

him of his welfare.' And the meaning seems to be no more than that Toi congratulated David upon his victories over foes that were common to both. But when the versions are examined with the care spent upon them by Mr. THACKERAY, it becomes manifest that King Toi did much more than that. In short, the phrase is the usual courteous expression for an act of submission. When Toi 'saluted' David he recognized his suzerainty, as Dr. CHEYNE shows in his article on 'Toi' in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*; when he 'blessed' him he bowed the knee to him in absolute surrender.

Now Mr. THACKERAY believes that this narrative is the very source of the parable. The 'two kings' referred to by our Lord are David and Toi. Mr. THACKERAY brings forward many illustrations

from other Semitic sources. But this is enough. We may take it as established that when Jesus recalled the well-known case of the one king who sent an embassy to another, He did not say that the embassy was to ask conditions of peace or even to inquire after the king's welfare, but to tender complete submission. And this is the only translation that agrees with the context. The words which follow the parable are: 'So therefore every one of you who renounceth not (saith not farewell to) all his possessions, cannot be my disciple.' We must not lay stress on the details of a parable. But that word 'therefore' binds the moral closely to the parable. Mr. THACKERAY believes that our Lord intended His hearers to recall the fact that Toi in saluting David surrendered not only his vessels of gold, silver, and brass, but also his independence.

## Days of the Son of Man.

BY THE REV. EDWARD W. WINSTANLEY, D.D., WOLVERHAMPTON.

'Days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.'—LUKE xvii. 22.

THESE words seem to form one of the most studiously avoided texts in all the Gospels: they constitute a puzzle for the exegete, and for homiletical handling they present great difficulties.

Yet because of the mystery of their meaning, they exert a peculiar fascination upon the student of the sayings of the Lord Jesus.

The connexion and interpretation of the statement are alike subjects of dispute and disagreement, and it must, we think, be admitted that no certain explanation has yet been discovered and perhaps no sure solution will ever be forthcoming. However, a little consideration may serve to throw some light upon meanings that are possible, and it will not be altogether without profit to see if any practical application of the words reported of our Lord can be made for our own conditions and needs.

I. Let us examine for a moment the context in which the saying in question lies embedded. It is

found almost at the opening of what can only be termed an apocalyptic section or collection of utterances concerning a future catastrophe, which is itself inserted in the so-called 'great interpolation' of this evangelist, and the verse is entirely peculiar to his record.

At the outset the definite statement is made that this revelation from the Lord's lips was uttered in response to a direct question on the part of the Pharisees, 'When does the Kingdom of God'—which had evidently formed the burden of the message of Jesus—'come?'

And the immediate answer is that much discussed, and in the last portion obscure, saying that it 'comes not with observation,' its advent cannot be calculated from external signs; nor is its manifestation local, that men may hurry thereto, 'for, behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst' (I give an ambiguous rendering of *ἐντὸς ὑμῶν* purposely). It is to be remarked that the opening and close of the reply of the Master are alike unique, confined to this report from the third evangelist.

Material is afterwards afforded which contains parallels, into whose details we must forbear to enter now, in the so-called eschatological chapter of Matthew, and, like that complex discourse, it is stated to have been uttered 'unto the disciples,' as if in pursuance of the subject with the circle of His intimates when the Pharisaic inquirers—whether honest or with crafty intention does not matter here—had turned away baffled. And our text, cryptic and mysterious, serves as the opening declaration (cf. Apoc. Ezra 13<sup>51f.</sup>).

II. Before we mention three or four meanings which appear to demand recognition, let us just look at the nature of the 'revelation' which, according to the transmission of the Lucan record, follows our text. First, there is an echo of the warning which appears in the Marcan apocalyptic chapter (13<sup>21</sup>; cf. Mt 24<sup>23f.</sup>, expanded 25<sup>f.</sup>), concerning the uprising of Messianic pretenders, who would but bring grievous disappointment to their deluded followers (17<sup>23</sup>). Then, apparently from the discourse material, utilized alike by our first and third evangelists, we have the simile of the lightning to intimate the world-wide and momentary manifestation of 'the day' (if that expression be original here), or, in Matthean terms, the 'presence' of the Son of man. Upon this there ensues, after an apparently intrusive and secondary prediction of suffering contained in Luke alone (17<sup>25</sup>), the statement that the coming situation will constitute an exact parallel with that familiarly known from sacred story in the period of the Flood, 'the days of Noah,' and on the occasion of the overwhelming of Sodom, 'the days of Lot': 'after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed' (17<sup>30</sup>; cf. Mt 24<sup>37. 39</sup>). The apocalyptic matter is then brought to a close by the narrating of a forecast of the consequences involved in the dramatic suddenness 'in that day' or 'night' of the separation of men or women, whether for acceptance or for rejection (17<sup>31f.</sup>; cf. Mt 24<sup>40f.</sup>).

Furthermore, before giving interpretations which seem to be worthy of consideration, the predominance of the future tense in the context ought to be noticed. The present, whether of mental impression or of prophetic realization, is only used in the Pharisees' question (17<sup>20</sup>), in the Lord's statement about the Kingdom (17<sup>21</sup>), and concerning the manifestation of the Son of man (17<sup>30</sup>). Otherwise, all is related directly to the time

to come (contrast 10<sup>23f.</sup>, Mt 13<sup>16f.</sup>, of the blessedness of the present vision of the disciples).

III. Now let us suppose the saying to be authentic, that is, a genuinely dominical word.

(a) 1. First, a possible interpretation is suggested by the introductory words of the statement: 'days will come.' Thus the Lord spoke, according to all the Synoptic records, most probably of Himself as being like unto a bridegroom whom his friends would mourn, when he had been violently withdrawn from them (Mk 2<sup>20</sup>, Mt 9<sup>15</sup>, Lk 5<sup>35</sup>). This veiled prediction of gloom and sadness for His close associates must belong to a relatively late period of the ministry of Jesus, when a fatal conclusion to His activities was clearly foreseen, and it may find a parallel in the reported word at Bethany concerning His burial (Mk 14<sup>8</sup>, Mt 26<sup>12</sup>).

Can our text, then, be accepted as indeed a unique and indirect prophecy of passion and death? Can it imply in like manner that the earthly presence of the departed Master will be vainly desired by devoted disciples in days to come? We apprehend that this would involve a meaning even more strained than to take the Kingdom's presence in the previous verse as signifying the terrestrial activity of Jesus and His little band of faithful ones.

2. Again, there is a broad tendency to suppose our words to intimate that, owing to a developing conviction on our Lord's part that the delay of His manifestation would be prolonged, He desired to afford strong encouragement to His disciples, so as to stiffen their faith and strengthen their hope in the waiting-time which would bring gloomy reaction and a pining desire to perceive some promise of their coming vindication. Under such conditions the danger of following some false claimant to Messiahship would have to be overcome by the recollection of a previous warning.

This interpretation would assume that a growing disillusionment and an increasing assurance of approaching death had convinced the Master that the time for the establishment of the divine Kingdom, and consequently for His own glorious self-revelation, was far from ripe. But this would seem to be in direct contradiction to the prevailing, and we can hardly deem other than authentic, expectation that the emergence of the new age would be within the generation of His contemporaries. Perhaps for this reason the compiler of the first Gospel, if he knew our text, found it out of

harmony with current Christian hopes—as the ‘little apocalypse’ chapter testifies—and not in accord with other traditional words of Jesus, and therefore omitted it.

3. But, thirdly, let us assume that these peculiar sayings about the Kingdom and the Son of man are alike fragments of an authentic tradition, not necessarily immediately connected together as at present, but related in meaning and original intention.

The Kingdom will appear in the near future, and that instantly, universally, simultaneously, none will be able to carry the news of its appearing; it will be known to all for bliss or woe at once.

So, too, with the Son of man; no pining for ‘days’ from which the signs of His actual arrival may be calculated in order to fan afresh the flame of dying hopes will be needful. For the ‘days of Messiah,’ as they formed the objective of current popular expectation, will never come, in their stair-like apocalyptic development and in their extending and increasing clearness; but ere men surmise it, like lightning flash or unlooked-for doom, the Son of man will be revealed. And His will be no locally limited appearance, any more than that of the Kingdom. No messengers, indeed, will then be required to herald His unmistakable advent; and yet our Lord acknowledged clearly His complete ignorance of the exact time of that ‘day’ (Mk 13<sup>32</sup>, Mt 24<sup>36</sup>; cf. Lk 12<sup>40, 46</sup>).

It may be that these sayings, now transmitted so approximately, resemble the boulders strewn by the ice-tongue from the North and West along our Midland ridges, near by one another now, but having their origin upon the sides of far distant mountains. In like manner these words of our Lord, possibly arising from quite different occasions, are brought together into one companionship to teach the imminence and also the world-wide suddenness of the divine-human manifestation. One can scarcely suppose that our text would have a directly opposite meaning to that of the utterances which surround it, or presume the connexion to be due to the total misunderstanding on the part of the evangelist. Nor could ‘not seeing’ be applied to exclusion from the glory of the Kingdom, if the words were addressed, as we are told, ‘to the disciples.’

(*b*) But what if the verse is genuine and original in the Gospel of St. Luke, yet unauthentic in respect of coming from the Master’s lips? Brief

reference must be made to two interpretations from this standpoint, because it seems to represent the critical view prevalent to-day.

1. The one looks at our text in this manner. The initial flaming hope of the speedy return in glory of the exalted Lord is dying down, and men are longing to catch the sound of His coming, to perceive some preliminary sign, that the joy of approaching vindication may be assured. The verse would then be a transcript from experience thrown back into the reported speech of Jesus; it would reflect the temperament of the expectant watchers in the primitive communities, and the words of foretelling in the mouth of the incarnate Lord would be recorded for their consolation; because He surely must have been aware of the period of patient waiting which was to come. He certainly foresaw the peril of widely spread despair. The adaptation and incorporation of some such saying, perhaps from floating tradition, would serve to allay unhealthy excitement and feverish anxiety at the time of the compilation of the narrative. The faithful had to realize, in the Master’s spirit, that it was not for them ‘to know times or seasons’ (Ac 1<sup>6</sup>).

2. Another mode of interpreting which demands notice is that which would regard our text and the preceding word, applied to the inwardness of the Kingdom, as alike indicative of a strain of mysticism in the nature of the third evangelist, related to that traceable in his master St. Paul, and tending towards the almost complete transformation into the present, internal, and yet continuous experience of the Kingdom of the coming of the Logos-Spirit which characterizes the Fourth Gospel’s reflexion upon the historic life. This is indeed, according to the opinion of some scholars, the significance which our Lord Himself actually attached to the sayings. No outward sounds or signs betoken the presence of the rule of God, no external vision marks the nearness of the Son of man in spiritual advent to His own.

If the verse be susceptible of such an interpretation, it would contain a protest against the craving for outward tokens, and emphasize the individual spirit-life in union with God ‘in Christ,’ implying that the days of the Son of man truly consisted in a spiritual relationship ‘in the Lord,’ to use the Pauline expression, and that their dawning was through a spiritual re-birth, as the saints of the Johannine type testified.

One feels, however, that this beautiful application of the utterance to the reality of inward experience for the disciple afterwards, to the immediate individual intuition of the communicated divine life, not only depends upon that qualitative interpretation of the saying about the Kingdom, which is itself uncertain, but also renders the verse quite out of harmony with the subsequent admonitions of a distinctly external and catastrophic type with which it is incorporated in the Lucan transmission.

All things considered, with our present inadequate knowledge, a judgment of *non liquet* seems alone open to us. If the dictum be authentic, it signifies the suddenness and simultaneousness of the presence, advent, or—in later Church phraseology—the return of the Son of man. If the verse be a product of reflexion within the Christian communities, its object is to strengthen wavering hopes, to meet the strain and disappointment of the prolonged delay of that earnestly expected open Parousia of the glorified Lord.

IV. In this abode of religious learning<sup>1</sup> we are fain to ask, What use for edification can therefore be made of this fragment from the sacred narratives, which is so 'hard to be understood'?

We must frankly admit that a direct, literal, and immediate application does not appear to be possible, by reason of the modern Christian's altered outlook upon the universe, and consequently his utterly different religious expectations from those of the first age, which were so intensely realistic, and expressed in terms of time and space which are quite foreign to us now.

'Days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.'

A. According to that view of the original signification of the saying to which we incline, it is not of importance whether 'one of the days' could mean (in the vernacular) to the speaker and the hearers the first, the beginning of a series of preparatory manifestations, or not, because of the anticipated world-wide simultaneousness of the epiphany. But our cosmology, which has long ceased to be geocentric, forbids such expectation of, and has eliminated the literal yearning for, a dramatic and spectacular *dénouement*; and the hope for the celestial pageantry of the advent of

<sup>1</sup> Preached in the University Church, Cambridge.

the Son of man has been abandoned, although the rich religious value of the ancient symbolism is assuredly to be preserved.

And yet one ventures to think that, despite the transformation of the old apocalyptic anticipations, even after all these Christian centuries of change, the text does express a truth which is verifiable for each decade and each generation, by those who have eyes to see with a vision which is not that of physical ocular apprehension. Neither epoch, nor *lustrum*, nor year passes by but there is manifested a day or, if you will, days of the Son of man therein, although the majority of those even who call themselves by the name of Christ do not perceive it; and, but for prophet and poet, men of creative vision, endued with more subtle sensitiveness to register their consciousness of waves of religious movement, the day of the reigning divine-human Personality passes unnoted and unobserved by the mass of men; and only when the special manifestation—among religious communities or the nations of the world, in social upheaval or wave of liberating and uniting thought—has ceased, the importance thereof comes to be recognized and appreciated.

There is no need to look far back down the avenue of Christian centuries for illustrations of the 'presence,' the 'days' of the Son of man in energizing spiritual power, exhibited either in slow or rapid processes of change—the catastrophic coming for the Jewish people in the sack of the Holy City, crises in the decay of the Empire of which the Latin Church more especially became the residuary legatee, and historic moments in the spreading of the faith—for we live *now* in a day of the Son of man, of the self-revealing, sway-establishing Lord, to whose own inner consciousness when on earth the reign of God was already present in the vibrant harmonies of His own soul, as well as future in the home-like symphony which He anticipated of attuned spirits, in communion with the Father and with each other.

Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes.

Yes, 'only he who sees.' For the most part, this application of the text in a modern spirit remains true of mankind: 'Ye shall not see it.'

(i.) The desperate onrush of the Balkan war last autumn, almost beyond the reach of imagina-

tion, with its surprises for the great world-powers and for its own initiators, its shock to Islam: is that no part of a day of Christ whose significance and whose issues are as yet unmeasured and unrealized? Ought we not to pray that the treaty of peace so recently signed in London may form indeed 'a landmark in history,' and that a reign of friendship, concord, and justice, a regency of the uniting spirit of Jesus, may come to be established shortly in those desolated and harried countries?

(ii.) Again, the Christian folk of our islands have not grasped it, but for those who watch the phenomena of change, the flush of a bright religious dawning deepens and spreads in the further East.

The World's Missionary Conference of three years ago has been followed by a gathering together in one spirit of the Christian agencies throughout all India, and last December was signalized by a new birth of religious unity in that vast land which is deemed the brightest jewel in Britain's imperial crown. But now, this very year, the consolidation of the Church of China proceeds apace, and it only required the recent appeal of the Celestial Government for the Christians' supplications to stir the public mind to realize that something is happening which will change for ever the features of the religious landscape in the country that now bears upon its surface a quarter of the world's population, and with whose inhabitants lies, we dare to say, for the East at any rate, the development and the complexion of the Christianity of the future. Surely, if we possess the vision of spiritual hope, we must see that a day of the Son of man is upon us; although no thunders of acclamation proclaim it to the Churches or the nations, and the people recognize it not, and no heavenly spectacle compels the attention of men to the subtly-spreading religious wave of a new spirituality and the urge of an uprising and democratizing Christian influence.

(iii.) Time does not permit in this discussion and brief applying of a text that we should dwell upon the modern interplay and interflow between East and West of deep religious thought of the contemplative and mystic type, or upon the remarkable though contrasted phenomenon of the active interest of the statecraft of the far distant Orient in, and its investigation into, the nation-building forces of our faith. Tendencies like these are, for prophetic minds who look beneath the

surface currents of our time, tokens of an advent, a moving, impelling presence of the Lord, of wider reach and vaster range of historic influence than that once desired and yearned for local manifestation of the Son of man from on high.

*B.* But a more limited, personal, and intimate application, if not primitive, possesses at least a modern value.

If one who delves below the primary meaning of our text perceives in some such manner as we have described its fulfilment in the broader spaces of what may be termed historic development, it is not to be denied that the day of the Son of man, unseen to the crowd, lights up the narrow places and dim recesses of the individual soul. Here the mystic inwardness of the Kingdom, here the internal advent of the Christ by the pervading, indwelling Spirit, exercises invisibly its sovereign, its transforming power.

Not seen without, but felt, experienced within, a divine communion, a sweet, ineffable, and empowering nearness, so irradiating the human spirit that even upon earth, on the toil-worn daily path, it 'dwells in the heavenly places,' and gaining poise, balance, and harmony, possesses some foretaste of that life eternal which is the knowledge of God. Many, alas! have not felt the desire for such a day of the Son of man within the soul's experience: many have not even thought of or considered the very possibility of the immediate knowledge of such presence and communion; immersed as they are in the sordid labour of garnering a living wage, set upon the needs, rewards, and pleasures of earth alone, no impulse has stirred them to look above material things and perceive the vision of angels, the ever-waiting Christ, whose guerdon of entrance is His regency within.

*C.* Nevertheless, it is not only in movements religious and social that days of the Son of man wax and wane unseen, unannounced and unacclaimed, and in the speedy or gradual changes within the single soul, but, just as the first apostles were themselves distributors, and the wider circle of disciples light-bearers, so for us as loyal followers there abides the consciousness of a deep responsibility laid upon ourselves as heralds of the dawn, as agents of the self-manifestation of the Lord to other men. The day of the Son of man comes around us and in us indeed, but also *through us*.



Preparers for the recognition of the inward, invisible Daystar in the heart are we for those souls in the twilight of doubt or the gloom of despair, through the untold action of our influence and the inestimable effect of our personal example, in municipal work, in friendship's ties, in the mutual duties of employment, with the moulding power of a teacher or in the impressionable condition of a listener.

*D.* Finally, in these various cases which can be rendered illustrative of days of the Son of man, we observe a similarity to nature's processes; sometimes progress by leaps, sometimes a slow advance; now rapid and catastrophic, now gradual, by an evolution that can scarcely be registered. But as with the tedious upbuilding of the land or the violent lateral pressures, volcanic and seismic disturbances, they have all alike passed through a preparation beneath the surface, whether of the earth, of a nation's mind, or of an individual consciousness. The agencies of change work unseen. Silently grow the developments of thought, the subtle, far-reaching alterations in religious outlook, whether in the soul of a people or the heart of a

man. We are, however, apt to forget that even the open 'day' of the Lord's manifestation in flesh came and passed virtually unknown to the world; yet men still with fainting hearts pine for the day, amid the visionless misery of pale, crushed lives, and with half-uttered longings miss the radiant joyousness of the divine presence; while we, the few strong in hope, who have seen the dream, strive 'to shape it to action,' and put our puny shoulders to the slow wheel of religious progress that we may hasten the dawn of an advent of sympathy, amity, and love, the blessedness of a rule of 'righteousness and peace and joy.'

We have learnt from the Incarnate the enthusiasm of patience; for the Sufferer reigns, and the 'men of violence' are forgotten; and we are conscious ourselves that the daybreak emerges from within, the Christ-spirit comes to expression in the heart of an individual or the soul of a community. Thus, with a day of the Lord illuminating our own experience, we are content to continue toiling like the weavers on the underside, beneath the cloud that veils our human sight:

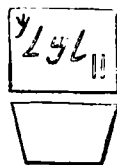
'We may not see how the right side looks: we can only weave and wait.'

## Inscribed Hebrew Weights from Palestine.

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### II.

#### IV. THE KING'S WEIGHT.



AMONG the inscribed weights in the Gezer collection is a small bronze weight of the Persian period, described as 'the frustum of a pyramid' (*E.G.* ii. 285, with fig. 433), and weighing 22.28 g (340 grs.). On it is engraved in Old Hebrew characters למלך 2, *i.e.* '2 of the king's [shekels or staters].' The king of this inscription is the king of Persia, and the weight represents two staters of the well-known Persian silver standard

of the normal value of 173 grs. Of this stater the ordinary silver coin of the Achæmenid kings, called by the Greeks the 'Median siglos,' or shekel, was one-half (*D.B.* iii. 421). That the siglos, however, notwithstanding its name—a græcized form of the Babylonian *shiklu*, shekel, as it is also termed in the Jewish papyri from Elephantinê—is really a half-shekel is evident on several grounds, among them the fact that in the Elephantinê papyri we are expressly informed that the real shekel (the fiftieth part of the mina) or stater (סתחרי) was equal to two 'shekels,' *i.e.* to two Persian sigloi.

The special interest of the Gezer double stater for the Old Testament student lies in the fact that the 'pounds,' or minas, 'of silver' in the official