

a grand universalism discoverable in the purposes that run through Hebrew history. In the midst of Israel's later life there grew into sublime proportions one of the noblest ideas that ever blossomed on the stem of time; the idea of the whole earth as a single divine realm, a world-encompassing commonwealth. And tho the Assyrian and the Chaldean, the Medo-Persian, the Greek, and the Roman harassed and smote down Israel, he never gave up his magnificent and imperial hope, identifying, however, the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom with the lifting up of his own race and capital.

But when the meek Teacher of Galilee appeared, while He claimed all the prophetic ideas of the kingdom, He purified them and founded a new society, whose principles ran athwart the gross nationalism so dear to Israel. Breaking away from the so-called kingdom of heaven, represented by the Jewish state, He launched a new and better commonwealth, giving it laws in the Sermon on the Mount; describing its spiritual and, hence, pervasive character in a score of parables; placing its sovereignty in the soul; and lifting it out of the ancient provincialism, which was yet great enough to dream of a universal commonwealth of God.

From the beginning to the end of Christ's life we catch glimpses of the universal purpose and character of His Messianic work. At His cradle the representatives of the old star-worshippers of Persia are drawn to His feet, and in the last week of His ministry in the temple, the Greeks, who represented the universal spirit of inquiry and of reason; the Greeks, in whose brain was the civilization of the modern world on its intellectual side, desired to see Him. And, while He went first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, His ministry was largely given to the semi-Gentile populations of the North. He even preached to the Samaritans, and once He departed to the Tyrian coasts, and discovered a great heart of trustful love in a Syro-Phœnician woman. It was of a Roman centurion that He said: "Verily, I have not found such faith; no, not in Israel," adding that many "shall come from the East and the West and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." It was a Samaritan that Jesus chose to illustrate what neighborly kindness is. It was an African who bore His cross over the shuddering rocks of Golgotha; it was a Roman captain, who, seeing the dying Redeemer, cried out, "This surely is God's Son!" And upon His cross Pilate placed a superscription, which proclaimed, with significant prophecy, the Nazarene's universal kingdom; for it was written out in three languages, the Hebrew, the old and sacred speech belonging to a people of unequalled genius, in the realm of religion; the Greek, the language of a race which still rules the intellectual and artistic world, the language in which Homer sang and Plato taught and Demosthenes fulminated, in which Paul and St. Chrysostom were to preach; and the Latin, the language of the masterful and militant Roman, in which Virgil and