

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 Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE *Expository Times* for December will contain a new and very able Sermon by the Rev. George Matheson, D.D., of Edinburgh.

By far the most original and most suggestive sermon in George Macdonald's new book (*Unspoken Sermons*, 3rd series) is the first. The text is John i. 3, 4, which, in the Authorised Version, reads, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." And the only change the Revisers introduced was to substitute "hath been made" for "was made". But in the margin they give an alternative and very different reading: Or, "was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in Him; and the life," &c. The difference depends entirely upon the punctuation. The last clause of verse 3 may be taken either with the words which precede or with the words which follow, according as the point is reckoned to come in before or after it.

Dr. Macdonald adopts the marginal reading. The authorities are undoubtedly upon its side. Westcott says: "It would be difficult to find a more complete consent of ancient authorities in favour of any reading than that which supports the second punctuation: 'Without Him was not anything made. That which was made in Him was life.' It was (to speak generally) the punctuation of the Ante-Nicene age; the other is that of the common texts, and of most modern versions and popular commentaries." "The modern stopping was due to the influence of the Antiochene School, who

avowedly adopted it to make it clear that the former words applied only to 'things created,' and not, as has been alleged, to the Holy Spirit." Dr. Macdonald is not, however, greatly concerned about authority. Being dissatisfied with the close of the third verse, which seemed to him "pleonastic, redundant, and unnecessary," he tried the shifting of the period in order to get rid of the pleonasm. Thereupon the interpretation which suggested itself at once justified the change, and "so glad was I, that it added little to my satisfaction to find the change supported by the best manuscripts and versions". "I found the change did unfold such a truth as showed the rhetoric itself in accordance with the highest thought of the Apostle."

"All things were made through Him, and without Him was made not one thing. That which was made in Him was life, and the life was the light of men.' Note the antithesis of the *through* and the *in*. In this grand assertion seems to me to lie, more than shadowed, the germ of *creation* and *redemption*—of all the divine in its relation to all the human."

Expressed very shortly, Dr. Macdonald's interpretation is this. The Father, in bringing out of the unseen the things that are seen, made essential use of the Son, so that all that exists was created *through* Him. Jesus Christ created the worlds by a power which was given Him by His Father.

But He had in Himself a greater power than that by which He made the worlds. There was something made, not *through* Him but *in* Him; something brought into being by Himself. Here

He creates in His grand way, in Himself, as did the Father. "That which was made *in* Him was *life*."

What is *life*? What is this of which the Son is the original source and creator?

What is life in a child? Is it not perfect response to his parents, thorough oneness with them? The life of Christ is this—negatively, that He does nothing, cares for nothing for His own sake; positively, that He cares with His whole soul for the will, the pleasure of His Father. Loving His Father with His whole being, He is not merely alive as born of God; but, giving Himself with perfect will to God, choosing to die to Himself, and live to God, He therein creates in Himself a new and higher life; and, standing upon Himself, has gained the power to awake life, the divine shadow of His own, in the hearts of His brothers and sisters. This is the life that was made *in* Jesus.

The interpretation is full of suggestion, and, as far as we know, it is original. Clement of Alexandria gives a hint of such a meaning when he applies the words to the Christian reborn in Christ. "He that hath been baptized is awake unto God and such a one lives: for that which hath been made in Him is life." But it is only a hint; no one seems to have taken it up; and in all probability Dr. Macdonald arrived at and worked out his interpretation without the aid of even this hint of Clement's. The title of the sermon is "The Creation in Christ".

If the first sermon is the strongest in this third series of *Unspoken Sermons*, the seventh, under the title "Justice," is the weakest. It runs from page 109 to 162 inclusive, more than a fifth part of the whole book. And what is it but another long lament over the "orthodox doctrine of the Atonement"? Dr. Macdonald comes back to it again before the volume is ended, in a sermon under the title "Righteousness". And here he gives an interpretation of 2 Cor. v. 21, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," which at once betrays the theological bias, for it is impossible that it can be a correct exegesis of the text. "He gave Him to be treated like a sinner, killed and cast out of His own vineyard by His

husbandmen, that we might in Him be made righteous with God." "He made" (*ἐποίησεν*) can never mean "He gave". Dr. Macdonald knows more Greek and understands interpretation better than to believe that the words, literally translated, "He made Him sin in behalf of us," can be capable of the translation, "He gave Him to be treated as a sinner by us".

Is not St. Paul's purpose, in his great speech before Agrippa, lost sight of when it is described as his defence? Neither Agrippa nor Festus could do anything for him now. Since he had appealed to Cæsar, to Cæsar he must go. It could not, therefore, have been on his own behalf that he pleaded. *He* had nothing to gain or lose from them. If this speech is his *Apologia pro vita sua*, as Professor Davison of Richmond has lately described it, is it not that grandest of all apologies, which lays bare a life and a life's motive, that the spirit of it may become ours, and hearten us to the same high endeavours? It was not to defend Paul that the Apostle pleaded, but to persuade Agrippa. Its climax is in the words, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether, such as I am, except these bonds". Read the chapter aloud—Dr. Pierson says it is the best chapter in the Bible for public reading—and you will find that that is the word to which the whole passionate appeal has been rising.

Mr. J. B. Mayor contributes to the September number of the *Expositor* some exegetical notes on St. James, of which the most important is on ii. 1.: "Hold not the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons". [R.V.] A word for word translation gives, "In-respect-of persons (*ἐν προσωπολημψίαις*) hold not the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the glory". As the italics of the Revised Version imply, there is no Greek for the words "the Lord" before "of glory". Is it right, then, to insert these words? Does that express the Apostle's meaning? Mr. Mayor prefers an interpretation first suggested by Bengel. The words "of the glory" stand in apposition to "Jesus Christ," so that Christ Himself is called "the Glory"—an appropriate designation in this place, for no earthly dignity is comparable to the glory of Christ, a glory in which the faithful themselves

share. The translation then becomes, "Hold not with respect of persons the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ (who is) the Glory".

If this exegesis is correct, we have another title for Our Lord. He calls Himself, says Mr. Mayor, the Truth, the Life; He is called the Word, why not the Glory? No fault can be found with the grammatical construction, for we have in 1 Tim. i. 1 an exactly similar construction: "According to the command of Christ Jesus, (who is) our Hope". The only question is whether the abstract word, "the glory," is ever used of a person. Bengel cites the two texts, Eph. i. 17, "The God of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory" (or "of the Glory"); and 1 Pet. iv. 14, "The Spirit of glory (or "of the Glory") and the Spirit of God resteth upon you," where he takes "of the Glory" as an appellation of Christ. Mr. Mayor adds to these 2 Pet. i. 17 (of which Alford says, "The words *the excellent glory* seem a periphrasis for God Himself"), and some other passages.

The Church of England Pulpit and Ecclesiastical Review describes this interpretation as "harsh and unnatural," and adds: "It ignores the fact that St. James' Epistle, being full of Hebraisms, must always be translated as though written by one who thought in Hebrew and wrote in Greek. We do not doubt that 'our glorious Lord Jesus Christ' is the right translation." But, since Bengel's is nearer a literal translation of the words used by St. James than any other that has been proposed, the epithets "harsh and unnatural" would apply equally to the original. As a translation, it is the most simple and natural of them all. There is only one objection that can fairly be made to it, that it introduces, on the strength of a single and doubtful passage, another of those impressive titles of Our Lord, of which we feel there must be few because of their very grandeur.

But suppose that the translation of the Revised Version is the correct one, does it follow that "Our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory" means no more than "our glorious Lord Jesus Christ"? Read the (other) passage in which this title occurs in the New Testament: "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been

hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory; which none of the rulers of this world knoweth; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (τὸν Κύριον τῆς δόξης) 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8. Who would be satisfied here with the translation, "the glorious Lord"? "The Lord of glory" is in contrast to "the rulers of this world," so that "glory" might almost be said to be a synonym for heaven, the whole glorious dominion of God. How conspicuous is the folly of the rulers of this world, when it is seen that He whom they crucified was a Lord also, and a Lord of that glory of which "this world" is a part! Almost identical is the contrast made by St. James in the passage before us.

The Church of England Pulpit criticises Canon Cheyne's paper in the *Expositor*, and says: Professor Cheyne writes this month on the 16th Psalm: his paper is half criticism, half gush. We commend the modesty of the following passage: "Sweet is it to find something in which we can agree with the most uncritical interpreters, viz., the view that the Psalms are true anticipations of Christ, 'that in all things,' as St. Paul says, 'He may have the pre-eminence'". We do not know which to admire more—the "sweet" condescension to "the most uncritical interpreters," or the classification of St. Paul amongst them.

Mr. G. A. Smith's *Isaiah* is the subject of warm commendation in two papers which have reached us together, the *Young Man* and the *Annual Address given to the Students of the Baptist College, Bristol*. In the former, the Rev. C. A. Berry, of Wolverhampton, describes it as "a priceless volume" which has made the prophecies of Isaiah "more new and more interesting than the last novel of the season". In the latter, Principal Edwards says: "A volume recently appeared on Isaiah which made his prophecies at least intelligible to us. Mr. Smith has not modernised Isaiah. That would, indeed, be unpardonable. But he has done what is much better: he has shown that human nature and human difficulties were precisely the same things in other garb than as they are now, and thus he has made Isaiah a real teacher and a living messenger to our age." Another criticism (inevitably described as "more

forcible than elegant") is found in the *Clergyman's Magazine*. Its fate is compared to "that of the rubbing-post erected in the meadow: at first the cows stare at it, then they butt against it, and lastly they use it".

It is just a century and a half since an Italian scholar, Muratori, published what has since been known as the Muratorian Fragment. He found in Milan a Latin manuscript, which had originally belonged to a great Irish monastery, Bobbio, and was so struck with its mistakes that he published it as a specimen of blundering. The manuscript itself had been written in the seventh or eighth century. The original, however, of which it was a copy or a translation, was as old as the second century; and that which was published as a specimen of misspelt Latin proved to be the oldest extant list of the Books of the New Testament.

Since the first surprise of its discovery, nothing so important has been done in connection with the Muratorian Fragment as a letter which the Bishop of Durham has just sent to the *Academy*. Dr. Lightfoot makes the surprising announcement that the original was not only in Greek, as almost all scholars hold, but in Greek *verse*. There is nothing improbable in that. As Dr. Lightfoot says, the employment of verse or rhythm for theological teaching was not uncommon in these early ages. "More especially when a *memoria technica* was needed, as in the list of the Canon, verse was naturally employed as a medium." In the last quarter of the fourth century we have two such metrical lists of the Scriptures—the one by Amphilo-chius, the other by Gregory Nazianzen. The Bishop makes good his contention by translating several extracts from the Fragment back into Greek verse. Incidentally he mentions one difficulty that is thus solved. The author of *Supernatural Religion* accuses the author of this List of falsifying the first verse of St. John's first epistle in order to prove that the Gospel was from St. John also. Dr. Lightfoot shows that the alteration was much more innocent, being due to the necessities of the verse, and nothing more. He believes the poet to have been Hippolytus, and that the date cannot well be later than about A.D. 185 or 190.

Two very able courses of sermons have recently been delivered from Church of England pulpits. First, a course of four on the Magnificat (Luke i. 46-55), in St. Paul's, by Canon Liddon. (They will be found in the *Family Churchman*, Nos. 411-414, or in the *Christian World Pulpit*, Nos. 928-931.) Then, a course of four under the titles: "Reverence," "Sympathy," "Tenderness," "Watchfulness," by Canon Westcott, in Westminster Abbey. (They may be found in the *Christian World Pulpit*, Nos. 927-930, from which we give the last of the four on another page.) These great preachers never preached better.

We have lately had a run on Egyptology in the Magazines. The magnificent illustrations of "The Pharaoh of the Exodus and his Son" in the *Century* gave it an unapproachable value; but the most readable is M. Edward Naville's contribution to the *Theological Monthly*, "The Bible and Egyptology". In the *Century* Mr. Paine contends for the identification of Seti II. (Seti-Menephtah) with "the first-born son of Pharaoh," who was slain by the destroying angel. M. Naville, with the freshest information and a graphic pen both at command; writes a most interesting story of the Egypt of Joseph and of Moses, full of Scripture illustration. Of the land of Goshen he says: "The geographical researches made in the Delta have led us to recognise the original site of the land of Goshen, which was given to the Israelites as their abode. The traveller who leaves the station of Zagazig and journeys towards Tel-el-Kebir crosses, in all its width, what was the old land of Goshen. This part of the country is still particularly fruitful; it abounds in fine villages, the sheiks, and even the common inhabitants, of which are generally very well off."

Speaking of the revolution in Egypt after Joseph's death, M. Naville says: "The Scripture is absolutely silent on the events which took place shortly after Joseph's death, and which resulted in a total change in the state of the Israelites, and the disposition of the Egyptians towards them. 'Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph' (Exod. i. 8). These are the only words alluding to the great revolution, after which the royal power passed into other hands. Apepi [the Pharaoh of

Joseph, and the last of the Hyksos who had conquered Lower Egypt and driven the native kings south], as we know from a papyrus, quarrelled with the native prince who reigned at Thebes. A war broke out, and lasted probably for years; but it ended in the defeat of the Hyksos, although the Egyptian king Raskenen was killed in battle. His mummy was found a few years ago with a great many other royal mummies in the hiding-place of Deir-el-Bahari. It is now deposited at the Boolak Museum, where it has been unrolled. It is easy to see that the king was struck while fighting; the blow of an axe has smashed his cheek bone, and a spear penetrating through his forehead has been the cause of his death. It was necessary to embalm hastily his body, which had perhaps been wrested from the enemy; and his face still bears an expression of ferocity which he must have had when he fell."

In the Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund for July, Mrs. Finn has an interesting note upon the Hebrew words *tsur* (עֵר), "rock," and *eben* (אֶבֶן), "stone," as symbolically used in Scripture. The former, she points out, is frequently employed as a symbol of "God". Thus, 1 Sam. ii. 2, "Neither is there any Rock like our God"; 2 Sam. xxii. 3, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me"; Isaiah xvii. 10, "For thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the Rock of thy strength"; and many other passages. On the other hand, the word *eben*, "stone," being connected with *ben* (בֶּן), "son," is used as a symbol of the Messiah. Thus, Gen. xlix. 24, "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel"; Ps. cxviii. 22, "the Stone which the builders rejected" (cf. Matt. xxi. 42). In Daniel ii. 45, the two words "Rock" and "Stone" occur together. But the word for "Rock," being in the Chaldee (Aramaic) form *tur*, so familiar as applied to mountains (*Tor*, in the East *Tur*), the Authorised Version translates it "mountain," and the Revisers follow suit, obliterating the association between the words employed, and emptying the passage of half its force. "Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the rock without hands." The "Stone" is the Messiah, who is to "break in

pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold"; and the "Rock" from which the stone was cut signifies His divine origin. In verse 35 the Revised Version gives "rock" in the margin. It should be in the text.

If we keep in mind the connection between *ben*, "son," and *eben*, "stone," and the contrast between *eben* and *tsur*, we shall be able to appreciate better another passage of Scripture. This is Deut. xxxii. 18-20:

"Of the *Rock* that begat thee thou art unmindful,
And hast forgotten the God that gave thee birth.
And the Lord saw it and abhorred them,
Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters.
And He said, I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end shall be:
For they are a froward generation,
Children in whom is no faith."

Observe that "sons," "daughters," "children," are all forms of the same word *ben*.

A still more important text which gets light thrown upon it is the much discussed saying of Our Lord, Matt. xvi. 18: "And I also say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church". What is the rock?

Christ Himself, says Mrs. Finn. "Our Lord appropriated to Himself the Rock as the symbol of His divinity." Not Peter; certainly not. "Peter was a stone (*eben*), that is, a son (*ben*), but not the rock, the divine foundation." The Rock is Christ as God, or the fact that, according to Peter's declaration, this Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the Christ, the Son of the living God and Saviour of the world. "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Mrs. Finn promises, "on some other occasion, to notice in fuller detail the many points connected with the use in Holy Scripture of the words 'rock,' 'stone,' 'son,' 'builder,' and 'building' (*banah*), and the closely-connected subject of the Temple on Mount Moriah as a type of the Church, the Temple of living stones built upon the Divine Rock of foundation, of which the great Temple-rock is so impressive a symbol".