earlier disciples. Andrew, speaking to Peter, had said: “We have found the Messiah,” the Anointed; in Greek, the Christos. The word Messiah is used throughout the Hebrew books to describe an anointed priest or king; in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, this is translated by some form of the verb from which the word Christos is derived; for example, in Isaiah: “Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,” the Greek word is Christos.

Messiah came to mean the expected Deliverer of the Jews, and Andrew and the other disciples accepted Jesus as that Deliverer. But Paul recognized Jesus as the Mediator, the Ambassador, not to the Jews only, but to mankind, as the Logos of the Father. At the same time, in order to find a reason for the crucifixion which will satisfy minds trained in the Jewish law, Paul links the sacrifice of Christ with the sin of Adam.

Throughout the centuries which followed, the interpretation of the Atonement has moved between these two points. The Greek Fathers lay stress on the incarnation of the Logos as the means of salvation, while the Latin Fathers, with Augustine as the most eminent, lay the emphasis on Adam’s fall. The tendency of the most enlightened thought in the Churches today is away from the literalism of the Latins, and toward the deeper, more mystical and more philosophical thought of the Greeks.

Of the Greek theologians, Clement of Alexandria is, perhaps, the greatest. Writing toward the close of the second century, he taught that the indwelling Divinity, the Logos, is organically related to the

human soul. Man is the image of Deity; his destiny is, to realize that likeness to the full. Christ, the Logos made manifest in the Incarnation, is at once the head and the norm of humanity. The work of Christ was to manifest the divinity of man to man, that man might fulfil his divine destiny. And in his spiritual presence, Christ remains in the world as the teacher of humanity, as he has been, indeed, since the beginning of the world. Athanasius follows in the footsteps of Clement. Writing of the Incarnation of the Logos, he says: "He was made man that we might be made gods."

Augustine, who is recognized as the founder of Latin theology, writing two centuries after Clement, laid emphasis on three principles: original sin, inherited through the fall of Adam; predestination; and the Church, as the means of salvation.

This much more concrete view may be regarded as a narrowing of the wide and universal scope of the Greek Fathers. Perhaps it would be wiser to see in it a necessary conforming to the changed spirit and conditions of the times. Greek civilization had suffered eclipse. New nations, rude and undisciplined, were coming within the pale of the Church. For their spiritual well-being, for their salvation, it was essential that they should learn self-sacrifice and obedience. And, in order that they might learn obedience, a strongly organized Church, representing spiritual law in concrete forms, and imposing its authority, was indispensable.

There was the danger that the broad and universal teaching of Clement and Athanasius, just because it was universal, might pass over their heads, altogether failing to lay hold on their minds and wills, and that laxity and disintegration would result. So it would seem that the concrete organization of the Church came at the right time. The abuse of the principle sometimes acted tyrannously, yet on the whole the spiritual discipline of the Church brought forth good fruits. It did not prevent the emergence of such great spirits as Francis of Assisi, Dante, John of the Cross, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila and Jeanne D'Arc.

The movement called the Reformation made no essential change in the understanding of the Atonement. Augustine's doctrines were accepted and transmitted by Calvin. Original sin and predestination

hold their place among the Articles of Religion of the Church of England, essentially as the Latin theologians defined them.

The practical effect of the view of the Atonement based on these two dogmas may be described as follows. Briefly, the doctrine is that, because of Adam's fall, all mankind was eternally lost. The debt incurred by Adam's sin was paid by Christ's death; mankind was washed in the blood of Christ and freed from sin. God, in His inscrutable wisdom, decreed that not all mankind, but only the elect, those predestined by His decree, should profit by Christ's sacrifice and redemption. On the remainder of mankind the doom of Adam's sin rested unaltered and unalterable.

Let us consider the effect of this doctrine on different types of character. There were some who flatly refused to accept this view because of the immense cruelty and injustice it seemed to involve. This was the genesis of many who were condemned as infidels. There were many, and some of the finest and most sensitive spiritual natures were among them, whose lives were tortured by dark doubts of their election. To this cause a great sum of human misery must be laid. There were noble spirits, like those who have been named, who, believing in their redemption through Divine mercy, made of their faith an incentive to splendid spiritual attainment. And there have been multitudes who, believing, or at least hoping, that Christ's death had indeed washed away their sins, and assured their eternal happiness in heaven, concluded that any further effort on their part would be superfluous, and sank into a happy dream which came close to paralysis of the spiritual will. Their too easy belief sapped their spiritual vitality and pauperized their interior life; for ceaselessly active aspiration and spiritual will are essential to spiritual health and strength.

Of recent years, there has been a turn of the tide, a drift from the Latin theologians toward the great philosophical principles of the Greek Fathers. Thus we find such a theologian as Dr. Hans Lassen Martensen, Bishop of Seeland in Denmark, writing paragraphs that take us back to the great Alexandrians, Clement and Philo:

“The entire diversity of individuals, of nations, of tongues, and of races, finds its unity in the divine Logos, the uncreated image of God, who in the fullness of time himself becomes man. . . .

The Logos, having become man, reveals the whole fullness of the ideal according to which human nature was originally planned, but which can be realized only imperfectly in each finite individual. If the divine Logos had not become man, humanity would want the actual Mediator, who can lead the species out of the created relations of dependence into the spiritual relations of freedom, who can raise it from the level of the natural life to the level of perfection and true being.”

If Dr. Martensen be taken to represent the Protestantism of the Continent, we may cite Mr. John Kenneth Mozley, Dean of Pembroke College, Cambridge, as a type of advanced thinking in the Anglican Church. Speaking of “that final reality which we call God,” he says that:

“Christ is a third to God and man, though He be both God and man, for He is neither simply God nor simply man. The intervention of Christ is His mediation between God and man.”

This is almost exactly the thought of Philo:

“The Father who engendered all has given to the Logos the signal privilege of being an intermediary between the creature and the Creator.”

In exactly the same philosophical and broad-minded spirit, we find in the Catholic Encyclopedia, under the word Atonement:

“The Atonement is founded on the Divine Incarnation. By this great mystery, the Eternal Word took to Himself the nature of man, and, being both God and man, became the Mediator between God and men. . . . By the union of the Eternal Word with the nature of man all mankind was lifted up and, so to say, deified.”

As has already been suggested, students of Theosophy would, perhaps, hold that the Master had attained to oneness with the Logos; that, being one with the Logos, he was born as Jesus; that his life and teaching set forth eternal spiritual law, the essential being of the Logos; that through his sacrificial death he gained the power to remain among men in the body of the resurrection; able, as essentially one with the

Logos, to enter as the Logos into the inmost hearts of men, enkindling them and drawing them into his own life, and therefore into the Logos, whereby they gain immortality.

How is this view of the Atonement to be reconciled with the law of Karma? Is there an essential opposition between the two ideas, or should we seek a deeper truth underlying and reconciling them?

We may take as an expression of the law of Karma the following passage from Professor Franklin Edgerton's recently published and admirable book, *The Bhagavad Gita*:

“The Upanishads also begin to combine with this doctrine of an indefinite series of reincarnations the old belief in retribution for good and evil deeds in a life after death; a belief which prevailed among the people of Vedic India, as all over the world. With the transference of the future life from a mythical other world to this earth, and with the extension or multiplication of it to an indefinite series of future lives more or less like the present life, the way was prepared for the characteristically Hindu doctrine of ‘karma’ or deed. This doctrine, which is also axiomatic with the Hindus, teaches that the state of each existence of each individual is absolutely conditioned and determined by that individual’s morality in previous existences. A man is exactly what he has made himself and what he therefore deserves to be. An early Upanishad says: ‘Just as (the Soul) is (in this life) of this or that sort; just as it acts, just as it operates, even so precisely it becomes (in the next life). If it acts well it becomes good; if it acts ill it becomes evil. As a result of right action it becomes what is good; as a result of evil action it becomes what is evil.’ In short, the law of the conservation of energy is rigidly applied to the moral world. Every action, whether good or bad, must have its results for the doer. If in the present life a man is on the whole good, his next existence is better by just so much as his good deeds have outweighed his evil deeds. He becomes a great and noble man, or a king, or perhaps a god (the gods, like men, are subject to the law of transmigration). Conversely, a wicked man is reborn as a person of low position, or as an animal, or, in cases of exceptional

depravity, he may fall to existence in hell. And all this is not carried out by decree of some omnipotent and sternly just Power. It is a natural law. It operates of itself just as much as the law of gravitation. It is therefore wholly dispassionate, neither merciful nor vindictive. It is absolutely inescapable; but at the same time it never cuts off hope. A man is what he has made himself; but by that same token he may make himself what he will. The soul tormented in the lowest hell may raise himself in time to the highest heaven, simply by doing right. Perfect justice is made the basic law of the universe. It seems hardly possible to conceive a principle of greater moral grandeur and perfection.”

The Buddhist view of Karma is exactly the same. In *Buddhism in Translations*, Mr. Henry Clarke Warren says:

“Karma’ expresses, not that which a man inherits from his ancestors, but that which he inherits from himself in some previous state of existence.”

And, speaking of the stories in his *Buddhist Legends*, Mr. Eugene Watson Burlingame says:

“In each and every story it is at least the ostensible purpose of the writer to illustrate the truth of the maxim, ‘whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.’”

So the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Buddhist books and the later Vedanta all teach the law of Karma, the law of the conservation of energy in the moral world. As individuals, we inherit from ourselves in some previous state of existence; we are even now creating our future states of existence. How can there be any room for Atonement, or even for a Mediator?

The answer has already been suggested. As individuals, we are responsible under the law of Karma for all our thoughts, words and deeds, good or evil; just as under civil and criminal law we answer for our own debts and crimes. But we are also something else, more and greater than separate persons; we are all potentially one with the Logos, with which those whom we call Masters are already one, in essence and in realization. That part of the Logos which has already realized itself can illumine and aid that part of the Logos which still feels itself to be

isolated, orphaned, miserable. Or, to put the same truth in simpler words, the Master can help the disciple who appeals to him for help, can impart to the disciple his own divine life. The law of Karma is not thereby violated. The law of Karma, the conservation of energy applied to the moral world, is an expression of the essential nature of the Logos. The wisdom and power and love of Masters, and their ability to help, are likewise an expression of the essential nature of the Logos. There is no disharmony or contradiction.

Therefore we find in the *Katha Upanishad*, side by side with the law of Karma, such a sentence as this:

“Smaller than small, mightier than mighty, this Oversoul is hidden in the heart of man. He who has ceased from desire, and passed sorrow by, through the grace of the Ordainer beholds the greatness of the Oversoul.”

The *Bhagavad Gita* likewise teaches the law of Karma. But we also find there such a verse as this:

“Ever continuing to perform all works, taking refuge in Me, through My grace he gains that everlasting home.”

Gautama Buddha taught the law of Karma, perhaps more rigidly and inclusively than it had ever been taught before. Yet it is recorded that Buddha said:

“May the sins of this age of evil rest on me, but let mankind be saved.”

And every disciple of the Buddha must repeat the sacramental formula: “I take my refuge in the Buddha.”

Finally, in the later Vedanta, which equally teaches the law of Karma, we have, in the *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, such a sentence as this:

“It is the essence of the very being of those of mighty soul to seek to heal the sorrows of others. . . .”

Or again, the disciple says:

“Through infinite compassion, thou, Master, hast become my saviour.”

In these Oriental scriptures, there is, therefore, a perfect reconcili-

ation between the law of Karma and the power of the Logos, or of the Master who has become one with the Logos, to heal and to save.

In the same way, there is, in the *New Testament*, an entire harmony between the two doctrines. Paul, as we saw, first developed the doctrine of the Atonement. Yet it was Paul who wrote the words quoted to illustrate the inexorable working of the law of Karma:

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Jesus said that the Son of man had come to give his life a ransom for many. A few days later, in the parable of the sheep and the goats, he expressed the spiritual essence of the law of Karma.

There is, therefore, this overwhelming testimony in favour of the truth of both doctrines: the law of Karma, and the power of Masters to save, because they have become one with the Logos. In everyday life, we can find exactly the same reconciliation of the two apparently opposite principles. It is true, on the one hand, that a child's growth depends almost wholly on its own efforts; it must eat, it must learn to use its eyes, it must learn to walk and talk, wholly through efforts of its own. But it is also true that the child's mother suffers for it even before the child's birth, in its birth, after its birth, ceaselessly; and that, without the mother's continuing self-sacrifice, the child could not live. In the same way, it is true that a student must advance by his own efforts, learning to read, to write, learning arts and sciences, and that his advance depends absolutely on his own exertions. It is also true that at each moment he is profiting by the work of others, those who have stored up the wisdom he is mastering, who have practised the arts and developed the sciences which he sets himself to learn. And he is helped, or should be, by his instructors, day by day as long as his studies continue. This really illustrates the twofold principle. He is an individual student; he is also an integral part of studious humanity, through whose veins a single life of erudition flows.

Or take a simple illustration from commerce. It is broadly true that every merchant succeeds in direct proportion to his own insight and energy; he makes his own Karma. But it is also true that he is completely dependent on the rest of mankind; on the producer and manufacturer on the one hand, and on the purchaser on the other.

In like manner, in the spiritual world, for which all these phases of

human life are the preparatory classes, it is true that the disciple's progress is absolutely dependent on his own efforts; he who sows little shall reap little, he who sows much shall reap much. But it is also true that the Master aids the disciple at every step, giving of the substance of his own life to aid him; the Master guides the footsteps of the disciple in the spiritual world to which he has introduced him, and in fact holds back the disciple's adverse Karma, in order that the disciple may enter the Path. The Master advances spiritual capital to the disciple, to enable him to begin to earn.

The metaphor suggests its moral: Just as he who has borrowed capital and has earned money by using it, will repay in full and with interest all that he has borrowed, so the disciple, who has received of the Master's life and force, will be passionately eager to make a return at the first possible moment; his adoring love and his sense of justice will equally compel him. So will the account be squared, and the law of Karma satisfied, when, through the Master's help, the disciple has attained salvation.

It is possible that some who have built up mental images of the mystery of the Redemption, may think that the Master's greatness is diminished by this view. But this is an objection of the surface of the mind. The cure is deeper and more immediate knowledge. Even a little experience of the Master's transforming power and love and wisdom will fill the heart of the disciple with a splendour of adoring gratitude, a living realization of Divinity, in comparison with which the speculations of theology are but shadows. And at the same time the disciple will realize in deep humility the vital importance of his own acts and efforts; the Master who helps him has thereby put himself at the disciple's mercy. It is a most sacred trust, for this relation is the holiest in human life, making that life divine, immortal.