

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXX.—NO. 3.

JULY, MDCCCLXXIX.

ARTICLE I.

THE BRETHREN OF OUR LORD.

An interesting inquiry is suggested by the phrase, "The brethren of our Lord." Were they children of Joseph and Mary, our Lord's mother; or of Joseph by a former wife; or of Mary the wife of Cleopas, adopted by Joseph on the death of their father; or of Joseph by a Levirate marriage with the widow of his brother? For this last view few advocates have appeared, and these divided in opinion as to the person of the widow, whether Mary the wife of Cleopas or some unmentioned woman. Indeed the opinion is entirely based on suppositions, none of which can survive a critical examination.

Of the three others just given, the bulk of Patristic, Papal, and Protestant authorities favor the adoption of the third. Early authorities were divided between the first and second. Each has had distinguished advocates as well as the third during the last hundred years, within which period discussions on the subject of the inquiry have become more numerous and been distinguished by more zeal and ability than during any former period subsequent to the fourth century.

In prosecuting this inquiry, it becomes us to lay aside *à priori* considerations, traditions, and ecclesiastical dogmas, and examine with careful criticism those scriptures which formally or incidentally inform us respecting our Lord's parentage, birth, and house

hold relations. Though the conclusions to which such an investigation may lead may not deserve to be formulated as matters of evangelical faith, they may yet be highly important, either in sustaining truth of spiritual value or in dissipating superstitions and dogmas opposed to the divine word and pernicious to a true religious faith and practice.

We propose to present the statements of Scripture under three divisions. They will be given in the words of the inspired penmen, according to our authorised version, with such summaries of the context as may be necessary; and also with such explanations as in some passages the literal rendering of the Greek text may provide.

I. Our Lord's *parentage and birth* is the first section of the history. These are narrated only by Matthew and Luke. They follow, in extracts from each, according to generally accepted chronological order of the history. Gabriel was "sent by God to a virgin whose name was Mary," Luke i. 27, "being," literally, having been, "espoused to Joseph." 28: The angel said, "Hail! highly favored! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." To soothe her fears and her mental perplexity respecting "this manner of salutation," the angel reassures her, v. 30, "Thou hast found," or obtained, "favor with God," and adds the evidence, v. 31, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus." 32: "He shall . . . be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." Mary seems at once to have believed this assurance, but was perplexed respecting the *mode* by which it should be accomplished, "seeing I know not a man," 34. Her marriage with Joseph was not yet consummated; otherwise she would not have been affected as Zacharias had been, 18. The angel then proceeds to inform her of the miraculous agency to be provided, 35: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." With this assurance, Mary replied, 38: "Be it unto me according to thy word." Luke ii. 4-5: "Joseph went up also . . . unto the city of David,

because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed, with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child." 6: "while they were there," . . . 7, "she brought forth her first born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes," etc.

Matthew i. 16, closes his "book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David," by saying, "And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." 18: "Now," Greek *de* (continuation and contrasted with the forms of the preceding verses literally; *but*, on the contrary,) "the birth of Jesus Christ was thus": "When," etc., or literally, for his mother having been "espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." The clause "before they came together," may be understood in the wide sense of living in the same house, implying but not asserting the narrower sense of cohabitation, *cf.* 25. "*Found*," not merely *was*, nor, on the other hand, *detected*, but became *known* or *was discovered*, as often used in active or passive form.* Joseph was troubled, for being a "just man," 19, he was bound "to put away his wife" if his natural suspicions were well founded; yet he thought, in his affectionate regard for her, "to put her away privately." God however interfered, by the appearance of an angel in a dream, 20, "saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." 21: The name of the son she should bring forth was given as Luke i. 31, and it is added, "for he shall save his people from their sins," 22. As we understand it, the *angel* says: "Now (literally, *and*) all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23, Behold, a (Greek *THE*) virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel." 24: "Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, 25, and knew her not till she had brought forth her son the first born." (E. V. her first-born son.)

*Matt. xxvi. 40, 43; Luke i. 30; ix. 36; xii. 37, 38, 43; xvii. 18; xxiv. 2; John v. 14; xi. 17; Acts v. 39; 2 Cor. v. 3; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. iv. 16.

With this scriptural narrative of our Lord's parentage and birth before us, let us examine its teachings on the family relation into which he was introduced.

1. The careful perusal of this history raises a presumption that there was a true marriage of Joseph and Mary. Instead of recognising any sundering of the betrothal, we are carefully informed that Joseph's purpose of effecting this, even in a manner not necessarily exposing Mary to disgrace, much less to death, was prevented by a divine revelation given in such a manner as to allay his natural apprehensions. He is called her "*husband*," and she having been espoused is taken to him a wife under divine bidding.

2. The careful critical examination of the salient points of this narrative confirms the presumption raised by its perusal. When Mary had received the angel's annunciation, Luke i. 38, we are told, 39, she "arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, . . . v. 40, and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth," who, 43, returned her salutation by saying, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" How long a time "in those days" may mean and how long after the annunciation Mary remained in Nazareth, are unknown to us. But Elisabeth's language indicates that Mary had then conceived. She "abode" with Elisabeth "about three months," 56. It does not appear by whom she was accompanied on the visit. Joseph is not mentioned. It is not as probable that some kinsman or suitable company went with her as that she had made known her condition to Joseph, and that the events recorded in Matt. i. 18-20 then occurred in Nazareth; that he, having taken her to wife, might properly attend her. At all events, the customs of the country and age would forbid a betrothed virgin or other unmarried female making such a journey alone. She went "in haste"—"in those days"—the space of time indefinite and yet including the time of the annunciation. These suggestions are made, not as speculations, but as explanations most consistent with the scope of the whole narrative. We must not be misled by the succinct account of Matt. i. 16-25, to suppose that her condition had been unknown

to Joseph till the birth of the promised son was imminent. Nor can it be supposed that either Elisabeth or Mary uttered the glowing words of joy and praise, Luke i. 42-56, and especially that Elisabeth saluted Mary as "the mother of my Lord," unless both were entirely satisfied that the fulfilment of the divine assurance to Mary respecting her destiny had already begun. We say Mary was now "married." The narrative gives no account of the ceremony of a wedding, a feast, guests, contracts, processions, and other attendant circumstances. But to "take Mary thy wife," and he "took unto him his wife," are expressions indicative of marriage, as usage both of the Old and New Testament writers fully shews. The passages cited below are only a small specimen. There was then a real marriage, and even if the time above suggested be not accepted, it occurred *before the birth of our Lord*.

3. The angel or the evangelist, equally authoritative, says "all this," the espousals, conception, and birth, "was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, Behold, (THE, E. V., a) virgin shall (conceive) be with child and shall bring forth a son," etc. That is, God thus ordered the means by which this enigmatical prophecy, one involving such an extraordinary event, might have a verification in well attested facts. It is interesting to discover the relation of the most prominent fact, the birth from the virgin, to the prophecy. We notice the use of the definite article before virgin, both in the Hebrew text and the Greek of Matthew quoted from the Septuagint. It is probable that our translators followed the Latin Vulgate, the Latin language having no article, hence the reading, "a virgin."

The Prophet Isaiah was specially directed to announce this strange prophecy to Ahaz, the representative "of the house of David," as a SIGN. Of what else could it be a sign for his comfort other than of the assured perpetuation of David's line? In doing this the Divine Spirit appears to have had in view a more ancient prophecy. It is recorded in Gen. iii. 15, and has received the name of *the protevangel*. God said to the serpent "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It (Hebrew HE) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt

bruise his heel." The first part of the verse has been accepted as a typical prophecy, setting forth the proverbial enmity between the human race and the race of serpents. This view is not set aside by the worship of the serpent by some pagans, for the ground of that worship is *fear*. But we are more concerned with the latter part of the verse—to the typical is added another direct prophecy. In this the "typical" seed or posterity of the woman becomes a person. "He saith not seeds, as of many; but seed, as of one," with a masculine singular pronoun and a masculine verbal form. Eve is a representative generally of her race, specially of the mother of this "seed," just as Abraham was his progenitor, respecting whose relation to the seed of promise Paul uses the language above quoted, Gal. iii. 16. But further, in this part of the verse, THE serpent, "that old serpent, the devil and Satan," Rev. xii. 9, and not his seed, is addressed. The serpent represented Satan, whose agent he was. The "seed of the woman who shall bruise his head" (Hebrew, him as to head) is "the Son of God who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. The phrase "her seed" is equivalent to "seed of the woman." This relation of woman to seed is no where else occurrent in the obvious sense of this passage. In Gen. iv. 25, Eve says of Seth, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel." But as born by ordinary generation and of Eve personally, Seth could not be "her seed" in the sense here found. The same may be said of seed (Hebrew, child) in Lev. xxii. 13. It was said to Hagar, Gen. xvi. 10, "I will multiply thy seed;" but we know that was said in respect of Abraham's descendants through Ishmael. So it was said to Rebekah, "Let thy seed possess the gate of their enemies"—Gen. xxiv. 60, addressed to her as the wife of Isaac. In Is. lvii. 3, the last two words furnish a barely possible exception to the remark on the singularity of our passage. But rightly translated these words are, "thou hast committed adultery." In the New Testament, Paul has given us the interpretation for which we see good reasons in the foregoing examination; not only was "the word made flesh," John i. 14, but Paul says, Gal. iv. 4, the Son of God was "made of a woman." This, as our narrative shows, was done by the agency of the Holy

Spirit, the recognised agent in executing God's purposes. As Eve was made without an earthly father, by God's almighty power, made of man's rib, so Eve's illustrious "seed" was made or created *of a woman* by the same power. We have no notice of Adam in the passage, Gen. iii. 15.

Now in view of what has been said, it is not a harsh presumption that from this singular prophecy an apprehension, more or less clear, may have arisen in the minds of holy men of old, that "her seed," of whom the victory over Satan was predicated, might be one born out of the ordinary mode. Then Isaiah, when the time for interpreting the old prophecy and clearing up all speculation had arrived, was specially instructed to formulate that interpretation in the words of prophecy, now fulfilled, as related by the Evangelist. The title of the child is added, "Emmanuel," to indicate his power to sustain the dynasty, as "David's Greater Son," of the perpetuation of which his birth was a sign. This titular name is fully explained, Is. ix. 6 (E. V.): "Unto us a child is born, a son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God," etc. In ordaining means to fulfil the prophecy, God selected the virgin as the sole human parent. By the miraculous conception the child to be born was not only secured from the taint of sin, to which all born by ordinary generation were subject, but endued with a HOLY human nature as well as a perfect divine nature. It is only for us to discuss what is revealed. Of possibilities of accomplishing God's plan, other than what is revealed, we need not speculate. The mother was secured from the slightest suspicion, not only of Joseph, but of all to whom the miraculous agency was made known, and by them believed. At the same time marriage with Joseph provided birth in wedlock, and the protection of a legal husband and a *legal* earthly father. All that prophecy required was met by an *antecedent virginity* of Mary. Yet while *using* that, for reasons already stated, God put no special honor on *virginity* as opposed to the married state. On the contrary, he honored marriage by choosing for his Son, who in all proper relations was to "be made like unto his brethren," a lawful family connexion. There is no evidence in Scripture that a subsequent

or perpetual virginity was appointed to Mary. On the contrary, we think a proper inquiry will result in shewing clear evidence of the opposite position.

4. The language of Matt. i. 18, "before they came together," and 24-5, "he (Joseph) did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and TOOK UNTO HIM HIS WIFE, and knew her not till she had brought forth her son, her first-born," raises a presumption that Joseph's abstinence from marital relations was only a postponement limited by the birth. Calvin rather censures the discussion of the subject, not as involving indelicacy, but because "the historian has not informed us what took place afterwards." With due respect, we protest that this is a "begging of the question." Rightly interpreted, we hold the historian's language, with the characteristic delicacy of Scripture, *does inform us*. It is true that the particle *ἕως* alone, does not define, *necessarily*, the extent of the limitation which it signifies. Whether the assertion, closed by *ἕως* simply, reaches only to the particle or extends beyond it, must be determined by the context. The same remark occasionally applies to *ἕως ἂν*. Ordinarily *ἕως* in local or temporal clauses defines the limit of action or condition by the word following the particle: as, "*go ἕως* Antioch, Acts xi. 22; *ἕως* Athens, xvii. 15; "*Till* the days of David," Acts vii. 45; "*Till* the ninth hour," Mark xv. 33. Or after the limitation expires, in clauses of a general character, the act or condition is changed: "Serve me *till* I have eaten, and afterward thou shalt eat," etc., Luke xvii. 8; "until he find it," xv. 4, when ceasing to seek is implied. The use of *ἕως ἂν*, involves a conditional sense, the clause succeeding the particle expressing limitation of the action or state preceding it, but not defining extent. "Sit on my right hand *ἕως ἂν* I make thy enemies thy footstool," Mark xii. 36. This assures the session till the enemies are subdued. It may continue. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 28, intimates that some new phase of the mediatorial kingdom will then ensue. But we have not space for more examples of these two particles.* It is evident that the action or state preceding the particle is

*We refer only to Matt. xvi. 28; x. 11; v. 26; x. 23; Mark xiv. 25: vi. 25.

generally limited by it. But neither of these particles is that used in our passage. This is *ἕως οὖ*. When the verb following is indicative, this particle involves more precision. If the verb is subjunctive, a condition *may* be implied. But, as the other particles, this is one of limitation. *οὖ* following *ἕως* is regarded as elliptical for *οὖ χρόνον*. In nearly, if not quite, every case in the New Testament—

(1) The action or condition preceding the particle is arrested and more generally, expressly, or impliedly changed or reversed by the statement following. Thus:

(a) Leaven hid in bread "*till* whole leavened," Matt. xiii. 33. Action arrested and another state of meal and leaven declared.

(b) "Cast into prison *till* he should pay the debt," Matt. xviii. 30-34. Release on payment implied.

(c) "How am I straitened *till* it (the baptism) be accomplished." The "baptism" was suffering "the wrath of God, the cruel death of the cross, being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time." Jesus having "accomplished" this, rose "triumphant over sin, death, and hell," "to die no more."

(d) The apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel in all the world," Matt. xvi. 15; but our Lord directed them to tarry in "Jerusalem *till* endued with power from on high," Luke xxiv. 49. They were then to be "witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and all Judæa and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth," Acts i. 8. The result was in accordance with these commands. *After* receiving the power they no longer "tarried in Jerusalem" than to fulfil the part of the commission requiring them to "begin in Jerusalem," Luke xxiv. 47. Other examples of same purport are Acts xx. 21; xxi. 26; xxv. 21; 2 Pet. i. 19.

(2) This construction is still clearer when, as in our passage, the clause preceding the particle is a negative statement. Thus:

(a) "The cock shall not crow *till* thou hast denied me thrice," John xiii. 38. The third denial was followed immediately by the crowing.

(b) They "bound themselves that they would neither eat nor drink *till* they had killed Paul," Acts xxiii. 12. In that event of course taking food would follow.

(c) "Tell the vision to no man *till* the Son of man be risen," Matt. xvii. 9. The enjoined silence then ceased; cf. 2 Peter i. 17-18. This usage of *ἕως οὗ*, evidently sustains the presumption that the obvious sense of Matt. i. 25 is the critically correct interpretation. This view leaves the *precedent* and absolute virginity of Mary entirely unimpaired till the birth of her son, and implies, by the very structure of the sentence, that the meaning of "taking a wife" was no longer subject to any exceptional condition of the married parties.

5. It may be true that the mention of the "first born," in view of Ex. xiii. 2, does not *necessarily* imply subsequent births. Still we must remark that we find in genealogical lists only one apparent exception, that of Hur, 1 Chron. ii. 50. But he may have had sisters, not usually named in genealogies. Isaac, an only son of Abraham and Sarah, is not called first born. Matthew, who mentions this "*first born*," would more naturally be supposed to have in view subsequent births, as he mentions "the brethren and sisters" along with "the mother of our Lord," xii. 47, xiii. 55. We therefore confidently claim that the use of this phrase in Matt. i. 25 completes fully the elements of evidence, that Mary, "married maid and virgin mother," having now performed the uniquely holy and sublime office of bearing the "Lord's Christ," and fulfilled the great Messianic prophecy, passed her life not in the toils of the "will worship" of asceticism, but after the "manner of holy women of old time," inculcating and exemplifying the "sweet charities of a pious home."

II. The infancy and childhood of Jesus are illustrated by but few incidents in the gospel history, but they are striking and pertinent to our discussion. Immediately after the announcement of our Lord's birth to the shepherds by the angel, Luke ii. 16, "they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger," . . . 19, "and Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

After the circumcising on the eighth day and naming the child, 22, "when the days of her purification" . . . "were accomplished, they (see verse 27, the parents) brought him to Jerusalem to do for him according to the law" (Ex. xiii. 2), which

provided that the first born should be presented to the Lord. [The best texts give *their* for *her*, recognising thus that either Joseph participated with Mary or that the child was included with the mother in this *ceremonial* uncleanness and consequent purification.] The presentation in the temple followed and included the offering, which was the conclusion of the ceremony of purification (Lev. xii. 4; vi. 8). Simeon being present, broke forth into a song of praise, and, 33, "Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him," "and Simeon blessed them." The narrative of Matt. ii. 1-12 informs us of the visit of the Magi, who, 11, saw "the young child and his mother . . . worshipped him . . . and presented gifts." Then 13 and 14 relate the flight into Egypt, under instructions given to Joseph by an angel of the Lord in a dream, and 19-23 two other revelations to Joseph by the same means, the first to take "the young child and his mother . . . to Judea;" the second, on the accession of Archelaus to the throne, to turn "aside into the parts of Galilee." We can but notice the prominence of the "young child" in this narrative, that phrase always preceding "his mother." Matt. ii. 23 says "he (Joseph) came and dwelt in . . . Nazareth"; Luke ii. 39, "they returned . . . to their own city Nazareth," 40, "and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." Luke ii. 41 we are told the "parents" of Jesus "went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover," 42. Such a visit was made when Jesus "was twelve years old." 43: At the close of the feast he remained behind," "Joseph and his mother not knowing it." 44: Missing him after a day's journey and not finding him "among (their) kinsfolk and acquaintance," 45-46, they "returned to Jerusalem, and after three days found him in the temple sitting amidst the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." 47-8: Participating in the astonishment of all who heard him, his mother rather reproved him, adding, "Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." 49, 50: They did not appreciate his reply, "Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" 51-2: He readily went with them to Nazareth and was subject to them. "Mary kept

all these sayings in her heart." (See verse 19.) "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

On this narrative we remark—

(1) It preserves the scope of what was before related as *being the history of an ordinary Jewish family*. Abstracting the miraculous incidents, we find that the parents and child were housed in the quarters to which the exigencies of their situation assigned them; that Joseph, just as if directed by providential causes, had fled with his family to Egypt to escape Herod's murderous schemes; returned when Herod was dead, and diverted by the news of the accession of his son, went on to Nazareth. For nearly six years no incident occurring has been deemed of sufficient importance for narration. Then comes the visit to Jerusalem, when, as the Jewish writers say, the child has reached the period to become "a son of the law." Knowing the circumstances of Jesus' birth, *we* are prepared to find that this period of his life was one in which his consciousness of his true nature begins to be developed, and he is not only seeking but giving instruction. The parental solicitude for his safety is just what we would expect. But notwithstanding his evincing a regard to "his father's business," and assigning that as a reason for what to them was so inexplicable, he completely fills the picture of a "holy" child in returning to his home and continuing in subjection to his parents, and grows in preparation for the great work of his life. The language of Luke is fatal to the assumed superiority of Mary's virginal character, for "the young child" constantly precedes "his mother" in the order of the narrative, and not Mary, but Joseph, is the head of the family.

(2) The presence of the miraculous element in this family history, so far from vitiating its reality as such, really enhances our estimate of it, as recognised by God as one of the chief agencies in that scheme by which our Lord, "though a Son, learned obedience," "was made perfect (completely adapted) through sufferings," (Heb. ii. 10,) and thus "he that sanctifieth" (or redeemeth) and they who are sanctified (or redeemed) are all of one."

As part of the discipline by which his human nature, though entirely sinless, was trained, he was as a child "subject to his

parents." In his intercourse with his mother there was no language of ill temper, and yet an unexpected development of the other nature and the rising consciousness of the work the "Father had given him to do." He meekly acquiesced in the divine place, for "he came to do his will" (Heb. x. 9). Of the course of his subsequent life with his parents in Nazareth we have only the assurance of that growth in "wisdom and favor with God and man," by which his preparation for his work of life was conducted.

(3) His mother was perplexed but patient, and "keeping all these things in her heart" awaited the results with evident recollections of the wonderful revelations vouchsafed to her. The whole of this history, from the first revelation made to Mary to his mature manhood, is that of one well entitled to be called "wonderful." But the great bulk of the people recognised only his human nature, and till he had been two years in his work he was regarded by such only as the son of Joseph. The question is not what they might have known and believed, with a right interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies, such as Ps. ii. 45, 6, Is. vii. 14, ix. 5-6, and others, nor what the Zachariases, Simeons, Annas, and Elisabeths under divine revelation did receive, but it is what the people, misled by false interpretations of scribes, really believed. By many he was regarded as an impostor, a false Christ, by others a great teacher, by most perhaps as one in whom men "hoped" to find a temporal prince to relieve them from the Roman yoke. Even apostles, *after his resurrection*, still hoped he would "restore the kingdom to Israel." In the synoptical Gospels, he called himself "the Son of Man;" though in discourses with the Jews, as given by John, he declared himself "the Son of God," and as they rightly understood him, thus claimed "to be equal with God." He appealed to his works to testify as well as to God, devolving on men the responsibility of receiving or rejecting him when they had the means of knowing him. Still, such was his constant human development, that during his life, before the crucifixion, he was regarded by the masses, from the human point of view, and that not very discriminating. His family relations, his life in

Nazareth, to those not divinely taught, but misled from right views of his divinity, left the impression that though "wonderful" he was yet only a human being. This leads us to consider

III. The subsequent life and household relations of Jesus. Says Luke, in opening his genealogical record, iii. 23: "Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph"; and John i. 45, Philip says, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." John ii. 1-4 narrates the presence of Jesus and his mother and disciples at the marriage in Cana. To her evident suggestion of her belief in his wonderful power, by telling him "They have no wine," Jesus replied, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." John ii. 12: "After that he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples." Luke iv. 16 records our Lord's visit to "Nazareth, where he had been brought up." The people heard his exposition of Is. lxi. 1. and "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" On the same occasion, as some suppose, others a different one, we have accounts by Matthew and Mark. Matt. xiii. 54: "They were astonished, and said, Whence hath (this) man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Mark vi. 3: "Is not this the carpenter?") "Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us?" (Mark vi. 3: "Is not this the son of Mary and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas and Simeon? and are not his sisters here with us?") Both record, "and they were offended in him."

John vi. 42: "They said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" We learn from Mark iii. 21 that our Lord's popularity as a teacher and worker of miracles attracted great crowds and created much excitement, so that "his friends went out to lay hold of him, for they said, He is beside himself." The marginal reading for friends is "kinsmen," and the phrase thus translated literally means "those from" or "those pertaining to him." Mark proceeds to relate, 22-30, the ran-

corous malice of his enemies, who, obliged to acknowledge his wonderful works, ascribed the power they evinced to the devil. The writer then returns to the incidents above introduced by narrating, 31–35, the result of the impression of his friends, in that “his mother and his brethren,” 32, or “his brethren and mother,” 31, desired to see him; as Matt. xii. 46, “desiring,” or literally “seeking to speak with” him. Luke viii. 19 says, “they could not come at him for the press.” Whether the interview sought was obtained we are not informed, but our Lord improved the occasion to state solemnly the nearness of those who would do the will of his Father in heaven.

John vi. 66 says: “Many of his disciples,” taking offence at the terms of relation to him, “went back and walked no more with him.” With this incident respecting discipleship there appears a connexion, topical, though not perhaps closely chronological, in the narrative of his interview with his “brethren,” when “after these things,” vii. 1, he had retired to Galilee. His “brethren” urged him to return to Judæa and attend the feast “that thy disciples also may see thy works. . . . If thou doest these things, shew thyself to the world,” 3, 4. The evangelist explains this language of his brethren by adding, 5, “FOR NEITHER DID HIS BRETHREN BELIEVE ON HIM,” evidently thus classing them with those, vi. 66, who “went back and walked no more with him.”

This mention of the “brethren” separately from the “mother” may be followed in this sketch by a mention of the “mother” without the “brethren.” John xix. 25: “There stood at the cross of Christ, his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the (wife of) Cleopas, and Mary Magdalen.” This last mention of his mother in connexion with himself, before his resurrection, is full of interest as an example of his tender regard for her. He committed her to “the disciple standing by whom he loved,” saying, “Woman, behold thy son,” . . . and to the disciple, “Son, behold thy mother.” There is no certain scriptural authority for any subsequent interview, though there are good reasons for supposing she may have been of “the certain (others)” and “other (women)” with “the women which came with him from Galilee,”

Luke xxiv. 1, 10, and xxiii. 55. We have now to add the last notice of a mention of "his mother" and "his brethren." Acts i. 14: "Then all (the apostles named, 3) continued with one accord in prayer, etc., with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." And hereafter we hear not another word—in history, "Epistles," or "Revelations," of "Mary his mother," whether by that title or the appellation "the virgin" or aught else. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 5, speaks of "the brethren of the Lord," distinguishing them from himself, "as well as other apostles" and "Cephas," and in Gal. i. 19, names "James the Lord's brother." In Acts xii. 17, Peter, after his miraculous deliverance from Herod, says, "Go shew these things to James and to the brethren." We find mention of "James" again with no distinguishing title, in Acts xv. 13, taking a prominent part in the council. And Acts xxi. 18, on Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, he "went in with us to James, and all the elders were present." In Gal. ii. 9, James is named with John and Cephas as three "who seemed to be pillars" of the Church; and 12. Paul, introducing his address to Peter, whom he "withstood because he was to be blamed," mentions "certain came from James" to Antioch. And Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 7, recounting our Lord's appearances to sundry persons after his resurrection, says, "After that, he was seen of James." This prominence given to James has led many to believe him to have been the author of the epistle, as he mentions his name without the adjunct of "an apostle." We have thus given in scripture language entirely a history of our Lord's personal and domestic relations. We have seen, pages 440 and 448, that in the scriptural account of our Lord's parentage, birth, infancy, and childhood, the presumption in favor of natural and obvious interpretation is sustained by the careful critical examination of the passages. So we shall find in this section that the natural and obvious meaning that "the brethren and sisters" of our Lord were the children of Joseph and Mary is similarly sustained by the careful examination of the terms of the narrative.

(1) There is nothing, in the growth of the family, abnormal. On the contrary, in view of what has been presented, as only an

antecedent virginity was required by the scope and terms of the "prophecies going before," so not one particle of scriptural evidence can be adduced in the narrative of Mary's subsequent life and relations to sustain the dogma of a *subsequent* virginity. The family continues to reside in Nazareth; the son, Jesus, is represented by his neighbors, who had known his history, not only as the "carpenter's son," but also as a "carpenter." Once for all, it may be said, though hardly necessary, that we by no means regard the testimony that he was Joseph's son as that of inspired men. They relate the views of others, when, as Luke records it, he was "supposed" to be Joseph's son; or that such was the popular view presented in Philip's so calling Jesus, or a view prevalent long after he had entered on his ministry as well as on his visit to Nazareth. "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" John vi. 42, is language clearly intimating that Joseph and Mary were *both* then *living*. We know such was true of Mary from other evidence. And yet when these words were spoken Jesus had been two years preaching. The evidence is negative but no less strong. It shows that in the aspects and relations of the family there appear no incidents, such as preceded and attended his birth, to indicate an abnormal family or household relations of Jesus. This was God's plan for reasons already stated, page 448.

2. We have the words "brother," "brothers," "brethren," "sister," and "sisters," used in the New Testament (1) only of natural relations of a common parentage; (2) of national relations; and (3) of ecclesiastical relations. The usage of such words for near relations, not of common parentage but common ancestry, does exist in the Old Testament; but the New Testament supplies a term to denote this blood relation, which our version renders "cousin," "kin," "kinsfolk," "kinsmen," etc. It is *συγγενής*, "of the same race or stock." It has also *ἀνεψιός* for nephew, for which the Old Testament used a phrase. But the relation expressed by brother is the natural sense in the Old Testament, even when that term is employed with other terms, "father," "mother," or "sister," in their natural sense. Now, few as we find the notices of our Lord's household, we have four

instances in which "mother and brethren" (in one "sisters" also) are named together. Then we have either "mother and brethren" (or "brethren" alone in one case) distinguished from disciples in four instances. In that of "brethren" alone it is said expressly, "For neither did his brethren believe on him." On any other view than that the natural relation is meant, it is singular, to say the least, that these terms are united with "mother," the nature of which relation is certain; and equally inexplicable, that *συνεργ* is never employed. It may be remarked too, that the use of "brethren," a double plural, or a collective rather than plural, which is used by English writers rather in an official, national, or congregational sense, instead of "brothers," has a misleading effect on the minds of merely English readers.

3. When our Lord's attention was called to his "mother and brethren seeking to speak with him," he used the terms to denote the most decided in attachment to him. Who are nearer than such persons if natural relations? Just such nearness he claims to those who "do the will of his Father." The relation of cousins would not afford an illustration on the same plane with that of mother. He mentions "sisters" also. Further, these relations, who were males, are called in Mark vi. 3, "James, Joses, Judas, and Simon." Three of these names, James, Judas, and Simon, occur in the list of the Apostles, Matt. x. 2-4, Mark iii. 16-19, Luke vi. 14-16. Lebbaeus (or Thaddeus his surname) of Matthew and Thaddeus of Mark is evidently the Judas of Luke. Now the identity of these with three of the names, Mark vi. 3, is thought to justify the assertion that they were our Lord's brethren, and of course being called sons of Alpheus, could not be sons of our Lord's mother. But the fatal difficulty that "none of his brethren believed on him," John vii. 5, excludes *them* from the apostolic college. The allegation that the clause just cited from John vii. 5 must be taken in a modified sense of *none*, equal to *most* of his brethren, or a modified sense of "believed," *i. e.*, not *fully* believed, seems a special pleading and is fully refuted by the list, Acts i. 14, in which all three names occur, and yet the writer adds mention of "his (Jesus') brethren," as additional parties in the assemblage of the "upper room." There is certainly no necessity that

identity of names so common as James, Judas, and Simon, should require an identity of persons. We have not space for discussing the questions respecting the sameness of Clopas, John xix. 25, and Alpheus, in the passages above cited, nor of the true reading of "his mother and the sister of his mother, Mary (wife of) Cleophas (English version, or Klopas, Greek), etc." It may be remarked, however, that we have two pairs of names separated by a comma and the names of each pair separated by "and," as is the manner in the lists of apostles in Matt. x. 2-4 and Luke vi. 14-16; and that on comparing Matt. xxvii. 56, "the mother of Zebedee's children," and Mark xv. 40, "Salome" appear to take the place of "the sister of his mother," John xix. 25. And thus there is no ground for *supposing* Mary (wife of) Alpheus or Cleophas, or Klopas, was our Lord's mother's "sister" and her children "the brethren" by being cousins of our Lord.

IV. But we are brought by the above to consider some objections to the views of "our Lord's brethren" now given and sustained by the examination of the passages quoted. We shall combine this consideration with that of the grounds on which the two leading conflicting opinions on the subject of our discussion are advocated.

1. These two opinions have evidently a dogmatic basis of common origin and character. Owing to the low, sensual view of marriage, growing out of Oriental customs which existed at the Christian era, there arose at a very early period in the Church a decided opinion among many religious teachers that *virginity* was a state of superior holiness to that of marriage. In the discourses of our Lord and the writings of the apostles, some favor seemed to be shown to this view. But such an interpretation was due to a misapprehension of special and exceptional cases as presenting the *law* of the gospel, instead of being merely permissive or commendatory provisions for those "able to receive them," Matt. xix. 12, or in view of the exigencies or "present distress," 1 Cor. vii. 26. For our Lord, Matt. xix. 4-6, explicitly reenacts the primeval law of marriage. Gen. ii. 24, and Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 2, ix. 5, 1 Tim. v. 14, Heb. xiii. 4, as clearly inculcate the lawfulness of marriage and its consistency with the

highest moral purity. In time of persecution, when alternatives of exile or death on the one hand and a denial of Christ on the other would more embarrass men with families, or when opportunities for preaching the gospel "in regions beyond" were less available to the married than the single, or in other exigencies of local or temporary influence, all exceptional, the unmarried might do better to remain so; but the instructions for such cases were by no means favorable to the asceticism and monasticism which made them not only of a permissive but obligatory force. Of all the ancients known as the "Fathers" none was more rigid in the adoption and practice of monastic asceticism than Jerome. While traditions had existed which, to favor the growing estimate of virginity, taught that our Lord's mother had no other children of her body except him, and that the "brothers of our Lord" were Joseph's sons by a previous marriage, and had not excited up to the middle of the fourth century any strongly marked opposition, the rapid growth of the ascetic views involved induced Helvidius, a Christian writer of Rome, to take a decided stand in opposing such views. In doing this he boldly advanced the scriptural view, and held that our Lord's mother had other children after his birth. He seemed to feel impressed with the conviction, on the one hand, that the popular estimate of virginity as opposed to marriage was greatly sustained by the widespread acceptance of the perpetual virginity of the mother of Jesus, and on the other, that a dogma so utterly unsupported by Scripture as this, as well as other forms of asceticism, must receive a death blow in the establishment of her true position after the birth of her first-born. His effort, whether particularly successful in repelling the force of tradition that "the brethren" were the sons of Joseph, excited a storm of indignation and virulent rebuke from Jerome. This writer introduced the view, then entirely novel, which has since most widely prevailed. If the scriptural view already presented be correct, of course that of Jerome falls.

2. We may examine some of his allegations. While the tradition had not presented any scriptural basis, Jerome, relying on *no tradition* whatever, professed to derive his opinions from critical examinations of certain scriptures. The explanations already

given of these, relating to the "brothers" as constituting a class, "none of whom believed," the improbability that the sons of some other mother would be constantly associated, not with their own mother, but with our Lord's mother, and cognate propositions, need not be repeated. The basis of Jerome's "critical" work is a series of suppositions, as that of the other theory is a tradition; neither resting on one word of Scripture. Prominent among these is the supposition that "James the Lord's brother," Gal. i. 19, was the son of Alpheus and cousin of our Lord. Not to notice the contradiction of John vii. 1-5, above shown to exist, only two other explanations of this language are feasible. Either James became a convert and then apostle, or he, as an eminent servant of Christ, was at once, by his virtues and his relation to our Lord, raised to a position of influence in the Church in Jerusalem, remaining its chief pastor when the apostles having "begun at Jerusalem" had gradually scattered to other fields, according to our Lord's commands, Mark xvi. 15, Luke xxiv. 49. That he was ever chosen as an apostle there is no evidence. Matthias succeeded Judas, Acts i. 25. Paul was a special apostle to the Gentiles. Or, as some suppose, Matthias's appointment was not recognised and Paul was chosen instead of Judas. The first is perhaps the soundest view. But we cannot discuss the question. At all events, "twelve" or "eleven" (for a time) are the uniform numbers designating the apostles in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Revelation. But is it not said, "Other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother"? Gal. i. 19. Certainly, but this language does not assert that James was an apostle. Paul went to Jerusalem "to see," literally *become acquainted with*, "Peter," 18, and remained "fifteen days." The chronology of Paul's movements after his conversion, Acts ix. 23-30, 2 Cor. xi. 32-33, Gal. i. 17-21, presents many difficulties, for the discussion of which there is neither space nor necessity here.

It was not pertinent to Luke's history to record the visit "to see Peter," nor to Paul's defence of his divine commission, to mention the visit "with Barnabas." The particle *εἰ μὴ*, here rendered *save*, denotes an exception to a positive statement, added outside of the sentiment expressed by it, and implies an ellipsis, in accordance

with the structure of the sentence; generally, of the verb expressing an act or condition. Paul says positively (literal rendering), "another of the apostles I saw not," *εἰ μὴ* (I saw) "James the Lord's brother." To express an exception as to apostles the Greek idiom would perhaps require *ἐκτός* before *εἰ μὴ*. 1 Cor. xiv. 5; xv. 2; 1 Tim. v. 19; in all which the exception is inside the statement preceding, as *εἰ μὴ* often represents אֲנִי-לֹא-אֶפְסָרִי, so *ἐκτός εἰ μὴ* אֲנִי-לֹא-אֶפְסָרִי. Compare Luke iv. 25-27. There were many widows IN ISRAEL in the days of Elias, . . . and to NO ONE (denying absolutely sex in verse) was Elias sent, *εἰ μὴ* to *Sarepta* of *SIDON*, to a . . . widow." Many lepers were IN ISRAEL in the days of Eliseus, and NO ONE of them was cleansed, *εἰ μὴ* Naaman the SYRIAN." Supply *he was sent* before "to Sarepta" and "*was cleansed*" after "Syrian." In John xvii. 12, our Lord says, "Whom thou gavest me I have kept, and *not one* of them is lost, *εἰ μὴ*—the son of perdition" (*is lost*). Matt. xii. 4: "Was not lawful for him to eat (the shew bread) neither for them that were with him, *εἰ μὴ* for the priests only (*was it lawful*). 1 Cor. i. 14: "I baptized no one of you" (Corinthians) *εἰ μὴ*—(*I baptized*) "Crispus and Gaius." But neither of these was a Corinthian.

These quotations will suffice. We add references to others. Matt. xi. 29; Mark ix. 9; John xix. 15; Acts xi. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 2, 11, etc. Any one with a Greek Concordance can make the examination. In one passage we have the ellipsis supplied. Rom. xiv. 14: "Nothing is unclean of itself, *εἰ μὴ* to him who esteemeth anything unclean to him it is unclean." In our passage then James is not reckoned an apostle, so he could not be either one of that name mentioned in the lists. This examination destroys Jerome's first argument and confirms all that has been said respecting "the Lord's brethren" as not belonging to any class otherwise named. This James is evidently the same who is mentioned, Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; and Gal. ii. 9. He was also probably the author of the Epistle. He does not use the word "apostle" in inditing the Epistle, and Jude does not, but in verse 17 speaks of "words spoken of the apostles." If an apostle, he would have said "of *us* the apostles." Paul tells us 1 Cor. v. 7, that our Lord appeared to James after his resurrec-

tion. It may not be asserted positively, but it is by no means improbable, that he and his brothers constituted a separate class from the apostles to whom our Lord sent the message—Matt xxviii. 10; John xx. 17: "Go tell my brethren, that they shall go into Galilee; and there shall they see me." For the angels sent the message to the disciples, Matt. xxviii. 7; and though Mary Magdalen, John xx. 18, "told the disciples that he *had spoken* these things," the record does not represent her as conveying this message to *them*. Or if we accept this as another communication to the apostles, the use of the term "brethren" is evidently that of Ps. xxii. 22; Heb. ii. 11, 12; Matt. xii. 49; xxv. 40. Jerome's argument in fact is self-destructive. He says as to "James the Lord's brother," that brother means "cousin" or "step-brother." Then in the passage "neither did his brethren believe on him," "brethren" must mean the same. Jerome cannot be allowed to play fast and loose. Again, if our Lord had no brother, the word "brother" must mean "cousin" or "step-brother" wherever it occurs. Then has Jerome proved that Cleophas' (or Alpheus') son *could not be an apostle* as effectually as that any son of Mary's could not. So his argument answers itself.

In conclusion, the question may be asked, of what benefit is this discussion. We reply briefly.

The tradition on which "the brethren of our Lord" were said to be "sons of Joseph by a previous marriage," and the view of Jerome which spread so rapidly and widely, were, as we have seen, adopted in the interests of asceticism, as specially illustrated in exalting the state of virginity over that of marriage. But the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary gradually developed a more widespread and pernicious evil than that of monasticism. This could not be universal either in practice or influence. Though "all error tends to practical vice" in some the tendency is arrested. The most flagrant crimes chargeable on the Papacy are by no means, however horrible and disgusting, confined to the results of monasticism. The "perpetual virginity of Mary," logically to the Papal conceptions, led to the dogma of the immaculate conception, which, long debated yet long believed, has within the last

thirty years been declared an article of faith by the late Pope, and of course is now to be accepted by the Faithful as an *infallible truth*. Her worship has long held a high place in the affections of the Papists. Her titles, however blasphemous, are accepted, and her intercession sought by her votaries as even superior to that of our Lord. The dogma has been accepted by many leading Protestant divines, who allege that the same reasons which required the antecedent virginity of Mary might at least possibly require it afterwards. It is also intimated by such that the rejection of a subsequent and perpetual virginity is only due to the superstitious reverence for Mary and the ascetic overestimate of virginity which are believed intimately connected with the dogma. But such forget that the Scriptures, by prophecy and didactic teaching alike, only *require* an antecedent virginity, and that no where in the Bible, subsequent to the narrative of the events preceding our Lord's birth, is Mary even called a virgin. We do not see why the views we hold should be termed matters of "taste and sensibility" alone. The antecedent virginity is clearly a teaching of the Word, and the subsequent is not. It is not a superstition, but a belief of the Word, which occasions us to shrink from the idea that our Lord might have been born of any other than a virgin. All these sentiments, which present the *subsequent* as of equal importance with *antecedent* virginity, grow out of the error that it was because virginity was a purer state than marriage that God selected the virgin to be the mother of our Lord; whereas, as we have shown, it was in accordance with his wisdom thus to *use* virginity as the means of introducing his Son as both "Son of Man" and "Son of God," virgin born, not purified but pure, not deified but divine, set apart in unique and awful solemnity from all mankind, "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven"; the "seed of the woman," "made of a woman," "of the seed of David according to the flesh," in due time to be "declared," not made, "the Son of God, with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

But the "sentiment" of this dogma has not only been of most disastrous power in engendering the widespread idolatry of the Papal Church, an evil we may deplore but can do but little to

remove or arrest; it has become an engine of great influence in conciliating Protestants to this abominable idolatry. Rome knows how to reach all classes. The ignorant and superstitious, who engage in the worship of the Virgin, may sin "ignorantly in unbelief." That worship is encouraged by the Papal hierarchy. To the more enlightened, both Papists and Protestants, the "sentiment" is presented in all the winning charms of music, painting, and sculpture, in prayers and hymns, Madonnas and the Child. You hear the music and the words in the school-rooms and parlors of Protestant teachers and parents. You behold the effigies and portraits in art galleries and the engravings of them in magazines. It is thus this great error wins votaries.

"Vice is a monster of such fearful mien
That, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
But, seen too oft, familiar to the face,
We first endure, then 'honor,' then embrace."

Doubtless many who have been carefully reared in the "doctrines according to godliness" have been gradually turned to regard the sentiment of this dogma as harmless, then the dogma as reasonable, and so gradually drawn to tolerate cognate corruptions of truth which distinguish the Great Apostasy, and at last become fully wedded to its soul-destroying heresies, in doctrines and puerile vanities in worship. Let this dogma of the perpetual virginity and its whole train of legitimate heresies and vices, be once rejected by the Protestant world, and men's vision be relieved of the glamour with which Rome has invested her favorite superstition, she who was divinely "blessed among women" would cease to be adored above her glorious Son, or have her name and true excellence prostituted to the purposes of an avaricious priesthood, and be hailed by men and angels as "highly favored" in having been only, as well as solely, distinguished as the "MOTHER OF OUR LORD!"

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