

the old man has been heard to say very complacently that people will yet find out he has not been "blowing" quite so much about this country as has been generally supposed, and that now they will probably admit he is not such a "great liar" as they have given him credit for being. Certain it is that even "Jim" Bridger's active imagination is not equal to the task of exaggerating the scenes to be encountered amidst the wonders of the Yellowstone and geyser region.

---



---

## THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

### II.

1. *Vita Jesu, Dionysii Carthusiani Opus.* Printed at Strasburg in 1473.
2. *Public Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.* By H. J. Coleridge, S. J. Vols. I and II. London, 1875.

THERE is one marked characteristic of Christianity which cannot be overlooked. Our holy religion is not merely a system of moral and religious opinions proposed to men for discussion, and to be adopted or rejected, wholly or partially, as to men may seem fit. Still less is it a mere school of intellectual thought, vague and varying, as the world advances or as public opinion veers and changes. It is, in truth and above all, as the great Stoberg designated it, a grand fact in the history of humanity,—the grandest, strongest, and farthest-reaching the world has ever seen.

A new element of powerful activity was introduced into the life of man. From the very beginning it manifested, and for eighteen centuries and a half it has continued to manifest, its strength; and to-day it exercises an influence as weighty and as widespreading as in any past age. Christianity has not lived out its day, and then vanished, as schools of human thought have done, leaving its traces in the annals of the past. No historian has arisen to recount its birth, its growth, its life, its decay, and its death; to sum up its whole existence and career, to scrutinize its works, to estimate its full value, and to write its epitaph. It still lives and acts. Its youth still endures undecayed. It came into the world in a visible form as a living organized society, seen and known by all, within and without, and animated by a spirit and power, which the world recognized, but could neither comprehend nor account for. It still lives on, in that same organized society; and men still recognize and wonder at that mysterious spirit and power, which they may

dread, or hate, or strive to destroy, but still cannot account for, nor overcome.

The central point of this grand and ever-enduring fact is CHRIST Himself; Christ as presented to the world by His Evangelists and Apostles. In Him Christianity commenced. Founded by Him, and organized by Him, it could not and it cannot continue to exist without Him. But for His presence it would have perished long ago, perhaps would have ceased to exist within one century. For so all human things perish. And Christianity was sorely pressed in every age. Time and again enemies seemed to be, and flattered themselves that they were, on the very verge of success in their effort to stamp it out. But though Christ no longer walks among men visibly, as He did of yore in Judea, He is still present in the world, in the highest and most effective sense of the word. He still works in His Church for the salvation of men, still teaches, still guides, still gives grace, still leads repentant sinners to the Kingdom of Heaven. Millions have believed in Him and have clung to Him in every past age. Millions still believe in Him, knowing that their lives should be controlled and guided by His example, and His teachings, and His grace, and that all their hopes of happiness hereafter depend on His love and His mercy to those that seek Him. Millions have suffered torture and death rather than swerve from their fealty to Him; and to-day millions would go to martyrdom rather than renounce their faith in Him.

Nothing can be falser in history, or more illogical in philosophic examination, or weaker and more absurd in action, than to separate Christ from Christianity. He it is who still teaches by the mouth of those whom He commissioned and sent to baptize and to teach all nations all things whatsoever He commanded them, and with whom, in accomplishing this their work, He promised to be, all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. xxviii. 20). He assured them that "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me" (Luke x. 16). By His presence, and in virtue of His power, that Church which He established must ever be the pillar and ground of truth (1. Tim. iii. 15). The gates of hell cannot prevail against her, whether to terminate her existence on earth, or to lead her into error and so mar her appointed work. In every age she must be the same, and her teaching must be the same as from the beginning—the same originally given by Christ to the Apostles. There must be one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

A continuous unity of teaching, such as is thus promised, presents when recognized, irrefragable evidence of the truth and divine authority of the Church which displays it. It is something which God alone can secure to her. Man of himself cannot attain it;

would not seek it, for he does not prize it. As the world goes and has gone from the beginning, the first act of man, if left in this matter to himself, would unquestionably be to change, under pretext of improving, what those before him had held and taught. He would yield to the pressure and the exigencies of ever varying public opinion, and to the demands that he keep pace with what is called the progress of the age. He would soon soften or change some things, surrender others totally, and be induced to accept still other new things instead. Ere many generations, *yes* and *no* would have changed places. In our own age and country a man does not need gray hairs to have been himself a witness of such changes.

To the philosophic student of history the most wonderful trait of Christianity, as presented in the living Catholic Church, is this continuous unity, this unchangeableness of the doctrine she teaches. Neither menaces of danger, nor prospects of advantage to be attained, however great, have ever bent her faith. She proclaims it to be her fundamental principle and her first duty to guard and keep intact and unchanged the deposit of doctrine originally committed to her charge by her Founder and His Apostles. She knows and avows this to be the vital condition, as it is the divine purpose, of her existence. Her children glorify her for it. Her enemies have, in every age, cast it up as a reproach against her. For it she has been called a laggard and a lover of darkness and of ignorance. She is charged with hating science, with shunning the light of modern civilization and advanced thought, and with being fossil and *obscurantist*. That her doctrines and her teaching now are those of centuries ago is what her enemies charge against her. She admits, she cannot deny, the fact. They condemn her for not hailing the fruits of modern progress, and not incorporating them in her doctrines. She will not yield or change the truth of God to please men. He has established her to teach the truth to all men, not to be taught by the world what to hold or not to hold. She heeds not such words of condemnation. They are not new to her. She has heard them in every age. She heard them from the Eutychians, and Nestorians, and Monothelites, from the Arians and Semi-Arians, and other cognate sectaries. She remembers how, even before these, the Gnostics called on her to yield her teaching to the moulding of their refined and superior philosophic discoveries of truth. To all of them she gave the same answer. The truth had been revealed in the beginning, and could not be changed. For, God cannot lie. His Apostles consigned to her bosom that doctrine of Christ. It is in possession, and may not be ejected. She will test all things, all opinions, all teachings by it. By that test they shall stand or fall. But for none of them will she cast it out.

As ages roll on, the ever active intellects of men raise novel questions, suggest fresh doubts, or advance new opinions.

She, on the other hand, sets forth her ancient doctrine with such full and explicit statement of it on needful points, that inquiries may be answered, that doubts and uncertainties may vanish, and that she may rebut and condemn the errors that arise. In this she guards, and defends, and teaches the more clearly, the original doctrine in her charge. Men may change their languages; her ministers may have had to speak the Copht, or the Sanscrit, or the Celtic; Greek at Athens, or Latin in classic Rome; or may now speak the modern languages of the world of to-day. The languages of her preachers are more numerous than the tongues heard on the Pentecost at Jerusalem. In all of them the same great and wonderful things of God are announced. Even when the language is not changed, men are led to adopt at different times different forms and modes of expression, influenced in this to no small extent by some system of intellectual training in vogue among them, some prevalent school of philosophy of the age, or some other cause that may specially act in such direction. The Church holds fast to the form of sound words (II. Timothy i. 13) and yet makes herself all things to all men. She will hold her one original doctrine, and explain it in the words which in any given age will be best understood by those to whom she immediately speaks. In all this the language, the accent, or the dialect, the forms of expression may vary according to the needs and usages of men. But the doctrines are ever the same.

Few that have not given special attention to the matter are aware of the great changes that are ever taking place in our modes of speech, even within the limits of a single language. They are so great that what was perfectly intelligible when written or uttered, may require a glossary to be understood a few centuries later. We were amused years ago by the title of an old English sermon, perhaps of the time of Charles I., against the doctrine of Predestination. It ran something like this: "On the justice and mercy of God, who having laid His commandments on man, letteth him not, but graciously preventeth him to fulfil them." Nowadays the wording would have to be changed in order to be intelligible. We would say: "On the justice and mercy of God, who having laid His commandments on man, does not hinder him, but stirs him up by grace and aids him to fulfil them." The words *let* and *prevent*, although then perfectly familiar and at once understood, have since become archaic in the senses they then bore, and would now be misunderstood by a hundred hearers, for one that would catch their right sense.

This instance may be extreme; but it exemplifies a sound prin-

ciple. Neither in philosophy, nor in science, nor in law, can we hope to understand the authors of former ages, unless we learn to take their terms in the sense they gave them, and are able to enter into their different, and sometimes very delicate, shades of meaning. This is true also in great measure in the study of theological writers. The difficulty of coming to understand them varies of course for different classes. For our Catholic writers, who wrote in Latin, and who habitually follow the form of sound and accepted words, the difficulty, though always existing, is small compared with what is found in the case of writers not so controlled. But especially in the case of many of the books of Scripture the difficulty is great, written as they were in languages so different in idiom from those of to-day, and when both writers and those addressed lived in a world so entirely different from our modern world. It is no easy thing to transport ourselves back to their day, and to realize their conditions, and circumstances, and environments of time, and place, and condition; not only making, as it were, their language our own, but thinking their thoughts, and looking with their eyes. In proportion as we succeed in doing this, shall we seize the exact meaning and full purport of what they have written. It is what very few can achieve in any fair degree. It requires long and serious study, careful training, and a special quality and power of mind.

Were men left to this as the only mode of ascertaining with certainty the doctrines of Christianity, who could learn them? Who can read the original text of Scripture as if it were the vernacular of his daily life? If we take translations, is it not a fact that the most perfect translation men can make is only approximately correct, always leaving out something of the spirit and meaning of the original, and introducing perforce something due to the use of the second language and its idioms? And even in what the most accurate translation preserves of the original, and presents to the reader, must there not be much which only a scholar, familiar with the idioms of the original tongue, and with the habits, and customs, and circumstances, and, it may be, the peculiar characteristics of the writers, and of those addressed, can adequately seize and understand? Yet this must be done, and perfectly done, else error is introduced. No wonder that the efforts to construct a system of doctrine out of the text of the Bible alone has resulted in so many clashing and contradictory systems. No other result was possible.

What a contrast is seen in the wonderful unity in all time, and in the ever consistent oneness, of the teaching of the Catholic Church. She speaks with no uncertain voice; never takes back a doctrine which she has once declared; never seeks to explain away

or to contradict her own teaching. The historical fact corresponds with and verifies her claim that she has authority to teach, and that her Founder has guaranteed her against error or variation. Harkening to her voice, her children are not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

This characteristic of the Church cannot fail to be felt by every reasonable and impartial mind that realizes it, as an overwhelming argument in favor of her divine character and authority. It is what we might term an experimental practical proof of it, so forcible, that if it be once admitted, the entire question is closed. Hence all those who claim to call themselves Christians, and yet tax her with erroneous teaching, are forced by their very position to maintain that she has at some time changed her doctrine on the points which they assail, and that, in these instances, for the original true doctrine given her by the Apostles she has substituted new opinions and errors devised by men. This is what they maintain. Those, however, who reject Christianity and revelation *in toto*, have no difficulty in admitting, and in fact many of them after historical investigation feel themselves forced to admit, that on those very points her teachings at the beginning were the same as they are now, and that she cannot be justly charged with having at any time changed her doctrine.

In arguing with the first class, it is the duty of him who would defend the Church, to show that, as a fact, she did hold and teach the doctrine which she holds and teaches now. This is the course we propose to ourselves in this article on the Divinity of Christ. If we show, as a matter of history, that our Catholic doctrine was really held in the very beginning of Christianity, and is not due to a later introduction, we shall have gained our point fully against this class of opponents, and shall have vindicated the authority of the Church against their attacks.

At the same time, this spectacle of the Church grandly marching on through the course of ages, never turning from her path, from the very beginning, and ever unceasingly proclaiming, and by her very course exhibiting and giving practical proof of the divinity of her Founder, is one that even an unbeliever cannot look on without being impressed by its moral grandeur. He must feel that this is something supernatural, and beyond the power of man to produce.

The first matter of fact statement made against the Church on this doctrine, was, that Christ our Lord Himself knew nothing of it, and never taught it. In our first article we showed, by His own words as given in the gospels, that He did teach it, and taught it so clearly and emphatically that His opponents based on it a charge of blasphemy, for which they tried Him, sentenced Him, and put Him to death.

It was said, in the second place, that His Apostles and immediate followers were equally ignorant of it, and never taught it. This is the point to which we address ourselves in the present article. It is the assertion of a fact. We must appeal to witnesses who can speak with knowledge.

We begin with the immediate disciples of our Saviour, those who learned His doctrine directly from His own lips, and whose testimony is of the highest rank. They speak in the various books collected together and forming the New Testament. We take first the four Evangelists, from whose pens we have four brief accounts of His life and work among men. What testimony do they give us concerning their belief of the Divinity of our Lord?

In the first place, it should almost be deemed superfluous to ask this question here. It is from the pages of those very accounts that we gathered all those decisive and emphatic declarations of our Saviour Himself on this point, examined in our former article. The Evangelists present themselves to us as His followers, and as sincere, unquestioning believers in His teaching: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John vi. 69). In recording His teaching, they consequently profess, in fact, their own belief. When they record those declarations of their Master, and give us an account of the opposition of the Jews and of their stubborn refusal to accept His doctrine, and their rejection of it, on the contrary, as blasphemous, do these Evangelists in any way try to soften His words? Do they intimate that the Jews misunderstood Him, or that they themselves understood Him in some different sense? Quite the reverse. Their whole narrative condemns the Jews as rejecting the truth, and by carrying out their opposition to it to the extreme of crucifying Him for teaching it, as calling down on their race the signal punishments of God. Whatever we saw to be clearly taught by the words of Christ, we must therefore hold to be also held and taught by the Evangelists. The record is not made by an enemy who arraigns our Saviour and His teaching, nor simply by an outsider, an indifferent historian, who impartially narrates events and words, from which, nevertheless, he holds himself aloof. It is made by sincere, earnest followers and disciples, who would hold it a sin before God, and ruin to their own souls, to swerve a tittle or a jot from their Master. We may rely on the sincerity and truthfulness of the record, and on the perfect adhesion of the writers to everything which He taught. If they had done nothing more in relation to this doctrine than give this record of the words of Christ and the opposition of the Jews, this alone would be ample evidence of their own belief in His divinity.

But, in fact, they have done much more. In the four accounts of His life which they give,—accounts unequalled in all the world

of literature, for the natural, simple, direct, and impartial statement of facts, and these the most wonderful facts that ever were recorded,—facts over which other writers would have allowed themselves to be excited into eloquent bursts of enthusiasm—in each and every one of these accounts of our Saviour's life, we have further and full evidence of the belief of the writers in His divinity.

They present Him as the Messiah, the promised one, the Redeemer, the true and only begotten Son of God—pre-existing from eternity, and coming at the appointed time into the world to fulfil His chosen task. His advent had been foretold from the beginning; God had revealed it to patriarchs in visions and through the ministry of angels. A nation had been specially set apart by the providence of God, and miraculously guided and guarded for fifteen centuries, that the knowledge of those promises might never die out among men. Special prophecies indicated the time and the place of His birth, and of what family He should be. In immediate preparation for His advent, a precursor is sent, whose birth is marked by miraculous manifestations, and whose life of wondrous asceticism in the desert, whose startling preaching, and whose death for justice's sake fail not to arrest the attention of all Israel. He was to go before the face of the Lord, to prepare His ways. (Luke i: 76). The advent of Christ himself is such as this preparation would warrant us to look for. An angel from heaven announces to the pure and immaculate Virgin of Nazareth that by the power of God, she, a virgin, shall conceive and bear a son, and that her son shall be called the Most High, the Son of God, Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Luke ii., Matth. i. 23). This Isaiah had foretold centuries before. Before the child is born, his virgin mother is saluted by Elizabeth as "The Mother of my Lord" (Luke i. 43). Angels announce His birth to the shepherds near Bethlehem, and a miraculous star summons wise men from the East to seek Him out and adore Him, and guides them to the "house where they find the child with Mary, his mother" (Matth. ii. 11). The venerable Simeon, in the temple, clasps the child to his bosom, and chants his *Nunc dimittis Domine*, and thanks God that his eyes have looked on the Saviour whom God sends; and the saintly Anna "confessed to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel" (Luke ii. 29, 38).

Even in the account of his birth, Christ is the Holy One, the Son of God, the Orient, the Lord, Emmanuel, God with us.

Of His early life, we have but one glimpse. That too is marked. We see Him at the age of twelve, "in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; and all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers" (Luke ii. 46, 47).

At the age of thirty He is to commence His public ministry. His character and office are at once announced. John the Baptist, the precursor, declares that he himself is not the Messiah; he is but the messenger sent before, the voice of one crying out in the desert, as the prophet had foretold. After him there was to come One mightier than he,—One already standing in the midst of them, though they knew Him not,—One the latchet of whose shoe, he himself was not worthy to loose—One who had power to baptize with the Holy Ghost, to judge men, and to reward the good and punish the wicked in eternity—"Whose fan is in His hand, and He will purge His floor, and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire" (Matth. iii. 11, 12; Luke iii. 16, 17). When "John saw Jesus coming to him, he saith: Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world" (John i. 29). After the baptism, "The heaven was opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape upon Jesus; and a voice came down from heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke iii. 21, 22). Later on, John the Baptist again bore testimony to him: "He that cometh from heaven is above all . . . He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God . . . The Father loveth the Son, and He hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth in the Son hath life everlasting: but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 31-36).

Thus at the inauguration of His ministry, Christ is declared to be the Son of God, pre-existing in heaven, and coming from heaven into this world, sent by the Father, and into whose hands the Father hath given all things. A voice from heaven declares that He is the beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased. He it is who takes away the sins of the world, who will judge men, rewarding the good and punishing the wicked forever. These declarations concerning Christ were made to the Jewish people, who held that the forgiveness of sins and the judgment of men after death, belonged to God alone. Do they not indicate and imply His divine power, and that, as the true and beloved Son, He shares the same Divine nature with the Father?

Their accounts of His public ministry, however briefly and summarily written, fully correspond with this inauguration of it. He preaches and teaches of His own authority, not as the scribes and doctors do, who cite and comment on the law of Moses and the traditions of their ancestors. He works miracles by His own power, and He empowers His followers to work miracles in His name. He gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb. He banishes diseases, casts out devils, restores the dead to life. The winds and the waves obey His commands. He establishes on

earth His Church, the kingdom of heaven, which is to spread throughout the whole world, and to be preached to every people. For all flesh shall see the Salvation of God. This Church of His, is to be ever one, and is to last to the end of time. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is to be the one fold under one Shepherd. Into it are to come together in perfect unity all the true children of Abraham, all those who believe in Him and follow Him, whether Jew or Gentile, whether called by Himself personally as He then preached, or called by the preaching of those He sent, should afterwards and elsewhere believe in Him. (John xvii. 20.)

The character of Christ, as manifested in all His words and actions recorded in these gospels, is infinitely beyond anything that history elsewhere shows. All others, however great in philosophy, in legislation, or in any other sphere of human action, have their parallels. He alone has none. Not even the veriest unbeliever ventures seriously to present one. His character is complete in itself, and is such that no writer, however gifted, much less these obscure evangelists, could have invented it. They especially could not have risen, even in the boldest flight of imagination, so far above the level of their own race and time. They would have been held within the circle of Jewish prejudices. They would never have burst those bonds, and have gone so directly counter to all the ruling and established ideas, and to the fondest national aspirations, and patriotic wishes of their day. They could not have risen to the conception of such a sublime and perfect character; nor would they have devised and originated His sublime plan of a world-wide and perpetual church embracing all nations, any more than of themselves they had the power to carry it into effect. They have written as they did, because the objective truth stood before them. They wrote sincerely and truly what they saw Him do and heard Him say. Hence, though each wrote apart in time and place from the others, and narrated different details of His words and acts, they are in perfect accordance with each other, and it is the same Christ who stands forth through all their pages, in His sublime, superhuman, divine character of power, wisdom, and mercy.

How they looked on Him is shown by their statements already referred to, of His pre-existence in heaven before coming on earth, and their application to Him of the prophetic name *Emmanuel*, *God with us*. They show it also by declaring prophecies of the Old Testament referring clearly to God, to be really fulfilled in Him. Thus the prophecy of Isaiah (xi. 3) concerning the Lord, is applied to Christ (Matth. iii. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4); and that of Malachi (iii. 1), still more clearly (Matth. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 17). So too, the miracles to be wrought by God (Is. xxxv. 4, 5) are the miracles wrought by Christ (Matth. xi. 5). The same interchange

is shown in the history of the thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas Iscariot (Matth. xxvii. 9, and Zach. xi. 12), and of the piercing of the side of our Lord as He hung on the cross after death (John xix. 37, and Zach. xii. 10). The words of Isaiah when he saw the glory of God (ch. vi.) are quoted as fulfilled in the unwillingness of the Jews to hearken to the teaching of Christ (John xii. 41).

When the Evangelists come to narrate the sad tragedy of his passion, crucifixion, death, and burial, they are careful to point out how in all this, even in such minute particulars as the division of his raiment among the soldiers, and the casting of lots over one piece, the ancient prophecies were fulfilled; and how clearly He himself had foreseen all these events, and had again and again spoken of them in detail to His disciples. He submits to everything voluntarily. Had He willed it, "more than twelve legions of angels" would have surrounded Him. He gave Himself up; that all might be accomplished. For by this sacrifice of Himself, man, whom He loved so tenderly, would be saved. Again, they tell of His Resurrection from the dead on the third day, as the prophets and He himself repeatedly had foretold; of His appearing to His disciples on many occasions during forty days, speaking of the kingdom of God (Acts i. 3) which they were to spread, and of His leading them to the Mount of Olives, again instructing them, then blessing them, and then ascending in their sight into heaven, returning to the Father. Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, looking up steadfastly to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God (Acts viii. 55). They tell of the miraculous coming, ten days later, of the Holy Ghost whom their Lord had promised to send, and of the grand work of establishing His Church, which He had commissioned and enjoined them to inaugurate. That work had commenced, and was being carried on, as they wrote. It was to cooperate in carrying it on that they have written.

Can there be any doubt in view of such a presentation by the Evangelists of the life and ministry of our Lord, as to their belief in His divinity? Is it necessary to cite individual passages where they profess their faith in Him distinctly; as when Martha said, "Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art Christ the Son of the living God" (John xi. 27); and when Simon Peter, speaking for all, said, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God" (Matth. xvi: 16), or on another occasion, "We have believed and have known that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God" (John vi. 70). It is not necessary here to repeat what we said in our former article, on the genuine meaning and force of this title given to our Saviour. To call him the Son of God, was then, in their understanding, equivalent, as the Jews declared, to making Him God. In fact, it was a more definite and exact expression of a doctrinal truth, than to

say vaguely, *Thou art God. Thou art the Son of God*, is equivalent in meaning to, *Thou art God the Son, the second person of the Trinity*.

Still if the general form of expression is desired, it can be found. Did not St. Thomas address our Saviour, "My Lord and my God" (John xx. 28).

There is, however, one other testimony found in the Gospels, to which we must direct our special attention. It has ever been looked on as the palmary and most decisive passage bearing on the Divinity of Christ. We mean, of course, the opening words of the Gospel of St. John, the beloved disciple and faithful Apostle. From the very commencement of Christianity, as often as texts of Scripture were to be cited in order to establish this doctrine, these words of St. John have been quoted. On the other hand, those who impugned the doctrine and labored to weaken the force of the argument drawn from these words, endeavored to do so, not so much by denying the sense in which they are to be taken—for this is too clear to be distorted—as by denying the authenticity and authority of this Gospel itself.

Into this latter question we do not propose to enter in the present article. The genuineness and authority of the Gospel of St. John can be fully established by those who treat that question *ex professo*. We here accept and presuppose their conclusion, and we present the argument, drawn from the words of the Evangelist, taking them as they are read, in the sublime and magnificent exordium of the fourth Gospel.

"In the beginning was THE WORD, and THE WORD was with God, and THE WORD was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . . And THE WORD was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we saw His glory, the glory, as it were, of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John beareth witness of Him" (John i. 1-15).

That the evangelist here speaks of Jesus of Nazareth, his Master, who dwelt among men, and whose glory he had seen on Thabor and on Mount Olivet, and of whom John the Baptist gave testimony, no one can doubt. The question is, Why, and in what sense, does the evangelist style Him THE WORD, and what does he teach of Him in this passage?

The phrase, *the Word*, applied to our Saviour, is found only in five instances in the New Testament, and always from the pen of St. John; in the first and in the fourteenth verses of this chapter; twice in the First Epistle of St. John (1. John i. 1; v. 7); and once in the Apocalypse (xix. 13). In no instance does he explain or develop the meaning of the phrase. He uses it, in the passage we

are considering, as he does in the others, simply and directly, as if it were a phrase already familiar to his readers, the meaning of which they already understood, at least in a general way, and sufficiently to follow him and catch the exact meaning of his statements.

In fact, this phrase was not altogether unfamiliar to Jewish ears. The ancient Hebrew, in which Moses and the prophets had written their inspired books of Scripture, had become a dead language since the Babylonian captivity. For popular and ordinary use there was a free translation or paraphrase called a Targum, in which this phrase, WORD OF GOD, occurs in quite a number of instances. And if we may judge from the sayings of the early rabbis and doctors of those days, and the extracts of their teachings still to be found in the Talmud, the phrase itself was not unfrequently brought into notice by special comments on it.

How it originated we cannot tell. But we see that for the Jews it was a sacred and quasi-scriptural phrase. The sacred text in Genesis and elsewhere, speaking of the creation and of other works of God, is accustomed to express the divine action by the words: *And God said*. David in the Psalms (xxxii. 16) sang: "By the *Word of the Lord* the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth." Holding, as the rabbis did, that every word of the sacred text was full of meaning, this special form of expression was to be well weighed. They tell us that, in ascertaining such recondite meanings, they were guided by the special and ancient traditional teaching handed down orally from generation to generation, and specially guarded among their doctors of the law, as a hidden, sacred teaching, which some of them dignify by the title of a second law. They were guided by this in making their vernacular Chaldee paraphrase. And repeatedly, especially when the Hebrew text speaks of God manifesting Himself by His works of power, or wisdom, or providence, they translate the Hebrew word *God* by the Chaldee phrase *Word of God*. This same phrase their rabbis, moreover, apply to the Messiah. This is in accordance with the teaching of at least a number of them who held the Messiah to be the agent of God in the creation, to have appeared to the patriarchs, to have guided the children of Israel in the desert, and generally to be the one who is designated by the text, on the grander occasions at least, when God is said to have appeared to men. Some of their statements are, as we intimated in our former article, very strong, and seem to go the full length of asserting or implying not only the heavenly pre-existence, but the eternity, and consequently the divine character of the Messiah. Other texts, from perhaps rabbis of another school, fall far short of this. It is not necessary for us to combine or to explain these differences. It

is enough to mark the points, that THE WORD OF GOD was an expression not unfamiliar to the Jews, and that they applied it to the Messiah. The Word of God was not for them a mere figure of speech. It designated an existing being, and particularly the Messiah, whose coming they prayed for and anxiously awaited.

How far back before the coming of Christ this expression or this mode of thought occupied the religious mind of Judea, it is equally needless to inquire here. The personification of Wisdom, in the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs, especially that passage (v. 22-31) where the wisdom of God is presented as existing from eternity, and being with God and assisting in the creation of all things, presenting as it does a very similar, if not identically the same train of thought, must carry this form of expression back to the palmy days of the glory of David and Solomon, long before the captivity of Babylon.

To Catholics, who believe and know that God has in the fulness of time revealed to the world through his Son the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and of the divinity of our Saviour Jesus Christ the God incarnate, it is reasonable to see in all those ancient Jewish thoughts and utterances, even though halting and obscure, some traces of those earlier and partial revelations, which God had, in preceding ages, been pleased to make to man in divers ways. They are, as it were, faint auroral beams preceding the coming of the effulgent orb of day—"God having spoken on divers occasions, and many ways, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets; last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by His Son." (Heb. i. 1-2.)

This early thought of Judea seems to have gone forth into other lands. Plato, who lived four centuries before Christ, and who travelled in various lands in search of wisdom, probably gained from learned Jews those higher and truer notions of God and of Religion which made his philosophic teachings so far superior to those of his brother philosophers of Greece. Curiously enough, he has a *Logos Theou*, a *Word of God*, in his system, whatever he really meant thereby. There has been, in fact, a vast deal of discussion among the learned as to the real sense of this Platonic *Logos*, or WORD. Some hold that Plato meant by it only an attribute of God, His wisdom or intelligence, or power of knowing. Others hold that this *Logos* meant the sum of the knowledge which God possesses, while others again maintain that *Logos* signifies an existing Person, either of the same nature with God, or inferior to and distinct from Him. The question is an intricate one, and is rendered more so by the fact that the strongest passages in favor of the latter views are from works which many now think written, not by Plato, but by some unknown and probably far later, perhaps post-Christian, writers of his school of philosophy. We will leave

the discussion of this point to those who delight in such intricate questions. It is enough for our purpose to note the fact, that from the days of Plato down, the phrase, *Word of God*, had its place in the philosophical language of Greece.

In the fever of philosophic and sophistic discussions which marked the Augustan age, we may be sure that the growing popularity of Platonism would not permit this point to sink into oblivion, especially in the East, where men delighted in refined and abstruse mental speculations. The ever-increasing and closer contact of Jewish scholars with those of heathenism in Asia Minor, in Egypt, and elsewhere, as the Hellenistic Jews, in their pursuit of commerce, mingled with the Gentiles, would obviously tend to bring it forward more frequently. The result of that contact may be seen in the instance of Philo, the Jew, whose works treat of the religious belief, the usages, and the history of his nation, of Oriental traditions, and of the Philosophy of Plato, among whose followers he was proud to be ranked. He is, we might say, expansive on the subject of the *Logos Theios*, the *Word of God*. And yet it must be admitted that those who have pondered long over his pages, differ as much as to his precise meaning in this matter as they do about the meaning of Plato. Some quote passages which would seem to imply that for Philo, the *Logos* was only an attribute or perfection of God. Some understand other passages to teach that the *Logos* is a Person consubstantial with and equal to the true and supreme God; thus presenting Philo as teaching on this point the true Catholic doctrine. Others, however, maintain that while Philo certainly and clearly attributed a personality to the *Logos*, it was a personality springing indeed from God, but by creation, and, therefore, inferior to Him, and of a subordinate rank, something like an Eon of the Eastern systems. Modern writers, influenced chiefly by passages from works of Philo, which were long thought to be lost, but which have been discovered in the present century in ancient Armenian translations of them, and have been retranslated into a European language and published by Cardinal Mai and the Armenian monk Aucher, seem generally to incline to the last-mentioned opinion.

Philo, however, drank in his knowledge at several fountains, and is not always consistent with himself. Sometimes he follows the Platonic school, and his ideas and his language are quite Platonic. Elsewhere he has evidently been poring over authors and questions of the Stoics, and his *Logos* puts on rather a pantheistic garb. At another time his mind is occupied by the popular theology of his own people on Angelology, and you would say the *Logos* was a great Archangel; while again, elsewhere, the Rabbinical traditions of the Cabbala, about the *Sephirah* coming out from God, are before

his mind, and he appears to speak with cautious reserve, using apparently obscure terms and expressions that were possibly perfectly clear to the initiated, but are unintelligible to ordinary readers, (and to us), not privileged to be made partakers in that system of sacred and carefully hidden knowledge.

Philo was contemporary with the Apostles. However vague and uncertain or even shifting his opinions as to the nature of the *Logos* may have been, it cannot be doubted that his works, numerous and popular as they were, and circulating both among the Hellenizing Jews and the Gentiles, contributed their part to direct the attention of men to this point of philosophy. After him the subject of the *Logos*, or WORD, was often treated by subsequent writers. We may have occasion to examine some of them, when we come to treat of the belief of the Christians in the first and second centuries as to the divinity of Christ.

Just now we will only say one word as to the intrinsic meaning of the phrase, *Word of God*, in order to catch the fundamental thought it was intended to convey.

There is a natural and obvious distinction to be made between an intelligent being who thinks and the thought which thus occupies the mind. A man is ever the same; the thought which now occupies his mind is not the same thought which claimed his attention yesterday, or that on which he will think to-morrow. The distinction is obvious, and is necessarily true in the case of every intelligence. The intelligence is ever to be distinguished from the thought. Again, as to the thought itself there is a further distinction. Sometimes the thought rests in the mind that conceives it, and which it occupies, without being uttered or outwardly manifested; or else the thought may go forth outside the mind, whether by expression in the articulate utterance of speech or manifested in some other form of outward action. This thought, as distinguished from the intelligence that thinks, would be technically termed a *Logos*, WORD, in the widest sense of the term.

When we apply these distinctions to God, the infinitely perfect, eternal, and immutable Intelligence, still other truths must be brought in, else we fail to develop the subject fully, or we fall into contradictions.

Before anything created was made, God existed alone in eternity. He thought of Himself, if we may use this human mode of speech, for He must know or be conscious of His own existence. In His divine mind there was a thought, an idea, a representation, or image of Himself, a *Logos*.

This image or representation must of necessity be infinitely perfect. It must not and cannot fail, in any way or in any attribute, to represent the original, that is, God Himself, with perfect exact-

ness. This His own infinite perfection and infinite Intelligence requires.

What is a perfectly exact image or likeness?

A statue is deemed a perfect likeness when it gives correctly and exactly the whole person, and every minute feature and peculiarity in its proper place and natural proportion. But after all, the marble is cold, dead, immovable. A painting from a master's hand may please and satisfy the eye, because beyond what the marble statue can give, there are here expressions of color, of life, and of feelings. But the painting on a flat canvas has not the form of the statue. It too is unchangeable; it may represent a man at one moment of his existence with marvellous accuracy; beyond that moment it does not go. A representation better than any the sculptor's chisel or the painter's brush can achieve, is that wrought by nature herself, when one looks in a perfect mirror. There all that the painting gave for one single moment, is given with greater truthfulness for each succeeding moment. The likeness follows in its variations every change of color, posture, or expression of the original. And yet even this fails in many ways; it is a mere play of light. It has no substance as we have; it cannot think, or speak, or act as the original does.

A more perfect likeness or image, were such a thing possible, would be a repetition of ourselves,—a body, the exact duplicate of our own in everything, and repeating our actions and feelings, and reproducing every change of whatsoever kind coming to us from without or within. Let such a body be inhabited by a soul that shall similarly follow ours in every act of thought, whether of memory, of knowledge, of love, or of hatred. The man might almost be said to live again, in such a duplicate of himself. Yet even such a living copy, or repetition, would not be a perfect image; it would fail in a most important feature. The original has free will, and independence of action. The image, by its very character as an image, is bound by a law of necessity, and must simply repeat what the original may freely originate.

The image or likeness of God, in the mind of God, cannot fail in these or any other modes. It must be infinitely perfect.

It must have a positive personal existence; else it falls short of presenting that first attribute of the Divine Nature. It must have an existence from eternity, for such is the existence which it perfectly represents. It must have every other Divine attribute; for if any one of them were wanting, the likeness would fail in that particular, and would not be absolutely perfect. It must be a Divine personality, distinct in some true sense from God; and yet, from eternity it must be in the mind of God, to use still that expression, united with Him, inseparable from Him, existing in Him, and not apart from

Him; else it would cease to be the image of Him proceeding from His Divine intelligence, and would, on the contrary, be a second and independent God.

Our understanding may seize these points positively and definitely, but we are unable fully to comprehend them, to combine them, or by any power of thought to carry them out. The finite cannot measure the infinite. We grope our way like men in the dark even in many earthly sciences; much more necessarily must there always be mystery, when we speak of the Infinite and Eternal.

This Divine personal image or likeness is the *λόγος θεΐους*, the WORD OF GOD. So far we have considered God existing of Himself, alone in eternity, holding within Himself, or as St. John expresses it (i. 18), "in His own bosom," this Word or Divine likeness. So far, we have the Word unuttered and still abiding in God. In the creation this *Logos*, or THE WORD OF GOD, is uttered, that is, is made manifest in outward action; for He thus becomes known to the creatures of God. Christian writers have also found a second and fuller manifestation or utterance, in the Incarnation. But this is a question which we are not now required to treat. We may have to do so farther on.

Having thus sketched the history of the phrase "THE WORD OF GOD" in the religious literature of the Jewish people and in the philosophy of the world up to the time of St. John, and having given some notion of its intrinsic meaning, we may now proceed to examine carefully the words of the Evangelist himself, and to ascertain the precise meaning which, at the time he wrote, each sentence conveyed to the minds of his readers. His initial words are evidently intended to recall to their minds the opening of the first book of the Sacred Law. No other opening could be more majestic and impressive in their estimation.

"In the beginning was the Word." His first emphatic statement is that THE WORD, concerning which perchance they have heard so many discussions, has in truth a real and positive existence. This WORD is not a mere attribute or quality having no substantial existence of its own, and inhering in God or in some creature. It is not a mere speculative thought never so wise, but still the mere conception of man's intelligence. The WORD is a real being, personally existent and distinct, a person who can act and can be known, who made all things that were made, in whom is life, who became man and dwelt among men, and was known by them, whose glory they saw, and of whom they gave testimony.

"In the beginning was the Word." We might indeed take the words, *In the beginning*, as some have done, in the sense of a Hebraism, equivalent to *In eternity*, or *From eternity*; for this view can be supported by other seemingly parallel expressions of the

Hebrew Scriptures. It would declare at once the eternity of the existence of *the Word*. We prefer, however, to take them in the mildest sense which can be really given to them, that is, as meaning here precisely what they mean in the first verse of Genesis,—the time when God first created heaven and earth, the date before which time is not counted, and only eternity was. At that initial date **THE WORD WAS**, the **WORD** already existed. The **WORD**, therefore, was not a created being, which at some time commenced to be. On the contrary, by the **Word** all created things were made. He **Himself** was uncreated, existing in the beginning, from eternity.

“And the **WORD** was with God.” Here the **WORD**, the image and perfect likeness of God, and **GOD**, are separately named. For, as we saw, the intelligence which thinks is distinct from the thought. God (that is, God the Father in the language of Catholic theology) is distinct, that is, as to personality, from the **WORD**, God the Son. But although thus distinct, they are not separate; *the WORD was with God*. In eternity the *Logos* is not uttered, is not made manifest outwardly, but abides in God. As the Evangelist again expresses it (v. 18), “the only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father.”

“And the **WORD** was God.” No paraphrase or explanation can make the statement clearer, more precise, or more emphatic. The **WORD** which exists personally, which exists from eternity, which from eternity was with God, “in the bosom of the Father,” is not a creature, however exalted, is not an Eon, or a Daemon, or a Demiurgos, or a Sefirah, but is **GOD**. This is the **WORD** by whom all things were made that were made, in whom was life, and the life was the light of men, the true light which, by the Gospel delivered to the world by Christ, and preached by the Evangelists and the Apostles, enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,—the **WORD** for whose advent John the Baptist had been sent as a witness; the same **WORD**, which **WAS MADE FLESH**, and dwelt among men, and was known as Jesus of Nazareth, whose glory the Evangelist himself saw,—the same whom John the Baptist pointed out.

We here are looking at testimony to prove a fact. We are relying not on the authority of a divinely inspired writer to prove a doctrine by the simple declaration. That is a proper matter for another time. We do not dwell on the unequalled sublimity of the entire passage, which even the classic heathens esteemed worthy of being written in letters of gold, and which they copied with admiration into their own works. We take the words simply as we would take the words of any ordinary uninspired writer of that day. We examine them in the light of the usages of speech then prevailing, and of the questions then agitated, and we seek to

ascertain an historical fact. What did John the Evangelist really hold and teach concerning the Divinity of Christ?

There can be but one answer. He taught that Christ is God. The words of the passage so clearly establish this fact, that those who would deny the doctrine are obliged to fall back and deny, in spite of the most overwhelming testimony, that John the beloved Disciple and Apostle ever wrote this Gospel. To make known this fact he declares to be the very purpose of his writing. "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John xx. 31).

Besides the Gospel, St. John is the author of the Book of the Apocalypse, or Revelations, and also of three Epistles all contained in the collection of inspired Christian writings known as the New Testament. We might adduce a score of texts from them in evidence of his belief in the Divinity of Christ. But after what we have already said, they would be superfluous. We pass on.

We have already said that St. John is the only writer of the New Testament who gives to our Saviour the title, *Word of God*, and that only in five instances. The others use the title, *Son of God*, which we explained in our first article. St. John also uses it in numberless instances. Each of those phrases implies both a distinction and a union,—a distinction of personality, and a oneness in nature.

The phrase SON OF GOD gives prominence to the distinction of personality. The first thought is that the Son is a distinct person from the Father, having the same Divine nature with the Father. That they are consubstantial, having the same Divine nature in such way as to be one God, is a second thought following the first, and unavoidable, unless we would absurdly admit the coexistence of two separate Gods. There was little danger that any one of Jewish blood and training would fall into this error. The unity of the one true God was the fundamental and impregnable idea around which revolved all their religious thoughts. They could not fall into Polytheism; hence, in presenting the Christian doctrine to them and in argument with them in the early ages concerning the nature of Christ, the Christians found it appropriate to use this phrase and to insist on and to develop the idea of His real and true Sonship.

• The phrase WORD OF GOD, on the other hand, presents as the first thought the Divine unity of the Father and the Son; of God, and of the *Logos* or WORD OF GOD. The distinction of personality between them comes in the second place. This distinction was not a matter of any difficulty for Christian converts who had been Polytheists, or for those who still remained heathens, believing in many

gods. It did not militate in their minds in any way against holding Christ to be God; they would find no difficulty in admitting the Divinity of the God Supreme Lord over all, and at the same time the Divinity of Jesus as a second God distinct and entirely separate from Him. In their case, it was necessary to present prominently and to insist strongly, on the connection between them, and their strict unity of nature, and to exclude the idea of separation or division, which would bring in two Gods. This could appropriately be done by insisting on, and developing in a Christian sense, the doctrine of the *Logos* or WORD OF GOD, especially when considered as unuttered, and abiding or dwelling in the Deity from all eternity. This was the course very generally pursued by the early Christian writers when they defended the Christian doctrine of the Divinity of Christ against the heathens, or against heretics, that were by race or by training or otherwise imbued with the polytheistic ideas and tendencies of the Gentiles around them. The Christian literature of those early centuries is full of the subject, and it subsequently seemed almost to overshadow all other themes, as Arianism, and Semi-Arianism, and the cognate heresies arose to battle against the original doctrine handed down from the Apostles.

We have said enough to establish the truth of the statement which we made as an historical fact, that the Evangelists who have given us accounts of the life of our Lord, all held the doctrine of His Divinity. There are four other writers in the New Testament collection, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. James, and St. Jude. Of these the writings of St. Paul, far exceed in bulk all that we have in the New Testament from the pens of the other three together. He too is frequently dogmatic, teaching and defending doctrine. Their Epistles are for the most part hortatory in character, and treat on moral and religious duties. Yet, for all this, we find from every one of those writers, statements or allusions bearing on the Divine character and the Divine power of Christ.

We begin with St. Peter. It was he, who, as chief of the apostles, inaugurated on Pentecost day the grand work of preaching the Gospel of Christ, and of bringing converts into the fold of the Church. In that sermon he preaches of Christ (Acts ii.) declaring that He is the Lord whom David foresaw (v. 25), the Holy One (v. 27), exalted by the right hand of God (v. 33), the one of whom David said: The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand (v. 34), and who is both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you have crucified (v. 36). In his second sermon (Acts iii.), Christ is the Son of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob (v. 13), the Holy One and the Just (v. 14), the Author of life (v. 15), in the faith of whose name miracles are wrought (v. 16). And on a third occasion: "There is no other name under heaven given

to men whereby we must be saved" than "the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (vv. 10, 12).

Does not every expression here imply His Divine character? This becomes clearer, if we bear in mind the special circumstances of the time, and how they obviously shaped the course of the Apostle's argumentation. He was not addressing men who admitted that Christ really had some authority from God, but denied His Divinity. We are told that it was to meet opponents of this character that St. John wrote the Gospel we have already dwelt on, and in which he states the Divinity of Christ clearly and plainly, "The Word was God." Had such been the case here, St. Peter might, and we may presume would, have followed the same course. But the case was widely different; those whom he addressed, far from admitting any legitimate authority in Christ, held that He had been justly crucified as a blasphemer, but a few weeks before, in that very city of Jerusalem. On the other hand, they believed in a Messiah, and in their strict obligation to yield to Him the fullest obedience in all things. The obvious purpose of the Apostle was to convince them that Jesus of Nazareth was in truth that Messiah. Convinced of this, as thousands were convinced by his words and by the grace of God, they would yield, and ask to be baptized, and would receive without questioning all further instruction which the Apostles would give in His name. Under such circumstances, the words of the Apostle will naturally bear directly on the question as it was presented to their minds. Expressions bearing on His Divine nature may occur, but it may seem almost incidentally. We should scarcely look for a discourse directed to prove the Divinity of Christ, as the first step towards their conversion. In what we have of the discourses, we find what legitimately implies the Divine nature of Christ, and what is absolutely incompatible with its denial. We find moreover the distinct assertions that He is the Lord, and the Son of God, both forms of expression stating His Divinity; and that He is the Author of life, which God alone gives.

St. Peter has written two Epistles, both brief, the one of five, the other of only three chapters, and both moral and hortatory rather than doctrinal. Yet in them we find assertions of and allusions to the divine nature of Christ, sufficient to remove all obscurity or doubt as to the belief of the great apostle.

Christ is termed throughout, the "Lord," the "Lord and Saviour," the "Son of God," the "beloved Son of God the Father." It is the Spirit of Christ that inspired the prophets of the olden law (1. Pet. i. 11), thus necessarily and obviously affirming the pre-existence of Christ before his incarnation and birth and ministry among men. St. Peter quotes or incorporates into his own Epistles, pas-

sages of Isaiah the prophet concerning God, applying them to Christ (1. Pet. ii. 3-8; Is. xxviii. 16). Where the Prophet says, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself" (Is. viii. 13), the Apostle says, "Sanctify the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts" (1. Pet. iii. 15). And he concludes his second Epistle by applying to Christ the doxology which the children of Israel gave to God, "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and unto the day of eternity, Amen" (11. Peter iii. 18). We find in these Epistles the same spirit and the same faith which filled the soul of this same Apostle, when he declared: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matth. xvi. 16).

From St. Jude we have only a brief Epistle, contained in a single chapter. Yet, brief as it is, we glean from it evidences of the apostolic doctrine. In the fourth verse, he condemns the ungodly men, "who turn the grace of our Lord God into riotousness, and deny the only Sovereign Ruler and our Lord Jesus Christ." Is not this the attributing to Christ the supreme authority which belongs to God? He goes on to admonish them that it was Jesus who saved the people out of the land of Egypt, who afterwards destroyed them that believed not, who punished "the angels who kept not their principality," as He afterwards punished Sodom and Gomorrah for their crimes. All this had not only a definite sense in the minds of those he addressed, but the theme was familiar to them. As Jews, they had heard all these statements made by their Rabbis and Doctors about the Messiah. The oral teaching handed down among the Rabbis of the people of God, enumerated these and other such deeds among the special acts of the Messiah, who carefully guards His people. According to their teaching (and, as we see, according to St. Jude), the Messiah existed as the *Word of God*, and was manifested as well in the creation, as also, in many ways, appearing to the Patriarchs, and watching over Israel. And at the appointed time He was to be fully manifested when He would appear in the character of the Messiah. All this they had heard while still Jews. Now they knew and believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah already come. All these things then were true of Him. These were what He had done, as He dwelt with God, before He came into the world to teach and to die for man. It is clear that St. Jude did not mean to teach, and that they did not, could not understand him to teach that Jesus Christ was a mere man, who had commenced to exist only when He was born among men, in Judea, less than a hundred years before.

The words of the venerable Apostle (v. 21) were full of meaning to them, as he thus exhorted them, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto life everlasting." For they held Him to be in truth the Lord, the Sove-

reign Lord, the fount of grace and mercy, and the giver of everlasting life.

St. James is the author of another Epistle in the New Testament collection. It is brief, and is wholly occupied with the moral duties of a faithful believer. There are one or two passages in it which we might cite as strongly evidencing his belief in the Divinity of Christ, were it not that there are variants of the texts which would have to be examined, before we could use the reading we prefer. Consequently we pass them over. St. James styles the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and sometimes *The Lord*. And this is the title by which he in other verses designates *God* Himself. Sometimes it is difficult to determine which he means, God the Father, or Our Saviour. Clearly he brings in no antagonism between them. On the contrary, the mode in which he uses the same terms equally for both, is evidence that as to the divinity of our Lord, St. James stands with the other apostles whose epistles we have examined.

St. Paul is the remaining writer whose teaching is to be examined. We have no less than fourteen Epistles by him, some of them quite lengthy. Though we style him the Apostle of the Gentiles, he appears in these epistles to address, for the most part, converts from Judaism, and he often presents arguments and treats questions in what we may call an intensely Jewish style. His teachings concerning our Lord are found in every part of his writings, and are so abundant, that volumes may be devoted to set forth his Christology. We, however, have only one point to examine here. Does St. Paul teach, or does he so speak, as to show that he believes in the Divinity of Christ? Even on this point alone there are so many passages before us, that to take them all would seem like commencing our article afresh. We shall take up only a few of the principal ones, and these we shall arrange in classes.

St. Paul styles our Saviour the Son of God in the full sense which the Jews gave to that phrase, teaching that it involved a participation of the divine nature of God the Father. "But God is faithful, for our preaching which was to you was not IT IS and IT IS NOT. For the Son of God, JESUS CHRIST, who was preached among you by us . . . was not IT IS and IT IS NOT, but IT IS was in Him. For all the promises of God are in Him, IT IS; therefore also by Him, amen to God, unto our glory" (II. Cor. xviii. 20). Besides calling Him the Son of God, the Apostle gives to Him the appellation IT IS; for the Greeks the name of the Eternal, self-existent One; for the Jews the incommunicable name, Jehovah, "I AM WHO AM." "He (God) spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. viii. 32). "I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

Christ is "the beloved Son" (Eph. i. 6; Col. i. 13), and throughout, God is His Father. This is true in the highest sense, in a sense which applies to no creature or saint, not even to Moses, the greatest of all in the Jewish estimation. "Every house is built by some man, but He that created all things is God. And Moses, indeed, was faithful in all his house, as a servant. . . . But Christ, as the Son, in His own house" (Heb. iii. 4-6). How can it be His own house, unless because, as Son, he possesses from His Father the divine nature?

St. Paul, in instances too numerous to be quoted, gives to Him, as we have seen others do, and as it has been the marked rule for Christians to give Him, the title of Lord. "If thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9). But the Apostle calls Him GOD. "Of whom (the Israelites) is Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all things, God blessed forever" (Rom. ix. 5). The full doctrine of the Incarnation is contained in that one short sentence. God, blessed over all, takes human nature to Himself, and is born at Bethlehem, of the race of the Jews. There are other passages in St. Paul's Epistles to match it. Thus, in the opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews, after speaking of the Son as possessing by inheritance, that is, because He is the Son of the Father, a rank above even the angels, and of the command of the Father to the angels to adore Him, and, while teaching that the angels are ministering spirits, he sets forth, by way of marked contrast and as indicating the rank of the Son, the words of the Father addressed to Him: "Thou art My Son, today (*i. e., from eternity*) I have begotten Thee" (Heb. i. 5). "But to the Son (He saith), Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (v. 8). And, "Thou in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the works of Thy hands are the heavens" (v. 10). In fact, the whole of this chapter is distinct in its enunciation of the character of our Saviour. It declares His existence from eternity; His true sonship from the Father; His exalted dignity by inheritance, *i. e.,* by right of His nature; it attributes the creation to Him; and calls Him, or, putting the statements in the most solemn form, introduces God the Father, as styling Him *Son, Lord, God*. This whole chapter may be placed alongside the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John for the explicitness and directness of the statements imbedded in it bearing on the Divinity of Christ. Nor should the important fact be overlooked that St. Paul wrote this epistle nearly half a century before St. John wrote his gospel. This simple fact, if borne in mind, overturns some darling castles of modern unbelieving criticism on the sacred writings of the New Testament.

In the discourse which St. Paul addressed to the clergy of Ephesus, as given in the Acts of the Apostles, there is another passage of remarkable import. He reminds them that the Holy Ghost has placed them "to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 28). Here it is *God* who, in the human nature which He assumed, died on the cross, purchasing with His own blood His Church. It is Christ, shedding His blood on Calvary, whom St. Paul, addressing the clergy of Ephesus, terms *God*. This expression may well be taken as establishing the true meaning of the phrases we so often meet in the New Testament, *Church of God, Servants of God*. It is Christ whom the early Christians designated by the use of the word God in expressions of this form. This point shall be made clear when we come to treat, as we intend doing, of the ordinary conversational language of the Christians in the early centuries.

We may now pass on to other expressions of St. Paul in which he speaks of the pre-existence of Christ before He appeared among men. The expressions may fully imply, or it may plainly and explicitly state, his previous existence. Thus: "A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners" (1. Tim. i. 15). "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem those under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 4, 5). And again: "He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that He might fill all things (Eph. iv. 10); or this: "The first man was from earth, earthy; the second man from heaven, heavenly" (1. Cor. xv. 47). And he states the doctrine of the Incarnation more explicitly: "When therefore He (Christ) cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to Me" (Heb. x. 5).

We have cited the strong statements found in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. There is another equally remarkable passage in the second chapter of that to the Philippians. Christ Jesus "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but debased Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death; even to the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted Him and hath given Him a name which is above all names; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 6-11).

This passage, like the others which we have quoted, affirms the

previous existence of Christ when He was "in the form of God," and, without "robbery" or taking what was not His own, was "equal with God," and that, taking the form of a servant, made into the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man, He was crucified. So much is clear to the most cursory reader. But if we take due account of certain forms of philosophic speech current in that age and which are here introduced, the meaning and force of the words of the apostle will come out much more fully and distinctly.

We may be sure that every metaphysical question which has been discussed in later ages, was known and discussed in those earlier times, and, indeed, had been discussed perhaps long before. We moderns have discovered and invented many things. But we can boast of no new questions of abstract mental philosophy. The ancients discussed the question whether we really know that bodies exist, or whether we only think so, having nothing to go on but appearances and impressions within ourselves. In the argument there sprang up distinctive forms of speech. For example, if one would speak of an appearance which was only an appearance, and unaccompanied with a real substance producing it—of a ghost, for instance, appearing as a body while there was no real body, or of an angel appearing in the form of a man—the proper word would be *phantasma*—a word which we still retain not much varied from its original philosophic meaning. Hence came the name of the *Phantasiasts*, an early sect who held that our Lord had only an apparent, not a real true body of flesh and blood.

If, on the contrary, one would speak of an appearance as including and manifesting a real positive existing thing, quite another word must be used. Latin writers used the word *figura*; which, we are of opinion, is not found in any modern language, in a sense similar to, or in any way approaching this old technical sense.

The overlooking or ignoring this technical sense of *figura* and other words, has led to mistakes, serious or comical, as the case might be. Apparently simple Latin words have been as thoroughly misunderstood, as *let* and *prevent* would be now ordinarily in the title of the old English sermon, which we mentioned some pages back. An instance is found in a passage of Tertullian which Protestant controversialists have entirely misunderstood, and never fail to quote against the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist. Tertullian (*Advers. Marcion*, iv. 40), writing against Marcion, who held the error of the Phantasiasts, says: "*Christ*, having taken the bread and given it to His disciples, He made it His own body by saying: 'This is my body;' that is, the figure (*figura*) of my body." Now, leaving out the last phrase, the words are a strong statement of the Catholic doctrine. The last phrase means, as we would now express his idea—*that is, my real substantial body; not an unsubstantial*

and merely apparent body, as Marcion maintains. The controversialists not catching the strict philosophic and technical sense in which Tertullian uses the word *figura*, translate it, "figure," and give it the modern wide English sense of that word, and so they find in those last words something which they love to quote against the Real Presence.

Where Latin writers used *figura*, in this technical sense of implying reality, the Greeks used *μορφη*. This is precisely the word in our text where St. Paul says that Christ was in the FORM of God. Applying such philosophic, or as we have styled it, such technical meaning to the words of the text, we might express the thought of the passage in a modern paraphrase, running in this form: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, being truly and substantially God, was of right equal to God the Father, and He humbled Himself by taking the real true nature of man, and by showing Himself subject to all the sufferings of man, and He was obedient, even to the death which He suffered on the Cross." We question if to us, now-a-days, this paraphrase would be a stronger expression of belief in the divinity of our Lord, than were the words of the Apostle to the Philippians, whom he addressed.

We might adduce still other passages from St. Paul, on the same doctrine, as when (Colossians ii. 9) he teaches that in Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporeally," or calls Him (i. 15) the image of the invisible God, or when (Heb. i. 3) he declares that Christ, the Son of God, is "the brightness of *God's* glory and the figure of His substance." The last portion of this phrase should perhaps be understood in accordance with the rule we have just laid down in reference to Phil. ii. The first member of it is akin to the title, WORD OF GOD, which St. John gave to the Saviour. Just as the *Logos*, or thought, is distinct from, and yet inseparably united with, the Intellect that thinks; as the light of the sun is (or would be, according to the ancient idea of the nature of light) distinct from the sun, and yet inseparable from him, so the *Logos* or Word of God is distinct from, and yet ever abiding in the Father, and the Son of God, the brightness of this glory of the Father, is distinct from, yet ever united with Him by whom He is begotten.

We have said enough to establish that point of our argument which we had before us specially in commencing this article. If, in our preceding number, we showed from the words of Christ our Lord Himself, that in his teaching He asserted the doctrine of His Divinity so plainly that His Disciples and his enemies both so understood Him, and the latter met that teaching by charges of blasphemy reiterated again and again, and finally condemned Him therefor to a cruel and ignominious death; we have, in this article, fortified our position by showing, in addition, that His Disciples,

when they became teachers after His death, clearly and positively continued to teach the same doctrine. We have taken them all up without exception, so far as they are accessible by their writings collected in the New Testament. Questioned, one by one, their answers are accordant, each one with the others, and all with their Master.

In face of His own words, then, it cannot be asserted that our Saviour knew nothing of the doctrine of His Divinity. We trust that we have made it equally clear that it cannot be asserted that the Apostles and Evangelists, instructed by Him and His immediate followers, knew nothing of it. We have aimed to show it to be a fact of history that He first, and they afterwards, taught it. Our next step should be to confirm both of these positions by duly establishing, as we propose to do on some future occasion, that the Christians of the first and second centuries, taught by the Apostles and their immediate Disciples, certainly believed and professed it.

The writers we have examined were of the Jewish race, were trained from early life in the world of Jewish religious thought, were familiar with the feelings and ideas then prevailing in the Jewish mind. They addressed their words mostly to an audience Jewish like themselves by race, and equally familiar with all these things. Hence their terminology is of their people and their language. The questions they treat are mostly those which were prominent and important to their fellow-countrymen. In treating them, they urge points on which the Jews required or would accept argument, though we would attach little or no importance to them, and would admit them without demur; and they pass over slightly or in silence points and views on which we now-a-days would call for explanations and proofs. Then such points were understood and admitted by those they addressed almost as matters of course. Hence the mode and style of treating a question, as seen in these Epistles, differs very much from the modes of modern writers with whom we are familiar. It requires study and training to understand their works adequately. But if that be given, it becomes soon clear that for them, and according to their teaching, Jesus of Nazareth was the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the Lord and Saviour, the true Son of God at the right hand of the Father, to whom with the Father was due from all creatures, in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, benediction, and honor, and glory forever and ever (Apoc. vi. 13).

---

---