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THE
CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA



THE
CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA

A COURSE OF LECTURES
ON THE EARLY HISTORY AND EARLY
CONCEPTIONS OF THE ECCLESIA
AND FOUR SERMONS

BY

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LADY MARGARET'S READER IN DIVINITY IN THE
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PREFACE.

THIS book consists in the first place of a course of lectures delivered by Dr Hort as Lady Margaret Professor in the Michaelmas Terms of 1888 and 1889 on 'The Early History and the Early Conceptions of the Christian Ecclesia'. The plan of the lectures is the same as that of the Lectures on Judaistic Christianity.

They contain a careful survey of the evidence to be derived from the literature of the Apostolic age for the solution of a fundamental problem.

The title 'Ecclesia' was chosen, as the opening lecture explains, expressly for its freedom from the distracting associations which have gathered round its more familiar synonyms. It is in itself a sufficient indication of the spirit of genuine historical enquiry in which the study was undertaken.

The original scheme included an investigation into the evidence of the early Christian centuries, and the book is therefore in one sense no doubt incomplete. On

the other hand it is no mere fragment. The lectures as they stand practically exhaust the evidence of the New Testament, at least as far as the Early History of Christian institutions is concerned. And Dr Hort's conclusions on the vexed questions with regard to the 'Origines' of the different Orders in the Christian Ministry will no doubt be scanned with peculiar interest. It is however by no means too much to say that it was the other side of his subject, 'the Early Conceptions of the Ecclesia', that gave it its chief attraction for Dr Hort. And on this side unfortunately the limitations of lecturing compelled him to leave many things unsaid to which he attached the greatest importance.

An effort has been made to supply this deficiency by including in the volume four Sermons dealing with different applications of the fundamental conception preached on different occasions during the last twenty years of his life. Two of these Dr Hort at one time intended to incorporate in the same volume with his Hulsean Lectures '*The Way, The Truth, The Life*'. The other two were printed by request directly after they had been delivered. The last has a special interest as the last public utterance of its author. It is the expression in a concentrated form of the thought of a lifetime on the vital conditions of Church life in special relation to the pressing needs of to-day.

The course in 1889 began with a somewhat full

recapitulation of the course delivered in 1888. I have not thought it worth while to print this recapitulation at length. A few modifications have however been introduced from it into the text of the original lectures, and a few additions appended as footnotes. Otherwise the Lectures are printed, with a few necessary verbal alterations, as they stand in the Author's MSS. I am further responsible for the divisions of the text, for the titles of the Lectures, and for the headings of the separate paragraphs.

My best thanks are due to the Rev. F. G. Masters, formerly scholar of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, for much help in revising the proof-sheets and for the compilation of the index.

J. O. F. MURRAY.

EMMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

March 12th, 1897.

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LECTURE I.

THE WORD ECCLESIA.

THE subject on which I propose to lecture this term is *The early conceptions and early history of the Christian Ecclesia*. The reason why I have chosen the term Ecclesia is simply to avoid ambiguity. The English term *church*, now the most familiar representative of *ecclesia* to most of us, carries with it associations derived from the institutions and doctrines of later times, and thus cannot at present without a constant mental effort be made to convey the full and exact force which originally belonged to *ecclesia*. There would moreover be a second ambiguity in the phrase *the early history of the Christian Church* arising out of the vague comprehensiveness with which the phrase 'History of the Church' is conventionally employed.

It would of course have been possible to have recourse to a second English rendering 'congregation', which has the advantage of suggesting some of those

elements of meaning which are least forcibly suggested by the word 'church' according to our present use. 'Congregation' was the only rendering of *ἐκκλησία* in the English New Testament as it stood throughout Henry VIII.'s reign, the substitution of 'church' being due to the Genevan revisers; and it held its ground in the Bishops' Bible in no less primary a passage than Matt. xvi. 18 till the Jacobean revision of 1611, which we call the Authorized Version. But 'congregation' has disturbing associations of its own which render it unsuitable for our special purpose; and moreover its use in what might seem a rivalry to so venerable, and rightly venerable, a word as 'church' would be only a hindrance in the way of recovering for 'church' the full breadth of its meaning. 'Ecclesia' is the only perfectly colourless word within our reach, carrying us back to the beginnings of Christian history, and enabling us in some degree to get behind words and names to the simple facts which they originally denoted.

The larger part of our subject lies in the region of what we commonly call Church History; the general Christian history of the ages subsequent to the Apostolic age. But before entering on that region we must devote some little time to matter contained in the Bible itself. It is hopeless to try to understand either the actual Ecclesia of post-apostolic times, or the thoughts of its own contemporaries about it, without first gaining some clear impressions

as to the Ecclesia of the Apostles out of which it grew; to say nothing of the influence exerted all along by the words of the apostolic writings, and by other parts of Scripture. And again the Ecclesia of the Apostles has likewise antecedents which must not be neglected, immediately in facts and words recorded by the Evangelists, and ultimately in the institutions and teaching of the Old Covenant.

In this preliminary part of our subject, to say the least, we shall find it convenient to follow the order of time.

I am sorry to be unable to recommend any books as sufficiently coinciding with our subject generally. Multitudes of books in all civilised languages bear directly or indirectly upon parts of it: but I doubt whether it would be of any real use to attempt a selection. In the latter part of the subject we come on ground which has been to a certain extent worked at by several German writers within the last few years, and I may have occasion from time to time to refer to some of them: they may however be passed over for the present.

The sense of the word in the Old Testament.

The Ecclesia of the New Testament takes its name and primary idea from the Ecclesia of the Old Testament. What then is the precise meaning of the term Ecclesia as we find it in the Old Testament?

The word itself is a common one in classical Greek

and was adopted by the LXX. translators from Deuteronomy onwards (*not* in the earlier books of the Pentateuch) as their usual rendering of *qāhāl*.

Two important words are used in the Old Testament for the gathering together of the people of Israel, or their representative heads, 'ēdhāh [R.V. congregation] and *qāhāl* [R.V. assembly].

Συναγωγή [*Synagogè*] is the usual, almost the universal, LXX. rendering of 'ēdhāh, as also in the earlier books of the Pentateuch of *qāhāl*. So closely connected in original use are the two terms Synagogue and Ecclesia, which afterwards came to be fixed in deep antagonism!

Neither of the two Hebrew terms was strictly technical: both were at times applied to very different kinds of gatherings from the gatherings of the people, though *qāhāl* had always a *human* reference of some sort, gatherings of individual men or gatherings of nations. The two words were so far coincident in meaning that in many cases they might apparently be used indifferently: but in the first instance they were not strictly synonymous. 'ēdhāh (derived from a root *y'dh* used in the Niphal in the sense of gathering together, specially gathering together by appointment or agreement) is properly, when applied to Israel, the society itself, formed by the children of Israel or their representative heads, whether assembled or not assembled.

On the other hand *qāhāl* is properly their actual

meeting together: hence we have a few times the phrase *q'hāl 'ēdhāh* 'the assembly of the congregation' (rendered by the LXX. translators in Ex. xii. 6 πάν τὸ πλῆθος συναγωγῆς υἰῶν Ἰσραήλ, in Num. xiv. 5 where no equivalent is given for *q'hāl pássης συναγωγῆς υἰῶν Ἰσραήλ*) and also *q'hāl 'ām* 'the assembly of the people' (rendered in Judg. xx. 2 ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, in Jer. xxvi. (LXX. xxxiii.) 17 πάση τῇ συναγωγῇ τοῦ λαοῦ). The special interest of this distinction lies in its accounting for the choice of the rendering ἐκκλησία: *qāhāl* is derived from an obsolete root meaning to call or summon, and the resemblance to the Greek καλέω naturally suggested to the LXX. translators the word ἐκκλησία, derived from καλέω (or rather ἐκκαλέω) in precisely the same sense.

There is no foundation for the widely spread notion that ἐκκλησία means a people or a number of individual men *called out* of the world or mankind. In itself the idea is of course entirely Scriptural, and moreover it is associated with the word and idea 'called,' 'calling,' 'call.' But the compound verb ἐκκαλέω is never so used, and ἐκκλησία never occurs in a context which suggests this supposed sense to have been present to the writer's mind. Again, it would not have been unnatural if this sense of *calling out* from a larger body had been as it were put into the word in later times, when it had acquired religious associations. But as a matter of fact we do not find that it was so. The original *calling out* is simply the calling of the

citizens of a Greek town out of their houses by the herald's trumpet to summon them to the assembly and Numb. x. shews that the summons to the Jewish assembly was made in the same way. In the actual usage of both *qāhāl* and *ἐκκλησία* this primary idea of summoning is hardly to be felt. They mean simply an assembly of the people; and accordingly in the Revised Version of the Old Testament 'assembly' is the predominant rendering of *qāhāl*.

So much for the original and distinctive force of the two words, in Hebrew and Greek. Now we must look a little at their historical application in the Old Testament.

'*ēdhāh* is by far the commoner word of the two in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Joshua, but it is wholly absent from Deuteronomy. The two words are used in what appears to be practically the same sense in successive clauses of Lev. iv. 13; Num. xvi. 3; and they are coupled together, *ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας καὶ συναγωγῆς*, in Prov. v. 14 (LXX.). Both alike are described sometimes as the congregation or assembly of Israel, sometimes as the congregation or assembly of Jehovah; sometimes as the congregation or the assembly absolutely. In the later books '*ēdhāh* goes almost out of use. It is absent from Chronicles except once in an extract from Kings or the source of Kings (2 Chr. v. 6). It recurs (in the sense of congregation of Israel, I mean) but two or three times in the Psalms and the same in the Prophets.

In these, and in the poetical books, *qāhāl* is hardly more common, but it abounds in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. It would seem that after the return from the Exile this, the more definite and formal word, came to combine the shades of meaning belonging to both. Thus *ἐκκλησία*, as the primary Greek representative of *qāhāl* would naturally for Greek-speaking Jews mean the congregation of Israel quite as much as an assembly of the congregation.

In the Apocrypha both *συναγωγή* and *ἐκκλησία* are to be found: but it would take too long to examine the somewhat intricate variations of sense to be found there¹. But with regard to these words, like many others of equal importance, there is a great gap in our knowledge of the usage of Greek Judaism. Philo gives us no help, the thoughts which connect themselves with the idea of a national *ἐκκλησία* being just of the kind which had least interest for him; and Josephus's ostentatious classicalism deprives us of the information which a better Jew in his position might have afforded us. For our purpose it would be of peculiar interest to know what and how much the term *ἐκκλησία* meant to Jews of the Dispersion at the time of the Christian Era: but here again we are, I fear, wholly in the dark.

¹ There is an indication that *συναγωγή* was coming to mean the local congregation in Sir. xxiv. 23 and especially in Ps. Sal. x. 7. 8.

The sense of the word in the Gospels.

It is now time to come to the New Testament and its use of *ἐκκλησία*, bearing in mind that it is a word which had already a history of its own, and which was associated with the whole history of Israel. It is also well to remember that its antecedents, as it was used by our Lord and His Apostles, are of two kinds, derived from the past and the present respectively. Part, the most important part, of its meaning came from its ancient and what we may call its religious use, that is from the sense or senses which it had borne in the Jewish Scriptures; part also of its meaning could not but come from the senses in which it was still current in the everyday life of Jews. We may be able to obtain but little independent evidence on this last head: but it needs only a little reflexion to feel sure that in this as in other cases contemporary usage cannot have been wholly inoperative.

The actual word *ἐκκλησία*, as many know, is in the Gospels confined to two passages of St Matthew. This fact has not unnaturally given rise to doubts as to the trustworthiness of the record. These doubts however seem to me to be in reality unfounded. If indeed it were true that matter found in a single Gospel only is to be regarded with suspicion as not proceeding from fundamental documents common to more than one, then doubtless these passages would

be open to doubt. But if, as I believe to be the true view, each evangelist had independent knowledge or had access to fresh materials by which he was able to make trustworthy additions to that which he obtained from previous records, then there is no *a priori* reason for suspecting these two passages of the First Gospel.

It is further urged that these passages have the appearance of having been thrust into the text in the Second Century in order to support the growing authority of the Ecclesia as an external power. An interpolation of the supposed kind would however be unexampled, and there is nothing in the passages themselves, when carefully read, which bears out the suggestion. Nay, the manner in which St Peter's name enters into the language about the building of Messiah's Ecclesia could not be produced by any view respecting his office which was current in the Second Century. In truth, the application of the term *ἐκκλησία* by the Apostles is much easier to understand if it was founded on an impressive saying of our Lord. On the other hand, during our Lord's lifetime such language was peculiarly liable to be misunderstood by the outer world of Jews, and therefore it is not surprising if it formed no part of His ordinary public teaching.

It will be convenient to take first the less important passage, Matt. xviii. 17. Here our Lord is speaking not of the future but the present, instructing

His disciples how to deal with an offending brother. There are three stages of ἔλεξις, or bringing his fault home to him; first with him alone, next with two or three brethren; and if that fails, thirdly with the ἐκκλησία, the whole brotherhood. The principle holds good in a manner for all time. The actual precept is hardly intelligible if the ἐκκλησία meant is not the Jewish community, apparently the Jewish local community, to which the injured person and the offender both belonged.

We are on quite different ground in the more famous passage, Matt. xvi. 18. At a critical point in the Ministry, far away in the parts of Cæsarea Philippi, our Lord elicits from Peter the confession, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the Living God," and pronounces him happy for having been Divinely taught to have the insight which enabled him to make it: "Yea and I say to thee," He proceeds, "that thou art Peter (Πέτρος, *kēphlā'*), and on this πέτρα I will build my Ecclesia and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

Here there is no question of a partial or narrowly local Ecclesia. The congregation of God, which held so conspicuous a place in the ancient Scriptures, is assuredly what the disciples could not fail to understand as the foundation of the meaning of a sentence which was indeed for the present mysterious. If we may venture for a moment to substitute the name Israel, and read the words as

'on this rock I will build my Israel,' we gain an impression which supplies at least an approximation to the probable sense. The Ecclesia of the ancient Israel was the Ecclesia of God; and now, having been confessed to be God's Messiah, nay His Son, He could to such hearers without risk of grave misunderstanding claim that Ecclesia as His own.

What He declared that He would build was in one sense old, in another new. It had a true continuity with the Ecclesia of the Old Covenant; the building of it would be a *rebuilding*¹. Christ's work in relation to it would be a completion of it, a bestowal on it of power to fulfil its as yet unfulfilled Divine purposes.

But it might also be called a new Ecclesia, as being founded on a new principle or covenant, and in this sense might specially be called the Ecclesia of Messiah, Messiah actually manifested; and under such a point of view building rather than rebuilding would be the natural verb to use. It is hardly necessary to remind you how these two contrasted aspects of the Gospel, as at once bringing in the new, and fulfilling and restoring the old, are inseparably intertwined in our Lord's teaching.

Hence we shall go greatly astray if we interpret

¹ Cf. Acts xv. 16, where James quotes Amos ix. 11, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I *will build* it as in the days of old."

our Lord's use of the term *Ecclesia* in this cardinal passage exclusively by reference to the Ecclesia known to us in Christian history. Speaking with reference to the future, He not only speaks (as the phrase is) "in terms of" the past, but emphatically marks the future as an outgrowth of the past. Here however a question presents itself which we cannot help asking,—asking in all reverence. How came our Lord to make choice of this particular word, or a word belonging to this particular group? Common as are the two Hebrew words which we have examined, 'ēdhāh and qālāl, they do not occur in any of the important passages which describe or imply the distinctive position of Israel as a peculiar people. Their use is mainly confined to historical parts of the historical book. They have no place in the greater prophecies having what we call a Messianic import. From all parts of the book of Isaiah they are both entirely absent. 'People,' 'ām, λαός, is the term which first occurs to us as most often applied to Israel in this as well as in other connexions, and which has also, under limitations, considerable Apostolic sanction as applied to the Christian Ecclesia. But on reflexion we must see, I think, that 'people' was a term which, thus applied, belonged in strictness only to that past period of the world's history in which the society of men specially consecrated to God was likewise a nation, one of many nations, and in the main a race, one of many races. It would have been a true word,

but, as used on this occasion, liable to be misunderstood. This impression is confirmed by examination of the passages of the New Testament in which *λαός* (people) is applied to the Christian Ecclesia. It will be found that they almost always include a direct appropriation of Old Testament language¹.

If the term 'people' was not to be employed, *qāhāl* (*ἐκκλησία*) was, as far as we can see, the fittest term to take its place. Although, as we saw just now, the use of the two words which we translate 'congregation' and 'assembly' in the Old Testament, is almost wholly historical, not ideal or doctrinal, there is one passage (Ps. lxxiv. 2) in which one of them wears practically another character. It is not a conspicuous passage as it stands in the Psalter; but the manner in which St Paul adopts and adapts its language in his parting address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts xx. 28) amply justifies the supposition that it helped directly or indirectly to facilitate the use of *ἐκκλησία* to denote God's people

¹ Rom. ix. 25; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10; Heb. viii. 10; Ap. xviii. 4; xxi. 3.

In Heb. iv. 9; xiii. 12 the term includes the ancient people, and is in fact suggested by the purpose of the Epistle as being addressed exclusively to Christians who were also Jews.

In Acts xv. 14 *ὁ θεὸς ἐπεσκέψατο λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ* (Revised Version paraphrastically "God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name"), the paradox of a people of God out of the *Gentiles* explains and justifies itself.

Nor lastly is it a real exception when the Lord tells St Paul in a dream at Corinth that He has "*λαὸς πολλὸς* in this city" (Acts xviii. 10).

of the future. "Remember thy congregation which thou didst purchase of old, didst redeem to be the tribe of thine inheritance."

The original here is *'ēdhāh*, and the LXX. rendering for it *συναγωγή*. St Paul substitutes *ἐκκλησία* as he also substitutes *περιεποιήσατο* ('purchased') for the too colourless *ἐκτήσω* ('acquired') of the LXX., while he further gives the force of the other verb 'redeem' by what he says of the blood through which the purchase was made. The points that concern us are these. Not 'people' but 'congregation' is the word employed by the Psalmist in his appeal to God on behalf of the suffering Israel of the present, with reference to what He had wrought for Israel in the time of old, when He had purchased them out of Egypt, ransomed them out of Egyptian bondage, to be a peculiar possession to Himself; these images of 'purchase' and 'ransom' as applied to the Divine operation of the Exodus being taken primarily from the Song of Moses (Exod. xv. 13, 16); and then fresh significance is given to the Psalmist's language by the way in which St Paul appropriates it to describe how God had purchased to Himself a new congregation (now called *ἐκκλησία*) by the ransom of His Son's lifeblood. This seventy-fourth Psalm is now generally believed to be a very late one; it is not unlikely that in speaking of God's congregation rather than God's people, the Psalmist was following a current usage of his own time. If so, there would be an additional

antecedent leading up to the language which we read in St Matthew. But to say the least, the Psalm shews that such language was not absolutely new¹.

But the fitness of this language by no means depends only on the Psalm or on what the Psalm may imply. These words denoting 'congregation' or 'assembly' had belonged to the children of Israel through their whole history from the day when they became a people. In the written records of the Old Testament they first start forth in this sense in connexion with the institution of the Passover (Ex. xii.): they continue on during the wanderings in the wilderness, in the time of the Judges, under the Kings, and after the Captivity when the kingdom remained unrestored. Moreover they suggested no mere agglomeration of men, but rather a unity carried out in the joint action of many members, each having his own responsibilities, the action of each and all being regulated by a supreme law or order. To Greek ears these words would doubtless be much less significant: but what they suggested would be substantially true 'as far as it went, and it was not on Greek soil that the earliest Christian Ecclesia was to arise.

This primary sense of *ἐκκλησία* as a congregation

¹ The four passages of the Talmud quoted by Schürer [Eng. Tr. II. ii. p. 59] to shew that *qāhāl* came to have a high ideal character do not at all bear him out.

or assembly of men is not altered by the verb "build" (*οἰκοδομήσω*) associated with it. It is somewhat difficult for us to feel the exact force of the combination of words, familiar as we are with the idea of building as applied to the material edifice which we call a church, and natural as it is for us to transfer associations unconsciously from the one sense to the other. To speak of men as being built is in accordance with Old Testament usage. Thus Jer. xxiv. 6; I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up (cf. xlii. 10); xxxiii. 7, I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first; and elsewhere. But no doubt the singular *μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν* is meant to imply more distinctly the building up of the whole body in unity.

What our Lord speaks of however is not simply building, but building "upon this rock." It is impossible now to do more than say in the fewest words that I believe the most obvious interpretation of this famous phrase is the true one. St Peter himself, yet not exclusively St Peter but the other disciples of whom he was then the spokesman and interpreter, and should hereafter be the leader, was the rock which Christ had here in view. It was no question here of an authority given to St Peter; some other image than that of the ground under a foundation must have been chosen if that had been meant. Still less was it a question of an authority which should

be transmitted by St Peter to others. The whole was a matter of personal or individual qualifications and personal or individual work. The outburst of keenly perceptive faith had now at last shown St Peter, carrying with him the rest, to have the prime qualification for the task which his Lord contemplated for him.

That task was fulfilled, fulfilled at once and for ever so far as its first and decisive stage was concerned, in the time described in the earliest chapters of the Acts. The combination of intimate personal acquaintance with the Lord, first during His Ministry and then after His Resurrection, with such a faith as was revealed that day in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, a faith which could penetrate into the heavenly truth concerning the Lord that lay beneath the surface of His words and works, these were the qualifications for becoming the foundations of the future Ecclesia. In virtue of this personal faith vivifying their discipleship, the Apostles became themselves the first little Ecclesia, constituting a living rock upon which a far larger and ever enlarging Ecclesia should very shortly be built slowly up, living stone by living stone, as each new faithful convert was added to the society.

But the task thus assigned to St Peter and the rest was not for that generation only. To all future generations and ages the Ecclesia would

remain built upon them, upon St Peter and his fellow disciples, partly as a society continuous with the Society which was built directly upon them in their lifetime, partly as deriving from their faith and experience, as embodied in the New Testament, its whole knowledge of the facts and primary teachings of the Gospel.

The Ecclesia (without the name) in the Gospels.

We must not linger now over the other details of our Lord's words to St Peter; though the time we have already spent on those points in them which most directly concern our subject is hardly out of proportion to their importance in illustration of it. But we have not yet done with the Gospels. Though they contain the word *ἐκκλησία* but twice, and refer directly to the Christian Ecclesia but once, in other forms they tell much that bears on our subject, far more than it is possible to gather up within our limits. This is one of the cases in which it is dangerous to measure teaching about things by the range of the names applied to things. Much had been done towards the making of the elements of the Ecclesia before its name could with advantage be pronounced otherwise than under such special circumstances as we have just been considering.

One large department of our Lord's teaching, sometimes spoken of as if it directly belonged to our subject, may, I believe, be safely laid aside. In the

verse following that which we have been considering, our Lord says to St Peter "I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." Without going into details of interpretation, we can at once see that the relation between the two verses implies some important relation between the Ecclesia and the Kingdom of Heaven: but the question is, what relation? The simplest inference from the language used would be that the office committed to St Peter and the rest with respect to the Ecclesia, would enable him and them to fulfil the office here described as committed to him, with respect to the Kingdom of Heaven. But the question is whether this is a sufficient account of the matter. Since Augustine's time the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God, of which we read so often in the Gospels, has been simply identified with the Christian Ecclesia. This is a not unnatural deduction from some of our Lord's sayings on this subject taken by themselves; but it cannot, I think, hold its ground when the whole range of His teaching about it is comprehensively examined. We may speak of the Ecclesia as the visible representative of the Kingdom of God, or as the primary instrument of its sway, or under other analogous forms of language. But we are not justified in identifying the one with the other, so as to be able to apply directly to the Ecclesia whatever is said in the Gospels about the Kingdom of Heaven or of God.

On the other hand, wherever we find disciples and

discipleship in the Gospels, there we are dealing with what was a direct preparation for the founding of the Ecclesia. We all know how much more this word 'disciples' sometimes means in the Gospels than admiring and affectionate hearers, though that forms a part of it; how a closer personal relation is further involved in it, for discipleship takes various forms and passes through various stages. Throughout there is devotion to the Lord, found at last to be no mere superior Rabbi, but a true Lord of the spirit; and along with and arising out of this devotion there is a growing sense of brotherhood between disciples.

Chief among the disciples are those Twelve who from certain points of view are called Apostles, but very rarely in the Gospels; sometimes 'The Twelve', more often simply 'The Disciples'. We do the Evangelists wrong if we treat this use of terms as fortuitous or trivial. It is in truth most exact and most instructive. Not only was discipleship the foundation of apostleship, but the Twelve who were Apostles were precisely the men who were most completely disciples. Here we are brought back to the meaning of the building of Christ's Ecclesia upon St Peter and his fellows. The discipleship which accompanied our Lord's Ministry contained, though in an immature form, precisely the conditions by which the Ecclesia subsisted afterwards, faith and devotion to the Lord, felt and exercised in union, and consequent brotherly love. It was the strength, so to speak, of St Peter's

discipleship which enabled him, leading the other eleven disciples and in conjunction with them, to be a foundation on which fresh growths of the Ecclesia could be built.

This point needs a little further examination, the exact relation of the Apostles to the Ecclesia, according to the books of the New Testament, being a fundamental part of our subject.

LECTURE II.

THE APOSTLES IN RELATION TO THE ECCLESIA.

The term 'Apostle' in the Gospels.

I SAID towards the close of my last lecture that the term 'Apostles' as applied to the Twelve was rare in the Gospels. Let us see what the passages are. The first is a very pregnant one, though simple enough in form, Mark iii. 13-16. Our Lord goes up into the mountain, and "calls to Him whom He Himself would, and they departed unto Him. And He made twelve, whom He also named Apostles, [such is assuredly the true reading, though the common texts create an artificial smoothness by omitting the last clause] that they should be with Him, and that He should send (*ἀποστέλλη*) them to preach and to have authority to cast out the demons; and He made the Twelve...Peter (giving this name to Simon) and James etc." Here by what seems to be a double process of selection (though the

word selection is not used), proceeding wholly from Himself, our Lord sets aside twelve for two great purposes, kept apart in the Greek by the double *ἵνα*: the first, personal nearness to Himself "that they should be with Him": the second, "with a view to sending them forth", this mission of theirs having two heads, to preach, and to have authority to cast out the 'demons', these two being precisely the two modes of action which St Mark has described in i. 39 as exercised by the Lord Himself in the synagogues of all Galilee, just as in the previous verses i. 14-34 he had described a succession of acts which came under these heads, the second head evidently including the healing of the sick. Lastly we learn that our Lord Himself, apparently on this occasion, called these twelve chosen men 'Apostles' or 'envoys'.

Whether they were or were not sent forth immediately after this their selection, St Mark does not expressly tell us. But it is morally certain that he intended to represent the actual mission as *not* immediate. Such is the natural force of *ἵνα ἀποστέλλῃ* "with a view to sending them forth", and moreover more than one hundred verses further on (vi. 7) we read how when our Lord was going round the villages teaching, He called to Himself the Twelve, "and *began* to send them forth by two and two"; and so, after a brief account of His charge to them we read (vi. 12 f.) "and they went

out and preached that men should repent, and they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them":—again the two heads of what they were to do when sent forth. Then comes the story of Herod and John the Baptist; and then (vi. 30) "and the Apostles are gathered together (*συνάγονται*) unto Jesus, and they told Him all things whatsoever they had *done* and whatsoever they had *taught*" (again the two heads emphatically distinguished). Henceforward the word *ἀπόστολος* disappears from St Mark's Gospel; so that he evidently used it only in the strictest sense, with reference to this one typical mission to preach and to heal, at the beginning of it and at the end of it. When he wishes afterwards¹ to mark them out sharply from the other disciples, he calls them "the Twelve."

Next, St Luke's Gospel is interesting both by its resemblances and by its differences. First comes a passage (vi. 12 ff.) which includes in itself both likeness and unlikeness to St Mark. "It came to pass in these days that He went out unto the mountain to pray, and He continued all night in His prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples, and choosing from them twelve, whom He also named Apostles, Simon..., and going down with them, He stood on a level place." Here

¹ See St Mark ix. 35; x. 32; xi. 11; xiv. 17; besides the Judas passages (xiv. 10, 20, 43).

the selection by our Lord is mentioned, and the name 'Apostles' which He gave: but nothing is said of either purpose or work. The selection is associated with the Sermon on the Mount. We do hear however (vi. 17 f.) of the great crowd who were present "to hear Him" (the correlative of preaching) "and to be healed of their diseases", "unclean spirits" being mentioned in the next sentence. Then, after a considerable interval, we read (ix. 1) how He called together the Twelve (the addition "Apostles" has high authority but is probably only an Alexandrine reading), and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and sent them forth (*ἀπέστειλεν*) to preach the kingdom of God and to heal. After a charge of three verses only, we read (ix. 6) "And they going forth went throughout the villages, *preaching* good tidings and *healing* everywhere". (Thus the two heads are twice repeated). Then Herod is spoken of for three verses, and in v. 10 (just as in Mark vi. 30) we have the Twelve on their *return* described as Apostles, "And the Apostles when they had returned recounted to Him what they had done." If we pursue the narrative a little further, we shall hardly think this limitation of usage accidental. Two verses later (ix. 12) it is the Twelve who are said to come to our Lord and bid Him dismiss the multitude. In v. 14 they are called "His disciples", in vv. 16, 18 "the disciples", and so on.

In this Gospel however the term is not throughout confined to this limited usage. Three times afterwards¹ it speaks of "the Apostles", without any perceptible reference to that mission, while it also speaks of 'the Twelve' once² and of 'the Eleven' twice³. The explanation, I suppose, is that St Luke, having probably in his mind the writing of the Acts, which is (see Acts i. 1 f.) a kind of second part to the Gospel, in these three places used by anticipation the title which, as we shall see presently, acquired a fresh currency after the Ascension: in each of the three cases the accompanying language bears no trace of coming from a common source with anything in the other Gospels; so that the wording is probably entirely St Luke's own. The anticipatory use thus supposed has no doubt an instructiveness of its own. It serves to remind us how all that period, in which the Twelve seemed to be only gathering in *personal* gains to heart and mind by their discipleship, was in truth the indispensable condition and, as it were, education for their future action upon others.

St Matthew on the other hand gives even less prominence to the title 'Apostles' than St Mark. He tells us (x. 1) that our Lord "calling His twelve disciples unto Him gave them authority over unclean

¹ See St Luke xvii. 5; xxii. 14 (the right reading); xxiv. 10.

² St Luke xviii. 31, besides the reference to Judas, xxii. 47.

³ St Luke xxiv. 9 (just before *τοὺς ἀποστόλους*), 33.

spirits so as to cast them out and to heal every disease and every sickness." "Now the names of the twelve Apostles," he adds, "are these...." In the other two Gospels we have had two separate incidents, the selection on the mountain, and the subsequent mission among the villages. Here in St Matthew the first incident is dropped altogether, so that in the first words of chap. x. "His twelve disciples" are spoken of as an already known or already existing body to whom powers are now given, and the list of names is prefixed to the account of their mission. We are not told that our Lord called them 'Apostles' nor is any other indication given that the term had a special meaning: nay, the word in this context might with at least as great propriety be translated 'envoys' as 'Apostles'. The nature of their mission is not expressly described, though our Lord's own previous action is spoken of (ix. 35) as "teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness." But St Matthew places here the well-known charge, introducing it with the words "These twelve Jesus sent (*ἀπέστειλεν*) charging them saying," etc., and the charge itself almost at once puts forward the same heads of mission which we have found in the other Gospels. Thenceforward St Matthew never uses the term 'Apostle'. When he needs a precise designation, it is usually¹, "His

¹ See St Matt. x. 1; xi. 1; xx. 17 *v. l.*; xxvi. 20 *v. l.*

twelve disciples" or "the Twelve¹", and once (xxviii. 16) "the eleven disciples".

St John's usage, as is well-known, is more remarkable still. He never calls the Twelve "Apostles", unless it be by indirect allusion (xiii. 16) "A servant is not greater than his lord; neither an envoy (one sent) greater than he that sent him." Of the Twelve he speaks in vi. 67, 70 "Jesus said therefore to the Twelve 'Will ye also go?'" "Did not I choose you the Twelve, and one of you is a *διάβολος*?"; besides his use of the term to describe Judas (vi. 71) and Thomas (xx. 24).

Taking these facts together respecting the usage of the Gospels, we are led, I think, to the conclusion that in its original sense the term Apostle was not intended to describe the habitual relation of the Twelve to our Lord during the days of His ministry, but strictly speaking only that mission among the villages, of which the beginning and the end are recorded for us; just as in the Acts, Paul and Barnabas are called Apostles (i.e. of the Church of Antioch) with reference to that special mission which we call St Paul's First Missionary Journey, and to that only. At the same time this limited apostleship was not heterogeneous from the apostleship of later days spoken of in the Acts, but a prelude to it, a preparation for it, and as

¹ See St Matt. xx. 17 *v. l.*; xxvi. 20 *v. l.* besides the Judas passages, xxvi. 14, 47.

it were a type of it. Such sayings as that difficult one (Matt. xix. 28 || Luke xxii. 30) about sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, are indications that a distinctive function was reserved for the Twelve throughout, over and above their function as the chiefest disciples. It remains true that the habitual, always appropriate, designations of the Twelve during our Lord's ministry were simply "the disciples" or "the twelve" or "the twelve disciples".

And this use of names points to corresponding facts. Discipleship, not apostleship, was the primary active function, so to speak, of the Twelve till the Ascension, and, as we shall see, it remained always their fundamental function. The purpose of their being with Him (with the Lord) stands first in that memorable sentence of St Mark, and is sharply distinguished from the Lord's second purpose in forming them into a body, viz. the sending them forth to preach and to work acts of deliverance. But the distinction does not rest on those words alone. A far larger proportion of the Gospels is taken up with records of facts belonging to the discipleship than with records of facts belonging to the apostleship, so far as it is possible to distinguish them.

The Last Supper.

When the Ministry is over, and the end is beginning, the importance of the special discipleship of the

Twelve in relation to the future Ecclesia soon comes to light. The Last Supper is the most solemn and characteristic gathering together of the Twelve with the Lord at their head. There in the upper room they are completely "*with Him*," and completely separated from all others. The words and acts at this supper, which constitute the institution of the Holy Communion, were addressed to the Twelve, and no others are spoken of as recipients of the command. Whatever directions for the future are present here are contained within the simple imperatives addressed to the Twelve, "take," "eat," "drink," and (if we add St Paul and the interpolation in St Luke's text derived from him) "do this." Of whom then in after times were the Twelve there representatives that evening? If they represented an apostolic order within the Ecclesia then the Holy Communion must have been intended only for members of that order, and the rest of the Ecclesia had no part in it. But if, as the men of the Apostolic age and subsequent ages believed without hesitation, the Holy Communion was meant for the Ecclesia at large, then the Twelve sat that evening as representatives of the Ecclesia at large: they were disciples more than they were Apostles.

That central event of the Last Supper, as we all know, is not mentioned by St John: but there is a close connexion between its meaning and much of the contents of those five chapters of his Gospel, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth, which begin with the

washing of St Peter's feet, and end with the Lord's own last prayer before His departure from the city for the garden. Though the word *ecclesia* does not occur in these chapters, any more than in the rest of the Gospel, the inward characteristics of the Christian Ecclesia according to Christ's intention are virtually expounded in not a few of their verses. The seclusion of the Twelve, soon becoming the Eleven, with their Lord away from all other men, makes itself felt throughout: but it is equally clear that the little band of chosen ones, with whom those marvellous discourses were held, was destined to become no mere partial order of men but a people of God, an Ecclesia like the ideal Israel. The feet-washing in act, and the new commandment in words, lay down the primary law for the mutual action of the members of the Ecclesia, humility and love; the similitude of the vine and the branches lays down their common relation to their Divine Head. The promise of the other Paraclete, the Spirit of the Truth, and the exposition of His working, are a new and pregnant revelation of life and light for the Ecclesia. In the last prayer the goal of unity is set forth in a sentence (xvii. 20) which expressly recognises the growth of the future Ecclesia from that little band: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send me."

These last words bring out the purpose of the Ecclesia in God's counsels: it is to draw the rest of mankind to its own faith and love; to carry on a work of salvation, in the power of the salvation wrought by its Head: "as Thou didst send me into the world, I also sent them into the world." The whole Ecclesia shares alike in that transmitted Mission.

The utterances after the Resurrection.

Before we pass from the Gospels we must look for a moment at one or two famous passages belonging to the days after the Resurrection, especially to the last five verses of St Matthew, and to our Lord's appearance among the disciples on the evening of the first day of the week (John xx. 19-23), when He breathed on them and said "Receive ye the Holy Spirit..." To discuss the contents of these passages would carry us into matters which it is happily not necessary to our purpose to examine in detail. But it is needful to point out the bearing of the results at which we have hitherto arrived, on the question as to the recipients of these two famous sets of words. Much stress is often laid on the supposed evidence afforded by the words of the evangelists that they were addressed exclusively to the Apostles. Dr Westcott has shown how, when we look below the surface, indications are not wanting that others were not improbably likewise present, at all events on the

occasion recorded by St John, when his narrative is compared with that of St Luke (xxiv. 33 ff.).

But in such a matter the mere fact that doubt is possible is a striking one. It is in truth difficult to separate these cases from the frequent omission of the evangelists to distinguish the Twelve from other disciples; a manner of language which, as we have seen, explains itself at once when we recognise how large a part discipleship played in the function of the Twelve.

Granting that it was probably to the Eleven that our Lord directly and principally spoke on both these occasions (and even to them alone when He spoke the words at the end of St Matthew's Gospel), yet it still has to be considered in what capacity they were addressed by Him. If at the Last Supper, and during the discourses which followed, when the Twelve or Eleven were most completely secluded from all other disciples as well as from the unbelieving Jews, they represented the whole Ecclesia of the future, it is but natural to suppose that it was likewise as representatives of the whole Ecclesia of the future, whether associated with other disciples or not, that they had given to them those two assurances and charges of our Lord, about the receiving of the Holy Spirit and the remitting or retaining of sins (howsoever we understand these words), and about His universal authority in heaven and on earth, on the strength of which He bids them bring all the

nations into discipleship, and assures them of His own presence with them all the days even to the consummation of the age.

This interpretation is not affected by the special language used in Matt. xxviii. 19, where bringing all the nations into discipleship is coupled with baptizing them into the Threefold Name. In the most literal sense of these words, they apply to the bearers of the message of the Gospel, chief among whom, ideally at least, were the Apostles; though the personal act of baptizing is somewhat markedly disconnected from evangelistic work by St Paul in 1 Cor. i. 14-17. In a word, the action of the Apostles is the most obvious expression, so to speak, of the charge then given. But the work of the Ecclesia in relation to the world is itself a missionary work; and it is to the Ecclesia itself as the missionary body that Christ's charge is ultimately addressed.

The new Apostolic mission.

On entering the Acts of the Apostles, we come at once to the term 'apostles'. It continues with us all through the book with the rarest exceptions¹. This

¹ When the excitement caused by the miracle of Pentecost leads to St Peter's first discourse to the people it is said, "And Peter standing *with the Eleven* lifted up his voice and spake forth to them." So when the neglect of the Greek-speaking widows led to the appointment of the seven whom we call deacons, it is "the Twelve" who are said to call to them "the multitude of the disciples" (vi. 2). And once we have the compound term (i. 26), when Matthias is said to have been numbered "with the eleven Apostles".

fact suggests that a change has passed upon the work or office of the Twelve: and such we actually find.

Two points especially require notice. Their original mission, from which apparently proceeded the title 'apostle' given them by our Lord, was strictly confined to Judæa (Matt. x. 5 f.), "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And the same charge which opens with these words contains the remarkable and by no means easy sentence (Matt. x. 23), "When they persecute you in this city, flee into the next; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." The limitation of the original apostolic mission here indicated is maintained strictly in the Gospels throughout the Ministry. Whatever tokens or express declarations of the destination of the Gospel for all nations may be recorded by the Evangelists in this part of their books, in no case, I believe, is any reference there made to the agency of the Apostles in extending the sphere of the message of salvation. No doubt it is sometimes said that the prediction of the Apostles being brought before rulers and kings (*ἡγεμόνες* and *βασιλεῖς*), which St Matthew places in that same first charge to the Apostles which we have just been looking at (x. 18), and St Mark and St Luke in the discourse of judgement pronounced on the Mount of Olives in the last week (Mark xiii. 9;

Luke xxi. 12), it is said, I say, that this prediction must refer to the heathen magistrates and potentates who withstood the Gospel in various parts of the Roman Empire. The words are however quite as naturally applicable to heathen rulers who, no less than the Jewish authorities, would be found hostile in Judæa itself. The allusion is, I strongly suspect, to the enemies of Jehovah and His Anointed, called in Ps. ii. 2 "the kings of the earth and the rulers" (LXX. ἄρχοντες), a description which the Apostles recognise as fulfilled in Herod and Pontius Pilate as gathered together against our Lord Himself (Acts iv. 27), thus making a hostile combination of Gentiles with Jews.

The extension of the range of the apostolic mission takes place between the Resurrection and the Ascension. Not to dwell again on the last charge at the end of St Matthew's Gospel, nor to refer by more than a word to the version of it preserved in a record of such uncertain authority as the Appendix to St Mark's Gospel, we read in Luke xxiv. 45 ff. how our Lord opened their mind to understand the Scriptures, and said to them that "thus it is written," not only "that the Christ should suffer and rise again on the third day," but also "that repentance unto remission of sins should be preached (or proclaimed) in His Name unto all the nations, beginning with Jerusalem." "Ye are witnesses," he adds, "of these things."

This language is strikingly guarded. The going

forth of the message of salvation is set forth as involved in the vision of the future which the prophets were permitted to see ; but it is set forth wholly impersonally : nothing connects the Apostles themselves with it but the single saying "Ye are witnesses of these things" ; a saying which perfectly well admits of meaning no more than that the fundamental testimony of "these things" (itself an elastic phrase) was to be given by the Apostles, without further implying that they were to be themselves the bearers of the message founded on that testimony to heathen lands.

Of less ambiguous import are the words which we read in Acts i. 8 as spoken to them by the Lord just before the Ascension, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria and unto the utmost part of the earth." Here the utmost range seems to be given to the testimony which they are to bear in person ; and this, the most obvious sense, is confirmed by the previous sentence, "But ye shall receive power by the Holy Spirit coming upon you," such power from above being evidently intended to sustain them in their long and troubled course of bearing witness. Thus universality is a characteristic of the new apostolic mission.

In what manner the Twelve understood themselves afterwards to be charged with this enlarged responsibility, it is difficult to make out. The admission of the Gentiles was assuredly not accepted at once without hesitation as a necessary consequence of the terms of

the Lord's commission. But the mere recognition of His having at this solemn time so expressly dwelt on the ultimate world-wide destination of His Gospel, must have been enough to affect deeply the character of their work, even in its first and narrowest sphere at Jerusalem.

The second characteristic of the new apostolic mission is that which has already come before us in connexion with its universality,—its work of bearing witness. This comes out with especial clearness in St Peter's address to the brethren respecting providing a successor to Judas: "Of the men," he says (i. 21 f.), "that companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out unto us, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that He was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of His Resurrection." This is the one essential condition mentioned, to be a witness of the Resurrection. The prayer that follows describes the office itself as "the place of this ministration and mission" (*τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ ἀποστολῆς*) just as St Peter had previously (v. 17) called it "the lot of this ministration." But this does not alter the statement as to the indispensable qualification. Nor does this passage stand alone. Everyone must remember the persistency with which this apostolic witness-bearing to the crowning events of Gospel history is reiterated in the Acts, and especially in the

early speeches in the Acts (ii. 32, iii. 15, iv. 33, v. 32, x. 39-41, xiii. 31).

This mark of apostleship is evidently founded on direct personal discipleship; and as evidently it is incommunicable. Its whole meaning rested on immediate and unique experience; as St John says, "that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled" (1 John i. 1). Without a true perceptive faith, such a faith as shewed itself in St Peter, all this acquaintance through the bodily senses was in vain. But the truest faith of one who was a disciple only in the second degree, however precious in itself, could never qualify him for bearing the apostolic character.

Apart from this unique function of being witnesses of the Resurrection, it is difficult to find in the New Testament any clear definition of the Apostolic office from the records of the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension. In the second verse of the Acts we read of our Lord giving them command (*ἐντειλάμενος*) on the day of His Ascension: but what were the contents of that commandment we know not, unless it was the charge to continue at Jerusalem awaiting the promise of the Father, the Pentecostal gift (i. 4, 5; Luke xxiv. 49). So again in v. 3 we hear of His "appearing to them and saying to them the things concerning the kingdom of God": but more than this we do not learn. What Scripture says, and what it

leaves unsaid, together suggest that the new stage of Apostleship was inaugurated by no new act of appointment analogous to the original designation of the Twelve on the mountain, these commands and teachings that we hear of being rather like the subsequent charge to the Apostles on their going forth among the villages. On this view it was the Crucifixion (interpreted as always by the Resurrection) which constituted the real inauguration of the renewed apostleship. We saw the other day how the work assigned to the Twelve, when first sent forth among the villages, was a repetition, so to speak, of the work which our Lord Himself was then pursuing, consisting of two heads, preaching and casting out demons, including the healing of sickness; or in other words, proclaiming the kingdom of God by word, and manifesting and illustrating it by significant act. The work that lay before them when His Ministry on earth was ended was not in its essence different from before: they had still to make known the kingdom of God by words and by deeds; and this is the sole conception of their work put before us in the Acts. But there were two great changes. First, He Himself would no longer be visibly in their midst, so that the responsibility of guidance descended upon them, subject only to the indications of His Will, and enlightened by His Spirit. Moreover, this responsibility was not for a limited mission of short duration, but by its very nature was

continuous and permanent. Second, He Himself, in His Death and His Resurrection, was now become a primary subject of their teaching and action: in the light of Him the kingdom of God put on a new meaning, and He was Himself the living representative of it.

LECTURE III.

EARLY STAGES IN THE GROWTH OF THE ECCLESIA.

WE now enter on the narrative of the time which followed the Ascension, limiting ourselves as far as possible to those parts of St Luke's record which illustrate the characteristics of the new Ecclesia and the stages of its growth; but not neglecting either pieces of evidence relating to the Ecclesia under other names and descriptions, or the history of the use of the name *ecclesia* itself.

On the return from the Mount of Olives the eleven remaining Apostles go up into the upper chamber where they were staying (i. 13), and thus renew, as it were, their coherence as a definite body.

A somewhat larger body is next mentioned as "attending steadfastly with one accord upon 'the prayer,'" certain women, and the Lord's mother and brethren, being associated with the Apostles.

This peculiar phrase taken in conjunction with "the prayers" (ii. 42) and "the prayer" (vi. 4) suggests that a definite custom of common prayer is intended, a bond of Christian fellowship.

Next in *v.* 15 we read of a larger assembly, probably the whole body of 'brethren,' as they are emphatically called, about 120 in number. "In the midst of the brethren," St Luke says, St Peter rose up and declared the need of filling up the place left vacant by Judas.

The next chapter relates the appearance of the fiery tongues on the day of Pentecost, St Peter's discourse, and the results of it. The hearers, or some of them, are pricked to the heart and ask Peter and the other Apostles, whom they recognise as brother Israelites (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί*), "What shall we do?" The answer is "Repent ye, and let each one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ unto remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: for to you is the promise and to your children and to all that are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." The other recorded words of his exhortation are significant, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." This phrase 'crooked generation' comes, you may remember, from what is said of the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness in Deut. xxxii. 5. There is not a word against the ancient Ecclesia or people. The crooked generation of the unbelieving present, which perverts and misinterprets

the ancient covenant, is the evil sphere to be abandoned.

These men accept his discourse and are baptised. That is the definite act which signifies at once their faith in Jesus as Messiah, and thereby their joining of themselves to the society of His disciples; and on the other hand the acceptance of them by the Ecclesia. "And there were added on that day about three thousand souls."

Then comes the description of the characteristic acts and practices by which these new members lived the life of members of the new brotherhood. "They continued attending steadfastly upon (*προσκαρτεροῦντες*) the teaching of the Apostles and upon the communion, upon the breaking of the bread and upon the prayers." In the centre we see the apostolic body, a bond of unity to the rest. Their public teaching, replacing the public teaching of the scribes, carries on the instruction of converts who have yet much to learn, and attendance upon it is at the same time a mark of fellowship. Next comes what is called 'the communion', conduct expressive of and resulting from the strong sense of fellowship with the other members of the brotherhood, probably public acts by which the rich bore some of the burdens of the poor. Thirdly we have 'the breaking of the bread,' what we call the Holy Communion, named here from the expressive act by which the unity of the many as partakers of the one Divine sustenance is signified.

Lastly we have 'the prayers', apparently Christian prayers in common, which took the place of the prayers of the synagogues.

In the next group of verses we hear not merely of these new disciples, but of the whole body of which they had now become members. "All that believed together" says St Luke (this is his peculiar but pregnant description of membership), "all that believed together had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need." This general statement is qualified and explained later. Evidently there was no law of the society imposing such sale: but the principle of holding all in trust for the benefit of the rest of the community was its principle of possession. "And day by day", the narrative proceeds, "attending steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they partook of their food in exultation (*ἀγαλλιάσει*) and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their company day by day them that were saved" (or Revised Version, "were being saved": neither rendering satisfactory). Such is St Luke's account of the inward spirit and outward demeanour of the new Ecclesia, not yet in any antagonism to the old Ecclesia but the most living portion of it, and manifestly laying claim by attendance in the temple to be a society of loyal sons of Israel.

Thus far St Luke has been picturing to us the Christian Ecclesia of Jerusalem antecedent to all persecution, moved simply by its own inherent principles. A fresh impulse towards consolidation comes from the onslaught of the Jewish authorities, due to the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, an event which had at once caused an increase in the number of Christian believers so that they reached five thousand (iv. 4). Peter and John, threatened by the Council, return "to their own company" (*τοὺς ἰδίους*), almost certainly, I think, the apostolic company; and together they pour forth a prayer in which they recognise that now they too are having to encounter the same opposition which by God's own providence had fallen upon His holy servant Jesus whom He anointed; and they ask to be enabled to speak His word with all boldness while He stretches forth His hand for healing, and for signs and wonders to come to pass through the name of His holy servant Jesus: thus attesting once more in the most solemn way the two original heads of the active functions assigned to them.

In St Luke's narrative this incident is followed by an emphatic statement that the multitude (*πλῆθος*) of them that believed had but one heart and soul, and a renewal in more precise terms of the former statement about their having all things common. "And with great power," he proceeds (iv. 33), "did the

Apostles of the Lord Jesus deliver their testimony of His Resurrection, and great joy was upon them all". The absence of want among them (*οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδεής τις ἦν*) is given as a reason for this joy, the needs of the poor being provided for by the sale of lands or houses. In the former passage of similar import (ii. 44 f.), we read only of a distribution of the purchase money by the members of the community at large, or possibly by the vendors themselves. Here on the other hand we read that the purchase money was brought and laid at the Apostles' feet for distribution, and further that Joseph, whom the Apostles called Barnabas for his power of exhortation, sold a field and laid the price at the Apostles' feet. This is the first indication of the exercise of powers of administration by the Apostles, and, so far as appears, it was not the result of an authority claimed by them but of a voluntary entrusting of the responsibility to the Apostles by the rest. It was probably now felt that the functions and powers Divinely conferred upon them for preaching and healing as witnesses of the Resurrection, marked them out likewise as the fit persons to deal with the responsibilities of administration in carrying out the mutual bearing of burdens. The manner in which Barnabas's name is introduced is remarkable, as also the express mention of his laying the value of his field at the Apostles' feet. It does not seem unlikely that this important step on the part of the Ecclesia was taken at Barnabas's

suggestion; just as with no less boldness and forethought he brought St Paul into close relations with the Twelve at Jerusalem (ix. 27), and encouraged the newly founded Ecclesia at Antioch at a sufficiently critical time (xi. 22-24).

The event which comes next, the falsehood and death of Ananias and Sapphira, is for our purpose instructive in more ways than one. First, St Peter's words "While it (the land) remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold was it not in thine own power (or right, ἐξουσία)?" exhibit the real nature of the community of goods at this time practised in the Christian community. There was no merging of all private possessions in a common stock, but a voluntary and variable contribution on a large scale. That is to say, the Ecclesia was a society in which neither the community was lost in the individuals, nor the individuals in the community. The community was set high above all, while the service and help to be rendered to the community remained a matter of individual conscience and free bounty. Next, the reality of the bond uniting together the members of the Christian community was vindicated in the most impressive way by the Divine judgment which fell on Ananias and Sapphira by the shock at the discovery of their deceit. Falsehood or faithlessness towards the Holy Spirit, as St Peter calls it, was involved in their faithlessness to the community, affecting as they did to take part to the full in the lofty life of mutual

help, while their hypocritical reservation made brotherly fellowship an unreality. In consequence of this occurrence "great fear," we are told, "fell on the whole Ecclesia, and all that heard these things." Up to this time, as Bengel points out, St Luke has used only such descriptive phrases as "they that believed", "the brethren" etc. Now for the first time he speaks of the Ecclesia. Whether it was so called at the time, it is not easy to tell. No approach to separation from the great Jewish Ecclesia had as yet taken place. On the other hand our Lord's saying to St Peter must have been always present to the minds of the Apostles, and can hardly have been without influence on their early teaching. If St Luke used the word here by anticipation, it was doubtless with a wish to emphasise the fact that the death of Ananias and Sapphira marked an epoch in the early growth of the society, a time when its distinctness, and the cohesion of its members, had come to be distinctly recognised without as well as within.

A short period of prosperity follows (v. 12 ff.). By the hands of the Apostles many miracles are wrought among the people. They were all with one accord in the great arcade called Solomon's Porch, reaching along the whole east side of the vast Temple precinct. "Of the rest," says St Luke, meaning apparently those who elsewhere are distinguished from "the people", the priests, rulers, elders, scribes, "no one dared to

cleave to them (*i.e.* however much he may have secretly become in conviction a Christian), but *the people* magnified them, and yet more were added to them, believing the Lord, multitudes of men and women". Even the neighbouring towns, we read, contributed their sick and possessed, who came to be healed. This fresh success leads to a fresh imprisonment of the Apostles; but by Gamaliel's advice they are dismissed with a scourging and warning. But they continue day by day in the Temple and in private houses to proclaim the good tidings.

The appointment of the Seven.

We now come to an incident which concerns us both as itself a step in the organisation of the Ecclesia, and as a prelude to an event which had decisive effects on the position of the Ecclesia as a whole, the martyrdom of Stephen. This incident is the appointment of the Seven, answering to a great extent to those who were later called deacons. As the disciples multiplied, complaints were made by the Greek-speaking Jews settled in Jerusalem that their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations (*διακονία*) for the relief of the poor, in comparison with the widows belonging to the Hebrew part of the community. The Twelve call to them the multitude (*τὸ πλῆθος*) of the disciples and say "It is not right (or desirable *ἀρεστόν*) that we, leaving the word of God, should serve tables (*διακονεῖν τραπέζαις*): but look ye out, brethren,

men from among yourselves of good report, seven in number, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will set over this office (or need, *χρείας* means either) : but we will attend diligently upon the prayer and upon the ministration (*διακονία*) of the word." The suggestion found favour with all the multitude. They chose out seven, including a proselyte from Antioch, and set them before the Apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. It is impossible not to connect this act with the laying of the contributions at the Apostles' feet. As being thus constituted stewards of the bounty of the community they were in a manner responsible for the distribution of the charitable fund. But the task had outgrown their powers, unless it was to be allowed to encroach on their higher Divinely appointed functions. They proposed therefore to entrust this special part of the work to other men, having the prerequisites of devoutness and wisdom, to be chosen by the Ecclesia at large. How much this new office included is not easy to say. All the seven names being Greek, it seems probable that they were Hellenists, as otherwise it would be a strange coincidence that there should be no Hebrew names; and if so, it would also seem likely that they were charged only with the care of relief to Hellenists. We do not hear however of any analogous office for the Hebrew Christians, nor whether any general superintendence of the funds was still retained by the Apostles. Nor again do we

afterwards hear anything more of these Seven in relation to their special work. The definite recognition of special claims of Christian Hellenists was the essential point. Stephen's miracles and preaching were no part of his office as one of the Seven, though they may have led to his selection; and Philip in like manner is known only as doing the work of an evangelist.

But the appointment was not only a notable recognition of the Hellenistic element in the Ecclesia at Jerusalem, a prelude of greater events to come, but also a sign that the Ecclesia was to be an Ecclesia indeed, not a mere horde of men ruled absolutely by the Apostles, but a true body politic, in which different functions were assigned to different members, and a share of responsibility rested upon the members at large, each and all; while every work for the Ecclesia, high and low, was of the nature of a 'ministration', a true rendering of a servant's service.

Once more we hear that "the word of God grew, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied exceedingly, and a great multitude of the priests obeyed the faith." A little while ago it would seem that they were among those mentioned in v. 13 as not daring to cleave or join themselves to the Ecclesia. But now their faith had grown stronger and deeper; and one after another they obeyed its call, and took the risks of joining the Christian congregation.

The Ecclesia spreading throughout the Holy Land.

We may pass over the discourse and martyrdom of Stephen. But the verse which follows the recital of his death (viii. 1) deserves our special attention for its language, and the facts which account for its language. "There came in that day a great persecution upon the Ecclesia which was in Jerusalem (*τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις*): all were scattered abroad about the regions of Judæa and Samaria save the Apostles". In the single place where the word *Ecclesia* has before occurred in the Acts (v. 11), there has been no question of more than the one Ecclesia of all Christ's disciples. Here we have that same identical body, differing only by the reception of more numerous members, so described as to give a hint that soon there were to be in a true sense of the word (though not the only true sense) more Ecclesiae than one. The materials for new Ecclesiae were about to be formed in consequence of this temporary scattering of the original Ecclesia; and moreover this first wide carrying of the Gospel through Judæa and Samaria was not the work of the Apostles: they are specially excepted by St Luke. Parenthetically in viii. 3 we read how Saul ravaged the Ecclesia, entering in house by house: and here the Ecclesia just spoken of, that of Jerusalem, seems to be meant, his prosecution of the persecution elsewhere even to Damascus being probably later. Of the work of one of the scattered

Christians, Philip the evangelist, we hear specially, its sphere being the representative city of Samaria. Tidings of his successful preaching and his baptizing of men and women having reached the Apostles at Jerusalem ("hearing that Samaria hath received the word of God" viii. 14), they depute Peter and John to go down. They found apparently no reason to doubt the reality and sincerity of the conversions. But the recognition of Samaritans as true members of the Christian community, hitherto exclusively Jewish, was so important a step outwards from the first, and now by long custom established, state of things that they evidently shrank from giving full and unreserved welcome to the new converts, unless they could obtain a conspicuous Divine sanction, what is called in this book receiving the (or a) Holy Spirit. What is meant is shown clearly by comparison with x. 44-48 and xix. 6, 7, *viz.* the outward marvellous signs of the Spirit, such as manifested themselves on the Day of Pentecost, speaking with tongues, with or without prophesying. "These which received the Holy Spirit even as we did" (x. 47) is the phrase in which St Peter describes the Divine sanction which justified recognition for Christian discipleship and membership. In this case the baptism of the Samaritan converts had been followed by no such tokens from heaven, and so they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and then laid their hands on them (the human symbolic act answering to the Heavenly act

prayed for) and they received the Holy Spirit (ἐλάβανον not ἔλαβον), that is, shewed a succession of signs of the Spirit. After the interlude of Simon Magus the Apostles return to Jerusalem, and on the way they themselves preach the Gospel to many Samaritan villages.

We need not examine the story of Philip and the eunuch, or even the conversion of St Paul, his recovery from blindness, preaching at Damascus, escape from attempted murder, admission to the confidence of the Apostles by the instrumentality of Barnabas, and on a fresh attempt to kill him, his departure for his native Tarsus. In passing it is worth notice that the man who lays hands on St Paul and baptizes him is no Apostle or even evangelist, but a simple disciple of Damascus, Ananias (ix. 17, 18). The last verse of the story (ix. 31) is this: "So the Ecclesia throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being built; and walking by the fear of the Lord and by the invocation (παράκλησις) of the Holy Spirit (probably the invoking His guidance as Paraclete to the Ecclesia), was multiplied." Here again the Ecclesia has assumed a wider range. It is no longer the Ecclesia of Jerusalem nor is it the several Ecclesiae of Jerusalem *and* Samaria and other places. That is language which we shall find in St Paul, but not in the Acts, except as regards regions external to the Holy Land. The Ecclesia was still confined to Jewish or semi-Jewish populations and to ancient

Jewish soil; but it was no longer the Ecclesia of a single city, and yet it was *one*: probably as corresponding, by these three modern representative districts of Judæa, Galilee and Samaria, to the ancient Ecclesia which had its home in the whole land of Israel.

These limits however were soon to be crossed. The first step takes place on a journey of St Peter through the whole land (*διερχόμενον διὰ πάντων*, ix. 32), which shews that he regarded the whole as now come within the sphere of his proper work, as it had to all intents and purposes been within the sphere of his work in the prelusive ministrations accompanying the Lord's own Ministry. On his way down to the coast he is said to have come to "the saints" or "holy ones" that dwelt at Lydda. The phrase is a remarkable one. It has occurred once already a few verses back (ix. 13) in Ananias's answer to the word of the Lord spoken to him in a dream, "I have heard concerning this man (Saul) how much evil he did to *thy saints* at Jerusalem." Members of the holy Ecclesia of Israel were themselves holy by the mere fact of membership, and this prerogative phrase is here boldly transferred to the Christians by the bold Damascene disciple. Its use is the correlative of the use of the term *Ecclesia*, the one relating to individuals as members of the community, the other to the community as a whole. It occurs once more

in the same little group of events (ix. 41), and once on St Paul's own lips in the bitterness of his self-accusation for his acts of persecution, in his defence before King Agrippa (xxvi. 10), probably in intentional repetition of Ananias's language respecting those same acts of his. It was a phrase that was likely to burn itself into his memory in that connexion. All know how commonly it occurs in the Epistles and Apocalypse, but its proper original force is not always remembered.

Then comes the story of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion in the great chiefly heathen seaport of Cæsarea, and his reception and baptism by St Peter, on the double warrant of the vision at Joppa and the outburst of the mysterious tongues while Peter was yet speaking. This was the act of Peter on his own sole responsibility, and at first it caused disquiet among some at least of the original members of the Ecclesia. We read (xi. 1) "Now the apostles and the brethren that were in Judæa (or rather perhaps, all about Judæa, *κατὰ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν*) heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God." And when Peter went up to Jerusalem they of the "circumcision" (*i.e.* probably those spoken of in x. 45, who had accompanied St Peter, for as yet there is no sign of uncircumcised believers) disputed with Peter for eating with men uncircumcised. This was apparently a complaint preferred in the presence of the

Apostles and brethren, but we hear nothing of any formal assertion of authority either by St Peter himself, or by the Apostles generally, or by the Apostles and brethren together. St Peter simply seeks to carry the whole body with him by patient explanation of the circumstances and considerations belonging to the case. And he has his reward: the objectors hold their peace (*ἡσυχασαν*, a word which points to the objectors) and glorify God for having given the Gentiles also repentance unto life. It was a great step that was thus taken; but it did not lie outside the local limits of the ancient Ecclesia. Cornelius was a sojourner in the land of Israel, and moreover one of them that feared or revered God, as it was called, a proselyte of the less strict sort.

LECTURE IV.

THE ECCLESIA OF ANTIOCH.

The Origin of the Ecclesia.

THE pause before the local limits of the ancient Ecclesia were overstepped was of short duration. St Luke's next section tells us how fugitives from the persecution which began with Stephen had preached the word all along the Syrian coast up to Antioch, and by this time a large number of disciples had been gathered together. In other words, here was a great capital, including a huge colony of Jews, in close relations with all the Greek-speaking world and all the Syriac-speaking world; and in its midst a multitude of Christian disciples had come into existence in the most casual and unpremeditated way. No Apostle had led or founded a mission; no Apostle had taught there. But there the Christian congregation was, and its existence and future could not but be of the highest interest to the original body of Christians. What the

relations would be between the two bodies was certainly not a question that could be answered off hand. "Hearing the tidings", we read (xi. 22), "the Ecclesia which was at Jerusalem" (here once more we have a narrower title, doubtless with a view to the antithesis of Jerusalem and Antioch) "sent forth Barnabas to Antioch." Barnabas, as we know, was not one of the Twelve. Probably the Twelve themselves felt that at the present moment it might be imprudent to take part personally in the affairs of Antioch, and to put forth even the semblance of apostolic authority there. But they (and not they only but the whole Ecclesia) sent a trusted envoy whose discretion could be relied on. He came and recognised what St Luke calls "the grace that was of God" (*τὴν χάριον τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ*), (the repetition of the article in the true text is full of meaning), the merciful extension of the area of saving knowledge and faith, and that by a kind of instrumentality which could be referred to nothing but the Providence of God. Accordingly, as a true son of encouragement or exhortation, Barnabas exhorted (*παρεκάλει*) all to abide by the purpose of their heart in the Lord, and many fresh conversions were the result of his teaching. But feeling apparently that this was a work for which St Paul's experience peculiarly fitted him, he fetched him from Tarsus, and together at Antioch they spent a year. The disciples, we are told, were there first called Christians; but there is reason to believe that St Luke does not

mean that the name was assumed by themselves. He does speak of Paul and Barnabas being "hospitably received¹ in the *Ecclesia*", thereby recognising the disciples at Antioch as forming an *Ecclesia*—a significant fact as regards both the recognition of this irregularly founded community at Antioch, and the changes in the use of the term *ecclesia* itself. Still however it was a community of men who were in some sense or other *Jewish Christians*: the widely spread opinion to the contrary rests on the wrong reading "Ἑλληνας in xi. 20.

Sending help to Jerusalem.

Before long an opportunity came for a practical exhibition of fellowship between the two communities. The famine in Judæa led to the sending of help (εἰς διακονίαν) by the disciples at Antioch to the brethren in Judæa. It was sent by Barnabas and Paul, and sent to "the elders" (xi. 30). Who were they? And why was it not sent to the Apostles? Both questions have been practically answered by Dr Lightfoot. He points out² that St Luke's narrative of the persecution by Herod in xii. 1-19 (his vexing of certain of them of the *Ecclesia*) comes in parenthetically in

¹ Such is the least difficult explanation of the curious word συναθροῦμαι as in Matt. xxv. and (with εἰς τὸν οἶκον, εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν) some Old Testament passages; also their original 'āsāph (*to gather*) in Ps. xxvii. 10.

² *Galatians*, p. 123, n. 3, p. 126.

connexion with this mission to Jerusalem, but probably preceded it in order of time. After the murder of James the son of Zebedee, St Peter, we are told (xii. 17), on being delivered from prison (after prayer being earnestly made by the Ecclesia) "went to another place"; and it is likely enough that the other ten did the same. It is possible that on their departure they appointed elders to whom to entrust the care of the Ecclesia in their absence. It is also possible that the Ecclesia itself may have provided itself with elders when the Apostles departed. But it is more likely that they were in office already, and merely assumed fresh responsibilities under the stress of circumstances. Some have even thought that they were the Seven under another name. This is a very improbable hypothesis. But it is at least conceivable, supposing the Seven to have been appointed for the Hellenists alone, that there were already elders, and that these supposed elders at that time chiefly represented the Hebrew part of the community. This however is quite uncertain; nor is it important to know. In any case it is but reasonable to suppose¹ that the Christian elders were not a new kind of officers, but simply a repetition of the ordinary Jewish elders, *ἡ γῆνῆμ, πρεσβύτεροι*, who constituted (as Dr Lightfoot says) the usual government of the Synagogue. "Hence," he adds, "the silence of St Luke. When he first mentions the presbyters, he

¹ See Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 191-3.

introduces them without preface, as though the institution were a matter of course."

The Antiochian Mission.

From this point the distinctive work of St Paul begins, and the first stage of it has a remarkable inauguration. At Antioch, "in the Ecclesia which was there", there were certain prophets and teachers, five being named, Barnabas first and Paul last. The prophets here spoken of are probably the same, wholly or in part, as the prophets mentioned before in xi. 27 as having come down from Jerusalem to Antioch, Agabus being one of them. While they are holding some solemn service (described as λειτουργούντων τῷ κυρίῳ) and fasting, the Holy Spirit speaks, evidently by the mouth of a prophet, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul unto the work unto which I have called them." The service here denoted by the verb λειτουργέω was probably a service of prayer. The context suggests that it was not a regular and customary service (like "the prayer" at Jerusalem earlier, see p. 45) but a special act of worship on the part of a solemn meeting of the whole Ecclesia, held expressly with reference to a project for carrying the Gospel to the heathen. Thus the voice would seem to have sanctioned the mission of particular men, perhaps also even the project itself: but not to have been a sudden call to an unexpected work. The persons

who are thus represented as doing service to the Lord are almost certainly the prophets and teachers mentioned just before. With fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands, Barnabas and Saul are let go. It is disputed whether the recipients of the prophetic word and performers of the last-mentioned acts of mission, were the prophets and teachers, or the Ecclesia. But on careful consideration it is difficult to doubt that the mouthpieces of the Divine command should be distinguished from those who have to execute it. In other words the members of the Ecclesia itself are bidden to set Barnabas and Saul apart; and it is the members of the Ecclesia itself that dismiss them with fast and prayer and laying on of hands, whether the last act was performed by all of them, or only by representatives of the whole body, official or other. So also on their return they gather the Ecclesia together (xiv. 27) and report what has befallen them.

This mission is no doubt specially described as due to a Divine monition: the setting apart comes from the Holy Spirit (to which in all probability the later words in xiii. 4 "being sent forth by the Holy Ghost" refer back); but the mission is also from the Christians of Antioch, whether directly or through the other three prophets and teachers, since the Holy Spirit, Himself the life and bond of every Ecclesia, makes the Christians of Antioch His instruments for setting Barnabas and Paul apart. It is with reference to this mission that, as I mentioned before, St Luke

applies the name Apostles to Paul and Barnabas; and under no other circumstances does he apply the name to either of them. Thus his usage both illustrates and is illustrated by 2 Cor. viii. 23 ("apostles of churches") and Phil. ii. 25 ("your apostle," viz. Epaphroditus).

The first missionary journey.

We need not follow the details of the journey, memorable for the turning from the Jews to the Gentiles at the Pisidian Antioch, and so beginning the preaching of the Gospel to heathen Gentiles in their own land. But we must not overlook one important verse, xiv. 23. Having preached successfully at Lystra, Iconium and the Pisidian Antioch on the way out, they visit these cities again on the way home, stablishing (ἐπιστηρίζοντες) the souls of the disciples. Then "having chosen for them (χειροτονήσαντες—the confusion with χειροθεσία is much later than the Apostolic age) elders in each Ecclesia (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν), having prayed with fastings, they commended them to the Lord on whom they had believed." Here first we find that these infant communities are each called an Ecclesia, not indeed (so far as appears) from the first preaching, but at least from the second confirmatory visit. Further, Paul and Barnabas follow the precedent of Jerusalem by appointing elders in Jewish fashion (elders¹ being indeed an institution of

¹ Lightfoot, *Philippians* 193.

Jewish communities of the Dispersion as well as of Judæa), and with this simple organisation they entrusted the young Ecclesiae to the Lord's care, to pursue an independent life. Such seems to be the meaning of the phrase "they commended them to the Lord on whom they had believed" (xiv. 23), which resembles some of the farewell words spoken to the Ephesian Elders at Miletus (xx. 32).

On their return to Antioch, "from whence", St Luke takes care expressly to remind us—"from whence they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled", they at once proceed to give an account of the task entrusted to them. They call together the Ecclesia and relate what God had done with them and how he had opened to the Gentiles a door of faith. No defence or explanation was necessary here. They had done what they had been sent to do. The turning to the Gentiles (xiii. 46) had evidently been contemplated from the first as a probable contingency, though the Jews were to be addressed first.

It is hardly necessary to say that these events, which happened about the year 50 A.D., constitute one of the greatest epochs, perhaps the greatest, in the history of the Ecclesia at large. Henceforth it was to contain members who had never in any sense belonged to the Jewish Ecclesia. There was henceforth no intelligible limit for it short of universality: and thus, while it never cut itself off from its

primitive foundation, it entered on a career which imposed on it totally new conditions.

The Conference at Jerusalem.

In the steps hitherto taken the Ecclesia of Antioch had acted independently and apparently without difference of opinion. But soon a troubling of the peace came from without, from Judæa. It is worth notice that we hear nothing of complaints against the Ecclesia of Antioch as having exceeded its legitimate powers. The appeal of the envoys from Judæa was simply to the Jewish law as binding on all Christians, "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (xv. 1). Evidently the heathen converts made by St Paul and St Barnabas had not been circumcised, and this proceeding had been accepted by the Ecclesia of Antioch, and was evidently intended to guide their future action in regard to converts from the heathen. To act thus was to decide that Judaism was not the necessary porch of entrance into the discipleship of the Gospel, and that Gentiles might pass at once into the Christian fold without doing homage to the Jewish law, and without any obligation to future allegiance to it. It would have been surprising indeed if all the Jewish Christians of Palestine had been ready at once, either to accept this as the right course to adopt, or to acquiesce in leaving the Christians of Antioch free to pursue their own way without hindrance or remonstrance.

What view the Twelve took of the matter, we do not know. It is hardly likely that the Jewish zealots within the Ecclesia of Jerusalem would commence an agitation at Antioch in person without having first tried to induce the leading men at Jerusalem to take action. If they did so, we know that they failed: nothing can be clearer in this respect than the words of the epistle recorded further on in the chapter (xv. 24), "Forasmuch as we have heard that certain of our number (τινὲς ἐξ ἡμῶν, so the rather startling right reading, meaning doubtless 'some members of our Ecclesia')—that certain of our number troubled you with words, disturbing your souls, *to whom we gave no charge*" (οἷς οὐ διεστειλάμεθα, 'we' being the Apostles, Elders, and the whole Ecclesia). But if the Twelve and other leading men refused to abet the Judaizing zealots, it does not follow that they already were firm and clear on behalf of the policy of Antioch: later incidents render it improbable that they were. Doubtless they were not prepared to come to a final decision without taking time.

What might have easily become a schism of impassable depth was averted by the forbearance of the brethren at Antioch. The disputes between the Judaizers and Paul and Barnabas led them to send Paul and Barnabas, with others, to hold a consultation with "the Apostles and Elders" at Jerusalem. It would seem as though St Paul himself hesitated at first about going, doubtless from a fear of compro-

misgiving the cause which he was determined that no Jerusalem authority should lead him to abandon. "I went up", he says (Gal. ii. 2), "in obedience to a revelation." The envoys set out, "speeded on their way by the Ecclesia" (Acts xv. 3). They passed through Phœnicia and Samaria, telling the tale of the conversion of the Gentiles, and "caused great joy to all the brethren": to those regions the scruples of Jerusalem had not spread. At Jerusalem "they were received by the Ecclesia and the Apostles and the Elders", the three being carefully enumerated, as if to mark the formality of the reception, and its completely representative character. Before the assembly the envoys repeated the tale of the successful mission, and then the gainsayers, now described as of the sect of the Pharisees (xv. 5), rose up to maintain the necessity of circumcision and the retention of the Law, as obligatory on the Gentiles. Then the discussion would seem to have been adjourned. It was probably before the assembly met again that those private conferences with the leading Apostles took place to which alone St Paul makes explicit reference in his narrative in Galatians¹.

The final assembly is described by St Luke (xv. 6) at the outset as a gathering together of the Apostles and the Elders to see concerning this discourse (*λόγου*, practically, this matter). It can hardly be doubted that the Ecclesia at large was in some manner like-

¹ See Lightfoot, *Galatians* 124 f.

wise present¹. This follows not only from the association of "the whole Ecclesia" with the Apostles and the Elders in the sending of a deputation to Antioch (*v.* 22), but still more clearly from the words "and all the multitude held their peace" in *v.* 12, since it is inconceivable that the body of Elders should be called "the multitude." On the other hand St Luke could hardly have omitted to mention the Ecclesia in that initial *v.* 6, unless the chief responsibility had been recognised as lying with the Apostles and the Elders.

Every one knows the order of incidents, the opening speech by St Peter appealing to the very similar event of his own Divinely sanctioned admission of Cornelius, and arguing against tempting God by laying on the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither their own Jewish fathers nor themselves had had strength to bear; next the recital by Paul and Barnabas of the signs and wonders by which God had set His seal to the work among the Gentiles; then James's renewed reference to Peter's argument, confirmation of it from the prophecy of Amos, and final announcement of his own opinion (*διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω*) against troubling Gentile converts, but in favour of sending them a message (or possibly, enjoining them, *ἐπιστεῖλαι*) to observe four abstinences. These need not be considered now². It is enough

¹ So Iren. *cont. Haer.* III. xii. 14 cum...universa ecclesia convenisset in unum.

² See Hort's *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 68 ff.

to say that on the two points at issue, circumcision and the bindingness of the Jewish law, they give no support to the demands of the Judaizers. Whether the abstinences here laid down be of Jewish or even Mosaic origin or not, at most they are isolated precepts of expediency, not resting on the principle which was in dispute. And lastly we have the decision of "the apostles and the elders and all the ecclesia" to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas two chosen envoys from their own number, "leading men among the brethren", Judas Barsabbas and Silas, and with them a letter.

The letter and its reception.

The salutation at the head of the letter is from "the apostles and the elder brethren to the brethren who are of the Gentiles throughout Antioch and Syria and Cilicia" (such seems to be the force of *κατά* with a single article for the three names), the central and in every way most important, Antioch, being placed at the head, and then the rest of Syria, and the closely connected region of Cilicia. The Ecclesia is not separately mentioned in the salutation; on the other hand the unusual phrase "the elder brethren" (for such is assuredly not only the right reading but the right punctuation) indicates that they who held the office of Elder were to be regarded as bearing the characteristic from which the title itself had arisen, and were but elder brothers at the head of a great

family of brethren. The letter, after the salutation, begins by repudiating the agitators who had gone down to Antioch. Next it states that it had been agreed in common to send back chosen men with Barnabas and Paul, who are spoken of in emphatically warm language, with indirect recognition of their mission as that for which they had exposed their lives: this was in fact a deputation from Jerusalem, exactly answering to the deputation from Antioch to Jerusalem. Thirdly, in a fresh sentence the letter gives the names of the two envoys (Judas and Silas), and the exact purpose of their mission, to repeat in person what had just been recited in writing (*τὰ αὐτά*), probably also with the inclusion of what comes next, or fourthly, "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no further burthen save these necessary things, *viz.* the four abstinences; from which if ye keep yourselves it shall be well with you. Fare ye well."

To some points involved in this letter and the accompanying circumstances we must return just now. But first we should glance at the historical sequel, under the two heads of St Luke's and St Paul's narratives.

Paul and Barnabas 'go down' to Antioch (the phrase is significant,—Jerusalem is still the central height). They gather together the multitude of the brethren (*τὸ πλῆθος*) and gave them the epistle (*ἐπέδωκαν*); a phrase which shews that, as might

indeed be gathered from the terms of the salutation, it was to the Ecclesia at large that the letter was addressed. Having read it they rejoice at the encouragement (*παρακλήσει*); a vague word, it might seem, but an appropriate one: it expressed the "God speed you" (so to speak) which had been pronounced on their own work and on the conditions of freedom under which it had been begun. The effect of the letter is reinforced by the personal representatives of Jerusalem: Judas and Silas, themselves also prophets, with much discourse encouraged (or exhorted, *παρεκάλεσαν*) the brethren and stablished [them] (*ἔπεστίριξαν*). They stay some time, and then are dismissed by the brethren with peace and return to those that sent them (the *ἀποστόλους* of the Textus Receptus and the Authorised Version is certainly a wrong reading). Meanwhile Paul and Barnabas continue in Antioch, teaching and preaching the good tidings of the word of the Lord, along with many others also (xv. 35).

St Peter at Antioch.

Such is St Luke's account, a history of smooth water. It did not enter into his purpose to wake up the memories of an incident on which the Ecclesia had been well-nigh wrecked, but which happily had ended in a manner which enabled it to pursue its course uninjured, or rather we must suppose strengthened. Nothing, we may be sure, but the

conviction that the whole future of the Gentile Ecclesiae was bound up in the vindication of his own authentic Apostleship, would have induced St Paul to commit to paper the sad story of his conflict with St Peter. St Peter, it would seem, had after a while followed the four envoys to Antioch. Nothing was more natural and expedient than that he should visit the vigorous young community in person, and establish friendly relations on the spot. A personal visit like this, which might once have been imprudent, had now become expedient. At first all went well. He carried out completely the purpose of the Jerusalem letter by associating on equal terms with the Gentile converts; he "ate with them", just as he had done (to the scandal of many) at Cæsarea (xi. 3). But when certain came down from James, he withdrew himself in fear of them of the circumcision. This conduct St Paul plainly calls "acting a false part" (*ὑπόκρισις* Gal. ii. 13), pretending to be that which he was not: but it was shared by the rest of the Jewish Christians at Antioch and even at length, strange to say, by Barnabas. St Paul alone stood firm, and rebuked St Peter to his face in the presence of them all. To go into the various questions arising out of this account, as I did to a certain extent two years ago¹, would be out of the question now. What specially concerns our own subject is that the point of principle really at stake was, under one aspect, the question

¹ See *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 76 ff.

whether membership of the Christian Ecclesia could be of two orders or degrees, an inner for Jewish Christians only, and an outer. The position practically taken up for a while by St Peter and his associates must not be confounded with the position taken up by the uncompromising Judaizers who had been repudiated in the letter from Jerusalem. There is not the least sign that he affected to wish to exclude heathen converts from baptism or most other Christian privileges. But he did persuade himself that, for the time at least, uncircumcised Christians should not be allowed to sit at table with circumcised; in other words that they might in a certain sense be members of the Christian brotherhood but not be recognised as full members, unless by first becoming Jews, and accepting Jewish customs as binding on them. St Paul does not tell us how the matter ended. That was unnecessary, for all the subsequent history shewed that this compromise, the fruit of timorous and untimely prudence, must have quickly collapsed, and left the policy represented by St Paul now more firmly established than before St Peter's arrival. Thus the freedom of Gentile Christian communities was assured anew in the completest form.

LECTURE V.

THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY.

St James and his position.

WE have already spent much time on the Jerusalem conference and letter, and its sequel. But there remain some points which concern our subject too closely to be passed over. First, about St James. This is the second of the three occasions on which his name appears in the Acts. When St Peter was released by the angel from prison, after the martyrdom of the Apostle James the brother of John, he said to the disciples assembled in the house of John Mark "Tell these things to James and to the brethren" (xii. 17). He must then have already been in some manner prominent among the disciples. As the chief among the Lord's own brethren, and one to whom the Lord vouchsafed a separate appearance after the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7), doubtless the appearance to which the well-known story in the Gospel according to the Hebrews refers (Lightfoot, *Gal.* 265), and, if so, at

which his unbelief probably came to an end, he would evidently be held in a peculiar kind of respect in the infant Ecclesia. St Paul alone speaks of him as an Apostle (Gal. i. 19: and probably by implication 1 Cor. xv. 7), and the contexts seem to me distinctly to exclude that looser sense of the term referred to before by which mere 'Apostles of Ecclesiae' were meant, while it is hardly less clear that he did not anticipate the later theory which made him to have been from the first one of the Twelve. It would seem then that, possessing as he did in an eminent degree the primary apostolic qualification of being a witness of the Lord's life, death and resurrection, he was at some early time after the persecution by Herod taken up into the place among the Twelve vacated by his namesake. The silence of St Luke, as compared with his explicitness about Matthias, may be due to the fact that in this instance it was no matter of choice, calling for all the process described in Acts i., but a natural result of the combination of circumstances, such as might itself well be treated as a sufficient intimation of the Divine will. On the other hand no Apostleship of St James is recorded or implied by St Luke, though he three times mentions him in a way which marks him out as, to say the least, a leading and prominent person. But this is less surprising than it might otherwise be, if the prominence was due to personal circumstances, which continued to operate after his admission to the Apostolate,

just as antecedently they had procured his admission to it. In other words, the prominence which he has in the Acts would not be due to his having become an Apostle: nay, his admission to that joint responsibility might rather tend to diminish any exclusiveness of *prestige* which he may have acquired outside the Apostolate, and so independently of it.

Was then the prominence of St James due solely to personal qualifications and history, not to any recognised function? That would be too much to say. That at the time of his death he was practically the ruler of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem is the least open to doubt among the particulars of the traditions current in the Second Century about him, by whatever name we choose to call his government; and at least the origin of such a position is likely to have some connexion with the facts mentioned or implied by St Luke. The clearest fact about him attested by the New Testament, Acts and St Paul alike, but enormously exaggerated at a later time, is that he was at least more closely connected in sentiment with the more Jewish part of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem than were the rest of the Apostles; and it may well be that the veneration in which he is said to have been held at the time of his death even by unbelieving Jews, had its roots in an early popularity which would make him a valuable mediator between the stiffer sort of Hebrew Christians and the other Apostles. Such a passage as that just cited from St Peter's words after

his release might, taken alone, be quite sufficiently explained by purely personal prominence. So also the fact that in Gal. ii. 9 the order is "James and Cephas and John" might well be due to the fact that the adherence of James on the occasion referred to was even more significant than that of the other two, on account of his closer relations with the Jewish party. But the two other passages of the Acts are best understood as implying that he held some recognised office or function in connexion with the Ecclesia of Jerusalem: and it does not seem unlikely that on his admission to the Apostolate it was arranged that, unlike the rest, he should exercise a definite local charge. Such a charge would of necessity become more distinct and, so to speak, monarchical when the other Apostles were absent from Jerusalem. His own circumstances were unique, and the circumstances of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem were no less unique. A peculiar function founded on peculiar qualifications is what the narrative suggests.

There is nothing in St Luke's words which bears out what is often said, that St James presided over the conference at Jerusalem. If he had, it would be strange that his name should not be mentioned separately at the beginning, where we read only that "the Apostles and the Elders" were gathered together. In the decisive speeches at the end the lead is taken by St Peter, the foremost of the Twelve. After Barnabas and Paul have ended their narrative, James

takes up the word. What he says is called an *answer* (*ἀπεκρίθη Ἰάκωβος λέγων* xv. 13), probably as replying to words uttered earlier by the more Jewish section of the assembly during the dispute mentioned in v. 7. His opening words suggest that his first appeal is to *them*, and that he makes it as one to whom they might be more willing to listen than to St Paul, "Brethren (*ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί*), listen to me"; he then refers to Peter's exposition, calling him not only by his original name, but by the strictly Hebrew form of it, Symeon, as though to bespeak their goodwill for what Peter had said. Then again the words which begin his conclusion, "Wherefore my judgement is," cannot reasonably be understood as an authoritative judgment pronounced by himself independently: the whole context and what is said in v. 22 about the actual decision makes that interpretation morally impossible. The sense is doubtless "I for my part¹ judge," "this is my vote" as we should say. The point then is that, guardian though he was of the honour of Israel in the Ecclesia, he here throws his voice on the side of liberty. It is no objection to this view that he says simply *ἐγώ* not *καὶ ἐγώ*: owing to his mention of the four abstinences his proposal could not be simply identical with that of St Peter.

¹ Wetstein *in loc.* quotes Thuc. iv. 16 for a still weaker *ὡς ἐγὼ κρίνω*, explained by the scholiast as *ὡς ἐγὼ νομίζω*, and the same use of *κρίνω* occurs elsewhere in the Acts (xiii. 46; xvi. 15; xxvi. 8): here the sense seems to be intermediate. Cf. the old latin version of Irenæus *cont. Haer.* III. xii. 14 'Ego secundum me iudico.'

We saw just now that he is not named at the gathering of the assembly. It is just the same afterwards: the decision is said to be made by the Apostles and the Elders with the whole Ecclesia; the letter proceeds from the Apostles and the elder brethren: apart then from these two classes he can hardly have exercised authority in this matter.

The Authority of the Jerusalem Elders and of the Twelve.

When we pass from St James to the Apostles and Elders, the question arises, "What kind of authority they here put forth over the brethren in Antioch and the surrounding region?" The answer cannot be a simple one. The letter itself at once implies an authority, and betrays an unwillingness to make a display of it. In the forefront are set anxious friendliness, courteous approval. Whatever is in any sense imperative comes after this and subsidiary to it, and is set forth as what had seemed good "to the Holy Spirit and to us", the human authority, whatever it be, being as it were appended to that which is presumed to be Divine. Further, the semblance of a command is softened off at the end into a counsel; "from which if ye keep yourselves it shall be well with you."

So again in the next chapter (xvi. 4) the phrase used, "the decrees which had been ordained of the Apostles and Elders", seems to refer back, 'the

decrees' (δόγματα) to the twice repeated ἔδοξεν of xv. 22, 25, 'ordained' (κεκριμένα) to St James's κρίνω in xv. 19¹. Δόγμα in Greek (properly only what seems, or seems good) is one of those curiously elastic words which vary in sharpness of meaning according to the persons to whom a thing is said to seem good, and to the other circumstances of the case. The dogma of an emperor or a legislative assembly or the Amphictyonic council is a decree, the dogma of a philosopher is what seems to him to be true; and between these extremes are various shades of meaning. Here the probable sense is nearly what we should call a 'resolution', as passed by any deliberative body, not in form imperative but intended to have a binding force. The New Testament is not poor of words expressive of command, ἐντέλλομαι, ἐπιτάσσω, προστάσσω, διατάσσω, διαστέλλομαι and their derivatives, to say nothing of κελεύω and παραγγέλλω: yet none of them is used. It was in truth a delicate and difficult position, even after the happy decision of the assembly. The independence of the Ecclesia of Antioch had to be respected, and yet not in such a way as to encourage disregard either of the great mother Ecclesia, or of the Lord's own Apostles, or of the unity of the whole Christian body. Accordingly we do not find a word of a hint

¹ In the later reference (xxi. 25) we have no stronger term than ἀπεστείλαμεν (οἱ ἐπέστειλαμεν) κρίναντες: cf. St James's κρίνω...ἐπιστείλαι (xv. 19 f.).

that the Antiochians would have done better to get sanction from Jerusalem before plunging into such grave responsibilities. But along with the cordial concurrence in the release of Gentile converts from legal requirements there goes a strong expression of opinion, more than advice and less than a command, respecting certain salutary restraints. A certain authority is thus implicitly claimed. There is no evidence that it was more than a moral authority; but that did not make it less real.

The bases of authority differ for the two bodies united in writing to Antioch, the Elders and the Apostles. The Elders are to all appearance the local elders of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem. It is impossible that, as such, they could claim any authority properly so called over the Ecclesia of Antioch. But they had a large voice, backed as they were by the great body of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem, in saying whether the Ecclesia of Jerusalem would accept the brethren at Antioch, and specially the Gentile converts among them, as true brethren of their own, and true disciples of Jesus Christ. There is no making of formal conditions of fellowship, but the Elders, as taking the lead in making so great a concession on the part of Jerusalem, might well feel that they had a right to expect that the four restraints which had been set forth would be accepted. Such a deference on the part of Antioch would be the more proper since Paul

and Barnabas, the representatives of Antioch, had evidently accepted the resolution as a whole (see their conduct in xvi. 4).

The authority of the Apostles was of a different kind. There is indeed, as we have seen, no trace in Scripture of a formal commission of authority for government from Christ Himself. Their commission was to be witnesses of Himself, and to bear that witness by preaching and by healing. But it is inconceivable that the moral authority with which they were thus clothed, and the uniqueness of their position and personal qualifications, should not in all these years have been accumulating upon them by the spontaneous homage of the Christians of Judæa an ill-defined but lofty authority in matters of government and administration; of which indeed we have already had an instance in the laying of the price of the sold properties at their feet. What is not so easy to find out is the extent to which an apostolic authority of this kind is likely to have been felt and acknowledged beyond the limits of the Holy Land. On the one hand all Christian discipleship, wherever it sprang up, must have come directly or indirectly from the central community at Jerusalem, and it is difficult to see any form the Gospel could take in transmission in which the place of the still living Apostles would not be a primary one. On the other hand we cannot forget that it was of James and Peter and John that St Paul wrote those guarded but far-reaching words (Gal. ii. 6)

“but from those who were reputed to be somewhat—(of whatsoever sort (ὅποιοι) they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not a man’s person) they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing (or nothing farther) to me (ἐμοὶ οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο)”: words which shew that with all his unfailing anxiety to have the concurrence of the Twelve, and not of them only but of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem at large, he was not prepared to obey if the Twelve had insisted on the requirement of circumcision and the Law. Hence in the letter sent to Antioch the authority even of the Apostles, notwithstanding the fact that unlike the Jerusalem elders they exercised a function towards all Christians, was moral rather than formal; a claim to deference rather than a right to be obeyed.

The Twelve and the Gentiles.

In this connexion there is special force in that familiar statement by St Paul in the context just referred to (Gal. ii. 7–12), “when they saw that I had been entrusted with the Gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with (a Gospel) of the circumcision (Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς, not τὸ τῆς), for He that wrought by Peter (that seems to be the sense of ὁ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ, rather than either “in Peter” or “for Peter”) unto an Apostleship (no τῆν) of the circumcision (τῆς περιτομῆς) wrought by me also unto (or for, εἰς) the Gentiles:—and when they perceived (γινόντες) the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and

John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas right hands of fellowship (*κοινωνίας*), that *we* (should be, or should go; no verb) unto the Gentiles, and themselves unto the circumcision: only *they would* that we should remember the poor (*i.e.* poor Christians of Palestine); which I also for this very reason took pains to do."

Our familiarity with the idea of St Paul as the Apostle of the Gentiles makes us in reading slide over this arrangement as though it were the obvious thing to be done. In one sense it was: but what is its relation to the universal mission of the Twelve? Was it indeed to the circumcision only that our Lord had appointed them to bear witness of Himself by word and act? It is difficult to think so when we read of words which He spoke between the Resurrection and the Ascension. Those other words about the twelve thrones, and about not having gone through the cities of Israel, doubtless remained, not abrogated. But in some sense or other the twelve Apostles were surely to be for the Gentiles as well as for the old Israel; not merely through the Ecclesia which was founded on them, but in themselves. They had a relation to the ideal twelve tribes of the new Israel as well as to those of the old, which long before the time of the Christian era had become hardly less ideal.

Here comes in the purely historical question. Had the Twelve or any of them preached beyond the limits of Palestine up to this time? High authorities give

this extension to St Luke's simple if vague words about St Peter after his deliverance from prison, how he "went out (*i.e.* out of John Mark's house at Jerusalem) and went his way unto another place" (xii. 17). About twelve years are said to have then elapsed since the Ascension, and reference is made to one of the traditions current in the Second Century, to the effect that our Lord had bidden the Apostles go forth into the world after twelve years. There is, however, nothing connected with the tradition which gives it substantially more weight than the other fictions about the Apostles which soon flourished luxuriantly and in endless contradictions to each other. The omission of such a cardinal event from St Luke's narrative is, I think, inconceivable; and his whole story of the doings of the Ecclesia of Antioch and St Paul's first mission becomes unintelligible if similar missionary journeys of Apostles had preceded. We must, I think, conclude that up to the date of the great conference the Twelve had not believed themselves to have received any clear Divine intimation that the time was come for them to go forth in person among the nations.

But now, independently of any action on their own part, the whole horizon was changed by the action of the Ecclesia of Antioch and the labours of Paul and Barnabas. It was no merely human series of acts which came before them for recognition. They doubtless accepted the mission from Antioch

as proceeding in the first instance from the Holy Spirit speaking by the mouth of prophets, and as subsequently sanctioned from heaven by the signs and wonders which Paul and Barnabas were enabled to work. Here then at last the Divine monition to themselves had come, though probably in an unexpected form. In the person of St Paul, long since welcomed by themselves as a fellow-worker, God had now raised up a mighty herald of the Gospel for the Gentiles. He was no delegate of theirs: his commission was direct: but by recognising him as specially called to do apostolic work among the Gentiles, they were enabled to feel that by agreement and fellowship with him they were in effect carrying out through him that extension of their sphere which it is incredible that they should ever have dismissed from their minds; and meanwhile they were themselves able without misgiving to continue their work in the narrower sphere in which they had already laboured so long. Whether this limitation was at the time contemplated as permanent or as temporary, we have of course no means of knowing: but indeed there was no need to decide; in the future, no less than in the present, the needful guidance was to be looked for from heaven. In any case this agreement with St Paul, made in private conference, must be kept in mind when we are reading the epistle to Antioch which was agreed to and written so shortly after. They remarkably supplement each other. On

the one hand the Twelve could not have so written had they meant henceforth to hold themselves discharged from every kind of responsibility towards Gentile Christians generally: on the other the agreement with St Paul and St Barnabas excluded them for the present from working personally among the Gentiles.

It must be noticed that the limit drawn is religious, not geographical: it is between the circumcision and the Gentiles, not between the land of Israel and Gentile lands. Thus St James was still acting quite according to the agreement when, while remaining at the head of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem, he wrote an Epistle to Jewish Christians of the Dispersion. But we hear nothing of evangelistic journeys by the Twelve for preaching to the *Jews* of heathen cities; and it is most unlikely that any such were made. The distribution of fields of work involved in the agreement itself passed away in due time by the force of circumstances: we know of at least three of the Twelve who can be shown on trustworthy evidence to have laboured eventually in heathen lands. But that lies outside the Acts.

It is worthy of notice that we have now reached the last appearance of the Apostles collectively, or of any one of them except St James, in St Luke's narrative. His remaining chapters are wholly silent about them. By this time the work which most characteristically belonged to them, their special con-

tribution to the building up of the Ecclesia, though not yet ended, was not henceforth to present new features. What remained of their work in Palestine would be a continuation of such work as St Luke had already described. On them the Ecclesia of the mother city had been built.

The government of the Ecclesia of Antioch.

One other supplementary observation should be made before we leave this fifteenth chapter. In all that we read there and previously about the young Ecclesia of Antioch we learn absolutely nothing about its government or administration. The prophets and teachers have, as such, nothing to do with functions of this kind. Doubtless a man like Barnabas, coming as an envoy of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem (so, not simply of the Apostles, xi. 22) and shewing such sympathy with the local conditions of things, would acquire by the mere force of circumstances a considerable moral authority; and this would presently be shared with St Paul, when he too had come out of his Cilician retirement. Of course by its very nature this position was temporary as well as informal. Strange to say, we hear nothing about Elders. Since we know that the Ecclesia of Jerusalem had long had Elders, and St Paul on returning from his first journey in Asia Minor had appointed Elders for each local Ecclesia, it is hardly credible that they were wanting at Antioch, to say nothing of the influence of the precedent of the great

Jewish population. But in the Acts we hear only of "the brethren" (xv. 1, 32, 33) or "the disciples" (xi. 26, 29; xiv. 28) or "the multitude" (xv. 30) or "the ecclesia" (xi. 26; xiii. 1; xiv. 27). Evidently at this time the general body of disciples at Antioch must have taken at least a large share in the acts of the Christian community.

LECTURE VI.

ST PAUL AT EPHESUS.

The later history of the resolutions of the conference.

THE rest of the Acts need not occupy us long. After certain days Paul said unto Barnabas "Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare." This journey then proceeded from no act of the Ecclesia of Antioch nor (so far as appears) from a special Divine monition. It was apparently in intention, and certainly as regards the first part of it, merely supplementary to the former journey. As we know, St Paul and Barnabas had a division of opinion, and separated, Paul taking Silas, one of the envoys of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem, and himself a prophet. At Lystra a still more important fellow-labourer was added to his company in the person of Timothy, whom for prudential reasons he circumcised; doubtless because, though hitherto form-

ally outside the old covenant, he had been from childhood to all intents and purposes a Jew¹. As they went through the cities they delivered to them (masculine: to the disciples there) the resolutions which had been decided on (*τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα*) by the Apostles and Elders that were at Jerusalem. The region through which they were now travelling had nothing to do with the provinces associated with Antioch, *viz.* Syria and Cilicia, to which the Jerusalem letter had been addressed. But the conversions which had taken place in that very region formed the first link in the chain of circumstances which led to the writing of the letter: and if the Ecclesia of Antioch were to accept loyally the restraints on neophytes imposed by the letter, it was impossible that their missionary, on now at once revisiting the scene of his mission, should fail to press these requirements upon his converts. But (with the exception of an allusion by St James or the Jerusalem Elders in xxi. 25) this is the last that we hear of these requirements in the Acts, and St Paul in his Epistles makes no allusion to them directly or indirectly. It is of course possible that St Luke's silence on this point for the rest of this journey, and for all the subsequent journeyings, was not intended to be expressive. He *may* have wished the single instance given at the outset to be understood as carried on through the rest of his narrative. But the manner in which the one statement is made

¹ See *Judaistic Christianity*, pp. 84 ff.

does not suggest such an extension; nor is it likely that St Luke would have failed to repeat it for at least one region now first entered on, had he wished it to be carried forward by his readers. But St Paul's own silence is more significant still. The truth probably is that he accepted the four restraints appended to the main purpose of the letter, but did not really care for them, preferring to seek the same ends by other means; and so that he did not attempt to enforce them with respect to Christian converts for which the Ecclesia of Antioch was in no sense responsible; having perhaps already found reason in Lycaonia to doubt their expediency, though, faithful to his trust, he introduced them *there*. At all events the great liberative measure to which the Apostles joined with the Elders and Ecclesia of Jerusalem in setting their hands stood fast, and determined the character of by far the greater part of the new Ecclesia, while these petty adjuncts to it, having served their purpose, dropped away, though many in ancient, and even in modern times, have tried to persuade themselves that they are still binding on all Christians.

The next verse to that which we have now been examining tells us simply that "the Ecclesiae (*i.e.* the congregations of the Lycaonian region) were strengthened (or solidified, *ἐστέρεοῦντο*) by their faith, and multiplied in number daily" (xvi. 5). This is

the last time that the word *ἐκκλησία* is used by St Luke, except for that of Jerusalem and in the peculiar case of the Ephesian Elders at Miletus.

How St Paul and his companions came to extend their journey beyond Lycaonia, we are not told. When they had passed through Phrygia and Galatia and reached Alexandria Troas the vision of the Macedonian beckoned them across the Hellespont, and so they entered Europe. As everyone will remember, the chief places of their preaching were Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth. Not a word here of Ecclesiae, for the Christian communities were only in their earliest stage of existence.

The founding of the Ecclesia of Ephesus.

On his way back to the east St Paul diverged rapidly from his course to snatch a visit to Ephesus, where he dropped Priscilla and Aquila, and there he began to argue with the Jews in the synagogue, but quickly took leave. If, as the following narratives suggest, this was the beginning of Ephesian Christianity, it is much to be remembered as a *bona fide* instance of a great central capital which could legitimately claim an Apostle as the founder of its Christian community. It will be remembered that shortly after leaving Lycaonia, Paul and his friends are said to have been "hindered by the Holy Spirit from speaking the word in Asia," *i.e.* Proconsular Asia; which implies that personally they (or Paul) had been desiring to

preach there, and doubtless specially in Ephesus. The deferred wish was now to be fulfilled, though still, so to speak, only in a representative manner, for there was no time for effectual preaching. Promising to return if God will, St Paul hurries across the Mediterranean to Cæsarea, goes up to Jerusalem and greets the Ecclesia there (here simply called τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Jerusalem itself being indicated only by the word ἀναβάς 'goes up'), and then returns to Antioch for some time; he sets out afresh through Phrygia and Galatia, "stablishing all the disciples" made on his last journey, and so at last reaches Ephesus in good earnest and makes a long stay, in which he becomes the founder of Christian Ephesus in very deed.

One early incident of this stay is mentioned which specially concerns us. After St Paul had been preaching and arguing in the synagogue for the space of three months, when at length some of the Jews become hardened in disbelief and publicly revile 'the Way,' he forms a separate congregation of the disciples, probably Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians alike, and carries on his public disputations in what was probably a neutral building, the σχολή or 'lecture hall' of Tyrannus.

The period of from two to three years then spent at Ephesus and in the surrounding region was full of dangers and troubles, of which the Epistles alone afford us some glimpses. They mark St Paul's anxiety to build up carefully and solidly the Ecclesiae

of the most important region of that great peninsula now called Asia Minor, which he had in a manner made peculiarly his own, and which from childhood must have had a special interest for him from the proximity of Tarsus to the Cilician Gates, the pass by which the greater part of the peninsula was entered from the south. The last incident of that period mentioned by St Luke brings us face to face with another sort of Ecclesia from those whose origin we have been tracing. He employs the word *ἐκκλησία* not only for the regular assembly of the Ephesian people (xix. 39), but, by a very unusual way of speaking, for the tumultuous gathering on behalf of the Ephesian goddess (xix. 32, 41). Before that last incident St Paul had meditated a fresh journey of great length, first a visit to the European Christian communities founded by him on his former westward journey, then to Jerusalem once more, where he wished to find himself at Pentecost, the great national festival, and lastly to Rome (xix. 21).

St Paul's discourse to the Ephesian Elders at Miletus.

The incidents of the journey, with one important exception, do not concern our purpose. Anxiety not to spend time in Proconsular Asia made St Paul refrain from going back to Ephesus on his way to Palestine. But, touching at Miletus, he thence, we are told, "sent to Ephesus and called to him the

Elders of the Ecclesia." St Luke speaks of them simply thus, as though no further explanation were needed. We have seen already how St Paul instituted an administration by Elders in the smaller Ecclesiae which he founded in Lycaonia, and it is but natural to conclude that he would pursue the same plan elsewhere. Whether the institution took place at an early date in his long stay (so that they would be acting along with and under him), or took place only on his departure, as seems best to suit the former precedent, we have no means of knowing. Superficially it might seem as if the early verses of his address favoured the first mentioned view, but in reality they are neutral, what is there said of the Elders' knowledge of St Paul's acts and teaching from the day of his arrival being, to say the least, addressed to them in their character of Christian disciples, not of Christian Elders. More is contained in xx. 28, partly about the Elders of the Ecclesia, partly about the Ecclesia itself. "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit set you as ἐπισκόπους."

First, how are we to understand this last word? No one, I suppose, doubts now that the persons meant are those first mentioned as "Elders of the Ecclesia." Have we then here a second title? The only tangible reasons for thinking so (apart from certain passages in Philippians and the Pastoral Epistles, which must presently be considered) are that

in the Second Century the word was certainly used as a title, though for a different office; and that it was already in various use as a title in the Greek world. But against this we must set the fact that both in the Bible (LXX., Apocrypha, and the New Testament itself, 1 Pet. ii. 25) and in other literature (including Philo) it retains its common etymological or descriptive meaning 'overseer', and this meaning alone gives a clear sense here. The best rendering would I think be, "in which the Holy Spirit set you to have oversight", the force being distinctly predicative. We shall have, as I said just now, to consider the word again in connexion with Philippians and the Pastoral Epistles, but for the present we had better remain at Miletus or rather Ephesus.

Secondly, the Elders are said to have been set in the flock of Ephesus to have oversight of it *by the Holy Spirit*. Neither here nor anywhere else in the address is there any indication that St Paul himself had had anything to do with their appointment, the contrast in this to the Pastoral Epistles being very remarkable. It is no doubt conceivable that he might describe such an act of his own as coming from the Holy Spirit: but apart from prophetic monitions, of which there is no trace here, it would be hard to find another example¹.

Again, it is conceivable that this language might be used without any reference to the mode of ap-

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 40 is obviously quite different.

pointment, the Holy Spirit being regarded simply as, so to speak, the author of all order.

But the manner in which the Holy Spirit is elsewhere associated with joint acts, acts involving fellowship, suggests that here the appointment came from the Ecclesia itself. Doubtless, as far as we can tell, such was not the case in those Lycaonian communities where (outside of Palestine) we first read of the appointment of Elders. But the case of comparatively small communities, recently formed and rapidly visited, might well induce St Paul in the first instance to start them with Elders of his own choice: while in such a capital as Ephesus, having probably already made a long stay there, he might well think the Ecclesia ripe for the responsibility. In so doing he would be practically following the precedent set at Jerusalem in the case of the Seven (vi. 3-6). In that case the appointment of the Seven was sealed, so to speak, by the Apostles praying and laying hands of blessing on the Seven; and so it may well have been here.

Thirdly, the function of the Elders is described in pastoral language ('take heed to...the flock,' 'tend,' 'wolves...not sparing the flock'). Such language, as we might expect, was probably not unknown as applied to Jewish elders. Apparently¹ (though not

¹ See the passages in Levy and Fleischer's *Lex.* iv. 120 f. The Aramaic verb (used only for men) is פִּרְגַם, the substantive פִּרְגָּם, the sense like that of the biblical רָעָה, including the sense of tending or leading and feeding.

quite clearly) it is applied in the Talmud to them as well as to other guides and rulers. But it was impossible that this aspect of the office should not assume greater weight, under the circumstances of a Christian Ecclesia. The unique redemption to which the Ecclesia owed its existence involved the deepening and enlarging of every responsibility, and the filling out what might have been mere administration with spiritual aims and forces. But the precise form which the work of the Elders was to take is not clearly expressed. The side of shepherding most expressed by 'tending' (*ποιμαίνω*) is government and guidance rather than feeding¹; nor is there any other distinct reference to teaching, the two imperatives being "take heed to yourselves and to the flock," and "watch ye" or "be wakeful" (*γρηγορεῖτε* xx. 31), spoken with reference to the double danger of grievous wolves from without, and men speaking perverse things from within. But this 'watching' does indirectly seem to involve teaching, public or private, in virtue of the words which follow, "remembering that for a space of three years night and day I ceased not to admonish each one," the practical form taken by the Apostle's vigilance being thus recalled to mind as needing to be in some way carried on by themselves. Moreover it is hard to see how the work of tending and protection could be performed

¹ See John xxi. 16 where 'tending' (*πολιμαίει*) is contrasted with 'feeding' (*βόσκει*) both in the preceding and in the following verse.

without teaching, which indeed would itself be a necessary part of the daily life of a Christian, as of a Jewish community; and it does not appear by whom it was to be carried on mainly and regularly if not by the Elders, or at least by some of them. No other office in the Ecclesia of Ephesus is referred to in the address.

Next for the Ecclesia of Ephesus itself.

Early in the term we had occasion to notice the significance of this phrase "the Ecclesia of God which He purchased by the blood of His own," as joining on the new society of Christ's disciples to the ancient Ecclesia of Israel, and marking how the idea of the sacrificial redemption wrought by the Crucified Messiah, succeeding to the Paschal redemption of the Exodus, was bound up in the idea of the Christian Ecclesia. Here we evidently are carried into a loftier region than any previous use of the word *Ecclesia* in the Acts would obviously point to. This language was but natural, since the words then spoken were then supposed to be last words. They are part of St Paul's solemn farewell to the cherished Ecclesia of his own founding. He begins with the actual circumstances of the moment, the local Ephesian community, which was the flock committed to the Ephesian Elders, and then goes on to say that that little flock had a right to believe itself to be the Ecclesia of God which He had purchased to be His own possession at so unspeakable a price. Of course in strictness

the words belong only to the one universal Christian Ecclesia: but here they are transferred to the individual Ecclesia of Ephesus, which alone these Elders were charged to shepherd. In the Epistles we shall find similar investment of parts of the universal Ecclesia with the high attributes of the whole. This transference is no mere figure of speech. Each partial society is set forth as having a unity of its own, and being itself a body made up of many members has therefore a corporate life of its own: and yet these attributes could not be ascribed to it as an absolutely independent and as it were insular society: they belong to it only as a representative member of the great whole¹.

In xx. 32, which follows the calling to mind of St Paul's own former admonitions, he commends the Elders "to the Lord and to the word of His grace", just as he and Barnabas, on leaving the Lycaonian churches with their newly appointed Elders, had commended them to 'the Lord on whom they had believed' (xiv. 23). "The word of His grace" here is what is called in v. 24 "the Gospel of the grace of God", doubtless with special reference to the grace by which Gentiles were admitted into covenant with God. Firm adherence to that Gospel would be the

¹ The phrase '*Ecclesia of God*,' which we find here, adopted and adapted as we have seen from the Old Testament, has a similar local reference at the head of both the Epistles to the Corinthians as also in 1 Tim. iii. 5, not to speak of 1 Cor. x. 32; xi. 22, where, as we shall see [p. 117], the phrase appears to have a double reference.

most essential principle to guide them, after his departure, in their faith in God.

Then he adds words which define for the future the two provinces of activity for the Ecclesia, its action within and its action without, 'building up' and 'enlargement.' The word of God's grace, he says, is indeed able¹ to build up², to build up the Ecclesia and each individual member thereof within (cf. ix. 31), and likewise to bestow on those who had it not already the inheritance³ among all the sanctified, all the saints of the covenant.

His last words are a gentle and disguised warning, again with reference to his own practice, against the coveting of earthly good things, and in favour of earning by personal labour not only the supply of personal needs but the means of helping those who have not themselves the strength to labour. These are words that might well be addressed to the whole Ecclesia: but there is no turn of language to indicate a change from the address to the elders; and various passages in the Epistles confirm the *prima facie* impression that it is to them in the first instance that the warning is addressed.

He ends with the saying of the Lord Jesus, or (it may be) the summing up of many words of His, "Happy is it rather to give than to receive."

¹ τῶ δυναμένῳ assuredly goes, as the Greek suggests, with λόγῳ, not with κυρίῳ (or θεῶ).

² No accusative, that the reference may be perfectly general.

³ See especially xxvi. 18; Eph. i. 18; Col. i. 12.

St Paul's reception at Jerusalem and at Rome.

We may pass over the journey to Jerusalem with all its warnings of danger. At Jerusalem Paul and his company were joyfully received by "the brethren" however widely or narrowly the term should be limited in this context. Next day they went in to James, and all the Elders were present. Of the other Apostles we hear nothing. In all probability they were in some other part of Palestine. James clearly here has an authoritative position. The presence of all the Elders shews that the visit was a formal one, a visit to the recognised authorities of the Ecclesia of Jerusalem, and the primary recipient is James, the elders being only spoken of as present. On the other hand not a word is distinctly said of any act or saying of James separately. After St Paul has finished his narrative, "they" (we are told, with a vague inclusive plural) "glorified God and said to him... (xxi. 20)." Not improbably James was the spokesman: but if so, he spoke the mind of the rest. Deeply interesting as this address was, the only point which concerns us is the final referencé to the letter sent to Antioch. "But as touching the Gentiles which have believed, we ourselves (*ἡμεῖς*) sent (or wrote, or enjoined) judging that they should beware of what is offered to idols, etc." This is said in marked contrast to the suggestion that St Paul should manifest by his own example his loyalty to the Law in the case of

born Jews. It was in effect saying that his different teaching respecting Gentiles was what they of Jerusalem could not condemn, seeing they had themselves sanctioned for the Gentiles only certain definite restraints which did not involve obedience to the Law. This accounts for the general form 'the Gentiles which have believed'. To refer to Antioch and Syria and Cilicia would have been irrelevant; and moreover the regions actually addressed were the only regions which at the time of the letter contained definitely formed Ecclesiae.

This is practically the end of the evidence deducible from the Acts. After this one scene on the second day at Jerusalem, James and the Elders disappear from view, as the other Apostles had disappeared long before. All that happened at Jerusalem, at Cæsarea, and on the voyage to Rome lies outside our subject. We hear of 'brethren' at Puteoli and at Rome, but the word Ecclesia is not used. The breach with the unbelieving Jews at Rome recalls that at the Pisidian Antioch, and ends with a similar setting forth of the Gentile reception of the Gospel, making up for the Jewish hardness of heart. Beginning at Jerusalem, the centre of ancient Israel and the home of the first Christian Ecclesia, the book points forward to a time when the centre of the heathen world will *as such* be for a time the centre of the Ecclesia of God.

LECTURE VII.

THE 'ECCLESIA' IN THE EPISTLES.

The uses of the word.

THUS far we have followed St Luke's narrative, with scarcely any divergence into the illustrative matter to be found in the Epistles. The Epistles however contain much important evidence of various kinds, while they also sometimes fail us in respect of information which we perhaps might have expected to find, and certainly should be glad to find. Much of the evidence will be best considered under the several Epistles successively: but, in beginning with the uses of the word *Ecclesia* itself, we shall find it clearer to take them in groups.

Everyone must have noticed St Paul's fondness for adding *τοῦ θεοῦ* to *ἐκκλησία*, "the Ecclesia (or Ecclesiae) of God". We saw just now the significance of the phrase in the adaptation of Ps. lxxiv. 2 by St Paul in addressing the Ephesian elders, as claiming for the community of Christians the prerogatives of

God's ancient Ecclesia. With the exception however of two places in 1 Tim. (iii. 5, 15), where the old name is used with a special force derived from the context, this name is confined to St Paul's earlier epistles, the two to the Thessalonians, the two to the Corinthians, and Galatians. It is very striking that at this time, when his antagonism to the Judaizers was at its hottest, he never for a moment set a new Ecclesia against the old, an Ecclesia of Jesus or even an Ecclesia of the Christ against the Ecclesia of God, but implicitly taught his heathen converts to believe that the body into which they had been baptized was itself the Ecclesia of God. This addition of *τοῦ θεοῦ* occurs in several of the groups of passages. Naturally, and with special force, it stands in two out of three of the places in which the original Ecclesia of Judæa is meant, and is spoken of as the object of St Paul's persecution. But more significant is the application to single Ecclesiae (the various Ecclesiae of Judæa 1 Thes. ii. 14; or Corinth 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1); or to the sum total of all separate Ecclesiae (2 Thes. i. 4; 1 Cor. xi. 16); or lastly to the one universal Ecclesia as represented in a local Ecclesia (1 Cor. x. 32; xi. 22).

On the other hand, that second aspect of the Ecclesia of God under the new Covenant, by which it is also the Ecclesia of Christ (as He Himself said "I will build *my* Ecclesia") is likewise reflected in the Epistles. The most obvious instances are the two

passages in which the Ecclesiae of Judæa are referred to. "Ye, brethren," St Paul writes to the Thessalonians (1 Thes. ii. 14) "became imitators of the Ecclesiae of God which are in Judæa in Christ Jesus" (viz. by suffering like them for conscience sake). They were Ecclesiae of God, but their distinguishing feature was that they were "in Christ Jesus", having their existence in Jesus as Messiah. It is as though he shrank from altogether refusing the name 'Ecclesiae of God' to the various purely Jewish communities throughout the Holy Land. The next verses (1 Thes. ii. 15, 16) contain the most vehement of all St Paul's language against the Jews: but these are the individual men, the perverse generation; and for their misdeeds the Jewish Ecclesia would not necessarily as yet be responsible, the nation's final refusal of its Messiah not having yet come. But, apart from this possible or even probable latent distinction, the Christian Ecclesiae of God would be emphatically Ecclesiae of God in Christ Jesus, He in His glorification being the fundamental bond of Christian fellowship. The other passage which mentions these Judæan Ecclesiae is Gal. i. 22, "and I continued unknown to the Ecclesiae of Judæa that are in Christ": the phrase here is briefer, but the added *ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ* gives the characteristic touch. Echoes of these two clear passages occur with reference to other Ecclesiae. That of the Thessalonians is in both Epistles said to be "in God the (or our) Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". The

men of Corinth are said to be "hallowed in Christ Jesus" (i.e. brought into the state of 'saints' in Him). The men of Philippi "saints in Christ Jesus". The men of Ephesus "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus"; and so the men of Colossae "saints and faithful brethren in Christ". And for the men of Rome also there is the analogous statement (i. 6) "among whom are ye also, *called* of Jesus Christ."

With these forms of speech we may probably associate the difficult and unique phrase of Rom. xvi. 16, "All the Ecclesiae of the Christ salute you." This is the one place in the New Testament, apart from our Lord's words to Peter, where we read of "Ecclesiae of Christ" (or "of the Christ"), not "of God": for the singular number we have no example. The sense which first suggests itself, "all Christian Ecclesiae" is very difficult to understand. That all the Ecclesiae of not only Palestine, but Syria, various provinces of Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece should have recently, either simultaneously or by joint action, have asked St Paul to convey their greetings to the Roman Christians is barely credible, and the addition of *πᾶσαι* (omitted only in the later Syrian text and by no version) clinches the difficulty¹. Observing this difficulty (which in-

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 19, 20 is no true parallel, for such joint action of the Ecclesiae (or principal Ecclesiae,—there is no *πᾶσαι*) of Proconsular Asia would be quite possible, and the second phrase (v. 20) "all the brethren" must by analogy mean all the individual brethren in the midst of whom St Paul was writing from Ephesus the capital.

deed had evidently been felt long ago by Origen), some of the older commentators suppose some such limitation as "all the Ecclesiae of Greece": but this the Greek cannot possibly bear. It seems far more probable that by "the Ecclesiae of the Christ" the Messiah, St Paul means the Ecclesiae of those "of whom as concerning the flesh the Messiah came" (Rom. ix. 5), and to whom His Messiahship could not but mean more than it did to Jews of the Dispersion, much less to men of Gentile birth: in a word that he means the Ecclesiae of Judæa, of whom as we have seen, he has twice spoken already in other epistles. It might easily be that all these had been represented at some recent gathering at Jerusalem, and had there united in a message which some Jerusalem colleague or friend had since conveyed to him.

This supposition gains in probability when we notice that, whatever may be the case elsewhere, *ὁ χριστός* is never used in this Epistle without some reference to Messiahship, though not always quite on the surface¹. The least obvious, but for our purpose the most interesting, is xiv. 18, where the whole stress lies on *ἐν τούτῳ* (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 13 f., 22 f.), and the mode of service of the Messiah just described is implicitly contrasted with a pretended service of the Messiah. The significance of the phrase comes out when it occurs again in that curious guarded postscript

¹ See Rom. vii. 4; ix. 3, 5; xv. 3 and 7 taken together.

against the Judaizers which St Paul adds after his greetings (xvi. 17-20). "Such men," he says, "serve not the Christ who is our Lord, but their own belly" (i.e. by insisting on legal distinctions of meats), while, he means to say, they pretend to be the only true servants of the Messiah. Now the salutation immediately preceding this warning contains the words which we are considering. To you, Romans, he seems to say, I am bidden to send the greetings of all the true Ecclesiae of the Messiah. But you need to be warned about some who may hereafter come troubling you, and falsely claiming to be Messiah's only faithful servants, as against me and mine. Thus the enigmatic form of the salutation may arise out of the inevitably enigmatic form of the coming warning.

Individuals not lost in the Society.

Another interesting point which it is convenient to notice here is that twofold aspect of an Ecclesia which came before us early in the Acts, as being on the one hand itself a single body, and on the other made up of single living men. Here too there is an interesting sequence, though not a perfect one, in the order of the Epistles.

The salutation to 1 and 2 Thessalonians is simply to the Ecclesia of the Thessalonians in God [our] Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (this last phrase, we may note in passing, may be considered to include the *τοῦ θεοῦ* of 1 and 2 Corinthians).

In 1 Cor. i. 2 on the other hand we find the two aspects coupled together by a bold disregard of grammar *τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις*: the single Ecclesia in Corinth is identical with men who have been hallowed in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints.

In 2 Cor. i. 1 there is a seeming return to the form used to the Thessalonians, the reason probably being that the name 'saints' was reserved for the following *σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις πᾶσιν τοῖς οὔσι ἐν ὄλῃ τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ* (only partially parallel to the *σὺν πᾶσιν* etc. of 1 Corinthians): there may also be a distinction between the single Ecclesia of the great city Corinth and the scattered saints or Christians of the rest of Achaia.

The case of Galatians is peculiar. Here St Paul was writing, not to a city alone, or to a great city, the capital of a region, but to a region containing various unnamed cities. He writes simply to "the Ecclesiae" (plural) of Galatia: to attach to this feminine plural a masculine plural would have been awkward and puzzling (in Acts xvi. 4 the change of gender from *πόλεις* to *αὐτοῖς* explains itself): and moreover the tone of rebuke in which this Epistle is couched has rendered its salutation in various respects exceptional.

But when we come to Romans, the term Ecclesia disappears from the salutation, and the designation

of it by reference to its individual members, which in 1 Corinthians we found combined with Ecclesia, now stands alone, "to all that are in Rome beloved of God, called to be saints," each word "beloved"¹ and "saints"² expressing a privilege once confined to Israel but now extended to the Gentiles. It is the same in Philippians ("to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are in Philippi"); and "Ephesians" ("to the saints that are [[in Ephesus]] and faithful in Christ Jesus"); and finally Colossians ("to the saints and faithful brethren, or holy and faithful brethren, in Christ that are at Colossae").

This later usage of St Paul is followed by St Peter (*ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς* followed after a few words by *ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος*), and by St Jude (*τοῖς ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ ἠγαπημένοις, καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τετηρημένοις κλητοῖς*).

Connected with this carefulness to keep individual membership in sight, is the total absence of territorial language (so to speak) in the designations of local Ecclesiae. Three times the Ecclesia meant is designated by the adjectival local name of its members, viz. in the salutations to 1 and 2 Thessalonians (*τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικέων*, "of Thessalonians": this personal description being in effect a partial substitute for the absence of anything like *κλητοῖς ἀγίοις*), and

¹ See Rom. xi. 28 in connexion with Deut. xxxiii. 12 and other parts of the Old Testament.

² See p. 110.

in a reference to the Ecclesia "of the Laodiceans" (τῆ Λαοδικέων ἐκκλησίᾳ) in Col. iv. 16. In all other cases of a single city the Ecclesia is designated as "in" that city: so the salutations of 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians; also Cenchreae (Rom. xvi. 1), and each of the seven Ecclesiae of the Apocalypse. When the reference is to a whole region including a number of cities and therefore of Ecclesiae the usage is, on the surface, not quite constant. Twice "in" is used, for Judæa (1 Thess. ii. 14), and Asia (Apoc. i. 4): while in each case the form used can be readily accounted for by the accompanying words which rendered the use of "in" the only natural mode of designation, τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν οὐσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, and ταῖς ἐπτά ἐκκλησίαις ταῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ. In all the other (six) cases, however, these plural designations of a plurality of Ecclesiae are designated by a genitive of the region; the Ecclesiae of Judæa, Gal. i. 22; of Asia, 1 Cor. xvi. 19; of Galatia, 1 Cor. xvi. 1 and the salutation to the Galatians; of Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1; of the nations or Gentiles generally (τῶν ἐθνῶν), Rom. xvi. 4. In these collective instances the simple and convenient genitive could lead to no misunderstanding. But we find no instance of such a form as "the Ecclesia of Ephesus" (a city) or "the Ecclesia of Galatia" (a region). No circumstances had yet arisen which could give propriety to such a form of speech.

It may be well now for the sake of clearness, to reckon up separately, without detail, the various classes of Christian societies to which the term Ecclesia is applied in the Epistles and Apocalypse.

1. (sing. with art.). The original Ecclesia of Jerusalem or Judæa, at a time when there was no other:—Gal. i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Phil. iii. 6: the occasion of reference in all three cases being St Paul's own action as a persecutor.

2. (sing. with art.). The single local Ecclesia of a city which is named:—Thessalonica (1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1); Corinth (1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1); Cenchreæ (Rom. xvi. 1); Laodicea in Asia Minor (Col. iv. 16); each of the seven Ecclesiae of Proconsular Asia in Apoc. ii. iii.

3. ἡ ἐκκλησία (sing. and with art.), referring to the individual Ecclesia addressed; or in one case the Ecclesia of the city from which the Epistle was written:—1 Cor. vi. 4; xiv. 5, 12, 23; Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Tim. v. 16; James v. 14; 3 John 9, 10.

4. ἐκκλησία (sing. no art.), referring to any individual Ecclesia:—1 Cor. xiv. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 5, 15; and similarly ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ 1 Cor. iv. 17; οὐδεμία ἐκκλησία, Phil. iv. 15.

5. (plur.). The sum of individual Ecclesiae in a named region: Judæa (1 Thess. ii. 14; Gal. i. 22); Galatia (1 Cor. xvi. 1; Gal. i. 2); Macedonia (2 Cor. viii. 1); Asia (Proconsular) 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Apoc. i. 4 (and practically vv. 11, 20 *bis*); or without a

name, but apparently limited to a region named or implied in the context. Macedonia (2 Cor. viii. 19) and Proconsular Asia (Apor. end of each epistle, ii. 23 (though with *πάσαι*), and xxii. 16).

6. (plur.). Not of a definite region, nor yet the sum of all individual Ecclesiae; 2 Cor. xi. 8 (*ἄλλας ἐκκλησίας*); viii. 23 (*ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν*); and more collectively *πάσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν ἐθνῶν* of Rom. xvi. 4, and *αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πάσαι τοῦ χριστοῦ* of Rom. xvi. 16, which we have seen probably refer to the Judæan Ecclesiae.

7. (plur.). The sum of all individual Ecclesiae (or all but the one written to); usually with *πάσαι* (1 Cor. vii. 17, xiv. 33 [with *τῶν ἀγίων* added]; 2 Cor. viii. 18, 24; xi. 28); with *λοιπαί* (2 Cor. xii. 13); or simply with *τοῦ θεοῦ* (2 Thess. i. 4; 1 Cor. xi. 16).

8. (sing.). The one universal Ecclesia as represented in the local individual Ecclesia (as in the address to the Ephesian elders). This is confined to 1 Cor. (x. 32; xi. 22; and probably xii. 28).

9. (sing.). The one universal Ecclesia absolutely. This is confined to the twin Epistles to Ephesians and Colossians (Eph. i. 22; iii. 10, 21; v. 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32; Col. i. 18, 24).

10. (sing.). What may be called a domestic Ecclesia. This is a subject on which more will probably be known hereafter than at present. Thus far it seems pretty clear that St Paul's language points to a practice by which wealthy or otherwise im-

portant persons who had become Christians, among their other services to their brother Christians, allowed the large hall or saloon often attached to (or included in) the larger sort of private houses, to be used as places of meeting, whether for worship or for other affairs of the community. Accordingly the Ecclesia in the house of this or that man, would seem to mean that particular assemblage of Christians, out of the Christians of the whole city, which was accustomed to meet under his roof. The instances are these, Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 19); the same pair afterwards at Rome (Rom. xvi. 5); Nympha (or some would say Nymphas) at Colossae (Col. iv. 15); and Philemon also at Colossae (Philem. 2).

II. An assembly of an Ecclesia, rather than the *ἐκκλησία* itself. This use is at once classical and a return to the original force of *qāhāl*. To it belongs the *ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις* of 1 Cor. xiv. 34 (Let the women be silent in the Ecclesiae); as also, the semi-adverbial phrases when *ἐκκλησία* in the singular without an article is preceded by a preposition (*ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ* 1 Cor. xi. 18; xiv. 19, 28; *ἐνώπιον ἐκκλησίας* 3 John 6; analogous to the *ἐν συναγωγῇ* of John vi. 59; xviii. 20).

The many Ecclesiae and the one.

In many of the passages here cited, as also in many passages of the Acts, we have had brought dis-

tinctly before us the individuality of the several local Ecclesiae in the various cities. On the other hand, apart from those passages which speak of the one universal Ecclesia, whether absolutely, or as its attributes are reflected in a particular Ecclesia, we have varied evidence as to the pains taken by St Paul to counteract any tendency towards isolation and wantonness of independence, which might arise in the young communities which he founded, or with which he came in contact. The Epistle which contains most evidence of this kind is I Corinthians, the same Epistle which more than any other is occupied with resisting tendencies towards inward division. The spirit of lawlessness would evidently have a disintegrating effect in both spheres alike, as between the members of the individual Ecclesia, and as between it and the sister Ecclesiae of the same or other lands. The keynote as against isolation is struck in the very salutation (i. 2). Without going into all the ambiguities of language in that verse, we can at least see that in some manner the Corinthians are there taught to look on themselves as united to "all who in every place invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and I believe we may safely add that "theirs and ours" means "their Lord and ours," the one Lord being set forth as the common bond of union, and obedience to His will as Lord, the uniting law of life. Then in *v.* 9, after giving thanks for those gifts of theirs which they were in danger of allowing to lead them

astray, he assures them "Faithful is the God through whom ye were called into fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord,"—fellowship *of* Him, not only fellowship *with* Him, though that also, but fellowship one with another and with all saints, derived from that fellowship with Himself which was common to them all.

Having put before the Corinthians this fundamental teaching at the beginning of the Epistle, St Paul repeatedly afterwards gives it a practical application by his appeals to Christian usage elsewhere. The authorities to which he appeals are of various kinds, e.g. traditions which he had himself first received and then passed on to them and to others, his own personal qualifications for judgment, expediency or edification, the teaching of "nature": but in addition to these he condemns Corinthian practices or tendencies by reference to the adverse practice of other Ecclesiae. Of the praying of women unveiled he says (xi. 16) "We have no such custom, neither the Ecclesiae of God." Enjoining order in the prophesyings (or according to another punctuation the silence of women in the assemblies), he adds (xiv. 33) "as in all the Ecclesiae of the Saints," and with reference to the latter point asks indignantly (v. 36) "Is it from you that the word of God came forth, or is it unto you alone that it reached?" In a different and calmer tone he simply seeks a precedent for what he would

have the Corinthians do in the matter of the collection for Judæa (xvi. 1); "as I directed for the Ecclesiae of Galatia, so do ye also." For a much larger matter of practice and principle, the remaining of each convert in the relation of life in which he previously found himself, he urges (vii. 17) "and so I direct in all the Ecclesiae"; while in an earlier passage, he binds up this principle of community with the obligations created by his personal relation as a founder (iv. 14—17), bidding them be imitators of him, as their true father in respect of their new life, and telling them that he sends them in Timothy another beloved child of his, "who shall put you in mind of my ways that are in Christ Jesus, as I teach everywhere in every Ecclesia."

In other places we find the community between Ecclesiae brought out from a different point of view by St Paul's warm thanksgivings for the *going forth* of the faith and love of this or that Ecclesia towards other Ecclesiae, so as to be known and to bear fruit far beyond its own limits (1 Thess. i. 7 f.; iv. 9 f.; 2 Thess. i. 3 f.; 2 Cor. iii. 2; Rom. i. 8; Col. i. 4). I need not repeat the details of the special prominence given by St Paul to the "collection for the Saints" as a means of knitting the Gentile and Jewish Christians together. One practical result of friendly intercommunion between separate Ecclesiae would be the cultivation of hospitality, the assurance

that Christians who had need to travel would find a temporary home and welcome wherever other Christians were gathered together (cf. Rom. xii. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 2; 3 John 5-8). Again, St Paul had doubtless a deliberate purpose when he rejoiced to convey the mutual salutations of Ecclesiae (1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. xvi. 4, 16; Phil. iv. 22); himself commended Phoebe to the Romans as one who ministered to the sister Ecclesia at Cenchreae (Rom. xvi. 1, 2); gave orders for the exchange of epistles of his, addressed to two neighbouring Ecclesiae (Col. iv. 16); and made this or that Ecclesia a sharer, so to speak, in his own work of founding or visiting other Ecclesiae by allusions to his being *forwarded* by them (*προπεμφθῆναι*: 1 Cor. xvi. 6; 2 Cor. i. 16; Rom. xv. 24). By itself each of these details may seem trivial enough: but together they help to shew how St Paul's recognition of the individual responsibility and substantial independence of single city Ecclesiae was brought into harmony with his sense of the unity of the body of Christ as a whole, by this watchful care to seize every opportunity of kindling and keeping alive in each society a consciousness of its share in the life of the great Ecclesia of God.

LECTURE VIII.

THE EARLIER EPISTLES OF ST PAUL.

WE must now pass to the Epistles themselves, taken mainly in chronological order, without however attempting to notice more than a very few of the most instructive passages bearing on our subject. Strictly speaking a large part of them all has a bearing on it, as we must see when once we recognise that in the Apostle's eyes all true life in an Ecclesia is a life of community, of the harmonious and mutually helpful action of different elements, so that he is giving instruction on the very essence of membership when in each of the nine Epistles addressed to Ecclesiae he makes the *peace* of God to be the supreme standard for them to aim at, and the perpetual self-surrender of love the comprehensive means of attaining it.

The Epistles to the Thessalonians.

To begin with I Thessalonians. At the outset St Paul dwells much on the marks of God's special love (i. 4), His special choice or election of them (doubtless chiefly at least their election as a com-

munity), as attested in the warmth with which under severe trials they had embraced the Gospel, and become imitators of himself and his associates and of the Lord; so that from them the word of the Lord had sounded forth anew far and wide. This was how they came to be an Ecclesia.

Of the temper and attitude which should always govern the members of an Ecclesia towards each other preeminently and then further towards all men, he has much to say in various places, the foundation being 'love' in accordance with the Lord's own new commandment, and the comprehensive result, His gift of peace¹: where, as in iv. 9, *φιλαδελφία* comes in, it connotes the special principle of action as between Christian and Christian, not 'brotherly love', as A.V. usually has it, i.e. love *like* that of brethren, but actual 'love of brethren' as being brethren.

Two closely related passages, one in each Epistle, deserve attention.

In 2 Thess. iii. 6—16 is a remarkable warning against some brethren among the Thessalonians who walked 'in an irregular and disorderly way' (*ἀτάκτως*, the word carrying with it the association of the verb *ἀτακτέω* applied to soldiers who leave their ranks or who do not keep in rank): they walked, he says, "not according to the tradition which ye received from us." The special point would seem to be that on

¹ See 1 Thess. iii. 12; iv. 9—11, &c.

some plea or other, whether of sanctity or gifts of teaching or the like (we are not told which) they claimed a specially privileged position, particularly the privilege of being supported by others. Against this pretension St Paul sets his own deliberate practice when among them, how he followed no irregular and exceptional ways (*οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν*), but in spite of the right which he might have acted on, worked for his own bread, that he might shew in his own person an example for all to copy, as well as not to burden any of them. "And if any," he adds, "harkeneth not to our word through the epistle, note that man not to company with him, that he may be ashamed (*ἐντραπή*); and count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. And may the Lord of peace Himself give you His peace at all times in every way." Here we have the beginning of the "discipline" of an Ecclesia, exercised by the community itself. Seclusion from the society of its members is seen illustrating by contrast what membership of an Ecclesia means on its practical side.

The other passage is in 1 Thess. v. 11—15, 23. Here the practised life of membership is the starting point. "Wherefore encourage ye one another (*παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους*), and build ye up each¹ the other

¹ The Greek here (*εἰς τὸν ἕνα*) is remarkable, and may be illustrated by 1 Cor. iv. 6 *ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐνδὸς φυσιοῦσθε κατὰ τοῦ ἐτέρου*, St Paul's point *there* being the dividing effect of inflatedness or puffing up, as *here* the uniting effect of mutual building up.

as also ye do." Then come two verses in which St Paul interrupts his words to and about the Thessalonian Christians generally, in order to call their attention to a special class among them: "But we ask you, brethren, to keep in knowledge (*εἰδέναι*) them that labour among you and guide you in the Lord (*προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν Κυρίῳ*) and admonish you, and to esteem them very exceedingly (as we should say 'in a special way' *ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ* or *-ῶς*) because of their work. Be at peace in (or among) yourselves." Though it is morally impossible that *προϊσταμένους*¹ can here be the technical title of an office standing as it does between "labouring" and "admonishing", yet the persons meant are to all appearance office-bearers of the Ecclesia. The reference is the more interesting because elsewhere in St Paul's Epistles (Pastoral Epistles and the salutation in Phil. i. 1 excepted) we find no other mention of such persons as actually existing in any individual church. It can hardly be doubted that Elders are meant, though no title is given. The characteristics assigned to them are three. Their labouring (*κοπιῶντας*) is doubtless specially meant to be opposed to the conduct of such persons as we have seen denounced in the Second Epistle (iii. 11). Then comes their guidance, *προϊσταμένους*, a word

¹ This common assumption is further negatived by the prevailing usage of *προϊσταμαι* (especially in the present) both in ordinary Greek and in the New Testament.

usually applied to informal¹ leaderships and managings of all kinds, rather than to definite offices, and associated with the services rendered to dependents by a patron², so that (as in Romans) helpful leadership in Divine things would be approximately the thought suggested. Third comes their work of admonition or warning. Of any other form of teaching nothing is said; and probably all three descriptions should be taken as setting forth services rendered to the individual members of the Ecclesia, rather than to the Ecclesia as a whole.

After this digression St Paul takes up (1 Thess. v. 14) the thread dropped after v. 11: "But we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly (*ἀτάκτους* again), encourage the fainthearted, sustain the weak, be long-suffering towards all." The services then which have just been mentioned as specially rendered by the Elders, were not essentially different from services which members of the Ecclesia, simply as brethren, were to render each other. *They* too were to admonish the disorderly, as also to do the converse work of encouraging the feeble-minded. *They* too were to make the cause of the weak³ their own, to sustain them, which is at least one side, if not more,

¹ Cf. Rom. xii. 8 ὁ προϊστάμενος ἐν σπουδῇ between two very different clauses.

² Cf. Rom. xvi. 2 καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ (Phoebe) προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ. See p. 207.

³ Cf. Chrysostom on Rom. xii. 6; Acts xx. 35 (addressed to the Ephesian Elders οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων).

of the 'helpful leadership' of the Elders; as well as to shew long suffering towards all. And again towards the close it is "the God of peace Himself" that St Paul prays may hallow and keep the Thesalonians.

The Epistles to the Corinthians.

The next Epistle, 1 Corinthians, is perhaps the richest of all in illustrative matter: but we must pass through it very quickly. Of late years it has been the occasion of an interesting theory. Many people seem to find a difficulty in believing that the Ecclesiae founded by St Paul in the west, or perhaps even further east among heathen populations, were founded on a Jewish basis, such as the Acts seems to imply, in at least the earlier cases. It has been pointed out that evidence is fast accumulating (chiefly from inscriptions) respecting the existence of multitudes of clubs or associations, religious or other, in the Greek cities of the Empire; and it has been suggested that in such places as Corinth, the Christian congregation or society was an adaptation rather of some such Greek models as these than of any Jewish congregation or society. The presence of these heathen brotherhoods in the same cities with the new Christian brotherhoods is in any case a striking fact; and it may be that hereafter traces of their influence may be detected in the Epistles. But I must confess that at present, as far as I can see, it is the paucity and

uncertainty of such traces that are chiefly surprising. It would not have been right to pass over so plausible a suggestion in silence: but I fear it will give us no help towards interpreting the evidence of the Epistles themselves.

The first few verses of 1 Corinthians (i. 4—9) after the salutation give us its main theme. St Paul thanks God for the gifts in which these typical Greeks of the Empire were rich, 'speech' and 'knowledge,' and then goes on to warn them against the natural abuse of these gifts, the self-assertion fostered by glibness and knowingness, and the consequent spirit of schism or division, the very contradiction of the idea of an Ecclesia. The habit of seeming to know all about most things, and of being able to talk glibly about most things, would naturally tend to an excess of individuality, and a diminished sense of corporate responsibilities. This fact supplies, under many different forms, the main drift of 1 Corinthians. Never losing his cordial appreciation of the Corinthian endowments, St Paul is practically teaching throughout that a truly Christian life is of necessity the life of membership in a body.

After the thanksgiving he exhorts them (i. 10—17) by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the bond of a common service, that they all say the same thing, and there be in them no rents or divisions (*σχίσματα*), but that they be perfected in the same mind and in the same judgment. He has heard that there

are strifes among them, due to partisanship adorned with Apostolic names. To all this he opposes the Cross of the Messiah. Presently (iii. 16 f.) he accounts for all by their forgetfulness that they were a temple, or shrine of God (for His Spirit by inhabiting their community or Ecclesia made it into a shrine of Himself), and he reminds them that this marring of the temple of God by their going each his own way was making them guilty of violence against the holiness of God; and again further on (iv. 6) he points out that the party factions which rent the Ecclesia, while they seemed to be in honour of venerated names, were in reality only a puffing up of each man against his neighbour.

With the fifth chapter the concrete practical questions begin. First comes the grievous moral offence which the Corinthian Christians were so strangely tolerating in one of their own number. St Paul's language, circuitous as it may sound, has a distinct and instructive purpose when closely examined. The condemnation that he pronounces is not from a distance or in his own name merely: twice over he represents himself as present, present in spirit, in an assembly where the Corinthians and his spirit are gathered together with the power of our Lord Jesus. That is, while he is peremptory that the incestuous person shall be excluded from the community, he is equally determined that the act shall be their own act, not a mere compliance with a command

of his: "do not ye judge them that are within," he asks, "while them that are without God judgeth? Put away (Deut. xxii. 24) the evil man out of yourselves."

How little this zeal for the purity of the community involved a pitiless disregard of the individual offender we may see from 2 Cor. ii.

The next chapter (vi.) contains a rebuke at once of the litigious spirit which contradicted the idea of a community, and of the consequent habit of having recourse to heathen tribunals rather than the arbitration of brethren.

The eighth chapter lays down the social rule that a man is bound not by his own conscience only, but by the injury which he may do to the conscience of his brethren.

The next three chapters (ix.—xi.) set forth in various ways the entrance into the one body by baptism, and the sustenance of the higher life by that Supper of the Lord¹ in which the mutual communion

¹ In x. 16—21, in arguing against complicity with idolatry through offered meats, he appeals to the one bread which is broken as a Communion of the body of the Christ, and then explains why: "because" he says, "we the many are one bread, one body, for we partake all of us [of bread] from the one bread."

The Holy Communion is more directly the subject of xi. 17—34, the special occasion being the injuries done to Christian fellowship by the practices which were tolerated at the Communion feast still identical with the Agape.

To these differences he applies the same term *σχιζματα* (v. 18) which in the first chapter he had applied to the parties glorying in Apostolic names.

of members of the body, and the communion of each and all with the Head of the body are indissolubly united.

For our purpose the central chapter is the twelfth, starting from the differences of gifts and proceeding to the full exposition of the relation of body and members. But to this we shall have to return presently, as also to the closing verses setting forth the variety of functions appointed by God in the Ecclesia. Then comes the familiar thirteenth chapter on love, which in the light of St Paul's idea of the Ecclesia we can see to be no digression, this gift of the Spirit being incomparably more essential to its life than any of the gifts which caught men's attention.

Yet these too had their value subordinate as it was, and so in ch. xiv. St Paul teaches the Corinthians what standard to apply to them one with another, these standards being chiefly rational intelligibility, edification, i.e. the good of the community, and fitness for appealing to the conscience of heathen spectators.

2 Cor. contains little fresh but the peculiar verse, ix. 13. The concluding section (xii. 19—xiii. 13) implies the same fears as to breaches of unity as the first Epistle; and it is worth notice from this point of view that in the final benediction the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit is added to the usual grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians likewise calls now for no special remark.

The Epistle to the Romans.

St Paul's peculiar position towards the Romans invests his Epistle to them with an interest of its own. We saw before that the Ecclesia of Antioch was founded by no Apostle, and, as the Epistle shews, it is the same with that of the mighty Rome, which had sprung up no one knows how, no one knows when, from some promiscuous scattering of the seed of truth; though a later age invented a founding of both by St Peter. The contrast in St Paul's tone, its total absence of any claim to authority, illustrates how large a part of the authority which he exercised towards other Ecclesiae was not official, so to speak, but personal, involved in his unique position as their founder, their father in the new birth. Here (i. 11 f.) telling the Romans that he longs to see them that he may impart to them some spiritual gift that they may be established, he instantly explains himself, "that is that *I with you*¹ may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine."

Almost the whole Epistle is governed by the thought which was filling St Paul's mind at this time, the relation of Jew and Gentile, the place of both in the counsels of God, and the peaceful inclusion of both in the same brotherhood. On the one hand the failure and the obsolescence of the Law in its letter is set forth more explicitly than ever; on the

¹ Cf. xv. 32 "and *together with you* find rest."

other the continuous growth of the new Ecclesia out of the old Ecclesia is expounded by the image of the grafting of the wild Gentile olive into the ancient olive tree of Israel.

The apparently ethical teaching of chapters xii. and xiii. is really for the most part on the principles of Christian fellowship, and rests on teaching about the body and its members, and about diversity of gifts resembling what occurs in I Corinthians, and will similarly need further examination presently.

Again ch. xiv. may be taken with I Cor. x.

Lastly, the fifteenth and parts of the sixteenth chapter illustrate historically, as other chapters had done doctrinally¹, St Paul's yearnings for the unity of all Christians of East and West, and its association in his mind with his carrying the Gentile offering to Jerusalem, and, if he should then escape death, with his own presence at Rome, the centre and symbol of civil unity.

¹ Note how here also the application of the principle of fidelity to Christian fellowship in xv. 7 to "mutual reception" (*προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους*, cf. xiv. 1, 3; xi. 15) is specially connected with the relations of Jewish to Gentile Christians; and how once more the same principle is illustrated from another side by the remarkable section xvi. 17—20 which St Paul interposes as by an afterthought before the original final salutation, with its warnings against the (unnamed) Judaizers from whom he feared the introduction of divisions (*διχοστασίας*) and stumblingblocks, and its confident hope that nevertheless the God of peace would shortly bruise Satan under their feet, Satan the author of all discord and cunning calumny, of all that is most opposed to the purposes for which the Ecclesia of God and His Christ had been founded.

LECTURE IX.

THE ONE UNIVERSAL ECCLESIA IN THE EPISTLES OF THE FIRST ROMAN CAPTIVITY.

WE now enter on that period of the Apostolic Age which begins with St Paul's arrival at Rome. His long-cherished hope was at last fulfilled, though not in the way which he had proposed to himself. He had met face to face the Christian community which had grown up independently of all authoritative guidance in the distant capital ; and, on the way, the Gentile offering which he carried to the Christians of Jerusalem had been accepted by their leaders, and he had escaped, though barely escaped, martyrdom at the hands of his unbelieving countrymen. Delivered from this danger, and shut up for two years at Caesarea, probably with great advantage to the cause for which he laboured, he had reached Rome at last as the prisoner of the Roman authorities. Here he spent another period of two years in another enforced seclusion, which still more evidently gave

him a place of vantage for spreading the Gospel such as he could hardly have had as a mere visitor (see Lightfoot, *Phil.* 18 f.). The four extant Epistles belonging to this period are pervaded by a serenity and a sense of assurance such as are rarely to be found in their six predecessors, even in Romans, and this increased happiness of tone is closely connected with St Paul's thoughts and hopes about the various Ecclesiae and about the Ecclesia.

The Epistle to the Philippians.

We begin with the Epistle to the Philippians. The last words of the opening salutation (i. 1) *σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις*, "with the bishops (or overseers) and deacons" (R.V.), will be examined to better effect after we have considered the usage of the same words in the Pastoral Epistles.

The special joy which fills the Apostle's mind in his outpourings to the Philippian Christians is called forth by their warm and active fellowship or communion with him, not simply as the messenger of truth to themselves at a former time, but as now and in the future the chief herald of the Gospel to other regions¹. Their sympathies and aspirations were not shut up within their own little community.

St Paul has likewise much to say to the Philippians on the inward relations of the Ecclesia, for this is the purport of his varied and strenuous exhortations to

¹ See i. 5—7; 12—20; 25 f.; ii. 17—30; iv. 3, 10, 14—19.

unity, and that on the basis of a corporate life *worthy of the Gospel of Christ*. Such is doubtless the force of the pregnant phrase in i. 27 [R. V. Mg.] ‘behave as citizens worthily of the Gospel of the Christ’ (*μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε*), *πολιτεύομαι* retaining its strict sense¹ ‘to live the life of citizens’, not merely the weaker late sense [R. V. text] ‘to behave, conduct themselves’. It is thus closely connected with the familiar ‘citizenship’ (*πολίτευμα*) of iii. 20, the new commonwealth having its centre in Heaven, to which Christians belong, being implicitly contrasted with the terrestrial commonwealth centred at Jerusalem, resting on laws about mere externals such as circumcision and distinctions of meats. And the same contrast underlies this exhortation to live a community life (*πολιτεύεσθε*) worthy of the Gospel of the Christ, one directed not by submission to statutes but by the inward powers of the spirit of fellowship; as St Paul himself explains within the same sentence, “that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul wrestling together through the faith of the Gospel” (the faith which it teaches and inspires); and more fully still in the following section (ii. 1—11).

¹ This strict sense is similarly the right one, in the only other place of the New Testament where the verb occurs, Acts xxiii. 1, St Paul there using it of himself as one who had loyally lived the life of a true Jew. Various places in some books of the Apocrypha, in Josephus, and nearly a century later in Justin’s dialogue with the Jew Trypho, shew that it must have been commonly used by the Jews in this familiar sense

The Epistle to the 'Ephesians.'

We now come to the three Epistles which the same messenger carried into Asia Minor, the Epistles to the 'Ephesians', to the Colossians, and to Philemon.

The Epistle to Philemon concerns us only by the speaking testimony which it bears to the reality of the Ecclesia as a brotherhood as shown in the new footing on which it was possible for master and slave to stand towards each other without any interference with the status and legal conditions of servitude.

Nor will it be worth our while to give time separately to the Epistle to the Colossians, nearly all that it contains directly pertinent to our subject being contained likewise in 'Ephesians'.

On the other hand 'Ephesians' is peculiarly rich in instructive materials and would repay a much more complete examination than could be attempted within our limits¹. He would be a bold man who should suppose himself to have fully mastered even the outlines of its teaching: but even the slightest patient study of it must be fruitful, provided we are willing to find in it something more than we have brought to it. On the other hand it is only too easy to exaggerate its exceptional character. Its teaching is, so to speak, the culmination of St Paul's previous teaching, not a wholly new message divided by a sharp line from what had been spoken before. If we enquire into the cause of this culmination, it is not enough to try to

¹ See further in Hort's *Prolegomena to Romans and Ephesians*.

account for it solely by mental progress in St Paul, by ampler experience and riper thought. Such progress, wrought by such causes of progress, must of course have existed in the case of a man in whom the free flow of inward life was so little hampered by languor or obstruction; and, if so, it would naturally reflect itself in his writings. But we have also to remember the significant hint given us in 1 Cor. ii. that the teaching which he addressed to unripe communities was purposely cut down to be proportional to their spiritual state, and that all the while he was cherishing in his own mind a world of higher thoughts, "a wisdom", he calls it, which could rightly be proclaimed only to maturer recipients; though here and there, for instance in some passages of Romans, he could not refrain from partially admitting others to these inner thoughts. This being the case, he might well desire to make some Christian communities depositaries of this reserved wisdom before he died, and the Ecclesiae of Ephesus and other cities of that region may have seemed to him to have now reached a sufficiently high stage of discipleship to enable them to receive with advantage what he now wished to say. The primary subjects of this higher teaching may be described as the relation of the Son of God to the constitution of the Universe, and to the course of human history, and in connexion with such themes it was but natural that the Ecclesia of God should find a place.

But there were other reasons why St Paul should think and write about the Ecclesia at this time, reasons arising in part at least out of concrete contemporary history. We have already seen how in the period preceding his two captivities his mind was filled with the antithesis of Jew and Gentile within the Christian fold, and with the steady purpose of averting division by his dangerous last journey to Jerusalem, after which he hoped to crown his missions, as it were, by friendly intercourse with the Christians of Rome.* The abiding monument of this aspiration is the Epistle to the Romans, and 'Ephesians' is a corresponding monument of the same thoughts from the side of fulfilment instead of anticipation. It is hardly a paradox to say that neither of these two great Epistles is really intelligible without the other. To a Jew, or a Christian brought up as a Jew, there could be no such cleavage among mankind as that between the people within the old covenant and the promiscuous nations without it. A Christian who understood his own faith could not but believe that the death on Calvary had filled up the chasm, or (in St Paul's figure) dissolved the middle wall of partition. But all would seem to have been done in vain if the work of God were repudiated by wretched human factiousness, and if Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians renounced and spurned each other. This worst of dangers was now to all appearance averted, and so St Paul could expound to the Gentiles of Asia Minor

the uniting counsel of God without serious misgivings lest perverse human facts should frustrate the great Divine purpose.

A phrase or two must suffice to quote from ii. 11—22, "He is our peace who made the both (*τὰ ἀμφότερα* neuter) one"; again, "that He might found the two in Himself into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile the both (*τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους* masc.) in one body to God through the Cross." Hitherto the Acts and Epistles have been setting before us only a number of separate independent little communities each called an Ecclesia: at least this holds good for Gentile Christendom from Antioch outwards, and perhaps even for Palestine. Now however the course of events has led the Apostle to think of all Jewish Christians collectively, and all Gentile Christians collectively, and of both these two multitudes of men as now made one in the strictest sense, "one new man". But this fusion is no mere negative or destructive process. To take away the distinction of Jew and Gentile without putting anything better in its place would have been deadly retrogression, not progress: fusion takes place because Jewish and Gentile believers alike are members of a single new society held together by a yet more solemn consecration than the old, and that new society is called "the Ecclesia": in other words for Christians it is true to say that there is one Ecclesia, as well as to say that there are many Ecclesiae.

It would seem accordingly that to St Paul, when writing this Epistle, "the Ecclesia" was a kind of symbol or visible expression of that wondrous 'mystery', to use his own word, which had been hidden throughout the ages but was now made manifest, that the Gentiles were fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of the same promises in Christ Jesus through the Gospel, and hence that it was likewise a symbol or visible expression of the Wisdom, as he calls it, by which God was working out His purpose through diversities of ages and by means which seemed for the time to foil Him. This subject is in some respects more fully expounded in Rom. ix.—xi., but without clear mention of the Ecclesia. It is probably in reference to it that St Paul speaks (iii. 10) of the "manifoldly diverse" (or resourceful *πολυποίκιλος*) wisdom of God, as being made known to the heavenly powers through the Ecclesia, i.e. through beholding the Ecclesia and considering the light which its very existence threw back on dark places of the world's history in the past. Nay through the Apostle's guarded words we may probably gather that the Ecclesia, with these associations attached to it, was to him likewise a kind of pledge for the complete fulfilment of God's purpose in the dim future. Ideally the Ecclesia was coextensive with humanity: all who shared the manhood which Christ had taken were potentially members of the Ecclesia: its ideals were identical with the ideals of a cleansed and perfected

humanity. In ascribing glory to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power which is inwrought in us, he lets us see (iii. 20 f.) what present facts were inspiring this reaching forward of hope, by adding "in the Ecclesia and in Christ Jesus (the Divine Head of the Ecclesia) unto all the generations of the age of the ages."

But if the securing of the union of Jewish and Gentile Christians on equal terms was one cause of St Paul's distinct recognition of the Ecclesia as *one* at this time, his position at Rome must have been another. Although his language in Romans shews that he had no intention of treating the community at Rome as having no legitimate position till he should give it some sort of Apostolic authorisation, he evidently did naturally feel that his function as Apostle of the Gentiles had a certain incompleteness till he had joined in Christian work and fellowship in the capital of the Gentile world, and brought the Roman community into closer relations of sympathy with other Christian communities through the bond of his own person. Writing now from Rome he could not have divested himself, if he would, of a sense of writing from the centre of earthly human affairs; all the more, since we know from the narrative in Acts xxii. that he was himself a Roman citizen, and apparently proud to hold this place in the Empire.

Here then he must have been vividly reminded of the already existing unity which comprehended both Jew and Gentile under the bond of subjection to the Emperor at Rome, and similarity and contrast alike would suggest that a truer unity bound together in one society all believers in the Crucified Lord. Some generations were to pass before the Christian Ecclesia and the Roman Empire were to stand out visibly in the eyes of men as rivals and at last as deadly antagonists. But even in the Apostolic age the impressiveness of the Empire might well contribute to the shaping of the thoughts of a St Paul about his scattered fellow-believers.

Besides these two causes for the transition from the usage of applying the term Ecclesia only to an individual local community to this late use of it in the most comprehensive sense, we must not forget the biblical associations with the Ecclesia of Israel which were evidently suggestive of unity, and perhaps a similar mode of speech as regards the Christians of Palestine before the Antiochian Ecclesia had come into existence. But apparently these influences did not affect current usage till changed circumstances pointed to the use of a collective name.

The image of the body.

'Ephesians' contains however other definitions of the Ecclesia which are in like manner led up to by

corresponding language in earlier Epistles. The most important of these is the image of the body. The cardinal passages are two, in 1 Cor. xii. and in Rom. xii.: the interesting but difficult allusion in 1 Cor. x. 16, 17 may be passed over. In 1 Cor. xii. St Paul deals with the vexed question of spiritual powers, and counteracts the disposition to treat the more exceptional and abnormal kinds of powers as peculiarly spiritual, by treating all powers as merely different modes of manifestation of the same Spirit, and each power as a gift bestowed on its recipient, with a view to what is expedient (*πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον*). From the Spirit and its manifestations he then descends to the recipients themselves. The reason, it is implied, why they have received different powers is because there are different functions to be discharged answering to these several powers; and the meaning of this difference of functions is explained by the fact that together they constitute a body, of which each is a different member "for (*v. 13*) in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit." He points out that in a body the whole is dependent on the diversity of office of the several members, and that each member is dependent on the office of the other members. Then he adds, "But ye are a body of Christ (*σῶμα Χριστοῦ*), and members severally." (The next verses we must come to presently.) Here evidently it is the Corinthian

community by itself that is called a 'body of Christ': this depends not merely on the absence of an article but on *ὑμεῖς*, which cannot naturally mean "all ye Christians."

In Rom. xii. 3—5 all is briefer, but the ideas are essentially the same. The central verse is, "As in one body we have many members, and all the members have not the same office (action), so we the many are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." Here the language used is not formally applied to the Roman community in particular: but the context shews that St Paul is still thinking of local communities, and of the principles which should regulate the membership of the Roman community, as of all others.

In 'Ephesians' the image is extended to embrace all Christians, and the change is not improbably connected with the clear setting forth of the relation of the Body to its Head which now first comes before us. In the illustrative or expository part of the passage of 1 Cor. indeed (*v.* 21) the head is mentioned; but only as one of the members, and nothing answers to it in what is said of the body of Christ and *its* members. And again in the rather peculiar language of *v.* 12 (*οὕτως καὶ ὁ χριστός*) Christ seems to be represented by a natural and instructive variation of the image, as Himself constituting the whole body (in accordance with the Pauline phrase *ἐν Χριστῷ*), without reference positively or negatively to

the head. This limitation was the more natural in these two cases because in both the main purpose was rather a practical than a doctrinal one, the repression of vanities and jealousies by vivid insistence on the idea of diversity and interdependence of functions. The comparison of men in society to the members of a body was of course not new. With the Stoics in particular it was much in vogue. What was distinctively Christian was the faith in the One baptizing and life-giving Spirit, the one uniting body of Christ, the one all-working, all-inspiring God.

In 'Ephesians' and Colossians the change comes not so much by an expansion or extension of the thought of each local Ecclesia as a body over a wider sphere as by way of corollary or application, so to speak, of larger and deeper thoughts on the place of the Christ in the universal economy of things, antecedent not only to the Incarnation but to the whole course of the world. According to St Paul, as Christ "is before all things and all things (*τὰ πάντα*) in Him consist" (Col. i. 17), so also it was God's purpose in the course of the ages "to sum up all things in Him, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth" (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι* Eph. i. 10: cf. Col. i. 20). Part of this universal primacy of His (*πρωτεύων* Col. i. 18), involved in His exaltation to the right hand of God as the completion of His Resurrection, was (Eph. i. 22 f.) that God "gave Him as Head over all things to the Ecclesia which is His body, the fulfilment of

Him who is fulfilled all things in all"; or as in Col. (i. 18) "Himself is the Head of the body, the Ecclesia." The relation thus set forth under a figure is mutual. The work which Christ came to do on earth was not completed when He passed from the sight of men: He the Head, needed a body of members for its full working out through the ages: part by part He was, as St Paul says, to be fulfilled in the community of His disciples, whose office in the world was the outflow of His own. And on the other hand His disciples had no intelligible unity apart from their ascended Head, who was also to them the present central fountain of life and power.

Here, at last, for the first time in the Acts and Epistles, we have "the Ecclesia" spoken of in the sense of the one universal Ecclesia, and it comes more from the theological than from the historical side; i.e. less from the actual circumstances of the actual Christian communities than from a development of thoughts respecting the place and office of the Son of God: His Headship was felt to involve the unity of all those who were united to Him. On the other hand it is a serious misunderstanding of these Epistles to suppose, as is sometimes done, that the Ecclesia here spoken of is an Ecclesia wholly in the heavens, not formed of human beings. In the closest connexion with the sentences just read St Paul in both Epistles goes on to dwell on the contrast between the past and the present state of the Gentiles

to whom he was writing (and in Eph. ii. 3, in the spirit of the early chapters of Romans, he intercalates a similar contrast as true of Jewish converts like himself), and describes these Gentiles as now "made alive with the Christ, and raised with Him, and made with Him to sit in the heavenly regions in Christ Jesus";—difficult words enough, but clearly turning on the spiritual union of men actually on earth with One called their Head in the heavens. Moreover this passage of Colossians, by what it says (i. 20) of His making peace through the blood of His Cross, compared with Eph. ii. 13—18, shews that this new language about the Ecclesia was really in part suggested by the new assurance that Jew and Gentile, those near and those far off, were truly brought together in the one Christian brotherhood.

Once more the identity of the Ecclesia before spoken of as 'the body of the Christ' with actual men upon earth, is implied in Col. i. 24, when St Paul says, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for *your* sake (i.e. assuredly, for the sake of you Gentiles), and then goes on "and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of the Christ in my flesh for His body's sake which is the Ecclesia, *whereof I was made a minister*, according to the dispensation of God which was given me to youward" etc.

Husband and Wife.

Again the unity of the Ecclesia finds prominent expression in various language used by St Paul on the relation of husband and wife (Eph. v. 22—33). The conception itself he inherited from the later prophets of the Old Testament, especially with reference to the covenant established between Jehovah and His people at Mount Sinai, e.g. Jer. ii. 2; Ez. xvi. 60; Is. liv. 5 “Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is His name and the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.” Language of this kind would easily fit itself on in due time to the *Ecclesia* of Israel for Greek-speaking Jews, or the *‘ēdhāh* (fem.) for Hebrew-speaking Jews: it is involved in the allegorical interpretation eventually given by Jewish commentators to the Book of Canticles, but there is no reason to think that this interpretation was as old as the Apostolic age. St Paul had already applied the prophetic language or idea to single local Ecclesiae, that of Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 2 “I espoused you to one husband to present you to him a chaste virgin, even to the Christ”), and implicitly that of Rome (Rom. vii. 4). He had also in 1 Cor. xi. 3 expressed the relation of husband to wife by the image of the head, associating it in the same breath with a Headship of the Christ in relation to each man or husband, and a Headship of God in relation to Christ. The lowest of these three headships

was probably suggested by the story of the origin of Eve in Genesis ; and the intermediate Headship was a natural application of the idea of the Christ as the second Adam, the true spiritual Head of the human race and so of each member of it : the word ‘ κεφαλῆ ’ doubtless borrowing for the purpose something of the largeness and variation of sense of the Heb. *rō’sh*.

Now, in Eph. v. these various thoughts are brought together in order to set forth what high duties were by the Divine constitution of the human race involved in the relations of husband and wife. That Headship of the human race which was implied in the Christ’s being called the Second Adam carried with it *a fortiori* His Headship of the Ecclesia, that chosen portion of the human race, representative of the whole, which is brought into close relation to Himself, and is the immediate object of His saving and cherishing and purifying love, attested once for all by His willing self-sacrifice. St Paul’s primary object in these twelve verses is to expound marriage, not to expound the Ecclesia : but it is no less plain from his manner of writing that the thought of the Ecclesia in its various higher relations was filling his mind at the time, and making him rejoice to have this opportunity of pouring out something of the truth which seemed to have revealed itself to him. If we are to interpret “mystery” in the difficult 32nd verse, as apparently we ought to do, by St Paul’s usage, i.e. take it as a Divine age-long secret only now at last disclosed,

he wished to say that the meaning of that primary institution of human society, though proclaimed in dark words at the beginning of history, could not be truly known till its heavenly archetype was revealed, even the relation of Christ and the Ecclesia, which just before has been once more called His body, and individual Christians members of that body. Taking this passage in connexion with the various references to the Ecclesia which have preceded in the Epistle, it may be regarded as morally certain that the Ecclesia here intended is not a local community, but the community of Christians as a whole.

LECTURE X.

'GIFTS' AND 'GRACE.'

HAVING thus examined the chief passages of Ephesians, which now for the first time in St Paul's extant Epistles clearly set forth the conception of a single universal Ecclesia, we must return to the passages of various dates in which he expounds his doctrine of *χαρίσματα*, and exemplifies it by various functions within the Ecclesia. The three passages are 1 Cor. xii. 4—11 and 28—31; Rom. xii. 6—8; Eph. iv. 7—12.

The meaning of the terms.

Χάρισμα comes of course from *χαρίζομαι*; it means anything given of free bounty, not of debt, contract, or right. It is thus obviously used in Philo, and as obviously in Rom. v. 15, vi. 23 (the gift of God is eternal life); and less obviously but with I believe essentially the same force in the other passages of St Paul, as also in the only other New Testament place, 1 Pet. iv. 10. In these instances it is used to

designate either what we call 'natural advantages' independent of any human process of acquisition, or advantages freshly received in the course of Providence; both alike being regarded as so many various free gifts from the Lord of men, and as designed by Him to be distinctive qualifications for rendering distinctive services to men or to communities of men. In this sense they are Divine gifts both to the individual men in whom so to speak they are located, and to the society for whose benefit they are ordained. This conception underlies not only the passages of St Paul which refer directly to membership of a body, but the various usages of the remaining passages, in which on a superficial view the word might be supposed to be used arbitrarily. (The usage of the Pastoral Epistles we shall have to examine separately by-and-by.) Thus in Rom. xi. 29 ("The gifts and the calling of God are beyond repentance," He cannot change His purpose in respect of them) we have a saying of the utmost universality respecting God's *χαρίσματα* in general, the special application being to the various privileges granted to Israel for the benefit of mankind. In 1 Cor. vii. 7 *χάρισμα* is the proper gift which each man has from God as bearing on marriage or celibacy, probably with reference to what St Paul believed to be involved in his own special *χάρισμα* as the wandering herald of the truth to the Gentiles. In 2 Cor. i. 11 (cf. *vv.* 3—7, 9, 13 f.) it is his recent deliverance from impending death regarded as

a gift bestowed on him for the sake of the Gentiles to whom he had yet to preach. And in the anxiously reserved language of Rom. i. 11 it seems to be some advantage connected with his personal history and work, which he wished to share with the Romans (*μεταδῶ*) by meeting them face to face, for the strengthening of their faith (cf. 1 Thess. ii. 8).

This conception of *χάρισμα* is essentially the same as that of the talents in the Parable, if only we go behind the somewhat vulgarised modern associations of the word talents to its full sense in the Gospel; with the difference that the Pauline *χαρίσματα*, covering the members of a body, have a more distinct reference to variety of use. Perhaps the clearest exposition is St Peter's (1 Pet. iv. 9—11, "Each, as he received a *χάρισμα*, ministering it to one another as good stewards of a manifold bounty (*χάριτος*) of God"); the instances given being hospitality and teaching. The single fountain of God's bounty or grace is thus represented as dividing itself manifoldly through all the inequalities of human faculty and possessions, that it may be the better distributed by the individual men as stewards each of what he has received, that it may be for the benefit of the great household.

It is important to notice that the associations connected with the term 'grace' as inherited by us from Latin theology, denoting a spiritual power or

influence, whether received by individuals according to their need or appropriated permanently to a sacred ordinance or a sacred office, whatever may be the truth of the idea in itself, are only misleading in the interpretation of the biblical language respecting *χάρις* and *χάρισμα*. The dominant conception of *χάρις* in the Acts and the Epistles is the free bounty of God as exhibited in the admission of the Gentiles although they stood without the original covenant; and this is constantly associated in St Paul's mind with the free bounty of forgiveness shown to himself the persecutor, making him the fittest of all heralds of the free *χάρις*, so preeminently in his own person a recipient of *χάρις*. And moreover the language in which he is accustomed to speak of the *χάρις* shown (in biblical language 'given') to him is by him transferred to those parts or aspects of the *χάρις* shown to Christians generally which constitute separate *χαρίσματα*. From this point of view it is well worth while to compare 1 Cor. iii. 10; Gal. i. 15, ii. 9; Rom. i. 5, xii. 3, xv. 15; Eph. iii. 2, 7, 8; and then to notice how in 1 Cor. i. 4—6 St Paul similarly thanks God, "for the *grace* of God which was given you in Christ Jesus; that in everything ye were enriched in him, in all utterance and all knowledge,...so that ye fall short in no *χάρισμα*": and again how Rom. xii. 6, "having *χαρίσματα* in accordance with the *χάρις* that was given (shown) to us, different [*χαρίσματα*]," looks back to *v.* 3, and how Eph. iv. 7 looks back to iii. 2, 7, 8.

The source of the 'Gifts.'

To come now to the instances given of various *χαρίσματα* within the Ecclesia, or of the persons to whom such *χαρίσματα* were assigned, we may look chiefly at 1 Cor. xii. and Eph. iv. First should be noticed the two verbs by which God's relation to the various functions is expressed in the two Epistles severally. In 1 Cor. the leading thought is of the Divinely ordained diversity of members in the Christian body; hence in *v.* 18 "God ἔθετο (not merely 'set' but 'placed,' set as part of a plan) the members, each one of them in the body as He willed"; and so in *v.* 28 the same verb is repeated with obvious reference to the preceding exposition, "And some God placed in the Ecclesia, first apostles, etc." In Ephesians the Divine *χάρις* or free bounty is the leading thought, each function being pronounced to be a Divine gift. Ps. lxxviii. 18, in the form in which it is quoted in *v.* 8, supplies the verb 'gave' ("and gave gifts to men"), and so St Paul proceeds, "And Himself gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, etc." The word *χάρισμα* does not occur in Ephesians: but ἔδωκεν in this connexion, associated with ἡ χάρις, is exactly the ἐχαρίσατο implicitly contained in *χάρισμα*.

'Functions' not formal 'Offices.'

Then come the functions themselves. Much profitless labour has been spent on trying to force the

various terms used into meaning so many definite ecclesiastical offices. Not only is the feat impossible, but the attempt carries us away from St Paul's purpose, which is to shew how the different functions are those which God has assigned to the different members of a single body. In both lists apostles and prophets come first, two forms of altogether exceptional function, those who were able to bear witness of Jesus and the Resurrection by the evidence of their own sight—the Twelve and St Paul—and those whose monitions or outpourings were regarded as specially inspired by the Holy Spirit. Each of these held one kind of function, and next to these in 1 Cor. come all who in any capacity were "teachers" (*διδάσκαλοι*) without any of the extraordinary gifts bestowed on apostles and prophets. In Ephesians this function is given in a less simple form. First there are "evangelists," doubtless men like Titus and Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 5) and Tychicus and Epaphras, disciples of St Paul who went about from place to place preaching the Gospel in multiplication and continuation of his labours without possessing the peculiar title of apostleship. Probably enough in St Paul's long imprisonment this kind of work had much increased. Then come "pastors and teachers," men who taught within their own community, and whose work was therefore as that of shepherds taking care for a flock. Here the list in Ephesians ends, while that in 1 Cor. proceeds to various functions unconnected with teaching

and belonging rather to action, first, extraordinary powers and what St Paul calls gifts of healings; then two types of ordinary services rendered to members of the community, first helps¹ (*ἀντιλήμψεις*), anything that could be done for poor or weak or outcast brethren, either by rich or powerful or influential brethren or by the devotion of those who stood on no such eminence; and secondly guidances² or governments (*κυβερνήσεις*), men who by wise counsels did for the community what the steersman or pilot does for the ship. Then last comes an exceptional class of extraordinary powers or manifestations, neither properly didactic nor properly practical, what are called 'tongues'. The enumeration earlier in the chapter (*vv.* 8—10) not only omits apostles and helps and guidances, but, with other variations, seems to subdivide the function of teachers under three different qualifications, what are called "an utterance (*λόγος*) of wisdom," "an utterance of knowledge," and "faith": and in Rom. xii. there are analogous subdivisions, among which occurs "ministration" (*διακονία*), a very comprehensive word, including e.g. (1 Cor. xvi. 15) the way in which apparently the household of Stephanas laid themselves out (*ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς*) to be hospitable and helpful to Christian strangers visiting Corinth.

¹ Cf. Acts xx. 35 *ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων*, some places in LXX., but especially Ecclesiasticus [xi. 12; li. 7].

² See especially its use in the LXX. version of Proverbs as the apparently exactly literal rendering of *tākhbūlōth* (see Del. on Prov. i. 5), three times rendered 'wise guidance' in R.V.

All this variation of enumeration, and also the variation in the form of description (persons and so to speak things being terms of a single series), becomes intelligible and natural when we understand clearly that St Paul is not speaking at all of formal offices or posts in the Ecclesia, much less enumerating them. The chief reason why he *seems* to do this is because apostles stand at the head in the two chief lists, and the apostolate of the Twelve and St Paul was in an important sense a definite and permanent office. But it was part of St Paul's purpose to shew that the service which they were intended to render to the Ecclesia of that age was on the one hand, as in the other cases, the service¹ of members to a body to which they themselves belonged, and on the other was too peculiar to be included under any other head. What is common in substance to all the terms of the series is that they are so many kinds of partial service, and from this point of view it was immaterial whether there were or were not definite offices corresponding to any or all of these kinds of service; or again whether two or more kinds of service were or were not, as a matter of fact, ever performed by the same persons. Hence these passages give us practically no evidence respecting the formal arrangements of the Ecclesiae of that age, though they tell us much of the forms of activity that were at work within them, and

¹ Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 5—9, and indeed —15, on Apollos and Paul.

above all illustrate vividly St Paul's conception of an Ecclesia and of the Ecclesia.

The image of the 'Body.'

The passage of Ephesians which we have been examining (iv. 7—11) begins the second portion of a section which rings with the proclamation of the great supreme Christian unities. But the purpose for which they are set forth is to sustain an exhortation on the fundamental practical duty attached to membership of the Christian body, to walk worthily of the vocation wherewith ye were called (explained by Col. iii. 15, "Let the peace of the Christ preside in your hearts, unto which ye were also called in [one] body"—better to read "in a body," i.e. to be members of a body) with all lowliness and meekness etc., giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, he proceeds in the familiar words which seem to glide from exhortation addressed to Christians of a few cities of Asia into affirmation respecting the whole body of Christians. But it would seem as though he dreaded the very semblance of representing an Ecclesia of God as intended to be a shapeless crowd of like and equal units. Accordingly he turns within, to claim as it were all varieties and inequalities as so many indications of divers functions needed to work together to a true unity. "To each one of us," he says emphatically (*Ἐνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν*), "was given the grace according to the measure of the

bounty of the Christ." Then comes the quotation from the Psalm and the rapid setting forth of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers as so many various gifts of God to men; and then in the same breath their present and their ultimate purposes; their present purpose the *καταρτισμός*, or perfecting and accomplishing of the saints (i.e. the individual members of the great community) unto a work of ministration (i.e. those more conspicuous functions were meant to train and develop analogous functions of ministration, in each and all); then secondly, as a single aim of this manifold accomplishing, the building up of the body of the Christ; and finally, as the ultimate purpose of these processes, the attainment of all together (*οἱ πάντες*), unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect [full-grown] man, unto a measure of stature [maturity] of [such as belongs to] the fulfilment of the Christ. Even here the sentence does not end. From the lofty heights of his own thought St Paul descends to its practical purport, the rising out of the old heathen state of distracted beguilement by unworthy teachers, and through a life of truthful intercourse one with another in the power of love (see 25 ff.) growing up into Him in all things who is the Head, Christ. Then he ends with a description of the action so to speak of the Head on the body of the Ecclesia, the fitting together and knitting together of the whole, the spreading of life as from a centre through every