

1930

The eschatological teachings of Jesus

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THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

Boston University

School of Theology

1930

OUTLINE

Introduction.

Purpose of thesis to give a reasonable and spiritual exposition of the main features of Jesus eschatology.

A The Kingdom of God the center of Jesus' eschatological teachings.

- 1 Judaistic conception of the Kingdom of God.
 - (a) Outward national organization.
 - (b) To be introduced by startling catastrophe.
- 2 Jesus' conception of the Kingdom of God.
 - (a) Not outward national organization, although Jesus did not oppose any earthly power.
 - (b) Translation of men's souls from power of Satan to power of God.
 - (c) Jesus the Founder and Lord of the Kingdom.
 - (d) Kingdom of God an ideal in heavenly purity hovering above earthly realities.
 - (e) Kingdom of God a spiritual society.
 - (f) Kingdom of God not to come catastrophically, but slowly, like growth of seed.
 - (g) Allegiance to Jesus required of those who would enter Kingdom.
 - (h) Kingdom the introduction of a new principle of divine rule into hearts of men.
 - (i) Kingdom a sphere of privilege and blessing.
- 3 The Kingdom present or future?
 - (a) Passages indicating the Kingdom as an already existing era.
 - (b) Passages indicating the Kingdom as coming progressively.
 - (c) Passages indicating the Kingdom as near at hand.
 - (d) Passages indicating the Kingdom as future, but without indication of its nearness.
 - (e) Passages indicating the Kingdom as ushered in at the coming of the Son of Man.

- (f) Passages indicating the Kingdom as future interpreted in two ways:
 - (i) Kingdom a gradual development.
 - (ii) Kingdom to come catastrophically.
- (g) Reconciliation of these passages:
 - (i) Jesus' conception of Kingdom as present in early ministry; as future in later ministry.
 - (ii) Kingdom to begin on earth and to be consummated in heaven.
 - (iii) Kingdom both a present being upon earth, and a perfect glorified reality in heaven.

B. The Consummation of the Kingdom.

I. The Parousia.

- (a) Passages indicating the coming of the Kingdom catastrophically.
 - (i) Passages indicating Jesus' coming within the lifetime of some of his hearers.
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 - (iii) Jesus' proclamation of his coming to Pilate.
- (b) Passages indicating the gradual coming of the Kingdom.
- (c) Reconciliation of these two conceptions.
 - (i) Various comings of the Son of man interpreted as epochs in the progressive development, but were understood in an eschatological, apocalyptic sense by the popular mind.

II. The Final Judgment.

- (a) Conception that Jesus will judge all nations in the Day of Judgment.
- (b) Conception that judgment is a process now taking place in the world.
- (c) Teaching of Jesus that judgment is both present and future.
- (d) Reward or punishment the result of reconstruction or of continued sin, respectively.

III. The Resurrection and Consummation.

- (a) Small amount of evidence in Jesus' teachings concerning life hereafter; his assumption that since men are the sons of God, they must share in his immortality.
- (b) Jesus' declaration of certainty of future life.
- (c) Jesus' emphasis of the truth that the forces of life will triumph over death, that man is destined to live beyond the grave, and that man will perpetuate the life which God gave him here on earth.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Perhaps no phase of our Lord's teaching has brought forth as many differing interpretations as has that concerning his eschatology, or doctrine of last things. It is the purpose of this thesis to endeavor to give a reasonable and spiritual exposition of the main features of Jesus' eschatology.

I. The Kingdom of God. Our Lord's teachings on this subject center around the great doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and his whole disclosure of the future has its point of issue in this doctrine of the Divine Kingdom and its consummation. Jesus does not dwell on theoretic questions and speculative discussions, but rather on the practical relationships and the broad moral issues of life. His teaching "offers no proof of the reality of a future existence", writes Dr. Salmond,⁽¹⁾ but presupposes it, and speaks of life as man's destiny. It unfolds the course of the Divine Kingdom which had been the object of Old Testament faith and the center of Old Testament hope. It presents that Kingdom as a thing of the actual present, brought to men in and by the Teacher Himself, but also as a thing of

(1) H.D.B., I, p. 750.

the future which looks through all historical fulfilments to a completer realization, -- a thing, too, of gradual, unobtrusive growth, yet destined to be finally established by a great conclusive event. Christ's whole teaching on the subject of the Last Things, as regards the Church, the world, and the individual, is connected with this lofty Old Testament idea of a new order in which God shall be confessed to be Sovereign, and has regard to it in its primary deliverances."

The thought of the Kingdom of God did not originate with Jesus, but rather it had occupied a prominent place in the Old Testament and in the late teachings of Judaism. The Jews looked upon their own state as a Kingdom of God -- in fact the place where Jesus was to set up his Kingdom. They considered Jehovah to be their king, and they regarded their whole system of laws and institutions as being the direct expression of his will. As Stevens writes: ⁽¹⁾ "They regarded their rulers and magistrates as Jehovah's vicegerents, the human instruments by which his will was to be executed in the nation. The judges and kings of Israel were the 'sons of God' in a preeminent sense, the objects of Jehovah's special care and favor...The oppression which the Jewish people suffered at the hands of other nations, especially

(1) Stevens, G.B., "The Teachings of Jesus", p. 59.

their experience under the Syrian and Roman dominations, tended to make the idea of a divine kingdom living and effective in Israel. When the Jews of Jesus' time spoke of the Kingdom of God, they thought of a world-power that should throw off the hated yoke of the Roman oppression. Visions of this coming glorious day for Israel constitute the substance of the apocalyptic writings of the later Jewish period."

Dr. Stevens further points out⁽¹⁾ that it is obvious alike from the Old Testament, from the late Jewish writings, and from the New Testament, that the Jews conceived of the Kingdom as an outward national organization -- a world-empire having its center in Jerusalem and having as its head the long-expected Messiah. "Another current idea concerning the coming Kingdom was that it was to be introduced by a startling catastrophe, a signal intervention of God in human history. The victorious Messiah should suddenly appear, beat down his enemies, and establish his throne in power and splendor."

When Jesus began his preaching concerning the Kingdom of God he came in contact with this Jewish eschatology which was current in his day. His idea of the Kingdom was in strange contrast to this popular conception. "Jesus refused

(1) Stevens, G.B., "The Teachings of Jesus", p. 60.

to follow the lure of the earthlier line of Messianism", writes Manson, ⁽¹⁾ "and to oppose the Kingdom of his Father to Rome or any other earthly power. ⁽²⁾ He refused to be drawn into the expression of any anti-Roman opinions. ⁽³⁾ He rejected the title 'Son of David' as an inadequate designation of his heavenly authority, ⁽⁴⁾ and the claims to which he confessed at last before the High Priest centered around the apocalyptic vision of Daniel 7:13. ⁽⁵⁾ So also the work he came to do was not to save Israel from her enemies, but to translate men's souls from the power of Satan to the power of God. ⁽⁶⁾ The victories of his disciples over the spiritual and bodily ills of men he described symbolically by saying he had seen Satan as lightning fall from heaven. ⁽⁷⁾ In all this, and in the acceptance of the demon-possession theory, the teaching of Jesus appears in continual contact with the apocalyptic idea, that 'we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'" ⁽⁸⁾

(1) Manson, Wm., "Christ's View of the Kingdom of God", pp. 73-4.

(2) Mt 4:8 f.

(6) Mt 12:28; Lk 11:20.

(3) Mk 12:17.

(7) Lk 10:18.

(4) Mk 12:35.

(8) Eph 6:12.

(5) Mk 14:62.

When we examine the teaching of Jesus on the nature of the Kingdom it is well to consider the relationship between the latter and his own person. Several passages in the first Gospel⁽¹⁾ show very plainly that Jesus is not simply the founder of this Kingdom, but that it is His kingdom as well as his Father's, and also that he is Lord and King over it. "The idea here is moulded by that of the Old Testament theocracy," writes Dr. Orr,⁽²⁾ "in which God was at once the King of the chosen nation, and exercised his functions through a visible representative. This relation, only brokenly and typically illustrated in the descendants of David, is now, in accordance with prophecy, perfectly realized in the Messianic King, whose solidarity with God in heart and will is complete."⁽³⁾ But the connection of the kingdom with the Person of Jesus is more intimate even than this. Jesus is not only the Founder and Lord of the new theocracy, but is Himself the vital germ of it, -- the living embodiment and representative of its principle, -- the actual type of the new relation of sonship to God into which men are invited to enter through Him, -- so that the Kingdom of God may truly be said to have existed on earth in His Person from the first moment of His manifestation. It is through vital relation to Him, as the Synoptics, and still more

(1) Mt 13:41; 16:28; 20:21; 25:34,40.

(2) H.D.B. II, pp. 849-50.

(3) Mt 11:27; Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38 etc.

clearly the Fourth Gospel, show, -- through reception of His Person and message, through faith in Him, surrender to Him, submission to his rule, keeping his commandments, which is synonymous with doing the will of the Father, through union with him as the branches and the vine, etc., -- that the kingdom is constituted.⁽¹⁾ With all this goes a profoundly modified conception of the nature of the sovereignty in this new kingdom of God, which, as founded, not by worldly means of conquest and violence, but by humility, by service, by deeds of mercy, by suffering, by witness for the truth⁽²⁾ is ruled in like manner, not by force or tyranny, but by the suasive influences of love over freely surrendered hearts.⁽³⁾"

"The kingdom of God," writes Bruce,⁽⁴⁾ "in one view of it, is an ideal hovering in heavenly purity above all earthly realities, and not to be sought or found in any existing society, civil or ecclesiastical. It is an inspiration rather than an institution. It possesses the quality of inwardness. It comes not with observation, but has its seat in the heart. Wherever there is a human soul believing in the Fatherhood of God, and cherishing towards God the spirit of sonship and towards man the spirit of brotherhood, there is the kingdom manifesting its presence in righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, and in philanthropic deeds."

(1) Mt 7:21-23; 8:10; 11:28-30; 16:24,25; Jn 15:1-8; etc.

(2) Mt 11:4-6,29; 13:19; 18:3,4; 20:25-28; Jn 18:36,37.

(3) Mt 11:28-30; 22:37-40; Jn 14:15; 15:15.

(4) Bruce, A.B., "The Kingdom of God", p. 252.

Jesus thought of the Kingdom as being a spiritual society which required spiritual conditions and qualifications of mind and heart for admittance and participation in it. It was not citizenship in the Jewish nation, nor the performance of ceremonial ritual, but the possession of certain spiritual states of mind and the fulfilment of certain moral conditions which entitled mankind to membership and citizenship in this spiritual realm or Kingdom. By this Jesus means something we can see here and now, if we will; it is something more real than what is perceived by the senses, yet it is not thus perceived; it is a reality which, when it is once perceived, will transform a person's thought, feeling and conduct. The Kingdom of God is an inward spiritual reality of this kind, and is more than a system of ethics. It is also a matter of proper personal adjustment between the individual and God, and of harmony with the spirit of the Lord. The sense of this inner adjustment and worth is the ultimate standard by which God estimates folks, and the coming of the kingdom means the coming of the rule and sovereignty of God.

The Kingdom of God does not come with a spectacular demonstration of power, but rather is like seed which brings forth fruit only when placed in good ground. Dr. Headlam holds that the coming of the Kingdom depends upon the growth of the Word

of God in men's hearts,⁽¹⁾ and as there are many in whom it does not bring forth fruit, the kingdom cannot come speedily. The growth of the kingdom is a slow and secret process; it is like seed growing secretly. What happens we cannot see, but ultimately the plant springs up and flowers and produces its seed, and so the consummation is reached. Its beginnings are very small, but little by little it will become great and spread throughout the world as the small seed becomes the great tree. The Kingdom is the Word of God working secretly through a long period of time; it means a principle of life and conduct in the heart of mankind. The great power of Christianity working in the world, of which process the Christian Church is the definitely visible aspect, is a part of the Kingdom of God.

When our Lord spoke of entering the Kingdom as a little child he meant that people should come in as beginners, not simply in child-like innocence. If God is to give his Kingdom to men, they must give their allegiance to him. Jesus made forgiveness a condition for entering the Kingdom because only the person who has experienced this blessing can realize its meaning, and because such a person will prove that he has been forgiven by manifesting the forgiving spirit toward one who has done him wrong. Faith is another condition for entering the Kingdom; the Christian should let Jesus lead him into an adjustment with God. The Kingdom is an inward reality

(1) Headlam, A.C., "Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ," p. 252.

with an outward manifestation, and it is a personal relationship which has a social aspect. The Kingdom of God is thus open to anyone who will do the will of the Father in heaven. Individuals come into the kingdom because of the attitude they take toward God, and not because they may be rich or poor in worldly possessions. This Kingdom is heavenly in that it is divine in origin and character; it is the reign of heavenly principles and laws, while its law is the will of God. Jesus thought that he was in the Kingdom of God as the rule and character of God found expression in his own life. The kingdom is open to anyone who is willing to take God's will and do it, and he who serves most will have the highest place in this spiritual empire. The one who humbles himself to the life of sacrifice and helpfulness shall be most highly exalted in the Kingdom of God.

"The Kingdom is in its beginnings the introduction of a new principle of divine rule into the hearts of men, through the word,⁽¹⁾ the truth,⁽²⁾ the Spirit,⁽³⁾ in virtue of which, changed in disposition,⁽⁴⁾ they become doers of the will of the Father in heaven,⁽⁵⁾ writes Dr. Orr.⁽⁶⁾ It is therefore, in its principle, something inward, vital, invisible.⁽⁷⁾ It is not

(1) Mt 13:19.

(3) Jn 3:5,6.

(5) Mt 7:21 etc.

(7) Lk 17:20,21.

(2) Jn 18:37.

(4) Mt 18:3.

(6) H.D.B. II, p. 852.

the idea of Jesus, however, that this kingdom should be confined solely to the inward life. It is rather a principle working from within outwards for the renewal and transformation of every department of our earthly existence (marriage, the family, the state, social life, etc.)⁽¹⁾ It is thus a growing, developing thing -- as it is represented in the parables.⁽²⁾ The kingdom is not fully come till everything in human life, and in the relations of man in society, is brought into complete harmony with the will of God.⁽³⁾ While, however, Jesus gives us many incidental indications of the true relation of his Kingdom to society, it is the spiritual or directly religious and ethical aspect of the Kingdom which alone is more prominent in his teaching. 'The whole weight is rested on the inward disposition, on the new relation to God, on the new life of the Spirit, on the new righteousness proceeding from that life, on the new hopes and privileges of the sons of God. Everything is looked at in the light of the spiritual, the eternal. We read nothing in Christ of the effects of his religion on art, on culture, on philosophy, on politics, on commerce, on education, on science, on literature,

(1) Mt 19:3-9.

(2) Mt 13.

(3) Mt 6:10.

on economical or social reform'.⁽¹⁾ So also with the apostles. Yet a regenerating spirit has gone forth from the gospel of the Kingdom in all these departments.

"On the other side, the Kingdom of God is viewed as a sphere of privilege and blessing into which the disciple is admitted, in which he receives the forgiveness of his sins, attains the satisfaction of his spiritual wants, is filled with righteousness, and inherits the felicity of the eternal life.⁽²⁾ It is the summum bonum for man -- the good to be desired above all others, and for which everything else should be sacrificed.⁽³⁾ The Kingdom of God is thus emphatically with Jesus, as throughout the whole of Scripture, a kingdom of grace, the message of it 'good tidings'.⁽⁴⁾ Its proclamation is a gospel, and it brings to man at once the fullest provision for his needs as a sinner, the highest satisfaction of his moral life, and the noblest end for his practical realization. God's royalty in his Kingdom is shown not less by gift than by rule; it is gracious, unstinted giving which is the foundation of the whole.⁽⁵⁾ The all-embracing expression for its good is 'eternal life'; yet in the Synoptics this term is always applied to the future consummation of that good,⁽⁶⁾ whereas in John it is used also to denote the

(1) "Christian View of God and the World," p. 406.

(2) Mt 5:3-10; 6:14; 19:29; 25:34,46; Lk 4:18; Jn 6:27,35,40.

(3) Mt 6:33; 13:44-46; 19:29; Lk 10:43; Jn 17:3.

(4) Mt 4:23; Lk 2:10,11; 4:22.

(5) Mt 7:7-11; Jn 5:14; 6:32-35; 10:11,28.

(6) E.g. Mk 10:30.

present possession of the life of God by believers. (1)

"The kingdom of God is inseparably associated with character in its members. The conditions of entrance into it are repentance and faith; (2) its blessings require for their reception such moral dispositions as poverty of spirit, humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, spiritual hungering and thirsting (3); as a kingdom of the truth, those only that are of the truth (4); of an honest and good heart (5), will receive it; to know its doctrine there must be a willingness to do the will of God (6); a desire for the honor of men is fatal to seeking the honor that comes from God. (7) These states of mind are not the product of nature, but the result of a new spiritual rebirth. (8) Within the kingdom, the rule of God takes the form of the realization of a new and spiritual righteousness in the hearts of the members, and in their relations with each other and with the world. This righteousness is of the essence of the kingdom, (9) and a great part of the teaching of Jesus relates to it (notably the Sermon on the Mount). It is at once part of the blessing of the kingdom, (10) and a moral task set before the members for their

(1) Jn 5:24.

(2) Mk 1:15; Lk 7:50; 13:3,5.

(3) Mt 5:3,6; 11:28,29; 18:3,4; Jn 4:14; 6:35.

(4) Jn 18:37.

(5) Lk 8:15.

(6) Jn 7:17.

(7) Jn 5:44.

(8) Jn 3:3,5.

(9) Mt 6:33.

(10) Mt 5:6.

accomplishment.⁽¹⁾ Its norm is the perfection of the Father Himself⁽²⁾ -- the absolutely Good One.⁽³⁾ Like everything else in the Kingdom, it is the product of a divinely given life, and develops from within outwards, from heart to conduct, as a good tree brings forth fruit.⁽⁴⁾ It differs from the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees in motive and in aim, -- being spontaneous, where theirs was formal and mechanical; spiritual, where theirs had regard only to the letter of the precept; done with a sole respect to God, where theirs was man-pleasing.⁽⁵⁾ Its supreme principle is love.⁽⁶⁾ In relation to God, it takes the form of a spirit of dependence, and trust in his fatherly providence, which relieves from earthly care⁽⁷⁾; in its estimate of goods, it sets supreme store on the kingdom and its righteousness, and seeks these beyond all material blessings;⁽⁸⁾ in its relation to man, it shows itself in mercy, forbearance, forgiveness of injuries, active beneficence, and in the bright shining of a holy example.⁽⁹⁾ Its standards of judgment are the direct inversion of most of those which prevail in the world. It

(1) Mt:5:13-16; 7:21.

(2) Mt 5:48.

(3) Mk 10:18.

(4) Mt 7:17.

(5) Mt 5:17-6:18.

(6) Mt 7:12; Mk 12:33-34.

(7) Mt 6:25-34; 7:6-11.

(8) Mt 6:19-23; 31-33.

(9) Mt 5:5,7,38-48; 7:12.

inverts, for example, the world's standards of blessedness in calling the poor in spirit, the mourning, the meek, the persecuted, etc., blessed; ⁽¹⁾ the world's standards of greatness in pronouncing that true greatness lies in humility and service; ⁽²⁾ the world's standards of wisdom in pronouncing the typical wise man of the world a fool; ⁽³⁾ the world's standards of the chief good in making that consist in the Kingdom and its righteousness. ⁽⁴⁾ Yet in his doctrine of the righteousness of the Kingdom, Jesus declares that He is not introducing anything absolutely new, but only unfolding the deepest spirit and teaching of law and prophets. ⁽⁵⁾ It follows from the nature of the kingdom, as just described, that it is a Kingdom entirely spiritual and unworldly in its nature ⁽³⁾ -- supernatural and heavenly in its origin, powers, blessings, aims, and ends, -- a kingdom free alike from national and ceremonial limitations, working by its own laws, and destined in the end to embrace all peoples.

The question has arisen whether Jesus conceived of his Kingdom as being present in the world now, or whether it is a consummation to be realized in the future. In his teachings there are expressions which point in either direction, as shown by the following exhibits:

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (1) Mt 5:3-12; cf Mal 3:14. | (2) Mt 18:3,4; Mk 10:44; Jn 13:14,15. |
| (3) Lk 12:15-21. | (4) Mt 6:33. |
| (5) Mt 5:17,18; 22:36-39. | (6) Jn 8:36; cf Mk 10:42,43. |

Exhibit A

Passages Indicating the Kingdom as an Already Existing Era

Lk 7:28

Among those that are born of women there is no one greater than John; but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. Cf. Mt 11:11.

Lk 11:20

But if I by the finger of God expel the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Cf. Mt 12:28.

Lk 16:16

The law and the prophets lasted until John came. Since then the good news of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone forces his way into it. Cf. Mt 11:13

Lk 17:20,21

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, The kingdom of God does not come with watching for it. Now will they say, Here it is; or There it is; for the kingdom of God is within you.

Exhibit B

Passages Indicating the Kingdom as Coming Progressively

Mk 4:26-29

And he said, The kingdom of God is like a man sowing seed in the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed springs up and grows, he knows not how. The earth bears fruit of itself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, immediately he begins to reap the grain because the harvest has come.

Mk 4:30-32

And he said, How shall I compare the kingdom of God or in what comparison shall I set it? It is like a grain of mustard seed which, though when it is sown upon the earth is smaller than all the seeds that are in the earth, yet comes up and becomes greater than all the herbs and puts out great branches so that the birds of heaven lodge under the shadow of it. Cf. Mt 13:31,32; Lk 13:18,19.

Lk 13:18,19

To what is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his garden and it grew and became a tree and the birds of heaven lodged in its branches. Cf. Mt 13:31,32; Mk 4:30-32.

Exhibit C

Passages Indicating the Kingdom as Near At Hand

- Mk 1:14,15 And after John was thrown into prison Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of God and saying, The appointed time is completed and the kingdom of God is near at hand; repent and believe in the gospel. Cf. Mt 4:12,17.
- Mk 9:1 Of a truth I tell you, that some of those who are standing here shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God come with power. Cf. Mt 16:28; Lk 9:27.
- Mk 14:25 Of a truth I tell you, that I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine until the day I drink it anew in the kingdom of God. Cf. Mt 26:29; Lk 22:18.
- Mk 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a councillor of good repute, who was also expecting the kingdom of God. Cf. Lk 23:50.
- Lk 4:43 In the other cities also I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this purpose I was sent.
- Lk 21:29-32 See the fig trees and all the trees. When they put out their leaves of yourselves you know at once that the summer is near at hand. So also you when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. Of a truth I tell you, that this generation shall not pass away until all these things have happened.
- Mt 13:36-43 And his disciples came to him, saying, Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field. And he answered, He that sows the good seed is the Son of man. And the field is the world, and the good seed represents the sons of the kingdom, and

the tares are the sons of the evil one. And the enemy that sowed the tares is the devil, and the harvest is the consummation of the age, and the reapers are angels. As therefore the tares will be gathered together and burned in the fire, so also will it be in the consummation of the age. For the Son of man will send out his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that lead men to sin and those that do iniquity, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire. There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let him that has ears hear.

Exhibit D

Passages Indicating the Kingdom as Future,
but without indication of its nearness

- Mk 9:47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is good for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye rather than having two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna. Cf. Mt 18:9.
- Mk 10:14 Suffer the little children to come to me; hinder them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Cf. Mt 19:14; Lk 18:16.
- Mk 10:15 Of a truth I tell you, whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it. Cf Mt 18:3; Lk 18:17.
- Mk 10:23-25 And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, How hard it will be for those that have riches to enter the kingdom of God. And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus said to them again, Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Cf. Mt 19:23,24; Lk 18:24,25.
- Mt 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Cf. Lk 6:20.
- Lk 13:28,29 There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but yourselves banished without. And they shall come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and shall sit down at table in the kingdom of God. Cf. Mt 8:11,12.

Lk 14:15-24

And one of those who was at table with him, hearing what he said, said to him, Blessed is every man who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. And he said, A certain man made a great supper; and he bade many: and he sent forth his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither of the poor and maimed and blind and lame. And the servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Lk 19:11-26

And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us. And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called before him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more. And

he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came saying, Thy pound, Lord, hath made five pounds. And he said unto him also, Be thou ruler over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that which thou layedst not down, and reapest that which thou didst not sow. He said unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that which I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow; then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest? And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds. I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. Cf. Mt 25:14-29.

Mt 25:34

Then will the king say unto those on his right hand, Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Exhibit E

Passages Indicating the Kingdom as Ushered in at the
Coming of the Son of Man

Lk 13:28,29

There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but yourselves banished without. And they shall come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and shall sit down at table in the kingdom of God. Cf. Mt 8:11,12.

Lk 14:15

And one of those who was at table with him... said unto him, Blessed is every man who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Cf. Lk 17:20-30.

Mt 13:24-30

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he saith, Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up whe wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

Mt 13:47-50

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away. So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

Mt 24:14

And the good news of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony for all the nations, and then shall the end come.

Mt 25:1-13

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.

When we look at Jesus' ministry as a whole we discover that at the beginning of it he conceived of the Kingdom as being already present in the world. For example, when John the Herald sent his disciples to Jesus asking, "Art thou he that should come, or are we to look for another?"⁽¹⁾ Jesus answered, "Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me."⁽²⁾ Thus John the Herald was to recognize that the Kingdom has come because he can see these manifest results. The same truth is set forth in our Lord's sermon in the synagogue in Nazareth, and particularly from his comment thereon.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings
to the poor:
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the
captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord...

And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears."⁽³⁾ By these words the Master

(1) Mt 11:3.

(2) Mt 11:4-6.

(3) Lk 4:18-19, 21.

is simply saying that the Kingdom is already present. St. Mark who records the earliest known teaching of Christ quotes him as saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel."⁽¹⁾ Mt 12:28 paralleled by Lk 11:20 furnish further evidence in the same direction: "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you." Moreover, in Lk 17:20 Jesus expressly declares to the Pharisees, "The Kingdom of God is in your midst."

Some of the parables presuppose that the Kingdom is already present, for they represent the Kingdom as spreading intensively and extensively. This principle is revealed particularly by the parables of the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Tares, the Draught of Fishes, and by the slowly growing seed described in Mk 4:26-29: "And he said, So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come."

(1) Mk 1:15.

The following passages, furthermore, indicate that the Kingdom is present in some form. "But seek ye first his Kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."⁽¹⁾ "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."⁽²⁾ Mt 11:11-13 show that in some respects "life" is synonymous with the coming of the Kingdom; "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force." Mt 21:31 declares that certain men are already in the Kingdom. As Jesus was reasoning with the chief priests and elders of the people concerning the two sons, one of whom obeyed while the other disobeyed the request of his father, he asked, "Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that

(1) Mt 6:33.

(2) Mt 7:13-14.

the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you." In Mt 23:13 we find the Master saying, "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the Kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter." Mk 12:34 tells of a scribe who was not far from the Kingdom of God, and Lk 9:62 states that "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

It is thus evident that Jesus represents the Kingdom of God as a matter of present experience. He speaks of his Messianic work in terms which indicate that a new start has been made in human history. God's idea for humanity is planted like a seed in the life of the world. The Divine spring has begun, and with it is the assurance that the harvest will come in due season. "While apocalyptic elements remain," writes Manson,⁽¹⁾ "and centre round the final glories of the Kingdom, they are not out of relation to the fact that the Kingdom is already come in the spiritual experience of the Christian era. The spiritual interpretation of the Kingdom is not abandoned, but left to the experience and wisdom of the Church to complete."

(1) Manson, Wm., "Christ's View of the Kingdom of God,"
p. 158.

On the other hand, the passages showing that Jesus thought of the Kingdom as being in the future indicate that the Kingdom is conceived in two ways: either it is to be brought about by a gradual development according to the ordinary laws of spiritual growth, or God himself is to set up the Kingdom in a catastrophic manner. It is to this latter Kingdom that reference is made in the following passages: "But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."⁽¹⁾ "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power."⁽²⁾ "There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God."⁽³⁾ "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God."⁽⁴⁾ These passages indicate, therefore, that Jesus conceived of the Kingdom as being in the future, and as still to be realized, and that its coming is to be "with power".⁽²⁾

(1) Mt 26:29.

(2) Mk 9:1.

(3) Lk 13:28-29.

(4) Lk 14:15.

How, then, can we reconcile these two different views regarding the kingdom? When we look into this question further we discover that the discrepancy is largely the result of the chronology of Jesus' life. As we have already seen, Jesus when beginning his ministry spoke of the kingdom as being present; indeed in his very person the kingdom had become a present reality. During the early period of his career he had undoubtedly hoped to bring the kingdom to its consummation within his lifetime, and for this reason he dwelt mainly on the present kingdom of God on earth. "But the accomplishment of his task was dependent on the conduct of the people," writes Dr. Charles.⁽¹⁾ "When the temper of the people changed, and his rejection and death appeared as an inexorable necessity, he began to speak of the future kingdom. He never relinquished, indeed, the thought of the present kingdom, but whilst holding it fast, he saw that, if it were ultimately to prevail, it must receive its consummation in the future by the direct intervention of God, or rather by his own return to judge the world."

"In this way, then," continues Dr. Charles, "the two conceptions of the kingdom appear to be related chronologically. It is also obvious that they are organically connected. Christ puts both views of the kingdom into one statement thus: 'Verily

(1) Charles, R.H. "Eschatology," pp. 376-377.

I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. (1)

These words declare that entrance into the future kingdom of God is dependent on a man's right attitude to the present kingdom of God. In the course of a truly ethical development the latter becomes the parent of the former, and the kingdom of heaven, now founded spiritually in weakness and in secret, will, through the infinite toil of God and man, issue in the completed kingdom of God, which is the perfect expression of the divine goodness and truth, having for its scene a new heaven and a new earth."

On another page Dr. Charles sums up this question in an excellent manner as follows: "The true Messianic kingdom begins on earth, and will be consummated in heaven; it is not temporary, but eternal; it is not limited to one people, but embraces the righteousness of all nations and of all times. It forms a divine society in which the position and significance of each member is determined by his endowments, and his blessedness conditioned by the blessedness of the whole. Thus religious individualism becomes an impossibility. On the one hand, it is true that the individual can have no part in the kingdom save through a living relation to its Head; yet, on the other, this relation cannot be maintained and developed save through

(1) Mk 10:15 -- Lk 18:17; cf. Mt 18:3,4.

life in and for the brethren; and so closely is the individual life bound to that of the brethren, that no soul can reach its consummation apart."⁽¹⁾

Dr. Orr⁽²⁾ holds that the Kingdom of God has both a present being upon earth, and a perfect, glorified form in eternity. The existence of the kingdom as a present developing reality is implied, as already indicated, in the parables of growth;⁽³⁾ in the representations of it, in its earthly form, as a mixture of good and bad;⁽⁴⁾ in the description of the righteousness of the kingdom⁽⁵⁾ which is to be realized in the ordinary human relations; as well as in many special sayings.⁽⁶⁾ But, apart from specific declarations, the truth is implied in the simple fact that Jesus himself was present in the full consciousness of his sonship and calling to be the founder of the Kingdom, gathering disciples to himself as the nucleus of a future society. We have formerly observed that in the person of Jesus, even had there been no other, the Kingdom of God was already present in humanity. In him lay the vital germ of that Kingdom; he was the bearer and representative of its principle of sonship; in him its powers and grace were made manifest.⁽⁷⁾ When, as the result of his activity, a band of

(1) Mk 6:7-11; Mt 10:1-15; Lk 9:1-5.

(2) H.D.B. II, p. 852.

(3) Mt 13; Mk 4:26-32.

(4) Mt 13.

(5) Sermon on the Mount.

(6) Mt 12:28; Lk 16:16; 17:21.

(7) Mt 13:28.

disciples were drawn around him, the members of which were introduced by him into a new fellowship with God, and in whose hearts the principle of a divine rule was manifestly established, it was more than ever evident that the kingdom of God had begun on earth."

We shall deal next with the three great events which are to bring about the consummation of the Kingdom: (a) the Parousia, (b) the Final Judgment, (c) the Resurrection.

I. The Parousia. The problems connected with Jesus' teaching concerning his Parousia, or second coming, are among the most difficult of those found in the Gospels. In order to present this question as clearly as possible, it is necessary to collate and compare the various references to this subject which are found in the Synoptics. After describing the instructions which Jesus gave to the Twelve when he sent them forth to teach and heal, ⁽¹⁾ Matthew gives an extended discourse upon the dangers and duties of the disciples ⁽²⁾ which Mark and Luke do not record. In the midst of the passage occurs this saying: "But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come."⁽³⁾

After relating Peter's confession, each of the Synoptists

(1) Mk 6:7-11; Mt 10:1-15; Lk 9:1-5.

(2) Mt 10:16-42.

(3) Mt 10:23.

record Jesus' prediction of his death and resurrection.⁽¹⁾ He warns the disciples of the severe tests to which they will be subjected, and exhorts them to gain their lives by constancy and devotion in his service. After this admonition there is a prediction of the coming of the Son of man to test the faithfulness of his disciples, to which is coupled a declaration that this event will occur within the lifetime of some of those who heard him speak. The parallel passages are as follows:⁽²⁾

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power.

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

(1) Mk 8:31-9:1; Mt 16:21-28; Lk 9:22-27.

(2) Mt 16:27-28; Mk 8:38-9:1; Lk 9:26-27.

In a long passage which the Synoptists record in substance, our Lord predicts the overthrow of Jerusalem, ⁽¹⁾ after which he predicts the second coming. The passages are as follows: ⁽²⁾

But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.

(1) Mt 24:31; Mk 13:24-27; Lk 21:25-28.

(2) Mt 24:29-31; Mk 13:24-27; Lk 21:25-28.

The next passages relevant to the Parousia are found in the description of Jesus' trial, and are recorded by all three Synoptists. After the accusations of the multitude had been made against Jesus, the high priest demanded what answer he would make. When he answered nothing, the high priest put a second question to him, namely, whether he professed to be the Christ. This question which together with its answer are pertinent to our present inquiry, are as follows: (1)

But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest said unto him, I adjure by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.

And as soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away into their council saying, If thou art the Christ, tell us. But he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask you, ye will not answer. But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God.

(1) Mt 26:63-64; Mk 14:61-62; Lk 22:66-69.

Other passages which refer to the coming of the Son of man are also found in the Synoptics. The suddenness of the event is compared to the descent of the flood in the days of Noah,⁽¹⁾ and to the flashes of lightning across the sky.⁽²⁾ The teaching of several parables is enforced by appealing to Jesus' coming to judgment. For example, the intervention of God on behalf of his people which is taught in the parable of the Unjust Judge, is conceived as taking place at the Messiah's coming. "I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Howbeit when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"⁽³⁾ Matthew seems to have regarded the parable of the talents⁽⁴⁾ as referring to the Messiah's return to judgment. Jesus enjoins his followers to faithfulness and watchfulness because of his sudden and unexpected coming to judgment, "Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh."⁽⁵⁾

Thus far we have considered passages which indicate that the kingdom is to be inaugurated suddenly with startling displays of divine power. On the other hand, there are also passages in the Synoptics which conceive of a spiritual king-

(1) Mt 24:37-39; Lk 17:26.

(2) Lk 17:24

(3) Lk 18:8.

(4) Mt 25:13-30.

(5) Lk 12:40; Mt 24:44.

dom, coming gradually, as leaven spreads through meal,⁽¹⁾ or as seed springs up and grows,⁽²⁾ a kingdom whose coming is "without observation",⁽³⁾ and whose progress is to be a great historical world-process.⁽⁴⁾ We must not fail to observe the fact that Jesus took account of the process of human development which must run its course before his advent. "The kingdom must spread extensively and intensively:" writes Dr. Charles,⁽⁵⁾ "extensively till its final expansion is out of all proportion to its original smallness (cf. the parable of the Mustard Seed); intensively till it transforms and regenerates the life of the nation and of the world (cf. the parable of the Leaven⁽⁶⁾)... This representation of the future presupposes a lengthened period of development. It no less than the former goes back to Christ. The contingency that the former view, which is derived from Old Testament prophecy might not be realized, is acknowledged in Mt 24:48; Lk 12:45; also in Mk 13:35, where the possibilities of an indefinitely long night of history preceding the final advent is clearly contemplated. Christ's conception of the kingdom of God is essentially a development of the large prophetic doctrine which emanated from Jeremiah and the later prophets of his school, just as the narrow particularism of the Pharisees was the

(1) Mt 13:33.

(2) Mk 4:28.

(3) Lk 17:20.

(4) Mt 21:43.

(5) Charles, R.H., "Eschatology", pp. 389-390.

(6) Mt 13:31,32.

legitimate offspring of Ezekiel's teaching and that of his successors."

In the endeavor to reconcile these two conceptions of the kingdom scholars feel that Jesus actually spoke of various comings of the kingdom or of the Son of man in his kingdom, and of various "days of the Son of man"⁽¹⁾ as epochs in the progressive development of his kingdom, but that these sayings were popularly understood in an eschatological, apocalyptic sense as describing a visible, personal return to earth through the clouds. The kingdom of God "concerned men here and now;" writes Prof. Bruce,⁽²⁾ "all men eventually, Israelites in the first place, as they were the people of the old election, and the Herald of the kingdom was their countryman. It was to become a society on earth, ever widening in extent, for a kingdom is a social thing; it could not fail to become such if it met with any reception from those to whom it was proclaimed, for the spirit of the kingdom is love, and impels to fellowship. It was the highest good of life, the hidden treasure which men should willingly buy with all their possessions, the precious pearl for which all else should be gladly exchanged. It was accessible to all: to the poor, the hungry, the weeping, the social outcasts, and the depraved; not to them exclusively, but to them very specially, as most need-

(1) Lk 17:22.

(2) Bruce, A.B., "The Kingdom of God," pp. 59-60.

ing its blessings and most likely to welcome them. It was spiritual. The conditions of admission, the sole conditions so far as appears, were repentance and faith, or in one word receptivity -- readiness to make the kingdom welcome. It was associated with, may almost be said to have consisted in, a certain doctrine of God, and a kindred doctrine of man.

'Briefly stated, the religious heaven of Jesus meant the Fatherliness of God for men, the sonship of men for God, and the infinite spiritual good of the kingdom of heaven is Fatherhood and Sonship'".⁽¹⁾

(1) Keim, "Geschichte Jesu von Nazara," S. 54.

II. The Final Judgment. Another subject closely associated with the Parousia is that of the Day of Judgment. This conception was connected in the popular mind with the coming of the Messiah when he would condemn and punish Israel's enemies. Matthew alone presents, in connection with the discourse concerning the Parousia, a parable of the judgment⁽¹⁾ in which all the nations are described as appearing before the Son of Man, sitting upon his glorious throne, and who separates them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. This passage has been interpreted in a number of ways:

Meyer and Weiss hold that this parable is a picture of the judgment of professing Christians only, by which the counterfeit are distinguished from the genuine by the tests of love and service. Bruce, Wendt, and Forrest maintain that this description relates specifically to the judgment of the heathen; Wendt holds that it refers to the judgment of such heathen as have come into contact with Christianity, while Bruce believes that the judgment is for all men because Christ's "brethren" were not limited to believers. Morison and Broadus hold the more common view that this passage describes the judgment of all mankind -- hence a universal judgment.

When we examine these views carefully we find that each presents rather serious difficulties. "If professing Christians

(1) Mt 25:31-46.

only were in view, why should those who are judged be distinguished from the 'brethren' of Jesus, and why should they be represented as unaware of the nature and object of their good deeds?" asks Dr. Stevens.⁽¹⁾ "If, on the other hand, non-Christians alone were thought of, it is difficult to see why this class should not have been more plainly indicated."

In view of the considerations affecting this passage we are to derive therefrom not a picture but a principle of judgment. Dr. Stevens holds that it is a pictorial description of man's relation to his deeds, illustrating, especially, how small acts of kindness and mercy may be an index of the deepest principles and motives which rule the life. "The description of the deeds done need not be regarded as presenting the only test and measure which will be applied to men and their conduct. We can only say that, as it stands, it was conceived as a description of a general assize, but that it describes the application of only one of those tests by which Christ was wont to determine the character of men."⁽²⁾

A careful study of the Fourth Gospel shows that judgment is conceived as a process which is now taking place in the world, and also as a great event to be consummated in the

(1) Stevens, "The Teaching of Jesus."

(2) Ibid.

last day, for example: "Now is the judgment of this world";⁽¹⁾
"As I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous";⁽²⁾ "Yea and
if I judge, my judgment is true";⁽³⁾ "For judgment came I into
the world";⁽⁴⁾ "And this is the judgment, that the light is
come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than
the light; for their works were evil."⁽⁵⁾ "He that rejecteth
me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him:
the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last
day."⁽⁶⁾

Our Lord thus teaches that judgment is both present and
future. "The continuous testing by which the destinies of men
are being determined terminates in a crisis -- in a future
judgment, which is the goal of the process of judgment which
is going forward constantly in the life of every man," writes
Stevens.⁽⁷⁾ Christ "is the mediator of God's continuous and
present judgment on the conduct of men," writes Charles.⁽⁸⁾
"He will be the mediator of the final judgment of God in the
consummation of the world. All things, Christ declares, relating
to the kingdom have been delivered into his hands by the Father."⁽⁹⁾

- (1) Jn 12:31 (2) Jn 5:30
(3) Jn 8:16 (4) Jn 9:39
(5) Jn 3:19 (6) Jn 12:48
(7) Stevens, "The Teaching of Jesus."
(8) Charles, "Eschatology", p. 392.
(9) Mt 11:27 - Lk 10:22

As the mediator of divine judgment in the present, He forgives sin.⁽¹⁾ He denounces unbelieving cities,⁽²⁾ and breaks up the most intimate bonds of social life because founded on a false peace."⁽³⁾

The question of reward and punishment also is closely connected with that of judgment. Reward or punishment is the verdict accompanying judgment, and it is the result of reconstruction or of continued sin respectively. Jesus seems to hold that punishment is simply the logical outcome of the abuse of a man's life. He who habitually neglects to develop his fundamental instincts and capacities in harmony with the highest ideals, may become largely incapable of opening his nature to these influences, and so realizing his best self. In the terms of Jesus, he loses the capacity of becoming a member of God's family, and so is punished by being excluded from the Kingdom, and is banished into outer darkness.⁽⁴⁾ As the result of neglecting his duties, the man's social and moral natures have so degenerated that he is unfitted for participation in and enjoyment of the ideal life which the Master would set before him.

(1) Mk 2:5 - Mt 9:2 - Lk 5:20, 7:48, etc.

(2) Mt 11:21-24, 23:37, 38 - Lk 10:13-15, 13:34, 35, 19:44.

(3) Mt 10:34-37.

(4) Mt 8:12.

III. The Resurrection and Consummation. In his teaching Jesus sets forth only a small amount of evidence concerning the life hereafter; rather, he seems to assume that since men are the sons of God, they must share in his immortality. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus,⁽¹⁾ in which the beggar is depicted as resting on Abraham's bosom, is a metaphorical description of a happy existence hereafter. In his account of the Judgment Day, the Master pictures those who have devoted themselves to the service of the less fortunate as inheriting in the future a kingdom prepared for them from the beginning.⁽²⁾ His final words to his disciples assured them of a dwelling place that he was about to prepare for them in the hereafter.⁽³⁾ While he was on the cross he promised the repentant robber that he should be with him that day in Paradise.⁽⁴⁾

There is, however, one passage in which Jesus definitely asserts the fact of the resurrection and of a future state. For example, in his confutation of the Sadducees, who sought to test him through the hypothetical case of the woman who had married seven husbands,⁽⁵⁾ he convicted them of two mistaken assumptions in their thinking, namely: the error of supposing

- (1) Lk 16:19 f. (2) Mt 25:34 f.
(3) Jn 14:2. (4) Lk 23:43.
(5) Mk 12:18-27 - Mt 22:23-33 - Lk 20:27-40.

that, in the world to come, such relations as those of marriage were maintained, and their failure to recognize the power of God to provide for men a mode of life suited to the condition of the world beyond. The passage which he quoted to them is as follows: "But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?"⁽¹⁾ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err."⁽²⁾

This teaching declares the certainty of the future life, but it does not explain the mode or condition of it. There shall be a blessed life for those "that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead", for they are "sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."⁽³⁾ In this future life the good deeds of men will be recompensed.⁽⁴⁾ These general statements, however, leave many questions unsettled, as if they were not essential. Dr. Graves⁽⁵⁾ remarks that Jesus neglects altogether the categories of space and time. "He is not concerned with the ordinary details as to how the resurrection takes place, and he undertakes no real description of the future existence. He makes no statement concerning the way

(1) Deut 25:5.

(2) Mk 12:26,27.

(3) Lk 20:35,36.

(4) Lk 14:14.

(5) Graves, "What Did Jesus Teach?"

in which the soul is to be embodied in the hereafter, though he stresses a resurrection of persons, rather than bodies, by stating that the resurrection is "from among the dead". These expressions suggest the idea that the person rises from the realm of death into a realm of life and happiness. Jesus stresses the generic truth that the forces of life will triumph over death, that man is destined to live beyond the grave, and that he will not sink into oblivion, but will rise to renew and perpetuate the life which God gave him here on earth.

It is a disputed point whether Jesus considered that all men, or only the just, should take part in the resurrection. In his discussion with the Pharisees he maintains that "they who are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead...are sons of God."⁽¹⁾ Elsewhere, however, he speaks of "the resurrection of the just"⁽²⁾ as if the wicked were also resurrected, and in Jn 5:29 we find him saying: "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Since the resurrection could not have the same meaning for both good and evil men it can only be inferred, then, that Jesus held that all men would meet with a resurrection, under differing conditions and with varying results.

(1) Lk 20:35 f.

(2) Lk 14:14.

Dr. Manson⁽¹⁾ feels that it is very difficult to relate the Kingdom, as a perfected state of human life in this world, to the condition of existence into which those pass whose death takes place before the great consummation. Jesus in his teaching seems to combine two ideas, which Jewish apocalyptic also combined -- "the idea of a corporate national regeneration on this earth, and the idea of individual immortality in a supersensuous sphere."⁽²⁾ But there is in his recorded utterances no systematic coordination of the two issues. On the one hand, he speaks of the perfected Kingdom as a glorified state of existence here. "There are some here...which shall in no wise taste death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power."⁽³⁾ The Kingdom as the enthronement of God in this world's life filled the mind of Jesus, and was the aim and object to which his whole work and teaching were directed from the start. On the other hand, he speaks of death intervening, and the individual soul passing beyond the earthly sphere, as in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, or in the words to the thief on the Cross.⁽⁴⁾ "It is best, perhaps, to say that Jesus contemplated both eventualities, and found their ultimate adjustment, as the eschatology of the day found it, in the doctrine of the resurrection. The fact that Jesus

(1) Manson, Wm., "Christ's View of the Kingdom of God," pp. 160-162.

(2) Streeter, B.H., "Foundations," p. 115.

(3) Mk 9:1.

(4) Lk 23:43.

nowhere co-ordinates the two issues shows that it was no part of his purpose to describe the future in exact or literal terms. Rather is his language the adoption for didactic purposes of a current imagery and symbolism. On the other hand, the sayings which are really constitutive of Jesus' thoughts of blessedness, both now and hereafter, are all ethical and spiritual. They make inheriting the Kingdom equivalent to being filled with righteousness, obtaining mercy, seeing God, and living as his children.⁽¹⁾ The New Testament is filled with this conception of the Kingdom. Paul states the content of the Christian hope as being forever with the Lord.⁽²⁾ While the pages of the New Testament contain imaginative delineations of the glory that shall be, they do not divert attention from the main matter. In this respect no words of the New Testament better express the spirit of the Master's teaching than these: 'Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.'⁽³⁾

(1) Mt 5:2f.

(2) I Thess 4:17.

(3) I Jn 3:2.

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