

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

period injuriously affects the incoming clergyman. The third portion of the income of a small living is often very insufficient for the maintenance of the retiring clergyman, and the remaining two-thirds are often insufficient for the Incumbent. This Act, therefore, cannot be regarded as an adequate remedy for existing evils.

At the present time the Church, whether in the midst of growing populations or in isolated and far-away country parishes, demands from all her servants strenuous effort. A worn-out sentinel cannot keep watch and ward. I value too much the independence which the freehold position gives to the clergy, to desire that any encroachment should be made on the life estates which they hold in their benefices. But I desire that they should be enabled to withdraw of their own free will from the responsibilities of office, whenever they feel themselves unable to fulfil them, without suffering the hardships of poverty or being compelled to live on precarious charity.¹

STANLEY LEIGHTON.



ART. II.—“ANOTHER COMFORTER.”

ST. JOHN XIV. 16.

THE word Παράκλητος, rendered in our Authorised Version *Comforter*, only occurs in the writings of St. John. It appears four times in the Gospel, ch. xiv. 16 and 26, xv. 26, and xvi. 7, and once in the 1st Epistle, ch. ii. 1. Wicliffe translated it uniformly in the Gospel by *Comforter*, but in the Epistle he gave the rendering of *Advocate*, and in this he has been followed by all the subsequent English versions, except the Rhemish, which has *Paraclete* in the Gospel. The Revisers have followed the authorised translation in their text, feeling that these familiar passages had so embedded themselves in English thought that they could not now be altered, but they have inserted a marginal note wherever the word occurs, to show that it has the double meaning of *Comforter* and *Helper*, and represents the same Greek word, “*Paraclete*.” Some have suggested a uniform rendering of *Paraclete*, but not being an English word, it is open to objection in a vernacular translation.

Bishop Lightfoot and Professor Westcott take the context in all these five passages as favourable to *Advocate* rather than “*Comforter* ;” but although the classical usage is con-

¹ The substance of this paper was read at the St. Asaph Diocesan Conference, in September.

firmed by Philo and early Christian writers, we find the Greek Fathers commonly taking the word here in the active sense from the time of Origen (if Ruffinus may be trusted, the Greek text being here wanting) and Cyril of Jerusalem. We must bear in mind further, as Archdeacon Hare has pointed out, that the word "Comforter," as used by Wicliffe, is derived from the Latin *comfortari*, in the sense of *strengthened*. (See Ephes. vi. 10, where he gives "Be ye comfortide" as the rendering of "Be strong," A.V.). In modern English we have almost lost this meaning of the word, and generally use "comforter" as the equivalent of "consoler;" but by restoring the old meaning we still retain the original sense of the Greek, "one called to our side," and may fitly retain both renderings, "Advocate" and "Comforter," the words representing not so much two different ideas as two sides of the same thing.

Taking (*παράκλητος*) *Paraclete* in this double sense, we propose to examine more particularly in what respects the Holy Spirit takes the place of Christ in the Church on earth.

Bishop Pearson understood "the notion of *παράκλητος*, common to the Son and the Holy Ghost, to consist especially in the office of intercession, which by St. Paul is attributed to both [Rom. viii. 27, 34], and is thus expressed of the Spirit by Novatianus, 'Qui interpellat divinas aures pro nobis gemitibus ineloquacibus, advocacionis implens officia, et defensionis exhibens munera.'" But there seems more than this involved in our Lord's words. He Himself during His public ministry had been the advocate, counsellor, and comforter of His disciples, and they would naturally understand the promise of "another *Paraclete*" to be a person who would in these respects supply the place of their beloved Master, now about to be taken from them.

In John vii. 39 we are distinctly told that "the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified," and in His farewell discourse (ch. xiv., xvii.) we have our Lord Himself dwelling upon the intimate connection between the Holy Spirit's work and the fulfilment of His own mission (xvi. 7): "It is expedient for you that I go away (*ἐγὼ ἀπέλθω*), for if I go not away (*ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ ἀπέλθω*), the *Paraclete* will not come to you; but if I depart (shall have made My journey, *ἐὰν δὲ πορευθῶ*) I will send Him unto you." Nothing can be clearer from these words than that Christ's bodily presence was to be withdrawn from the Church, and that the result of that withdrawal was to be the gift of the Spirit as "another *Paraclete*" to take the place of Christ.

By the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Saviour to be with His Church "all the days until the consummation of the age" (Matt. xxviii. 20) is made possible;

and so far as we can comprehend the revelation, it is only through the Spirit's discharging the office of *Paraclete* that the promise of the Lord's continued presence can become possible. This does not contradict the fact that Christ Himself is present in the believing heart, for in the dispensation in which we live, His presence is both *direct* and *indirect*; but in both cases that presence is revealed by the Holy Ghost, who in the one case conveys Christ to the faithful heart, and in the other represents Christ in His fulness to the believer.

The blessedness of the Spirit's office, as the abiding *Paraclete* of the Church, rests upon the fact that it is through Him that Christ's spiritual presence is fulfilled to us, and thus Christ, through His substitute or vicar (if such an expression may be permitted), remains with us still. And this result even our imperfect faculties can perceive could not have been brought about in any other way, for, as Tholuck says, “It was only when the Redeemer Himself was entirely freed from the limitation of earth, that He could become spiritually the indwelling principle of life in His disciples, and thus set up His throne in the hearts of men; while, on the other hand, the new life of the disciples could not expand spiritually and independently until the visible presence of the Saviour was taken away from them.”

The mysterious connection and inter-dependence of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity is beyond our comprehension, and all we can do on such a subject is to repeat the statements of Holy Scripture. Thus, in ch. xiv. 18, our Lord says, “I will not leave you desolate; I come unto you;” and in verse 23, “My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,” so that the Son comes through the Spirit, and the Father with the Son. It is interesting to notice in this chapter that whenever our Lord speaks of His coming to His people He uses the *present*, and not the *future* tense, thus teaching us that “He is ever coming to the world, and to the Church, and to men as the Risen Lord” (Westcott).

We must now consider further Christ's relations to the devil and the world when on earth. He was ever opposed by them; and during His ministry their assaults fell on Him as the Champion and Defender of His disciples. Thus, with regard to the devil at the time of the mission of the Seventy, He tells them, “I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven” (Luke x. 18). Whatever may be the exact meaning of these words, and they have been variously understood, it is plain that our Lord claims to be the Vanquisher of Satan, and would encourage the disciples by it—as in ch. xvi. 33, He bids them “be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” So again

before His Passion, He says, "Satan asked to have you [My disciples], that he may sift you as wheat: but I did make supplication for thee [Simon,] that thy faith may not fail," revealing Himself as their advocate against Satan (Luke xxii. 31, 32). In like manner it was our Lord who was ever attacked and questioned with regard to His disciples. To take one instance—when the Pharisees charged them with breaking the law by plucking corn on the sabbath day—they addressed the complaint to Christ, and He at once took up and repelled the charge.

On Christ's withdrawal, the Holy Spirit takes His place as the *Advocate* of the Church, and, as such, opposes Satan, "the accuser of the brethren," while, as regards the world, His office is to "convict it of sin, righteousness, and judgment" (ch. xvi. 8). The necessity of Christ's bodily absence imposes on the Spirit the duty of counsel and instruction. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance that I said unto you." "He shall bear witness of Me." "He will guide you into all truth." And again: "When they bring you unto the synagogues . . . the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Luke xii. 11). "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matt. x. 20).

In all these respects the Spirit is a *Paraclete*, while Christ Himself remains our "*Paraclete with the Father*" (1 John ii. 1), and pleads the cause of believers with the Father against Satan (Rom. viii. 26, Rev. xii. 10). In the Epistle to the Hebrews this truth is set forth under the figure of Christ's high priesthood (of which the Aaronic priesthood was a type), and in ch. vii. 25 our Lord's power to save to the *utmost* is connected with His continual intercession at the throne of God.

We have the nature of Christ's relations to His disciples brought out strikingly in that wonderful prayer recorded in John xvii.: "And I am no more in the world, and these are "in the world. . . . Holy Father, keep them whom Thou hast given me in Thy name. . . . While I was with them I kept them in Thy name. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." In this prayer we have no direct mention of the Holy Spirit, but His action as "*Paraclete*" is evidently implied throughout, and the fulfilment of the Divine protection is exercised by the Spirit's agency according to the concurrent testimony of the rest of the New Testament, which recognises His presence in the Church guiding and directing the Apostles. Thus in Acts v. Peter charges Ananias with "lying unto the Holy Ghost;" and in the Encyclical Letter (Acts xv.) the deliberate decision of the Church in

council is thus announced: "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

The same thought is so constantly found in the Epistles that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it, as it forms the basis of all exhortation and remonstrance. "The Holy Ghost dwelleth in you," and the preciousness and value of the truth rests upon His taking Christ's place as "*Paraclete*" with the Church on earth, while Christ discharges the office of "*Paraclete*" with the Father. Thus the promise of another Comforter is fulfilled in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, quickening, sanctifying, comforting, strengthening, and blessing the Church, —revealing and glorifying Christ. "He shall glorify Me, because He shall take of Mine and declare it unto you."

R. C. W. RABAN.

ART. III.—THE HYMNS OF THE CHRISTIAN AGES
COMPARED WITH EACH OTHER AND THE BIBLE.

THE two latest Charges from the Metropolitan chair in Canterbury have made noticeable reference to Hymns. Archbishop Tait, with characteristic large-heartedness, when recommending that use by various denominations of the parochial grave-yard which has since been peaceably adopted, drew an argument in favour of the practice from the readiness with which churches, differing in ecclesiastical discipline, have borrowed from each other spiritual songs. "There is something like a liturgy," he said, quoting, in an appendix to his Charge, from a speech which his Grace had made in the House of Lords, "in which Churchmen and Dissenters may unite."

I hold in my hand a book of hymns of great value. It is the compilation of my noble friend whom I see opposite (Lord Selborne). I turn to the index of these hymns, and I find the name of Isaac Watts as the author of forty which have been selected. I go farther, and find the name of Philip Doddridge as the author of many more. Then I come to a portion of the book in which the noble lord has collected hymns that are suitable for the burial of the dead. I find there the name of Bishop Heber and of Henry Hart Milman; again the name of Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge.¹

Archbishop Benson, whilst stating certain praiseworthy particulars in the present condition of Church of England Psalmody, referred, with less laudation, to the system occasionally followed in the selections of hymns for the Sunday services. Complaining of "serious disproportion in the worship of many churches," he cited, in illustration, this instance:

Some time since I was two Sundays in an important parish of the North. Thirteen hymns were sung. In all these there was but one stanza

¹ "Some Thoughts on the Duties of the Established Church of England," 1876, p. 153.