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Doctrinal Theology.

COSMOLOGY.

Cosmology, as a chapter of Christian theology, is the doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning the genesis, nature, and states, of created things. The source whence every doctrinal statement under this head must be derived is the same from which we draw our theological information concerning the unfathomable mysteries of Theology proper, the doctrine of God, of the Trinity in Unity, of the divine attributes and eternal decrees. It is true, the Bible is not a scientific text book of Cosmic Philosophy, of Natural History or Geology or Astronomy, claiming for itself the authority due to the results of scientific research, of human observation and investigation and speculation. Its claims, also in reference to Cosmology, are infinitely higher. The authority of human scientists is never more than human; the authority of the Scriptures, also where it speaks of mundane things, is simply and unrestrictedly divine. Scientists may err, God can not; scientists have often erred, God never. Where the statements of great scientists and those of the Scriptures are at variance, those of the Scriptures must prevail, not although, but because, the Bible is not a scientific text book, because it is more, it is the word of

Jesus. And here the inestimable value of a well prepared and well delivered series of passion sermons is once more manifest. No one can truly appreciate the significance of the risen Lord and Savior, who has not learned to know and to understand Christ crucified. It was only after the disciples, who had been slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken, had been led in a measure to understand in all the Scriptures the things concerning Christ, especially concerning his suffering and entrance into glory, that they began to rejoice in the risen Lord. Luke 24, 25—27. 32—34. And likewise did true and abiding Easter gladness enter the hearts of the eleven only after Christ had said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me," and after he had opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." Luke 24, 44—48.

A. G.

SERMON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SEASON OF LENT.

For the Sundays and festivals in the ecclesiastical year we have certain traditional texts, the epistles and gospels. But there are seasons in the ecclesiastical year requiring a special series of sermons and for these there are no texts prescribed or suggested. For the evening sermons in Advent and Lent the pastor must make his own selection of texts. Sometimes this is tedious work. It is not a wise policy to pick out texts at random, without any systematical

arrangement, and to say almost the same thing in every sermon. A faithful pastor will outline a certain course for the season and present to his congregation the divine truths to be proclaimed in that season in a systematical form.

We shall endeavor to give a few hints as to the arrangement of lenten sermons. The great subject of Lent is the Lord's Passion, the suffering and death of our Savior. In the lenten services the suffering, crucified, dying Christ should be presented to the congregation in His inestimable love to the whole sinful world. Not only the history of His suffering, death and burial should be told and enlarged upon, but the principal part is to show why Jesus had to suffer and die and what great benefits we derive therefrom. The hearers must be led to perceive that their sins have caused the Lord those terrible agonies of body and soul, to deplore their sins, and then to find comfort against sin and hope of eternal life in the wounds of Christ. "God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." This is the great truth which every lenten sermon should impress on the mind, whatever its theme or subject may be.

We submit a number of sermon arrangements for the season of Lent under different headings.

I. The suffering and dying Lord at different places.

1. In the garden Gethsemane. Matt. 26, 36.
2. In the high priest's palace. Matt. 26, 57.
3. In Pilate's judgment hall. Matt. 27, 1. 2.
4. In the presence of Herod. Luke 23, 6—12.
5. In the streets of Jerusalem on His way to Calvary. Luke 23, 26—32.
6. On Calvary. Luke 23, 32. 33.
7. In the grave. Matt. 27, 59. 60.

II. Remarkable utterances of Jesus in His passion.

1. His appeal to the disciples to keep awake in Gethsemane. Matt. 26, 40. 41.

2. His explanation why the enemies were successful in capturing Him. Luke 22, 52. 53.
3. His advice to Peter. Matt. 26, 42.
4. His declaration under oath that He is the Son of God. Matt. 26, 63. 64.
5. His advice to the daughters of Jerusalem. Luke 23, 26—31.
6. His testimony concerning His kingdom. John 18, 33—36.
7. His confession, I am a King. John 18, 37.

III. Remarkable conduct of Jesus in His passion.

1. His silence. Matt. 26, 62. 63 and 27, 13. 14.
2. His care for the disciples, preventing their apprehension. John 18, 4—9.
3. His remonstrance with the servant who slapped Him in the face. John 18, 22. 23.
4. His look upon Peter. Luke 22, 61.
5. His refusal to work a miracle. Mark 15, 29—32.
6. His refusal to drink vinegar mingled with gall. Matt. 27, 34.
7. His care for His mother, entrusting her to John. John 19, 25—27.

IV. Remarkable incidents connected with Jesus' suffering and death.

1. The angel appearing from heaven to strengthen Him in Gethsemane. Luke 22, 43.
2. The dream of Pilate's wife. Matt. 27, 19.
3. Choosing between Jesus and Barabbas. Mark 15, 6—13.
4. Casting lots for Jesus' garment. John 19, 23. 24.
5. Pilate washing his hands in protestation of his innocence. Matt. 27, 24.

6. The potter's field bought with the thirty pieces of silver for which Jesus was betrayed. Matt. 27, 6—10.
7. The issue of blood and water from the corpse. John 19, 33—37.

V. Prominent persons figuring in our Lord's holy passion.

1. Judas Iscariot. 2. Peter. 3. Annas. 4. Caiaphas. 5. Malchus. 6. Pontius Pilate. 7. Herod. 8. Barabbas. 9. Simon of Cyrene. 10. The dying thief. 11. Mary. 12. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea.

VI. Persons who contributed to the suffering of our Lord.

1. Judas.
2. Peter.
3. The false witnesses.
4. Caiaphas.
5. Pilate.
6. The soldiers and servants.
7. The howling multitude.

VII. Persons who showed a friendly disposition to our Lord in His suffering and death.

1. Peter in the garden drawing the sword in his Master's defense.
2. Simon of Cyrene bearing Jesus' cross.
3. The daughters of Jerusalem bewailing Him.
4. Pilate's wife warning her husband.
5. The dying thief asking Jesus to remember him in His kingdom.
6. The centurion saying, Truly, this man was the Son of God.
7. Nicodemus and Joseph undertaking the interment.

VIII. Seven Words from the Cross.

1. Father, forgive them. Luke 23, 33. 34.
2. This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Luke 23, 39—43.
3. Woman, behold thy son. John 19, 25—27.
4. Why hast Thou forsaken me? Matt. 27, 43—45.
5. I thirst. John 19, 28. 29.
6. It is finished. John 19, 30.
7. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Luke 23, 46.

IX. What was done to Jesus to make Him suffer in His body.

1. He was bound and taken captive.
2. He was slapped in the face.
3. He was buffeted.
4. He was scourged.
5. He was crowned with thorns.
6. He was compelled to bear His own cross.
7. He was nailed to the accursed tree.

X. What was done to Jesus to make His soul suffer.

1. In Gethsemane He was made to feel the burden of the world's sins resting upon Him to such an extent that He was almost on the verge of despair praying that this cup might pass away, and the sweat issuing from His pores as drops of blood. Luke 22, 44.
2. He was left by all His disciples, who fled when He was taken captive and kept themselves at a safe distance during the trial. Matt. 26, 31.
3. He was betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter, His own disciples. Ps. 41, 9.
4. In the highpriest's palace His divinity was assailed and false witnesses were produced against Him. Matt. 26, 59—66.

5. In the judgment hall He was falsely accused. Luke 23, 1.
6. Before Herod He was mocked and put to public shame. Luke 23, 11.
7. By the soldiers and servants He was spitefully entreated, spitted on and put to ridicule. Matt. 27, 27—30. Mark 14, 65.
8. On Calvary He was reminded of His miracles and told that He could not help Himself. Matt. 26, 39—44.

XI. Attending signs showing nature's condolence with the dying Son of God.

1. The sun shrouded in darkness.
2. The earth quaking.
3. The rocks rent.
4. The graves opened.
5. The veil of the temple rent in twain.

XII. Rays of divine glory perceptible in the suffering and dying Christ.

1. At His simple Word the band headed by Judas and coming to seek and arrest Him go backward and fall to the ground. John 18, 3—6.
2. He heals Malchus' ear which Peter had severed from the man's body by the sword. Matt. 26, 51—54.
3. He restores Peter by the look of His eye. Luke 22, 54—61.
4. He declares Himself the Son of God and utters divine prophecy. Luke 22, 66—71.
5. It is made manifest that He is the Lord of nature when nature mourns His death. Matt. 27, 45.
6. He promises Paradise to the penitent thief. Luke 23, 39—43.
7. He expires with a loud cry showing that He does not die from exhaustion, but of His own will. Luke 23, 46.

8. Such is His power even in death that not only the centurion must bear record of His divinity, but the whole multitude smite upon their breasts. Luke 23, 47. 48.

XIII. The human heart disclosed by our Saviors suffering. (According to Tholuck "Light from the Cross.")

1. The history of our Savior's Passion makes manifest in *Caiaphas* to what a degree the human heart may harden itself against the truth. Matt. 13, 14. 15.
2. In *Judas* to what a degree it may harden itself against the truth, after once having known the way of righteousness. 2 Pet. 2, 20. 21.
3. In *Pilate* to what a degree it is capable of shallowness and vanity. John 18, 38.
4. In *Peter* to what an extent it may waver in its attachment to Him in whom it has confidently found the words of eternal life. John 6, 67—69. and Luke 22, 60—62.
5. In *Mary* what a human heart may become under the training and discipline of God. Luke 2, 34. 35.
6. In *Thomas* the Lord's Passion and resurrection makes manifest what may become of the human heart under the Lord's training and discipline. John 20, 29.

Similar arrangements may be made on the lines indicated. The full history of the Lord's Passion may be profitably discoursed upon in a chronological order. The history as given by a certain Evangelist may be followed and texts chosen from that Evangelist. Prophecies of the Lord's suffering and death may be selected from the psalms, or from the prophets, or from other books of the old Testament and their fulfilment shown in the Passion history. Any such plan is commendable. Contributed by H. S.