THE MESSIANIC CAREER OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

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IN ATTEMPTING to fathom events veiled from us by lack of adequate contemporary records there is no principle more useful than the adage: History repeats itself. Light can always be shed on the aims and deeds of one personage by studying the activities of others in the same field. Those able to take up, without prejudice, the study of religious movements will find that these are no exception to the rule, and that one prophet often exhibits surprising similarities to another. And though the ardent disciples of each declare him to be sui generis and utterly unlike his rivals, the impartial observer will never find himself able to admit this contention.

Of Jesus of Nazareth, in particular, we can take a rational view only by ceasing to presuppose him to have been a unique member of the human race. We must consider him as a man of his times, profoundly influenced by the ideals and aspirations of the circles in which he moved. It is to the inspiration given him by the exhortations of John the Baptist that we must ascribe the appearance on the public stage of Jesus, the ex-carpenter of Nazareth in his new rôle of preacher and reformer. The authentic history of Jesus really begins with his baptism, the birth and infancy stories of the canonical gospels being obviously purely fabulous; as much so as the stories of the apocryphal gospels of the infancy. Accordingly we find that the Ebionites, the Christians who traced their spiritual lineage to the personal disciples of Jesus, had a gospel, which the Catholic Church did not allow to survive, beginning with the words: "It came to pass in the reign of Herod the king of Judea, when Caiphas was high priest, that there came a certain man, John by name, baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan, who was said to be of the lineage of Aaron the priest, child of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and all went unto him." "After a good deal more" says Epiphanius (to whom we are indebted for the preservation of this fragment) the Ebionite gospel "continues that 'After the people were baptized, Jesus also came and was baptized.'" And in much the same way begins the story of the canonical gospel of Mark.
The various stories of the baptism of Jesus and an account of John the Baptist and his present-day followers, the Mandaeans, will be found in an article by the writer: "Jesus and John the Baptist" in the October 1929 issue of The Open Court. Here we need merely note that everything goes to show that, in the view of the early Christians, the baptism of Jesus marked an important epoch in his life. It was only then, the Ebionites held, that he became the mouthpiece of the divine spirit: that the Holy Ghost descended and entered into him. There may perhaps be some connection between this view, that the spiritual birth of Jesus took place in the waters of the Jordan, and the practice among the early Christians of symbolizing Jesus as a fish. Such a connection is in evidence in the hostile Mandaean tradition according to which John the Baptist, when asked to baptize Jesus, replied sharply: "Stinking fish is not a tasty morsel." Likewise the rival theory, that Jesus was the "Son of God" from his very conception (and not the son of Joseph even in a physical sense) could make use of the fish symbolism, since fishes were popularly supposed to be generated without carnal contact between the male and the female.1

After being baptized Jesus, we are told, went out into the wilderness and fasted for "forty days." The "forty" should not here be taken literally, it was merely the conventional round number of Hebrew legend, and "a number of days" would be a more suitable rendition. We need not be surprised that after a prolonged fast Jesus should have had the hallucination of being tempted by the devil: on the contrary it would be surprising if in such a condition he had not been subject to hallucinations. But we must decidedly discredit that a hallucination of the character in question could come to one who believed himself to be the Messiah—the "Son of God." To a person so favored by Jahveh the devil would have nothing to offer. The diabolic bargain might indeed be alluring to a humble follower of John the Baptist, and it was presumably in this light that Jesus then viewed himself. Jesus, of course, withstood the temptation, and returned to the haunts of man firm in the Baptist faith. According to Luke it was "in the fifteenth year of Tiberias Caesar" that John the Baptist began his work. Just how long the ministry of John endured we have no means of as-

1 Of course the use of fish symbolism in religion is much older than Christianity. See "The Fish in Christianity" by Dr. Carus in The Open Court V. 25, p. 435 and "The Physiologus and the Christian Fish Symbolism" by R. Garbe, ibid. V. 28 p. 405.
certaining, but at all events it was brought to an untimely end by the arrest and execution of John at the command of Herod Antipas. The movement which the Baptist had inaugurated did not die with him, but has kept alive even until this day. Obviously then his work must have been taken up by his lieutenants: by certain of his disciples endowed with the gift of leadership, and we shall not go wrong if we rank Jesus as of this category: as one who in the beginning of his career was merely an ardent disciple of John the Baptist, determined at all hazards to carry on the work of his beloved master. The message he set forth to deliver, which other enthusiasts were simultaneously proclaiming around the land, was thus, in the beginning, not anything original, but was merely a reiteration of what had already been taught by John. As it has been put: Jesus caught up the lamp which had fallen from the hands of the stricken prophet and hurried on with it towards the same goal.

It is quite possible that Jesus may have worked previously side by side with John, shortly after being baptized, and it is implied that this really took place in the suggestion (originating with Brandt and Cheyne) that in certain remarks, concerning one greater than Jonah and Solomon, Jesus was referring not to himself but to John the Baptist. This theory, that a testimony of Jesus to John has been converted by Christian writers into a vainglorious boast about himself, has the merit of making clear some very puzzling passages. But it requires a bold and arbitrary rearrangement of gospel texts (i.e. of Matthew 11:7-9, 11; Luke 11:29,30; Matthew 12:41-42 and 11:13-15 and Luke 7:29,30) and moreover the substitution of “John” for “the Son of man” in Luke 11:30. Making the rather precarious assumption that this conjectural rearrangement of texts is justified, it would seem that on one occasion, naturally early in his career, Jesus was preaching as a subordinate of John the Baptist, to behold whom a multitude had gathered. Jesus begins by assuring his audience that John is much more worthy of attention than a reed-like Jonah or a luxuriously clad Solomon. “And.... Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John. What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft raiment are in kings' houses. But wherefore went ye out? To see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you and much more than a prophet. Verily I say unto you: Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen
a greater than John the Baptist. This generation is an evil generation; for it seeketh after a sign, and there shall be no sign given it but the sign of Jonah. For even as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall also John be to this generation. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall convict it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah which is come. He that hath ears to hear let him hear. And all the [lowly] people that heard him, and the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God being not baptized of him.”

Unquestionably there were, besides Jesus, other Baptist leaders and propagandists, and an illustration of their work is afforded by the episode of Apollos (Acts 18 and 19), the Alexandrian Jew at Ephesus who knew “only the baptism of John.” As Overbeck has shown, this indicates that the first Ephesian community of “disciples” of which Apollos was a member had been founded by the followers of John the Baptist who knew more or less about Jesus but were unacquainted with what, in the view of the author of this passage of Acts, was the distinctively Christian doctrine: that of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon believers. And it has been held that the legendary association of John the Apostle with Ephesus, and the ascription to him of various New Testament writings emanating from that place had as its only foundation this fact: that the Ephesian Church was “Johannine” in the sense of tracing its origin to the teachings of John the Baptist. History shows that not all the followers of the Baptist were as amenable to Christian influence as Apollos and the disciples of Ephesus; others remained aloof, as is evinced by the line of spiritual succession traced back to such men by the Mandaeans of to-day, a religious body bitterly opposed to Christianity.

As field of his labors Jesus chose his native province of Galilee. “After that John was delivered up,” says Mark, “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying: The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and be-
lieve in the Gospel." In his preaching Jesus was following in the footsteps of John who had likewise proclaimed the imminent coming of the Kingdom of God: in other words the speedy realization of the Messianic hope of the Jews which has been well characterized as the "fixed social belief of the Jewish people that Jehovah would deliver Israel and erect it into a glorious empire to which a conquered world would be subject." The glories of the reign of David and Solomon were to be restored; "a conquering Israel, a Davidic king, a suppliant, terrorized, tortured [Gentile] world—these were the dreams which Jehovah was to make real." 2 Sometimes the phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" was preferred to "kingdom of God," on account of the Jewish aversion to using the name of the deity, but in both cases the meaning was the Kingdom of God on earth. 3 Modern Christians however usually hold that the kingdom to which Jesus aspired and the approach of which he announced was not of this world. To the Fundamentalists this view is inevitable, for they believe that Jesus, having had divine foreknowledge of what was to befall the Jewish people, could not have dreamed of beholding nineteen hundred years ago the overthrow of Roman rule and the establishment of an independent Jewish state, since no such dreams came true. The orthodox theory thus interprets the predictions of John and Jesus of the glorious coming of the Kingdom as having meant, so far as the near future was concerned, that John was to be beheaded, that Jesus after a brief career of one year, was to be condemned as a criminal and executed, that the Temple was to be destroyed and Jerusalem razed to the ground, and that the Jewish people were to lose even the limited autonomy they had enjoyed. More reasonable than this is the view that Jesus


3Keim well puts it, in discussing the expectations of Jesus, that "All existing evidence goes to prove that his kingdom of heaven was a kingdom upon earth." In fact Reimarus was fully justified in his contention that the movement promoted by Jesus had, as its essence, the political Messianic ideal: "Away with the Romans! Palestine to God and the Jews!" As regards the apparently authentic sayings of Jesus which seem to refer to an immanent Kingdom of God, we may quote the remarks of Prof. Shailer Matthews of the Department of Theology of the University of Chicago (op. cit. p. 80) that the adjusting the references of Jesus to "a present kingdom to his entire eschatological scheme...is by no means difficult....The words of Jesus which apparently describe the present kingdom refer (1) to those who were to be received into the kingdom when it appeared, and (2) to the triumphs he and his followers were winning over Satan and his kingdom. The kingdom was among those to whom he spoke in the sense that there were men present who to enter it when it appeared."
made mistakes in his attempts to foretell the future. And admitting that, like other men, he was fallible, and that his expectations were likely to outrun the harsh realities of life, we cannot assume that because certain hopes remained unrealized these were not in the mind of Jesus.

On the disappearance of John from the public stage Jesus began to preach independently, and gathered around him a little group of comrades who accompanied him and lent their aid to his mission. Probably the group was formed gradually. It was only after he had begun this preaching that he gained the support of the four fishermen: Simon (Peter) and Andrew and John and James (the two sons of Zebedee.) According to Luke, the fishermen were induced to abandon their work and follow the prophet of Nazareth after he had preached from Simon's boat on the Lake of Tiberias to an audience on the shore. The Ebionite gospel quotes Matthew as saying: "There was a certain man named Jesus, and he was about thirty years old, who chose us. And coming to Capernaum he entered into the house of Simon who was surnamed Peter, and opened his mouth and said: 'As I passed by the Lake of Tiberias, I chose John and James the sons of Zebedee, and Simon and Andrew, and Philip and Bartholomew, James son of Alphaeus and Thomas, Thadaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the Iscariot, and thou Matthew, as thou sarest at the receipt of custom I called, and thou followedst me. You therefore I will to be twelve apostles to bear witness unto Israel.'" Some of the twelve apostles, tradition specifically tells us, were originally disciples of John the Baptist, and it is highly probable that all of the original group were picked from the Baptist fold.

Capernaum, where Jesus seems to have begun his preaching, was a town on the northwest shore of the Lake of Tiberias, and it has been conjectured that Matthew the "publican" (i.e. tax collector) might have had the office of collecting toll or customs duties on the important caravan route leading thence to Damascus. That Jesus should have fixed upon this particular place would indicate that the Baptist movement had already gained some support there. In other respects, indeed, it had distinct advantages for his purpose. As Klausner points out, it was a petty town, and in smaller places the audiences of Jesus would not have been sufficiently large, while in the cities the people were too sophisticated and the government supervision more severe. Jesus however does not seem to
have remained continuously at Capernaum for any length of time. Soon after beginning his preaching he found it advisable to move on, saying to his disciples: "Let us go elsewhere into the next towns that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth." So he proceeded to preach his message in the "synagogues throughout all Galilee." Ultimately he found it more advisable to speak from a boat to hearers on the shore, and in this boat he quickly flitted from one place to another. Leaving the Galilee lakeside he crossed the lake into the country of the Gerasenes, apparently in some haste, for the crossing was effected during a dangerous storm. Going back to Galilee he went to his own countryside of Nazareth, where he had but scant success, and following this he gathered an audience in an unspecified "desert place," following which he again speedily took refuge in a boat, and crossed to the other side of the lake, to Bethsaida. There soon followed another crossing which took him to Gennesareth, and next he proceeded to make his way to the border of Tyre, and passing through Sidon went back to the Lake of Tiberias "through the midst of the borders of Decapolis." This frequent change of quarters, and especially the preaching from a boat, can have but one reasonable explanation: the fear of being arrested and meeting the fate of John. How harassed Jesus found himself by what we would now call the constabulary is shown by his bitter complaint: "The foxes have holes and the birds of heaven have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." To the officials who at that time had charge of keeping order in Palestine a Messianic preacher could, in fact, appear only as a dangerous agitator who must be quickly silenced in order to nip in the bud an incipient revolt. It is true that theoretically there were quietist Messianists among the Jews; dreamers who held that if the Jewish people bent themselves sufficiently to the whims of Jahveh as set forth by the priests, if the Israelites carried out in all their petty minutiae the ordinances inflicted upon the people by the priests in the guise of the Law of God, then Jahveh would graciously restore the Kingdom without other effort on the part of the Chosen People. But in practice few of the quietists would have refused to give their support to any armed revolt had the occasion seemed propitious. Even the Jews who adhered to the Herods and usually supported the established order of things might not have been adverse to joining a revolt which appeared to have good chance of success provided it aimed at putting a Herodian monarch
on the throne of an independent Palestine, but to these practical men of affairs Jesus and his disciples appeared hopeless visionaries quite unaware of the tremendous power of Rome.

It is not improbable that among the entourage of Jesus were men who, not yet cognizant of the rank which Jesus was ultimately to claim for himself, dreamed of an alliance between the followers of the new prophet and the forces of the Herodian princes for the purpose of driving the Romans from the land. And it may well have been in reference to some such futile hope that Jesus took occasion to warn his followers to "take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15) or as Matthew (16:6) has it: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." With this admonition we may perhaps connect the statement of Luke: "Now there were some present at that very season which told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." This can hardly have been anything else than a warning from men who, while sympathizing with the aims of the movement, were too sober minded to take part in it and were endeavoring to make Jesus realize that piety on the part of himself and his following would not avail them in the event of hostilities with the authorities. The context here would seem to have been mutilated or distorted, and moreover the inspired writer goes astray in his chronology, since the massacre referred to took place before the time of Pilate, under the rule of Archelaus, who had his soldiers attack his rebellious subjects while the latter were occupied with their religious duties, a large number of Jews (which Josephus, probably exaggerating, puts at three thousand) having been killed. It would seem that one of the disciples put forward the theory that the Jews thus killed must have been great sinners, or Jahveh would not have allowed the soldiers to strike them down while in the very act of worshipping him. And Jesus seized the opportunity to tell his followers that they were not yet sufficiently righteous to satisfy God. Those sufferers whose blood had been mingled with their sacrifices were not sinners above all the Galileians, but were merely on a par with the rest, and he added "except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish."

Jesus taught his disciples to pray for the speedy restoration of the Davidic Kingdom—the Kingdom of God on earth—this being the sense in which we must take the clause "thy kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer, and his plans for bringing into being the
Kingdom of God could hardly have contemplated a purely human revolutionary movement against Rome. But this does not necessarily mean that the Prophet of Nazareth would have looked askance on an armed revolt provided Jahveh had first been placated and his intervention assured. The aid of Jahveh could, it was supposed, be obtained only by scrupulously obeying his mandates, and accordingly Jesus preached the necessity of righteousness. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Righteousness was so paramount that all material things were to be neglected to attain it. "Be ye not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?... But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In fact, according to the prevailing belief, the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom would be marked by rich gifts from God, extorted, as tribute and expiatory offerings, from the Gentile nations who had so long oppressed the Jews. And it was probably in order to show that this expectation had been fulfilled that, after the death of Jesus and the revamping of the Christian Messianic doctrine, there was fabricated the legend of the three Magi bringing gifts to Mary's new-born babe.

The scribes and Pharisees, since they did not sufficiently practice the piety they preached, were regarded by Jesus as standing in the way of obtaining the favor of Jahveh for the national aspirations, and sometimes came in for a share of his denunciations. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy and faith: but these ye ought to have done and not left the other undone." None the less the Pharisees could not, in the beginning at least, have been wholly unsympathetic towards Jesus as is shown by Luke 13:21. "There came certain Pharisees saying to him: Get thee out and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee." His reply: "Go tell that fox: Behold I cast out devils and perform cures to-day, and to-morrow and the third day I am perfected" is, by orthodox Christians, taken as predicting the resurrection of Jesus from the dead on the third day. But in the phraseology of the Jews "the third day" was used in an

4 Among the Semites the fox was regarded not as a cunning animal but as one bloodthirsty and rapacious.
indefinite sense, and "yesterday and the third day" was a well-known locution meaning merely shortly before. What Jesus was expressing was his firm conviction that quite soon in the future ("to-morrow and the third day") his plans for the establishment of the Messianic kingdom would come to full fruition, and he would be seated on the throne of David as monarch of an independent Palestine. So understood, these words, sent as a defiant message to Herod Antipas, are perfectly comprehensible. On the other hand, construed as meaning that Jesus was about to proceed to Jerusalem with the expectation of being executed and rising from the dead on the third day, his message would be ridiculous.

On occasions Jesus would acknowledge the authority of the wise men of Israel as expounders of the Divine Law. Said he: "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these observe, but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not." Other passages of the New Testament represent Jesus as in conflict with these interpreters of the Law. Some of these passages are certainly interpolations by Paulinist redactors. For instance, in view of the position taken by the Ebionites towards the Mosaic Dietary Laws, we cannot possibly believe Mark when he represents Jesus as "making all meats clean" by saying "There is nothing from without a man that going into him can defile him" (Mark 7:19 and 15, Cf. Matthew 15:11). For it was precisely the opposite stand that the Ebionites—the body of believers giving allegiance to the personal disciples of Jesus rather than to Paul—took against the Paulinists. Likewise we must reject as unhistorical the tales of Jesus healing, on the Sabbath day, a man with a withered hand, another with the dropsy, and a woman who was bowed (Luke 12:6-11, 14: 1-6, 13:10-17), since a healer who retained even the slightest reverence for the Jewish Law would recognize as reasonable the Pharisaic contention that works of healing which, like these, could well be delayed until the morrow, ought not be performed on the Sabbath. It is utterly unbelievable that Jesus thus went out of his way to offend the susceptibilities of his pious fellow citizens, and that he designated as "hypocrites" those who took the perfectly reasonable view of the ruler of the synagogue (Luke 13:14) "There are six days in which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed and not on the day of the Sabbath."

5See an article by the present writer: "Paul alias Simon the Magician" in The Open Court for August, 1930.
On the other hand we can well believe that the disciples plucked and ate raw grain on the Sabbath (*Mark* 2:23; *Matthew* 12:2). For the reply of Jesus to his critics implies that this hasty meal was snatched from the stalks as the little band passed hurriedly through a grain field while fleeing from the agents of the government. And the justification that this action was on a par with that of David who, commissioned by Jahveh to lead a revolt against Saul, while evading the emissaries of the reigning monarch, “entered into the house of God when Abithar was high priest, and did eat the shew bread which it is not lawful to eat, save for the priest, and give also to them that were with him” would be quite reasonable from the point of view of one who, like Jesus, believed that Jahveh sanctioned his own opposition to the constituted authorities of his country. The passage however shows a sad ignorance of Old Testament history on the part of the Prophet of Nazareth, for *1 Samuel* 21:1-6 tells us that not Abithar but Ahimelech was the priest who fed the band of David on shew bread, and the fact that David was engaged in a divinely inspired revolt does not seem to have entered into the matter, the only scruple of Ahimelech being as to whether those about to eat had of late “kept themselves from women.”

It would seem however that Jesus (probably without actually infringing the Law) did offend the Pharisees by his disregard of certain niceties. He dined with sinners and publicans, he and his disciples, even when dining as guests of the Pharisees, ate without duly washing their hands, and they refused to take part in certain fasts. This last innovation was noted as a departure from the customs of John the Baptist, and indicated that Jesus now claimed higher rank than that of a mere preacher of John's gospel. In fact the ex-carpenter of Nazareth in a comparatively short time—certainly in less than a year—had come to regard himself as the very Messiah. Klausner conjectures that his name, Jesus (more proper-

6In the Israel of those day, instead of there being a single Temple at which officiated a High Priest, supreme in the Jewish spiritual hierarchy, there were a number of sanctuaries, that of which Ahimelech was the chief priest was at Nob. At Nob, and probably at every sanctuary, as later in the Jerusalem Temple, there was a table on which was kept continually exposed bread ready for God to eat should he prove hungry. At certain intervals this “shew bread” or “bread of the face” or “bread of the presence” was replaced by fresh loaves, and the discarded food of God might be eaten by priests or by men who had not been “defiled” recently by relations with women. David and his band, fortunately coming at a time when there was bread hot in the oven ready to replace that on the table, could eat the latter, since they were “pure” having kept from women for “about three days.”
ly transliterated and pronounced Yeshua), which signifies "Jahveh shall save," may have had some influence in leading him to believe that it was he who was predestined to deliver Israel and restore the Kingdom. Just when he reached this conclusion we do not know. The first definite acknowledgement of his Messianic rank seems to have been given by Peter who, on the way to "the villages of Caesaria Philippi" in reply to the question put by Jesus, "Who say ye that I am?" replied: "Thou art the Christ!"

Emboldened by this putting into words his own thoughts, Jesus began to speak "the saying openly." "And Peter took him up and began to rebuke him. But he turned about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith: Get thee behind me Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." Evidently Peter feared that the boast that Jesus was the Messiah, instead of making friends for the movement, might make foes. And this would indicate that the many wonders and miracles paraded in the gospel stories were not really impressive enough to inspire his audiences with any excessively high opinion of his powers. Even previous to this Jesus and the rest of the band had not always been open in their speech. The parables of Jesus, in fact, sometimes wrapped up in esoteric form what he could not safely say openly. And in this connection we must consider the alleged saying of Jesus to his disciples: "Unto you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables; that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest haply they should turn again and it should be forgiven them." As these words stand they ascribe to Jesus an unspeakably despicable character, for he is here represented as deliberately consigning most of his hearers to hell by speaking so obscurely that they cannot possibly understand the truths that alone can save them from damnation. It is probable however that the "inspired" writers who have transmitted his words to us have distorted them and done him gross injustice. What we can reasonably conjecture to have been meant is that in order to avoid the casual by-standers learning of his Messianic plans and betraying them to the authorities, Jesus spoke in parables in dealing with the Kingdom of God which he expected would soon come into

Those who can give no credence to the stories of Jesus foretelling his failure and crucifixion must regard as an interpolation the passage in Mark which would make the "saying" spoken openly and meeting Petrine rebuke be the prediction that Jesus would be rejected, killed and resurrected.
being and sweep away all traces of Roman rule. His aim was perhaps to pose on occasions as a pure quietist who in no way advocated resistance to the governmental authorities. Such a stand is indicated by his famous reply to the question whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar. Requesting that they bring him a piece of the tribute money he said, when a coin was put before him: "Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him: Caesar's. And Jesus said unto them: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's—a reply that was certainly most ingenious, though showing a mind far from ingenuous.

It is not improbable that the story of the swine of Gerasa, which as it now stands is a rather silly miracle tale, may have originally been one of the Messianic parables. The story is that of Jesus driving out of a man a host of demons (two thousand in number) who called themselves "Legion" and sending them into a herd of swine who madly rushed over the brink of a precipice to their death in the lake below. In view of the fact that it was the Roman legions (each composed of several thousand men) which quartered in Palestine or Syria kept the Jewish people in subjection, and that some of these legions had depicted on their standards the insignia of a wild boar, it is by no means far-fetched to presume that Jesus may have related a parable whose significance was that when the Messiah set about the overthrow of the Roman rule and the establishment of an independent Jewish kingdom he would derange the minds of the Roman soldiers and make the legions bring about their own destruction. Another point of interest is the question as to how far some of the alleged miracles of Jesus may not have been, even in the beginning, pious frauds, pure and simple. Since belief in the miraculous powers of Jesus was undoubtedly an essential element in the hope for success under his leadership, we can have but little doubt that some of his co-workers, deeply devoted as they were to the realization of the national aspirations and anxious to gain adherents for the movement, would not scruple to spread reports of miracles performed by their master which had no basis whatsoever in fact.

8E. g. the First Italica, the Second Adjutrix, the Twentieth Valeria Victoria and the Tenth Fretensis. The last is known to have been stationed in Palestine from 70 to 135 A.D., and one of these legions may well have been there at an earlier date. The figure of the unfortunate demoniac, loaded with chains and wandering among the tombs, would symbolize the captive Jewish people. See "Mon Nom est Legion" by Theodore Reinach in the Revue des Études Juives, 1903. V. 47, p. 177.
From the very beginning it would appear (Mark 1:22) that Jesus spoke dictatorily: as one "having authority and not as the scribes." He did not, like the ordinary interpreters of the Law, search for a precedent and then, with inflexible logic, bring it to bear in juristic manner on the case in hand. Instead of saying "It is written" or "Thus saith the Lord" like an ordinary prophet, he would prefix his admonitions with "I say unto you." In connection with the dispute about his followers breaking the Sabbath, after pointing out that "the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless," he said of himself: "One greater than the temple is here." Naturally his pretensions were questioned, especially when he arrogated to himself the divine prerogative of forgiving sins (Mark, 2:5). Said the scribes: "Why doth this man thus speak? He blasphemeth! Who can forgive sins but one, even God?" Jesus answered by what he deemed a conclusive argument: an exhibition of his ability to cure the palsy; but though in later days Christian theologians accepted this as a valid syllogism, logicians can look upon it only as a non sequitur. The Wise Men of Israel too took the rational view that the performance of a prodigy cannot serve as verification of the doctrines of him who performs it, as is shown by a Talmud story. One day Rabbi Eliezer had put forth his interpretation of certain points of the Law which however the other Wise Men refused to accept. "Then he cried: If the Law is as I teach it, let the carob tree decide. Thereupon the carob tree moved a hundred yards, some say four hundred. But the Wise Men said unto him: No proof can be adduced from the carob tree. Then he said: If the Law is as I teach it, let the watercourses decide. Thereupon the watercourses went backward. But they said: No proof can be adduced from the watercourses. Then he said: If the Law is as I teach it, let the walls of the school decide. Thereupon the walls of the school assumed a slanting attitude, as if preparing to fall. Then cried out Rabbi Joshua: What though the learned dispute about the Law! How are ye concerned therein? So in deference to Rabbi Joshua they fell not, and in deference to Rabbi Eliezer they remained slanting!"

The demands of Jesus on those who acknowledged his pretensions were by no means slight. He who would share in the Kingdom was enjoined to give all his possessions to the poor and follow the Prophet of Nazareth. And when a disciple (identified by an extra-biblical tradition with the Apostle Philip) on the point
of joining the band, said to Jesus: “Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father!” Jesus replied: “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.” The reward promised was indeed commensurate with the sacrifice. Said Jesus: “There is no man that hath left house or brethren or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the gospel’s sake, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time.” It was quite natural that men who were asked to give up everything on the basis of such a promise should demand some sign indicating that Jahveh stood back of Jesus, insuring victory under his leadership. But notwithstanding the wonders Jesus is alleged to have worked, he never acceded to this reasonable request. “And the Pharisees came and tempting [i.e. testing] him asked him to show them a sign from heaven. But he answered and said unto them: When it is evening ye say: It will be fair weather, for the heaven is red. And in the morning: It will be foul weather to-day, for the heaven is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign given unto it save the sign of the prophet Jonah” (Matthew 16: 1-4). By the “sign of the prophet Jonah” is meant, most biblical critics admit, no sign at all, the words added in Matthew 12:40 “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” being a later interpolation. Jonah merely appeared as a prophet in Nineveh, and Jesus refused to do more. According to Luke (16:20,21) Jesus “being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh,” replied, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,” the last word here being perhaps better rendered as “computation.” In the time of Jesus there were Messianic enthusiasts who attempted to calculate from the “prophecies” of Scripture just when the new era was predestined to be inaugurated, precisely as to-day Christians who read the Book of Revelations without understanding it, seek to figure out the exact date of the coming parousia. Of this character were those who put the question, and in his reply Jesus seems to deny that the Messianic kingdom would inevitably be inaugurated at a certain fixed time regardless of the attitude of the Jews towards Jahveh. To bring it into being the people of Israel, Jesus contended, must not waste their energy in idle computation, but must turn their attention to their in-
ner selves and heed his exhortations to repentance and righteousness. He was however so optimistic as to be convinced that the "signs of the times" indicated that his preachings would bring about the regeneration of enough Jews to placate Jahveh and insure the latter's restoration of the Kingdom to Israel.

It is probable that Jesus rebuked his hearers for demanding a sign on several different occasions; one perhaps being when he was speaking on behalf of John the Baptist. At all events the gospels in different places quote him as giving vent to the same sentiments in somewhat different language, as in Mark 8:11,12 and Luke 12:54-56. The latter passage makes Jesus say: "When ye see a cloud rising in the west, straightway ye say: There cometh a shower, and so it cometh to pass. And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say: There will be a scorching heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites! Ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heavens; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time?" There appears no justification here for calling "hypocrites" the men who disagreed with Jesus as to whether or not the times were propitious for the overthrow of Roman rule and the establishment of the Messianic kingdom in Palestine, and history shows that Jesus was wrong in his reading of the signs of the times and his opponents in the right. And we need not wonder that the scribes and Pharisees whom he addressed in such scathing language regarded all this as sheer arrogance.

The "casting out of devils" by Jesus, that is the cure or temporary palliation of nervous disorders by suggestion, was not acknowledged as proof that he was inspired by the spirit of God, since his opponents pointed out that a magician in league with the devil might equally well effect such prodigies. This, more than anything else, aroused the ire of Jesus. To say that he was under the influence, not of the Holy Ghost, but of some evil spirit, was in his eyes the very worst of crimes. Accordingly he proclaimed: "all their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies, wherewithsoever they blaspheme; but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin; because they said: He [i.e. Jesus] hath an unclean spirit" (Mark 3:28-30; Cf. Matthew 12:31,32).

That the hearers of Jesus were often very far from accepting his preachings is quite obvious. And Matthew 11:20-24 is perfectly explicit on the matter. "Then began he to upbraid the cities where-
in most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes . . . . And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? Thou shalt go down into Hell; for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained unto this day." In the neighborhood of his home Jesus fared worst of all, for there he "could do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them." And when he preached at Nazareth "they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue . . . and they rose up and cast him forth of the city." It was, in fact, only the dregs of society that listened to his teachings; the "priests and elders" disdained it, and the Pharisees "scoffed at him" (Luke 16:14). And Jesus on this account reproached them bitterly, saying "the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." (Matthew 21:31,32).

The group surrounding Jesus cannot have been very well supplied with sustenance, to judge from the exhortations he made to them: "Be ye not anxious for your life, what ye shall wear; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on . . . . If God doth so clothe the grass which to-day is in the field and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more shall he clothe you, Oh ye of little faith! And seek not what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind . . . . Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. Howbeit seek ye his kingdom and these things shall be added unto you. Fear not little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:22-32). In the meantime, while awaiting the advent of the kingdom, it was the duty of the less poverty-stricken of his adherents to sell all they possessed and give the proceeds towards the support of the more needy—at least this is the most plausible interpretation of his repeated admonitions to "sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor." And we may reasonably conjecture that this, like many another religious movement, would have fallen flat at the very outset had it not been for the financial support of certain pious and well-to-do women. For we are told by Luke that Jesus "went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God, and with him the twelve, and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary
that was called Magdalene, from whom seven devils had gone out, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto them of their substance." Scant credit has been given to Susanna and Joanna (to say nothing of the latter's husband from whose pocket may well have come the greater part of the funds at the disposal of Jesus)—these names are all but unknown to the average Christian. As to Mary Magdalen she has had the sad fate of being celebrated only for the supposed indiscretions of her youth, though in point of fact the only reason we have for believing her to have been unchaste is the bad reputation of the women of Magdala. It would be quite as reasonable to take the contrary stand concerning the virtue of Mary Magdalene, and this is indeed done in the apocryphal *Assumption of the Virgin*, where we are told that when the "virgins" had been summoned, Mary the mother of Jesus, took the hand of "one of them, Mary Magdalene, now very old."

It seems probable that it was to convince his followers that they need not be discouraged over the small number of men who had given their adhesion to the movement that Jesus related two parables recorded in *Matthew* 13:31-33. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed which a man took, and sowed it in his field: which is indeed less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof." "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." In other parables (*Matthew* 13:45-46) Jesus likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a treasure and to a pearl, so precious that a man will gladly dispose of all he possesses to procure it. And in a final appeal, before going to Jerusalem, he urged those who had not joined his movement in the beginning to come forward now, relating for this purpose the parable of the workers in the vineyard (*Matthew* 20:1-16). "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man....which went out....to hire laborors into his vineyard," those who started work only at the eleventh hour receiving the same reward as those who had worked from the very beginning. Jesus apparently thought that no definite plan for the establishment of the Kingdom was necessary; that Jahveh would arrange the details—at least this seems the most natural interpretation of the following passage: "And he said: So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon
the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow. he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth his sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:26-29).

It was with such visionary expectations that in some mysterious way the established order of things would be overthrown and the independence of the Jewish nation restored, that the little band started on their journey to Jerusalem. Their hopes were high, as is shown by the fact that the sons of Zebedee (or their mother) asked that they might have the places of honor next to Jesus in his kingdom, which caused the other ten apostles to be much disgruntled. To the twelve apostles Jesus had, in fact, promised the highest ranks under him: "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). The disciples, we are told, "supposed the kingdom of God was immediately to appear" (Luke 19:11). And undoubtedly, as Bousset remarks, Jesus likewise, in his dreams of the future, was not thinking of a colorless and purely heavenly beyond, but was picturing to himself a state of things existing on this earth, though of course a transfigured earth, and in his own time. It was probably during this journey that Jesus encouraged his followers by painting in glowing colors the wonderful fertility that the earth would exhibit in the days of the Kingdom of God. According to tradition as transmitted by Papias, Jesus said: "The day will come when vines shall grow, each bearing ten thousand branches, and upon each branch ten thousand twigs, and upon each one of the twigs ten thousand shoots, and upon every shoot ten thousand bunches, and upon each bunch ten thousand grapes, and each grape when pressed shall yield twenty-five measures of wine.... So too the grain of wheat shall produce ten thousand ears, and every ear shall bear ten thousand grains, and every grain shall yield ten pounds of flour, white and pure." At this prediction Judas, less credulous than the other disciples, showed a carping spirit, for "Judas, the traitor, would not believe."

Near Jerico a blind beggar on being told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing, greeted him as "Son of David," a recognition of his claim to Messiahship, since the Messiah was commonly reputed to
come of Davidic stock. Although the genealogies of Matthew and Luke would represent Joseph as descended from David (of course implying that in the original documents Joseph was taken to be the physical father of Jesus) yet we know that Jesus himself made no such claim of Davidic descent, since (Matthew 22:41:46) he was at much pains to argue that the Messiah ["Christ"] would not be the "son of David." And hence we must conclude that these genealogies are hopelessly spurious. Matthew, in fact, in order to arrive at the number of generations desired by him, fourteen in each of the three series of his list, coolly leaves out three links in the series of the kings of Judah, viz. Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah. In this connection we may note the admonition of the Epistle to Titus (3:9) to "shun foolish questions and genealogies," indicating, perhaps, that at the time this epistle was written the Davidic genealogies of Jesus were being put forward by certain Christians in support of the Messianic claims, but were recognized by the more sober believers to be obviously fraudulent.

When the procession reached Jerusalem a dramatic entry was staged. As Keim remarks all the gospels are agreed that Jesus went into Jerusalem in an unusual manner and with accompaniments that unmistakably exhibited his Messianic claims. There was a widely believed prophecy that the Messiah would come riding on an ass, and Talmudic writers have devoted a good deal of attention to this phase of the entry of the Messiah, describing in glowing terms the beauty of the ass. In order to fulfill the prophecy Jesus solemnly mounted an animal of this species, his disciples having previously placed their garments on its back to serve as saddle, just as the officers of Jehu, when they made him king of Israel, "took every man his garment, and put it under him" (2 Kings 9:13). As Jesus rode into the city his adherents "spread their garments in the way, and others cut branches from the trees, and spread them in the way" crying out "Hosanna to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest." Not all the by-standers were pleased with this; apparently the Pharisees regarded Jesus as very far from having demonstrated his right to be accepted as the Messiah. So they "said unto him: Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said: I tell you that if these shall hold their peace the stones will cry out." John would have us believe that a great multitude of the populace of Jerusalem, hearing that Jesus was coming, took the branches of palm trees and
went forth to meet him. But as Keim points out "the enthusiasm of the Jerusalemites...never existed at all, according to the earlier gospels, which describe the astonishment of the Jerusalemites as contrasting violently with the jubilation of those who accompanied Jesus." In fact Matthew tells us that "when he was come to Jerusalem all the city was stirred, saying: Who is this? And the multitude said: This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee." Entering Jerusalem, Jesus went into the Temple, and "when he had looked about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out into Bethany with the twelve." Apparently this was the first visit of Jesus to the city, for according to Matthew his disciples wished to show him the sights: "his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple."

Bethany, where Jesus passed the nights during his activities in Jerusalem, was on the Mount of Olives, to the east of the city. Klausner thinks it probable that the reason Jesus withdrew to this place every night was that from the very first he feared arrest. The Mount of Olives seems moreover to have been regarded as the predestined place for the Messiah to abide. In messianology and apocalyptic literature it is repeatedly referred to, and the Old Testament apocalypse of Zechariah says (14:4) that in the coming day of the Lord "His feet shall stand...upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem to the east." Nor was Jesus the only pretender to the throne of David who made it his headquarters. Josephus tells us of an "Egyptian false prophet" who took up his post there. "A charlatan who had gained for himself the reputation of a prophet, this man appeared in the country, collected a following of about thirty thousand dupes, and led them by a circuitous route from the desert to the mount called the Mount of Olives. From there he proposed to force an entrance to Jerusalem, and after overpowering the Roman garrison, to set himself up as tyrant of the people, employing those who poured in with him as his bodyguard." The Roman procurator however took his forces and, joined by the Jews of Jerusalem that remained loyal to the authorities, went out to meet and fight the rebel. The result was that "The Egyptian escaped with a few of his followers; most of his force were killed or taken prisoner." There can be but little doubt that in those days a man who posed as a prophet and attempted to make himself master of the Jewish lands would have proclaimed himself as Messiah had the revolt been successful. A
confusion between this "Egyptian false prophet" and Jesus may perhaps have been the origin of the Jewish tradition which, admitting that Jesus was a worker of wonders, ascribed them to magic learned during a sojourn in Egypt.⁹

While Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper (or Simon the Lowly, as Chajes thinks it might be read) a woman "came with an alabaster cruse of ointment of spikenard, very costly; and she brake the cruse and poured it over his head." A question that here arises is whether this anointment had any connection with the expected inauguration of the Kingdom of God with Jesus as its king. "Messiah" in Hebrew (like "Christ" in Greek) means "the anointed one," and in early times the term had been applied to earthly kings because they only were anointed. It would seem not unnatural that when Jesus was about to enter upon his kingdom (as he and his disciples supposed) a ceremony of unction would be performed on him. The only other mention of anointment of Jesus in the gospels is in Luke where (as in John 12:1-8) the ointment from the alabaster cruse is poured on the feet of Jesus, and this is represented as taking place in Galilee at a much earlier time. At Bethany the time and place would be well suited for the anointment of Jesus as Messiah, and it has been held that what really took place at the house of Simon was a Messianic anointment of Jesus, and that what Judas betrayed to the authorities was the fact that this ceremony had been performed.

In attempting to discern the truth about the events narrated by the gospels we must keep in mind that religionists are none too scrupulous as to veracity when telling about a beloved prophet. And especially do they go to great lengths to keep out of sight facts that are unedifying and might be harmful to the cause which it is their dearest desire to promote. In the case of Jesus it would not do to admit that his expectations were entirely falsified by the events. Hence the gospel tales have been garbled to indicate that he had no intention of taking possession of an earthly kingdom, and that he all the while foresaw his own crucifixion: that he deliberately took a course which he knew would lead to his condemnation and execution because this disgraceful death would be of incalculable benefit to the human race. The rational view however is that the kingdom to which Jesus aspired was not that of a far

⁹See "Jesus and Jewish Tradition" in The Open Court for September, 1930, p. 552, note 6.
distant parousia, but was to be of this world and of those very days in which he gathered together his disciples. And it follows that we must presume him to have had in mind for the attainment of his ends much the same methods that were used by the other would-be Messiahs of whom history tells us. In this connection we must remember that it was not the desire of the Pauline Christians to antagonize the Roman government. Indeed tradition tells us that converts were soon gained in the imperial household itself, and these believers, of course, would have been compromised by a record being kept of a rebellious attitude on the part of the Christ. Hence the New Testament writers strove to exhibit Jesus and his disciples as lambs in the midst of wolves, and have obscured the facts which contravene this point of view. They were however somewhat clumsy in their work, and notwithstanding the reticence of the gospels there have been handed down to us sayings which distinctly point to warlike methods having been contemplated for bringing into being the Kingdom of God. One is the admonition recorded by Luke (22:36) as given at the Last Supper: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his cloak and buy one" —a text that must have good foundation in tradition, as it has no particular connection with the context, nor any raison d'être which would explain its interpolation if not founded on fact. The next verse does not fit in with this at all, but in verse 38 we find: "And they said: Lord, behold here are two swords. And he said unto them: It is enough"—a lame and impotent conclusion of the incident, the account of which has evidently been much mutilated by the redactors. It has been conjectured that the swords referred to here were the short stabbing weapons which the Sicarri or Zealots wielded so murderously while mingled in a crowd of their enemies. One of the twelve apostles, Simon the Zealot (whose other surname, "the Cananaean" is simply the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word for Zealot) was presumably not unacquainted with the favorite weapon of his sect, and it might well have been he who came forward. And it has been contended that in all probability the reply of Jesus was meant as an expression of satisfaction that one of his followers had already been thoughtful enough to arm himself, and that a bloody affray was in view as the first step towards the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. In this connection we must remember that enormous shedding of blood was a prominent feature in the apocalyptic representation of the com-
ing of the "good times" of the Messianic kingdom. Enoch says the horses shall walk up to the breast in the blood of sinners (1 Enoch 100,3) while the Book of Revelations describes, for the delectation of believers, a scene in which "there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the briddles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs" (14:20). Jesus himself declared, according to the Ebionite gospel (see Clementine Recognitions 6:4) "I am come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were kindled," a passage which in our Luke (12:49) takes the improbable form: "I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I if it is already kindled?" Matthew (10:34-36) quotes him as saying: "Think not that I am come to cast peace on the earth: I am come not to cast peace but a sword." According to the Ebionite gospel (see Recognitions 2:29) Jesus charged the believers to have peace among themselves, and it was only in this sense that he said "Blessed are the peace-makers!" Another passage which might be construed as bearing on the question—and certainly more reasonably than by taking it, as do Catholic theologians, to uphold the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation—is the remark made by Jesus at the Last Supper concerning "the blood of the covenant which is shed for many." It is quite possible that this may have been a reference to an uprising planned for the morrow on which occasion the disciples had been asked by Jesus to covenant to shed blood (that of others and if necessary their own) to bring about the establishment of the Kingdom of God. And this conjecture is given more plausibility by the fact that it was on this occasion that Judas finally decided to betray his master, and by the utterance with which Jesus closed the proceedings: "I say unto you I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God." Nor can we regard as without significance the fact, recorded by Luke, that at this very supper the disciples had a quarrel over which of them should be the great-10 Biblical critics now admit that the appended words "unto remission of sins" is no part of the original tradition but is the interpolation of some redactor.

11 Mark, 14:24-25; Cf. Matthew 16:28,29. Luke (22:16-18) quotes Jesus as saying he will "not any more eat" of "this passover" "until it fulfilled in the Kingdom of God," and as the best opinion of biblical critics is that the Last Supper (at which no meat is recorded as having been served) was not the passover meal, this would seem to mean that Jesus expected the Kingdom of God to be brought into being before the time came for celebrating the passover—probably the next evening.
est: that is, which should have the highest rank under Jesus in the restored Davidic kingdom—the "Kingdom of God."

It was some days before this supper, almost immediately after the arrival of the band at Jerusalem, that the so-called "Cleansing of the Temple" is represented as having taken place. According to Mark, Jesus, on the morning after he reached Jerusalem, "entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves: and he would not suffer any man should carry a vessel through the temple." In doing this Jesus, of course, was interfering with the customary religious exercises of the worshippers in the Temple, the money changers and dove sellers being both there by permission of the ecclesiastical authorities for the convenience of the Jews who came to worship in the Temple. The former exchanged the pagan money brought by the worshippers for the Jewish coins which alone were acceptable as Temple tribute, while from the latter those who wished to offer sacrifice to Jahveh (as their religion bade them) could purchase doves for this purpose. And needless to say, all the Christians of to-day who applaud Jesus for this "Cleansing of the Temple" would regard analogous behavior in a modern Christian church as utterly outrageous. The implication given by the gospel stories is that Jesus met no resistance, and that it was not until the next day, when he returned to the Temple, that the "chief priests, and the elders of the people" came unto him and timidly asked: "By what authority doest thou these things and who gave you this authority?" And Jesus is quoted as coolly replying: "I also will ask you one question, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or from man? And they reasoned with themselves, saying: If we shall say from heaven, he will say unto us: Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say from men, we fear the multitude, for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said: We know not. He also said unto them: Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things" (Matthew 21:23-27).

It is surprising that this story should ever have been taken as a

Luther, with sound common sense, said that the Cleansing of the Temple ought not to be taken as an example. Greatly scandalized at this, Canon Farrar stigmatized it as "an unbecoming and mistaken remark" showing "how even the best and greatest fail to rise to the height of that universal morality of which the life of Jesus is the sole human exemplar."
precise presentation of fact. Unless Jesus had at his heels a mob of considerable size the Temple merchants and money changers would certainly not have tamely submitted to being thrown out, and Jesus would have found himself roughly handled by them and the Temple guards before getting very far in his work. The probabilities are that Jesus and his disciples came to the Temple, over-turned a few of the tables and created an uproar, and then hurriedly left before the Temple police could be summoned. The only alternative to this—the supposition that Jesus had rallied a numerous body of men to his support—would have meant nothing less than a riot, an incipient insurrection, which Pilate would undoubtedly have severely suppressed and in so doing have killed a considerable number of the rioters. But all biblical accounts agree that Jesus was the sole victim of his attempts to install himself on the Davidic throne. It is however quite possible, not to say probable, that a riot was precisely what Jesus and his companions vainly endeavored to bring about in the Temple: that they were attempting to incite an insurrection of the people, aimed first at the Temple priests and next at the Romans whose puppets these were. This abortive attempt, bloodless though it was, must certainly have drawn the attention of the Jerusalem authorities to Jesus, and he could hardly have remained unmolested for as long afterwards as the gospels would lead us to suppose. So we must presume this episode to have been antedated. Most probably it took place on the day on which the Last Supper was held, and was the immediate cause of the arrest of the Prophet of Nazareth. And it would not be unreasonable to conjecture that the failure of this first attempt at inaugurating the Kingdom of God led Judas to realize how little chance of success had the project of Jesus, and brought to him the thought of selling to the police the information at his disposal concerning this pretender to the Davidic throne.

Jesus, while unwilling to abandon what he deemed to be his mission, was doubtless sad and disheartened at the ill success of his initial attempt to rouse the populace. And the tale of the passion of Jesus at Gethsemane may well reflect this momentary discouragement. If however he was then really so low in spirit as to anticipate his own arrest and death, the most plausible explanation is that on broaching his new plan at the Last Supper he had noted a decided lack of enthusiasm on the part of his followers. This plan, in fact, involved something more bloody than the rough and
tumble fight that had taken place at the "Cleansing of the Temple," since swords were to be used. Against whom these weapons were to be directed, the Temple guards or the Roman soldiery, we can hardly tell. But after the fight had begun Jesus unquestionably expected legions of armed angels to come to reinforce his band, as is indicated by the remark ascribed to him at his arrest: "Thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels!" (Matthew 26:53). It was doubtless this illusion that angelic forces would join themselves to his following that had made Jesus so sanguine of the success of his scheme. In reality the attempt to start a revolution would have been perfectly futile, and would have had as only tangible result the production of a number of widows and orphans. But the projected insurrection never came to pass, for that very night Jesus was arrested by the authorities, and thus his Messianic career was brought to a close.