

INTERPRETATION OF THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT VOLUME ONE – THE FOUR GOSPELS

BOOK ONE: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW



**APOSTOLOS
MAKRAKIS**

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"—Matthew 26:28

This verse-by-verse Orthodox Christian Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew is taken from the larger *Commentary on the Entire New Testament*, by Apostolos Makrakis, the teacher of Christianity. It is an original work and presents an Eastern Orthodox interpretation of the New Testament such as has never appeared in print, because it follows the author's own method of hermeneutics. The New Testament is the covenant entered into through Jesus Christ between God and believers in Christ. This Commentary on the New Testament points out the true meaning of the divine Covenant, and it exposes the misinterpretations of heterodox Christian denominations and their distortions of the terms and statements in the divine Covenant. It thus offers them a very great benefaction in that it enables them to see the opposite point of view, and, abandoning their delusion, to return to the dogmas of the united Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils, from which they originally strayed. A clear interpretation that genuinely interprets the divine words of Scripture enlightens all readers to true knowledge of the divine works, enables them to discern misinterpretations and false statements, and saves them from being led astray and from heresy and unbelief. Such is this Commentary on the Entire New Testament - one of great benefit to the learned as well as the unlearned, to those who know and those who do not know. Clarity is wise, but not unclearness, said our ancestors, who spoke to men with clearness and logic. All of the gospel and epistle books of the New Testament are therefore expounded scientifically by Makrakis for the enlightenment of the entire Christian world, in which misinterpretations and perversions of the Holy Scriptures have for many centuries kept divided and virtually at war with itself. Makrakis sheds light on many of the obscure passages and parables in the scriptures. The errors of the heterodox are scientifically exposed, analyzed and refuted through logical interpretation of the entire New Testament.

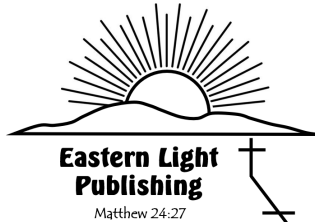
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Apostolos Makrakis
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INTERPRETATION OF THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT

VOLUME ONE – THE FOUR GOSPELS,
BOOK ONE: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST. MATTHEW

By Apostolos Makrakis



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**INTERPRETATION
OF
THE ENTIRE NEW
TESTAMENT**

by

APOSTOLOS MAKRAKIS

The Gospel According to Matthew

"Hear this, all ye people" (Psalm 48 (49))
"For this is my blood of the New Testament,
which is shed for many for the remission of
sins" (Math. 26:28)

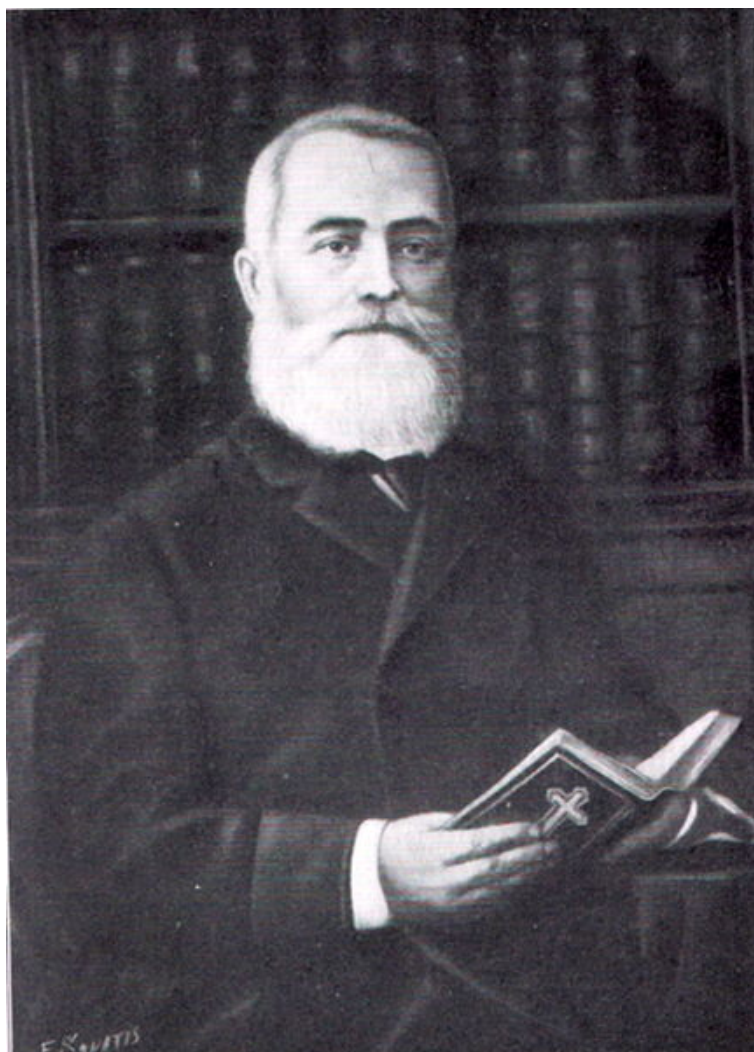


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Translated from the original Greek

by

ALBERT GEORGE ALEXANDER

Department of Languages

Northwestern State College

1947

To the

Devout and Christloving People

who have long known and observed

THE NEW TESTAMENT

This Complete Interpretation of
is dedicated

by

The Interpreter

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The translation into English of the two volumes of Makrakis *Interpretation of the Entire New Testament*, has presented innumerable problems of a phraseologic and textual nature which required a keen and impartial perusal of the Greek text, contributed in the main by Jewish Apostolic writers, as well as an exact determination of word meanings and connotations toward a faithful and accurate impartation of ideas and concepts—as accurate at least as the incongruity of the two tongues allows. In the transcription of quotations from the Old Testament, the translator at the insistence of the editors has adhered scrupulously to faithful translations of the Septuagint which is conceded by Greek and Hebrew scholars to be incomparably superior to any other version of the Old Testament at the present time. Likewise, in the transcription of passages from the New Testament, the same course has been pursued except in cases of serious discrepancies between the apostolic text and available translations, wherein the translator on his own responsibility undertook to render the above text into English as accurately as was within his power.

Makrakis is the first original interpreter of the Holy Scriptures and a far more accurate one than his predecessors. He interprets scientifically through the aid of right reason which he defines as Jesus Christ and His words as recorded in the Gospel. He furthermore accepts only two witnesses of truth—*right reason* and *conscience*, which he elaborates fully in his *Philosophical System* published in 1940 by the editors of the present volume, and *Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*. The author does not take under consideration the allegories and exegeses of other writers but adheres to the text of the Gospel and to the interpretations offered in the main by Christ and the Apostles; and thus, by

means of right reason he methodically and scientifically sheds light upon the unknown.

It is the sincere hope of the translator that the two volumes of *Interpretation of the Entire New Testament* will prove a veritable religious and theological treasurehouse not only to every minister of the Christian Gospel but also to every Christian layman.

ALBERT GEORGE ALEXANDER

EDITORS' FORWARD

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly. prophets, thirdly teachers." One of the teachers whom God hath set in Christ's Church is also A. Makrakis who has, indeed proved such a one through his writings, but a teacher of the two witnesses those who stood up and are still being made to stand up. "Stood up" signifies those who through repentance and tears receive the spirit of life from God and stand up spiritually. And first, A. Makrakis received the spirit of God and stood on his feet as teacher of the two "witnesses" that is the clergy and the laity. This is the way to salvation for every sinner that wishes to be saved and acquire a thorough knowledge of the truth—repentance through faith and return to our Lord Jesus Christ.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days clothed in sackcloth ... and when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them and shall overcome them . . . and they shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves . . . And after three days and a half the spirit of God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them who saw them." (See Inter. of Revelation XI :3-12)

Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit founded one Church on the day of Pentecost through the holy Apostles. *"And the gates of Hell (according to the veritable word of Christ) shall not prevail against her."* (Math. XVI :18) And Paul in confirming the above says: *"One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and father of all who is above all, and*

through all and in you all." (Eph. IV :5) Such a teacher of the Church is A. Makrakis whose *Interpretation of the Entire New Testament* translated and published in English is a divine work and not human. This interpretation just making its appearance in English is original and its circulation most necessary.

And as regards the prophetic section of the Holy Scriptures—the prophets—Mr. Makrakis does not prophesy but interprets deductively. He is not then a prophet but a deducer, as he himself states in a speech *delivered at the Regimental Square in Athens on July 20, 1868*, from which we quote the following:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah IX :6) "What manner of child shall this be?" (Luke 1:66). Can we boast that we have received from God this prophetic gift, and that we can solve unerringly the problem (constituting the theme of the speech) by stating in advance the nature of this child? Surely not. For we cannot lie and deceive. However, we can say that we possess another gift through which the future is more or less discerned, and this gift is called deduction and its possessor is called a deducer. The difference between the deductive and the prophetic gift between the deducer and the prophet is testified to by Prophet Isaiah saying: "Behold now, the Lord, the Lord of hosts will take away from Jerusalem and from Judea the mighty man and mighty woman, the strength of bread, and the strength of water, the great and mighty man, the warrior and the judge, and the prophet and the counsellor, and the elder, the captain of fifty also, and the honorable counsellor, and the wise artificer, and the intelligent hearer. And I will make youths their princes, and mockers shall have dominion over them." I am not referring to this passage of the prophet in order to show what blessings God takes away from the people whom he wishes to discipline for their sins, and what blessings he provides when he wishes to be benevolent, but simply and merely to prove that the prophet distinguishes between a prophet and a deducer, between the prophetic and the deductive gift, because he says that God takes away from Jerusalem and from Judea the prophet and the deducer. Therefore, a prophet differs from a deducer. Let us then ask what is the work of each. The prophet foretells the future according to the dictates of the Holy Spirit speaking within him. Thus, saith the Lord and thus it will be. The deducer foretells the future deductively, observing signs and times everywhere; the deducer foretells the future through the past. From the prophecies and signs of the times, he concludes which events are near consummation or still far away; and from all these

indications he foretells the future inferentially, whereas the prophet predicts the future positively, speaking in the name of the Lord. The declarations of a prophet are based upon absolute certitude and cannot be proved false; whereas the conclusion of the deducer is subject to a certain amount of doubt and acquires certitude when it is demonstrated and supported without exception by every word." (*Studies and Speeches* p. 73)

Thus, we can see that the work of the deducer is much more arduous than that of the prophet, for God Himself speaks through the prophet; whereas a deducer must have light and God's spirit to interpret the prophet. But when God wills that a truth come to light not today but later, He does not enlighten the interpreter. For, time is for everything, and everything for a time.

THE EDITORS

PRAYER OF THE SON

My Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son and Logos, who art in the bosom of the Father, who didst become flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, thou art the perfect God and the perfect man. Thou art the perfect man, pure in heart, meek and humble, righteous and merciful, a peacemaker, who endured the cross for the sake of mercy, peace and righteousness, our Great High Priest, holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners, cleansing and sanctifying us sinners with thy own blood, who sittest at the right hand of the Father, having become higher than the heavens, having been placed above all rule and authority and power and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come. Thou art that elect stone, the precious one, the chief cornerstone, who hast knocked down the image of the old man, and has thyself filled all the earth like a great mountain; the true vine, cultivated by the heavenly Father; the tree of life, planted of old in the Paradise of God. Thou art the mighty, the eternal, the Great King, and thy kingdom hath no end. Thou art the perfect God, perfect Logos of perfect Mind, the Being of the Being, the Living One of the Living One, the True One of the True One, the radiance of glory, the similitude of substance, the exact image, the effusion of tenderness, exceedingly good in every respect, my righteousness, my sanctification, my redemption, my life,

INTRODUCTION TO *The Interpretation of the Entire New Testament*

In beginning with God's help the interpretation of the entire New Testament to which we have bound ourselves through our public announcement, we deem it indispensable to precede this interpretation with certain introductory knowledge essential to it. And first, in differentiating between a faithful interpretation of the divine word and a misinterpretation or misconstruction of it, we feel obligated to point out the law whereby the Bible is interpreted faithfully and infallibly, as well as the causes of the misinterpretation of the Holy Scriptures, for the purpose of avoiding them.

Law of faithful interpretation of the Holy Scriptures

The law of the faithful interpretation of the Holy Scriptures is our LORD JESUS CHRIST, our all-wise and omniscient teacher and mentor and the discoverer of every road to knowledge. He opened his mouth in parables and discussed the unrevealed since the creation of the world, but he also explained the parables in private to his own disciples; and by means of the clear and obvious he revealed unto them the unexplained and hidden mysteries of God. And after His resurrection from the dead upon meeting Luke and Cleophas, going to Emmaus and conversing about His crucifixion and His expected resurrection from the dead, said to them:

"O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets,

he explained unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (**Luke 24:25-27**)

The Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (**Peter II, 1:21**)

and the things spoken and written were mysterious and baffling. The Son of God after taking human flesh and teaching those whom he had selected as his disciples, interpreted for them the words of the Holy Ghost, opened their minds for the understanding of the Scriptures, and later sent the Holy Ghost to remind them of the things spoken to guide them toward all truth.

"But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." (**John 14:26**)

"Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you to all truth." (**John 16:13**)

Christ interprets the prophecies of the Holy Ghost faithfully and accurately, unfailingly and infallibly; and the Holy Ghost descending reminds them of Christ's interpretations, teaches and explains all, and leads Christ's disciples to all truth. And thus, Christ's disciples understand the Scriptures and are able to interpret them accurately; for they have been taught by two allwise teachers, infallible and sinless by nature—first by our Lord Jesus Christ, and second by the Holy Ghost which they received on the *fifth* day following the resurrection. And after acquiring a thorough understanding of the Scriptures and becoming infallible interpreters of it, the divinely taught Apostles imparted to the original Church both orally and in writing the true meaning of the Scriptures, as they received it from Christ, their chief teacher, and with the right interpretation they further imparted the gift of the Holy Ghost as they themselves received it in order that the Holy Ghost may continuously remind the Church of the things interpreted, teach at the proper time the things conducive toward salvation, and lead unto all truth, the Church which is founded upon firm rock and truth. Hence, the written word of God has initially two equally divine interpreters by nature infallible and

sinless—our LORD JESUS CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST which remains and dwells permanently in the Church, and whose work is to bring to the mind the authentic interpretations of Christ, to teach and clarify all that is written according to their true spirit and concept, and lead to all truth the sincere lovers of truth, and the enemies of falsehood and delusion. The faithful and accurate interpretation of the Scriptures springs from Christ, the chief teacher, as from a virgin fountain and through the Holy Spirit is conveyed and imparted to all the disciples and the Apostles of Christ, and through them to all the pastors and Church teachers and to all the faithful church people. Christ and the Holy Spirit of Christ speak in accord and interpret in accord what is spoken. Likewise, the Apostles of Christ impart Christ's interpretations in accord to the Church, to its bishops and its presbyters. And the Church in turn through its own pastors and teachers imparts in accord this interpretation from one generation to another. And the Holy Ghost abides permanently in the Church and dwelling therein brings to mind the words of Christ, teaches and clarifies all things that require explanation, and leads to all truth, each one individually and the entire Church collectively. No one can go astray following the Holy Ghost, believing and speaking as the Holy Ghost believes and speaks. Such are those by whom the Scripture is interpreted faithfully and infallibly, and such is the law of faith in the interpretation of the Holy Bible. And now concerning those by whom it is misexplained and misinterpreted and distorted with the resulting loss of those who accept the distorted as right and the misinterpretations as interpretations—concerning these we must now think.

The first cause of the misinterpretation and distortion of the Scriptures

The first cause of the misinterpretation and distortion of the Holy Scriptures is indicated by the Holy Scriptures themselves, both the Old and the New Testament. The Old Testament, in Genesis, Chapter III, presents the wisest of all beasts, the Serpent, misinterpreting to the first woman God's word in the following manner:

"And the serpent said unto the woman, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the

serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The "*Ye shall not surely die*" is a misinterpretation or a distortion by the cunning serpent through which it introduced the opposite meaning into the hearing of the woman—*Ye shall not surely die but ye shall be as gods, knowing good from evil if ye eat of the forbidden fruit*. This is the first misinterpretation of the divine word and the serpent is the first distorter of the Scriptures - the cursed Serpent crawling on his breast and belly and eating earth throughout all the days of his life. And those who accepted this misinterpretation as a true interpretation and acted accordingly, have suffered all the bad consequences of their acceptance.

The New Testament also indicates the misinterpreter and distorter of the divine words as follows:

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."
(Math. 4:5-7)

The Old Testament indicates the Serpent misinterpreting the word of God to Eve, while the New Testament presents the Devil misinterpreting the Scriptures to the new man, our Lord Jesus Christ, who disproves and refutes the misinterpretation by means of another scriptural passage, contradicted by the false concept of the misinterpretation. By comparing these two Biblical testimonies we arrive upon the following logical conclusions: (a) The Serpent that misinterpreted the word of God in the Garden of Eden, and Satan that stood with Christ on the pinnacle of the temple and attempted through the misinterpretation to cast Him down and destroy Him, are one and the same and not two different persons, (b) the misinterpretation and the false concept attributed to the Bible, is disproved and nullified by another Scripture statement and concept which clearly opposes the spurious one.

After Satan, who is the first distorter and falsifier of the Scriptures, the false prophets and false teachers, who were taught by Satan, also misinterpreted the Scriptures. Concerning these, Peter the

For the heretics there is neither mercy nor salvation; for, by disobeying Christ and obeying Satan, they distort the Scriptures toward their own destruction as Peter writes in his second Catholic epistle. Paul, too, thus writes in his epistle to Titus:

"A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (**Titus 3:10-11**)

And the disciple beloved by Christ in his second Catholic epistle writes:

"Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." (**2 John 9-11**)

Thus, it is evident that the heretics are condemned and cursed by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of the disciples and Apostles of Christ; and those who justify the heretics as well as the orthodox believers and do not distinguish between heresies and orthodoxy, and heretics and orthodox believers oppose the judgment of God, become more heretical than the heretics, and incur the relentless wrath of God. Who art thou who judgeth differently and opposeth the judgment of God? And wherein does he whose judgment is at variance from and against that of God, dwell but within Satan? As against the condemnation of the heretics by God, who will justify them? The condemnation of the heretics and the shunning of their society is one of the terms of the Covenant with God, the violation of which constitutes a violation of the entire Covenant.

"For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and by ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you,

and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty."
(2 Corinth. 6:14-18)

This term of the divine Covenant the orthodox Church has observed from the beginning and continues to do so; for if it violates the term it falls from orthodoxy and it also is transformed into a harlot and a heretic Church. Yet this very same term many Orthodox people violate by befriending and favoring the heretics, not knowing that they thus fall from orthodoxy and desecrate the Covenant of God, and that they became co-victims of the condemnation and perdition of the heretics. Moreover, every violation of the terms of the Covenant of God renders responsible those too who remain silent and do not protest the violation by warning the violators of the devastating consequences of the violation of which they become guilty. Likewise, the official interpreter of the entire New Testament becomes responsible if he fails to perform the duty of protesting not only against the orthodox people, but also against the present-day Papists and the Protestants by condemning their misinterpretations and heresies through a faithful and accurate interpretation of the Scriptures so that they may be delivered, if willing, from the delusion under which they are laboring and from its disastrous consequences. For God does not desire the death of the sinners until they have repented and lived; rather He wants all men to be saved and to attain a knowledge of the truth. But the road to salvation is one and the same for all—the faithful and accurate knowledge of the terms of the New Covenant; and the careful observance of these terms is the exact fulfillment of the duties imposed on us by them.

Historical knowledge of God's Testaments or Covenants

The New Testament or Covenant which we propose with God's help to interpret dates back to the years of the new man, our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom it has become and has been until today a sacred symbol between us and God. But prior to the New Testament, there was the Old, and prior to that those made by the patriarchs. The historical knowledge of God's testaments made prior to the New Testament is introductory most essential toward a knowledge of the New Testament. Therefore, we present it here before the interpretation.

The Covenant with Noah and his sons

God established relations with Adam, the first-created man, through the enactment of only one law by means of which Adam was prohibited upon penalty of death from eating of the fruit of that tree called the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But because Adam violated the Law given him, God in performing a judicial duty sentenced Adam to death. Furthermore, in trying judicially Adam's posterity for their transgressions, He condemned them to a death by drowning in the waters of the flood. However, Noah found favor before God because he was a just man and pleased God in the midst of that sinful generation. Therefore, God saved him from the general devastation together with his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives. And upon being saved through the ark from the waters of the flood, Noah offered God a sacrifice of thanks which God accepted favorably saying: "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold, and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." These words constituted the first term of the covenant which God made with Noah and his sons, binding himself to them by means of a covenant and a code of laws; for in creating the marriage law so that they might multiply and increase upon the earth, the law of abstinence prohibiting the eating of the blood of animals, and the law against murder, prohibiting the taking of the life of a fellowman, he held Himself morally responsible through the following words: "And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." And to secure their faith in and remembrance of this promise, God said to Noah and his sons : "This is the token of the covenant which I made between me and you and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations; I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living

creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." And after these words, God having shown the bow of the covenant in the cloud said to him: "This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

The above is the first covenant which God made with Noah and his sons and every human race descended from them and through which God obligated Himself to maintain upon the earth the human race and not to destroy it by a similar flood because of its sins. This first covenant secured for ever the maintenance upon the earth of the human race; for God undertook for the sake of the righteous Noah the moral obligation not to destroy utterly the human race on the earth because of its sins.

The Covenant of God with the Patriarch Abraham

The second covenant, God made with father and patriarch Abraham descended from Shem and born B.C. 2174. To Abraham while in his seventy fifth year and in residence at Mesopotamia with Terah his father, God revealed Himself and said to him:

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (**Gen. 12:1-3**)

This call of God, Abraham willingly obeyed and went on his way following the Lord's instructions; and God obligated Himself to do all the things that he promised. Therefore, according to His original promise to make Abraham a great nation, He showed Abraham the entire land of Canaan and said to him:

"For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the seed of the earth: so that if a man can number the sand of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee and unto thy seed for ever." (**Gen. 13:15-17**)

After this announcement God visited Abraham by night, brought him out of his tent and said unto him:

only-begotten son of God, born of the Holy Ghost and the virgin Mary—a sacrifice through which the New Testament was ratified. And after this sacrifice God said to Abraham:

"By myself have I sworn saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (**Gen. 22 :16**)

These are the covenants and moral obligations which God undertook toward Abraham the patriarch because of his moral rectitude, and which He fulfilled in their natural order, first by emancipating and second by establishing the sand-like seed on the land of promise, and subsequently by sending, in due time, the blessed seed of heaven, our Lord Jesus Christ, so that all the nations of the earth may be saved by Him.

The Covenant and Lawgiving on Mount Sinai

The Covenant and lawgiving on Mount Sinai is the same as the so-called Old Testament made with respect to the sand-like and earthly seed of Abraham, and in behalf of the Hebrew people who were delivered by Moses the prophet from Egyptian bondage according to the first promise which God made to Abraham. And this covenant was made in the third month after the exodus (of the Jews from Egypt) in the year 1483 B.C. in the following manner and recorded in the following words:

Moses ascended the mount of God, and God called him from the mount saying: "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself, now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all of the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came, and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words, which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will

God and perfect man, who took human flesh and through whom mankind may effect a true and perfect union with God and partake of the divine nature; instead of the law which applies to and regulates only the outward man and his outward actions, the New Testament promulgates the law which applies and regulates the inward man and moulds him after the moral nature of God; instead of the penalties of the old law it provides the grace and mercy of God; instead of that hard-hearted and disobedient people, it presents a new people reborn through water and the Holy Ghost, and analogous physically to the stars of heaven; instead of the animal sacrifices it provides one and complete propitiatory sacrifice by means of which the New Messiah and the eternal High Priest has reconciled us to God and ratified for ever the covenant with God. Furthermore, instead of temporal blessings we inherit, through the New Covenant, the future and eternal ones; we inherit an impregnable kingdom together with honor and glory and delights equal to those of God; for we become children of God through the New Testament and inheritors of divine and eternal blessedness. The New Testament is the end and goal, aimed at by the Old Testament, through which the advent of the New—ever new—and abiding for ever, not subject to deterioration or age, abolition or extermination and substitution by a better covenant—was formulated and prophesied. For the New Testament given birth by the New Man possesses all the divine perfection.

The Books of the New Testament

The books which together constitute the so-called New Testament are as follows:

1. The four Gospels: according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
2. The Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist.
3. The fourteen Epistles of Paul.
4. The seven Catholic epistles: one of James, two of Apostle Peter, three of John the Divine, and the last and seventh of Jude, the brother of the Lord.
5. Revelation of John the Divine. Of all these books the most misunderstood and misinterpreted is the Revelation by John the Divine, which prophesies the future events from the days of the writer to the end of time. But this book we interpreted in 1881 and its readers derive great enlightenment and benefit from it. In the meantime, we are about to interpret all the other books in accordance with the

mind and spirit of the entire New Testament; and concerning these we shall now say what is essential.

The Mind and Spirit of the Entire New Testament

A knowledge of the mind and spirit of the entire New Testament can interpret each of its books and all together rightly and sanely, flawlessly and infallibly; whereas a lack of knowledge concerning these two becomes the cause of misinterpretations and pernicious heresies. The possessor of the mind and the spirit of the entire New Testament owns the criterion of the true interpretation as well as of the misinterpretation of every passage and of the entire context, and distinguishes between the genuine conception of the text and the spurious and adulterated. But what is the mind of the entire New Testament and what is its spirit? This question we shall answer as follows:

The mind of every word, book, or literary work is the ultimate desire and purpose toward which the word was uttered, or the book or literary work was produced. While its spirit is a full knowledge of the word, or book, or literary work which looks to the mind, unites with it, proceeds from it and clarifies as well as develops it. For the spirit of the word bears the same analogy to the mind of the word, of the book, or of the literary work, as the light bears to the lamp, from which it comes, and with which it unites. And the intensity of the glow of the lamp, is equal to that of the light given by it. According to these definitions of the mind and the spirit, the mind of the entire New Testament is considered its ultimate aim toward which the entire New Testament was written; whereas its spirit is considered the full knowledge which is conducive to and explanatory of its ultimate aim; and which by uniting with the mind constitutes an indivisible whole. Moreover, the mind of the entire New Testament is contained in and expressed by the word which the perfect mind uttered from heaven, when the only begotten Son and Logos or Word was baptized in Jordan by John the Baptist, saying: *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him"*; whereas the spirit of the entire New Testament is contained in and expressed by all its other words and passages. For all that is written in all the books of the New Testament toward the knowledge and understanding of the Son of God, aims at obedience to Him, on the part of those who know Him, though which they assume the likeness and nature of God and become His children, and the inheritors

of His eternal kingdom and glory. The spirit of the entire New Testament is equal to its entire mind expressed through a single passage; and the entire mind is likewise, equal to the entire spirit which clarifies and explicates the entire mind, and renders it conceivable and manifest through all its utterances. The mind of the entire New Testament is analogous to the bright light of the sun, which pours forth everywhere, and illuminates every eye seeing the light and the Sun, and through them everything that is visible. And as the clear and healthy eye, illuminated by the Sun and its rays, sees clearly all that is visible, and is not deceived, or obscured, so the man of pure soul, enlightened by the mind and spirit of the entire New Testament, understands and interprets clearly all that is written, and is neither deceived nor bedarkened by the spirit of perversion and distortion of the divine words. Furthermore, he who has fully grasped, through scientific definition, the nature of the mind and the spirit of the entire New Testament, understands unerringly and interprets faithfully every passage of it, and is able to summarize and recapitulate the meaning of everything within one mind by means of scientific collaboration and harmonization of the various concepts; while on the other hand he can easily criticize every misinterpretation, and, by means of sound concepts, expose the spurious and alien interpretations of the text. Conversely, he who neither knows nor understands the mind, or the spirit of the entire New Testament, will walk like a blind man walking without guide in the darkness, stumbling and falling at every step. Such then must be the interpretation of the entire New Testament, which we proclaim, logical, scientific, unerring, and which by means of the true spirit interprets its true mind, and by means of the true mind distinguishes between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood and delusion, and excludes everywhere misinterpretation and heresy through the sound interpretation which was made of two faithful witnesses of truth, that is, the mind and the spirit of the entire New Testament. Such an interpretation clearly differentiates between the orthodox and true Church of Christ, and the heretical factions, and solves the question regarding the union of the now divided Christians, thus illumining all toward the abandonment of delusion, and a union with truth.

The Gospel According to St. Matthew – CHAPTER 1

The first book of the New Testament is the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Its author who happens to be the eighth of the chosen group of twelve disciples and Apostles of the Lord, was from the beginning an eyewitness and a servant of the Word as well as a reliable witness of everything, he relates from the birth until the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. His father's name was Alphaeus, and his own was Levi before he was called to the glorious apostolic rank. And he received his call, being a publican by occupation and sitting at the customhouse, as follows, according to his own account: *"And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me, and he arose and followed him."* And Jesus went into the house of Matthew who received him with great welcome; and many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples; for there is great joy in heaven and earth upon the repentance of one sinner. In accordance with the above, Mark also relates the call of Matthew, saying:

"And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him." **(Mark 2 :12-15).**

In the same vein Luke also relates:

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans, and of others, that sat down with them." (**Luke 5:27-29**)

From the above testimonies it can be inferred that Levi, the son of Alphaeus, and Matthew are one and the same person, and not two different persons, as some older and modern critics have erroneously assumed. But Alphaeus is also the name of the father of James the younger, and the husband of Mary the sister (or cousin) of the Mother of Christ. As a result of the similarity in names the question arises, whether Alphaeus the father of Matthew the Evangelist is the same person as Alphaeus the father of James the younger brother of the Lord. Our answer is that he is not the same, but another person of the same name; for if he were the same person, then Matthew too would surely be spoken of as the brother of the Lord, just as James, Jude, and Joseph, the sons of Alphaeus and Mary, the cousin of the mother of Christ, would also, through the same relationship be spoken of as the brothers of the Lord. Having proved worthy of such a call, he who sat in receipt of customs—Levi the son of Alphaeus, named Matthew, which is interpreted *offered as a gift*—wrote his Gospel in Hebrew eight years after the Ascension of the Lord, in behalf of the Hebrew Christians. And immediately St. James translated it into Greek, which proves that both the translator and the author are equal in divine inspiration and reliability. Furthermore, Matthew preached the Gospel, according to Socrates the historian, in Ethiopia, and according to other historians, in Syria, Parthia and Medea; and died, according to some, a natural death, whereas according to others he was condemned by Fulvian, king of Parthia to a martyr's death by fire. However, through prayer, he put out the fire and gave up the spirit in peace. His memory is commemorated on the 16th of November.

He begins his Gospel by saying:

"The book of the generation of JESUS CHRIST, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." – **Matthew 1:1**

JESUS CHRIST, the intercessor is the person in the New Testament, through Whom God enters into a covenant with mankind. Hence the knowledge of Jesus Christ is the first condition and the first moral obligation, which the New Testament imposes upon all those who are willing to have communion and union with God. Jesus Christ is known by the nature of his birth as Son of God, and perfect God, born of God eternally, before all time, and as Son of man, and perfect man, born of woman within time. Matthew the evangelist begins his gospel by announcing his human birth, in view of which he is called Son of David and the Son of Abraham, through both of whom his genealogy is traced from a human viewpoint; whereas John the Evangelist begins his Gospel by announcing his divine and eternal birth saying: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* According to the ontological order, the divine birth precedes the human, over which it has priority in origin and cause; however, according to the didactic order, the human birth is taught and recognized before the divine; for man knows man first, and through the knowledge of man he rises into the higher knowledge of God. According to this didactic order, the Gospel of Matthew precedes that of John, and is called *"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham,"* for it, acquaints us with Jesus Christ's human birth and genealogy. Christ is traced genealogically, first from king David for it is through the David genealogy that he is recognized as the true Christ, and, as such, he has Abraham for a father from whom David also is traced genealogically. The genealogy of Christ from David and Abraham represents the fulfillment of the promises which God made first to Abraham and then to David. And to Abraham God promised the following, saying: *"And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed";* while to David He said *"The fruit of thy loins shall I set upon thy Throne."* The evangelist being fully informed that God has, through Jesus Christ, fulfilled the promises he made to Abraham and David, he imparts his information to others by tracing the genealogy of Christ from Abraham to Joseph, the betrothed of Mary, who gave birth to

CHAPTER III

MATTHEW CHAPTER 3

"In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." – Matthew 3:1-2

From the genealogy and the birth of Jesus Christ the Evangelist passes on to the preaching of John the Baptist, which began in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and almost thirty years after the birth of Christ. And the reason for this is that the intervening span is of no historical importance; neither is it marked by any events worthy of narration. During this interim Jesus was reared in the home of his parents, growing and becoming stronger in spirit, and fuller in wisdom, until his entrance into public life and his appearance in Israel, just as John, by six months his senior, who having through divine power escaped the child-slaying sword of Herod, was reared in the desert by the angels of God, until the time he was sent to preach repentance and to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. After the agitation and restlessness caused by the announcement of Christ's birth had subsided, and after Joseph had returned from Egypt to the land of Israel and had settled in Nazareth of Galilee, Jesus was bred and developed within the haven of the paternal home, while the people without knew nothing about His nature and mission. The Nazarenes observed Jesus and his carpentering activities while working with Joseph his father, and

looked upon him as one of a host of Jews, not discerning in Him any sign of superiority. Furthermore, they had a rather lowly opinion of Joseph His father and Mary His mother, judging their worth by their penurious and meaningless existence; therefore, they greatly wondered and were scandalized upon seeing Jesus in the midst of them teaching and performing miracles.

"Whence hath the man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James and Joses and Simon and Judas? and his sisters are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were scandalized in him." (**Math. 13:54**)

These words of the Nazarenes testify that Jesus was brought up among them, and that he never travelled to a foreign country, such as Egypt or Phenicia as the world-wise give out who are utterly ignorant of the work of God. Only once a year did He go up to Jerusalem on the feast of the Passover with his parents, with whom he again, after the feast, returned to Nazareth. But on his twelfth year, without the knowledge of his parents, he remained in the temple in the midst of the teachers whose wonder he aroused through the wise questions and answers he addressed to them. Obviously, the career of Jesus from the time of his return from Egypt until his thirtieth year is entirely of a private nature and for this reason Matthew the Evangelist passes on from His genealogy and birth and such related events as are memorable, rapidly to the preaching of John the Baptist who emerging from the desert of Judea where he had been brought up until his thirtieth year, called the people to repentance, saying:

Repent ye, because the kingdom of heaven is near. But what did the Baptist mean by the statement: "*Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand?*" The kingdom of God has for its primary and essential element Christ the king, who descended from heaven, to deliver his people from the power of the Devil who ruled upon the earth; its second element is a just code of laws, whereby the king of heaven reigns and governs his subjects; its third element is the people, who recognize the king of heaven and govern themselves according to its just legislation. During the days of the Baptist there was upon earth the king of heaven—Christ—whom the people awaited in order that he might deliver them from the yoke of the kings of the earth, from the yoke of Herod and Caesar, not capable of understanding the greater freedom, from the yoke of sin and of Satan, together with which goes naturally the freedom also from the

external yoke of man. Therefore, the Baptist announces to the people that Christ is found in their very midst, the king of heaven; and that in order to see him and recognize him, they must repent and be first delivered from the internal yoke of sin and the power of Satan. The king of heaven came down to earth and walks upon it, but the people must rise through repentance from sin to righteousness and meet the king of heaven. And when these three combine into one—the king of heaven, his just code of laws, and the people who recognize the king of heaven and govern themselves according to His laws, then the kingdom of God becomes established upon the whole earth with all its elements. But in the days of the Baptist, there was upon earth only the king of heaven—the just essential element of the kingdom of God; while the people were enslaved both internally and externally by the king of the earth, Satan, and his co-rulers, the Herods and the Caesars; and the code of laws existed only in the mind of the legislator, and not in the life and the government of the people. For this reason the Baptist preached, saying that the kingdom of heaven was at hand but not that it had come upon earth. And when the kingdom of heaven approaches and comes in contact with the kingdom of earth, it clashes with it; and the clash begins with the preaching toward repentance; for such preaching calls upon the people to abandon sin, to break away from the ruler of the world, Satan, and to recognize Christ, the king of heaven submitting to Him alone in the future. Clearly, the preaching toward repentance and toward the transplantation of the people from the kingdom of the earth to the kingdom of heaven attacks the former kingdom, and naturally it is counter-attacked by it; and the two opposing kingdoms, clash upon meeting and fight each other, until the superior kingdom overcomes the inferior and destroys it. Such is the nature and the meaning of the preaching of John, whom the Evangelist characterizes as follows:

"For this is he that was spoken by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." – **Matthew 3:3**

Isaiah the prophet called John *a voice of one crying in the wilderness*, in order to signify the isolated and unmarried life, which is espoused by all who prepare the way of the Lord, and contend in behalf of the kingdom of Christ; whereas Malachi called him *messenger of the Lord*

CHAPTER V

MATTHEW CHAPTER 5

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain." – **Matthew 5:1**

The aforementioned mountain lies northeast of the city of Cana, being two hours distant; and today it is called the mount of the beatitudes, for Jesus after ascending it taught the beatitudes according to the belief of the inhabitants of Galilee.

"... and when he was set, his disciples came unto him." – **Matthew 5:1 (cont.)**

The disciples of Jesus were few, while his hearers were many. However the disciple differs from the hearer, in that the former listens and learns what is taught, and becomes in time like his teachers; whereas the hearer listens but misinterprets what he hears, for he does not learn through study, neither does he appropriate the teaching to himself so that it will become his permanent personal property. Hence the few disciples are considered worthier of teaching than the many hearers; and so, for the sake of the few the Master teaches upon the high mountain the most advanced lesson of blessedness and righteousness, in order that they too may become able to teach still others. Let us then too emulate the select group of the few disciples, and not remain as those multitudes – simple hearers of this and that heavenly teaching.

"And he opened his mouth and taught them saying." – **Matthew 5:2**

The mouth of Jesus is the mouth of God out of which proceeds the clear truth free from delusion. But the ears also which hear the truth must be free from prejudice and false ideas, so that they may perceive soundly and maintain the truth in as pure a state as when it proceeded from its source. The first statement which came from the opened mouth of Jesus was as follows:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." –
Matthew 5:3

The entire teaching of Jesus advocates blessedness and represents as blessed those who hear and abide by it, for as Christ says: *"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it."* But the beatitudes proclaimed on the mountain of Galilee teach in greater detail those virtues without which no one can be blessed. The first beatitude teaches very clearly the first acquired virtue which he calls poverty of spirit, and the nature and worth of which we are obligated to interpret. The word poverty signifies want, privation, and nakedness; that man is called poor who does not possess the things that satisfy his wants and needs—the needy, the deprived and suffering and the one who bows and humbles himself before the rich.

Poverty may be classified into physical and spiritual. The poor physically are deprived of the blessings which allay their nakedness and the other needs of the body, while the poor spiritually are deprived of spiritual blessings by means of which the nakedness of the soul is concealed, and all spiritual needs are satisfied. Neither physical poverty makes the body blessed, nor spiritual poverty renders the soul blessed. For what reason then does the first beatitude bless the poor in spirit who are deprived of spiritual blessings? Because it signifies only the poor who have a realization and consciousness of their poverty, and who by virtue of this realization move and toil toward the acquisition of the spiritual benefits, through which they become verily blessed. Hence it is not the poverty of spirit but the realization and the full knowledge of this poverty, that is pronounced blessed, by means of which the search and discovery of those spiritual benefits that satisfy spiritual want, the nakedness of the soul and soul needs, are effected. For just as our body is naturally born naked and poor and needy, likewise the soul is born with the body, naked and poor and lacking entirely in knowledge and wisdom. But realizing the nakedness and needs of our body, we work

toward the preparation and acquisition of clothes and the remaining needful things, and thus the naked body is clothed, adorned, and sustained in life, and somehow becomes blessed through the realization of its nakedness and its needs. In the same manner the soul, born by nature naked and poor, upon realizing and becoming fully aware of its own physical nakedness and poverty acts and works toward the discovery and acquisition of that wisdom and knowledge through which it achieves blessedness, according to the divine proverb: "*Blessed is the man that findeth wisdom and the mortal that acquireth prudence.*" The finding of wisdom is preceded by the search for it, and the search for it is in turn preceded by the consciousness of the lack of it; for no one seeks what he has but that which he has not. Therefore, blessed are they who have the realization and the consciousness of their own spiritual nakedness and poverty; for they seek and find wisdom in Christ, and become blessed by inheriting the kingdom of heaven, which is the kingdom of Christ. However, those who have not such a consciousness but on the contrary though professing to be wise, are foolish, and though rich and adorned are still poor and naked—these proud braggart-beggars are not susceptible to improvement because they can neither seek nor find goodness of which they are in need; neither do they accept what is offered them but spurn and reject it. Such men are indeed stupid and foolish, and unsusceptible to blessedness. Whereas the poor in spirit, according to Christ's meaning, are the wise and the prudent, in a human sense, in the light of which Socrates declared that he was wise because he knew that he knew nothing, and expressed himself to this effect through the erudite and celebrated dictum: "One thing I know, that I know nothing." But Christ's disciples also must possess such Socratic wisdom, in order to learn the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and to inherit it according to the significance of the first beatitude, "blessed are the poor in spirit" and the lowly before the great God, and the humble before the omniscient master Christ; for only these come to Christ and enter the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." – **Matthew 5:4**

The poor in spirit are the very ones who mourn, being aware of their wretchedness—aware that they do not only lack goodness but are also under the power of evil, for they have violated the law of

God and become slaves to sin. And subsequently they grieve and weep and mourn for the sins they have committed, and repenting, they appeal to God's mercy. And the merciful and compassionate God accepting their repentance forgives their sins, and comforts and cheers them assuring and informing them that they have gained eternal salvation, that their sins have been pardoned, that they have been reconciled to God and have become partakers and heirs of eternal blessings. Such knowledge dispels the grief of mourning, replacing it in the soul with the joy of comfort, of relief from eternal wickedness and of inheritance of everlasting blessings. Blessed, then, are those who mourn and repent from their sins, for they are granted compassion by the merciful God, are forgiven and freed from the penalty of sin, and, having been conciliated with God, rejoice in Him, as sharers and partakers of divine blessings. Hence the Prophet-King sings:

"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." [**Psalm 32:1-2 Septuagint version**].

We should distinguish between mourning and grief in the light of God and in the light of the world; for according to St. Paul, grief in the eyes of God leads to unregrettable repentance, whereas worldly grief leads to death. Therefore, not those who mourn after the manner of the world, are not blessed, but those who mourn in the eyes of God and repent toward unregrettable salvation.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." – **Matthew 5:5**

Those who have mourned for the sins they have committed, and have been comforted by God, and who have the grace of the Paraclete in their hearts—these become meek or enduring against the attacks and insults and injustices they suffer, and incapable of hatred or anger against their persecutors, or of returning evil against evil or abuse for abuse. And all those who have acquired the virtue of meekness are recorded as citizens in the book of the Kingdom of God, and they shall all inherit the earth upon the advent of God's kingdom on earth. But the savage, the bestial and the wrathful will be routed into hell according to the words of the Prophet:

CHAPTER VII

MATTHEW CHAPTER 7

Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. – **Matthew 7:1-2**

This prohibitory command does not forbid, according to the divine law, the judging of the deeds of other men, but the denial of forgiveness and good will which Christian privilege provides those who repent of their sins, confess them and ask forgiveness of the merciful and compassionate God. According to the Christian privilege of good will, God forgives our sins to the extent in which we forgive those who sin against us. "For", we read, "if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. For this reason we pray: "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Thus, according to the privilege of mutual forgiveness and good will, Christ commands us not to judge those who sin against us, so that neither we may be judged by God for our own sins, and that we may not deny mercy and pardon to our brethren, when they plead for them from us, and that God may not deny us mercy and pardon either when we ask Him. And an investigation into the causes of this prohibitive command reveals clearly that its basic concept and purpose was what we express while we pray, saying: "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." God judges us as we judge others.

Therefore, if we judge others severely, God will judge us severely too; but if we judge others justly God will judge us in like manner. The Mosaic law condemned the violator according to the testimony of Paul, saying: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." But the law of the Gospel, full of good will and truth restrains the wrath of divine justice, and gives the sinner time for repentance and improvement in order to escape the impending judgment. "*Unless ye repent,*" Christ says, "*ye shall all perish.*" But for those who repent and return to the way of God there is mercy, and peace, and life eternal. The Mosaic law obligated the Israelites to condemn and stone the guilty one without mercy; but the law of the Gospel obligates the Christians to forgive the fallen upon condition that they improve and save themselves from the future wrath of God. This difference between the Mosaic and the Evangelical law becomes quite clear through the case of the adulteress whom the Scribes and Pharisees brought before the Lord saying:

"Master, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us that such shall be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have cause to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he had heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her. Woman where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." – **John 8:4-11**

This example of the adulteress explains most clearly the Gospel command: "*Judge not that ye be not judged*" and the fact that the humanity and righteousness of good will abolished the severity of the Mosaic law, or rather restrained its application until the day of universal judgment and retribution. The adulteress according to the ruling of the Mosaic law deserved condemnation and stoning; but all her condemners and those ready to stone her deserved the same condemnation. But exercising forbearance, the merciful and humane Lord, said

CHAPTER X

MATTHEW CHAPTER 10

"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." – Matthew 10:1

The unpure spirits bear the same relation to the souls of men as the blood-thirsty wolves bear to the shepherded sheep. For just as the shepherds of the sheep must have the power to drive away the wolves and protect the sheep from their ravages, likewise the shepherds of human souls must have the power to drive away the impure spirits and save human souls from their devastations; but the souls are bound to the bodies which are subject to many and various diseases; and when the body ails, the soul, too, somehow ails and suffers with the body. Therefore, the Lord gave to the new shepherds of the sheep the additional power to heal every sickness and every disease of the body so that they might save both the souls and the bodies of the sheep from the vicious onslaughts of the impure spirits as well as the sicknesses and diseases of the body. Jesus, in imparting these two abilities or powers to his disciples—the ability to drive away impure spirits, and the ability to heal every sickness and disease—raised them to the rank of co-laborers and co-shepherds of the rational sheep. The one and only laborer, Jesus, produced twelve co-laborers who labored with Him toward the plenteous harvest and the care and protection of the sheep. But these twelve are few as against the great amount of work to be done. Therefore, He later proclaimed another seventy and again after that many other shepherds and teachers so

that the supplication made to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to His harvest might be fulfilled.

"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; (...)" – Matthew 10:2

Andrew being the first to hear the testimony of John the Baptist saying "*Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world*" and pointing at Jesus, followed Jesus with John who relates his coming, as a result of which he is being referred to as *first-called*. Then Andrew first found his brother called Simon and led him to Jesus. And Jesus upon looking at him said "*Thou art Simon the son of Jonah, thou shalt be called Cephas*" which is interpreted Peter. Andrew came first and was named first-called, whereas Peter who came second became the first of the twelve and the top-ranking Apostle. But why did the second–Peter–become the first and topmost of the twelve? The reason for the highest rank of the Apostle Peter we hear from the mouth of Apostle Paul saying:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." (**1 Timothy 1:15-16**)

First then is Peter among the Apostles because he was the first to deny Christ in the court of the highpriest, and the first to be reclaimed through repentance and shown mercy so that Jesus Christ's long-suffering might be manifested in him first as a pattern to those who would in the future believe in Him to life everlasting. Peter precedes the twelve Apostles as a type and an example of the saved sinner through faith and sincere repentance, or, as Paul says in order that Jesus Christ may show in him first all long suffering as a pattern of those who would believe in Him in the future to life everlasting. This is the reason for the precedence of Apostle Peter—a reason worthy of all acceptance—for it proceeds from the mouth of Paul and not those upon whom the Popes have founded the heresy of the infallible and sinless representative of Christ which divided the Church of Christ and strengthened the kingdom of the Antichrist.

"... James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother." – Matthew 10:2

These two brothers Jesus called sons of Thunder for their mouth, and especially that of John roared as from heaven in the hearing of men the highest tenet of theology or "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*" John is the disciple whom Jesus loved, who fully grasped and taught the commandment of love, and who became the pattern of those perfected in the love of God. Peter on the one hand is placed at the top as a pattern and example of the sincerely repenting and saved sinners, whereas John is mentioned later as a pattern and example of those who are improving in the virtue of love and becoming perfect. The repentance of sinners naturally precedes the love of the perfect; but the antecedent repentance ranks much lower than love and the perfection of those who have loved God as John loved Him. Hence the first place of Peter with respect to repentance is much lower than the third place of John occupying the position of the third and highest heaven—the position of supreme perfection. We mention these things in order to lower the lifted brow of those who by means of fabricated reasons have based upon the precedence of Peter the heresy of the infallibility and sinlessness of the pontiff of Rome and of his universal authority over the entire Church of Christ. The Popes have founded their houses upon sand, and so when the spirit of truth blows against it and reveals the falsehood upon which they have built, their house shall fall and great will be the fall thereof according to the word of the Lord.

"Philip and Bartholomew." – Matthew 10:3

Philip was from Bethsaida a city of Galilee from which came Andrew and Peter. He was called by Jesus after Andrew and Peter, and upon finding Nathaniel led him to Jesus. And Jesus said concerning him: "*Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile!*" And this Nathaniel, the three Evangelists call Bartholomew, or the son of Tholomew, omitting his principal name by which John the Evangelists calls him.

"Thomas and Matthew, the publican." – Matthew 10:3 (cont.)

CHAPTER 12

MATTHEW CHAPTER 12

"At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the cornfields and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat." – **Matthew 12:1**

It is understood that through the phrase *"At that time"* the Evangelist relates an event not connected in time with what precedes; for the Evangelists relate historical events not according to their time order and sequence but according to the order of recollection, in which one event brings back to the mind another and that still another; and at times the order of the recollections coincides with time order and sequence while at others it does not. But whenever the Evangelists relate historical events not connected chronologically with what has been related before, they make use of the phrase *"at that time"* to indicate that they are recording an event not associated in time with what goes before, but one which took place at another time. And because Evangelists narrate events in the order of their recollection and not according to time, therefore the historical record of each of the four Evangelists has its own coherence; for each narrates events as he recalled them and not according to their chronology. The walk of Christ with His disciples through the wheatfield on the Sabbath is an event that took place during the time that Jesus went about Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and ailment in the people. During this walk the disciples became hungry but they had no bread with them. And so as they passed through the cultivated fields, they plucked ears of wheat and after rubbing them with their hands ate the grains and thus satisfied their hunger. Such an act is foreseen and permitted in Deuteronomy, Chapter XXIII, where we read:

"When thou comest into the standing wheatfields of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn." (**Deuteronomy 23:25**)

But this act, though sanctioned by the lawgiver, was performed on the Sabbath on which day the law prohibited all work toward the preparation of food. The Jews prepared all their food for the Sabbath, oil the preceding day or Friday, and on the Sabbath they merely ate the food abstaining from all work toward the preparation of food. Hence the act was prohibited by the law of the Sabbath.

"But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." – Matthew 12:2

The condemnation of the disciples is virtually a condemnation of their Master Who allowed them to violate the law and do what was unlawful on the Sabbath. Therefore, the Master must explain and justify both Himself and His disciples. And this He does as follows:

"But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him. How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" – Matthew 12:3-4

David did eat against the law, the consecrated loaves; but this violation was justified by the fact that he was hungry and the additional fact that the priest had no other bread to give him. My disciples are also hungry today, and they have no other food except this which they can obtain from the wheat of the field. Therefore they do as David did, and they are no more condemnable than David and those with him who, against the law, ate the consecrated loaves. Therefore, if God then allowed David and his companions to eat, against the law, the consecrated loaves, the very same merciful God today allows my disciples to pluck the ears of wheat and eat their food. After justifying his disciples through the example of David he proceeds further to justify them by citing the law:

"Or have ye not read in the law that on the Sabbath days the priests of the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." – Matthew 12:5-6

The law which imposes upon the people abstinence from work permitted the priests of the temple to work and offer sacrifices on the Sabbath but they were not criticized as violators of the law because they worked on that day. However, anticipating the objection of the Pharisees *"your disciples are not priests, neither do they work in the temple"*, He says to them that He is greater than the temple and that his disciples were consequently greater than the priests working in the temple. For, Jesus being God is naturally greater than the holy place consecrated to God. But the ears of the Pharisees could not hear this truth manifested through the works of divine power performed by Jesus.

"But if ye had known the meaning of, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." – Matthew 12:7-8

God desires both sacrifice and mercy. But He wants sacrifice as a means, and mercy as an end toward which the means aims. For the sake of mercy, the sacrifice was legalized, and the will behind mercy is superior to the will of the sacrifice. If then God for the sake of sacrifice allows the priests to work on the Sabbath, He would much more willingly, for the sake of mercy and the salvation of man, allow work on the Sabbath. But the Son of man having legislative power, is lord even of the law of the Sabbath, being justified as lawgiver to validate or invalidate or modify, according to the benefit of man, the law of the Sabbath. But the conceited Pharisees were ignorant about all these things; and yet although they themselves deserved condemnation, they condemned the innocent who were justified by the most logical and most legal explanation of their Teacher.

"And departing thence he went to their synagogue. And behold there was a man there with a withered hand. And they asked him saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse him." – Matthew 12:9-10

CHAPTER XV

MATTHEW CHAPTER 15

"Then came to Jesus scribes and pharisees, which were of Jerusalem saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." – Matthew 15:1-2

The Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem followed Jesus as hostile scouts in order to see something reprehensible in him so that they might accuse, bring to trial, and kill Him by legal means which they had within their power. And they saw that Jesus' disciples did not wash their hands before taking and eating bread, a practice which violated not the law of God but the tradition of the elders. Consequently, they accuse and report the disciples to their Master in order to hear for what reason He permits such a violation by His disciples.

"But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But you say, whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus, have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." – Matthew 15:3-6

By this reproach Jesus proves the accusers of his disciples violators of the great command of God, or rather its subverters; for God on the one hand commanded the children to honor their parents by

providing or proffering them every possible assistance and care, and sentenced to death the curser of father or mother; however, the Scribes and Pharisees taught that when a son says to his father that what he asks of the son is a gift or something dedicated or offered to God, the father cannot take it— in short, the son is not obligated to give what is asked to his father. Thus, those who taught according to the traditions of the elders, rendered the commandment of God invalid and inapplicable. Therefore, who should be brought to trial, the violators and subverters of God's greatest command in the decalogue or the transgressors of a legally meaningless and inconsequential tradition? The eyes of the Pharisees saw the mote in the eyes of Christ's disciples, but the beam in their own eyes, they could not see. They saw an innocent and indifferent act as a great crime, whereas they looked upon the transgression of the divine law as a legitimate and just deed. Therefore, they were not custodians and upholders of the law, but distorters and subverters of it, and murderers of the righteous through the judicial authority they possessed but applied unjustly. For this reason, after a just reproach He scores them with indignation saying:

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." – Matthew 15:7-9

Hypocrites, who cloak by their apparent zeal of the law the penalty-deserving transgression; hypocrites who appear lovers of the law but are in reality transgressors, for which reason Esaias the prophet addressing you as God's spokesman publicly denounces your hypocritical and wicked nature testifying that you honour God only with your mouth and lips, but as regards your heart's desire and your works you are very far from God and very near Satan; for you teach as doctrines, the commandments of men which are subversive of God's commandments, and then falsely and vainly state that you respect and fear God. Your respect for God is vain, useless and spurious, being proved false and nullified by your own words and deeds.

CHAPTER XVII

MATTHEW CHAPTER 17

"And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." – Matthew 17:1-2

The six days which passed from the day on which Jesus foretold his glorious coming, represent the period of men's work, and the works which must be completed by the seventh day which is the day of the Lord, great and notable; for on this day the Lord appears shining and illumining and celebrating an auspicious day which brings to an end the period of the power of darkness and night. For, just as the three select disciples of Christ, Peter, James, and John, after a period of six days saw Jesus in the glory of his Godliness gleaming brighter than the Sun, likewise all Christians after the allotted period for work and the fulfillment of the prophesied events see the Lord coming in the glory of His Father, in the glory of the universal and supreme critic surrounded by a host of angels who carry out His will and His decisions. But Jesus took out of the twelve, only three disciples—Peter and James and John his brother; for the law requires two or three witnesses and no more, toward the confirmation of every truth and every event or act. During this period of ignorance and darkness God affirms truths and demonstrates them through these lawful and dependable witnesses of the truth. And those who disbelieve these lawful and dependable witnesses of the truth violate the law of God and incur the consequences of all their violators. And the first and immediate consequence of the rejection of the "reliable witness" testimony is the disbeliever's straying away from the path of truth and entering upon the path of falsehood and perdition. Those who do not believe the witness of truth, naturally believe falsehood, the opposite of truth, tread upon treacherous ground, and fall into

the abyss of destruction. Moreover, this law pertaining to the testifying and confirming of truth reproaches the delusion of the Papist church, which decrees that one high priest—the Pope of Rome—is sufficient to confirm every truth; that only he alone as a successor (supposed) of Apostle Peter has the prerogative of the infallible one and no one else. But why did not Jesus take Peter alone upon the mount of transfiguration, but also the two other brothers, James and John? Because Peter alone could not satisfactorily bear witness to the event of transfiguration, because Peter alone was not an acceptable and reliable witness of that divine vision, for "in the mouth of two or three witnesses of the truth every word may be established." If, then, Peter alone was an insufficient witness of the truth, how can the supposed successor of Peter, how can only the bishop of one city have the prerogative of the infallible one toward the confirmation, and disposition of every truth, and not two or three according to the divine law? Is it not quite obvious that the prerogative of the Papists springs from the lying Satan and not from the true Christ? That the Papists represent Satan hiding and escaping notice behind the names of Peter and Christ? We are offering this reproach of the Papal delusion as a saving benefaction to the deluded, so that they may return to the truth and to the true Church of Christ. But delusion has its seeming benefits and charms, for the deluded generally prefer delusion, and certain perdition instead of the truth and salvation. And those who are guilty of such a heresy and choice deserve the destruction which they willingly welcome and are unworthy of salvation. But we must testify the truth which God loves, and he who has ears, hears. The transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor of Galilee is absolutely concrete proof of the Divinity of Jesus, combined and united then with human nature; because He who had till then appeared a man in the eyes of His disciples now appears gleaming and illuminating more brightly than the Sun, being the eternal Sun of righteousness and the creator of the stars. The light of the divine essence has shone forth over men through human essence, and the face of Jesus flashes and casts forth the light-rays of Christ's Divinity; and the three witnesses behold the Godliness of Jesus manifested by means of his human form. *"And his face did shine as the sun and his raiment white as the light."* The above expresses very briefly the actual truth; for the brightness of the physical Sun is much less intense than that of the metaphysical Sun, and physical light much inferior to the metaphysical and divine and eternal light. But human tongue could not express and describe that sight except by means of such relatively

similar phrases whereby we rise to the understanding of the mental which lie far above the sensory.

"And behold there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." – **Matthew 17:3**

This vision too serves to prove that the fruth of God must always be testified to by two or three reliable witnesses. Moses and Elias the two outstanding prophets of the Jewish nation testify to the incarnate Christ-God and converse with Him as servants with their master, they converse concerning His passion and death and resurrection as Luke the Evangelist records; for the salvation of the world and the great and timeless plan of God is to be accomplished through them—a fact foretold and foreseen by all the prophets. Two witnesses from the Old Testament, Moses and Elias, and three from the New—Peter and James and John, observe Jesus upon Mount Tabor and testify that he is incarnate God; so that through the death and the resurrection of human nature Satan who has power of death may be done away with; and so that all those may be raised to life eternal and deathless, all who have believed in the repeatedly and variously testified to and demonstrated truth of God, and who will see Christ as He was seen by His reliable witnesses on Mount Tabor, who will rejoice greatly as did the beholding Peter who said:

"Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." – **Matthew 17:3**

This statement of Peter expresses the feeling of delight in his soul as a result of his vision of that divine light. So delighted was Peter by that light that he wished to remain there incessantly delighted and idle. It is good for all of them, he says, to be there and never to leave and be deprived of this great sight; but they need tents, and if Jesus is willing as he is, they could make three tents, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias, so that they could remain there forever and be eternally delighted as they are now. But Jesus did not desire what Peter desired, who did not know what he said or what he wanted, for he wanted the absurd and impossible. But the more absurd and stupid Peter's suggestion is, the more fervent and expressive of his spiritual inclination and desire—the result of his contact and touch

with that divine light. Most naturally, when we too are overwhelmed by this divine light we shall say "It is good for us to remain in this light and to behold God, and all things through God, and to be enchanted and delighted unceasingly and unchangeably, to live in perpetual enchantment that knows no sorrow." Such will be the future state of the blessed souls.

"While yet he spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." – Matthew 17:5

This voice testifies as to the identity of the One Who speaks from the effulgent cloud and as to what this cloud reveals, from which the Father acknowledges the Son before three witnesses, so that they too may testify as to what they saw and heard. The effulgent cloud is the symbol of the Holy Spirit through which God speaks to men and reveals Himself through the statement He makes, as one God, Father of one only begotten Son and the source of one Holy Spirit manifested and imparted by the Son to those who hear the voice of the Father and submit themselves to the Son. The three witnesses saw God on Mount Tabor, in three persons: they saw the face of the Son shining brighter than the sun, they saw the Holy Spirit in its elements of the effulgent cloud, and they heard the voice of the Father speaking from the lambent cloud and saying: *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."* Thus, did the three Apostles see God on Mount Tabor, these are the things they testified to, and their testimony is true. Those who accept it acquire through it a knowledge of and a profound insight into one and only true God revealed in three persons; they believe in Christ and recognize Him as Son of the living God; they hear His voice, that is, obey his law and the commandments of Christ; and inherit a firm and eternal kingdom. But those who do not accept this testimony, reject the true knowledge of the true God and lapse into the false; disbelieve in Christ and believe in Satan, in the misrepresentations, and slanders and falsehoods of Satan; and they go with him to the unquenchable fire of eternal damnation. But we who accept the testimony of the three reliable witnesses—Peter and James and John—must distinguish ourselves from those who have rejected it, and constitute a genuinely Christian community unpolluted by the hostile and anti-Christ element of disbelief; for otherwise if the faithful are intermingled with

the faithless they will stumble and fail to walk aright; and they will be unable to hear the voice of Christ, and live according to the Evangelical law; and hence they will sin and be condemned with the faithless. Confusion and disorder are to Satan's advantage; but to us Christians, discrimination and order are of paramount importance. Everyone who advocates discrimination and order is of Christ and a true Christian; whereas he who advocates confusion and disorder is of Satan—a subverter and underminer of the Christian Church.

"And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face and were sore afraid." – **Matthew 17:6**

From such an outcome we conclude: that the voice of the Father sounded thunderous and dread to the ears of the disciples, therefore they fell on their face in great fear; that the voice of the Lord was a voice of might and a voice of grandeur. And this voice of the Lord is identified to the previously recorded confession of Peter saying to Christ "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*" And then Christ blessed Peter because he received this true knowledge through the revelation of the heavenly Father—knowledge upon which the Church of Christ is founded and erected. But even now upon Mount Tabor, the same father reveals the same truth, and to the three disciples he says in a clearer and more dignified manner: "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.*" Hence, the testimony of Peter, for it was revealed to him by the heavenly Father, is for this reason identified to the testimony of the Father who said from the effulgent cloud: "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.*"

This voice points out the foundation and the basic law of the Christian Church, and the same voice also reproaches the false and spurious foundation upon which the Papists have erected their own bye-synagogue, their own heresy by means of which they have torn asunder and confounded the Church of Christ, and promoted the delusion of the Antichrist. Let him who will, read this reproach in our recently reprinted memoirs "of the Nature of Christ's Church, and its basic laws."

"And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only."
– **Matthew 17:7-8**

CHAPTER XXIV

MATTHEW CHAPTER 24

"And Jesus went out and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple." – Matthew 24:1

The buildings of the temple naturally aroused the wonder of the disciples, for their eyes had never before seen such magnificent and artistic buildings anywhere in Galilee or Judea. It is very usual for those who behold some imposing spectacle and admire it to point it out to those with them so that they too may admire seeing it. Consequently, the disciples of Christ while observing and admiring the buildings of the temple, erected during the reign of King Herod the infant-killer, who thus tried to win the favor of the Jewish nation, they pointed them out to their own Teacher, in order that He may admire with them the buildings which they admired.

"And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." – Matthew 24:2

All these things that you see and admire are an abomination to God who will bring destruction upon them. This temple and its buildings are doomed to destruction.

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately saying: Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" – Matthew 24:3

The disciples upon hearing that the temple and its wonderful buildings were to be destroyed, and that the kingdom of Christ is postponed until after the fulfillment of the prophesy of destruction, wonder when these things are to be and what sign will announce the presence of Christ and the end of the world. And so when Jesus sat on the mount of olives after leaving the temple and the city, the disciples came to Him privately and sought the solution to their puzzles: when will the temple and Jerusalem be destroyed? when will the kingdom of Christ come? and what sign will point to the end of the world and the coming of Christ's kingdom? To these questions Jesus answered as follows:

"And Jesus answered, and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and they shall deceive many." – **Matthew 24:4-5**

Before Christ answers positively their propounded questions He protects the disciples and all the Christian Church from the falsehood and the delusion of the rising pseudo-Christ. Before the true Christ comes to reign upon earth too as he has reigned in heaven, there will come many pseudo-prophets saying, "I am Christ", and many will believe in these pseudo-prophets and be led astray. But those who heed the words of Christ and who see and distinguish the truth from falsehood, will not believe in the pseudo-christs nor will they be led astray by them. Those who are not deceived by the pseudo-christs are true and genuine disciples of Christ—those who see and distinguish between truth and falsehood. Christ's commandment, "*Take heed that no man deceive you*", is a universal one applying to all Christians from the disciples and Apostles of Christ to all Christians and every Christian Church. All of us Christians expect the coming of Christ to the earth and in the Creed of our faith we say: "Who will come again in glory to judge the quick and the dead, and to whose kingdom there is no end." But in awaiting the coming of Christ we should beware and recognize the appearing pseudo-christs who assert, "I am Christ whereas they are not," and thus lead astray those who believe in them and follow them. However not only do they lie who say "I am Christ" but also those who say *I am the representative of Christ* whereas they are the representatives of Satan, hypocrites transformed into ministers of Christ. From the delusion of all these, Christ protects us commanding: "Take heed that no man

deceive you." And he takes heed who is enlightened by the words of Christ, who knows the true Christ, and can very easily recognize the pseudo-Christ or the false representative of Christ. However, he who is not enlightened by the words of Christ and who knows not the true Christ—such a one is easily caught in the trap of delusion and is lost. Furthermore, he who is neither enlightened by the words of Christ nor provided with a knowledge of the true Christ—such a one is not a disciple of Christ nor a true Christian; and all like him are led astray, believing in the pseudo-Christ or in the false representatives of Christ such as the Roman Popes. Let us then be constantly illumined by the glowing rays of Christ that we may see and recognize the pseudo-Christ and the false representatives of Christ and thus avoid being led astray by them.

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." – **Matthew 24:6**

Wars bring devastation and desolation to cities and communities. And those who hear about wars going on among nations or rumors of wars to take place soon believe that these wars are harbingers of the end of this world. But these prophesied wars do not foretell the end of the world. Let us not be disturbed then, nor worry by wars waged in the past or those to be waged in the future; for these wars must take place and be over, but the end of the world is not yet—it is still very far off.

"For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these things are the beginning of sorrows." – **Matthew 24:7-8**

This prophesied rising of nations begins with the year 376 AD and this, historians have called *the great migration of nations*. The Huns who first made an inroad from Asia into Europe were the cause of this great migration of nations which lasted one hundred years and brought about the liquidation of the Roman empire, on the ruins of which rose the medieval powers from which the modern nations of Europe have been formed. During this period there are recorded famines, and plagues and earthquakes in various places, but neither the earthquakes nor the famines nor the plagues have brought about

CHAPTER XXV

MATTHEW CHAPTER 25

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto the virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made. Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, not so; lest there be not enough for us and you. But go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins saying, Lord, Lord open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the son of man cometh." –

Matthew 25:1-13

The Lord tells us to watch and be ready as the wise virgins were and not as the foolish ones. For as many as will prepare themselves like the wise virgins and take oil in their vessels with their lamps, these, upon the arrival of the bridegroom will go in with Him into the marriage; but as many as will prepare themselves like the foolish virgins, having lamps without oil—these shall knock on the door and hear the "I know ye not." But we should inquire as to the significance of the virgin's lamps, of the oil in the vessels through which the lamps burn and of those who, holding these, go out to meet the bridegroom. The lamps of the virgins symbolize their souls and the

oil without which the lamp neither burns nor gives light represents the spirit and the fruit of the spirit, or the works of righteousness and goodness through which the souls diffuse light and shine. But the lamps of the foolish virgins which do not contain oil for burning and illumination represent those souls which are naked and deprived of the fruit of the spirit and of the works of righteousness and goodness and possess only virginity or the negative virtue of abstinence from evil. But just as the lamp which is inwardly clean but without oil cannot shine or illumine, likewise the souls possessing only the negative virtue without the positive cannot go out to meet the bridegroom because they have neither the attractiveness nor the gleam of the positive virtues. And so as many souls are virgin, abstaining from wrong but not engaging in good and benevolent works according to the command "Depart from evil and engage in good,"—these prepare themselves like the foolish virgins who had lamps without oil but failed to grasp that a lamp without oil was useless and valueless; but as many souls as abstained from evil and engaged in good works prepared themselves as the wise virgins who realized the necessity of oil for the burning of the lamp, and provided themselves with it in time. Let us then also make preparation like the wise and not the foolish virgins, and, while refraining from wrong engage virtuous works through which our light may shine both before God and man and through which we are justified to go into the marriage and the joy of our Lord. But preparation can be made only here; after death and the resurrection of the dead preparation is impossible, for everyone is found as he has prepared himself here, either with or without oil, and either goes into the marriage or is shut out of it according to the nature of his preparation.

"In like manner the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man about to depart to a far country who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same and made them other five talents. And likewise, he that had received two, he also gained another two. But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents saying, Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside