

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

were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." Both of these statements are, as I understand, descriptive of the one Holy Spirit in His active working; compare v. 6, "A Lamb standing as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." I alluded to the circumstance already that the seven archangels are by some writers, ancient and modern, resolved into one, especially when one is reckoned at the head; compare the seven-fold energy of the Spirit resting on Messiah (Isa. xi. 2); and the six men with slaughterer weapons accompanying the man clothed in linen (Ezek. ix. and x.). So in Rev. xv. 5, 6, "I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened; and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues," etc.

It is easy to suggest things which might lead to this speculation about seven archangels: the sacredness of the number seven; the seven planets and astrological notions connected with them; the

seven counsellors of the king of Persia (Ezra vii. 14), "the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and sat first in the kingdom" (Esther i. 14); and, perhaps, "seven men of them that saw the king's face" in Jerusalem (Jer. lii. 25), though the parallel (2 Kings xxv. 19) speaks of five.

The Jehovistic and Elohistie discussions may have some bearing on these names, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Salathiel, Ruhiel, Phanuel, Zadkiel; there are several corresponding Jehovistic forms in Scripture, Micaiah, Rephaiah, Uriah, Zedekiah.

Possibly some side light may be thrown on the names of the holy beings Michael and Gabriel, by the name Satan being given to the devil, the leader of the hosts of evil angels, and Beelzebub. But the evil side of these mysterious subjects had need to be handled with extreme caution, since it is on the good side that revelation is ever fullest and most explicit; and yet in the present case this does not amount to very much.

Renderings and Readings in the Revised New Testament.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR ROBERTS, D.D., ST. ANDREWS.

It is a remarkable fact that neither the word "damn" nor the word "damnation" appears in any part of the Revised New Testament. In this respect, it contrasts strikingly with the Authorised Version. As every reader is painfully aware, there are not a few passages in the current translation which contain the dreadful words that have been mentioned. "Dreadful," I say, for so they undoubtedly are to modern ears. It may have been that they bore a much softer meaning when the A.V. was formed, but they inevitably suggest nothing less than hopeless perdition to English readers at the present day. We cannot, therefore, help feeling that it is well worth our while to inquire into the true signification of the original Greek, that we may satisfy ourselves whether the idea suggested by the A.V. is justifiable, or whether we are warranted in accepting the milder rendering presented in the R.V.

Let us look, first, at the well-known passage, 1 Cor. xi. 29. That verse stands as follows in the text of the A.V.: "For he that eateth and drinketh

unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." It is perfectly impossible to conceive of the amount of mischief which has been wrought by these words. No matter that "judgment" stands on the margin, and no matter that that word is almost invariably substituted for "damnation," when the passage is read in the pulpit—the fearful term still stares the devout reader in the text, and necessarily excites a thrill of apprehension in his heart. Who can tell how many humble souls have shrunk back with terror from the Lord's Table under the horror of that awful word, and have thus been prevented from carrying out the precept of their Saviour when He said: "Do this in remembrance of Me?" And then to think that not the slightest ground for such feelings is to be found in the original! The word which is translated "damnation" is a singularly mild one (*κρίμα*), and is regarded by all critics as having no reference to spiritual consequences at all, but as simply pointing to those temporal judgments—sickness and

death—which, as the next verse declares, had been sent upon the Corinthians, on account of their unfaithfulness. Bengel admirably remarks on the verse: “*κρίμα* sine articulo, *judicium* aliquod, morbum mortemve corporis. Non dicit, τὸ κατὰ κρίμα, *condemnationem*.” When it is thus perceived that there is absolutely no reference whatever in the verse to the world to come, how frightful is it to think that copies of the Bible should continue to be multiplied containing here that appalling word “damnation”! One feels that hardly any price would be too high to pay for the deletion of that term; and whether agreeing or not with the R.V. in omitting “unworthily,” one gladly hails its mild and accurate rendering: “For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgement unto himself, if he discern not the body.”

We turn next to 1 Tim. v. 12, where we read in A.V.: “Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.” When the context is considered, this statement sounds almost ludicrous at the present day. The apostle is referring to those who should be put on the roll (*κατάλογος*) of presbyterial widows; and with his usual good sense he gives a caution against admitting such as were still young, and might soon falter in their devotedness. No doubt, in the first deep sorrow of their widowhood, they might fancy they had for ever done with the world, and might desire to dedicate themselves to a purely spiritual life. But the apostle well knew that such enthusiasm was not to be depended upon, and recommends that it should not be encouraged; for, says he, if these young devotees should, as is natural enough, afterwards regret the choice they had made, and wish to contract another marriage, then they will incur censure or condemnation (*κρίμα*) as having cast off their former profession of entire consecration to Christ. It is clear that the term “damnation” is here entirely out of place, and that the rendering of the R.V. is greatly preferable: “Having condemnation, because they have rejected their first faith.”

And now let us look at Rom. xiv. 23, where we read in A.V.: “And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” This verse has often been grievously misunderstood. Many who are carried away by the mere sound of the words have supposed that the last clause is intended to teach us that every action which does not proceed from

a principle of faith in Christ is necessarily sinful. But the passage has no such meaning. The apostle has been referring to acts which are in themselves indifferent, but which may become sinful according to the spirit in which they are performed. If a man has any scruples about the propriety of a certain line of conduct, then he is to abstain from it, for otherwise he will wound his conscience, and thus be guilty of sin. The apostle in the verse before us lays down a great guiding principle. He tells us that “whatsoever is not of faith”—*i.e.* whatsoever is done by any man without a clear conviction in his own mind that it is right—“is sin”—becomes to him sinful, because it is an act of which the moral faculty in his soul does not distinctly approve. It is not *saving faith* which is referred to in this passage. It is the confidence which springs from a good conscience, or, in other words, from the strong assurance which is felt that the course of conduct which is adopted is pleasing in the sight of God. The inference, therefore, which St. Augustine and others have derived from this passage, that “*omnis infidelium vita peccatum est*,” rests upon no solid foundation. That point does not here fall within the scope of the apostle’s reasoning; and, in accordance with what has been said, the proper rendering of the verse manifestly is, as in the R.V.: “But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

In all the other passages in which the words “damn” or “damnation” occur in the A.V. (Matt. xxiii. 14, 33; Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47; John v. 29; Rom. iii. 8, xiii. 2; Mark xvi. 16; 2 Thess. ii. 12), “judge” or “condemn,” “judgement” or “condemnation” is found in the R.V.; and a priceless gain is thus secured to all English readers.

Of a character only a shade less offensive than the preceding, are many of the passages in the A.V. of the New Testament, which contain the word “hell.” This is especially the case at Acts ii. 31, in which reference is made to Christ. We there read in A.V.: “He (David) seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption.” It is well known how much controversy there has arisen about the clause in the Apostle’s Creed which states regarding Christ: “He descended into hell.” To the ordinary ear such a declaration implies the descent of Christ

into the place of torment—the abode of the devil and his angels. But that is not the meaning of the words. As the saintly Archbishop Leighton remarks on the clause: “The conceit of the descent of Christ’s soul into the place of the damned, to say no more nor harder of it, can never be made the necessary sense of these words; nor is there any other ground in Scripture, or any due end of such a descent, either agreed on, or at all alleageable, to persuade the choosing of it as the best sense of them.” How, then, does the R.V. deal with the passage? Its translation is as follows: “He (David) foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.” The word in the Greek is thus simply transliterated into English, and a means is in this way provided of distinguishing between it and another term *Gehenna* (γέεννα), which is more properly translated *hell* (Matt. v. 22, etc.). What we have to conceive of with respect to Christ is that He did in His disembodied state, that is between His death and His resurrection, go into the place of departed spirits, called Hades, and that He there revealed Himself both to the righteous and the wicked (see Luke xxiii. 43 on the one hand, and 1 Peter iii. 19 on the other). It is worthy of notice with respect to the very difficult passage in St. Peter’s first

Epistle just referred to, that the Syriac Peshito version, the earliest, and one of the best translations of the New Testament ever formed, substitutes for the words “in prison” (ἐν φυλακῇ) the phrase “in Sheol,” שְׁוֹל which exactly corresponds to the Greek *Hades*. In regard to the gain secured by the naturalising of this term in our language, it was well said by one who showed himself by no means blind to the many defects of the R.V.: “In employing ‘Hades’ to designate the place of the departed, the Revisers have ventured upon a bold experiment which deserves to succeed. We shall be spared the sense of incongruity when we read concerning Christ, ‘Thou didst not leave His soul in Hades,’ which formerly oppressed us on hearing the old version ‘in hell’; and in Rev. i. 18, ‘I have the keys of Death and of Hades,’ is more majestic and accurate than the old rendering, which invested the Lord of Life with the functions of the keeper of the dread prison-house in the apprehension of the unlearned” (*Edinburgh Review*, July 1881, p. 181). It is much to be desired, then, that this word *Hades* should find its way into common use instead of “hell,” in all the places in which it occurs in the R.V.; and it would soon become, like Paradise, and similar expressions, quite intelligible and familiar to English readers.

Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR ROTHE, D.D.

CHAPTER II. 24-29.

“Let that abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise, which He Himself has promised us, even eternal life. This have I written unto you concerning those that lead you astray. And the anointing which ye have received of Him will abide in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but even as the same anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and it is true and no lie, and even as it hath taught you, so will ye abide therein. And now, little children, abide in Him, in order that, when He shall be manifested, we may have joyousness and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If ye know that He is righteous, know ye that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.”

VER. 24. To this description of the false teachers John adds an exhortation to his readers to abide by the old original teaching. As for you, in contrast with those who deny the Son and the Father, hold ye fast by that *which ye have heard from the beginning*, i.e. from the beginning of your life as Christians. That which they heard from the beginning was in particular that Jesus is the Christ,

the fundamental truth of all gospel preaching. For experience teaches that deviation from this truth leads ultimately to the denial of Christ and God.

We need to remember this at all times. The further doctrine is developed in the Church, the greater does the danger become of deviating from that conception of the truth which forms the basis