*their mother,* because they remembered the rebuke which had followed their former contention about precedence.

**21.]** The *places close to the throne were those of honour,* as in Josephus, where speaking of Saul, he describes Jonathan his son as seated on his right hand, and Abner the captain of the host on his left. In a Rabbinical work, it is said, that God will seat the King Messiah at his right hand, and Abraham at his left.

*One of these brethren,* John, the beloved disciple, had his usual place close to the Lord, John xiii. 23: *the other* was among the chosen Three (this request hardly can imply in their minds any idea of the rejection of Peter from his peculiar post of honour by the rebuke in ch. xvi. 23, for since then had happened the occurrences in ch. xvii. 1—8, and especially ib. vv. 24-27). *Both* were called Boanerges, or the sons of thunder, Mark iii. 17.

They thought the Kingdom of God was *immediately to appear,* Luke xix. 11.

**22.]** One at least of these brethren saw *the Lord on His Cross — on His right and hand the crucified thieves.* Bitter indeed must the remembrance of this ambitious prayer have been at that moment ! Luther remarks, ‘The flesh ever seeks to be glorified, before it is crucified: exalted, before it is abased.’

The *‘cup’* is a frequent Scripture image for joy or sorrow : see Ps. xxiii. 5; cxvi. 13: Isa. li. 22: Matt. xxvi. 42. *It* here seems to signify more the *inner* and spiritual bitterness, resembling the agony of the Lord Himself, — and the *baptism,* which is an important addition in Mark, more the *outer* accession of persecution and trial,—through which we must pass to the Kingdom of God. On the latter image see Ps. xlii. 7; lxix. 2; oxxiv. 4

Stier rightly observes that this answer of our Lord contains in it *the kernel of the doctrine of the Sacraments* in the Christian Church: see Rom. vi. 1—7: 1 Cor. xii. 18, and note on Luke xii. 50.

Some explain in their answer as if they understood the Lord to speak of *drinking out of the royal cup, and washing in the royal ewer:* but the words **are ye able to drink,** and **we are able,** indicating a *difficulty,* preclude this.

**23.]** The *one* of these brethren was the *first of the Apostles to drink the cup Of suffering, and be baptized with the baptism of blood,* Acts xii. 1, 2: the *other had the longest experience among them of a life of trouble and persecution.*

The last clause of the verse may be understood as in the text, ‘is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father ;’ So Meyer, al. ; or, ‘is not mine to give, *except* to those for whom,’ &. So Chrysostom and others. If however we understand after but ‘it shall be given *by Me,’* the two interpretations come to the same.

**26-28.] {26} great .... first,** i.e. in the *next life,* let him be **minister**