

so the Lord Jesus Christ did not translate all that He was, and all that He did into words. Even in the silence of Christ there is a revelation transcending all that is contained in the raptures of psalmists, the visions of prophets, and the wisdom of apostles. The words of Christ are great, but Christ Himself is greater. The doctrine of Atonement developed in the epistles seemed to him to be the only satisfactory explanation of some of the phenomena recorded in the four gospels. All the four evangelists were agreed about the exceptional importance and significance of our Lord's death. Only two relate the circumstances of His birth, only two the story of His temptation; the sermon on the mount, the most elaborate of all our Lord's discourses, appears neither in the second gospel nor the fourth. St. John says nothing about the transfiguration, the agony in the garden, or the institution of the supper. Neither Matthew nor St. John tells anything of our Lord's ascension into heaven; but all four give minute particulars of the crucifixion. It is the life of the prophets and saints, not the circumstances of their death, to which attention is given in the Scriptures. As illustrations they might take the references to the deaths of Moses, David, and St. James. To Christ His approaching death, whatever might be its significance, was distinctly present from the commencement of His ministry, and He constantly spoke of it as necessary. The manner in which He anticipated His death when it was still remote, the increasing terror which it created in His mind as it gradually drew nigh, and the mystery of His moral sufferings on the cross, appear to require some such explanation as is supplied by the doctrine of the Atonement. It cannot be fairly said that the repeated intimations of His approaching death show nothing more than a desire to prepare the disciples for the event. It was evident that His death had taken possession of His own heart; that the anticipation of it was constantly recurring to Him; that He lived almost always under its shadow; and not only spoke of it, but looked forward to it with anxiety and fear. It was of His death He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with." This was while He was still in Galilee. He saw it afar off, and, if it might be so said with reverence, was eager to have it over. At Jerusalem, when some Gentiles came to Him, wishing to see the great Teacher, His heart thrilled with a sudden joy; they were the representatives of the great multitudes whom no man can number, who through Him would be rescued from sin and eternally pardoned, and He exclaimed, 'The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.' Then there arose up at once the dark presence of death. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.' The vision of death sank upon Him like a vast and gloomy cloud. His heart was shaken with fear, and He said, 'Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour.' He could not turn aside, and he adds, 'But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name.' At the Last Supper the agitation returned, because the traitor was sitting at the table. He knew the deed of treachery was about to be consummated. As soon as Judas left, the agitation seemed to pass away, and His whole nature rose to its loftiest activity. Not a solitary intellectual power was latent; not a solitary affection slumbered. In the garden, in the midst of a scene suggestive of perfect peace, suddenly a great terror came upon Him. He said to His three disciples, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.' The trouble became darker every moment. He clung to the relief and support which the mere presence of those who love affords us in times of great distress. But He could not remain with them; He was restless, and tore Himself away, and then followed successive spasms of spiritual effort. He was like a great tree, but His resolution to endure the worst was rooted too deeply. It almost seemed as if He must yield to the tremendous strain. His death was near—the death which had been present to Him as descending upon Him at last. He shrank from it, and cried, 'Oh, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' It is not thus that good men have been accustomed to confront death. He said to His disciples, if they loved Him they would rejoice because He told