

**AN ILLUSTRATED COMMENTARY ON THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW:
FOR FAMILY USE AND
REFERENCE, AND FOR THE GREAT BODY
OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS OF ALL
DENOMINATIONS. VOLUME I**

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An Illustrated Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew: For Family Use and Reference, and for the Great Body of Christian Workers of All Denominations. Volume I by Lyman Abbott

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LYMAN ABBOTT

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CHRIST TEACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE *From Alexander Bids.*

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ILLUSTRATED COMMENTARY
ON
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
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FOR FAMILY USE AND REFERENCE, AND FOR THE GREAT BODY
OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS.

By REV. LYMAN ABBOTT,
AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF CHRIST," "DICTIONARY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE," ETC.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE object of this Commentary is to aid in their Christian work those who are endeavoring to promote the knowledge of the principles which Jesus Christ came to propound and establish—clergymen, Christian parents, Sunday-School teachers, Bible-women, lay-preachers. Intended for Christian workers, it aims to give the results rather than the processes of scholarship, the conclusions rather than the controversies of scholars; intended for laymen as well as for clergymen, it accompanies the English version of the New Testament, in all references to the original Greek gives the English equivalent, and translates all quotations from the French, German, Latin and Greek authors.

The introduction on pages 31-34, contains a statement of those principles of interpretation which appear to me to be essential to the correct understanding of the Word of God. This Commentary is the result of a conscientious endeavor to apply those principles to the elucidation of the New Testament.

It is founded on a careful examination of the latest and best text; such variations as are of practical or doctrinal importance are indicated in the notes. It is founded on the original Greek; wherever that is inadequately rendered in our English version, a new translation is afforded by the notes. The general purpose of the writer or speaker, and the general scope of the incident or teaching, is indicated in a Preliminary Note to the passage, or in an analysis, a paraphrase, or a general summary at the close. Special topics, such as The Baptism, The Temptation, The Trial, and The Crucifixion of Jesus are treated separately in preliminary or supplementary notes. This volume contains thirty such excursus. The results of recent researches in Biblical archæology have been embodied, so as to make the Commentary serve in part the purpose of a Bible Dictionary. A free use is made of illustrations, from antiques, photographs, original drawings, and other trustworthy sources. They are never employed for mere ornament, but always to aid in depicting the life of Palestine, which remains in many respects substantially unchanged by the lapse of time. Since the Commentary is prepared, not for devotional reading, but for practical workers, little space has been devoted to hortatory remarks or practical or spiritual reflections. But I have uniformly sought to interpret the letter by the spirit, and to suggest rather than to supply moral and spiritual reflections, a paragraph of hints is affixed to each section or topic, embodying what appears to me to be the essential religious lessons of the

incident or the teaching; sometimes a note is appended elucidating them more fully. The best thoughts of the best thinkers, both exegetical and homiletical, are freely quoted, especially such as are not likely to be accessible to most American readers; in all such cases the thought is credited to the author. Parallel and contrasted passages of Scripture are brought together in the notes; in addition, full Scripture references are appended to the text. These are taken substantially from Bagster's large edition of the English version of the Polyglot Bible, but they have been carefully examined and verified in preparing for the press, and some modifications have been made. For the convenience of that large class of Christian workers who are limited in their means, I have endeavored to make this Commentary, as far as practicable, a complete apparatus for the study of the New Testament. When finished it will be fully furnished with maps;—there are four in this volume; a Gazetteer gives a condensed account of all the principal places in Palestine, mentioned in our Lord's life; and an introduction traces the history of the New Testament from the days of Christ to the present, giving some account of the evidence and nature of inspiration, the growth of the canon, the character and history of the manuscripts, the English version, the nature of the Gospels and their relation to each other, a brief life of Christ, and a complete tabular harmony of the four Gospels.

The want of all who use the Bible in Christian work is the same. The *wish* is often for a demonstration that the Scripture sustains the reader's peculiar theological tenets, but the *want* is always for a clearer and better knowledge of Scripture teaching, whether it sanctions or overturns previous opinions. I am not conscious that this work is written in the interest of any theological or ecclesiastical system. In those cases in which the best scholars are disagreed in their interpretation, the different views and the reasons which lead me to my own conclusions have been given, I trust, in no controversial spirit. For the sole object of this work is to ascertain and make clear the meaning of the Word of God, irrespective of systems, whether ecclesiastical or doctrinal.

No work is more delightful than that which throws us into fellowship with great minds; of all work the most delightful is that which brings us into association with the mind of God. This is the fellowship to which the student of the Bible aspires. I can have for those who use this work no higher hope than that they may find in its employment some of the happiness which I have found in its preparation, and that it may serve them as it has served me, as a guide to the Word of God, and through that Word to a better acquaintance with God himself.

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