

THE

PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

EXPLAINED.

No. 2.

“And he said unto his disciples, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God ; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.”—MARK iv, 11.

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THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN EXPLAINED.

THE ordinary interpretation of this parable is, that the religion of Christ Jesus will silently and insensibly make the whole world holy : changing its nature from evil to good by the gentle influence of doctrine and example. And it is, perhaps, on the seeming authority of this parable more than any other part of Scripture, that the Millenarian doctrine is resisted ; and many good men are found to contend, that by the means already in use, the world will be ultimately converted to the faith of Jesus, and the glory of the latter days draw on.

In proof of this, let us take the interpretation of the parable as given by a much admired, and much trusted writer. “Leaven changes not the substance of the meal in which it is hid, but materially alters its qualities : it so impregnates the meal, as to transform it, as it were, into its own likeness. Thus does the gospel affect those who receive it into their *hearts* ; it makes us partakers of a divine nature. It does not indeed essentially change either the faculties of the mind, or the members of the body ; but it communicates to them a new life and power, a new direction and tendency. The more this leaven works within us, the more are we changed into Christ’s image from glory to glory.” “Leaven, when it has begun to work, never ceases, till it has leavened all the meal. Thus does the gospel also work in the *hearts of men*. The man is made altogether a *new* creature ; *old* things are passed away, and all things are become new.” “Thus will the *world* also be *regenerated by the grace of the gospel*. This leaven has long been put into the great mass of mankind ; it has already raised a ferment throughout a great part of the world, and in due season shall leaven the whole lump. Though its progress be but slow

at present, it shall work till it has pervaded every soul, and brought all nations to the obedience of faith." Similar is the exposition given by Scott.

But the fatal error of this interpretation is, that it exactly inverts the uniform meanings given to the leaven and the meal respectively. Leaven here is made to correspond to the *glorious gospel* of the blessed God: while in Scripture it is ever taken as the sign of *false doctrine*, or *evil practice*. And the meal, which in Scripture has always a *good* sense, is by these interpreters made to signify either the *corrupt heart*, or the *corrupt world*. The very texts quoted bear witness to the inversion. How can the introduction of the "*old leaven*," which transforms all into *its own nature*, figure the *new* creation, and the passing away of all that is *old*?

The parable represents a transformation *either of good into evil*, or of *evil into good*. If we invert the places of these, we obtain an interpretation *exactly the reverse of what the Savior intended*. How careful should we be, therefore, to give the leaven and the meal respectively the significations which they uniformly receive in other places of God's word! For it results from the structure of the parable, that such a mis-interpretation does not, as in other cases, produce nonsense, but only an exactly reversed view of the Redeemer's prophecy. And Mr. Scott confesses, that "*leaven is generally used in Scripture as the emblem of corrupt doctrine, or wickedness.*" If then we take the leaven and the meal in their scripture sense, we have one interpretation; if we reverse their respective meanings, we get another, and an opposite interpretation. If we run counter to the Scripture, the parable predicts that *the world is to be made holy by the church*; if we take Scripture as our guide, it foretells the *church made corrupt by the world*. With the awful prophecies of the Epistles and the Revelation sounding in our ears, who can doubt which is the true?

Again—if the point of the parable be supposed to be, that the religion of Jesus will diffuse its own holy influence, this is *no mystery*: and if it be supposed to be its sanctifying the whole world, the statement is not true. This were contrary to the whole current of the New Testa-

ment testimony: for there we are informed that in the last days iniquity will abound, and the love of many wax cold; that trials and persecutions unto death will be common; that many in those "perilous times," will depart from the faith; that they will be days like those of the flood, and of Sodom's corruption. Moreover this dispensation is declared, in more than one passage, to be a dispensation of election; which is necessarily opposed to a time when *all* are saved.

But further, the action of the leaven upon the dough results in that which the Scripture judges as evil. The effect of leaven is to swell and puff up the mass into which it is inserted. Now the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, which especially presents us with the leaven in the church of Christ, and commands its purging out, (chap. v,) offers to our notice this effect in the church, which God judges as evil. They were "*puffed up* for one against another." "Some are *puffed up* as though I could not come to you—but I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know not the speech of *them who are puffed up*, but the power:" iv, 6, 18, 19. "*Ye are puffed up*, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from you:" v, 2. "Knowledge *puffeth up*, but charity edifieth:" vii, 1. Charity "*is not puffed up*:" xiii, 4. The expression occurs but once more, and there is attributed to the evil of the fleshly mind: Col. ii, 18. But the substantive related to the verb, (which is but once used,) refers to this *same church at Corinth*, and is mentioned among the various forms of sin then displayed amongst them. "I fear, lest, when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and that I should be found unto you such as ye would not; lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, *swellings*, tumults:" 2 Cor. xii, 20.

And the last stage of iniquity manifesting itself in open apostacy from the truth, is described in similar terms. "When they speak great *swelling words of vanity*, they allure through the lusts of the flesh:" 2 Peter ii, 18. "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh *great swelling words*:" Jude 16.

The leaven is sour dough, and its tendency is to produce its own nature, sourness. Now this word in the Old Testament, where alone it is used, is spoken of *the heart*, and *signifies to decline, or turn aside*. "Their drink is *sour* : they have committed whoredom continually : " Hos. iv, 18. "Thy people have *corrupted themselves* : they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them : " Ex. xxxii, 8. So Deut. xi, 28 ; xxxi, 29 ; Judges ii, 17.

On the contrary, the emblem whereto the Savior compares true Christianity, is something whose tendency is to *resist fermentation and corruption*. "Ye are the *SALT* of the earth." Moreover, the destiny of the dough after it is leavened, points out that it is ready for judgement and wrath. As treading awaits the ripened grape, and the wine-press, is the wine-press of wrath : so the *oven and its fire* awaits the fermented dough. And what does this betoken but the judgements of Christ's coming ? "Behold the day cometh that shall *burn as an oven*, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : " Mal. iv, 1. "Thou shalt make them as a *fiery oven in the time of thine anger* : " Psalm xxi, 9.

In proof of the meal having a good meaning in the Scripture, we may observe, that it is the basis of half the sacrifices of the temple. Offerings of flour were continually commanded by the same God that forbid leaven. And on one occasion we find meal made use of to counteract the effect of poison. "And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds, his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage ; for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, O man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, *Then bring meal*. And he cast it into the pot : and he said pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot : " 2 Kings iv, 39—41.

But the ordinary view will be more clearly seen to be false, when we have examined the true interpretation. The parable, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, runs

thus :—“ Another parable spake he unto them : The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened :” Matt. xiii, 33.

“ And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God ? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened :” Luke xiii, 20, 21.

First, then, the parable, as being given both by Matthew and Luke, is not a *Jewish* parable. Secondly, these parables were uttered by the Lord after the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost by the Pharisees and rulers of Israel. The rejection of the Holy Spirit was the virtual rejection of Jesus ; for he was one with the Holy Ghost, and by the sacred Spirit’s inspiration did he utter his words, and work his miracles. The kingdom of Jesus therefore could not at that time dawn on Israel ; and as long as the nation remains impenitent, the kingdom which is promised to Israel, cannot be *manifested*. But yet in another sense, the kingdom was *already come* : (Matt. xii, 28,) its king, its laws, its mighty powers (“ powers of the age to come”) had already been displayed. And shortly after, it was to be set up in the Christian church—a body visibly governed by its laws, submitting to and reverencing its king, and openly exercising its supernatural gifts. This is the time then of its being “ a kingdom within a kingdom.” For though Satan is the Prince of the world, Jesus has yet faithful subjects within his dominions.

Now is the time of the *principles* of the kingdom, of the reception of those doctrines on which it will be ultimately founded, and of the exercise of those tempers in which its glory will principally consist. But these principles are not now actually supreme in power and rule ; nay, they are despised and trampled upon by the world, and even by many of the professed followers of Jesus. No *power* is put forth on God’s part to compel all to adopt them, or else to be themselves cut off. But this must and will be the case when the kingdom is fully come. Thus we arrive at the important distinction of the *kingdom in mystery* ; and the *kingdom in manifestation*. The kingdom in manifestation will consist of two classes of blessings, the

earthly and the *heavenly*. The earthly blessings of prosperous harvests and fair weather, of the taming of wild beasts and the ceasing of disease, were promised to the earthly people—the Jews. Hence, when they refused to believe, the earthly blessings were cut off, and the kingdom could not *appear*: for the earthly blessings are those apparent to the senses. But there was another class of blessings, in which the kingdom will mainly consist—the heavenly. And these are the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost. The latter then might come, even when the earthly people were cut off; for the children of faith who are the heavenly people, are now being gathered. Therefore we may call the present dispensation “the kingdom of heaven,” if we will only understand it of the kingdom *in mystery*. All the parables of this chapter relate to “mysteries” or secrets concerning the kingdom while in its state of mystery. But when the Kingdom of God is actually come, which is at the last or seventh trumpet, “*the mystery of God is finished*:” Rev. x, 7, because it is openly manifest to every eye.

I. These remarks being premised, let us approach to the interpretation of the parable. And may the Holy Spirit bless it, for Christ’s sake! The first question which arises is, What is meant by the *leaven*? Both the Old and New Testaments give testimony concerning its nature.

1. Leaven was a thing forbidden to the Israelite so long as he was keeping the feast of the Passover. “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread: Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day till the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.” “Seven days shall there be no *leaven* found in your houses; for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened: in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread:” Ex. xii, 15, 19, 20. “Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the Passover unto the Lord thy God. . . . thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it. . . . and there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days:” Deut. xvi, 2—4.

2. Leaven was forbidden also in the temple and worship of the Lord. "No meat offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with *leaven*: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord, made by fire:" Lev. ii, 11. "This is the law of the meat offering. . . . it shall not be baked *with leaven*. . . . it is *most holy*:" Lev. vi, 14—17. It might not be offered with the blood of the sacrifice. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice *with leaven*:" Ex. xxxiv. 23. So Ex. xxiii, 18.

3. Leaven was a thing of Egypt, which the Lord would have his people to leave behind, when they were led forth from the house of bondage and of idolatry. "They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened: because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry: neither had they prepared for themselves any victual:" Ex. xii, 29. Here it is implied that Egypt's bread was prepared with leaven, and that had Israel tarried there, theirs would have been leavened also.

This is the view of leaven as given in the Old Testament. Let us now turn to the New. Its voice and testimony concerning leaven is entirely confirmatory of the view given by the Old.

1. The Savior cautions the disciples against it. "Then Jesus said unto them, *Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees*." "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees:" Matt. xvi, 6, 11, 12. Leaven, then, is *false doctrine*. On another occasion Jesus again uttered the same caution. "He began to say *unto his disciples* first of all, *Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy*:" Luke xii, 1.

2. The Christians of Corinth and Galatia are both warned against it by the great Apostle of the Gentiles. "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*? *Purge out therefore*

the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; Therefore let us keep the feast, not *with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* Therefore put away from yourselves that wicked person :” 1 Cor. v, 6, 8, 13. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. . . . Christ is become of no effect unto you, whoever of you *are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.* This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump:*” Gal. v, 1, 2, 4, 8, 9.

The uniform testimony then, both of the Old and New Testaments concerning the leaven is that it is an evil thing.* And the main doctrine concerning it, to be collected from the above passages, (which the reader should study for himself in their context,) is, that by leaven is meant evil doctrine—of two classes—that of the *Pharisees*, or an attachment to forms and ceremonies, with the self righteousness of *the law*, which was rebuked in the churches of *Galatia*: and the other, that of the *Sadducees*, the leaven of unbelief and of *lawlessness*.

I. The leaven of the Pharisee is hypocrisy; a fair pretence and show of wisdom and righteousness covering an evil and proud heart. The other leaven is lawlessness, and refusal to believe and obey. The Epistles to the Corinthians display the leaven in its form of lawlessness.

* There is an apparent, but not real, exception to this. The wave loaves of fine flour were offered (Lev. xxiii, 17), baked with leaven. On this I would give the remarks of an able Christian writer. “With the leavened cakes which represented the Church sanctified by the Holy Ghost to God, but still living in *corrupted human nature, a sin-offering was offered*: for the sin-offering of Christ answered for and put away the leaven of our corrupted nature.” Again, leaven was used in the peace-offerings: Lev. vii, 13. On this also take the remark of the same writer. “That offering which represented the communion of the church in the sacrifice of Christ, necessarily brought in man, and the leaven was the ordained symbol of that leaven which is ever found in us.”

The various subjects treated of in turn, display the many corruptions that were abroad in the church. Schisms—the setting up of human wisdom and eloquence—the consequent resting on the simplest elements of the faith—the setting up of men—the spirit of judging—uncleanness—law and lawsuits—fornication—abuse of liberty—covetousness—leaning to idolatry—abuses of the Lord's Supper, and of the Spirit's gifts—want of love—abuses in worship—denial of the resurrection. In a word, the flesh was manifested and tolerated among them—they were "*carnal*:" 1 Cor. iii. Paul shows the effect of the leaven in its puffing them up: (chap. iv, 5,) while he also presents our position as keepers of the passover. And his last Epistle shows that there were among them, both resistance to the Spirit's authorized officers, and false apostles; and the whole is concluded with a threat of judgement against offenders. This threat, (and indeed the whole of the lessons to be derived from the Epistles in question,) is the more significant because the address of the first of the two Epistles is *universal*: 1 Cor. i, 2.

But leaven, whether in one form or the other, is *Egyptian*. And Egypt represents the world; and Israel's leaving Egypt and passage through the Red sea is shown by St. Paul to type and foreshadow the baptism of the Christian Church, and its dying thereby to both the law and the flesh. And the law and the flesh are now both alike things *of the world*.

That which the Holy Spirit commands to be purged out must be *unclean*. When then Paul writes—"Purge out therefore the old leaven," he describes the leaven as *unclean*. "Because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be *purged from thy filthiness* any more:" Ex. xxiv, 13. "Dearly beloved, *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness* of the flesh and spirit:" 2 Cor. vii, 1.

But the point of view in which the sin is seen most clearly, is by regarding the mystical position of the present dispensation. Leaven was forbidden in the house *only during the feast of the Passover*. But this is exactly the place and time which by a spiritual eye we are seen to occupy: "For *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*,

therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The obligation to abstain from leaven lasts during the time of the feast, and that time still continues. The woman's sin, therefore, spiritually stated, is the use of leaven during the feast of the Passover. Hence I gather assuredly that all interpretations of this parable must be false, which make the leaven or its effects to be *good*.

Leaven is either false principles, or evil practice opposed to the gospel: Matt. xvi; Luke xi. It also includes the persons that hold or practice the one or the other: 1 Cor. v.

II. But of the leaven we are informed that "a woman took" it. Who is the *woman*?

First, I would observe, that in this series of parables, wherever *good* is done, a *man* is represented as doing it; and with but one exception, that man is the Lord Jesus Christ. Why then is it not said of the leaven that a *man* took it? The change is highly significant: for there was no necessity in the structure of the parable, *men* being bakers as often as *women*. This of itself should lead us to suspect her person and act to be evil. For if it were right, then Jesus did not complete his work.

Secondly, none will suppose her to be a literal woman: for neither the meal nor leaven are literal. But there are only three mystic women mentioned in the New Testament—out of which it will be easy to make a selection. And among the mystic women of the Old Testament is found one,* whom I am led to regard as identical with the woman before us. She is shown to the prophet Zechariah, (chap. v,) undergoing transportation to the land of Shinar, but no explanation is given who she is. She is therefore left under mystery, no less truly than the woman of the parable. And that which makes me judge her to be the same as the one in question, is, that she is found in connexion with an ephah. Now an ephah is the measure for corn and meal: Lev. v, 10; vi, 20; Num. v, 15; xxviii, 5; Judges vi, 19; 1 Sam. i, 24. And an ephah is equivalent to "three

* This point was not seen when the first edition was published.

seahs" (σατα)*—the quantity of flour which the woman is said to have had her in power in the parable. I suppose then that the woman of Zech. v, is the offender of this place, driven out from her paradise, like Eve, after the forbidden thing had been taken; and like Achor † removed from the camp, and brought to the valley of Achor, in order to be burnt with fire: Joshua vii. And as the ephah in Zachariah is declared to represent the iniquity ‡ of "*all the earth*," so by the three seahs, which are the equivalent to the ephah, I understand *the earth* also, only regarded in its three divisions, as distributed among the three sons of Noah. And the use of the definite term "seah" (σατον) instead of one more general, as "measure" (μετρον,) seems to imply that something equally physical is intended to answer thereto. Moreover a measure is something quite extrinsic to the meal, although the meal is meted out thereby. Even thus the question of the localities of the globe, or the various divisions of the earth, is one quite independent of the being of the saints. But if the foregoing observations are correct, it was an intimation that the gospel would have a wider spread than Judæa; and answers to the Savior's command to his disciples—"Go ye therefore and teach *all nations*;" and to the still later vision of John—"Lo a great multitude whom no man could number, out of *every nation* stood before the throne and before the Lamb:" Rev. vii, 9. I think also that the meal being taken in its relation to these extrinsic measures, denotes that the church is taken in its worldly or visible aspect of number and quantity.

* On the equivalence of three seahs to an ephah, see Ex. xvi, 36, in the Septuagint. Also three seahs or an ephah seem to be the quantity prepared for guests or presents: compare Gen. xviii, 6; Judges vi, 19; 1 Sam. i, 24. It is taken for granted in Horne's Introduction.

† That the name of the offender is properly Achor עכר is clear (1) from 1 Chron. ii, 7, where it is so written. (2) From Joshua's play upon his name, יְהוָה יַעֲכֹרְךָ יְהוָה verse 25. (3) The Septuagint and Syriac read Αχαρ, with 'r' and not 'n.'

‡ I read עונם for עונם with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Coptic: Zech. v, 6.

The three mystic women of the New Testament are—the earthly Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem, and great Babylon or Rome.

1. The woman before us cannot be the earthly Jerusalem: for she was revealed before; this is a “thing kept secret from the foundation of the world.” Also because *she* took not the leaven, but rejected it, as we find in Acts xv.

2. Nor can it be the heavenly Jerusalem, because she has no power on earth; where the kingdom in mystery now is; besides *she* is called “the *holy* Jerusalem:” Rev. xxi, 10. “And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither worketh abomination:” ver. 27.

3. It remains then that it be Babylon—the mystic woman that is revealed in the Revelation. And this may be set upon a firm basis of proof. For the Revelation answers to, and is the interpretation of these parables—the manifesting and clearing up of the secrets contained in them. For in these parables of St. Matthew, Jesus, like Moses, puts a “*veil on his face*,” that “seeing they might see and not perceive.” But the Apocalypse or Revelation, signifies “*the taking off of a veil*:” and thus it gives the explanation of what here is mysterious. And it will be found that every one of these parables has something corresponding to it in that book. But other evidence may be adduced, that the woman before us signifies Rome.

1. “The woman is the *glory of the man*” (1 Cor. xi, 7), but the man is the “image and glory of God.” Now, of the three cities mystically described as women, which best represents “the glory of man?” Rome, it must be answered. In her history and within her walls have been gathered whatever attracts the fleshly eye and heart of man; riches, power, fame, luxury, pleasure, learning, empire.

2. As the parable is a *mystery*, so is the woman’s name—“MYSTERY, Babylon the great:” Rev. xviii, 5. And as the parable of the mustard-seed is connected with that of the leaven, so is the same “great Babylon” conspicuous in each.

3. The woman takes the forbidden leaven and mixes it with the flour. She is responsible then for all its evil re-

sults, and is the author of them. So is she characterized in the Revelation as "THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS, AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH:" Rev. xvii, 5. We may argue satisfactorily, therefore, that if Babylon be the mother of the abominations of the earth, and if hiding the leaven into the meal be an abomination, then does it proceed from her as the mother—and the woman of the parable is no other than Babylon the great.

4. The woman occupies the place of power. Both leaven and flour are under her hand and direction. She is active; both leaven and flour relatively passive. Now such is the aspect which Babylon the great holds. "*The woman which thou sawest is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth:*" Rev. xvii, 18. The parable relates to the times of the Gentile dispensation, and in it Rome is the reigning head of the Gentiles. During it Jerusalem, the head of the Jews, is trodden down and deserted, and abandoned of power; for these respective heads are opposed to each other, as being the capitals of opposing kingdoms, and when Rome was exalted, Jerusalem was oppressed, and when Jerusalem is "the city of the great King," Babylon is "found no more at all." From this also we can see that the woman is no holy person; for, as has been shewn in the parable of the mustard-seed, worldly rule and authority among his disciples during this dispensation, are things not according to the mind of Christ. Until Christ comes, the only scriptural exhibition of the saints is as trampled and oppressed. And that the rule is worldly, is seen by the taking of the leaven, which is a thing of the world, its great essence and characteristic.

5. The inspired history of Christianity leaves it at Rome. After Jerusalem will not receive the witness of Jesus, it is conveyed to Rome as the next sphere appointed by the Lord Jesus. "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in *Jerusalem*, thou must bear witness also at *Rome*:" Acts xxiii, 11. "Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to *Jerusalem*, saying, After I have been there, I must also see *Rome*:" xix, 21. At Rome, in the Epistles also, we take leave of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Now in Rome we have both the leaven and the meal. The meal, as the Epistle shows—"To all that be *in Rome*

beloved of God, called to be saints :” Rom. i, 7. And the leaven is there also. The leaven of the *flesh* was at Rome from the very first. And the relics of the *law* were transported to Rome as a further leaven, when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the temple furniture borne in triumph. What woman but Rome had both kinds of the leaven? “And so we went towards *Rome*.” At Rome the Jews are cast off as a nation, and the Gentiles taken in for the time of this dispensation. “Be it known therefore unto you (Jews,) that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it :” Acts xxviii, 28.

6. Moreover she is seen punished for this her sin in the Revelation. “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, the great city, because she made all nations drunk with the wine of the fury of her fornication :” Rev. xiv, 8. But of this more hereafter.

7. She is a woman (*γυνή*), a word which implies that she is married, (1 Cor. vii, 34.) She is not a widow; but that is the condition of the true church of Christ :” Luke xviii, 3—5. Now Babylon rejects that name. “I sit a queen and am *no widow* :” Rev. xviii, 7. Hence her husband is not Christ, but one of the world : and her condition agrees with that of Babylon.

8. This parable is the last of those delivered by Jesus to *the multitude*, the remaining ones being uttered before *the disciples in the house*. Hence it seems highly probable, not to say certain, that the three former parables presented such a view of Christianity as might be noticed by even a worldly eye : and this we found to be the case as regards the parable of the mustard-seed. The remark then holds good here also, and by this criterion we may decide that the woman in question is not a *covenant*, (as in Gal. iv,) for that would require the eye of a believer. But suppose this to be the imperial city that filled the eye of the world, and at once we perceive the possibility of its being seen by the multitude. Rome’s influence upon Christianity in deteriorating it, is a scene which the infidel himself may trace.

And as Jerusalem during the millennium is to be the centre and city of *God*, whence the streams of truth are to go forth to the nations (Isa. ii,) so is Rome the centre and

city of *man*, whence, during the period of mystery, the debasing tide of worldliness and corruption flow forth.

III. We are next informed that the woman "took" the leaven.

The taking seems to imply ownership. "We will *take* our daughter and we will be gone:" Gen. xxxiv, 17. "They *took* double money in their hand:" xliii, 15. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which *took* their lamps:" Matt. xxv, 1.

But the leaven is forbidden, and the taking of that which is forbidden is sin, meriting punishment. Such was the offence of Achan (Achor.) The spoil of Jericho was forbidden. "Ye, in anywise, keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye *take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse*, and trouble it:" Josh. vi, 18. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan . . . *took of the accursed thing.*" "And Achan answered Joshua and said, indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and **TOOK THEM**; *and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent:*" vii, 1—21. Thus the accursed thing is both *taken* and *hid*, as in the parable: and the camp of Israel was defiled and troubled thereby, as the meal is here.

Like this was the case of Saul. God sent him utterly to destroy Amalek, and to slay everything they had. But the king and the people coveted the forbidden thing, and "the people *took of the spoil, the chief of the things which should utterly have been destroyed:*" 1 Sam. xv, 21. Similar were the cases of Nadab and Abihu: Lev. x, 1, 2; and of Korah and his company: Num. xvi, 18—35.

But the chief and especial reference here seems to be to the first sin in the garden of Eden. The Lord had uttered a warning against the tree of knowledge. "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." But "when **THE WOMAN** saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be

desired to make one wise, SHE TOOK of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." And as the consequence of this sin, Adam and his wife "*hid themselves*" among the trees of the garden. Now the agent in the first sin was a literal woman, because the tree was literal, and the dispensation generally was that of the letter; but now the dispensation is spiritual, and the thing forbidden is so also. But the sin still consists in *taking* the thing forbidden. In the leaven, moreover, are contained all the reasons for the act which moved Eve to the sin in Eden. The leaven is "the lust of the flesh—the lust of the eye—and the pride of life." She took the leaven—It was not in the meal at first: The gospel as it came from the hands of the Lord Jesus was pure. "*Ye are unleavened.*"

IV. "And hid it into three measures of meal."

By meal is meant the saints of God. This was the basis of the *mincha* or meat offering to God: Ex. xxix, 40, 41. And even thus Christians are to present themselves "*a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God:*" Rom. xii, 1. Flour is of the same even character throughout. So are Christians to be. "One is your leader, the Messiah; and *all ye are brethren:*" Matt. xxiii, 1. Thus its equableness of nature sets forth the equality of believers as brethren, and its innumerable flakes the "multitude which none can number." Their glory is to be united: and their usefulness then begins. But then their principles are not to be the common and worldly ones; for these are selfish, earthly, forbidden. It was the glory of the Christian church to be cemented together as no society ever was before, on quite new and unearthly principles. They were to be a new and heavenly lump. Let the world's societies be joined together on the grounds of interest, natural relationship, and earthly birth; *they* were bound together as born again, children of the same heavenly Father, baptized into the same spirit of love and power. Leaven is the world's principle. But God has another, which he appointed in his offerings. The meat-offering with leaven is an abomination—*oil* is his element. "If thou bring an oblation of a meat-offering baken in the oven, it shall be *unleavened* cakes of fine flour *mingled with oil*, or *unleavened wafers*

anointed *with oil*. And if thy oblation be a meat-offering, baken in a pan, it shall be of fine flour *unleavened, mingled with oil*. And if thy oblation be a meat-offering, baken in the frying-pan, it shall be made of *fine flour with oil*:" Lev. ii, 1, 4, 5, 7.

But the woman here adds leaven to the meal. It was the glory of the church that it had left all leaven behind it in Egypt. The return to leaven, therefore, is a return to Egypt: a falling back to the yoke of bondage, a conformity to the world, whence the church is called out.

That the woman regards not the command of God, is seen by the opposition between Christ's word by Paul, and her act. "*Purge out the old leaven.*" "*The woman took leaven and hid it into three measures of meal.*" Thus she is on Satan's side; not with Christ, but against him; not gathering with him, but scattering abroad. Her employment is like Satan's. The enemy came while men were asleep, and sowed tares among the wheat. The woman corrupts by leaven the fine meal of Christ. Satan's work is permitted to come to maturity—"Let both grow together until the harvest;" and so is it here—"the whole was leavened." The object of Jesus was to keep separate his church from the world, "*to purify unto himself a peculiar people*:" Tit. ii, 14. Her aim is to make one, two things which he sought to keep asunder, and she effects it.

V. She "*hides it into three measures of meal.*"

Probably there is a reference to the history of the interview between Abraham and the three angels: for there we read of the patriarch's order to Sarah, "*make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth*:" Gen. xviii, 6.

But the real meaning of the number "**three**" seems to be a reference to the universal visible church: it is the same flour in all, but that flour is in **three** several measures. They are not actually divided thus, but they are capable of that division. "**The whole**" is made up of these "**three**."

Now the division of the world since Noah's day, is threefold. And Noah begat *three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth*:" Gen. vi, 10. "**And the sons of Noah, that went**

forth of the Ark, were Shem, Ham, and Japheth These are the *three sons of Noah*; and of them was the *whole earth overspread*:" Gen. ix, 18, 19. When the Gentiles are to be brought into the church, "*three men*" seek Peter: Acts x, 19; xi, 11. The Lord Jesus, describing to his apostles the sphere of witness, makes a three-fold division of it—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea—(the first division), and in Samaria, (the second), and unto the uttermost parts of the earth:" (the third) Acts i, 8. This is not indeed the same division as the former, but it is worthy of notice, as including beneath its triple division the universal church. But the measurement given above is one into which visible Christianity naturally fell; the Eastern church, the Western church, and the African church. And accordingly there were at first *three patriarchs*—the patriarchs of Alexandria, of Antioch, and of Rome, answering respectively to these three divisions.

The *three* measures of meal discover, I think, that the visible church of Christ had in some degree become corrupted before, for the three divisions of it are earthly divisions. As it came forth first from the hand of the Spirit it was but *one*. "There shall be *one fold*:" John x, 16. "That he might gather together *in one* the children of God:" John xi, 52. "We being many are *one body in Christ*:" Rom. xii, 5. "By one Spirit we are all baptized into *one body*:" 1 Cor. xii, 13. Yet I would not speak with full certainty: for the Savior, speaking of his church, desires that it should be *one with the unity of the Godhead*; and therefore there may be a reference intended to the Ever-Blessed Three in One. "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me *that they may be one as we are*." "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, *that they may be one, even as we are one*:" John xvii, 11—22.

Three is, moreover, the appointed number of measures for the meat-offering in the temple. "In the beginnings of your months ye shall offer *three tenth deals of flour, for a meat-offering, mingled with oil*." "In the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast;

seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten Their meat-offering shall be of *flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals shall ye offer for a bullock :*" Numb. xxviii, 11, 12, 17, 20, 26, 28.

Into these three measures of meal the woman hides the leaven.

This adds to the proof that the whole is evil. For leaven is hypocrisy, and to it belongs concealment—but the Savior teaches that this concealment would be but momentary. At the great day it would be brought to light. "*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy : for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be known :*" Luke xii, 1, 2. Hidden works moreover are *works of darkness*. "*Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts :*" 1 Cor. v, 5. The deed of the woman is not according to the will of Christ, nor is she any servant of his. For his command to his ministers, is not to hide but to proclaim openly the truths they had heard : Matt. x, 27. And Paul contrasts his "*manifestation of the truth*" with the "*hidden works of dishonesty*" in the epistle, which, as we have noticed, bears most on the subject of the leaven. "*We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God :*" 2 Cor. iv, 2.

Herein we get the view of the transaction as it is regarded by God. To men the addition of leaven to flour seems quite fitting, and an improvement to both. Leaven by itself is sour dough, but added to meal it becomes palatable. Flour alone is pure, but unpleasant to the taste ; the addition of leaven makes it light and pleasant. It is the common, the regular practice of mankind. But then these very principles are the condemnation of the act in the sight of God. Christianity was not devised to give ease to the flesh, any more than God gave the command to eat unleavened bread, because it was more agreeable to the taste. Far from it ; it was called under the Old Testament, the "*bread of affliction :*" Deut. xvi, 3. And thus

Christianity is the "crucifying of the flesh with the affections and lusts." The mixing of leaven with flour is indeed the ordinary practice of men. But it is the Christian's condemnation to be living like men in general. "Seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind, for all these things do the nations of the world seek after:" Luke xii, 29, 30. Here a practice is considered as sufficiently condemned by its being the common "course of the world." Again, "Whereas there are among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and WALK AS MEN?" 1 Cor. iii, 3. The Christian's glory is not conformity to the world, but separateness from it. "Come out from among them, and be ye separated, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing:" 2 Cor. vi, 17.

The men of the world see no crime but advantage in the act of mixing leaven with the meal. And so indeed in a worldly point of view there was. When the Emperor of Rome established Christianity as the religion of the world, it seemed a great and advantageous thing for both parties. His empire was the more firmly established; and the Christians were no longer molested with perpetual persecutions, but being recognized by the state as its officers and friends, grew in wealth, importance, and power continually. But the ceasing of persecution, and attaining to power and consequence in the world, were in the sight of God only evil. His principles were such, that followed out, his words must stand good throughout the dispensation—"In the world ye shall have *tribulation*." "We must through *much tribulation* enter the kingdom of God." The churches were therefore abandoning their true position in consenting to be established by Constantine. Then was leaven of corruption mixed with the meal. The introducing of leaven was seemingly a friendly act; and the union of church and state in Constantine's day, was a pacific and friendly alliance. By the Christians of that day its sad effects were not apprehended. They seeing, saw not: so natural is the sympathy between the flour and the leaven that its corrupting tendency passed unnoticed. The leaven was hid, and we hear no note of warning or of remonstrance throughout the church. Ease from persecution, power,

and splendor, was the desire of the flesh; but the contrary was God's choice and the Savior's; and when prudent but fleshly Peter would have rebuked our Lord for anticipating sorrow, he was set aside as doing Satan's work. "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; thou savourest not (dost not relish) the things that be of God, but those that be of men:" Matt. xvi, 23. See also the same desire to avoid persecution, by mixing leaven with the meal, in Gal. vi, 12; "*As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.*"

And we know what is the "old" when compared with our present dispensation considered as the "new."

The LAW is old, as compared with the gospel. It is "the old covenant," (*διαθηκη*): 2 Cor. iii, 14. And to it belonged "the letter" and carnal ordinances—old wine, suited to the old bottles: Matt. ix, 16, 17, xiii, 52.

The FLESH is "old," as compared with the "new man," regenerate by the Holy Ghost: Rom. vi, 6. And oldness and corruption are nearly related. "The old man which is corrupt:" Eph. iv, 22.

Now the leaven as related to the meal must always be "the old" as compared with "the new." For leaven is not, as some seem to have supposed, yeast or some fermenting substance of a different character from the meal. Leaven is only *old and sour dough*. And, therefore, Paul gives leaven justly, and more than once, the character of "old:" 1 Cor. v, 7, 8.

It is clear, therefore, that the law and the flesh are the old leaven as opposed to the spirit and the gospel. Any introduction of the principles of the old dispensation into the gospel, and any bringing in of the natural and fleshly principles of the world into the church is the adulteration of the new meal by the old leaven.

Now, from the beginning it has ever been thus. The course of evil may be stated generally, as the old corrupting the new. God creates a new world, and pronounces it very good. But into this secretly enters "the old serpent the devil and Satan," and defiles it. God sets up a new dispensation at Sinai, but in forty days' time the old

heaven of idolatry enters, and the covenant is broken, and the nation defiled. He bids Israel make a holy tabernacle, within whose curtains he may abide. He sends forth from himself new and holy fire, that it may burn for ever on his altar: Lev. ix. But Nadab and Abihu, (as we are informed at the commencement of the very next chapter) profane his offering with the old and strange fire. He sets up a kingdom in the person of Solomon, but the old corrupts the new: the Gentile wives of the king introduce idolatry, and persuade him to his fall. The scene before us, therefore, to an instructed and spiritual eye, is nothing startling and unexpected, but the sad course of things in an evil world. As the snow descends from heaven of brilliant and spotless whiteness, but every hour that it lingers amid the city streets, contracts some new defilement, till at length it is scarcely discernible from the ordinary mud, so did the Savior perceive that it would be with his most holy doctrine, to the utter loss, at length, of its original purity, mercy, and heavenliness.

IV. But we have to trace, in conclusion, the issue, "Until the whole was leavened."

"The whole" is an expression used both of the church and of the world. "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the *whole world*; for a witness unto all nations:" Matt. xxiv, 14. "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the *whole world*:" Matt. xxvi, 13. "There should be great dearth throughout the *whole world*:" Acts xi, 28. "Your faith is spoken of throughout the *whole world*"—said of Rome: Rom. i, 8.

The same expression also describes the church. "Gaius mine host, and of the *whole church*, saluteth you:" Rom. xvi, 23. "If therefore the *whole church* be come together into one place:" 1 Cor. xiv, 23. "A little leaven leaveneth the *whole lump*:" 1 Cor. v, 6; xii, 17.

Now both these expressions apply in the case before us; the whole visible church, which is nearly identified with the Roman world, will be leavened. And this is testified of Babylon. "By thy sorceries were all nations deceived." She "did corrupt *the earth* with her fornications." How different and opposite to this was the first work of the church! As soon as the leaven appeared first, it was met

and cast forth. Covetousness sought an entrance into the church at Jerusalem, in the persons of Ananias and Sapphira; but the Spirit resisted the entrance of the unclean thing, and it was cast out. It sought entrance again, in its other form of Judaism. "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." But here also it was met and ejected by the Holy Ghost. "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

The leaven, in the form of Judaism, sought entrance also into the Gentile Church of Antioch. The apostle of the circumcision "before that certain came from James, did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." But there the Spirit by Paul "withstood Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed," and the leaven was cast out. In its other form of lawlessness, evidenced by fornication, Paul met it in the church of Corinth, and thence he ejected it also by the power of the Holy Ghost. "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed . . . to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." "Wherefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person:" 1 Cor. v, 3, 5, 13. So again, 2 Cor xii, 20, 21; xiii, 1—3. But it was foreseen, that after the apostles fell asleep, the leaven would enter unrebuked, and work undisturbed. It was in being, and even working, when the apostle wrote. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work:" 2 Thess. ii, 7.

How the gospel would be corrupted, was foreseen by the great Prophet of the church. He foretold that the evil would first come from without, and in a friendly form, and that thence the corruption of his church might be dated, and would go on incessantly till all was impure. He saw that evil would be introduced, not by force, but by a seemingly pacific and advantageous act. Christianity is a thing of principle, and he here foretells that it would be met and corrupted by the contrary principles of the world. He beheld the church made worldly, and so its witness

against the world lost. He saw that by the introduction of the principles of Judaism, and the flesh, the *union of the Church and of the State* would be effected. This transaction, in scripture language, is the *union of the church and of the world*. At once, then, the church loses its place. Christ had "chosen it *out of the world*." By uniting with it its testimony against the world as evil and lying under judgement, is lost. *The world is made respectable, and the church is made worldly, by the same act.*

The union, or rather oneness of Church and State *was good once*, when the whole nation was equally holy in God's sight, with the holiness of the flesh. *It will be good again*, when the whole world shall be renewed in spirit, and clean in flesh. But in the present dispensation, in which the flesh is rejected, and only an election is gathered out of an evil world, the union of the church and of the world, or of the clean and the unclean—the subjects of Satan, and those of Christ—the leaven and the flour, is and must be *evil*.

The change produced on flour by the leaven hidden within it, is not a visible nor audible, but a real and secret change: it does not affect its bulk so much as its quality. So when the church was established by Constantine, the change in it was not immediate or visible, yet was it real. It had become a thing of politics, and so of the world. The same motives began to move among its members, that rule the current of state affairs. The leaven only required *time* to develop its powers. The *motives* were introduced, when it was allied to the state and privileged, and caressed; but the full *effects* required space of time to disclose themselves.

This second parable throws light upon the first. We saw the anomalous and unexpected growth of the minute mustard-seed into a tree, but this shows to what that unexpected growth is to be traced. The abandonment of its appointed nature we now see to be due to an earthly cause. It was the leaven of Judaism and of the world which occasioned the sad result.

The principles immediately affected by the introduction of the leaven, were those of *church union*. The principles

of *individual salvation* were not at once affected; but the position of the church as given by Christ was at once changed. *Constantine* was now its head and lawgiver, and therefore not Christ.* He supplied its funds and honors; thus the church left its espoused bridegroom, and became the affianced of the state. To the emperor she yielded obedience, and by him laws were enacted, funds granted, and dignities bestowed. This answers to the estate of marriage, where the wife is bound on agreement and voluntary stipulation to obey *in return for a share of her consort's honor and continual support*. This sin and error against its place, as intended by God, in the present dispensation, has still continued in every established church. The evil effects proceeding from it have often been noticed, and cures proposed, but every one short of the return of the church to its state of dependence—through poverty, reproach, and contempt, upon Christ and his Spirit alone, is vain, and reaches not the mischief. At the Reformation the principles affecting individual salvation were by God's mercy graciously restored; but the principles of church union still remained only the old and leavened ones. Hence corruption flowed in once more, as was sadly visible in the reigns of several of our sovereigns.

That this is no forced view to serve a purpose, may be seen by presenting to the reader the statement of a writer of great powers, who composed a work expressly in defence and commendation of the union of Church and State.*

He first occupies himself in shewing that the Church and State are each sovereign and independent the one of the other. He then observes, that for mutual advantage a "politic league and alliance for mutual support and defence" is entered into.

The motive of the ruler to seek the alliance of the church, he declares to be, the service rendered to him in procuring reverence for himself and the laws, and the obtaining power over the church, so as to prevent it from exciting sedition or ill-will against his government.

The motive of the church he represents as being, pro-

* No man can serve two masters.

† Bishop Warburton.

tection. "*The Church flies for protection to the State.*" The legitimate motive and "*benefit can be no other than security from all exterior violence.*" The illegitimate motives that might, but ought not to affect the minds of churchmen in the compact are (2) the desire to propagate religion by force; and (3) the desire of riches, honour, and power.

From these motives the alliance springs, and the terms are—"That the Church shall apply ITS UTMOST INFLUENCE IN THE SERVICE OF (alas!) THE STATE!" and that for its part, "*the state shall SUPPORT and PROTECT the Church.*"

The Church in this alliance as the weaker of the two contracting parties, must surrender, as he says, its independence, and receive in return (1,) A settled maintenance for its ministers. This maintenance may be given in any way, but generally is in tithes, after the Jewish example: and the payment of these is not for the support of opinions, but "*for the use and service of the State as such.*"

(2) The second benefit is ecclesiastical power of coercion exercised in the bishops' courts. The resulting benefit to the State, (which arises from its obligation to support the Church) is "THE ECCLESIASTICAL SUPREMACY OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE" with the bishops' seat in Parliament.

In this melancholy picture, we find the leaven of Judaism and of the world at every turn. The union of Church and State, the authority of the civil Magistrate and tithes, are all argued from, and supported by, Judaism. From that leaven the Church was strongly cautioned to abstain, but the Savior foresaw that it would be in vain.

Let us then contemplate the results of this alliance to the Church, and see how utterly fallen it is from its true position as the waiting, pure, espoused virgin of Christ.

1. It seeks *protection* from an arm of flesh. And thus it deserts the protection of its Lord and Master, Christ Jesus, as though that were insufficient. It wins to itself the curse; "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm:" Jer. xvii, 5.

2. It becomes *supported by the world*, as though Christ were so ignorant or careless of its necessity, that he could not, or would not provide.

3. It takes ANOTHER HEAD AND HUSBAND THAN JESUS. The civil Magistrate is its head and husband by the terms of alliance ; and as the Church cannot have two heads and husbands at once, Jesus is not only slighted, but rejected. This is that spiritual fornication and adultery of which Rome and her daughters stand accused : Rev. xvii, 2—5.

4. It therefore becomes obedient to the will of the Magistrate, as the same writer states it, “ When the alliance is made, and CONSEQUENTLY THE CHURCH UNDER HIS DIRECTION, *he hath then authority to prescribe such public exercises of religion, in such manner and such seasons AS THE EXIGENCIES OF THE STATE REQUIRE.*” Its ministers become in the main, *his* ministers. “ *The civil Magistrate being become protector of the Church, and consequently supreme head and director of it, the MINISTRY IS MUCH IN HIS POWER.*” “ *He admits and excludes to the EXERCISE OF THEIR FUNCTIONS AS HE SEES FIT.*”

5. It is incapable of action without permission. This is the consequence of “ *the Church resigning up her independency, and making the Magistrate her supreme head, without whose approbation and allowance she can administer, transact, or decree nothing.*” She can excommunicate none without the State’s consent.

6. She receives and exercises *temporal* power instead of the *spiritual* power which her former Lord gave her ; for the ecclesiastical courts are guided by the municipal laws of each country, and their forms of process are borrowed from the civil courts ; while from these ecclesiastical courts an appeal lies to the civil power as supreme.

7. Lastly, the object of the Church is expressly declared to be—not the glory of God—not the service of Christ Jesus alone, but—the “ *service of the State* ”—that is of the *world!* Thus is the aim and object of the Church turned utterly aside. In place of witnessing to the world that it is evil, in rebellion against God, and soon to be visited by the coming wrath of Messiah, the visible Church, believing that it is possible to serve “ *two masters,*” joins hands and fellowship with it, and devotes herself to its service. She takes the civil governor as her head and ruler, in place of the Holy Ghost, whom the Lord Jesus left as its appointed guardian and guide. And as Israel’s

desire for a king was the rejection of Jehovah, so is the making a king the supreme head of the church the rejecting both of Christ Jesus and of his Spirit. The power rejected is heavenly; the power chosen is earthly.

The issue of the alliance of the Church with the State (or the world) was most disastrous. Wealth and splendor, power and dignity followed. Worldly philosophy and eloquence crept in, to corrupt the gospel. The rulers of the world interfered in the government of the church, and consequently the principles of the world—law and justice—took the place of mercy. War was sanctioned. Priesthood arose: and with it the beggarly elements of the law, holy places, and buildings—Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; holy times—Easter, Pentecost, Christmas; and holy rites devised by men.

Of this we have a glimpse in the church of Corinth, and its reproof. Paul notices that they had stepped out of the place of their dispensation, and were “*full*,” and “*rich*,” and “*reigning like kings* ;” “*wise*,” “*strong*,” and “*honorable* :” 1 Cor. iv; while he, on the other hand, and the other apostles, were in a state the very reverse.

And, as there are two forms of leaven, so there are two gigantic iniquities which divide the world between them at the close—lawlessness—and bondage to the law, or Christianity Judaized. The Judaizing of Christianity is seen in Babylon, the Great Harlot; the lawlessness of the visible church discharges itself at length into the bottomless gulf of the delusions of Antichrist.

We may now just gather up the principal points of prophecy concealed beneath the veil of the parable. Jesus and his apostles sent forth into the world Christianity pure, and retained the Churches unleavened for a while, by the Spirit’s unceasing vigilance and activity. But our Lord foresaw and foretold that the mistress of the globe—all conquering Rome, would reduce his Church throughout the earth to the low level of the world, and, that not by force of arms from without, but by a secret influence from within. At first she tried with Satan as her instigator, to crush, by all the malicious and bloody arts of persecution, the rising religion. But this failed. Every one that fell upon that stone was broken. She altered her mode of

attack therefore, and approached in the garb of a friend, and like Satan in the Savior's temptation, offered the riches, and glory, and power of the world. But the church had not the Savior's eye, and saw not things as they appear to the eye of God. She consented, and the leaven was introduced. The heavenly mindedness and purity of the Church was gone. In the three hundred years *before* the establishment of Christianity, it arose and spread through great part of Asia, Europe, and Africa, not only without worldly aid, but against the efforts of the mightiest of rulers. But three hundred years *after* human authority had set it up and endowed it, where was its light, glory, and purity? Ambition, dissension, false doctrine, heresy, superstitions, and lying wonders had utterly corrupted it. After that the world had established it, the blessed gifts of the Holy Ghost and his miracles, which were promised to all its propagators, had ceased. God took away his heavenly jewels, when the woman had abandoned her affianced lord, and received and wore those of the earth.

The Savior foresaw also that the introduction of worldly principles, while they would utterly destroy the original savor of the gospel and of the church its depository, would yet be scarcely noticed. But he adds further, and this is the sad conclusion, that the result yet to come, is that the whole visible church throughout the world will be entirely corrupted by principles derived from Rome. Such is the sad scene which we behold in the Apocalypse. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, the great city, because she made *all nations* drink of the wine of the fury of her fornication:" Rev. xvii, 2. And wide is her power. "The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues:" 15. By thy sorceries were all nations deceived:" xviii, 23. "She did *corrupt the earth* with her fornication:" xix, 2.

This teaches that the working of the leaven in its last stage will be most powerful. A universal fanatical impulse will seize the souls of men in favour of Rome and her superstitions, and those that resist and remonstrate will pay the forfeit of their lives.

By the light of this parable we may draw some weighty

conclusions. The present Romish movement in the Church of England is viewed with anxiety by many, with hope by not a few. They trust, nay some prophesy, that after a while, this cloud will pass away, and leave the heavens clearer than before. Nay, this is no *cloud*. It is *leaven*, leaven working untiringly among the meal. The issue of the process is determined for us by unerring wisdom and divine foresight. Do any inquire, which will prevail, Puseyism, or Evangelical truth? We answer boldly—Puseyism. “What saith the scripture?” “THE WHOLE WAS LEAVENED.”

And this is but a special instance of the great and terrible truth, so contrary to the flattering expectations of many, that the truths of the gospel are steadily advancing and destined to expel error. Nay, the very reverse is now nigh at hand. Read it in the words of one that cannot mistake —“THE WHOLE WAS LEAVENED.”

By the same light we may also a moment glance at the doctrine of apostolical succession. This is itself a *Jewish* prepossession and prejudice, founded on no warranty of the New Testament, but solely on the order of succession after the flesh manifested in the Jewish high priests. We see in this glass of what value it is as the basis of the Church. *There is no succession in the visible church but the successive* INFECTIONS OF LEAVEN. Those pernicious influences once introduced, have not ceased, nor ever will, until they have subdued to their influence the whole visible church.

Lastly, I would say a few words upon the mystery of the parable. For if there be no mystery in the interpretation given, it is a proof of its falsehood. But here there are several mysteries. First, the woman herself is a mystery. Her name is “*mystery, Babylon the great.*” Now, though Daniel had been presented with a view of the four empires, yet had he never seen the aspect of the fourth which is exhibited here. He had seen the fourth empire in the light in which it affected *the Jews*, “strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things. . . . shall it break in pieces and bruise:” Dan. ii, 40. He beheld it in his own vision “devouring the whole earth, treading it down and breaking it in pieces:” vii,

23. He saw also the kingdom of Messiah in its relation to the four empires, but the kingdom *in manifestation*, not while in *mystery*. To him it was revealed as "breaking in pieces and consuming all these kingdoms and standing for ever:" ii, 44. But he saw not the state of things here described. This is a view of Rome, prevailing not by arms, but by example and influence. Daniel saw Rome overwhelmed by the kingdom of God. Jesus describes it as corrupting by stealth his kingdom in mystery.

Again, the Savior describes the days of his coming as like the days of Noah, both in the wickedness of man and in the vengeance from God. Now the iniquity of the flood, whereby the "earth was corrupt" before God, began by the woman's touching the forbidden thing. So did the Savior foresee and predict that the wickedness of men preceding his coming, and the vengeance that then would light on men, would spring from the sin of a mystic woman, who would "*corrupt the earth*" through her fornication.

Another mystery is, that the woman's act is not hindered, nor does the Savior express any opinion concerning it, much less is any vengeance taken on her for it. The woman's sin in Eden was scarcely concluded, when both she and her husband, who participated in her guilt, are called before God and judged. But it is not so here; no hand hinders the entrance of the leaven; no voice is raised against it. It is not purged out when once hid within, nor its fatal leavening cut short by judgment. It is left to its natural conclusion—"The whole was leavened."

Now this befits the parable and the time of mystery. God's silence and apparent inactivity against the transgressor is a mystery. And especially it is thus with *this transgressor*. If the corrupter of Moses' law must die, how much more, we are ready to say, the corrupter of the gospel of the Son? But the time of mystery is the time of mercy, and therefore the transgressor is spared, till "justice go forth unto victory." The Apocalypse clears up for us this mystery, and shows that the act, though long unnoticed, is not forgotten before God. "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God *hath remembered her iniquities*:" xvii, 5. It describes to us fully the judgement on the woman;

“She shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her :” xvii, 8.

How sad and humbling a thought that the history of this our dispensation is only the *history of leaven!* The Savior does not say, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a woman which took leaven.” This would have seemed the more natural expression. But the interpretation above given accounts for it. The woman is not the *kingdom of heaven*, but the *kingdom of the world*; and the parable describes her pernicious influence in corrupting the “children of the kingdom” of God. Nor does he say “The kingdom of heaven is like unto three measures of meal into which a woman hid leaven,” because in the meal there is *no history*; the agency is that of the leaven; the meal is passive. *It is not that the flour is purging out the leaven; then the meal must have been the nearest object of comparison.* But now the kingdom in mystery displays nothing but a history of the working of leaven, corrupting the quality of the gospel, and misleading its professors: and the end and consummation of the whole is its unresisted dominion! Can the Gentile then boast above the Jew? “What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise.”

How soon after the introduction of the leaven by Rome, under Constantine, its ill effects became apparent, is noticed by an historian of the progress of Christianity. “Mankind, even within the sphere of Christianity, *retrograded to the sterner Jewish character; and in its spirit, as well as in its language, the Old Testament began to dominate over the gospel of Christ.*”

I subjoin some heads of doctrine and practice, with the comparative change wrought in them by the leaven of Judaism and the world :—

JUDAISM.	CHRISTIANITY.	CORRUPTION.
Sacrifice—Altar	A Supper	Sacrifice—Altar
Priests	Elders	Priests
Consecrated Temple	Houses	Consecrated Churches
Vestments		Vestments
High Priests	Jesus	The Pope.
Infant Circumcision	Baptism	Sprinkling of Infants
	Spiritual Gifts	Confirmation
Consecration of Priests	Laying on of hands.	Ordination
Sabbath	Lord's day	Sabbath
Passover		Easter
Pentecost		Whitsuntide
Jubilee		Jubilee
Cities of Refuge		Asylums
Union of Church and State		Union of Church and State
Oaths	Forbidden	Oaths
Harp, Trumpet, &c.	Spiritual Songs	Instrumental Music
Forms of Prayer	Inspiration	Forms
Tithes		Tithes
Justification by Works	Faith	Justification by Works
National Election	Individual	National Election
Justice	Mercy	Justice
Law Suits	Arbitration	Law Suits
Decalogue	Grace	Decalogue
Visible Succession	The Spirit's Energy	Visible Succession
Anointing of Kings		Coronation
War	Peace	War
Vows and Dispensations		Vows
Journeys to Jerusalem		Pilgrimage
Holy Water		Holy Water
Punishments (temporal)	Spiritual	Temporal
Treasures (earthly)	Heavenly	Earthly
Authority of Kings in things Spiritual	The Holy Ghost	Kings
National Religion	Individual	National
Miracles	Miracles	Frauds
Nazarites	Virgins	Monks—Nuns
Metropolitanism	Distinct Churches	Metropolitanism.

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