BIBLICAL COMMENTARY
ON
THE NEW-TESTAMENT.

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TO WHICH IS PREFIXED OLSHAUSEN'S
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used Luke) might be supposed. Mark, however, according to his
custom, has cast his narrative in a somewhat larger mould, and
added some single features which enliven it. (For example, see ver.
43, the words προσκαλεσάμενος τούς μαθητάς αὐτοῦ.) The place in
which the incident occurred was the so-called court of the women;
there stood thirteen brazen vessels shaped like trumpets (which, on
account of this form, were called ποτηρίων), into which those who
visited the temple cast their gifts. (Comp. Winer in his Reallex.)
[One γαζοφυλακίων, treasury, and that a single object standing by the
wall, is mentioned Jos. Ant. 19. 6. 1. It is this which is here
intended, and which is not to be confounded with the treasure reposi-
tories (γαζοφυλακίων) which the rich Jews subsequently constructed
in the temple during the siege. Jos. Bell. Jud. v. 5, 2; vi. 5, 2.)
The poor widow (Luke has πεντηκόσια = πέντες, ἀρ. which does not oc-
cur elsewhere in the New Testament) dropped in two of the small-
est coins (comp. the remarks, Luke xii. 59, on the word λεπτῶν),
which, however, constituted all her property. (Comp. Luke viii.
43, xv. 12, where βίος, living, occurs in the same signification.
Mark explains it, “all that she had” (πάντα δοσιν εὐχα). Hence it is
observed that she gave more (πλεῖον) than the rich—she gave ἐκ τῆς
ὑποτρίχῳς αὐτῆς, of her deficiency. This expression forms the ant-
tithesis to the περισσεύων, abundance, of the rich, and thus acquires
its precise meaning. As it is said, “she cast in of her deficiency”
(ὑπερήφανος, Luke υπερήφανος), the statement cannot imply an absolute
want of resources, but merely a relative one; so that the sense is
—“under the impulse of self-sacrificing love, she gave so much of
her small property, that it might be said she had nothing left, while
the rich gave but little in proportion to their vast possessions.”

§ 9. Predictions of Jesus Respecting the Last Things.

(Matth. xxiv. 1—xxv. 46. Mark xiii. 1—37. Luke xxii. 5—32.)

In regard to the form of the great prophetic discourse of Christ,
with which Matthew concludes his account of the residence of Jesus
in Jerusalem before his sufferings, it may be observed, that this
again evidently manifests itself as a composition of the Evangelist.
Matthew has here collected together the predictions concerning the
Saviour’s advent, uttered by him at different times and under vari-
ous circumstances. True, there can be no doubt that, during the
last sojourn of Christ in Jerusalem, he delivered a longer discourse
respecting the events to be anticipated. It was to be expected that
the Lord, when about to leave his own, would give them some guid-
ing lights as to the future; and the harmony of all three Evangel-
ists in their statements about the time, place, and general contents of the discourse, is a guarantee for the correctness of their report; but the mode in which Luke (especially chap. xvii.) places elements (occurring, according to Matthew, in this discourse) in their appropriate historical connexion with other occasions and localities, renders it in the highest degree probable that Matthew here again, in accordance with his custom, has blended kindred thoughts, spoken at different times, into the last principal discourse. [?] Still, the passages which we find only in Matthew, especially the fine parables concerning the advent of Christ (Matth. xxv.), are so exactly adapted to the last days of Christ's intercourse with his disciples, as to leave no doubt that, in transferring these to this period, he has given his account with more precision and fullness than the other Evangelists. But however certain it may be that here, as in other instances, Matthew has given us a union of separate discourses, yet we must deny that this discourse, as he reports it, is an incongruous whole. Schleiermacher (über die Schriften des Lc. s. 217, ff.) has directed special attention to the circumstance that those passages of the large discourse (Matth. xxiv.), which in Luke stand in a different connexion, completely interrupt the train of thought in Matthew. This scholar remarks, in the first place, that Matth. xxiv. 42 is immediately connected with ver. 36, and that the intervening verses, received from Luke xvii. 23, ff. into Matthew, are not at all suited to the context of the latter Evangelist. Because since God commanded Noah to build the ark precisely at the right time, this was just as much as if he had revealed to him the day and hour; and hence the admonition to watch, because they knew not the hour, was inappropriate. But this position would seem untenable; for the general direction which Noah received to build the ark did not by any means involve a disclosure of the day and hour; rather it was in his following the command of God, without knowing the day or the hour, that Noah evinced his faith and obedience. In like manner, also, the disciples were told that the coming of the Lord was near, and, in conformity with this admonition, they were to prove their faith by watchfulness.—The other observation of Schleiermacher, that Matth. xxiv. 27 does not harmonize with ver. 26, is equally untenable. He is of opinion that a warning to the disciples against going forth to the false Messiah, could not be founded on the immediateness and universality of Christ's coming, but rather on the fact of his not yet having come. But the ubiquity of his advent is here referred to, not as a reason for their not going forth, but as a sign by which the advent of the true Messiah may be distinguished from that of pseudo-Christ's. And the introduction of such a sign is quite in place here, while the language of the following verse (ver. 28) conveys the same meaning—only under the
form of another figure—viz., that the advent of the Son of Man is sudden, and its approach depends upon the increasing corruption of the world.—According to Schleiermacher, however, the most remarkable instance of the want of connexion in Matthew occurs in ver. 29. For, he observes, it appears from this verse that the sign of the Son of Man, and the Son of Man himself, should follow that coming (παρουσία) which is compared to lightning; whereas, on the contrary, ver. 29 would come very well immediately after ver. 24. But this remark is also without weight; for in ver. 27 the Parousia (παρουσία, advent) is not spoken of in its historical relation to other events, but we have there merely a preliminary sign of the true Parousia, whereby it might be distinguished from the appearance of false Christs. Hence it is quite consistent that in ver. 29, should follow the fuller exposition of the historical circumstances which precede the actual Parousia. In this discourse also, with all the freedom of its composition, Matthew discovers great skill and power in the arrangement of the thoughts. Proceeding in a strictly logical manner, he speaks first of the political and moral corruption that should take place; then passes on to those commotions in the heavenly regions which precede the great catastrophe; and after giving a description of the care exercised by God over his faithful ones at the time of his arrival, finishes with appropriate exhortations.

In regard to the contents of the discourse, we are first briefly to consider the relations of the accounts of the synoptical Evangelists to the representation of John in his Gospel. Now, although John also speaks of the advent of Christ and the judgment (v. 21, ff., viii.

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* Olhausen’s view in opposition to Schleiermacher is unquestionably just, but not, perhaps, stated with quite sufficient distinctness. From ver. 23, “Then if any one say to you,” &c., to ver. 29, “And immediately after the affliction,” &c., the verses are episcopical, the main description being suspended in order to warn the disciples against false Christs and prophets whom the occasion will produce. He intimates the manner in which they will come, “in the desert,” “in the chambers,” in places more or less secluded and concealed; and then gives them the grand token by which the coming of the true Messiah may be distinguished from all these counterfeit appearances. His appearance will not be secluded, and partial, but, like the lightning that flashes across the whole face of heaven, it will be open, instantaneous, and universal. He closes this digression with a statement in brief and striking language, of the cause of this swarming of the false prophets,—“where the carcases is, will be gathered the eagles.” i.e. such a disordered and decayed condition will naturally engender or attract all the corruption that will prey upon it. So Fick interprets this last sentence, rightly, as I think. The γυρ, in which Olhausen finds his chief objection to the interpretation, is wanting in many MSS, and is rejected by Lachmann and Tischendorf; yet it may even be retained without any unwarrantable ellipsis, “and this very naturally for,” &c.—But at all events, with v. 29 the succession of events, broken at v. 23, is again taken up. It had been there stated that there should be great affliction (μεγάλη δισπίστικι, but shortened for the sake of the elect. The Saviour now resumes, “immediately after the affliction,” etc. (μετὰ τῶν δισπίστων & τ. λ.). Thus the intermediate passage is clearly parenthetical, the allusion to theMode of the Son of Man’s coming, like a flash of lightning, being introduced merely in passing as a means of distinguishing the spurious Messiahs from the true.—[E.
15, 16. ix. 39, xii. 47, ff., xiv. 18), yet in his Gospel we do not find any such descriptions of outward occurrences which were to accompany them; and hence it is undeniable, that there is a difference between the mode of expression adopted by the synoptical Evangelists and that employed by John, in reference to the doctrine of the last things. Still, however, it can by no means be said, that even the mode of expression adopted by the former differs from the general scope of Scripture in regard to this doctrine; on the contrary, very many of the descriptions in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew have their analogies in the Old Testament (the passages will be cited in the exposition of the several verses); and the Pauline writings (1 Thess. iv.; 2 Thess. ii.; 1 Cor. xv.), but above all, the Apocalypse presupposes the same view of this subject as Matthew gives in the chapter just mentioned. Now, whoever believes the Apocalypse to be a work of John, has a sufficient security, in its relation to his Gospel, for the fact that John did not hold a different view from that presented by the synoptical Evangelists. But granting even that the Apocalypse is the production of another author (which, by the way, is not our opinion), still it must be conceded that the Gospel of John affords the only instance of deviation from the general mode of conceiving the doctrine in the Old as well as the New Testament. And since this deviation consists merely in omitting customary representations, nothing is more natural than to regard the difference of representation as not founded in a difference of views on the part of the writers, much less in any variation in the teaching of the Redeemer, but simply and solely in the special scope and aim of this work. The fact that the Gospel of John was designed for idealizing Gnostics who were not Jews, is quite sufficient to explain this and all its other peculiar variations from the synoptical Evangelists.

In the second place, as regards the contents of the discourse, a great difficulty of this section (especially ch. xxiv.) lies in its placing in apparent juxtaposition circumstances which, according to the history, are separated by wide intervals. Obvious descriptions of the approaching overthrow of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity are blended with no less evident representations of the second coming of the Lord to his kingdom. It cannot be denied that those commentators who agree with the views always held by the church (among whom we must reckon Schott, the most recent interpreter of this section, in his well-known work, Comment. in Christi Sermones, qui de ejus reditu agunt, Jena, 1820), treat the ideas in this section in a far less simple and straightforward manner than the rationalistic ex-

* Fleck, in his work de regno divino, p. 483, exaggerates the differences, and thinks that Christ could only have spoken in the one way or in the other. But there is no essential contradiction between the synoptical Evangelists and John; the latter merely omits what was not intelligible to his readers, or was not suited to their point of view.
positors. Docilian views lead the former to attempt a separation of the elements which are blended in Matthew and the other Evangelists. Particularly Schott is of opinion that the description of the advent of Christ to his kingdom begins with ver. 29, "and immediately after the tribulation, etc.,” and refers all that precedes only to the destruction of Jerusalem. But apart from the impossibility of interpreting ver. 29 itself as the commencement of something entirely new and different, it is equally certain that the latter part of the description contains the most definite references to the present generation (comp. ver. 34) as that the former part plainly alludes to the last times. Hence we do not hesitate to adopt (with Fritzschel, Fleck, Schulz, de Wette) the simple interpretation—and the only one consistent with the text—that Jesus did intend to represent his coming as contemporaneous with the destruction of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish polity. However, this result of the exposition certainly requires a closer consideration, in order to be understood in its harmony with the whole circle of the Saviour’s teaching. And in making such an inquiry, much assistance may be gained from observing that this proximity of the advent of the Lord to the time immediately at hand is not at all peculiar to the section before us. Besides the passages in the Gospels, most of which have already been discussed (Matt. x. 28, xvi. 27, 28, xxiii. 38, 39, xxvi. 64, and the parallels), statements of the same kind occur in almost all the writings of the New Testament (1 Cor. x. 11; Phil. iv. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 7; 1 John ii. 18; James v. 8; Rev. i. 1, 3, iii. 11, xxii. 7, 10, 12, 20), from which it is clear that the apostles expected the return of Jesus in their lifetime. And as in the New Testament, so also in the prophets of the Old Testament, we constantly find the idea that the coming of the Messiah was near. (The well-known formula יְהֹושֻׁעַ יִשְׂרָאֵל occurs very frequently, Ezek. xxx. 3; Joel ii. 1, i. 15; Isaiah xiii. 6; Obad. ver. 15; Zeph. i. 7, 14; Hag. ii. 7.) Accordingly we may say that the coming of the Lord, whether the first or the last, has always been vividly anticipated as being at hand; and in no single passage, either of the Old or of the New Testament, is it stated that it will be long delayed; nay, this mode of expression is distinctly condemned, for example, Matt. xxiv. 48. (This passage, Dan. viii. 14, is the only exception here; but even in this case, seventy weeks being given, the metaphorical expression appears to conceal from the multitude the actual distance of the event.}

* Concerning this doctrine compare the treatise of Baumeister in Klaiber’s Stud. B. L. II. 2, a. 219, ff., H. 3, a. 1, ff. B. ii. H. 1, a. 1, ff., H. 2, a. 1, ff.

† On this entire discourse and its interpretation compare with Olshausen (whose explanation I have left unchanged) my Kritik der Ev. Gesch. (Aufl. 2, § 102).—[E.

‡ The numerical statements in the Apocalypse are not designed to indicate the time at which the last great catastrophe will take place, but only the single epochs within.
Matthew XXIV. 1.

Schott, indeed (loc. cit. a. 413), thinks that intimations of the kind are found in the New Testament; but in this he is mistaken. He appeals to passages, such as Matth. xxiv. 48, xxv. 5, 19; but these verses do not speak of the coming of the Lord as absolutely distant, but merely as relatively so, in respect to persons expecting it. And in Luke xx. 9, in the parable of the vineyard, where the long absence of the Lord is mentioned, the reference is not to the remoteness of the return of Christ, but to the long period which elapsed since the time of Moses, during which God did not manifest himself to the people of Israel. Hence the difficulty that occurs here is founded in the general doctrine of Scripture respecting the last things, and can be solved only by a reference to the nature of prophecy generally, as well as to the peculiar character of the particular fact in question—viz., the return of Christ.

Now in regard to prophecy generally, we agree with the idea so admirably developed by Hengstenberg (Christology of O. T. p. 217, ff.), that it is to be viewed as a spiritual vision. By virtue of this vision of the future, as something really present to their minds—the best designation we can give of it is that of a perspective view—the actual events indeed were accurately discerned by the prophets; but neither the distance of the event foreseen from the present to which they themselves belonged, nor the intervals between the individual objects beheld. This explains the fact, that in the prophecies of the Old Testament, the two appearances of Christ in humiliation and glory—although the prophets were cognizant of both—are not separated by wide intervals, but closely connected. The birth of the promised child (Isa. ix. 6, 7) is immediately succeeded by his peaceful reign; the springing of the rod from the stem of Jesse is directly followed by changes of nature (Isa. xi. 1-6); and so everywhere in the Old Testament, the first appearance of the Lord is viewed as only just preceding the full blessing that results from the second which the catastrophe itself will move on; the whole Apocalypse represents the Parousia of the Lord as immediately at hand—that is, as visible to the generation then living. How therefore any calculations of the time of the Lord’s advent, sufficient for anything more than our subjective need, can be justified by Scripture, it is difficult to understand. At the same time there is no more reason to favour any oversight of the most obvious signs that the great crisis approaches, or to cherish the assurance that the Lord will not yet come for a long season. History shows that, in all times in which the conflict between light and darkness has been specially vigorous, there has also been manifested in the minds of believers a lively desire for the coming of the Lord; and yet it is equally true, that when a crisis has passed, the church has become conscious that two conditions connected with the last crisis yet remained unfulfilled. Between these two influences (which may be recognized as already at work in the time of the apostles, by comparing the two Epistles to the Thessalonians) a balance was always preserved, and indifference opposed as much as enthusiasm. The circumstance that Jesus did not deliver his discourse in the presence of all the twelve disciples, but only before the three most matured among them, shows that the more precise communications respecting his advent are not designed for all.
Matthew XXIV. 1.

(Isa. liii., lx. 1, lixi. 1; Jerem. xxxiii. 5, ff., xxxi. 81, ff., xxxiii. 14, ff.; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, ff., xxxvi. 24, ff., xxxvii. 24, ff.)

Meanwhile, in the course of prophecy, we may observe an advancing clearness; that which in the Old Testament is as yet undistinguished—the difference between the advent of Christ in humiliation and his advent in glory—appears perfectly marked in the Gospels; and again, those things which are represented in the Gospels as contemporaneous, viz., the establishment of the kingdom of God and the judgment of the world (which are no more separated in the Gospels than the first and second advents of Christ are in the Old Testament), are in the Apocalypse accurately distinguished. Now, as it is quite consistent with Scripture to suppose that the precise time when the last great catastrophes should happen, was, and was designed to be, unknown to the prophets and apostles (comp. Matth. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32; Acts i. 7), it remains for us simply to say, that the lively ardour of their desire for the manifestation of the Messiah, and their immediate vision of the event, induced them to picture it as close at hand. True, indeed, these remarks cannot be applied to the Lord; for although (Mark xiii. 32) Jesus says of himself that he knows not the day of his coming, this ignorance cannot possibly be regarded as absolute. (Comp. the exposition of the passage below.) Hence, in order to justify such definite discourses as he delivered concerning the nearness of his advent, we must contemplate more closely the nature of the fact.

Now, the primary reason why the declarations of Christ respecting the near approach of his coming, although they were not realized in their utmost sense, yet involve no error, is this—that it is an essential ingredient in the doctrine of the advent of Christ that it should be considered every moment possible, and that believers should deem it every moment probable. A referring of it to an indefinite distance would have robbed it of its ethical significance. The constant expectation of the return of Christ is verified also by the fact that Christ with his kingdom is perpetually coming; it is relatively true that the history of the world is a judgment of the world, without superseding by the judicial agency of God, as already manifesting itself in the history of human development, the judgment as the concluding act of all developments. And precisely on this foundation rests the principle, that great events in history, wherein either the fulness of the blessing that is in Christ, or his severity against sin, is strikingly manifested, may be viewed as types of the last time—as a coming of Christ. To this category, so far as respects the fulness of blessing revealed by Christ, belongs the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (In the language of John the word ἐπερχόμενος is undoubtedly used in reference to the manifestation of the
Lord in the spiritual world. Comp. John xiv. 18–23; Rev. ii. 5–16, iii. 8. In the last passage even the well-known phrase Ἰστα να τα χίοι, I shall come as a thief, is employed to designate a spiritual coming.) And, in relation to the manifestation of avenging justice, the fall of Jerusalem, with the ruin of the religious and political life of the Jewish people, may be viewed in precisely the same light. This latter event, like the flood in the days of Noah and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, is one of the chief types of the approaching separation of all into two classes—the righteous and the wicked; and hence the Redeemer himself connects the description of the last great catastrophe with this fearful judgment. Nor is it at all consistent with the meaning of the prophetic representations to regard them as restricted in their reference to the one or the other of those events—for example, to look at everything as relating only to the destruction of Jerusalem; on the contrary, each single occurrence is to be viewed in connexion with the whole.

Another circumstance, by which the distinct declarations of the Lord, respecting the near approach of his advent, are completely removed from the province of error, is the conflict between freedom and necessity, which appears peculiarly prominent in this passage. On the one hand, the time of fulfilment is represented as fixed in the counsels of God (Dan. xi. 36; Acts i. 7); on the other, the time seems uncertain, and open to be deferred or hastened by the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of men (Habak. ii. 3; 2 Pet. iii). This diverse and apparently contradictory mode of expression is quite analogous to the general relation of freedom and necessity, as it presents itself in reference to this subject. As everything future, even that which proceeds from the freedom of the creature, when viewed in relation to the Divine knowledge, can only be regarded as necessary; so everything future, as far as it concerns man, can only be regarded as conditional upon the use of his freedom. As obstinate perseverance in sin hastens destruction, so genuine repentance may avert it; this is illustrated in the Old Testament, in the prophet Jonah, by the history of Nineveh, and intimated in the New Testament by Paul, when (like Abraham praying for Sodom) he describes the elements of good existing in the world as exercising a restraint upon the judgments of God (2 Thess. ii. 7); and 2 Pet. iii. 9, the delay of the coming of the Lord is viewed as an act of Divine long-suffering, designed to afford men time for repentance. Accordingly, when the Redeemer promises the near approach of his coming, this announcement is to be taken with the restriction (to be understood in connexion with all predictions and judgments),

* Compare also Acts iii. 19, where it is said: "Repent ye, that the time of refreshing may come."

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"All this will come to pass, unless men avert the wrath of God by sincere repentance." None of the predictions of Divine judgments are bare historical proclamations of that which will take place; they are alarms calling men to repentance—of which it may be said that they announce something, in order that that which they announce may not come to pass. This is no more pleasing to the natural man than the grace of the Lord was to Jonah; but it is none the less a Divine arrangement. Sin must be condemned, but whether God condemn it by the obstinacy of man, or man himself condemn it, by receiving into himself the mind of God, depends upon man's free-will, which, however, does not destroy the necessity in God, but consists in it, and through it. All generations, therefore, that have waited in vain, since the time of the apostles, for the fulfilment of the promise of the Lord's external advent, have experienced it internally, if they have spiritually found the Redeemer; and the hour of death will afford every individual a perfect analogy to that which would be involved in the visible return of the Lord to each and all.⁹ But to all succeeding generations, the prophecy of the Saviour (like all the parallel predictions of the Old Testament prophets) remains valid in its full sense; for, although names and forms may be changed, the opposing forces continue the same, and must at length bring to its climax the conflict described. Hence the prophecies of Scripture which have been, in one sense, fulfilled, still remain in another sense unfulfilled. The overlooking of these points accounts for the fact, that many expositors, with a good intention, but contrary to the simple meaning of words, would make a forced separation between events yet future, and that which is described as near—viz., the destruction of Jerusalem. Such a separation can never be substantiated from the mere language; and since the whole teaching of Scripture is in harmony with our passage, nothing remains but to justify this form of Scriptural representation upon higher grounds, in the manner which we have attempted.

In regard to the separate thoughts in the following prophecy concerning the last things, it may be observed, that it is by no means the design of the Lord to give a comprehensive survey of all the circumstances connected with his return. On the contrary, in the first portion of the discourse (chap. xxiv.), he exhibits only that aspect of his coming which is calculated to excite fear, and describes the temptations and errors accompanying it in their succession (but rarely—e. g. Luke xxi. 28; Mat. xxiv. 31—is there any mention

⁹ Comp. the words of Hamann in Herbst's Bibl. Christl. Denk. Th. i. a. 85—"The death of every man is the time when the manifestation of the coming of the Lord is in part fulfilled to his soul. In this sense it is literally true that the time of the fulfillment is near"
of its consolatory aspect towards the saints), whilst the resurrection of the just, the kingdom of God, the general resurrection, and the judgment, are not spoken of. Only in the subsequent parables (Matth. xxv.) do we find the more definite statement, that his appearing will be productive not less of happiness to believers and those living in love, than of condemnation to unbelievers. And even in these parables the single circumstances are not described in distinct succession, but they exhibit the whole as one grand picture into which all the separate features are compressed. The proper distance between the individual points, as, specially, between the general judicial proceedings of the Redeemer as set forth in the last parable of the sheep and the goats, and the scenes depicted in chap. xxiv., can be inferred only from the minute and amplified representation of the Apocalypse.

Ver. 1, 2.—According to the unanimous accounts of the three Evangelists, the conversation respecting the advent of the Lord originated in a definite occasion, of such a nature as almost necessarily to lead to it. It was at the decisive moment when the Redeemer quitted the Temple with his disciples, never again to enter it. As he withdrew, the gracious presence of God left the sanctuary; and the temple with all its service, and the whole theocratic constitution allied to it, was given over to destruction. No moment in the life of the Saviour could have afforded a more seasonable opportunity to dwell on the coming catastrophes, and to leave a legacy with his disciples from which they might derive hints for their conduct in the threatening crisis. The whole of the following discourse is to be viewed in the light of an instruction to the disciples, who, as the appointed leaders of the church, needed an insight into things that would happen in the future; in order that, on the one hand, they might not suffer shipwreck in their own faith, and, on the other, might be enabled to conduct the church through the perilous sea. When Jesus and his disciples passed out of the temple, the latter, having a presentiment that they should not enter it again with him, pointed him, with an expression of wonder, to its mighty pile; and upon this followed the declaration of the Redeemer, that the lofty fabric of the temple was approaching its destruction. (Ver. 1 ἐξελθὼν has reference to xxi. 23. Mark xiii. 1 speaks of one of the disciples as the individual who uttered the words; probably it was Peter, who [according to ver. 8] with John, James, and Andrew, questioned the Lord more closely on this great event. The temple, as it then stood, owed its completion to Herod, who had been engaged [comp. John ii. 20] for a long time in restoring it. Josephus gives an elaborate description of the magnificence of the temple. [Comp. Winer's Realwörterb. sub. verb.] The ἀναθήματα, offerings, mentioned by Luke, denote,
according to the classic signification of the word, offerings which were given in great numbers to the Temple at Jerusalem, and displayed on the walls or in the porches and side buildings [the latter is the meaning of oikodomei]. The reading οὐ βλέπετε πάντα ταῦτα in the text of Matthew, ver. 2, is probably inferior to that supported by Fritzche and Fleck, which omits the negative. Only it is difficult to explain how the οὐ got into the manuscripts. If it be retained in the text, as Schulz thinks it should, it must be taken, like Matth. vii. 22, as standing for οὐχί = μή.)

Ver. 3.—After this glance at the structure of the temple, the Lord goes with his disciples, as he was accustomed, over the Mount of Olives, to Bethany. On the summit of the mountain from which he could see the city and the temple, he sat down in the midst of a few of his disciples—those whom he treated with special confidence—and disclosed to them the future in a sublime picture. The question of the disciples which led to those more minute disclosures is given with the most precision by Matthew; Mark and Luke comprehend the Parousia and the End (συντέλεια), which are both mentioned by Matthew, under the general expression πάντα ταῦτα, all these things. But this very relation of the accounts of Mark and Luke to that of Matthew, furnishes us with a hint as to the true interpretation. The apostles viewed these two great events in immediate connexion with the destruction of the temple, and thought of the one as dependent on the other. Hence their inquiry has reference only to two objects. First they seek to know the time of the destruction of the temple; and, secondly, they desire a sign (σημεῖον, μή) whereby, on the one hand, they may know the correctness of the prophecy, and, on the other, may themselves recognize the proximity of the great events. Respecting the time, the Lord says only that it is very near; but he gives them more than one sign, and thus puts them in a position to recognize the gradual approach of the fact. Now this fact includes two distinct parts which, although not identical, are so closely connected, that when the one takes place, the other does also. The word παρουσία (Parousia, presence) is the ordinary expression for the second coming of the Lord. (Matthew xxiv. 27, 37, 39; 1 Thessalonians ii. 19, iii. 18, iv. 15, v. 23; 2 Thessalonians ii. 1; James v. 7, 8.) With the classic authors parousia commonly signifies presence; it has the same meaning sometimes in the New Testament, in the writings of Paul (2 Cor. x. 10; Phil. i. 26, ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 9); in other cases it is used in the sense of advent, and once (2 Pet. i. 16) it denotes the incarnation of the Redeemer, as applied to his first coming. But it generally designates the second coming in glory, synonymously with ἐπιφάνεια, appearing (1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8. The same expression is also employed in the passage 2 Tim.
Matthew XXIV. 3.

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i. 10, in reference to the first advent of the Lord, and ἀποκάλυψις, revelation (1 Cor. i. 7; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 7, 13; in the passage, Luke xvii. 30, the verb occurs.) In one instance (2 Thess. ii. 8) we have the compound expression ἐπιφάνεια τῆς παροιμίας. Now as the prophets (according to the observation already made), did not make any chronological distinction between the coming of Christ in his humiliation, and his coming in glory (and this mode of treating the subject has its relative truth, because, having risen from the dead, he was exalted to the right hand of God, and rules in his church as the Prince of Peace); so, in the Gospels, the coming of Christ in glory is not distinguished from eternity, or from the creation of the new heaven and of the new earth. The Apocalypse is the first place in which these events appear in their complete separation. However, their connexion in the Gospels has not less relative truth than the union of the first and the second coming of the Lord in the Old Testament. For such a mighty victory of good over evil is represented as taking place upon the return of Christ at the resurrection of the just, and the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, that this period may be considered as a natural type of the final complete conquest. Accordingly the question, whether the words, συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, end of the world, are to be understood as meaning the commencement of eternity, or the beginning of the Messianic period, must be dismissed (as we have already stated in our remarks on Matth. xii. 31), for in the representation of the apostles the two are united, and immediately associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. (In one case only, Heb. ix. 26, the expression relates to the whole time since the appearance of Christ in the flesh.) The only instances of its occurrence in the New Testament, are Matth. xiii. 39, 40, 49, xxviii. 20. The LXX. have συντέλεια καιροῦ in the passage Dan. ix. 27, for τῆς. The other writers of the New Testament, to express the same idea—the conclusion of the αἰῶν ὁστος and the beginning of the αἰῶν μελλων—use the forms ἐσχαταὶ ἡμέρα (Acts ii. 17) ἐσχατοὶ χρόνοι (1 Pet. i. 20), ἐσχατον τῶν ἡμερῶν (Heb. i. 2), καιρὸς ἐσχατος (1 Pet. i. 5), ἐσχάτη ἡμέρα (John vi. 39, 40, etc.), ἐσχάτη ὥρα (1 John ii. 18), ἡμέρα ὀργῆς καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως (Rom. ii. 5; Rev. vi. 17, xi. 18), which correspond with the Old Testament expressions: ἡμέρα τελωνίας (Gen. xlix. 1; Isaiah ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1), ἡμέρα τῆς ἡμέρας (Dan. xii. 13), or merely τῆς (Dan. viii. 17, xi. 40) which answers to the Greek τέλος, Matth. xxiv. 6, 14. The Lord, in replying to the question respecting the time and the sign of his coming, describes the approaching commotions as closely connected, and draws no distinction between his (invisible) Parousia at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος separated.

It is remarkable that we never find the expression συντέλεια τοῦ κόσμου; the word αἰῶν indicates the time of the world, which passes away, whilst the world itself remains.
from it by hundreds of years; on the contrary, the advent in its
great leading events is immediately associated with the present, and
thus great impressiveness is given to the entire portraiture without
its treading too closely upon the truth.

Ver. 4, 5.—The Redeemer now exhibits in his discourse, that
aspect of the coming events which was adapted to restrain the dis-
ciples from prying into the future, from mere curiosity, and direct
their thoughts to themselves. Jesus shews them that the approach-
ing events will be of a very perilous nature, and that it will require
all their strength of faith to guard themselves against falling into
snares. As the first danger, the Redeemer mentions that men will
rise up who will pretend to be the Messiah, and will seduce many.
This temptation is again spoken of, ver. 11, 28, 24 (comp. with
Mark xiii. 21, 22; Luke xvii. 23), because such phenomena will
present themselves not only at the beginning of the birth-pangs of
the new age, but will recur from time to time, till light gains the
dominion over darkness. Moreover, ver. 23, 24 indicate progress in
these sinful phenomena themselves, for there the Lord speaks of
wonders wrought in the power of darkness which are not mentioned
here. Among the false Christs (ψευδόχριστοι) and false prophets
(ψευδοπορφύραι), however, a great distinction is to be made. Indi-
viduals may be so carried away by fanatical zeal for the cause of re-
ligion, as to delude themselves into the belief that they are mes-
sengers of God; such a case appears to be described, Ezek. xiii. 1,
ff., where persons prophesying out of their own heart (אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵן), or
men who follow their own spirit (אָדָם רָצוּן שֵׁרְבוֹנִים), are spoken of in
opposition to true prophets appointed by the Spirit of God. But, on
the other hand, we may also conceive of wicked and conscious dece-
ivers, who boldly pervert the faith of the people of God in the
prophets, and in an expected Messiah, for their own avaricious or
ambitious aims. It is not improbable that this latter class may
have means of getting powers of darkness into their possession, and
thus become all the more dangerous, in that they dazzle by their
prodigies (τέρατα) the eyes of the unwary. Both the false Christs
and the false prophets, however, must always be distinguished from
the Antichrist (ἀντιχριστός) of John. This epithet conveys the
idea not of one person so named announcing himself as Christ,
but of one who proceeding out of the church, and forsaking it, con-
tends against the entire Christian principle, and the Lord him-

* I cannot agree with the opinion of Lücke (comp. his remarks on 1 John ii. 18), who
thinks the idea expressed by the term ἀντιχριστός in John is different from that contained
in the of him who “opposeth himself,” etc. (ἀντικειμένον), of Paul (2 Thess. ii. 1, ff.) The
description of Paul is quite in harmony with Dan. xi., and does not by any means ap-
ppear to denote a form of evil without the church. In the Apocalypse, the beast out of
the sea, that opposeth every thing Divine, and is full of blasphemy, is parallel with Anti-
christ. (Rev. xiii. 1, ff.)
The false Christs, on the contrary, are to be viewed as having no connexion with the Church, and merely giving themselves out—either consciously or unconsciously—to be Christ. Hence Antichrist is a more daring and fearful form of sin; inasmuch as it denies the idea of Christ itself, whilst the pseudo Christ acknowledges it, but seeks to use it for its own ends. The circumstance, finally, that there is no record of any one having declared himself to be the Messiah before the destruction of Jerusalem (Theudas, Acts v. 36, and the Egyptians, Acts xxii. 38, represented themselves only as prophets), is to be regarded as shewing that the whole prophecy was not fulfilled at the time of the destruction of the city. It is well known that after that event many wretched men played the part of Messiah, and deceived credulous persons. I will mention only two; in ancient times Bar Chochba; and in modern days Sabbatai Zebih, who, in the seventeenth century, in Constantinople, finished his career by going over to Islam.⁰

Ver. 6–8.—The Redeemer having thus described the temptation that will result from the sin of men, proceeds to depict certain terrible physical events. The advent of the Lord appears to be a time of ripeness in evil as well as in good (Matth. xiii. 30); all the afflictions and sorrows that have been poured out upon mankind during the course of the world's history, then come forth in their mightiest and most aggravated form. But, like evil generally, this form of evil is only the external echo of internal discord and convulsion in the moral world; it is only on account of their having this moral source, and because of their possible salutary reaction, that these external circumstances are of any significance. The Rabbins very expressly designated the sufferings and disturbances that will precede the advent of the Lord: מֵאֱלֹהַי, the birthpangs of the Messiah; and reference is made to the expression in the words ἀνάδομεν, beginning of pangs, Matth. xxiv. 8.† They viewed the universe as parturient and bringing forth a higher and nobler state of things under pangs and pains. The endeavour to point out cases of all the forms of human distress mentioned here, as existing in the time previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, is really inconsistent; for even though analogies to all the specified phenomena of suffering are found, yet these are not the very things prophesied. At the coming of the Lord, all will be repeated in the.

⁰ Comp. Henke's Kirchengeschichte, Th. iv. s. 359, ff. Von Meyer, in the Blätt. l. böh. Wahrh. Th. i. S. 306, ff., following Peter Beer's history of the Jewish sects, speaks of another man of this description, named Jacob Frank. According to the same authority, Peter Beer, there are still persons among the Chasidim in Russia and Poland who exercise a power over their adherents, from which it may be inferred that they assume Messianic authority. Accounts are given of fifteen false Messiahs among the Jews since the time of Christ.

† Comp. Eisenmenger's entd. Judenth. B. i. S. 111.
highest measure. The words of the Redeemer here evidently show his aim to be to divert the minds of his disciples from the importance which man is so fond of attaching to these external commotions and troubles. Twice (ver. 6 and ver. 8) he assures them, that these troubles are not the end itself (concerning τέλος = τε, comp. the remarks above on ver. 1), but only the beginning of sorrwes—obviously intimating that what are to follow will be still more severe.

(Rumours of wars (ἀκοὰ πολέμων), relate to wars that have not actually broken out, but the fearful rumours of which keep the mind in a state of alarm. It is better to understand ver. 7 as having reference to insurrections, than to take it as descriptive of wars which had just been spoken of. The dissolution of all political order is the main thought of the passage. θρονίσαι, instead of which Luke has προκείσθαι, occurs in the parallel, 2 Thess. ii. 2. Πάντα, in Matth. xxiv. 6, is to be taken as standing for τα πάντα, or ταῦτα πάντα. The Old Testament affords parallels to the contents of these verses, in the passages 2 Chron. xv. 5, 6; Isaiah xiii. 13; Joel iii. 3; Zech. xiv. 3. The words added by Luke xxi. 11, φόβησέ τε καὶ σείει ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, fearful sights and signs from heaven, are introduced by Matthew in a subsequent part of the description [ver. 29], and more in harmony with the context. The expression φόβηστρον occurs in the New Testament only in this passage.)

Ver. 9.—The Saviour proceeds to specify some of these sharper sufferings and dangers to be endured by his disciples, and instances, as such, personal persecutions and martyrdom. He states that the ground of the hatred cherished against them is the name of Christ (here again διόνυα, name, like we stands for the person, and the whole nature of the person himself), so that the Divine element in believers, comes into a like conflict with the ungodliness existing in the world, and its children, as was manifested in the person of Christ himself. As in Christ, so also in believers, that Divine element will conquer only by death. The observation appended by Luke (xxi. 18), and peculiar to himself, καὶ θυσί ἐκ τῆς κεφαλῆς ύμῶν οὐ μή ἀπόληται, and not a hair of your head shall perish, cannot have reference to external but to internal inviolability; for previous to this, ver. 16, we have the statement, καὶ θανατώσουσιν ἐξ ὑμῶν, some of you they shall put to death.° (The same metaphor occurs, Luke xii.

° If it be said that the words of Luke are only, "they shall put to death some of you" (θανατώσουσιν ἐξ ὑμῶν), so that the sense is: some would be killed, but the rest would remain unhurt; then an utterly unjustifiable distinction arises, and the dead appear to suffer an injury—which cannot possibly be the meaning of the passage. On the contrary, the words represent the hatred of the mass at large in its impotence. As an external force, it can reach only the external man; the true man remains untouched. In the parallel passages, 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; Acts xxvii. 34, it is said: δρές θα

κεφαλῆς οὖς πεσείται—a form which must be regarded as identical with our own.
6, ff.; and there also, it does not relate merely to the outward preservation of earthly life.) Now, if this hatred on account of the name of Christ is represented as altogether general, μουσέμενοι ὑπὸ παντών, hated by all (Matthew adds ἐθνῶν, nations)—then the idea expressed is, that mankind, without the spirit of Jesus Christ, live in the ungodly element of darkness, and by this very circumstance are prevented from recognizing in its true character the light of the Redeemer which has been received by believers. In regard to the fuller details given by Mark and Luke (with slight transpositions) respecting the form of the persecutions, and the position of believers in reference to the nearest earthly relations of kindred and friendship, we may observe, that it is probable, they were originally spoken in the connexion of the discourse, but that Matthew put these thoughts in an abbreviated form, because he had already copiously introduced them in the passages Matth. x. 17, ff., 34, ff. The history of the Church of Christ, as has been remarked in our exposition of those passages, affords numerous confirmations of this prophecy. But to what extent persecutions of believers to the death will be repeated when the advent of the Lord draws near, time must teach. The possibility of such things, at least, is proved by the persecutions of the faithful at the hands of their sanguinary oppressors during the time of the first French Revolution.

Ver. 10–13.—The sad consequences of these persecutions, to the Church, are now minutely described. To many they will prove a stumbling-block, and will lead them into great delinquencies. False teachers will arise, who will seduce many from the Church, and the ardour of brotherly love will be extinguished. The exhortation to υπομονή (or persevering endurance in all these sufferings), suggested by these thoughts, is expressed ver. 13; affliction is represented as that which purifies and perfects, so that it is equally a means of separating the impure, and of transforming into complete salvation the life of the upright.②

That the teachers of error here spoken of (ver. 11) would be in the bosom of the Church, is not expressly stated; and it may be

Grotius, who renders the form thus: ne hilum quidem damnit sectes, also points out another interpretation of the words in the present connexion; he says: si quid ipseum ad tempus interius videntur, non tam interit quam spud Deum deponitur, qui cum facere est redditoris. Accordingly he seems to understand the passage thus: “Ye will indeed be hated and killed, but nothing of you shall perish—ye will receive it all again at the resurrection.” However, the idea of preservation and restoration can only be applied only to what is spiritual; for Scripture says nothing about a revivification of all the parts of the destroyed body; and hence we come back to the meaning: ye will suffer no true injury (not even the slightest); on the contrary, you will receive advantage from all this, for, by patient endurance of sufferings (ver. 9), ye will gain your souls.

② Luke xxii. 19 has, instead of σωτερία, the parallel expression κατάθηκα τῆς ψυχῆς, to gain or win the soul; antithesis to ὑπολέοντα. Comp. Matth. xvi. 25, where εὐρίσκεσθαι and σωτερία occur synonymously. Comp. also on v. 13, the passage Matth. x. 22, where the same words are employed.
supposed that teachers not belonging to the Church will succeed in drawing many feeble and half-hearted members out of it, for fear of persecutions; just as the growing iniquity (ἀνομία) without the Church acts banefully upon the love in the Church itself (ver. 12). But, as it is not expressly said that they will be without the Church, the words may be taken indefinitely as we find them, and applied to both cases; so that the general meaning is, that sin and corruption will gain greater power through the persecutions that should result from them, and will wound the Church itself in many of its members. (Ψέκεσθαι, to grow cold, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; it is derived from the metaphor which compares love to a fire, Luke xii. 49.) The probability that such phenomena as those described, ver. 10–12, were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem, cannot be shewn; the persecutions of that period were not so violent as to drive many away from the faith and from the first glow of love. If anything of the kind did take place, it was only a feeble type of the decline of the Church predicted here, which Paul (2 Thess. ii. 3) designates as the “falling away” (ἀποστασία). And another proof that this prophecy also will find its fulfilment, in far more fearful phenomena than those which preceded the fall of Jerusalem, is furnished by the terrible fact of the first French Revolution—when the Christian religion was formally abolished, and compelled to give place to the idolatrous worship of reason.

Ver. 14.—The proclamation of the Gospel in the world, and its vast extension to all the nations of the earth, forms, in the discourse of the Lord, the contrast to the apostacy of many from the Church in consequence of persecutions and seductions. In this extension, the Divine energy inherent in the word is manifested as infinitely more mighty than all the power by which the Church is assaulted from without. (The expression εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας, Gospel of the kingdom, in Matthew specifies the kingdom as the object of the glad tidings proclaimed by the preachers; that message, however, is to be viewed as combining both the external and internal; only, that here the connexion naturally leads to this, viz., that the proclamation would invite men to receive the spirit of the new living community, so that, at the Parousia, when it shall appear in ascendancy, they may be received into it.)

Now, this verse is particularly opposed to that view which refers the whole of this portion of the discourse (as far as ver. 29) to the destruction of Jerusalem alone. For the parallel πάντα τὰ ἐθνῶν, all nations, prohibits us from applying οἰκουμένη, world, either to the Jewish state or to the Roman empire; nor can those who support the above hypothesis allow that there was a proclamation of the Gospel in all the world before the destruction of Jerusalem; while
the explanation that the announcement was not made to nations, as such, but to individuals belonging to them, who, it may be, came in contact with the apostles (so that the sense would be: "the proclamation shall not then be confined to Jews, but addressed to members of all nations"), is evidently the mere resort of necessity. According to our fundamental view, the preaching of the Gospel in all the world (as the prophets so often declared that the word of God should come to the remotest isles) is a true sign of the near approach of the Lord's advent, only that here—like the whole description—it leans upon a great historical event which forms the natural type of the final catastrophe. Hence it is here said (with a retrospective reference to ver. 6), ὅτε ἔσεί τὸ τέλος, then shall the end come, so that the end of the αὐτῶν οὐτος, present age, is clearly connected with this sublime triumph of the Divine word over all ungodliness. At the same time, the language before us does not imply that every member of every nation will be converted to the Church of Christ, as is shewn by the words "for a testimony to all nations" (εἰς μαρτύριον πάσι τοῖς ἐθνεῖς). (The same phraseology occurred Mark xiii. 9; Luke xxii. 12, in reference to persecutions.) All that is required is that the Gospel, as the purest light of the manifestation of God, be shewn to all; thus every one is placed under the necessity of deciding and taking part either for or against it. Hence the proclamation of the kingdom of God is itself a deciding time (κρίσις) for the nations, whereby those who are of an ungodly mind are made manifest; and this is the precise point expressed in the phrase "for a testimony to them." In the representation of Luke (which here begins to differ widely from Matthew), this idea is wanting; and, instead of it, he has introduced into this discourse the thoughts omitted by Matthew respecting the support that would be rendered to the preachers of the Gospel by the Holy Spirit; Mark also refers to the same subject, and connects it immediately with the proclamation of the Gospel. Matthew has the words (x. 19, 20), in his account of the instructions to the apostles; and although they are by no means unsuitable in that connexion, yet it must be confessed that the last addresses of Christ, like the great concluding discourses reported by John, afford us reason for considering it very probable that the Lord then made reference to the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, it appears that Mark and Luke have preserved, in these passages, true elements of the discourse of Christ, which Matthew omitted here because he had introduced them into previous discourses.

Ver. 15.—Immediately after this description of the spread of the Gospel through all nations, there follows a very minute repre-
sentation of the destruction of Jerusalem, without any pause being observed, or any intimation being given, that what follows is to be separated from what has preceded. Luke's account especially, which contains much that is peculiar, makes the reference to the destruction of the holy city unmistakable. This blending of the proximate and the most remote in one vision can be explained only by the principle we have laid down (ver. 1), as the ground on which our view of this section is founded: viz., that the destruction of Jerusalem is employed as the nearest point with which the last things—necessarily remaining indefinite in their chronology—could be connected; and that, according to the design of the Redeemer, this event itself was a type of the overthrow of the whole state of things obtaining in the present life, including the internal institution of the church.

According to Matthew and Mark, the description of the Lord proceeds upon a prophecy of Daniel. This express reference by the Redeemer to the book of Daniel, will always furnish the believer with an important argument for the retention of Daniel's writings in the canon, although he may not yet be able, on historical grounds, altogether to surmount the critical doubts respecting them, which, as it seems to me, still remain, even after the most recent and very valuable attempt to demonstrate the authenticity of Daniel's prophecies. It is impossible that Christ should have employed Daniel, as he did here, unless he approved of the importance ascribed to the book bearing his name. (In the text of Mark, the form of citation το βιβλίον ἑκατον ἡμιν τοῦ προφήτων, is spurious, and merely interpolated from Matthew; but it is evident that Mark has in his eye the same passage of Daniel as Matthew quotes.) The main passage here referred to by the Lord is the remarkable prophecy, Dan. ix. 26, 27, which we find more definitely expressed, Dan. xi. 31; xii. 11. According to my conviction, this cannot relate to Antiochus Epiphanes, but only to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Although the calculation has its difficulties—and these not slight ones—(difficulties which designedly exist in all dates connected with the prophecies of Scripture, because it is intended that the time should remain indefinite, and that nearer light concerning the future should be given to individuals only for special ends); yet the reference of the prophecy to this fact is throughout so distinctly expressed, that it never ought to be mistaken. But if this general

* It appears to me that Daniel in the Old Testament, in a critical point of view, stands parallel with the second epistle of Peter in the New Testament. Neither of them can, on critical and historical grounds, be conclusively vindicated as the genuine writings of the authors to whom they are attributed. Meanwhile it is sufficient to shew that neither are the arguments against their authenticity conclusive, and that hence the question of authenticity, in regard to these writings, cannot be solved on historical-critical grounds.
reference of the prediction cannot be doubted, so neither can the expression βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, abomination of desolation (= κτώς σφυρηλατή; the expression is best taken as meaning the horror attendant on universal devastation and destruction; the context would seem to point to some particular scene of horror conspicuous in the general desolation) be applied to the events in the time of Antiochus, but can only relate to what transpired when the city was demolished by the Romans. Now since Jesus applies the passage to this very fact, he here uses the prophetic words in their most literal sense. But what occurrence at the time of the fall of Jerusalem is denoted by this obscure expression (it is chosen in conformity with the LXX.; the version of Theodotion, which, as is well known, is generally used in the book of Daniel, has βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημωσεων) we are not definitely informed; and it must necessarily remain a matter of uncertainty, because, according to the character of prophecy, the actual fact ultimately contemplated, as the immediate precursor of Christ’s advent, only had its feeble types in the period of the destruction. Two objects, however, must be decidedly excluded; the passage cannot have reference either to the band of zealots who caused a massacre in the temple, or to the Roman army. Neither of these has any religious character; but such a character is indicated by the expression βδέλυγμα, abomination, in its connexion with τόπος ἁγίος, holy place; and the idea that the passage refers to the Roman army is merely occasioned by a mistaken comparison of Luke xxii. 20, who should be treated independently, because he gives another report of the discourse of Christ. The expression τόπος ἁγίος, holy place (for which Mark has δομον οῦ δει, that is, ubi nefas est), cannot relate to the Holy Land; it can be applied only to the temple, because in the original text the words are παρὰ τοῖς. And, moreover, the expression ἵσταται, standing (with Fritzche, I prefer the neuter because it refers to βδέλυγμα) is incompatible with either reference, to the zealots or the Romans. The most consistent hypothesis is, that the profanation of the temple by idolatrous worship is the phenomenon alluded to;* but as the historical accounts respecting the attempts made to introduce it, afford us but little satisfactory information, it is difficult to fix upon anything specific. According to Josephus (Bell. Jud. ii. 7), Pilate attempted to set up the statue of the emperor, though not in the temple. Jerome (in his commentary on the passage) says, that a statue of Adrian occupied the place of the demolished temple; but this was after its destruction, whilst here the discourse

* The expression βδέλυγμα is in the highest degree favourable to this view. Suidas explains it thus: πῶν ἐκθελον και πῶν κατατυπων αἰνηρωσων οἴτως ἐκαλεται παμ Ιουδαιος, every image and every likeness of men was thus called among the Jews. In the Hebrew also, γάρ is used especially of religious impurity, and γραμμα are plainly idols. (Comp. Gesenius sub verb)
relates to occurrences before that catastrophe. Such events, therefore, furnish only feeble analogies to that which is the proper subject of this prophecy. Paul (2 Thess. ii. 4) affirms this distinctly and beyond all mistake, and the possibility of such a fearful development of sin in times of external civilization and culture is again strikingly proved by the French Revolution, with its idolatrous worship of reason.

A further difficulty is occasioned by the parenthesis in Matthew and Mark, ἵνα γενώσων νοεῖτω, let him that readeth understand. That the Lord himself uttered these words with reference to the text of Daniel, does not appear to me probable; in such a case something more definite would have been added, as, for example, "the words of the prophet" (τὰ τοῦ προφήτου). But if these are the words of the Evangelist, appended by him to direct the attention of his contemporaries to this passage, then the question occurs, whether they will not afford a date for the composition of the Gospel. It is by no means improbable that if Matthew recognized the near approach of the dreadful destruction of the metropolis, in the signs that preceded it, he might have felt it right to add such a hint for his readers; this hint, however, gives us no premises from which to deduce anything further than that the Gospel of Matthew must have been composed shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem; the uncertainty as to the particular events to which Matthew may have referred in what he added, does not permit us to fix the time more precisely.1

Here the account given by Luke is peculiar. As we have already remarked, the interpretation of the words quoted in Matthew and Mark, by a reference to Luke, as meaning the Roman army, is evidently forced; Luke gives another version of the Lord's discourse. Still it is not improbable that the particulars preserved by him are genuine constituent parts of the original discourse of the Redeemer. In Luke xix. 43, 44, we find the same idea—that of the city being invested by enemies, and the siege proceeding against it; but that passage cannot be regarded as a post eventum description of what happened during the siege of Titus, because the Old Testament contains representations precisely similar. (Comp. Isaiah xxxix. 3; Jerem. vi. 6; Ezek. xvii. 17.) Luke xix. 43, not only represents the city as beleaguered, but describes the mode of the blockade, by means of a mole thrown up. (Xάραξ signifies vallum or agger, an artificial elevation, by means of which besiegers endeavour to reach the walls of the blockaded city. Ezek. xvii. 17, the LXX. use the expression ἄραξας θολὴ for this form of siege. The passage, Luke

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1 Hug. Einl. in's N. T. Th. ii. a. 14, goes too far when he thinks this passage gives ground for the inference that the Romans must already have occupied Galilee, and must have been on the point of taking Judea also, when Matthew wrote these words.
is the only instance in which ἐδαφίζω occurs in the New Testament. It signifies literally [from ἐδαφὸς] to level with the ground, then generally to overthrow, to annihilate. In this wider signification, the expression is extended also to the children of Jerusalem [τὰ τέκνα σου εν σοι]."

Ver. 16–21.—In the following verses the reference to the destruction of Jerusalem again presents itself unmistakably in many particular features. The judgment is described as breaking in so suddenly and inevitably, that the utmost haste is recommended, and this very haste, as well as the entire surrender of all earthly possessions (comp. the same thought Luke xvii. 31) retains its significance in the typical application of this description to the advent of the Lord. The Lord will also preserve believers who yield themselves with child-like confidence to His guidance, in a safe hiding-place (comp. the remarks on ver. 31), against the universal devastation and destruction. (The mountains are mentioned as the places difficult of access to troops making an assault, and it must be borne in mind that the houses were flat, so that the inhabitants could make an immediate descent from the roof to the open fields, and effect a more speedy flight. We have a perfect parallel to this description in Luke xvii. 31, which passage treats of the advent of the Lord under the figure of the destruction of Jerusalem.) The calamity itself appears inevitable, but prayer might effect alleviations; as, for example, that the flight may not take place in the inclement season of the year. Matthew has the peculiar addition, μηδὲ σαββάτῳ, nor on the Sabbath. In interpreting this it must be observed that Jesus [regards the law of the Sabbath as Divine, and part of the moral law] yet without sanctioning the rigid notions which prevailed among the Jews concerning the Sabbatic law as correct. In conclusion it may be observed that even this special description of the fall of Jerusalem is not without allusion to the coming of the Lord, as is shown by ver. 21, where the (θλίψεις μεγάλη) great affliction, such as had not happened since the creation of the world, can only have reference to the ἡρίζων ἔρημος; especially as it is added: οὐδόν οὐ μὴ γένηται.

Here again the representation of Luke so decidedly differs, that it requires a separate consideration, as a peculiar version. Jerusalem was expressly named as the besieged city, ver. 20; and so also in the following verses of Luke the same application of the language is most decidedly retained—Jerusalem being described, ver. 24, as destroyed by Gentile nations. Even the mention of the great period of suffering is made in such a manner as not to convey so express a reference to the coming of Christ as that in Matthew and Mark. It is designated (ver. 23): ἰρηγί τῷ λαῷ τοῦτῳ, wrath upon this people, and accordingly this destruction appears to be
merely a judgment upon the Jews. But the supposition that the account of Luke relates merely to this fact, without making any reference to the advent of the Lord, is most decidedly opposed by verse 24 in its immediate connexion with verse 25. In the former the time of the Gentiles is represented as being fulfilled, and in the latter the signs of the Parousia are described as altogether unmistakeable; so that we cannot admit any essential difference between the statements of Matthew and Mark compared with those of Luke. The points of difference have more to do with single features in the representation than with the matter itself.—(Ver. 21, the words ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῆς, in the midst of it, refer to Jerusalem. The city is brought into contrast with its environs [χώρας]. Those believers who were in the city were to flee out of it [and thus it came to pass, for the Christians fled beyond the Jordan to Pella], while those who were already out of it were not to seek safety in it, because the city, with everything in it, was to become a prey to destruction. Ἐξωθίωσα occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Verse 22 expressly designates the destruction of Jerusalem as a Divine act of judgment [concerning ἐκδικημον, comp. the remarks on Luke xviiii, 3, 7] already predicted in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament.)—The form πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα, all things written, cannot have reference only to the passage Matt. xxiv. 15, quoted from the prophet Daniel; on the contrary, it comprehends the entire sum of those prophecies and types in the Old Testament, which set forth the wrath of God against the nation of Israel. Hence we must begin with the curse pronounced by Moses upon the people if they would not obey the voice of God (Deut. xxviii. 15, ff.), and connect with it the threatenings of all holy men and prophets, in which they denounced punishments upon unbelief and disobedience. And even if these had their preliminary fulfilment in many oppressions endured by the nation—as may be said, for example, of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of Israel in Babylon—yet all previous sufferings appear insignificant when compared with the ruin of the city by the Romans. All prior judgments, therefore, are types of this last and proper act of Divine justice, which followed the rejection of the Messiah, the highest and also the final act in the manifestation of the grace of the Lord. (Comp. Matt. xxi. 38, ff., where the Lord, in His parable, connects the judgment with the expulsion of the Son.) This is especially true of the Babylonish exile, to which there appears to be an allusion in the words of Luke, ver. 24. αἰχμαλωτισθησονται εἰς πάντα τὰ κόσμος, they shall be led captive among all nations. The carrying away of Israel from the land of his fathers to Babylon was only a prelude to the general captivity of the Israelites (predicted by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 64) among all nations, from one end
of the earth to the other. Thus the whole world was opened to them, excepting only the holy city—the centre of all their hopes and desires—this (since the time of Adrian) was closed against them. It was accessible to none but Gentiles, who made the holy place a place of idolatrous worship and licentiousness. (Παρέω, like ἀπαντάκεω, is also used by the profane writers in the sense of contemptuously treading under the feet, abusing. Hence it involves the idea of audacity and sinfulness as the only source from which abuse can spring. There is but one other instance of its occurrence, in the same signification, in the New Testament, viz. Rev. xi. 2, τὴν πάλιν τὴν διὰν παράσων θηνη, the Gentiles shall trample on the holy city; and this language appears to refer to our passage, thus affording no small confirmation to the view that the words before us, while peculiar to Luke, really belong to the discourse of the Lord.)

The final clause of ver. 24, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (ἄρι πληρώσας καιροΐ ἔθνων), is of the highest significance. The main idea it expresses is, that nations, like individuals, have a limited time of development, beyond which they cannot pass. As Israel filled up the measure of his disobedience and then was rejected, so also the rule of the Gentiles over Israel has its term. True, these words contain no express information respecting the relation of Israel to the Gentiles, at the termination of their power over it; but this may be gathered from other passages. According to Rom. xi. the rejection of Israel is not total, and therefore the fulfilment of the "times of the Gentiles" is to be viewed as connected with the restoration of the Jews. And, on the other hand, this fulfilment in relation to the Gentiles, is to be regarded as a judgment poured out upon them for the purpose of punishing and sifting them. (The prophets of the Old Testament speak in a similar manner respecting the nations whom the Lord used as scourges to his own people; for a time they kept the ascendancy, and then they themselves were hurled down. See Isaiah x. 5, 12, 15; Zech. i. 14, 15; Dan. ix. 26, compared with xii. 11.) The meaning of the words certainly has its primary application to the Romans, as the nation by whom the Lord God permitted the Jews to be chastised. But as the destruction of Jerusalem (according to the principle already laid down in our remarks on Matt. xxiv. 1) was employed only as the nearest great historical event to represent the description of the last time, so also the several circumstances in the history of

* The time of the conversion of the Gentiles is not the period referred to. The Lord does not here speak of the Gentiles in so far as they also are objects of Divine favour, but so far as they are used as instruments in the Divine government of the world. (Comp. Schott in his Comm. p. 338. The passages, Jer. xxvii. 7, 1 L 31, which Schott quotes, are illustrations in point.) Verse 25 throws decisive light on the meaning of Luke in these words; for after the description of the sufferings of the Jews, mention is made of the ἔθνων, distress of nations.

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the former people have their further relation to this. A more minute view of this subject will be furnished in the interpretation of the passage, Rev. xi. 2, which is quite parallel with Luke xxi. 24, and contains a reference to Dan. xii. 11.

Ver. 22.—Whilst Luke immediately follows up the description of the fall of Jerusalem with the mention of prodigies which would be visible in heaven and on earth, Matthew (ver. 22-28) introduces between these points a more amplified description of the distress which he had mentioned, ver. 21; and Mark inserts a similar paragraph in the same place, only in a form somewhat more abbreviated. The peculiarity of the ideas is a guarantee for the correctness of their position here, with this exception only—that Luke employs ver. 27, 28 in a more appropriate connexion than that which they have in Matthew. Matthew xxiv. 22, describes the great affliction as so fearful that in the mercy of God a special curtailment would be necessary, for without this none (οὐ πάσα = οὐκ ημῖν) of the feeble race of men (σάρξ = όντος certainly signifies mankind generally, but with the accessory idea of weak, perishable elements contained in the mass) would survive the woe. (There can be no doubt that here “saved” (σωζόμεθα) primarily refers to the outward, corporeal life, so that the sense is: “all would be destroyed.” But since the subject of discourse is a visitation of Divine justice, the corporeal destruction involves moral guilt; the impossibility that the elect should perish, in this judgment of God, is parallel with the impossibility of their being seduced [ver. 24].—Κολοβω, from κολλωθείν, literally signifies to mutilate, then to cut off, to shorten. This is the only instance of its occurrence in the New Testament. Now this abbreviation of the distress comes to pass for the sake of the elect (διὰ τοῦ ἐκλεκτοῦ). The question might be asked, whether the design of the language is to represent the elect as exercising this influence merely by their presence, or whether the effect results from their prayer. But wherever the elect are, they are only to be conceived of as in prayer, so that the two senses coincide. Thus we find the same idea here as in the Old Testament (Gen. xviii.), that the saints exercise a preserving influence upon the whole mass. And the truth of this idea is easily seen if, instead of the ordinary view of human relations, which isolates the individual man, we adopt a more profound one, according to which alike the human race as a whole, and single nations in their collective capacity, appear founded upon a vital, mutual influence of the individuals that constitute them. For this view shows the forbearance of God with the ungodly for the sake of the godly, as not resulting from arbitrary Divine decree: it springs from the natural connexion of the spiritual life of the mass, that those individuals in whom the germs of the nobler life are preserved, sustain the whole; if they also become the

Prey of corruption, the whole must sink. In the fall of Jerusalem this principle was but very imperfectly realized. True, the siege might have lasted longer, and the ruin might have been such that not a single person should have escaped; but how it can be said that this was prevented for the sake of the elect, does not appear. For the Christians fled to Pella, and this flight was a proof that Jerusalem, with its inhabitants, was given over to destruction as incorrigible (like the world before the flood after Noah's removal into the ark, and like the dwellers in Sodom after the flight of Lot to Zoar); not that God shortened their tribulation on account of the believers. Schott, indeed, thinks (p. 57) that we are not to understand by the elect the Christians, but such Jews as were about to go over to the Church of Christ. But the reference of the elect, ver. 24 and 31, to the members of the church, renders this hypothesis quite untenable. This passage also evidently has its final reference to the advent of the Lord, preceded by the birth-pangs of the Messiah; these will fall at once upon believers and unbelievers—upon the former to perfect, upon the latter to punish them; but for the sake of believers the merciful One will shorten them. It is not till after this (ver. 31) that believers are separated from their connexion with unbelievers, and gathered together in a mountainous place (Zoar); then the community of unbelievers, having lost its moral foundation, is plunged into irretrievable destruction.

Ver. 23-26.—The physical sufferings are accompanied further by sharp temptations; deceiving and deceived men represent themselves as the Messiah and as prophets (comp. the remarks on Matth. xxiv. 4, 5). The temptation by pretended appearances of Divine messengers appears continuous in its operation upon the church, and, at the same time, advances in itself. According to this passage, it is so severe that even the elect might be deceived, if it did not involve an internal contradiction to suppose that the representatives of the kingdom of light on earth would be overcome by darkness. The reference of the "elect" in this passage to any others than the apostles and believing members of the church, is utterly untenable, for the whole is addressed directly to the apostles themselves. Hence the words can only be taken as meaning "so as to lead astray, if possible, you and all the elect" (σοτε πλανήσαι ει δύνατον, ὑμᾶς καὶ πάντας τῶν ἑκλεκτῶν); it is only thus that the force of the admonition can be felt. A remarkable point in this passage is, that signs and wonders are ascribed to false prophets. These being signs by which genuine prophets proved their authority, inexperienced persons might easily be deceived by them. Now, the admission that miracles might be performed by false prophets, is an incontestable witness (as we have already remarked in the exposition of Matth. iv. 12) that miracles cannot prove the truth.
The truth can only be proved by itself, as the presence of light is attested only by light itself. But the gift of miracles certainly shows the connexion of an individual with the spiritual world, whether with the world of light and truth, or with the kingdom of darkness and lies. The question whether an individual is acting in the spirit of light or of darkness, cannot long remain a matter of doubt to an upright person; and, if miraculous powers are united with falsehood, this is to an enlightened mind so much stronger an intimation to keep aloof. The meaning which the Lord here intends to convey is enlarged upon by Paul (2 Thess. ii. 9) and John (Rev. xiii. 12, ff.); but without the presupposition of a kingdom of darkness and its agency, we can have no possible conception of miracles of pseudo-prophets.6

Ver. 27, 28.—A contrast is drawn between the forms in which false Christs appear (ἐν τῇ ἡρῴῳ, in the desert—ἐν τοῖς ῥυμέως, in the secret chambers) are to be taken merely as general expressions for the antithesis between inhabited and uninhabited, concealed and open†), and the mode in which the only true Messiah is manifested. The latter is like an all-illuminating flash of lightning, which no one can mistake; as easily as the former admits deception, the latter unmistakeably reveals itself. Granting that the figure of the lightning turns partly on the unexpected and startling suddenness of its appearance, yet the connexion absolutely requires that the main reference should be to its discernibleness and openness to universal observation. This is contrasted, as the test of the appearing of the true Messiah, with the pretended Messianic advents of impostors, who are always obliged to mask themselves, in one mode or another. Now, in what way this can relate to the so-called invisible advent of the Lord at the destruction of Jerusalem, does not at all appear; the words have no sense except when applied to the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven.‡ In the text of Luke (xvii. 24) this figure of the lightning is worded somewhat differently: ἡ ἀναβάτης τῆς ἑρῴου εἰς τὴν ὑπὸ σιρανὸν ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ σιρανὸν ἐστιν ἡ ἀναβάτης τῆς ὑπὸ σιρανὸν εἰς τὴν ὑπὸ σιρανὸν

* The expression δοξολογεῖσται οὐκεία, shall give signs, forbids the supposition that the mere presence of being able to work miracles is meant: it ascribes to false prophets the real power to perform them. Paul speaks expressly, 2 Thess. ii. 9, of the ἐνεργεία τοῦ σατανᾶ, working of Satan, which effects them.

† This representation of the ministry of false prophets is strikingly descriptive of the spirit that inspires them. Instead of the open, transparent spirit of the true Gospel, they manifest a spirit of sedition which shuns the light, and is constantly under the necessity of hiding this or that from its all-revealing rays.

‡ Schott is impartial enough to acknowledge the impossibility of applying ver. 27, 28 to the invisible advent of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem; but he is inclined (since these verses are wanting in Mark and otherwise associated by Luke) to remove them altogether from Matthew, so that ver. 26 shall form the conclusion of the prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and ver. 29 the commencement of the prophecy respecting the advent of Christ. (Comp. loc. cit. p. 72.)
Matthew XXIV. 27, 28.

λάμπει; whilst Matthew mentions the cardinal points of the earth: ἢ διστραπὴ ἐξερχέται απὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ φαίνεται ἐως δυσμῶν. (With ἐκ τῆς and εἰς τὴν the word χώρα must be supplied; so that, even according to Luke, the language denotes those regions of the heavens through which the lightning flashes.)

It is probable, as we have already remarked, that this passage and ver. 28 do not constitute original parts of the discourse of the Lord. In Luke xvii. 24, 37, the two verses stand in a more exact connexion; and besides this, we have seen that in the whole narrative of Luke, to which this passage also belongs, a closer train of thought is to be observed, which appears to rest upon accurate historical accounts; whilst Matthew, throughout his gospel, treats the elements of the discourses more freely. But ver. 28, διὰν γὰρ ἔδω ὁ πόλεμος ἑπετεῖα ἐν ὑπ' ἑτολ, especially does not seem to stand in connexion with what precedes it, according to Matthew; whilst in Luke the previous question (ποῦ κύριε) renders the proverbial sentence exceedingly appropriate to the description about to be given of the destruction of unbelievers. Now, as in Matthew, the unmistakeable coming of Christ, was described in the verses immediately preceding, the connexion might seem to recommend the untenable interpretation, which makes the πτώμα mean Christ himself, and the δερόλ believers collected around him. But apart from the unsuitableness of the figure, we find no parallel case of such a relation between the πτώμα and the δερόλ. On the contrary the usus loci of the Old Testament (comp. Hab. i. 8; Jevem. xlviii. 40, xlix. 22; Job xxxix. 30) indicates the natural idea of the humiliation and destruction of that which is given over to ruin. The only question is, how this idea coincides with the connexion. According to the context in Luke xvii. 37, the only way of understanding the passage is to take σῶμα, body, as meaning the Jewish state, deprived of all life, and the δερόλ, eagles as the Romans completely putting an end to its existence (it is not improbable that allusion is made to the eagles of the legions); but both the former and the latter point, as types, to the last great catastrophes. In Matthew, however, this signification of the proverb is directly contrary to the connexion; hence we must either say that the passage is here inappropriately inserted, or admit that Matthew and Luke use the same apothegm in different senses. To the former view I must declare myself most decidedly opposed; because it would entirely rob the Evangelist of his character as an author of scripture; and it is always observable in his gospel, that where he does not preserve the original order he institutes a new one. Accordingly, I adopt the other

* In the text of Luke, however, σῶμα, is to be preferred to the reading πτώμα which has been copied from Matthew.

† So Fritzche (in loc.) who translates the words; ubi Messias, ibi homines, qui ejus potestas futuri sit.
hypothesis. But there are two modes in which the connexion with what precedes may be formed. Either eagles must be referred back (with Fleck, loc. cit. 384) to the ψευδόχριστος, false Christs (ver. 24), so that the meaning is, "where corruption has become general, there men are immediately found who know how to employ it for their own ends;" or else the γάρ, for, must be allowed to decide for the immediate connexion of ver. 28 with ver. 27, and the "eagles" must be interpreted as descriptive of the Messiah coming to inflict punishment upon the corrupt Israel. The latter view is grammatically preferable, on account of the for, which it is more difficult to connect with ver. 26; for this reason Fritzsche adopts it, only, as we have remarked, applying πτημα to the Redeemer—an application which appears to me inadmissible. But one thing only can be adduced against this view, viz., that the plural (ἀετῶν) does not properly apply to the appearing of Christ. But if his appearing be conceived as connected with that of angels (as required by Matthew xxv. 31), this difficulty is solved. The nobler expression ἀετός = ἦς, Isaiah xl. 31, is in other passages also used metaphorically in the good sense. The figure strictly required, not eagles, but vultures, because the eagle only devours living animals; but the names of kindred animals are not unfrequently interchanged. (Comp. Gesenius in his lex. sub verb, ἦς.)

Ver. 29.—The correctness of our interpretation of the Lord's prophecy respecting his advent, as developed at the beginning of this chapter, is not more evident in any passage than in the difficult verse which now follows. Whatever other explanation is offered, the difficulties are not solved. For if all that is now added be referred, like what has preceded, to the destruction of Jerusalem, without allowing the description of the Lord's advent to be blended with this; then, in the first place, it does not appear how the θλίψις, affliction (by which, according to the connexion, we can understand only the events described, ver. 21, and not the temptation by false prophet, ver. 24) can be represented as past (comp. μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν τῶν θημερόν ἐκείνων), since the destruction itself (by some understood as the invisible coming of Christ) is the affliction. And in the second place, the description of the miraculous signs (ver. 29), and the details of the Parousia itself (ver. 30, 31) are by no means suited to the fact of the destruction of Jerusalem. But if a pause in the representation of Jesus be supposed (as Schott suggests), and the foregoing part be applied to the fall of Jerusalem, while the sequel is taken as belonging to the coming of Christ at the end of the world, then, although the words μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν, after the affliction, gain their right signification, εἰδέως, immediately, is inexplicable.

* Comp. the remarkable passage Rev. viii. 13, where the term ἀετός is applied to an angel. The text. rec. also reads ἵγγειος in the passage.
and ver. 33, 34, refer every thing (πάντα ταῦτα) again to the immediate presence of the apostles. The interpretation which Schott (p. 99) attempts to give of εἰδέως, when he compares it with the Hebrew שָׁמַעְתָּ, and takes it in the sense of “suddenly,” “unexpectedly,” is only to be regarded as a shift; for this scholar himself sees there-in a false rendering by the unknown translator of our Greek Matthew from the Hebrew original. If there appeared no other choice, I would rather adopt the fine conjecture of Weber (conjecturae ad Mt. 24. Viteb. 1810), that εἰδέως belongs to the preceding verse, and ver. 29 opens with the words: μετὰ δὲ τὴν θλίψεως κ. τ. λ.; but, the exact agreement of the manuscripts speaks too strongly for the integrity of the text* to render a conjecture admissible in this passage. But according to the fundamental view of prophecy which we have laid down, this verse coincides with the connexion very naturally. The representation of the Redeemer certainly marks a progression in the several events of the future concerning which he speaks, so that the following great signs, taking place in the heavens, stand in contrast with the commotions on earth previously described, and the distress of all nations (according to Luke) with that of the Jewish people; thus it was proper to speak of these subsequent events as following the afflictions of those days (μετὰ τὴν θλίψεως τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων). Nevertheless this entire circle of successive events is transferred to the immediately coming present (according to the principles already laid down); and therefore εἰδέως, immediately (which Mark explains by the words ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, in those days), was used, quite consistently, in its literal sense.† (Haggai, ii. 6, similarly ascribes the great movements of heaven and earth to the immediate present; he employs the expression γῆς ἡμέρας, that is, after a short time, εἰδέως.) The unity of the whole picture (in which no divisions whatever can be distinguished) is most strikingly obvious in Luke, who, with a καὶ ἐσται, and there shall be, xxi. 25, links the following description to the preceding one, which refers most definitely to Jerusalem.

According to the scope of the whole—and the succeeding verses (30, 31) do not leave a doubt on this subject—the signs (σημεῖα) in the sun, moon, and stars, cannot be interpreted allegorically, as representing political or ecclesiastical relations and their dissolution; for political disturbances have already been spoken of, ver. 7. And just as little is the sense exhausted, if the language is understood as referring to ordinary and frequently recurring phenomena, which were only at times regarded as prodigies, for example, eclipses of

* Throughout the whole verse, there is not the slightest difference in the MSS., which is seldom the case in passages of any importance.

† A reference of εἰδέως to the Divine chronometry (according to 2 Peter iii. 8), is not here admissible, because the representation is evidently adapted to human conceptions. (Comp. the question, Matth. xxiv. 3.)
the sun and moon, or falling stars. It would be preferable to explain the signs in the sun and moon, of their obscuration during earthquakes, by evaporations and volumes of smoke; this is a very extraordinary and terrific phenomenon, and would well correspond with the raging of the sea (Luke xxii. 25), which often accompanies earthquakes. But the parallel passages of the Old Testament point too definitely to another view to allow of our retaining this. The Old Testament—which is followed by the New in the idea alluded to—never isolates our globe, as a separate sphere, from the heavenly world and its orbs, as the modern philosophy usually does; on the contrary, heaven and earth make up one perfect whole. Hence mighty phenomena on earth influence alike previously and subsequently the heavenly world. (Thus with the star that led the Magi at the birth of Christ.) On this principle the prophets predict not merely violent convulsions on the earth, but with them similar events in heaven; and these are by no means viewed as incidentally coinciding, but as necessarily connected. The Creator of heaven and earth, in the exercise of his sovereign rule, makes the upper and the lower worlds simultaneously tremble from their foundations. Among the passages in which such celestial phenomena are predicted, Isaiah xiii. 10, xxiv. 23, xxxiv. 4; Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; Joel ii, 30, 31; Hagg. ii. 7, are specially to be noticed. In the last of these, God promises that at the time when he sends the Messiah (whose first and second advents are viewed as coincident, according to the usual mode of representation) he will shake heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land. Our passage is in perfect correspondence with this language; Matthew and Mark detail the commotion in the heavenly world, Luke gives greater prominence to the disturbance on earth. Hence the obscurations of the sun and the moon are most correctly interpreted of extraordinary phenomena in the celestial regions themselves; and so also with the expression: “the stars shall fall from heaven” (ἀστέρες πέσουνται ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). There is here no reference to stars falling to the earth, as is said of a star, Rev. viii. 10, in symbolical language: Πάπτειν, fall, may therefore be taken (as Schott, p. 78, very justly remarks) for ἐκπάπτειν, perish, disappear.†. Not that absolute destruction is meant; but simply that violent shakings and fearful commotions of the heavenly bodies will, for a time, withdraw them from the eye of man, and veil everything in awful night. This idea is well supported by the expression σαλευσθαι (from σαλος, salum, the roll-

* The term φανερος is used among the Attics, by way of distinction, for moonlight, φως for daylight. But the distinction is not constantly observed. (Comp. Passow in the lex. sub verb.)

† Compare the parallels in the Old Testament, Isaiah xiv. 12 (where the king of Babylon is described as a falling morning star, ἄγγελος ἅβαφ, and xxxiv. 4, where the LXX. have the phrase πάντα τι ἀστρα πέσουται.)
ing sea [found in the New Testament only in this passage and in Luke], hence to be moved up and down, to be tossed). Probably the word contains an allusion to the parallel in Haggai (יוֹם הָאָרֶץ), although the LXX. have rendered it by σέλος. The only remaining expression in which there is any difficulty is δύναμις τῶν οἰρανῶν, powers of heaven. Since the stars have already been mentioned, this cannot, without tautology, be understood as meaning the heavenly host, the οὐρανοὶ θεοῦ. The best interpretation makes δύναμις signify the angelic world. (Comp. the remarks on Rev. ix. 1.) For in part σαλευομαι, shaken, may be applied to spiritual commotion. (2 Thess. ii. 2), and partly we are to conceive alike of the angels and their dwelling-place—the entire upper sphere—as appearing to be moved. Hence we need not understand the language metaphorically. But as to the remark of Schott, that δύναμις, powers, in the sense of higher powers, angels, does not occur in connexion with οἰρανῶν, of the heavens, Bretschneider (in his lex. Pt. i. p. 262) shows that in the Apocrypha mention is made of οἰρανίων δύναμεων, heavenly powers (comp. also 2 Kings xvii. 16, according to the LXX.) and there appears to be no reason whatever why that connexion should be inadmissible, especially as it is in the highest degree probable that the designation of stars as God's host is founded in the idea of the ancients, that the stars were animated and inspired by spirits.

While then Matthew and Mark describe the celestial phenomena which will usher in the Parousia, Luke points also minutely to the violent earthly commotions that will precede it. These are designated, in contrast with the earlier sufferings of the Jews in Palestine (Luke xxii. 21), as about to come upon the whole earth (γῆ, οἰκουμένη), and upon all nations (ἔθνη). (Mattt. xxiv. 30, we find instead of those forms, the expression: πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς.) The words of Luke, ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς συνοχῇ ἐθνῶν ἐν ἀπορία ἡχοὺς θλίψεως καὶ σάλων, contain an important various reading, which Schulz has even received into the text. The Codices A.B.L.M. and several others read ἡχοὺς, but the substantive may still be preferable as the more difficult reading. (Ἀπορία ἡχοὺς signifies "perplexity on account of the roaring of the sea." The meaning is that the dreadful commotion of the elements will render men altogether helpless and bereft of their senses, not knowing what next awaits them [προσδοκία τῶν ἐπερχομένων]. Сυνοχή occurs in only one other instance, 2 Cor. ii. 4, connected with καρδίας. The figure is derived from the sensible influence of distress as revealed in a (συνοχή, holding together) compression, straitening.

Ver. 30.—All three Evangelists agree in connecting the Parousia of the Son of Man immediately with these signs by a τότε, then But Matthew alone remarks, with reference to the question of the
disciples (Matth. xxiv. 3), that immediately before the return of the Lord, another special sign of the Son of Man (σημεῖον τοῦ νῦν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) will appear in heaven. It is impossible to determine this with precision, as it is spoken of only in this passage. Most probably a star is meant (in allusion to Numb. xxiv. 17); so that just as before the birth of Jesus a star was seen which heralded his coming—like the morning star that precedes the sun at its rising—a similar sign will appear before his second advent. Thus much is certain (on account of the article,) that a definite sign is to be understood, so that the expression cannot relate (as Schott thinks) to the signs described, ver. 29; and, in like manner, it cannot be intended to designate an earthly event or an invisible occurrence in the church, since the words εν τω οὐρανω, in heaven, which cannot be joined to νύν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, are expressly connected with it. But all conjectures for which there is absolutely no scriptural warrant (for example, that a cross will be seen in the heavens) are best left in their own uncertainty. The sight of this decisive sign will awaken terror in the (unbelieving) nations of the earth (comp. the remarks on κύπεσθαι, Matth. xi. 17; Luke viii. 52), and they will then behold the solemn Parousia of the Son of Man. It is beyond all doubt, that the following description neither relates to an invisible advent of Christ, nor can be understood in any metaphorical sense whatever. For although ἔρχεσθαι and ἤκειν (come), alone might be so understood (comp. the observations on Matth. xxiv. 1), no passage can be adduced in which the complete phrase, ἔρχεται ὁ νῦν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δύναμεως καὶ δόξης, the Son of Man cometh in the clouds of heaven with power and glory, can with any probability be thus understood. (Comp. Matth. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xix. 11; Dan. vii. 13, 14.) Let any one, with an unprejudiced mind, place himself within the sphere of ideas familiar to the hearers of Jesus, and he will entertain no doubt that the clouds, in which he promises to appear, are literally clouds of light. (In Rev. xix. 11 we find, instead of this expression, the metaphor of a white horse, denoting swiftness of motion and brightness.) These are to form, as it were, the basis on which the Redeemer, descending from Heaven, will rest, while brightness (δόξα = δόξη) encircles the whole of the sublime phenomenon. According to constant custom, deeply founded in the nature of man, all appearances of God are surrounded with light, in the Old Testament as well as in the New; there is no imagination whatever, individual or national, that can conceive of the Deity under any other image than that of light. Δύναμις, power, however, is not to be taken merely as a synonym of δόξα; in this instance it unquestionably has the signification of host (= αἰγίς, which the LXX. in the passage, 2 Kings xvii. 16, translate δύναμις τοῦ
since it belongs to the pomp of the Parousia, that the Lord does not come alone, but with the host of his holy ones (Matth. xvi. 27, xxv. 81; Jude, ver. 14; Rev. xix. 14). It is further observed, that, in like manner, according to a constant use in this book, the Redeemer represents himself in his coming as the Son of Man, not as the Son of God. Here there might be an appeal, on the one hand, to the general use which the Saviour makes of this name, when he speaks of himself; and on the other to passages such as Dan. vii. 13, 14, which the Lord may have had in view. Yet there is still a peculiar significance in the fact, that this name—which denotes the ideal humanity of the Lord—is constantly employed in the description of his advent; for by this means, we have the most distinct assurance of the reality and corporeality of his appearance. The return of the Son of Man necessarily presupposes his ascension in a glorified body, and his sitting, in this glorified body, at the right hand of God.

Luke makes the transition to the next thought in a very appropriate manner, xxi. 28. After the impression of the return of the Lord upon the tribes of the earth (φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς) has been described, there follows a representation of its effect upon believers. To the former it is the essence of everything terrific, because of its immediate connexion with the judgment; to the latter, it is the essence of everything desired, because it is the commencement of their promised bliss in the kingdom of God (ver. 31). That kingdom, in relation to the sufferings of the present, takes the form of redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) to the saints. The same term, indeed, applies (like σωτροπαί, Matth. xxiv. 22), in the primary sense, to release from the external troubles of the αἰών υἱῶν; but so far as these are the results of sin, deliverance from the former involves freedom from the latter. (Concerning the expression ἀπολύτρωσις, comp. the remarks on Matth. xx. 28.—There is also mention made of an ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος, redemption of the body, Rom. viii. 23 [the connexion points to the corporeal glorification, as the deliverance from ματαιότητος, vanity, decay, ver. 20], but this also presupposes a spiritual redemption.) Believers may joyfully anticipate this attainment of the final goal at the time of the Parousia. (*Ἀρχεσθαι, begin, is here by no means redundant; on the contrary, the events described are viewed in their gradual development, and treated as affording encouragement and consolation to the members of Christ's kingdom.—'Ἀνακύπτειν was employed, Luke xiii. 11, to denote the physical act of looking up; here it is a metaphorical expression for a hopeful, confident state of mind.)

Ver. 31.—Luke contents himself with indicating the relation of the Parousia to the saints; but Matthew and Mark dwell more definitely on the Divine agency by which they will be delivered from
all danger and trouble. Whilst the appearing of the Lord is fraught with destruction to unbelievers, the elect will be removed, by a sublime arrangement, from all peril, and collected together in one (safe) place. That this passage does not relate merely to Palestine, and the believers in that land, is shown by the expressions: ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων, from the four winds, ( הו בעליון, 1 Chron. ix. 24; Ezek. xxxvii. 9; Rev. vii. 1), and ἅπαξ ἀκρων οἰκρισμῶν ἐξ ἀκρων αὐτῶν, from one end of heaven to the other, both of which phrases metaphorically denote the widest extent of the earth. Just as little can the language refer to the diffusion of the Gospel (as an invisible gathering of the nations), for it is not the heathen, but those already converted, who will be gathered together. (The general proclamation of the Gospel has already been spoken of, ver. 14.) Nor can this passage be applied even to the general union of all the saints in the kingdom of God, which would presuppose the resurrection. (On that subject, comp. 1 Thess. iv. 17; 2 Thess. ii. 1, where the ἐπίσωμα γραφή, gathering, of believers with the Lord, after the resurrection, is the subject of discourse.) For in conformity with the question of the disciples (ver. 3), the whole representation of the Lord refers only to the time and the signs of his coming. Hence the picture embraces all that precedes that event, up to his appearing in the clouds (ver. 30); but the advent itself, and the occurrences connected with it—the resurrection of the dead, the clothing of the living with immortality, and their removal to the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. v. 4; 1 Thess. iv. 17)—are left untouched. In the whole description, the Redeemer specially has in view the moral design to excite holy earnestness and vigilance, as well as to afford encouragement in the conflict of this life.

According to passages of the Old Testament (comp. Isaiah xi. 12, ff.; xxxvi. 20, xxvii. 13; Ezek. xxxvi. 24; Zechar. x. 8, ff.), it would seem that before the resurrection of the just, all the dispersed Israelites will be gathered together. (Comp. Eisenmenger’s Entd. Judenth. Pt. ii. p. 894, 95.) We may suppose that the design of this gathering is, first, to separate them from the mass of unbelievers, so that they may be removed from the punishments that will fall upon that class† (Luke xxi. 36, ἡ ἑκατέρα ἐσθίετε διὰ φυγής ἐν τῇ θάνατι πάντως); and, secondly, to unite them more closely together, so that the manifestation of the Lord may not be beheld by a few

* Equal to θέαρεις οὐκ εἰρήνη, Deut. iv. 32, xiii. 7; xxviii. 64. In a similar manner, John (Rev. vii. 1) speaks of the ἔσσαις γυναικών τοῖς γύρις.

† The book of the Revelation (xix. 11–21) describes this judicial punishment of the wicked at the Parousia. The gathering of believers is not mentioned, but according to Rev. xvii. 4, it is presupposed, for in chap. xx. they appear preserved and ruling with the Lord. The community of believers is the bride (xix. 7) to whom the heavenly Bridegroom comes. The gathering together of the wicked (Rev. xvi. 14, 15) forms the antithesis to that of the saints.
individuals only, but the privilege may be shared in common by the
great body of his believing people. In relation to the first object,
this separation and gathering of believers has its type in the gather-
ing together of Noah's descendants in the ark, of Lot's family in
Zoar, and of the Christians of Jerusalem in Pella. (Comp. the re-
marks on Rev. iii. 10.) It is only in this view that the following
exhortations to fidelity and watchfulness gain their true significance;
for this implies the possibility of escaping the dreadful events at
the Parousia, and being removed to the place of safety. As regards
the angels sent forth with the loud sounding trumpet, by whom the
collection is accomplished, it has already been remarked at Matth.
xiii. 51, that the expression ἀγγέλος is often applied to human mes-
sengers and instruments of the Lord. Now the words μετὰ σάλπιγγος,
with a trumpet, seem to render it improbable that we are here to
understand ἀγγέλονας as meaning men (comp. Schott, p. 119); for
this mode of speech is never employed in reference to the preaching
of the Gospel. But if it be considered that the σάλπιγγος would
seem to denote less the communicating of a doctrine than the power
of the Spirit by which persons are awakened and brought together
for a definite object, then it does not appear why this effective energy
may not as well be ascribed to human individuals who are endowed
with the Spirit [?]. In the Revelation also (chap. viii.) the seven
angels with trumpets may be regarded as meaning individuals who
exert upon the church a specially powerful, awakening energy [?].
(Comp. Matth. xxv. 31, concerning the angels who accompany Jesus
on his return.)

Ver. 32, 38.—Here Christ concludes the communication of actual
events connected with the Parousia. In a parable (respecting παρα-
βολή, see the remarks on Matth. xiii. 3) probably suggested by a fig-
tree in the neighbourhood—he compares the course of natural de-
velopment with that of the seed of God's kingdom. The vernal swell-
ing of the branches (ἀπαλός, literally "tender," "soft;" this is the
only instance of its occurrence) is placed along side of the commu-
nications respecting the near approach of the kingdom. (Hence
the words πάντα ραώτα, all these things, are not to be applied merely
to the concluding statements of the Lord, but embrace all that He
said in reply to the question of the disciples.) Here, the connexion
shews that we must conceive of the kingdom of God (according to
Luke xxi. 31) as that state of things, commencing with the second
coming of the Lord, when good will be also outwardly predominant.
(Comp. the remarks on Matth. iii. 2.) The element which wrought
after the first advent of the Lord, in humility in the hidden realm of
the Spirit, and could produce but comparatively feeble outward
effects—because sin still retained its ascendancy in the whole visible
world—will, at the second coming of Christ, reign triumphantly
over nature and mankind. And there is yet another idea comprehended under the one name, "kingdom of God" (βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ) which, although not developed here, is brought out very distinctly at a subsequent period (in the book of the Revelation)—viz., the kingdom of the saints upon the renovated earth (Rev. xx.), and the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. xxi.). The text of Luke somewhat differs in this parable; but the difference is not essential. (The same parallel is extended to πάντα τὰ δέντρα [ver. 29], and instead of ἐκφών τὰ φύλλα, the expression προβάλλειν is used = πετύησαν. [Comp. Gesenius sub verb.] The words ἰδεῖ τῶν γενόσκειν, to know of ourselves, indicate that independence which can dispense with the guidance of another: "accordingly ye can judge from your own observation concerning the approach of the kingdom of God.")

Ver. 34, 35.—The use of the second person in the address, in the preceding verses, to the disciples, plainly shewed that the fulfilment of the Lord's predictions was conceived as transferred to the present; but a still more distinct impression than has yet been given is furnished by the declaration that everything previously spoken of (πάντα τὰ πάντα) will come to pass in the lifetime of this generation (γενεά = χρόνος). The statements of this passage cannot be applied either to the church (as the spiritual posterity of Christ), or to the people of Israel (as enduring to the end); both of these interpretations are inadmissible, partly upon philological grounds, and partly on account of the parallels, Matt. xvi. 28, xxiii. 36; in the first of which γενεά, generation, is circumscripted by τινες τῶν ὑστέρων, some of those who stand here, and μὴ παρέχεσθαι, not passing by, by μὴ γενόσωσθαι θανάτον, not tasting death. Genesis is not used in the sense of nation in any one passage, either of the New Testament or of profane writers. If it relate to a particular people, for example to Israel, then it signifies the members of that people living at a particular time. There is only one instance in the version of the LXX. (Levit. xx. 18) where the γενεά stands for αἰών. (Comp. Schleusner lex. in LXX. vol. ii. p. 11.) But if this application of the term to the generation then living be retained here, then, according to the ordinary interpretation of the passage, it must not be united with the foregoing reference to the return of the Lord.† Hence Schott (p. 131) most arbitrarily conjectures that here the

* See, however, my opposing explanation of this at Matt. xvi. 28. "Some of those standing here" refers there, I feel assured, to those Apostles who, on the Mount of Transfiguration, would behold, before death, a glory typical of that which awaited the Saviour in his kingdom.—[E.

† "All these things" (ταῦτα πάντα, v. 33), are those general forerunners (compared with the gradual swelling of the branches) of the day of the Lord, ἐρχόμενος (which for Israel commenced in the year 70, A. D., for the Gentiles will begin with the "times of the Gentiles"—σαρώσει ἡμῶν). "All these things," v. 34, are precisely the same signs, since the words in v. 34 point clearly back to the same words in v. 33. The then existing generation was to live to see all these signs.—[E.
discourse suddenly returns to the destruction of Jerusalem. Such a change, when there is nothing to support it, cannot be supposed in any discourse. The instances adduced by Schott (p. 133) are from the same chapter, and labour under the same arbitrariness; and as to the observation that here the second person is used, whereas ver. 30, where something far later is spoken of, the third is employed (δόξον τὸν νῦν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον)—this proves nothing; for the third person refers to unbelievers, and the second to believers. The only way of explaining these difficulties is that which we have already stated—viz., to view the prophecy with reference to the immediate present, but in such a manner that everything includes a further reference to the future.

Jesus (ver. 35) founds the truth of these predictions upon the nature of His words generally. They, being imperishable, form the antithesis to that which is perishable; whatever is capable of perishing, even in the highest and grandest object (heaven and earth—the universe), will perish; the word of Christ cannot pass away. Here the word of Christ and the word of God are viewed as perfectly identical, for the same language was used, Matth. v. 18, in respect to the Old Testament as the word of God. And the sentence οὐ δὲ λόγος μον οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσι, is by no means to be understood as merely meaning that the previous predictions would certainly be fulfilled, and that therefore the word of Christ is true; for then it might be said that all the statements concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, having been fulfilled, have already passed away and perished. On the contrary, the language in question traces the certainty of the fulfilment of the prophecies to the eternal nature of the Word of God, spoken by Christ who is the Word of the Father; it follows from the nature of this word that it is never exhausted, and even its fulfillment does not do away with it or change it, but by means of the power that dwells in it, it continually renews its youth, and retains its freshness and force in all circumstances and in all ages. (John vi. 63.)

Ver. 36.—The foregoing general statement, that the present generation would not pass away till the prophecy was fulfilled (ver. 34), is now more definitely explained by the fact that there is no exact assignment of dates (ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα); this is absolutely refused as impossible. Hence there is no reason to suppose a contradiction between ver. 34 and ver. 36, assuming which, Schott (p. 131) refers ver. 34 to the destruction of Jerusalem, but ver. 36 to the second advent. On the contrary the mode of expression here adopted is the only one that can be conceived of as suited to the circumstances of the case. For had the Redeemer intended to say that his coming was yet very distant, such a statement would have entirely destroyed the ethical import of the prophecy, viz. the incitement to watchful-
ness which it was designed to produce; and if, on the other hand, he had so expressed himself as to say nothing at all about the time when these things would come to pass, this total silence would have been no less paralysing in its influence. But the representation given by the Lord was so formed as to act in a two-fold way; first, to keep before the mind the constant possibility of his coming; and, secondly, to shew the impossibility of fixing upon a precise period; the former object was accomplished by ver. 34, the latter by ver. 36.

It may indeed be said that ver. 34 does not express the possibility, but the certainty, of the Lord's returning in the time of the generation then alive. But this very decided form of promise (beginning with the phrase: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) is explained by the relative truth which the coming of Christ has in reference to that generation in particular, and also to all generations of the world. (Comp. the remarks on Matth. xxiv. 1.) The advent is by no means to be looked upon as an occurrence happening at a particular time in the remote future, for in that case it would only concern the people living at the precise period when it comes to pass, and would be of no consequence to previous generations; on the contrary, it is to be viewed as something extending throughout the history of the world, and spiritually near to every one, without excluding the fact that the prophecy respecting it will also be externally fulfilled in its whole meaning, at the end of the αἰών σωτῆς, present age.

Special notice is due to the peculiar addition of Mark: nor the Son (οὗτος ὁ Υἱός). The harmony of the manuscripts and versions is a sufficient guarantee for its genuineness, but its interpretation is not free from difficulty. The first question is, what ought to be supplied after "the Son" (ὁ Υἱός)—of man, or of God? The former supplement seems to be supported by its juxtaposition with οὗτος, no one, and ἄγγελοι τῶν οὐρανῶν, angels of heaven, for these expressions place the creature in contrast with the Uncreated; to the former, ignorance is ascribed, to the latter, knowledge; hence if the Son is represented as participating in the former, it seems more appropriate that this should be said of him as Son of Man than as Son of God. But, on the other hand, father, as the correlative to son, strongly calls for τὸν Θεοῦ, of God, to be understood, for if "son" did not occur, there can be no doubt that "God" would be chosen as the antithesis to "angels" and "no one." True, it may be said, that in the text of Matthew we find πατήρ, but not Υἱός. But the different readings show that the expression was not deemed quite suitable in this connexion; some have received οὗτος ὁ Υἱός from Mark; others have appended μοῦ, which Matthew ordinarily associates with the application of πατήρ to God in the discourses of Jesus. Now, although these readings are not genuine in the text
of Matthew, yet they render it very probable that the reading παρῆκα
is only founded in the circumstance that οὐδὲ ὁ νῦς originally pre-
ceded in the discourse, but Matthew, for unknown reasons, omitted
it. If, however, the Son of God is here referred to, the ignorance
of the day and hour predicated of him cannot be absolute, because
the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son does not permit a
specific separation between the knowledge of the Father and the
Son; rather, it must be understood as designating the κένωσις of
the Lord in his position of humiliation. Hence we must not rea-
son from these words in Mark to the parallel passage in Acts i. 7,
in which the Lord, after his resurrection, declares that it is not
within the range of human faculties (οἶχ ὡ μοι ν κενῶ) to know the
precise period of the Parousia, and infer that even at that time the
Lord did not know it. (Comp. the exposition of Acts i. 7.)

All three Evangelists finish this prophetic picture with an ex-
hortation to watchfulness; but in the further illustrations which
immediately follow the verse before us, they differ so much, that
their representations must be regarded as independent statements.
Mark, indeed, does not say anything different from Matthew, but
merely reports the exhortation to watchfulness in an abbreviated

* Without assuming perfectly to explain the difficulty here involved, we may, I think,
assume thus much, that (even apart from doctrinal considerations) the exegetical difficul-
ties against supposing an ignorance on the part of the Saviour of the day and the hour of
his coming are insuperable. The being who knew all that he has so minutely foretold
of the signs, the attendant circumstances, the manner and the consequences of his com-
ing, could not be ignorant of the simple fact of the time, which assuredly involved no
deeper knowledge. He who could thus prophesy all round the period, could not but
know the period itself. Certainly not if his knowledge was underived; but will it be ar-
gued that his knowledge was derived, and therefore limited? True, God could
reveal to a man the knowledge of every thing but the date, and withhold that. But
to such a withholding the general spirit of the present prophecy runs entirely
counter. Had it not been for this declaration, we should have pronounced, unhesitating-
ly, that he who knew all the rest here foretold, must have known this. But again, did
the Saviour hold his knowledge by any such tenure? John says that he "himself knew
what was in man," and this seems to presuppose a personal and absolute omniscience.
He sometimes represents himself as following the Father in working miracles, and yet
we find in him abundant proofs of an indwelling and perpetual divinity. As his Father
wrought so he wrought, although in his official position he was subordinate to the Father
in those displays of omnipotence. But that he had the omnipotence is clear, and
certainly if he was omnipotent he was omniscient. Any one unlimited attribute implies
all unlimited attributes. If his knowledge was limited, so must have been his power.

We are driven, then, by the mere facts of the case, to find another than literal expla-
nation of the words. And is it not furnished in the strong hyperbolical language so
frequently and freely employed by the Saviour? Is it not the strongest possible state-
ment that the time of that great event was to be kept a profound secret? It was un-
known to man, it was unknown to angels; it had never been lodged even with the Son
himself—the Great Revealer of Divine truth—for the purpose of being communicated to
man. Whatever difficulties press upon this interpretation, they are surely less, even in
an exegetical view, than those which involve an absolute ignorance in the Son of a single
point around every side of which he is shedding the blaze of a Divine illumination.—[X.
form, in a parable which Matthew, in the last verse of the chapter, gives more at large. Luke, on the contrary (ver. 34–36), has given a perfectly independent account. He first warns against worldliness of life (κρατησάμην literally means a "heaviness of the head from previous intoxication," or "the effect of excessive eating"); then adds an admonition respecting the suddenness of the day of judgment, and its destructive character to all who live in security (he employs here the expression παγίς, "snare, noose," which is often used [1 Tim. iii. 7; vi. 9, and in the Old Testament, Prov. vii.; 23 xiii. 14, xxii. 5] for danger, ruin.—The verb καθημαί here denotes the easy, comfortable life of men indulging in worldly security); and, lastly, he concludes with an exhortation to watchfulness and prayer. As the objects of prayer he specifies καταξιωθήναι εκφυγεῖν, being counted worthy to escape, and σταθήμαν εἴπροσθεν τοῦ νοοῦ ανθρώπου, to stand before the Son of man. 'Eκφυγεῖν, as already observed, relates to the idea unfolded, Matth. xxiv. 31, that the saints, after having been proved, will be withdrawn from all the calamities which impend at the second coming itself. But σταθήμαν, stand, which has its antithesis in πητείν, fall (Rom. xiv. 4) denotes recognition and acceptance in the judgment. If for this escape and standing a worthiness is required, this, according to the fundamental principle of the Gospel, is to be sought, not in a number of deeds, but in faith. This faith, however, is to be viewed as a living principle, which, springing from the life of the Lord, enables its possessor to stand before him and his judgment. Luke xxi. 37, 38, furnish historical notices of the Redeemer's life during his last days in Jerusalem (how he taught in the Temple by day, spent the night out of the city, and again in the morning was expected by the people); but these have no further reference to the prophetic announcements. (Respecting ἀνλιξεσθαι = νῦ, comp. Matth. xxi. 17.—This is the only instance in the New Testament where we find ἄφρειζο = ἣξφη.)

Now Luke, xvii. 26, ff., agrees in the main with Matthew's mode of presenting (xxiv. 37, ff.) the conclusion of the discourse concerning the Lord's return. And the exact connexion of the passage in Luke leaves no doubt as to the fact, that it stands there in its original connexion, Matthew having only removed it in accordance with his custom, and not at all unsuitably, to another position. But, on the one hand, he abbreviates the discourse which Luke gives at large, even in such parts as would have been quite appropriate to the connexion (for instance, he omits the example of Lot and his wife, although it so strikingly illustrates the reward of faith and the punishment of unbelief [Luke xvii. 28, 30, 32]); and on the other, he omits what was not adapted to his design, although it belonged to the connexion of Luke (comp. Luke xvii. 83, 37.)
Ver. 37–39.—In the first place, Matthew draws a parallel between the times of the Parousia, and a kindred period in the history of the old world—the deluge (Luke xvii. 26, 27). Luke adds a second parallel taken from the destruction of Sodom. In both cases only a few followed the warning voice of God, and assembled in a safe mountain-retreat; the great mass did not repent or undergo any true change of mind, but persisted in the old life of estrangement from God. One thing is remarkable throughout the whole of this representation, that the contemporaries of Noah and Lot are not, by any means, described as wicked and vicious, but merely as sensual men. (ὡς οἱ ποιεῖν ὁ τ. λ., and according to Luke ἔγοραζεν, ποιεῖν ὁ τ. λ. denote only the ordinary business of the outward life.) That the wicked are lost is easily understood, but the man who, without any glaring evil deeds, wastes his life upon external things, fancies himself in this freedom from positive crime, secure from the judgment of God; he little thinks that his whole existence and being is sinful, because it is worldly and alienated from God. (James iv. 4.) The discourse of the Lord is directed against this carnal security, and not against vice, which is condemned by the law.

Ver. 40, 41.—Upon this world, full of secure sinners, the Parousia, and with it the κρίσις, will break in without mercy. Good and evil, which coexisted and were mingled together, will now be separated; the closest and most intimate relations, things linked in apparent union, will now be made known, as in their inmost nature entirely different. Matthew gives the examples of companionship in the labours of the field or in grinding at the mill; Luke (xvii. 34) adds the intimate relationship of married persons, who rest on the same bed, and yet come under the influence of different elements. (In the text of Luke, ver. 36 is wanting in most, and those the best codices, viz., in A.B.E.G.H.K.L.Q.S. Probably it has been received from Matthew into Luke.—Instead of the futures παραληθήσεται, ἐφεθήσεται in Luke, Matthew has the present tenses, παραλαμβάνεται, ἰδείται. The latter render the description more vivid and graphic. These are the only passages in the New Testament where the antithesis between παραλαμβάνειν and ἰδείναι occurs. The simplest mode of explaining this use of the two words is to take παραλαμβάνειν, according to Luke xvii. 35, in the signification "to receive and accept as worthy," "to admit into one's society," so that it is identical with ἐκλέγειν; and ἰδείναι, on the contrary should be understood as denoting the negative act of non-acceptance.)

Ver. 42.—An exhortation to watchfulness is now given as a concluding admonitory thought, drawn from this illustration, and grounded also upon a further reflection—the uncertainty of the period (ἐορ), when the Lord will come. Here again, of course, the
conviction that he will come in the lifetime of the generation to whom he speaks, is to be presupposed (as in Matt. xxiv. 34); for what force would there be in an exhortation to vigilance, that had respect to a period of time far beyond the individual life of the persons addressed?

Ver. 48–51.—These thoughts are succeeded in Matthew by two other parables, which Luke also has xii. 36–40; and in this instance again we must acknowledge that the connexion of Luke is the original one. For it is altogether improbable that the Lord would have frequently repeated these parables in such a peculiar connexion. Here, as in Luke, the parable of the householder (ἀλεξοδοσιῶτης) and the servants (δοῦλοι) are blended together with this difference only, that Matthew gives the precedence to that of the householder, Luke to the other. On the import of such a commingling we have already said what was necessary in our remarks on Luke; we here simply consider the relation of the similitudes to the whole representation of the Parousia. It is easily seen that the last of the two (which Luke also has xii. 42–46, although in another connexion)—respecting the faithful and wise servant (δοῦλος πιστὸς καὶ φρόνιμος, ver. 45) and the wicked servant (δοῦλος κακὸς)—relates to watchfulness. (Mark xiii. 34, in his expansion of the parallel, draws a distinction between the managing servants to whom the Lord commits the authority [Matt. xxiv. 45 and Luke xii. 42 view them as superior stewards, to whom the servants (θεραπεία = θεραπότες—the abstract for the concrete—) are subordinated] and the θύρωρός, porter, to whom he gives special prominence as the watcher; comp. Matt. xxv. 6.) The faithful and wise servant watches, and while he considers the period of the Lord’s advent uncertain, deems it equally possible that it may come in his own time. The bad servant (who is also the μωρός, foolish, Matt. xxv. 2) negatively fixes the time of the Lord’s coming, by declaring that it is yet distant. (Concerning ἄγνωστος comp. Luke i. 21, xii. 45.) In this putting off really consists the unfaithfulness of the servant; and the “beating” etc., is to be regarded as its consequence. In ver. 51, this is designated as ὑπόκρισις, hypocrisy, because the delay and the relation of the servant to the Lord are mutually contradictory. The true servant desires the return of the beloved Master; the wicked one, who in reality belongs to another (the world), wishes it to be deferred, because he dreads it. Where there is the glow of ardent love to God, there is a constant expectation of the coming of the Lord; although in the course of the Christian conflict, the delay is often too long even for the sincere heart (comp. the remarks on Matt. xxv. 7). We have already observed on Luke xii. 46, that Matthew appears to have preserved the true reading in ἄγνωστον, hypocrites; Luke has the more general term διστῶν, faithless, which is not so well
adapted to the connexion in Luke, where hypocrisy (ὑπόκρισις) is the very subject of discourse.

The second parable—that of the householder—involves greater difficulty; it seems unsuited to the connexion. Ignorance of the time when the thief would come, here appears to be the circumstance that prevents the master of the house from watching; now the whole description is designed as an exhortation to watchfulness, and therefore it might be argued analogically that the watching here enjoined would be facilitated if the time were known. But the more specific reference of the householder and thief has already been developed in the exposition of Luke xii. 39; in this parable the intention is to represent the other aspect of the Parousia, its relation to the unbelieving world, while that of the servants describes its relation to believers. In so far, however, as the disciples by no means appear as yet entirely free from the worldly principle and its influence, this aspect of the Parousia has an application to them also. For whilst the parable of the servants gives a direct admonition as to watchfulness, the same thing is indirectly urged by that of the householder. The day of the Lord’s coming must be unknown to believers, that their desire may be kept constantly awake, to unbelievers that judgment may suddenly surprise them in their carelessness; but this carnal security, while it forms a temptation even to believers, on the other hand serves to exite their watchfulness by the contrast which it presents. Thus, as the whole Christ is set for the fall and rising of many, so also is his Parousia. (Instead of the more general terms πολύ φιλακρόν, or ὧρα [Matth. xxiv. 42, 44], Mark xiii. 35, has the expressions: ὑπὲρ, ἡ μεσονυκτίων, ἡ ἀλεξοροφωνίας, ἡ νύκτα, at evening, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning. This distribution of the night into four vigils is the more popular form. Comp. the remarks on Matth. xiv. 26. —Διεξοδομένω literally signifies “to divide into two pieces;” but here, on account of the following words, which are not compatible with the idea of death, the meaning is, “to punish severely, to hew, to lash.”—Μέρος τίθεναι = ρηγήνῃ. Comp. Rev. xxi. 8.—Concerning κλαυθμός and βρυγμός ὀβόντων comp. the observations on Matth. viii. 12. It does not appear that the words can be understood here as denoting eternal perdition; they merely designate exclusion from the kingdom of God which begins with the advent of the Lord, and the torment which results from the consciousness of having deserved it; for the further discussion of the subject comp. the exposition of Matth. xxv. 12, 30.)

The following three parables are found only in Matthew; Luke has one analogous (Luke xix. 11, ff.) to the second in another connexion. It is unquestionable that they were all spoken in the last period of the Lord’s ministry, since they have such distinct refer-
ence to the second advent; but whether they immediately followed the conversation on the Mount of Olives (chap. xxiv.), cannot be affirmed with certainty. However, the three parables stand in such close connexion both with one another, and with what precedes, as to render it very probable that they were at least not delivered long after the discourse respecting the second coming (chap. xxiv.). For the two first—that of the virgins and that of the servants—contain admonitions to be watchful and faithful in expectation of the speedy return of the Lord; and thus stand in close connexion with the discourse immediately preceding. Both parables represent the blessing attending true devotedness to the Lord, and the curse resulting from a divided heart. But in order to understand these two parables, it is in the highest degree important to mark their relation to the third. Whilst the two first are, so to speak, co-ordinate, the third appears to be destined for quite another point of view. This is shown, first, by the form of transition (ver. 31, ἕταν δὲ, but when), which introduces something new and different; whilst the second parable is connected with the first by a διότερ γάρ, for just as, and the first with chap. xxiv. by a τότε, then. Then, secondly, the expressions virgin, servant, plainly indicate a special relationship to the Redeemer; hence, in the first and second parables, the reference is not to men without distinction, but to children of the kingdom, concerning whose vigilance and fidelity, judgment is passed. In the third, on the contrary, all nations appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, with the exception of true believers (πάντα τὰ ἐδώρια, ver. 32). And, finally, in the last parable, the good, in common with the bad, are represented as perfectly unconscious of their relation to the Lord (ver. 37, 44); whilst, according to the two previous ones, both parties appear to act with a consciousness of this relation. These important points of difference forbid the supposition that all three representations relate to one and the same fact; but they are explained in a similar manner, if—in accordance with the Jewish views (comp. Bertholdt Christ. jud. p. 176. seq.), which the New Testament confirms—we distinguish the general judgment of all nations and individuals (associated with the general resurrection), from the kingdom of God and the resurrection of the just. The establishment of the kingdom of God is connected with a sifting of those who belonged to the earthly church (comp. Rev. xx. 4, about the preliminary judgment); all who stand that trial are members of the kingdom, and participants in the marriage of the Lamb, but those who cannot endure it, although they certainly are excluded from the kingdom of God, are not as yet eternally condemned. The final decision respecting them also takes place at the general judgment of the world (Rev. xx. 12). It is true that these two periods are not distinctly separated in the whole of Matthew's
Matthew XXV. 1-13.

representation; on the contrary, they prophetically coincide; the only place in the New Testament where we find the order of succession plainly marked is in the book of the Revelation; but the intimations here given are sufficient to render it clear that the 25th chap. of Matthew is founded upon the same view of the future.

The ordinary interpretation of this chapter—according to which the same thing substantially is conveyed by all three representations, viz. that the good will be rewarded and the wicked will be punished, and that hence the subject of discourse is merely the final account which all must render—has some truth in it, inasmuch as all the positions of men have a similarity to one another, and therefore the various figures may be used for all relations. But this general applicability of the parables must not lead us to overlook the immediate and special references that present themselves in each separately. (Comp. the further particulars in the remarks on Matth. xxv. 14, 31.)

Ver. 1-13.—The external form of the parable of the ten virgins is to be explained from the customs of the Israelites. The bridegroom, accompanied by his friends (νεότιον νυμφών, or φίλας τ. ν., John iii. 29) brought the bride from the house of her father. The bride was surrounded by her companions, who went to meet the bridegroom as he approached, and then accompanied her with torches to the house of the bridegroom, where the marriage-supper was prepared. According to the usual figure, the Lord now represents himself as the Bridegroom who comes to the earthly church, as the bride, that he may conduct her to his dwelling. As the angels accompany the Bridegroom (ver. 31), so the virgins, who await the delayed arrival of the Bridegroom, are distinguished from the bride. Thus the sense of the parable as a whole is easily made out; the only question is, how far its single features are to be retained. The only fixed rule by which we can be guided in the matter is the appropriateness of the reference, and this rule, when applied without any straining, presents so many interesting points of relation in this parable, that it must be considered one of the finest in the Gospel. For the more numerous the points of comparison which a parable affords, without any unnatural or forced interpretation, the greater its perfection.

* Comp. Jahn's Hebrew Antiquities, Part i. vol. 2, § 173. The Rabbins also made use of this custom in similar comparisons. (Comp. Wetstein and Lightfoot on the passage.) In 1 Macc. ix. 37, ff there is a description of an oriental marriage procession.

† In the Cod. D, and several authorities—in particular, the Syriac version and the Vulgate—after the words, ἤξιλθον αἰς ἀποστάσεις τοῦ νυμφίου (ver. 1), we have also, καὶ τῆς νυμφῆς. However, this reading rests upon a false view of the parable; it was thought that where the bridegroom was, there the bride also must be. But, according to oriental custom, the bridegroom came to fetch the bride, and the maidens conducted her to meet him.
Now, first, as regards the virgins (παρθένοι) we may remark that the expression certainly has a special reference, which is best perceived by comparing with it the following parable of the servants. The "virgins," like the "servants," are by no means intended to designate all members of the church (Matth. xxiv. 45, the δούλοι are expressly distinguished from the θεραπεία, who are nevertheless to be viewed as members of the same community—the family of God), but only those among them who stood in a position like that of the apostles and disciples generally towards the Redeemer [?]. But even among these, a distinction may be observed between those whose relation to the Lord is chiefly that of passive love, and others who are characterized by greater activity; among the twelve, the former class is represented by John, the latter by Peter. True, in so far as no member of the true church is without either the one or the other characteristic, both parables admit of a perfectly general application; but we must not, on this account, overlook the special reference to particular tendencies in the Christian life. (Comp. the exposition of Luke xii. 35.) The number ten, which Luke xix. 13 specifies as that of the servants also, appears simply to contain the idea of a definite body. According to the Jewish custom, ten form an assembly (συνελεύσεις), and hence it was very natural to fix upon this number. (Passages in Wetstein in loc. state, that it was usual to choose just ten bridesmaids. But Jahn, loc. cit., remarks, that it was customary to have as many as seventy; of course this only extended to rich families.) The intensity of chaste love to the Lord, which was represented by the virgins, well accords with their waiting for the delayed approach of the bridegroom. Whilst the servants are busily at work, and engaged in a variety of concerns, the virgins wait to meet the beloved. (Comp. the remarks on Luke x. 42, concerning Mary and her relation to Martha.) The fact that they are all characterized as virgins is a proof that the antithesis of φρόνιμος, wise, and μωρά, foolish, is not to be taken in the sense of good and wicked, for the idea of gross transgression is incompatible with love to the Lord. The foolish virgins are merely to be viewed

* Would it not be safer to reason the other way, and instead of inferring from the common application of the name of "virgins," that the epithets "wise" and "foolish" mark no radical discrimination of character, rather to infer from this radical discrimination as well as the difference in their destiny, that the name "virgins" has no such special significance as Olshausen attributes to it? The distinctions which the author draws from the words "virgins" and "servants" seem to me forced and fanciful. These terms are employed, I think, simply because our Saviour finds in the relation of the virgins to the Bridegroom in the Jewish marriage rites, and in that of servants entrusted with funds to their absent lord, opposite and striking illustrations by which to enforce the necessity of watchfulness in view of his coming. The "virgins" and "servants" of the parables are literal virgins and literal servants; they represent relations rather than characters; and to make them good so advance is to forestall the result of the very ordeal by which they are tested in the parable. Undoubtedly we should guard against stripping a parable of any legitimate subordinate ideas, and of such secondary teachings as may be some-
as representing minds that seek that which is pleasing and sweet in the service of the Lord, instead of following him in right earnest, and hence neglect to labour after thorough renewal, and to build in the right way upon the foundation that is laid (1 Cor. iii. 15). The parable describes this lukewarmness in their nature, by saying that they neglected to take any oil in their vessels. (Ver. 4, ἔλαυν does not seem consistent with λαμπάδες. But it is explained by the form of the ancient torches. They frequently consisted of a wooden staff, a vessel being let into an opening at the upper end, containing a wick, which burnt with oil or pitch. [Comp. Jahn, loc. cit.] This contrivance united the peculiarities of the torch and the lamp.) The parables explained by the Lord himself (Matth. xiii.) are proofs that we need not be afraid of going too far, if we take the single features of this parable into account as strictly illustrative. According to the pervading scriptural symbol, the oil designates the Spirit; the virgins were not altogether destitute of this higher element of life; their hearts glowed with love to the Lord, which impelled them to go out and meet him; but their faith had no other root than feeling; it had not sanctified all their dispositions and faculties; and hence, when feeling was no longer sufficient, and nothing but thorough self-denial could avail them, the flame of their love died away. The severe discipline which was necessary is expressed partly by the long delay of the Bridegroom’s arrival, and partly by the representation that it was night. This induced slumber, in which (with reference to the immediately preceding description, Matth. xxiv. 42) the virgins must be regarded as overcome by temptation. (Ver. 5, νυστάζω is the feebler expression, which signifies “to nod the head from sleepiness;” καθεύδω is the strict term for deep slumber.) It might indeed appear that, in this case, sleep did not indicate a negligent state of mind, since all, even the wise, fell asleep; but, on account of the immediately foregoing and express admonition to watch—which, according to Mark xiii. 37, was addressed to all—this is hardly to be admitted; especially since this admonition is again made prominent, Matth. xxv. 13, in the winding-up of the narrative. On the contrary, the description becomes much more striking if the meaning is thus understood: “the Bridegroom delayed his coming so long, that at last even the wise virgins slept.” This gives great point to the warning ἄγρυπνεῖτε, watch, be watchful. Now the words μέσης δὲ νυκτὸς κραυγὴ γέγονεν, but at midnight there is a cry made, ver. 6. shew that there were watchers in the church; although these are not so decidedly distin-
guished from the virgins in the present case, as in Mark xiii. 34, where the θεωρός, porter, is charged with the special duty of watching. The confusion occasioned by the surprise of the Lord's arrival, discloses the difference between the slumbering virgins. The wise ones, who have in every respect completely given themselves up to the Lord, are able not only to rouse themselves at the summons, but to rekindle the glimmering torch into a vigorous flame. This the foolish ones cannot do, because they lack the inward supply of the Spirit. They therefore seek spiritual support from the wise; but in this critical moment each one can only answer for herself, and hence they are directed to them that sell (πωλοῦντες). It is perfectly natural to find in the sacred Scripture and its authors an explanation of this feature in the parable; to these the foolish virgins are recommended to resort, that they may find counsel and strength in the distress of their souls. But before the extinct life can be quickened again, the Bridegroom comes, and those who are not ready see themselves shut out. According to this connexion, it is clear that the words οίκα οίδα υμᾶς, I know you not (ver. 12) cannot denote eternal condemnation; for, on the contrary, the foolish virgins are only excluded from the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix. 7); hence they must be viewed as parallel with the persons described, 1 Cor. iii. 15, whose building is destroyed, but who are not thereby deprived of eternal happiness. These virgins possessed the general condition of happiness, faith (which led them to cry κύρε, κύρε, ἀνοίξων ήμιν, Lord, Lord, open unto us, ver. 11); but they lacked the requisite qualification for the kingdom of God, that sanctification which proceeds from faith (Heb. xii. 14). In the concluding verse (ver. 13) the words ἐν ᾧ διός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔχεται should be removed; they have probably been inserted from parallel passages, such as xxiv. 44.

Ver. 14–30.—The external form of the second parable—that of the servants—presents no difficulty.† The ἀνθρώπος ἀποδημῶν, man going abroad (Mark xiii. 34 has ἀποδημος, the antithesis to ενόμος, and this is the only instance in which the expression occurs in the New Testament), according to Luke xix. 12, is an εἰγενής, noble, descended from a family of distinguished rank; he is here represented as travelling to a distance to receive a kingdom there (a type of the installation of Christ into his heavenly dominion), but upon his return, even his nearest subjects, the citizens of his own city (πολίται), will not obey him. It is quite clear from the parallel in Luke, that the ten δουλοί, servants (Luke xix. 13) do not mean all


† The transition ἦτερ ὑπάτωσ the corresponding member of the sentence. According to Matth. xxiv. 31, we may supply: οὕτως ἦσαν καὶ ἐκαρποῦσι τῷ νῦν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ.
men, or even all Christians indiscriminately, but such as possess a decided qualification for the guidance and government of the church. The mass under this guidance are the citizens. Matthew designates the endowments bestowed upon the servants by the term τάλαντον, talent, Luke by μνᾶ, mina. This variation merely expresses the freedom exercised by the reporters of the parables of Jesus, in regard to non-essential points. The sum entrusted to the servants is here perfectly unimportant; all that is intended to be shewn is, that the reward of the servant depends upon the use which he makes of what is committed to his charge. The servants (δοῦλοι) are represented as the active members of the church, whose duty it is to employ the gifts conferred upon them in external labours for the cause of the Lord; and the parable is designed to describe the opposite cases of fidelity and unfaithfulness. Hence the talents entrusted signify the general gifts of nature, so far only as these form the condition of endowment with the gifts of grace. This is referred to in the words, ver. 15, "to each according to his several ability" (ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὴν ὑιον δύναμιν, scil. εἴδωκε). For he who is without any natural abilities, is not fitted to be a powerful instrument of grace. A general application of the parable may be made, in so far as it may be said that every one is entrusted with something, for the right use of which an account will be required. But this application of the parable is not identical with its original reference. According to the very close association with chap. xxiv., the withdrawal of the Lord after the distribution of the gifts, and his return after a long absence (μετὰ χρόνον πολίν), in order to hold a reckoning (λόγον συνάλησεν = rationem conferre), relates to the disciples, whom the Lord, when he departed to the Father, invested with spiritual gifts, that being left to themselves they might administer till his return. Hence the whole connexion here also requires the assumption that a return at the time of the apostles is spoken of, so that the words after a long time primarily refer to the waiting of the apostles. As to the apostles being left to themselves after the withdrawal of the Lord, this may appear to stand in opposition to such passages as Matth. xxviii. 20, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." But this constant spiritual presence of the Lord in the minds of his people is often concealed, and imperceptible; it is never destructive of free choice, and hence does not exclude faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Hence, in regard to the later generations of servants, who did not see the Lord in the body, their endowment with power from above, of the use of which an account is at length to be rendered, must be viewed as extending from the moment when Christ first gives a living manifestation of himself in the soul, to those seasons in which the individual is left to the discharge of cares designed to test his sincerity in the Lord's
cause. The return of the Lord is the period of reckoning with the servants involving reward for the faithful, and punishment for the unfaithful. The faithful are described as those who have increased what was entrusted to them; that is, with these spiritual powers conferred upon them by Christ, they have carried on his sublime work in his spirit and nature. (The expressions employed to designate faithful labour are ἐργάζεσθαι [Luke xix. 16 has προσεργάζεσθαι] and ποιεῖν. The latter answers to the Hebrew נָעַר and בְּרִית, in the signification “to acquire.” Compare Gesenius in his Lex. under נָעַר and בְּרִית. To convey the idea of περδαίεσθε, “to make gain,” “to obtain advantage,” Luke, xix. 13, 15, uses πραγματεύεσθαι, διαπραγματεύεσθαι, which does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament; it is the strict term for trade and money transactions, which has even passed into the later Hebrew. [Comp. Buxtorf. lex. p. 1796, seq.] Thus the parable is founded upon the supposed case of a merchant, which has occurred also in a former instance, Matth. xiii. 45.) It is represented as the reward of these faithful labourers, that they will be called to a higher sphere of activity adapted to their desires. The earthly relations of the kingdom of God, upon which the “servants” continually spent their toils, are contrasted, as the ὀλίγα, few things, with the πολλά, many things, that is, the affairs of the kingdom when it shall be manifested in its heavenly victorious form. (Luke xix. 17, 19, gives more specifically, adhering to the metaphor, ten and five cities as the reward.)

The manner in which the parable speaks of the third servant is peculiar; without having gained anything he brought back to the Lord what was entrusted to him. It is evident that the design is not to describe a man entirely fallen from the faith, an apostate; but one who, although he has not dissolved his connexion as a servant, or squandered his talent, yet, from a false view of his relation to the Lord, has not used it to his advantage. Hence he is called, ver. 30, δουλὸς εὐγενεῖς, unprofitable servant; so that he is regarded as a “servant” of the Lord, although one who has not done his duty. His false view of the Lord consisted in overlooking his love, and supposing instead an inexorable legal rigour. (Instead of σκληρός, ver. 24, Luke xix. 21 has αὐτορρίπτως austerus, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Luke somewhat modifies the parable, by speaking of a σοῦδαρίον [sudarium] σορκία, in which the money was hid; Matthew represents it as buried in the earth. The talent of course rendered that impossible which might have applied to a mina.) By this view of unfaithfulness, a remarkable contrast is formed between this parable and that of the virgin. Whilst the

* Διασκεπτίζειν, ver. 24 and 26, is not to be understood as synonymous with στι- πέρειν; it is better to take it — ηγεῖται. In the sense, “to purify by means of a winnowing shovel.”
guilt of the foolish virgins proceeded from thoughtless presumption upon the kindness of the master, this servant failed through an unbelieving assumption of his severity, so that the two parables are complements to each other, and describe the two leading temptations of believers in their relation to the Redeemer, to abuse grace, or to exclude themselves from access to it by false legality.

One point in the rebuke administered by the master to his disobedient servant (ver. 27) requires special notice, viz., the remark: ἐδεῖ σε βαλεῖν τὸ δργόμον μοι τοῖς τραπεζίταις, thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers. (Τραπεζίτης from τράπεζα, which Luke has here [xix. 23], "the banker's table." Τόκος, interest, profit. Instead of εἰκοσάμην in Matthew, Luke has ἔπραξα, which is commonly used in reference to money, in the sense of exige, extorque.) We cannot regard these words as a perfectly useless addition, for they furnish an appropriate thought. The fearful servant, who dreaded his master, had evidently refrained from laying out the property committed to him, in the way of independent activity for the interests of his master, because he was afraid of losing it; that is—to drop the metaphor—the dangers connected with activity for the kingdom of God on earth, on account of the manifold temptations and opposing forces of the world, restrain many persons, who lack faith in the help of God, from going believingly to work according to their abilities. These timid natures, that are not fitted for independent labour on behalf of the kingdom of God, are now advised at least to associate themselves with persons of greater strength, under whose guidance they may apply their gifts to the service of the Church. The first thing mentioned as the punishment of total unfaithfulness is the loss of the gift entrusted, which is then committed, by the command of the Lord, to the servant who was endowed with ten talents. The proverb which follows (ver. 29) in connexion with this proceeding, has already been explained in the remarks on Matth. xiii. 12; its recurrence here in an entirely different connexion cannot be considered strange, when it is remembered that the idea which it contains is of such a nature, that the Redeemer could readily employ it in the most multifarious applications. The fundamental idea here expressed—viz., that goodness constantly secures richer benefits to him who receives it, while it is the curse of sin that it makes even poverty poorer still—is here also perfectly applicable. Whilst blessings are heaped upon the faithful, the unfaithful man, stripped of all the gifts conferred upon him, is cast out into darkness (ver. 30). Here again, the immediate reference is not to eternal condemnation, but to exclusion from the "kingdom," into which the faithful enter. The degree of guilt in the case of the unfaithful, determines the possibility of their being awakened to true repentance. The kingdom,
finally, is viewed as a region of light, encircled by darkness. And in reference to this point, the metaphorical language of Scripture is very exact in the choice of expressions. Concerning the children of light who are unfaithful to their vocation, it is said that they are cast into the darkness; but, respecting the children of darkness, we are told that they are consigned to the πῶς αἰώνων, everlasting fire; so that each finds his punishment in the opposite element.*

As regards the points of difference presented by Luke, in this parable of the servants, we may remark, that they consist, first, in the carrying out of the subordinate idea of the citizens, who would not that the lord should reign over them. Whilst the one servant represents an inactive member of the body of Christ, the Church, who failed to perform his duty, these citizens are open rebels, and hence their lord orders them to be killed. It is evident that this penal proceeding is essentially distinguished from the reproof administered to the one servant. According to the connexion in Luke—as we have already observed—the "citizens" signify the Jews who engaged in a hostile opposition to Jesus, and, in the wider sense, all real enemies of Christ. In the second place, the two narrators differ in the circumstance that, according to Matthew, the distribution of the talents was unequal, but the profit realized upon that which had been received was equal; whereas in Luke, on the contrary, every one receives the same, but the amounts gained are different. It certainly is a superficial mode of interpretation to explain away these points of variation, as features of no importance; there is no doubt that they have their distinct applications. However, I cannot agree with Schleiermacher (comp. the remarks on Luke xix. 11, ff.) in the opinion, that they render the parables specifically different. The representation of Matthew expresses the idea that the Lord himself distributes gifts differently even among his disciples, assigning to one a greater, to another a smaller, sphere of operation; but that the Redeemer only looks at the application which each one makes of what is bestowed upon him. Luke, on the other hand, shews how equal degrees of endowment on the part of the Lord, may result in inequality, by means of the different degrees of activity on the part of men. Now, as the tendency of the whole parable is to describe the influence of human fidelity in the kingdom of God, the representation of Luke, which places this most prominently in view, deserves the preference before that of Matthew.

Ver. 31-46.—By means of the third and last parable respecting the coming of the Lord—as we have already remarked on xxv. 1—we now obtain the proper data from which to fix the meaning of the two preceding ones. The form of transition, "but when" (δεικνυμι...
indicates something different as the subject of discourse in the similitude that follows; hence we cannot admit with Schott (loc. cit. p. 168, ff.), that both the foregoing parables and the words now before us, refer to the last judgment. This learned man has, indeed, given a triumphant refutation of the hypothesis that the parables relate to the destruction of Jerusalem; to which event we cannot refer a single feature throughout the whole three, and it can only be brought into view, in so far as the description in the twenty-fourth chapter represents the coming of Christ as connected, although not identified with it. But according to the view he maintains, that all three parables have reference to the last judgment, the third cannot be shewn to have any peculiar character, the righteous (δικάω), and the unrighteous (ἀδικω), of whom it speaks, being made perfectly parallel with the faithful and unfaithful servants. If, however, the third parable treats of something different from the previous ones, this cannot be anything else than the judgment of unbelievers, while, in the two that precede, the subject is the sifting of believers. True, if we understand the persons judged, in the parable of the sheep and the goats, to mean all men without exception, the expression πάντα τὰ ἑθνή, all nations, suits this view very well; but then, it does not appear who the “least of Christ’s brethren” (ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἐξελέξαντός, ver. 40) are. If the assemblage consists of all men, it follows of necessity that believers themselves must be comprehended under that designation; but it is evident that in these words they are distinguished from the righteous (δικαίω) and the unrighteous (ἀδικω). And, moreover, according to the above interpretation, the fact that all the righteous could say: κύριε, πότε σε ελδομεν πεννύτας κ. τ. λ., Lord, when saw we, etc., ver. 37, is inexplicable. Believers surely would know that the Lord regards what is done to his brethren as done to himself. If it be said that this is the language of humility, we must oppose such a view, for Christian humility is by no means to be conceived of as devoid of consciousness. It knows what it does, and its distinguishing feature consists in this—that it does not acknowledge its work as its own, but as the works of God in it. (Such was the humility of Paul, who boasted: “I have laboured more than ye all,” but adds, “yet not I, but the grace of God that is in me,” 1 Cor. xv. 10.) Finally, the hypothesis that all men, even believers and perfectly just men, are here to be understood by the term δικαίω, is directly contrary to the doctrine of the New Testament, that believers shall not come into judgment (comp. John iii. 18, v. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 31).

Nor is there any more ground for the opinion, that, in the parable of the sheep and the goats, merely Christians, without unbelievers, are meant. For, in addition to the arguments adduced in refutation of the view just considered—all of which apply to this as
well—to take the expression “all nations” as referring to Christendom, is utterly untenable. It is indeed said, that it denotes the Church of the Lord collected out of all nations; but it is impossible to shew that an expression, the fixed meaning of which is so different, can be employed in this sense. Hence, the only alternative is to understand the term as denoting all men, with the exception of true believers—that is, all unbelievers; and this interpretation being adopted, the parable preserves its own internal harmony, as well as its right position in relation to those which precede.* The expression πάντες ἡλέν, all nations, then perfectly corresponds with the Hebrew פָּנָים, in opposition to the people of Israel. The collective body of believers is now viewed as Israel. These do not come into judgment at all, but at the resurrection of the just enter into the joy of the kingdom of God. Those who are idle and unfaithful are indeed shut out from the kingdom of God; but this act of shutting out must not be confounded with the general judgment. Accordingly the δοκέων, brethren of Christ (ver. 40) are easily distinguished from unbelievers who appear in judgment; the brethren are believers, and because the righteous receive them (δέχεσθαι), they receive the reward of prophets, righteous men, or believers. (Here compare the exposition of the whole passage, Matth. x. 40–42.) There is a meaning in the profession: “And when saw we thee,” etc., when it is taken as the language of unbelievers; for even the righteous among them must be viewed as excluded from the higher consciousness wrought by the spirit of Christ; the power of love was active in their hearts, without their being themselves conscious of what they did. Now if this parable be taken in connexion with the foregoing ones, it will be seen how well, according to our interpretation, they complete each other. The two first parables contain a representation of the sifting of believers (in conformity with their two leading dispositions, the contemplative and the practical); then this is followed by the judgment of the mass of unbelievers; the former is to be viewed as taking place at the resurrection of the just, the latter at the general resurrection of the dead. These two matters make up the whole of the Redeemer’s beatific and punitive procedure at his coming.†

* The sense of the parable has already been very justly acknowledged by Keil (in his and Tzschirner’s Anal. vol. i. p. 3).

† The remarks of De Wette, in opposition to this interpretation of the third parable, as applying only to the judgment of non-Christians—that is, those who are not the subjects of true regeneration—have not convinced me of its unsoundness. On the contrary, I think that the only thing that has led this scholar to reject my exposition is the unhistorical assertion, that Matthew makes no distinction between the millennial and the eternal reigns of Christ. If it be considered that this distinction was a general Jewish idea, it cannot be understood how Matthew could be free from it, especially when we take into account the way in which, as De Wette allows, the whole representation of Matthew is modified by the national element. And if Matthew observed this distinction, the relation of the three parables cannot well be determined in any other manner than that in which I have attempted to define it.
It is true that this explanation of the third parable appears to give rise to other difficulties which do not press upon the first-named hypothesis. For, according to our view, unbelievers (the ἄναδεικνυόμενοι) would be received to favour, whereas, Heb. xi. 6, it is said that "without faith it is impossible to please God," and Romans iii. 28, "man is justified by faith (alone)." And further, good works would

That "all nations" here arrayed before the judgment seat are "all men with the exception of true believers, i. e., all unbelievers," it is impossible to admit. Those who are separated from the goats, and placed, as sheep, on the right hand of the judge, who are welcomed, as his active friends, into his kingdom, and then go into eternal life, are surely regenerate believers if the Bible knows of such a class. Olshausen's argument against this is first that they are distinguished from "those very brethren" who are with the judge as his acknowledged friends, and secondly that they evince an unconsciouiness of their Christian acts incompatible with spiritual enlightenment. In regard to the first objection, such a distinction is indeed drawn. But it is accounted for, I think, by the representations of God's mode of dealing with Israel. He had sent prophets and teachers among them, and the Saviour had sent forth his apostles and the Seventy. As therefore the reception given to those recognized servants and brethren of the Lord, was the test of Israel's character, so now the Saviour transfers the same principle to the assembled nations, and declares them received or rejected according as they had treated him through his accredited agents. This clearly distinguishes the "these my brethren" as the previously acknowledged and public ministers of Christ from the men among whom they were sent, "He that receiveth you," etc. Secondly, as to the unconsciouiness of the righteous of their good deeds, we may remark, first, that the unrighteous seem equally unconscious of the proper nature of their delinquencies, and if this does not exclude them from the category of unbelievers, why should that of the other class exclude them from the category of believers? But, in the next place, the parable itself—if we may so call it—furnishes ample explanation of this unconsciouiness. The Saviour's grounds of approval and welcome are intentionally and characteristically placed in the most abrupt and startling form. He expresses in the strongest and most hyperbolical manner the essential spirit of their conduct. He bases his words of welcome on the fact that they had rendered to himself personally the most varied and important services. They might well hesitate as to the import of such a representation, and naturally inquire when they had laid the supreme judge under such obligations; as might also the unrighteous be startled at a view of their delinquencies which they had never before taken. And still further, both the Saviour's address and their reply seem purposely and dramatically constructed in order to bring out the great truth couched in the final declaration, that as they treated his messengers and representatives they treated him. This same principle, viz. that of a dramatic scene appended for the sake of a more full exhibition of a grand principle is, I think, frequently applicable to the explanation of the parables. In the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, the workmen are represented as murmuring against their employer, in order to give scope for the statement of his absolute sovereignty in the dispensation of his favours. In that of the Prodigal Son, the introduction of the elder brother, with his fault-finding at the demonstrations of joy over a recovered prodigal, (while conveying a side intimation to the Pharisees: "if you are as good as you profess to be, you should rejoice at the restoration of the vile and degraded," is mainly intended to introduce the father's touching statement of the reasons for rejoicing over a lost one found. So the dramatic scene in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is neither intended to teach that the blessed and the lost hold such parleyings with each other, nor that the lost will or do have any benevolent regard for the living, but simply to give scope for bringing out in strong relief the law of retributive justice, the unchangeableness of the final state, and the impotence of miracles to benefit those who are insensible to moral and scriptural truth.—F.K.

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be presupposed in unbelievers, whereas, 'whatsoever is not of faith is sin' (Rom. xiv. 23). [Among those ignorant of Christ, there is indeed none to whom faith can be ascribed, Rom. x. 14. And just as little any who could do a single good work, i.e., one free from all mixture of sin. But there are among them, doubtless, those who perseveringly strive after freedom from sin (Rom. ii. 7), and struggle against sin (Rom. ii. 14), and grieve over it, and thus have a conscious need of deliverance from it. Such men are then accepted in the sense of Acts x. 35. Not that they are justified by their imperfect works. But they are doubtless susceptible of still hearing the gospel of grace in Christ, and of believing in it, and of being healed by these 'leaves of the tree of life,' Rev. xxii. 2.]

Ver. 31–33.—The Parousia of the Son of Man at the judgment is here described just in the same manner as in Matth. xxiv. 30. The prophetic form being adopted, the several circumstances at and after the advent of the Lord, although not exactly interchanged, are yet not plainly and chronologically distinguished. No precise account of the order is given till we come to the Apocalypse, and the data there supplied are the guide by which the elements in these passages must be separated. In the same way we may explain the circumstance that Matth. xxiv. 30 does not differ at all from this description of the appearing of the Lord at the general judgment, although its primary reference is to an earlier period in the revelation of his glory. (Just in the same manner the prophets of the Old Testament immediately connect with the appearing of the Messiah all those effects of his work which, in reality, would only be unfolded in thousands of years.) Instead of the διψαλον, angeles, who here form the retinue (Matth. xxiv. 30 the δύναμες) of Christ, who is described as the Sovereign, in Rev. xix. 14 (comp. this with ver. 8 and Jude ver. 14), the διψαλον, saints, are mentioned. Now as our passage also (ver. 40) intimates that these will be present, the expression διψαλον, angel, messenger, is probably to be taken here in a more comprehensive sense, so as to include also the just made perfect (Heb. xii. 23). (Compare Zech. xiv. 5, where the description of the advent of the Lord represents the νέων as appearing with him. It is true that, according to the modern hebraism, this term is understood to mean the angels, but it is a question whether it does not contain an intimation of the idea, that those men who were glorified in ancient days will be with the Messiah, and will appear with him. The LXX. render the passage νέων of διψαλον. Finally, in its form, this similitude is but imperfectly developed. In reality it combines two similitudes which cross each other. The Redeemer is first compared to a king, who sits upon his throne and pronounces judgment; and secondly to a shepherd who divides the sheep. The διψαλον, separating, in-
volves the idea of the ἀπίνειν, the separation of the two classes, good and bad, who were mingled up to that time. The metaphor of the sheep and the goats is found in the Old Testament (comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 15, ff.; Isaiah xl: 11); and indeed it is a common Old Testament idea, that the right hand is that which is approved and loved, the left that which is rejected.

Ver. 34–36.—In the first place, the righteous (δικαιοί) are commended by the king, and represented as the heirs of the kingdom (Matt. v. 5). By the Divine kingdom, we are here to understand the perfect state of the creation, called in another place (Rev. xxi. 1, ff.) the new heaven and the new earth. There the characteristic of the kingdom of God, the dominion of the will of God, which extends by degrees, will be perfect (1 Cor. xv. 27); for the very last manifestations of evil will be destroyed, and the harmony disturbed by sin will be restored. Hence the relation between the kingdom of Christ on earth and this eternal kingdom of the father (βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς) is as follows: in the former, although that which is good prevails, yet evil still exists; in the latter the influence of evil is perfectly annihilated. Here a difficulty occurs, in that this kingdom being represented in our passage as prepared for the κληρονόμοι, heirs (Rom. viii. 17) from eternity (ἡτοιμασθήναι ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου). Comp. Matth. xiii. 35; Ephes. i. 4. Similarly, ver. 41, the πῦρ αἰώνιον, everlasting fire, is described as prepared for the wicked. (The reading δ ἡτοιμασθεὶς ὁ πατὴρ μου must yield to the ordinary reading; but it makes no difference in the sense, because ἡτοιμασθεῖν can only be explained by supplying ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς.) But in the latter case the ἐπὶ καταβολῆς κόσμου, from the foundation, etc., is wanting, and this is a circumstance that must not be overlooked. Often as the election of believers is represented in the New Testament as eternal and dependent upon the predestination of God, it is never said of the wicked, that they are predestinated as such.

We have fully discussed this important doctrine concerning the relation of the Divine decree to the righteous and unrighteous, in the exposition of the principal passage that treats on that subject (Rom. ix). Here we only offer the following remarks. According to the nature of the opposition between good and evil, which is only relative, no one is good out of God or besides God, but only through God and in God. Hence the doctrine of Scripture—which proceeds from the deepest knowledge of Divine things—traces what is good in the creature to the only eternal Good, and accordingly teaches a predestination of the saints; for he who is good and happy can only become so by God's will and choice. The Divine choice, however, does not destroy freedom, but establishes it; it is only the capacity, the power to choose evil, which is done away by grace [ultimately in the perfected, in so far as it elevates them]. But the
case is different with evil. God, who is entirely free from evil, determines no one to evil; to act evilly is rather the prerogative of the creature. Hence sin, as proceeding from the creature, has not the character of the absolute. After evil has come into existence through the creature, its punishment may be ascribed to God, but God can never appoint even the wicked themselves to wickedness. The Holy Scriptures, in perfect harmony with this, teach a praedestinatio sanctorum (although without gratia resistibilis), but they say nothing about a reprobatio impiorum. He who is saved is so through God, and through God alone; he who is lost is the sole cause of his own misery.

The works of love performed by the righteous are now mentioned, as the proofs by which they evince their calling to the kingdom of God. (Comp. such passages in the Old Testament as Isaiah lviii. 6, 7; Job vi. 14, xxii. 6, ff, where also eternal life is connected with works of love.) These, as works of true love, presuppose living faith; for faith and love are as inseparable as fire and warmth; the one cannot exist in its real nature without the other; and if they ever appear isolated (1 Cor. xiii. 2), the true nature of one or other is destroyed. Accordingly the reference is not to external actions of charity—these may be dead works; but the subject of discourse is the living effluence of the inward tide of love. It is in love as such that godliness consists, for God is love.

Ver. 37-40.—The ignorance of devout men respecting their works is humility, but not Christian humility, which cannot be conceived of as unconscious, because Christian life, in its perfection, presupposes the highest consciousness. Such passages as Matth. vi. 3 cannot be applied here, for they do not commend the absence of consciousness, but merely discountenance any appropriation of works as our own. The dialogue of course is to be regarded as the form of the similitude, but it has its truth in so far as the interior nature of man will manifest itself, at the judgment, in its proper character, and will, as it were, utter a real language. To those who have been actuated by a humble childlike love, there will then be a disclosure of the living connexion that subsists between the Redeemer and his people, so that what is done to his brethren is done to him. (The expression μικροι, little ones, as we have already shown, in the remarks on Matth. xviii. 6, is applied to believers, partly in reference to the world and its persecutions, and partly in reference to regeneration. But here διάχυστος, least, is employed in opposition to μεγας, great, and among the brethren themselves, great and little are distinguished, as Matth. v. 19. The distinction is designed to point out in a striking manner the difference between

* From these sources the same view has been received by the Rabbins. Compare Jalkut Rub. fol. 42, quiunque hospitalitatem libenter exercet, illius est paradisum.
the act and the recompense; love exercised toward the least of the brethren is followed by the richest reward.) The brethren are represented as present (τὸ υἱὸν τῶν ἀδελφῶν), and as distinguished from the δίκαιος, to whom the language of the Judge is addressed. Hence the scene may be described as follows: those who are judged stand before the throne of Christ, on the right and on the left; then by the side of the Judge, and therefore not appearing in judgment, stand believers, who do not come into judgment, but in and with Christ judge the world (1 Cor. vi. 2).

Ver. 41-46.—The very same criterion by which eternal life is secured to the just, forms the reason why the unjust are consigned to everlasting punishment (κόλασις αἰώνιος). As he who can love has the power to receive love, yea, as love is itself happiness and eternal life, so the privation of love is misery and incapability of happiness. Accordingly the punishment here spoken of is not arbitrary or positive; the punishment of want of love is association with those who are destitute of love, in that state of discord in the external as well as the internal life, which constantly proceeds from the absence of love. And hence the κόλασις αἰώνιος, everlasting punishment, is not identical with the exclusion from marriage (Matth. xxv. 13); on the contrary, the expression denotes eternal condemnation. Nor can the strictness of the contrast be mitigated, at least not by means of exegesis, on account of the term ζωή αἰώνιος, eternal life; for the observation of De Wette—that if a strict antithesis were intended, annihilation must have been specified in opposition to life—is sufficiently refuted by the fact that here the predominant idea expressed by the word life is not existence, but holy and happy being. In regard to the view founded upon the antithesis between good and evil generally—that good alone is eternal, and rests in the nature of God himself, whilst evil is an accident, having nothing substantial in its nature, and therefore the consequences of evil, which is temporal, can only be temporal—we allow that these ideas are certainly not devoid of truth. But at the same time, it must not be overlooked, that the mode of representation adopted in Scripture nowhere favours the hypothesis of the restitution of all things (ἀποκατάστασις τῶν πάντων) by any positive declarations, and hence in the exegetic examination of this question—which at last resolves itself into the view taken of free choice and its relation to Divine agency—it is best to adhere to the mode of expression which Scripture has selected. However, the doctrine of everlasting punishment is not to be sought in every place where the punishment of sin is mentioned; this has been done long enough. Throughout the New Testament, redemption is the object kept in view, and hence the Lord, here as always, concludes his discourse not with condemnation, but with eternal happiness. And
with a glance at this, we will pass on to the consideration of that
gospel of love, which the disciple of love has bequeathed to us,
wherein the secret things of God, and especially the profound coun-
sels of his grace, are disclosed. The eternal Word proceeding from
the bosom of the Father, in order that he might bring the happi-
ness of eternal life to those who were lost, fathomed the abyss of all
sin and suffering, and sealed the covenant of peace with his own
sacred blood, that he might procure *for all* eternal redemption.