

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? toward their instructors. *What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*] Mark and Luke have, "that I may inherit eternal life;" but the original is sometimes used to express the mere acquirement of a thing, and is assuredly to be understood in those passages in the sense of *obtain*. From this inquiry it may be inferred, 1st. that he was not a Sadducee—a disbeliever in a future state; 2d. that he did not rest satisfied with the Pharisaic notion that "eternal life" would certainly be conferred on him as a son of Abraham. It thus appears that his mind was, to a considerable extent, divinely illuminated: though he had not a clear understanding of the extent and spirituality of God's law, as will hereafter more fully appear. From his inquiry, "What good thing shall I do?" &c., it is supposed that he imagined some particular act or acts of obedience to be so pre-eminently pleasing to God that the performance of it or them would assuredly secure his favour. If this supposition be correct, he must have imbibed the notion, then commonly taught by the Pharisaic rabbis, that some of the divine commandments were *light*, (or of slight obligation,) and might be dispensed with, while others were *weighty*, (or absolutely binding,) and the observance of them peculiarly acceptable unto God.

Verse 17. *Why callest thou me good? there is none good, &c.*] Our Lord probably meant this reply as a reproof both to the ruler, for using the flattering title by which he had just addressed him; and to the Pharisaic teachers, for their pride in desiring and valuing such ostentatious and indecorous compliments. Not that the word "good," even in its widest sense, would be really improperly applied to Jesus, (for according to his own argument, as it belonged truly to God, it might be appropriated

there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

with equal truth to himself, he being God,) but because the young man had applied it to him, though he regarded him in no other light than that of an excellent teacher. For, as Mr. Watson cogently observes, "This title was not rejected by our Lord because inapplicable to him, but because it was improperly applied by one who regarded him only as a mere man, not as the divine Messiah. The argument, therefore, which has been sometimes built upon this text, to prove that Christ himself disclaimed divinity, is wholly unsound; for our Lord did not in this case restrain one from calling him 'good' who came professing his persuasion that he was a divine person, or one who entreated him to do an act which supposed divine power, and so might be considered as implying such a persuasion, but one who addressed him only as a teacher." By there being "none good but God," is meant none absolutely good, but he. Having thus censured the adulation of the employers, and the arrogance of the receivers, of such inappropriate titles, our Lord proceeded to answer the question of the young man. *If thou wilt enter into life*] Namely, that life inquired about—"eternal life." *Keep the commandments*] Meaning *all* the commandments of God comprehended in the decalogue. The Saviour does not, here, intimate that any man can, unaided by divine grace, "keep the commandments;" neither does he advance any tenet contrary to, or inconsistent with, the doctrine that "man is justified, not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ." His language is a simple and direct reply to the question which had been put to him, and is (we think) the only complete answer which the case admitted: for the young man's inquiry was not

18 He said unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do

how he should be justified or pardoned, but how he should obtain eternal life, or be finally saved. "It is in no respect, therefore, an answer inconsistent with Christian doctrine, which, while it teaches that men are justified by faith only, as strongly enjoins that, if they would 'enter into life,' and be finally saved, they must keep the commandments."—*Watson*. But even then is the reward not of debt, but of grace; for it is only by divine aid that the commandments can possibly be kept. Men can have, therefore, no claim, in their own right, to the benefits of salvation, or do any thing to entitle themselves to "everlasting life." "Eternal life" is "the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. vi. 23.

Verse 18. *Which?*] The young man seems still to cling to the vain distinction of lesser and greater commandments: as though he had said, By the observance of *which command* may I most assuredly secure to myself eternal life? Upon this the Saviour proceeded to enumerate some of the requirements of the moral law, choosing thus gently to show him the superficial character of his obedience, and the consequent hopelessness of trusting in his own righteousness, rather than to alarm his prejudices and excite opposition in his heart by directly charging him with his errors and faults. What an admirable exemplification of judicious teaching! The commands distinctly specified by our Lord are the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and fifth of the decalogue; and the injunction to "love our neighbour," &c., drawn from Lev. xix. 18. It will be observed that all the commands enumerated are taken from what is sometimes termed "the second table," or the laws relating to man's duty to his fellow: not that these

no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

are more necessary to be observed than the others, but either as *instances of the whole*, or because a failure in the performance of these may be more readily noticed than a failure in the fulfilment of the laws of the first table could possibly be. The love of man to God, "in which all the precepts of the first table are summed up," says Mr. *Watson*, "can only be made manifest and proved by obedience to his moral commands: nor is this a proof to others only; it is the best proof to ourselves, since we thus know, and perhaps only thus fully know, whether we truly love God, or are under the influence of a mere inoperative sentiment and emotion." It will also be noticed that our Lord does not enumerate the commandments in the order in which they stand in the moral code, probably to show that "such is the perfection and fulness of every precept, it is of no consequence which is first or last quoted,"—all being of equal obligation. Mark's account of our Lord's answer (chap. x. 19) differs slightly from that of Matthew, inasmuch as he does not give the command to love our neighbour; but, apparently instead thereof, inserts "Defraud not," which injunction is perhaps designed to embody the substance of that command. On this supposition the accounts may be easily reconciled; for as to "defraud" any one is to deprive him of his property, it is a manifest violation of the law of love. Luke says nothing of the command to "love our neighbour," but gives the other five. *Thou shalt do no murder*] "Murder" is the act of killing unlawfully. The scriptural import of the word is very extensive, as it not only embraces all degrees of cruelty whereby human life may be unnecessarily shortened, but also, all malevolent dis-

19 Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

positions of the heart. Hence it is declared, 1 John iii. 15, that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." It has pleased God to sanction this command by the promulgation of very severe penalties against its violator; doubtless with the design of impressing mankind with a high sense of the value of human life. *Not steal*] To "steal" is to take away any thing not our own, without permission of the owner. This command forbids all degrees of theft, pilfering, &c. *Not bear false witness*] "False witness" is the speaking an untruth of, or affecting, another, whether in a court of justice or elsewhere. This command is, therefore, a prohibition of all slander or evil speaking. People generally do not seem to be sufficiently aware of the extent and importance of this injunction, or of the sad consequences which may flow from its transgression. Hence many who would not, on any account, put their hands to their neighbours' goods, and *steal*, do not hesitate to say calumnious things respecting those very persons, which are far more injurious to them. A celebrated writer has no less forcibly than truly said,—

— " Good name in man or woman
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse, steals trash—
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

Verse 19. *Honour thy father and thy mother*] "Which," says the apostle, (Eph. vi. 1, 2,) "is the first commandment with promise,"—meaning the first (as, indeed, it is the *only*) command to which an express promise of good is

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?

annexed. To "honour" our parents implies the paying them *reverence, love*, and all necessary *care*: so that their opinions and wishes shall be regarded, they treated with affection, and their wants supplied. *Love thy neighbour, &c.*] To love our neighbour as ourself is to feel and act toward him, in all things, as we would wish others to regard and treat us. It therefore imports, 1st. The doing him no harm; 2d. The doing him whatever good we can without injury to ourself.

Verse 20. *All these things have I kept*] Or, as Mark has it, "observed;" meaning, perhaps, that he had made these laws the rule of his conduct, and had conformed his deportment to their requirements. His declaration was, probably, true, so far as the public observance of the laws was concerned. In this sense Paul declares himself to have been, as "touching the righteousness" or justification "of the law, blameless." It will be remembered that the Pharisees of our Lord's day did not regard the law as applying to the disposition of the man, but only to his outward deportment: hence they greatly erred in their estimate of their own religious character. *From my youth*] Wesley renders *childhood* instead of "youth." So, also, Campbell, who observes that "as he was a 'young man' who made this reply, the original word is badly rendered youth." It may be inferred from his having kept the commandments from his childhood, that this ruler had received a religious education; he certainly had been a moral lad, as he was now a moral man. Had he, however, understood the spirituality and extent of the law, as explained by our Saviour, he would not have been thus confident but would have confessed that his obedience was, at least,

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and

very imperfect. *What lack I yet?*] To "lack," in the sense here meant, is to be deficient in any quality: the meaning of the inquiry is, therefore, What do I lack as a pre-requisite to obtaining everlasting life? (See verse 16.) The language also conveys an intimation of his willingness to perform whatever duties should be further required of him. The young man's evident sincerity, and readiness to undertake more than he had yet done, seems to have endeared him to our Lord; for, "when Jesus heard these things," (Luke xviii. 22,) he, "beholding him, loved him." (Matt. x. 21.) Surely there must have been something extraordinary in the emotion with which Christ regarded the young man, to have induced the evangelist to make such an entry as this:—something differing from that fervent compassion which glowed in the bosom of the benevolent and beneficent Saviour to all the lost race of man: and if so, then there would seem to have been a peculiar amiableness in the ruler himself. What a pity that with so much of loveliness he should still come short of the mark at which he aimed! "One thing"—and that the most important qualification for eternal life—he "lacked:" (Mark :) namely, *supreme affection to God.* Reader, shouldst thou be "weighed in the balance," wouldst thou be found "wanting?"

Verse 21. *If thou wilt be perfect, &c.*] "Perfect," here, means *complete*. The young man had just inquired in what he was yet "lacking," or deficient; to this inquiry Jesus replies, "If thou wouldst be perfect," or complete in thy-obedience, so that no qualification for the attainment of everlasting life shall be wanting, "sell that thou hast," &c., and "follow me." Designing, probally, that

sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

he should become one of his more select and intimate disciples, and ultimately a preacher of the gospel. Our Lord's reasons for directing the ruler to dispose of his property, &c., may be fairly presumed to have been, 1st., because he saw that his affections were too much set on his possessions, and that they would consequently prove a snare to him; and 2d., because he wished to constitute him a minister of the gospel, and therefore required him, as he had all the others who were honoured with the like "office and ministry," to "forsake all" for it. The circumstances of the early Christian church seem to have rendered this entire and absolute renouncement of worldly interests necessary in some instances; that necessity, however, no longer exists, and therefore the followers of Christ are not now subjected to this test of supreme affection to the Author of their salvation, and of devotedness to his cause: yet, though it is no longer required of Christians, or of Christian ministers, to "sell all that they have and give to the poor," as a condition of discipleship, they must still be *willing* to do this, should circumstances render such a sacrifice necessary, or they do not possess supreme love to God. That "treasure in heaven" which was promised to the young man on condition of his giving up his earthly riches, consists in the enjoyment of unending and inconceivable blessedness; Psa. xvi. 11; 1 Pet. i. 4; and is equivalent to assuring him of "everlasting life."

Verse 22. *He went away sorrowful, &c.*] "This," says Mr. Watson, "is a touching relation, heightened at every step by the seriousness of the young man's inquiry after

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

eternal life; the respectful manner of his approach to Christ; the excellence of his moral character from his earliest youth; the affection with which our Lord regarded him; the sorrowful struggle of spirit with which he departed; and, to close the whole, the perfect silence respecting him afterward, which renders it probable that he gained the world, which he could not sacrifice, and lost his soul. It is left on record as a solemn warning against preferring the things of earth to the interests of our salvation; and especially to warn the young of the error of closing their hearts against the calls of Christ, under the influence of worldly hopes and pleasures. From the ruler's "going away sorrowful," it appears that he did not find fault with Christ's answer to his question, as though it were too arbitrary, being inwardly convinced that Jesus had opened to him the only way of life; but he was grieved that he could not obtain "everlasting life," without sacrificing his wealth. It is thus evident, that much as he desired to secure the heavenly inheritance, he loved his earthly one better. "From the case of this young man let us learn, 1st. That external correctness and morality are insufficient to secure our salvation; 2d. That supreme love of the present world is ruinous to our eternal interests; (see 1 John ii. 15-17;) 3d. That nothing can supply the lack of true religion. Without this, there cannot be complete goodness of character."—Ripley.

Verse 23. Then said Jesus, Verily I say, &c.] "Verily" means truly, certainly: it is a word of peculiar emphasis, designed to point out the great importance of the remarks which should follow. A rich man shall hardly

enter, &c.] The phrase "kingdom of heaven," sometimes denotes the visible church of Christ,—sometimes the state of the redeemed in heaven. It here, probably, embraces the true subjects of both estates, as none can become partakers of the happiness of the latter without possessing the character proper to the former. The words "shall hardly enter," mean, shall not enter without great difficulty; and are equally applicable to the entrance into the visible or invisible kingdom: for as no person is really a member of Christ's visible church who is not conformed to the spirit of Christ, (Rom. viii. 9,) so neither will he have a place among the finally redeemed in heaven, unless he be found faithful at his life's end. (Rom. ii. 7, 8.) Now as none are members of Christ's kingdom but such as are truly humble and spiritual, the rich, to become such, must make an entire renunciation of all undue worldly interests and affections. This is, however, a difficult matter; for by that fatal estrangement from God which characterizes fallen man, the affections are often found to be deeply set on earthly good; and hence riches have, to very many, become an object of trust and supreme love. The possession of wealth, also, gives a certain kind of power and influence, and is calculated to inflate its possessor with a feeling of fancied superiority. Thus arrogance and pride are engendered and fostered, and selfishness increased; which feelings are totally opposed to the poverty of spirit and denial of self so strongly enjoined by Christ. It is for this reason that not "many noble" or "mighty" are found in the Christian ranks, while such numbers of "the poor of this world" are chosen "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom;" not because they are better by nature, or of themselves more inclined to goodness, or that there is any merit in being

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

“poor,”—but because they have fewer hinderances to a hearty believing on Christ than surround the rich. The peculiar difficulties in the way of a rich man's salvation are thus seen to be—1st. That riches are apt to engross the affections; 2d. That such men too often consider wealth their chief good; 3d. Riches beget pride; 4th. By administering to personal gratification, they strengthen selfishness. Yet the rich need not despair of attaining everlasting life; for though they may enter heaven “hardly,” they assuredly *shall* enter, if, instead of trusting in “uncertain riches,” and seeking to indulge self, they will renounce “the vain pomp and vanities of this wicked world,” and humbly trust in God.

Verse 24. *It is easier for a camel, &c.*] The “camel” is, in the East, a well-known and highly-valued beast of burden. It is somewhat taller than an ox, being six or seven feet in height: and is distinguished for having one or two fleshy humps on its back. It is a common but mistaken opinion that all camels have two humps, and that the one-humped animals are all dromedaries. The northern or Bactrian camels have two humps, but those of Syria, Arabia, and Egypt, have only one. The distinction between the camel and dromedary is, that the latter, which is only used for riding, is of higher breed and finer qualities—as the high-blooded race-horse is distinguished from the cart-horse. The foot of the camel is large and spreading, and covered on the under part with a rough, flexible skin. Its hoofs are partly divided, having two toes in front, but the hinder part is not separated. It is an erroneous opinion that the camel delights in sandy

ground. It is true that he crosses it with less difficulty than any other animal; but wherever the sand is deep, the weight of himself and his load causes his feet to sink into it at every step, and he groans and often faints under his burden. Neither is it correct that he



is incapable of ascending hills; for, provided the ground is rough, he can ascend the steepest and most rugged paths with as much facility as the mule. The soil best adapted to his feet, and which he traverses with the greatest ease, is that of which the desert is usually composed, a dry and hard but fine gravel. In its internal structure the camel resembles other ruminating (or cud-chewing) animals, except that it is furnished with an additional bag, or stomach, which serves as a reservoir for water; so that by this contrivance the animal can travel three or four days without drinking. The phrase “easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle,” &c., was a proverbial saying, denoting any thing *impossible*: and the camel was probably chosen rather than any other animal, because it was the largest beast with which the Jews were familiar.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved!

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Other eastern nations had a similar proverb, only substituting *elephant* for "camel." The import of our Lord's declaration, therefore, is, that it is as impossible for a "rich man"—meaning, probably, *such* a rich man as he had just been conversing with—"to enter the kingdom of heaven," as it is for "a camel to pass through the eye of a needle," or *sewing tool*. This announcement excited the astonishment of the disciples, being a doctrine contrary to all their former conceptions on the subject; and on their expressing their surprise, Jesus informed them that he spoke of those who "trusted" in riches; (Mark x. 24;) thus intimating, as above remarked, that the possession of wealth has, in our fallen state, a natural tendency to cause men to rely on it for happiness:—a feeling utterly destructive of that lively sense of dependance on God which is so favourable to a life of piety.

Verses 25, 26. *The disciples were exceedingly amazed*] Mark says, "Astonished out of measure," an expression importing a very high degree of surprise. *Saying, Who then can be saved?*] That is, "who among the rich."—*Holden*. The language expresses the apostles' sense of the *extreme difficulty* (amounting almost to an *impossibility*) with which, according to Christ's doctrine, rich men would obtain salvation. *Jesus beheld them*] Meaning, *fixed his eyes upon them*: a phrase denoting intense earnestness. So, also, Mark x. 21, 27; Luke xx. 17; and elsewhere.—*Bloomfield*. *With men this is impossible, &c.*] Our Lord speaks here of the conversion and ultimate

27 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?

salvation of rich men. "With men," that is, by the power of men, unaccompanied by the special succour of divine grace, it is "impossible" for a rich man to become so humble, so heavenly-minded, so self-denying, as is necessary for his being a member of the true, spiritual church of Christ; *but with God all things are possible*, and he, by his powerful and renewing influence upon the hearts of the rich, can bring them into the required state of mind.—*Watson*. Some commentators translate the word here rendered "impossible" by *extremely difficult*, as also in Luke xviii. 27, and Heb. vi. 4: but "are not supported by sound critical reasons."—*Holden*. So, also, *Bloomfield*.

Verse 27. *Peter said, We have forsaken all, &c.*] This remark was not the result of disappointment, but seems to have been suggested by our Lord's direction to the young ruler. (Verses 21, 22.) The *all* which the apostles had "forsaken" was, in most of their cases, very slender—a few nets, boats, &c. These were, however, their *all*; and in giving them up they as strongly exhibited their sincerity and devotion as they could have done by unhesitatingly yielding up immense wealth, had they been its possessors: and so our Lord evidently regarded their act, looking not so much to the amount of the sacrifice as to the disposition with which it had been made. *What shall we have?*] Jesus had promised the ruler "treasure in heaven," on condition he distributed among the poor his earthly riches: in apparent allusion to this, Peter asks, "What shall we have?" meaning, what shall be *our reward*? Whether he expected the reward to be of a

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory,

spiritual or of a temporal character does not clearly appear: our Lord's reply may, probably, include both senses, though the spiritual predominates.

Verse 28. *Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, &c.*] The words, "Ye which have followed me," are to be understood of the apostles. The word rendered "regeneration," signifies *reproduction, restoration, renovation*. "It is used by Cicero to express the *restoration* of his fortune and dignity; by Josephus, for the *restoration* of the Jews to their own land after the captivity; and by Philo, both for the *renovation* of the earth after the deluge, and to express the *new condition* of the soul in a future state." It is only twice used in the New Testament; here and in Titus iii. 5, and is there explained by the clause which follows, "the renewing of the Holy Ghost," to be a moral renovation. A wonderful diversity of opinion exists as to what is the import of this passage. "Some," says Bloomfield, "construe the words 'in the regeneration,' with the preceding (clause,) and understand by 'regeneration' the great change of manners and doctrines which arose from the preaching of the Baptist or the *first* preaching of the gospel. This, however, is hard and forced." Others understand the term to denote the *millennium*, or personal reign of Christ on the earth for a thousand years; "but," remarks the commentator above quoted, "the whole of this edifice is built on a sandy foundation." Others think, and among them Mr. Watson, "that the 'regeneration' must be understood to signify the perfected dispensation of Christ's gospel, under which the great and divine work of human *restoration* to

ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

the favour and image of God, and that 'renewing of the Holy Ghost' by which St. Paul explains the original word, was commenced in its power and efficacy, and shall continue as long as the dispensation itself." According to this view, the words "the throne of his glory," or his *glorious throne*, signify Christ's exaltation to his *mediatorial* kingdom, on his ascension into heaven; and the phrase, "ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging," &c., is to be interpreted of the *ministerial authority* with which the apostles became then invested in the Christian church as the infallible teachers of its faith and practice, and the administrators of its discipline. Yet, however plausible this interpretation may appear, it does not satisfy the compiler; 1st. Because, apparently, not agreeable to the context; 2dly. Because not suitable to the purpose for which the words were spoken, namely, to give assurance to the apostles that they should receive *ample compensation* for all their sacrifices and sufferings in the cause of the gospel. We would rather, therefore, with Wesley, Bloomfield, and others, understand by "the regeneration" that state of entire *renovation* which shall accompany and follow the *resurrection from the dead* and the *general judgment*. At the resurrection—emphatically the time of *renovation*—the *restoration* of the faithful follower of Christ to the moral image of God shall become complete, and his body, freed from the corruptions of its material and fallen state, be raised immortal, spiritual, and glorious. This *new world*, (as the Syriac version renders the original word,) the Jews generally looked for: and expected it to be introduced under the reign of the Messiah. True,

their views respecting its nature had become gross; but their error, in this respect, does not invalidate the thing itself. If this interpretation of the term "regeneration" be admitted, it will then follow, that by the phrase "the Son of man sitting on the throne of his glory," is meant the glorious manifestation of Christ at the judgment, when he will reward or punish the assembled universe. This will be his most august act as mediator, and is therefore emphatically denominated *the throne of his glory*. The promise that then the apostles should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging," &c., is probably a figurative expression, denoting the honour which should be put on them by the fact that that judgment should be conducted, and its awards distributed, on the principles which they had authoritatively declared. It is not probable that our Lord meant the "twelve" should be in any wise *personally* associated with him in the "judgment;" neither is it likely that the passage in 2 Corinthians vi. 2, 3, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world," &c., is to be understood in a literal sense; but simply that the world should be judged in accordance with the doctrines believed in, and propagated by, the saints. As a "throne" is a well-known emblem of power, dignity, and authority, we ought, perhaps, to include in this promise an intimation of the high state of glory and happiness to which the apostles should be exalted in the heavenly kingdom, as a reward for their sacrifices and sufferings for the cause of Christ. The "twelve tribes" symbolically represent the whole Israel of God.

As our Saviour certainly knew that Judas would prove a traitor, this promise of glory was plainly conditional, meaning that such of the twelve as persevered in faithful obedience should be thus rewarded.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Verses 29, 30. *Every one that hath forsaken houses, &c.*] This promise is not to be limited to the apostles, as it is of a general character, and may be applied to all the obedient followers of Jesus. The word "forsaken" should not be construed to denote a literal *leaving* or *abandoning* of parents, wife, children, or lands, which would be manifestly wrong; but is to be understood in the sense of holding them in lighter estimation than Christ and his gospel are held. *Shall receive a hundred fold*] St. Luke has it "manifold more." A "hundred fold" is a hundred times as much: the import, therefore, is, shall receive that which is of a *hundred times as much value* as all that is forsaken. St. Mark adds that this vast reward shall be given "now in this present time," meaning, in this life—though not, probably, consisting entirely, or even chiefly, of external blessings,—"*with persecutions*,"—that is, "even amidst persecutions." It is the opinion of Mr. Watson that the expression "with persecutions," is added to indicate that our Lord is not speaking strictly of a hundred-fold reward of external felicity to be enjoyed in this life, though probably without designing to intimate that this "hundred-fold" increase should consist entirely, or even chiefly, of present external good: for he qualifies his former announcement by saying, *with persecutions*. It may here be worthy of remark, that as the early persecutions were of such a nature as often to deprive the believers of their natural relatives, who forsook and renounced them, the compensation which Christianity prepared for them in the love and care of new and better

friends, may be glanced at in this declaration of our Lord. So when his persecuted followers were excluded from their former habitations, the dwellings of their fellow Christians were open to them; and "instead of one father, one mother, and a few brothers and sisters, they found a hundred of the faithful who regarded them with fatherly, motherly, or brotherly affection." Still, though somewhat of temporal good may be included in Christ's promise, it is the opinion of many pious and judicious commentators, that it has particular reference to spiritual blessings, such as peace of conscience, communion with God, full assurance of his love, joy in the Holy Ghost, &c.; "one drop of which spiritual refreshing doth incredibly surpass all the comfort which wife, children, wealth, or, in a word, all worldly good, can possibly yield." Thus, though tribulation may abound, to the faithful Christian consolation shall much more abound. But the future reward is more—inconceivably more—than "a hundred fold," and is emphatically termed—"EVERLASTING LIFE."

"O what hath Jesus bought for me!
Before my ravish'd eyes,
Rivers of life divine I see,
And trees of paradise!

Then what are all my suff'rings here,
If, Lord, thou count me meet
With that enraptured host t' appear,
And worship at thy feet!"

3

LESSON XXVII. [Date, A D. 29.]

Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard—Christ is notified of, and comments on, the illness of Lazarus, brother of Martha and Mary.—Matt. xix. 30—xx. 16; John xi. 1—16.

MATT. xix. 30—xx. 16.

BUT many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

NOTES ON MATT. xix. 30—xx. 16.

Verse 30. This passage is generally allowed to be more closely connected with the matter following it than with that preceding, though it possesses an intimate relation to both. *Many that are first shall be last, &c.*] This seems to have been a proverbial saying, and like most adages, is capable of being applied in several ways. It appears to be here employed to guard the disciples against undue exultation, or self-commendation, in view of the honour which Christ designed them, by admonishing them that some who might now seem *first*, either in devotion or influence, might hereafter be found deficient, and in consequence regarded as *last*; and *vice versa*. The adage and parable may also be intended to declare and illustrate the equity of God in admitting the Gentiles to an equal participation with the Jews in the blessings held out to men by the gospel.

Chap. xx. 1. *The kingdom of heaven is like a householder, &c.*] That is, Christ's proceedings in that kingdom may be compared to the conduct of such a "householder," or head of a family. *Went out early*] The original im

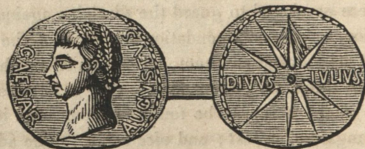
3

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a-day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

ports at *daybreak*. The hour for commencing work was at sunrise. *Vineyard*] A plantation of grape-vines. Vineyards were very numerous in Palestine: and were cultivated with great care. They furnished the sacred writers with some of their most beautiful and striking figures. The church is often alluded to under this image. Greswell supposes our Saviour to have been at this time in Perea, the country east of the Jordan, travelling toward Jerusalem. This division of Palestine was rich in vineyards, (Jos. Wars, b. iii., c. iii. 2,) and their frequent occurrence may have suggested the parable.

Verse 2. *Agreed for a penny a day, &c.*] The *denarius*, here rendered "penny," was a Roman silver coin equal in value, at the time our Saviour was on earth, to about fifteen cents of our money. This was the usual rate of



Denarius of Augustus.

wages among the Romans, as appears from the statement of their historian Tacitus: and from the same amount being specified here, as the compensation for a day's labour, it may be safely presumed to have been the ordinary rate of wages for agricultural labourers among the Jews also.

Verses 3, 4. *He went the third hour*] The Jews began

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

their day at sunrise, and ended it at sunset. This time they divided into twelve portions, or hours: (John xi. 9:) but as the days were of unequal duration, according to the time of the sun's rising and setting, so the length of the hours also varied. At one season of the year their days were about fourteen hours long, as we measure time, and at another season only about ten. The conclusion of the "sixth" hour, or mid-day, was always that point of time when the sun was on the meridian, and answers exactly to our *noon*; and the end of the "third hour" was when the sun was mid-way between the point of his rising and the meridian. At the summer solstice, when the sun rises with them at five and sets about seven, their "third hour" would be, of our time, about half past-eight, and at their winter solstice, when the sun rises at seven and sets at five, about half-past nine, o'clock. In like manner, their "ninth hour" would, in the height of summer, be about half-past three, and in the depth of winter, about half-past two o'clock, of our time. We shall, however, have a sufficiently correct notion of the Jewish manner of reckoning time, for all practical purposes, if we consider their day as uniformly beginning at six o'clock, which would bring the "third hour" to nine o'clock in the forenoon. *Market-place*] The "market-places" of the East are not, as with us, mere places for the purchase and sale of goods; but are also frequently used for the holding of courts, public assemblies, and the like. Indeed, the original term comes from a word which signifies to *collect* or

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

convoke. They will thus appear to have been very suitable places at which to look for employment, and to find servants. The labourers who were here "idle," are not, therefore, to be considered indolent men; they were in search of occupation. *Whatsoever is right, &c.]* That is, not what was legally due for a day's work, but whatever should be equitable or reasonable:—to be decided, probably, by the employer. These labourers could not, of course, expect compensation for the *whole day*, three hours of it being already passed away.

Verses 6, 7. *About the eleventh hour]* One hour before sunset, when the work of the day ceased. *Why stand ye here, &c.]* This is not to be considered as the language of rebuke, but of inquiry. *Because no man hath hired us]* Their "idleness" was, therefore, their misfortune, not their fault: consequently, they were not blameworthy. These labourers were also hired, the householder promising them, as he had the others, whatsoever should be "right."

The best illustration of the imagery of this parable we have met with, is contained in Morier's *Second Journey through Persia*. Speaking of a large square in Hamadan, (the ancient Ecbatana, and generally supposed to be the Achmetha mentioned Ezra vi, 2,) which serves as the market-place, he says: Here "we observed every morning, before the sun rose, a numerous band of peasants collected, with spades in their hands, waiting, as they informed us, to be hired for the day, to work in the sur-

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

rounding fields. The custom * * * * forcibly struck me as a happy illustration of our Saviour's parable of the labourers in the vineyard, particularly when, passing by the same place late in the day, we still found others standing idle, and remembered his words, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' as most applicable to their situation; for, on putting the very same question to them, they answered, 'Because no man hath hired us.'

Verse 8. *When even was come]* When the sun had set, and the business of the day was over. *The Lord saith unto his steward]* By "steward" is meant the agent or manager of his affairs. This officer was commonly the most trusty and faithful of the servants, who had been raised to that station as a reward for his fidelity. *Call the labourers, &c.]* It appears from this and other expressions of Scripture, that *hired* servants were employed by the day, and paid their wages at the close of each day's labour. See Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 15. "This is still the case in the East, where not only labourers but mechanics are paid by the day, and regularly expect their day's wages *when the sun goes down.*" *Beginning from the last, &c.]* That is, pay those who were last hired *first*, and those who were first hired, last of all. This course may be supposed to have been adopted to avoid the appearance of deceit, as well as to give the householder an opportunity of replying to the objections of those who had worked the whole day, should they be dissatisfied with their wages. The arrangement certainly adds to the beauty and ease of the narration, as it very properly introduces the complaint of the murmurers.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

Verse 9. *Received every man a penny*] The full compensation for a day's service, though they had worked but one hour, and were consequently entitled to but one-twelfth of the amount. Such liberality was unusual, and excited high expectation in some of those who were not yet paid.

Verses 10-12. *When the first came*] Those who were first hired. They "likewise received every man a penny:" whereat *they murmured*, or complained, because, as the master had given more, proportionately, to the others, they had expected he would deal equally generously with them. *The good man, &c.*] That is, the householder; as is plain from the fact that in the original the same word is here used as is in the first verse rendered "householder." The expression is not, therefore, to be understood as referring to moral character, but simply as denoting the *head of the family*, in which sense it is often used by old English writers. *Equal unto us*] Meaning, hast paid them equally as much as us. *The burden and heat, &c.*] That is, the "burden" or fatigue of the labour, and the "heat" of the sun or air, during the whole day; while the "last" had "wrought" or worked but "one hour," and that, too, toward the cool of the evening. In Palestine, in certain seasons of the year, out-door labour is

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way; I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?

exceedingly oppressive in "the heat of the day," both on account of the scorching rays of the sun, and the frequency of the hot winds, which are probably here especially alluded to by the word rendered "heat." These enervate the body, and make labour a wearisome "burden."

Verses 13, 14. *Friend, I do thee no wrong*] The word here rendered "friend," is not the one commonly so translated, neither does it imply affection and regard, as the term "friend" usually does: it is merely a civil mode of address to strangers and persons of inferior rank. The same application is given in the parable of the marriage feast, (chap. xxii. 12,) to the guest who had not on a wedding garment; and by our Lord to the traitor Judas, (chap. xxvi. 50,) when he came to deliver him up to his enemies. The labourers first hired had no just ground of complaint, for they were paid according to their contract; and though the master gave more, proportionately, to others than to them, he did them "no wrong"—no injustice—inasmuch as he paid them all they had a right to expect, and for which they had bargained. *Take that thine is, &c.*] That which is justly your due, which is properly your own; meaning the wages for which they had agreed.

Verse 15. *Is thine eye evil*] An "evil eye" is a figurative expression for a covetous, grasping disposition; (Deut. xv. 9; xxviii. 54; Prov. xxiii. 6;) and had its origin in the fact that strong emotions generally exhibit themselves more clearly by the eye than by other features of the

16. So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

countenance. So Milton speaks of the "jealous leer malign." *Because I am good?*] The word "good" here means *bountiful or liberal*.

Verse 16. *So the last shall be first, &c.*] The proverbial saying on which the parable is founded, is here repeated by our Lord, probably, to remind his hearers of his object in narrating it. Its leading points seem to be, 1st. That in the distribution of the privileges of the gospel, the great Sovereign and Judge would, in the exercise of a free and sovereign grace, dispense of his benefits as it should please him, yet never in a way contrary to impartial justice. In consequence of this, it would be seen that many who had supposed themselves peculiarly entitled to favour, and who might, therefore, have expected to be *first*, would be disappointed, while others should be freely chosen to the highest privileges and immunities. Thus the poor fishermen of Galilee were chosen, (as a matter of free grace,) to high office and spiritual dignity in the church, rather than the priests and scribes; and the Pharisees, as a body, with all their apparent zeal for religion, were behind many of the "publicans and sinners" in true meetness for heaven. 2d. That the visible church of Christ should no longer be confined to the Jews, but that its privileges and immunities should be extended to all nations. This truth is probably taught by the successively calling into the "vineyard"—or symbolic church—those who had been idle until the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours. 3d. That all who should comply with the invitation, and labour in the vineyard to the close of the "day," or of life, should be rewarded with the gift of "everlasting life." This seems to be intimated by *each* receiving a

JOHN xi. 1-16.*

1 Now a certain *man* was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

penny. For many be called, but few chosen.] This declaration is repeated Matt. xxii. 14, in connection with the casting out of the guest who had not on a wedding garment. It is generally allowed to have been an adage implying the approval and exaltation of some, and the disapproval and degradation of others; and was probably founded on the ancient manner of selecting from the mass of Israelites, (all of whom were subject to military duty, unless exempt by age or casualty,) those most fit for warlike service. The Romans raised their armies in a similar manner. By the "called," are meant those who are invited to partake of the blessings and privileges of the gospel; and by the "chosen," either those who shall be selected to stations of distinguished usefulness, or those who shall be ultimately approved, and admitted to the bliss of heaven. The latter seems the more reasonable interpretation: for it is highly probable, both from the turn herein given to the discourse and the use which our Lord subsequently makes of this proverb, (in Matt. xxii. 14,) that he here looks to the decisions of the judgment day.

JOHN xi. 1-16.

Verse 1. *A certain man was sick, named Lazarus*] This is the first mention the Scriptures make of one whose death gave occasion for an eminent display of the omnipotence of Christ. The Martha and Mary mentioned in Luke x. 38,

* It is not improbable that this account of the sickness, death, and resurrection of Lazarus, should have been introduced immediately after the tenth chapter of John. (Lesson

&c., are generally supposed to have been the sisters of Lazarus. It is worthy of note, that neither of the first three evangelists make any allusion to the sickness or death of Lazarus, nor of the stupendous miracle by which his decease was followed; perhaps because, as Lazarus might have been still living when they wrote, they were unwilling either to expose him to the malice of the Jewish rulers, or to lay in the way of these persons a temptation to bring upon themselves deeper guilt by his actual murder, than they incurred by coolly and malignantly plotting his death. See John xii. 10, 11. When John wrote, however, Lazarus was in all likelihood removed from this state of existence, and being thus placed beyond the reach of his enemies, that evangelist hesitates not to make the matter public. *Of Bethany*] That is, an inhabitant of Bethany, which village was rather less than two miles east of Jerusalem. From Jerusalem to Bethany is a beautiful walk; the road leads over the summit of Olivet, and thence by a gentle descent to the village, which is now an inconsiderable place, containing, according to Dr. Robinson, "about twenty families." The village is described as being very pleasantly located. The monks here, as a matter of course, show what they pretend to have been the sepulchre of Lazarus; "it is a deep vault, like a cellar, excavated in the limestone rock in the middle of the village; and to which there is a descent by twenty-six steps. It is hardly necessary to remark, that there is not the slightest probability of its ever having been the tomb of Lazarus. The

16.) Mr. Townsend has, however, assigned the narrative to the place it here occupies, and his arrangement is necessarily followed.

* Ecclesiastical history states that Lazarus lived for thirty years after our Lord's ascension into heaven.—*Benson*.

2 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

form is not that of the ancient sepulchres; nor does its position accord with the narrative of the New Testament, which implies that the tomb was not in the town."—*Robinson's Researches in Palestine, &c. The town of Mary, &c.*] The place of their residence.

Verse 2. *It was that Mary which anointed, &c.*] Meaning, she who *afterward* anointed our Lord. See Matt. xxvi. 6, &c.; Mark xiv. 3, &c.; John xii. 3, &c. It would seem, from this reference to the "anointing" of our blessed Saviour by Mary, that that pious act was well known, even among the Asiatics, for whom John more particularly wrote his history; and that the prediction of Jesus, (Matt. xxvi. 13,) that wheresoever his gospel should be preached, the remembrance of that act should be preserved, had begun to receive its accomplishment.

Verse 3. *His sisters sent unto him*] That is, to Christ, who at this time was probably at Bethabara. (Compare chap. x. 40 and xi. 7, with i. 28.) It would seem that the message here referred to was not sent as mere *intelligence*, but with the desire, and probably the request, that Jesus should forthwith repair to Bethany. The sisters probably expected that he would come and restore their sick brother to health. (Verse 21.) *He whom thou lovest is sick*] Meaning Lazarus. This is a simple, yet most touching message. It makes its eloquent appeal, not to the love of Lazarus for Christ, (though that was doubtless great,) but to the greater love of Christ for Lazarus. He whom *thou lovest* is sick! "Even we weak men," says

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Bishop Hall, "what can we stick at where we love! but thou, O God, art love itself! Whatever thou hast done for us is out of thy love; the ground and motive of all thy mercies is within thyself, not in us, and if there be aught in us worthy of thy love, it is thine own, not ours." The sending this intelligence so far, and the earnest representation made, shows that the sisters deemed their brother to be in imminent danger; and that their fears were well founded the event fully proves.

Verse 4. *Jesus said*] Namely, to the messenger. The remaining words of this verse comprise our Lord's answer to the sisters, which was apparently to be conveyed to them by him whom Christ now addressed. *This sickness is not unto death*] Meaning, that death, as commonly understood, would not be its ultimate result. It cannot be that our Lord meant Lazarus would not *expire*, as the words immediately following, and the declaration contained in verses eleven and fourteen, abundantly prove; but simply that he would not *remain under the power of death*. For a similar mode of speech see Matt. ix. 24. We presume the language was designedly ambiguous, and intended for the trial of the sisters' faith. *But for the glory of God*] Because made an occasion for strikingly exhibiting his wondrous power and goodness. How much pains the Almighty seems to have taken to convince and save an unbelieving and apostate world! *That the Son might be glorified*] Which he signally was by this event, for "many believed on him," as the Messiah, through the strong evidence which the raising of Lazarus furnished of our Lord's being "the Christ, the Son of God."

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

Verse 5. *Jesus loved Martha, &c.*] That is, he was strongly attached to them, and regarded them with peculiar affection: probably because of their piety and amiableness. We may learn from this that *special friendships are not improper*; and that the Christian, though bound to cultivate a spirit of love to *all men*, may innocently regard some persons with more tender emotions than he does others. Indeed, the desire for, and enjoyment in, the company of certain persons over that of others, so common to man, is a proof of the wisdom and goodness of Almighty God, in constituting us with such dispositions, and most assuredly adds much to the happiness of our race.

Verse 6. *He abode two days in the place, &c.*] Meaning, probably, that he remained "where he was" until the second day after receiving the intelligence. It is plausibly suggested that Lazarus died soon after Jesus received the tidings of his illness; either on the same day or the day after. Now if, as is supposed, our Lord were at this time at least two days' journey from Bethany, he could not, in the natural course of things, have reached that town in time to save his friend's life; and as to working a miracle in this instance, as he had sometimes done, while at a distance from the object, it is manifest that the sisters did not expect this from him; (chap. xi. 21, 32;) and had he even done so, the splendour of the miracle would not have been so great, nor its evidence so decisive, as that which he finally wrought, for the distance of the author from the subject must have had a tendency to obscure its truth. The miracle, it is true, would have been equally real, but its

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

reality would not have been so apparent. Besides, his delay in repairing to Bethany removed all possibility of doubt as to the fact of Lazarus's death. It is, too, strongly inferable from Christ's conduct in thus continuing at Bethabara, that he intended to reanimate Lazarus; for on no other supposition can his apparently unnecessary delay be reconciled with his love to the family.

Verses 7, 8. *After that*] Meaning, after the expiration of the time above mentioned. *Saith he—Let us go into Judea*] Whence he had been driven, a short time before, by the violence of the Jews. This journey was proposed with the design of restoring Lazarus to life, (verse 11,) though as yet the disciples knew it not. *His disciples say—The Jews sought to stone thee, &c.*] Namely, at the previous feast of dedication. See chapter x. 31, 39. The disciples were evidently astonished at their Master's proposition, probably because of its apparent rashness, for they seem to have anticipated a renewal, by the Jews, of the same harsh treatment they had already received. Their intention was to *dissuade* him from going.

Verses 9, 10. *Are there not twelve hours in the day?*] Meaning, there are: for the Jews divided their day, from sunrise to sunset, into twelve equal portions of time denominated "hours." In consequence of counting their day from the rising to the setting of the sun, their hours were of longer duration at one season of the year than at another, according as the sun rose and set earlier or later.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

The expression is supposed to have been a proverbial saying, importing that there is a suitable time in which men should be engaged in the duties of their callings; and is illustrated, in the following words, by the case of a traveller, who, while pursuing his journey in the day time, is supposed to prosecute it safely; but, neglecting that proper time, falls into peril. The sense of our Lord's words, then, is: That there was a certain and stated time allotted him in which to live, and perform his mighty acts—represented by the twelve hours of the day: and that consequently he must diligently employ that time, undeterred by the dangers attendant on the discharge of his ministry. His language thus appears to be a direct reply to the disciples' attempt to dissuade him from going into Judea. We should learn two things from this example of our Saviour: 1st. Not to permit ourselves to be sluggish in duty, for "the night cometh when no man can work;" (John ix. 4;) 2d. Not to permit any danger to turn us aside from the performance of any known duty. *There is no light in him*] Rather, in *it*; that is, in the world: the light of the sun being withdrawn in the night.

Verse 11. *Lazarus sleepeth*] A soft method of announcing his death. The sacred writers frequently employ this phraseology when speaking of the decease of the righteous. See Deut. xxxi. 16; Acts vii. 60; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. The word *sleep* is applied to death, 1st. Because of the *resemblance* between them; 2d. As intimating that death is not the termination of existence; but that there

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death : but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there,

will be an *awaking* from it, as of a man from sleep. It is a tender and beautiful expression, well calculated to remove from the mind of the righteous all that is dreadful in death, and to fill it with the idea of calm repose after a life of toil, as well as of a future rising in increased vigor and with renovated powers. *I go that I may awake him*] Intimating his intention of arousing Lazarus from "the sleep of death," by raising him again to life. We have here another instance of our Saviour's prescience, for no one had acquainted him with the fact of his friend's death.

Verse 12. *Then said the disciples*] Supposing that by "sleep" Jesus meant taking ordinary rest. *If he sleep he shall do well*] Meaning, *he should recover*; for the ability and disposition to sleep was by the Jews considered to be a very favourable symptom in disease. Bloomfield observes that their rabbins ranked it among the six good symptoms in sickness. The disciples seem to have intended their remark as a hint that as Lazarus was now in a fair way to recover, there was no occasion for their Lord to hazard himself in Judea.

Verses 14, 15. *Then said Jesus plainly, &c.*] Perceiving that the disciples misapprehended his former remarks. *I am glad I was not there*] Seemingly intimating that if he had been, he could not well have resisted the importunities of his beloved friends to restore Lazarus to health, which might not have afforded his disciples so convincing

to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

a proof of his omnipotence as would the miracle they would now witness. *To the intent ye may believe*] Meaning, that they might "believe" on him the more firmly: their faith being greatly confirmed by the performance of so stupendous a miracle. The disciples do not appear, however, to have had any idea of what Christ was about to do.

Verse 16. *Thomas, called Didymus*] "Didymus" is a Greek word answering to the Hebrew "Thomas." They both signify a *twin*. *Let us go, that we may die with him*] Meaning, die with Jesus. From this it appears that the disciples were still labouring under the apprehension that their Master was about to expose himself, and probably them, to imminent peril. Notwithstanding this impression, however, Thomas, with characteristic bluntness, and strong attachment, which was probably equalled by the love of every other apostle, proposes that they should accompany him, that they might "die with him." We cannot forget, however, that when the hour of trial really came, "they all forsook him and fled."