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PREFACE.

THE idea of incorporating in one collection the Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence originated on the other side of the Atlantic, and the Editor of the present publication has no wish to lay claim to the credit of the happy thought, or to deny his obligations to the work in which it was first embodied. Plenty of scope, however, has been left for a variety of additions in the present series. An instance or two of such augmentations may be cited with propriety, on account of their importance in illustrating the homiletics of whole periods of Church History which had been unaccountably left entirely unrepresented. Thus, the touching sermon of St. Bernard on the death of his brother Gerard has been introduced into these pages as being, perhaps, the most favourable specimen of the Mediæval Pulpit in the West that could have been selected. Of the Byzantine preachers during the same age Eustathius of Thessalonica may be taken as the Prince. The discourse from his lips which has been translated and printed amongst the "Great Sermons of the Great Preachers," gives a good idea of the faults and excellences of that extravagantly florid school. Had space been more abundant,

the attempt would have been made to give the collection a still more œcumenical character. As it is, it will be found a choice casket of the rarest gems of sacred eloquence ever laid upon God's Altar.

Before dismissing his readers to the enjoyment of the treasures of Christian art and piety here amassed, the Editor would repeat his obligations to the various publishers through whose liberality the work has been enriched with various copyright discourses. Their names will be found mentioned at the appropriate places. That of C. A. Bartlett, Esq., who kindly accorded permission to reprint Mr. Jay's celebrated Jubilee Sermon, was, we regret to say, inadvertently omitted.

DISCOURSE ELEVENTH.

WYCLIFFE.

JOHN DE WYCLIFFE, the herald of the Reformation, "the star that arose on the brow of a long and gloomy night," was born about the year 1324, at a village of the same name, near Richmond in Yorkshire, where his ancestors had resided from the time of the Conquest. He was entered a student at Oxford University—then recently established—in the year 1340, and afterwards at Merton College, which the name of Duns Scotus rendered so celebrated. In 1361 he became master of Baliol College, and four years later of Canterbury Hall, just founded at Oxford. Displaced by the Pope for advocating offensive opinions, he retired to his living at Lutterworth. In 1377 he was tried for heresy, at the instigation of those who were alarmed at the influence of his writings, but so able was his defence that the charge was dismissed. A second time he was summoned to trial by the Pope, and with the same result.

A third council condemned his doctrines as heretical; but while some of his followers suffered punishment, Wycliffe himself was removed by death at Lutterworth, in the year 1384. Chaucer was his associate; and it is supposed that the fidelity of Wycliffe, as the good minister of Lutterworth, furnished this celebrated writer with the original of his "Village Pastor." The angry Papists branded with infamy the name of the zealous Reformer, and obtained a decree of the Council of Constance by which his bones were dug up and burned, and their ashes cast into a neighbouring brook, a branch of the Avon. "And thus this brook did convey his ashes into the Avon; and the Avon into the Severn; and the Severn into the narrow sea, and this into the wide ocean. And so the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine: it is now dispersed all over the world."

That the mind which Wycliffe possessed was one of the very highest order, is sufficiently evinced in the wide sphere which he filled as lecturer in theology, royal chaplain, popular preacher, faithful pastor, powerful writer, and able defender and translator of the Word of God. He was emphatically in advance of his age; and stands out in solitary grandeur as the Father of the Reformation. He was born a century and a half anterior to Luther; and although the faithful Waldenses, in their mountain fastnesses, had trimmed the flickering lamp through long ages of moral darkness, yet it is doubtful whether Wycliffe borrowed his light from

theirs; and certain that he first bore aloft the torch of truth to scatter the impending gloom. To Wycliffe belongs the honour also of having first translated the Bible into the English language; a work which he completed in 1383. No event in the annals of English history can be compared with this in importance. It was the author's *great* work, but by no means his *sole* work. His writings are voluminous, and embrace a large variety of subjects. As printing was not yet discovered, copies of his works were at first made in writing, and their influence was immense.* Wycliffe's method of preaching was *postillating*, in distinction from *declaring*; that is, taking up the various parts of a passage and briefly *expounding* them, in succession, with a view to some timely application.

Owing to this fact, the *Sermons* of Wycliffe which have come down to us, are exceedingly brief and imperfect, and discover but little of the excellence and force which undoubtedly marked the Reformer's preaching. The discourse which follows was put forth under the title of "Wycliffe's Wicket" (little door, or gate, in allusion to Christ's "strait gate"), and bore on the first page a quotation from the 6th of John, which is here transcribed literally as a specimen of the English language in the fourteenth century: "I am the lyuyng breade whych came downe from heauen: who so etethe of this brede shall lyue for euer. And the brede that I wyll gyue is my flesche, whyche I wyll gyue for the lyfe of the worlde." The modern rendering here used is that adopted by the Tract Society. It is proper to add that this was one of Wycliffe's most influential productions, and dealt many a heavy blow during the progress of the Reformation. It is often noticed in the articles against the Lollards, and in various proclamations against heretical books. It is written in his usual purity of style, and well adapted to influence the common mind. No subject could have been more important than that here treated; for the "*altar*" had come to be the shrine of idolatry; and in the discussion of *this* question, *all* the Scriptural doctrines of salvation were invlved.

* The number of Wycliffe's disciples at his decease is described by Knighton, a canon of Leicester, his contemporary; and coming from an enemy, the testimony is the more valuable. He says, "The number of those who believed in Wickliffe's doctrine very much increased, and were multiplied like suckers, growing from the root of a tree. They everywhere filled the kingdom; so that a man could scarcely meet two people on the same road but one of them was a disciple of Wickliffe."—*Twysden, Decem. Scrip. Col. 2663.*

CHRIST'S REAL BODY NOT IN THE SACRAMENT.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven : whose eateth of this bread shall live for ever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—*JOHN vi. 51.*

VERY BRIEF DEFINITION OF THESE WORDS: *HOC EST CORPUS MEUM*—"THIS IS MY BODY."

"I beseech ye, brethren, in the Lord Christ Jesus, and for the love of His Spirit, to pray with me, that we may be vessels to His laud and praise, what time soever it pleaseth Him to call upon us."—*ROM. xv. 30.*

Forasmuch as our Saviour Jesus Christ, when that He walked here on earth with the prophets which were presently before Him, and the apostles which were presently with Him, whom also He left after Him, whose hearts were mollified with the Holy Ghost, and warned us, and gave us knowledge that there was two manner of ways, the one to life, the other to death, as Christ saith (*Matt. vii. Luke xiii.*), "How strait and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and there be few that findeth it. But how large and broad is the way that leadeth to damnation, and there be many that go into it." Therefore pray we heartily to God, that He of His mere mercy will so strengthen us with the grace and steadfastness [of] His Holy Spirit, to make us strong in spiritual living after the evangelical Gospel, so that the world, no not the very infidels, papists, and apostates, can gather none occasion to speak evil of us, whereby we may enter into that strait gate, as Christ our Saviour and all that follow Him have done, that is, not in idle living, but in diligent labouring, yea in great sufferance of persecution even to the death ; and that we find the way of everlasting life, as He hath promised where He saith,—“He that seeketh findeth, and he that axeth* receiveth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” (*Matt. vii.*)

Also Christ saith, “If thy son axet thee bread, wilt thou give him a stone? or if he axet thee fish, wilt thou give him a serpent? If ye which are evil can give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give a good Spirit to them that axet it of Him?” (*Luke xi.*) Saint James saith, “If any man lack wisdom, let him axet it of God, which giveth to all men if they axet it in faith, and upbraideth none; for he that doubteth is like to the waves of the sea, that is borne about with every blast of wind. Think not that such shall receive anything of the Lord. For a man double in soul is unstable in all his ways,” as it is written. (*James i.*) Wherefore let us pray to God that he “keep us in the hour of temptation, that is coming in all the world.” (*Rev. iii.*) For as our Saviour Christ saith, “When ye see that abomination of desolation that is spoken of by the prophet Daniel standing in the holy

* Asketh.

† Ask.

place," as Christ saith, "he that readeth let him understand." (Dan. xii., Matt. xxiv.) But for because that every man cannot have the book of Daniel to know what his prophecy is, Daniel said, "Towards the last days the king of the north shall come, and the arms of him shall stand, and shall defile the sanctuary, and he shall take away the continual sacrifice, and he shall give abomination into desolation, and wicked men shall find a testament guilefully, but ye that know your God shall hold and do, and untaught men in the people shall teach full many men, and they shall fall on the sword and in the flame, and into captivity many days."

"And when they shall fall down they shall be araised by a litle help, and many shall be applied to them guilefully, and of learned men should fall to them that they build together. And the chosen shall be together, and shall be made white till a time determined. For yet another time shall be, and the king shall do his will, and then he shall be raised, and magnified at each god; and against the God of gods shall speak great things, and he shall be raised till the wrathfulness before determined is perfectly made, and he shall not inherit the God of his fathers, and he shall be in the companies of women, and he shall not change anything of God's, for he shall raise again all things.—Forsooth he shall honour god of mason in his place, and he shall worship a god whom his fathers know not, not with gold, silver, precious stones, nor with precious things, but he shall do make strong the god of mason with thalyent or strange god which he knew not, and he shall multiply glory, and he shall give to him power in many things, and he shall depart the land at his will." (Dan. xi. 31.) Hitherto be they the words of Daniel, who may see a greater abomination than to see the people to be led away from God, and they be taught to worship for God that thing that is not God nor Saviour of the world? For though it be their god, as it is written by a prophet, saying, "The Lord's going shall make low the god of the earth, for it is their gods that they believe in them which make them safe" (Zeph. ii. 11), as it is written.

Whereas Saint Paul saith, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things I see you as vain worshippers of idols, for I passed by and saw your mawmetes,* and found an altar in the which was writtem, To the unknown god. Therefore the thing which you know not ye worship as God. This thing show I unto you: God which made the world and all things that be in it. This forsooth, He is Lord of heaven and earth, and He dwelleth not in the temple made with hands, neither hath He need of anything, for He giveth life to all men, and breath everywhere, and He made of one, all kinds of men to inhabit on all the face of the earth, determining times ordained and terms of the dwelling of them to seek out God: if peradventure they might find him, although He be not

* Idolatries.

far from each of you." And again he saith, "Ye shall not think that God living is not like to gold, silver, either any graven thing, or painted by craft, either taught of man; for God despiseth the time of the unknown things. And He showeth everywhere that all men should do penance."—Acts xvii. And hereof the clerks of the law have great need, which have been ever against God the Lord, both in the old law and in the new, to slay the prophets that spake to them the Word of God.—Matt. xxiii 27. Ye see that they spared not the Son of God when that the temporal judge would have delivered Him (Matt. xxvii.), and so forth of the apostles and martyrs that hath spoken truly to the word God to them, and they say it is heresy to speak of the holy Scripture in English, and so they would condemn the Holy Ghost that gave it in tongues to the apostles of Christ, as it is written to speak the Word of God in all languages that were ordained of God under heaven, as it is written.

And the Holy Ghost descended upon the heathen, as He did upon the apostles in Jerusalem, as it is written (Joel ii.); and Christ were so merciful to send the Holy Ghost to the heathen men (Acts viii. 10), and He made them partakers of His blessed word; why should it then be taken from us in this land that be Christian men? Consider you whether it is not all one to deny Christ's words for heresy, and Christ for an heretic? for if my word be a lie, then I am a liar that speaketh the word; therefore if my words be heresy, then am I a heretic that speaketh the word; therefore it is all one to condemn the word of God in any language for heresy, and God for an heretic that spake the word; for He and His word is all one, and they may not be separated; and if the word of Him is the life of the world, as it is written (Matt. ii.), "Not only by bread liveth man, but in every word that cometh out of the mouth of God;" and every word of God is the life of the soul of man, as saith St. John (1 John ii. 27), "that thou have anointing of the Holy Ghost, and thou have no need of any man, but teach thou in all things," which is His blessed word, in Whom is all wisdom and cunning, and yet ye be always to learn as well as we. How may any antichrist for dread of God take it away from us that be Christian men, and thus suffer the people to die for hunger in heresy and blasphemy of man's law that corrupteth and slayeth the soul, as pestilence slayeth the body? As David beareth witness, where he speaketh of the chain of pestilence; and most of all they make us believe a false law that they have made upon the secret host, for the most falsest belief is taught in it.

For where find ye that ever Christ or any of His disciples or apostles taught any man to worship it? For in the mass creed it is said, "I believe in one God only, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten and born of the Father, before all the world: He is God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten and not

made, and of one substance, even with the Father, by whom all things be made ;” and the Psalm, “*Quicumque vult,*” there it is said, “God is the Father, God is the Son, and God is the Holy Ghost ; unmade is the Father, unmade is the Son, and unmade is the Holy Ghost.” And thou, then, that art an earthly man, by what reason mayest thou say that thou makest thy Maker ? Whether may the made thing say to the maker, “Why hast thou made me thus ?” or may it turn again, and make him that made it ? God forbid ! Now answerest thou that sayest every day that thou makest of bread the body of the Lord, flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, God and man ; forsooth, thou answerest greatly against reason, by these words that Christ spake at His supper, on Serethur’s day,* at night (Matt. xxvi.), that Christ “took bread, and blessed it, and gave it to his disciples and apostles, and said” (Mark xiv.), “Take ye, and eat ye ; this is my body which shall be given for you. And also he taking the cup, and did give thanks, and gave to them, and said, Drink ye all hereof ; this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed out for many into the remission of sins ;” as saith Luke (Luke xxii. 19), “When Jesus had taken bread, he gave thanks, and brake it to them, and said, Take ye, eat ye ; this is my body that shall be given for you : do ye this in remembrance of me.”

Now understand ye the words of our Saviour Christ, as He spake them one after another—as Christ spake them. For He took bread and blessed ; and yet what blessed He ? The Scripture saith not that Christ took bread and blessed it, or that He blessed the *bread* which He had taken. Therefore it seemeth more that He blessed *His disciples and apostles*, whom He had ordained witnesses of His passion ; and in them He left His blessed word, which is the bread of life, as it is written, “Not only in bread liveth man, but in every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”—Matt. iv. Also Christ saith, “I am the bread of life that came down from heaven.”—John vi. And Christ saith also in John, “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” Therefore it seemeth more that He blessed His disciples, and also His apostles, in whom the bread of life was left more than in material bread, for the material bread hath an end. As it is written in the Gospel of Matthew xv. that Christ said, “All things that a man eateth go down into the belly, and are sent down into the draught ;” but the blessing of Christ kept His disciples and apostles, both bodily and ghostly. As it is written, that “none of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled,” John xvii., and often the Scripture saith that “Jesus took bread and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take ye, eat ye, this is my body that shall be given for you.” But He said not This bread is my body, or that the bread should be given for the life of the world. For Christ saith, “What and if ye shall see the Son of man

* Thursday before Easter.

ascend up where He was before! It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."—John vi. Also Christ saith in the Gospel, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except the wheat-corn fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."

Here men may see by the words of Christ that it behoved that He died in the flesh, and that in His death was made the fruit of everlasting life for all them that believe on Him, as it is written: "For as by Adam all die, even so by Christ shall all live, and every man in his own order; for as one clearness is in the sun, another in the moon, and a star in clearness is nothing in comparison to the sun, even so is the again-rising of the dead men. For we are sown in corruption and shall rise again incorruptible, we are sown in infirmity, and shall rise again in strength; we are sown in natural bodies, and shall rise again spiritual bodies." Then if Christ shall change thus our deadly* bodies by death, and God the Father spared not His own Son, as it is written, but that death should reign in Him as in us, and that He should be translated into a spiritual body, as the first again-rising of dead men; then how say the hypocrites that take on them to make our Lord's body? Make they the glorified body? Or make they again the spiritual body which is risen from death to life? Or make they the fleshly body as it was before He suffered death? And if they say also that they make the spiritual body of Christ, it may not be so, for what Christ said and did, He did as He was at supper before He suffered His passion; where as it is written that the spiritual body of Christ rose again from death to life.—Matt. xxviii. Also that He ascended up to heaven, and that He will abide there till He come to judge the quick and the dead. And if they say that they make Christ's body as it was before He had suffered His passion, then must they needs grant that Christ is to die yet. For by all Holy Scriptures He was promised to die, and that He should give lordship of everlasting life.

Furthermore, if they say that Christ made His body of bread, I ask, With what words made He it? Not with these words, "*Hoc est corpus meum*;" that is to say in English, "This is my body," for they are the words of giving, and not of making, which He said after that He brake the bread; then parting it among His disciples and apostles. Therefore if Christ had made of that bread His body, [He] had made it in His blessing, or else in giving of thanks, and not in the words of giving; for if Christ had spoken of the material bread that He had in His hands when He said "*Hoc est corpus meum*," "This is my body," it was made before, or else the word had been a lie. For if I say, This is my hand, and if it be not a hand, then am I a liar; therefore seek carefully if ye can find two words of blessing, or of giving of thanks, wherewith Christ

* Mortal.

made His body and blood of the bread and wine. And that all the clerks of the earth know not, for if ye might find or know those words, then should ye wax great masters above Christ, and then ye might be givers of His substance, and as fathers and makers of Him, and that He should worship you, as it is written, "Thou shalt worship thy father and mother." —Exod. xx. Of such as desire such worship against God's law, speaketh St. Paul of the man of sin that enhanceth* himself as if he were God. And he is worshipped over all things as God, and showeth himself as he were God. Whether our clergy are guilty in this, judge ye, or they that know most, for they say that when they have said, "*Hoc est corpus meum*," that is to say, "This is my body;" which they call the words of consecration, or else of making; and when they are said over the bread, they say that there is left no bread, but it is the body of the Lord. So that in the bread there remaineth nothing but a heap of accidents, as witness ruggedness, roundness, savour, touching, and tasting, and such other accidents. Then, if thou sayest that the flesh and blood of Christ, that is to say, His manhood, is made more, or increased by so much as the ministration of bread and wine is, the which ye minister—if ye say it is so—then thou must needs consent that the thing which is not God to-day shall be God to-morrow; yea, and that thing which is without spirit of life, but groweth in the field by kind, shall be God at another time. And we all ought to believe that He was without beginning, and without ending, and not made; for if the manhood of Christ were increased every day by so much as the bread and wine doeth that ye minister, He should increase more in one day by cartloads than He did in thirty-two years when He was here in earth.

And if thou mayest make the body of the Lord in those words, "This is *my* body," thou thyself must be the person of Christ, or else there is a false God; for if it be thy body as thou sayest, then it is the body of a false knave or of a drunken man, or of a thief, or of a lecherer or full of other sins, and then there is an unclean body for any man to worship for God! For even if Christ had made there His body of material bread in the said words (as I know they are *not* the words of making), what earthly man had power to do as He did? For in all Holy Scripture, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Apocalypse, there are no words written of the making of Christ's body; but there are written that Christ was the son of the Father, and that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and that He took flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, and that He was dead, and that He rose again from death on the third day, and that He ascended to heaven very God and man, and that we should believe in all Scriptures that are written of Him, and that He is to come to judge the quick and the dead, and that the same Christ Jesus, King

* Advanceth.

and Saviour, was at the beginning with the Father and the Holy Ghost, making all things of naught, both heaven and earth, and all things that are therein; working by word of His virtue,* for He said, Be it done, and it was done (Gen. i.), whose works never earthly man might comprehend, either make. And yet the words of the making of these things are written in the beginning of Genesis, even as God spake them; and if ye cannot make the work that He made, and have not the word by which He made it, how shall ye make Him that made the works? You have no words of authority or power left you on earth by which ye should do this, but ye have feigned this craft of your false errors, which some of you understand not; for it is prophesied (Isaiah vi. xlii., Matt. xiii., Luke viii., and Mark iv.), "They shall have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not; and shall see prophecies, and shall not understand, lest they be converted; for I hide them from the hearts of those people; their hearts are greatly fatted." And this thing is done to you for the wickedness of your errors in unbelief; therefore be ye converted from the worst sin, as it is written, When Moses was in the hill with God (Exod. xxxii.), the people made a calf and worshipped it as God. "And God spake to Moses, Go, for the people have done the worst sin to make and worship alien gods."—Exod. xxxii.

But now I shall ask you a word; answer ye me, Whether is the body of the Lord made at once or at twice? Is both the flesh and the blood in the host† of the bread? or else is the flesh made at one time, and the blood made at other time; that is to say the wine in the chalice? If thou wilt say it is full and wholly the manhood of Christ in the host of bread, both flesh and blood, skin, hair, and bones, then makest thou us to worship a false god in the chalice, which is unconjured when ye worship the bread; and if ye say the flesh is in the bread, and the blood in the wine, then thou must grant, if thy craft be true, as it is not indeed; that the manhood of Christ is parted, and that he is made at two times. For first thou takest the host of bread, or a piece of bread, and makest it as ye say, and the innocent people‡ worship it. And then thou takest to thee the chalice, and likewise makest—marrest, I would have said—the blood in it, and then they worship it also, and if it be so, as I am sure that the flesh and blood of Christ ascended, then are ye false harlots§ to God and to us; for when we shall be houselled|| ye bring to us the dry flesh, and let the blood be away; for ye give us after the bread, wine and water, and sometimes clean water unblessed, or rather conjured, by the virtue of your craft; and yet ye say, under the host of bread is the full manhood of Christ. Then by your own confession must it needs be that we worship a false god in the chalice, which is unconjured when we

* Power. † Wafer. ‡ Simple, ignorant people. § False servants, varlets, cheats
|| Receive the Sacrament.

worship the bread, and worship the one as the other ; but where find ye that ever Christ or any of His disciples taught any man to worship this bread or wine ?

Therefore, what shall we say of the apostles that were so much with Christ, and were called by the Holy Ghost ; had they forgotten to set it in the creed when they made it, which is Christian men's belief ? Or else we might say that they knew no such God, for they believe in no more gods but in Him that was at the beginning, and made of naught all things visible and invisible (Heb. i., Pa. cii.), which Lord took flesh and blood, being in the Virgin the same God. But ye have many false ways, to beguile the innocent people with sleights of the fiend.

For ye say that in every host each piece is the whole manhood of Christ, or full substance of Him. For ye say, as a man may take a glass, and break the glass into many pieces, and in every piece properly thou mayest see thy face, and yet thy face is not parted ; so, ye say, the Lord's body is in each host or piece, and His body is not parted. And this is a full subtle question to beguile an innocent fool, but will ye take heed of this subtle question, how a man may take a glass and behold the very likeness of his own face, and yet it is not his face, but the likeness of his face ? for if it were his very face, then he must needs have two faces, one on his body and another in the glass ! And if the glass were broken in many places, so there should be many faces more by the glass than by the body, and each man shall make as many faces to them as they would ; but as ye may see the mind or likeness of your face, which is not the very face, but the figure thereof, so the bread is the figure or mind of Christ's body in earth, and therefore Christ said, "As oft as ye do this thing do it in mind of me."—Luke xxii.

Also ye say this, As a man may light many candles at one candle, and yet the light of that candle is never the more nor ever the less ; so, ye say, that the manhood of Christ descendeth into each part of every host, and the manhood of Christ is never the more nor less. Where, then, cometh your ministrations ? For if a man light many candles at one candle, as long as they burn there will be many candles lighted, and as well the last candle as the first ; and so by this reason, if ye shall fetch your word at God, and make God, there must needs be many gods, and that is forbidden in the first commandment.—Exod. xx. And as for making more, either* making less, of Christ's manhood, it lieth not in your power to come thereon, neither to touch it, for it is ascended into heaven in a spiritual body (Matt. xxviii.), which He suffered not Mary Magdalen to touch, when her sins were forgiven to her.

Therefore all the sacraments that are left here in earth are but

* Or.

minds* of the body of Christ, for a sacrament is no more to say but a sign or mind of a thing passed, or a thing to come; for when Jesus spake of the bread, and said to His disciples (Luke xxii.), "As ye do this thing, do it in mind of me," it was set for a mind of good things passed of Christ's body; but when the angel showed to John, Apocalypse xvii., the sacraments of the woman and of the beast that bare her, it was set for a mind of evil things to come on the face of the earth, and great destroying of the people of God. And in the old law there were many figures or minds* of things to come. For before Christ, circumcision was commanded by a law; and he that kept not the law was slain. And yet St. Paul saith (Rom. ii.), "And neither is it circumcision that is openly in the flesh, but he that is circumcised of heart in spirit, not the letter, whose praising is not of men, but of God." Peter saith in the third chapter of his epistle, "And so baptism of like form maketh not us safe, but the putting away of the filthiness of the flesh, and the having of good conscience in God by the again-rising of our Lord Jesus Christ from death, that we should be made heirs of everlasting life, He went up into heaven, and angels, and powers, and virtues, are made subjects to Him."

And also the Scripture saith of John Baptist (Matt. iii.), that he preached in the wilderness and said, "A stronger than I shall come after me, and I am not worthy to kneel down and unlace his shoe;" and yet Christ said that he was more than a prophet. See also Isaiah xl., Matt. xi. How may ye then say that ye are worthy to make His body, and yet your works bear witness that ye are less than the prophets, for if ye were not, ye should not teach the people to worship the sacraments or minds* of Christ for Christ himself; which sacraments or figures are lawful as God taught them and left them unto us, as the sacrifices or minds* of the old law were full good. As it is written, "They that kept them should live in them."—Paul, Rom. x. And so the bread that Christ brake was left to us for mind of things passed for the body of Christ, that we should believe He was a very man in kind as we are, but as God in power, and that His manhood was sustained by food as ours. For St. Paul saith He was very man, and in form He was found as man. And so we must believe that He was very God and very man together, and that He ascended up very God and very man to heaven, and that He shall be there till He come to doom the world. And we may not see him bodily, being in this life, as it is written (Peter i.), "For he saith, Whom ye have not seen ye love, into whom ye now not seeing believe." And John saith, in the first chapter of his Gospel, "No man saw God; none but the only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, He hath told it out." And John saith, in his first epistle, the third chapter, "Every man that

* Remembrances or memorials.

sinneth seeth not Him, neither knoweth Him." By what reason, then, say ye that are sinners that ye make God? truly this must needs be the worst sin, to say that ye make God, and it is the abomination of discomfort that is said in Daniel the prophet to be standing in the holy place; he that readeth let him understand.

Also Luke saith, chap. xxii., that Christ took the cup after that He had supped, and gave thanks and said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood that shall be shed into the remission of sins for man." Now, what say ye; the cup which He said was the new testament in His blood, was it a material cup in which the wine was that He gave His disciples wine of, or was it His most blessed body in which the blessed blood was kept till it was shed out for the sins of them that should be made safe by his passion? Needs must we say that He spake of His holy body, as He did when He called His passion or suffering in body a cup, when He prayed to His father, before He went to His passion, Matt. xxii., and said, "If it be possible that this cup pass from Me, but if Thou wilt that I drink it, Thy will be done." He spake not here of the material cup in which He had given His disciples drink; for it troubled not Him, but He prayed for His great sufferance* and bitter death, the which He suffered for our sins and not for His own. And if He spake of His holy body and passion when He said, "This cup is the new testament in My blood," so He spake of His holy body, when He said, "This is My body which shall be given for you," and not of the material bread which He had in his hand. Also in another place He calleth his passion a cup (Matt. xx.), where the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him, and asked of Him that her two sons, when He came to His kingdom, might sit one on his right side, and one at his left side. And He answered and said, "Woman, thou wottest not what thou askest; then He said to them, May† ye drink of the cup that I shall drink? and they said, Yea, Lord. And he said, Ye shall drink of My cup, but to sit on My right hand or left hand it is not mine to give, but to the Father it is proper." But in that He said, "Ye shall drink of My cup," he promised them to suffer tribulation of this world as He did, by the which they should enter into life everlasting, and to be both on His right hand. And thus ye may see that Christ spake not of the material cup, neither of himself, nor of his Apostles, neither of material bread, neither of material wine. Therefore let every man wisely, with meek prayers, and great study, and also charity, read the words of God and holy Scriptures; but many of you are like the mother of Zebedee's sons, to whom Christ said, "Thou knowest not what thou askest." So, many of you know not what ye ask, nor what ye do; for if ye did, ye would not blaspheme God as ye do, to set an alien god instead of the living God.

* On account of His great sufferings, &c.

† Can.

Also Christ saith (John xv.), "I am a very* vine;" wherefore then worship ye not the vine for God, as ye do the bread? Wherein was Christ a very vine, or wherein was the bread Christ's body? In figurative speech, which is hidden to the understanding of sinners. Then if Christ became not a material or an earthly vine, neither did a material vine become the body of Christ. So neither the bread, material bread, was changed from its substance to the flesh and blood of Christ.

Have ye not read in John the second, when Christ came into the temple, they asked of Him what token He would show, that they might believe Him. And He answered them, "Cast down this temple, and in three days I shall raise it again;" which words were fulfilled in His rising again from death; but when He said, Undo† this temple, in that that He said this, they were in error, for they understood it fleshly, and had supposed that He had spoken of the temple of Jerusalem, because He stood in it. And therefore they accused Him at his passion full falsely.—Matt. xxvi. For He spake of the temple of His blessed body, which rose again in the third day. And right so Christ spake of His holy body when He said, "This is My body which shall be given for you" (Luke xxii.), which was given to death, and to rising again to bliss, for all that shall be saved by Him. But like as they accused Him falsely of the temple of Jerusalem, so now-a-days they accuse falsely against Christ, and say that Christ spake of the bread that He brake among his apostles; for in that Christ said this, they are deceived, take it fleshly, and turn it to the material bread, as the Jews did to the temple; and on this false understanding, they make abomination of discomfort, as is said by Daniel the prophet, and in Matthew xxiv., to be standing in the holy place; he that readeth let him understand.

Now, therefore, pray we heartily to God that this evil may be made short for the chosen men, as He hath promised in His blessed Gospel.—Matt. xxiv. And the large and broad way that leadeth to perdition may be stopped, and the strait and narrow way that leadeth to bliss may be made open by Holy Scriptures, that we may know which is the will of God, to serve Him in truth and holiness in the dread of God, that we may find by Him a way of bliss everlasting. So be it.

* True.

† Destroy.