

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.

For the sake of the Members of The Expository Times Guild of Bible Study who are resident abroad, it may be well to state thus early that the subjects of study chosen for next session (November 1893—June 1894) are Isaiah xl.-lxvi. ; and the Epistle to the Romans.

The books recommended for use on Isaiah are as formerly, Orelli (1 vol., 10s. 6d.), or Delitzsch (the *fourth* edition, 2 vols., 21s.), and the publishers of these books (Messrs. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh) will send a copy of Orelli for 6s., and of Delitzsch for 12s., post free, to any *Member of the Expository Times Guild* who applies for it. There are no other books quite so well suited for the student, and at a reasonable price. Cheyne's *Isaiah* (2 vols., Kegan Paul) is very expensive, and Smith's (Hodder & Stoughton) is intended for the general reader. They are both of the first importance.

On the Epistle to the Romans the list of commentaries is long. An almost ideal student's book, if it is not somewhat severe, is the *Explanatory Analysis*, by the late Canon Liddon, just published by Messrs. Longmans (1 vol., 14s.). Professor Agar Beet's *Commentary* is expressly written for the diligent painstaking student of the Word, and does as much to supply the lack of

Greek scholarship as a book could possibly do (Hodder & Stoughton, 7s. 6d.). For the student of the Greek, on the other hand, Dean Vaughan's (Macmillan, seventh edition, 7s. 6d.) is the only brief and competent work we have. We need not name Meyer, which everyone is understood to possess, nor Philippi, an admirable, though less classical, work. Of these larger Commentaries, there is one, and only one, that is altogether indispensable. This is Professor Godet's (in 2 vols., at 21s.). For all the purposes of the student, the expositor, and the preacher, it stands quite apart and unapproached.

But there are two small books that deserve notice—Principal Brown's edition in the "Handbooks" series (2s.), and Principal Moule's in the "Cambridge Bible" (3s. 6d.). They are written by men who are in close sympathy, doctrinally and ethically, and indeed, we believe, intimate personal friends, and it is somewhat difficult to choose between them. The larger space, however, which has been allowed to Principal Moule, and of which he has taken excellent advantage, seems a sufficient reason for specially recommending his book. On the whole, then, we think, that if only one small book is to be used, and that will generally be the case, it should be Principal Moule's edition in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*. If a larger book can be chosen, let it be Godet's, without doubt. The publishers

(T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh) are prepared to send a copy of Godet for 12s., postage free, to any *Member of the Expository Times Guild* who applies for it.

It is impossible to miss in reading the Acts of the Apostles the importance of the service which was rendered to the gospel, in its first proclamation, by women. Every reader notices it, every expositor comments on it. Yet the subject has never been independently and fully investigated. And it probably would repay a far closer study than either reader or expositor has yet given to it.

There is one important feature of the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles which is now very freely recognised—the unremitting control which was exercised by an unseen hand upon every movement of the missionaries. Here and there it becomes so distinct and prominent that the busiest runner may read it. Perhaps the most noticeable place is near the beginning of the sixteenth chapter, where it is first said that “they were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia,” and immediately after that “they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not,” where the best reading has “the Spirit of *Jesus* suffered them not.”

Now, when we perceive how unremitting was this control of the Spirit of Jesus, we are led at once to search for a reason for every step that was taken. We may not always find it. We always run the risk of inventing it where it is not easily found. But neither the failure nor the danger should hinder, or indeed *can* hinder, us from seeking a cause for every effect when we perceive so clearly that an adequate and imperative cause there must have been. And we are much delivered from the risk of error by a recognition of one great law that has accompanied the proclamation of the gospel in every place and in all time.

That law is, that the gospel message comes when preparation has been made for its coming, and not till then—never till then.

Why, then, to take the instance already touched upon, why were the disciples forbidden to preach in Asia, and forbidden to enter Bithynia, and then sent across the sea to Macedonia? The reason need not be far to seek—indeed, the simplest is most likely to be the nearest right; for God has always chosen the things that are not, in preference to the things that are. Following our law of preparation, we are led at once to the Proseucha or Place of Prayer by that riverside at Philippi, and to the devout women who were gathered there. Why were the disciples forbidden to preach in Asia, and hindered from entering Bithynia? No doubt, because Asia was not prepared; because, in Bithynia, prayer was not yet wont to be made. Why were they sent over into Macedonia? Because women were there who had discovered their need of help.

Now it was only in Macedonia, and perhaps in some parts of Asia Minor, that women could be found at once prepared and capable. For only there had they the necessary liberty. In the introduction to his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*, Bishop Lightfoot suggests the probability “that the apostle’s work was made easier by the national feelings and usages of Macedonia.” He thinks it may be gathered even from St. Luke’s narrative that woman’s social position was higher in this country than in most parts of the civilised world. But he afterwards quotes additional evidence from certain Macedonian inscriptions which had been discovered when he wrote. And the evidence which he thus produced, though it has not been greatly strengthened, has not in the least degree been invalidated since. We, therefore, reach a simple and intelligible reason for the sending of the disciples across to Macedonia. There the women were waiting, women with receptive hearts, with prepared wills, and with

influence and freedom enough to make the gospel felt and known.

This social position and liberty of action was therefore not the gift of the gospel. Much as the gospel gave back to women in return for the service it had received, it was not this, either in Macedonia or in Asia Minor. On the contrary, it soon seemed necessary for the Christian Church to set herself in opposition to the honours (though not the honour) that it had become the fashion to bestow upon women, especially in Asia Minor. Even within the New Testament itself the hints are by no means obscure that women who had enjoyed great freedom of exercise before they embraced Christianity, were in much danger now of abusing their liberty in the gospel. "I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord." And these women—women of rank, no doubt—belonged to this very Church of Philippi where a woman was the first convert, women the first hearers of the gospel, and a woman was the occasion of its first bitter persecution in Europe.

This "difficulty" between Euodia and Syntyche occurred within St. Paul's own lifetime and experience. It was not the only difficulty of the kind he had to meet. Is it not probable, then, that bitter experience was the ground upon which the apostle stood so firmly when he commanded that the women should not speak in the Christian assemblies? That command has done more than all the discoveries of the critics to open the question of inspiration. Devoted and even heroic souls, who never could have found the heart to doubt one word of the apostolic "Thus saith the Lord" on grounds of historical or literary criticism, have made so bold as to "dissent from the judgment of St. Paul" in this matter, and the Church has looked on in wonder, scarcely ever in condemnation, in these latter days almost in open encouragement. If we *could* see that special circumstances demanded special measures, and so the apostle uttered his command for the cases

before him, where experience had taught him how great was the need of it, then it would be no little relief to some earnest souls who have been called to carry burdens already in abundance.

But however that may be, and it is a somewhat difficult and delicate subject to deal with in a passing note, one thing is certain, that the Church of Christ did find it necessary, and that speedily, to withstand what seemed the unnatural and mischievous place claimed by women, and in some countries freely accorded them. This was especially the case in the churches of Asia Minor. For there, almost from time immemorial, women had held an extraordinary position. "The honours and influence," says Professor Ramsay in his recently issued *The Church in the Roman Empire* (Hodder & Stoughton), "which belonged to women in the cities of Asia Minor, form one of the most remarkable features in the history of the country. In all periods the evidence runs on the same lines. On the border between fable and history we find the Amazons. The best authenticated cases of *Mutterrecht* belong to Asia Minor. Under the Roman Empire we find women magistrates, presidents at games, and loaded with honours. The custom of the country influenced even the Jews, who in at least one case appointed a woman at Smyrna to the position of archi-synagogos."

Now this, as we have seen, was at first an advantage to the gospel. It is said that at Thessalonica "there were added to Paul and Silas . . . of the chief women not a few" (Acts xvii. 4); and again at Berea, "many of them believed, and of the Greek women of rank and men not a few" (Acts xvii. 12). And as in all other matters with which this brief history deals, these, we may be sure, were but samples of many more.

But it was also, even then, an occasional hindrance. For though these women of position did

sometimes lend a greedy ear to the apostles' message, and then, casting in their lot with them, used their influence in their behalf, or took joyfully the spoiling of their goods and the loss of their position, thereby, perhaps, finding a wider and deeper influence than ever they had before, still it is on record, and we are not astonished to discover it, that there were places where the "honourable women" were as ready to listen to the adversaries of the gospel, and then put forth their unbounded influence in a bitter and unrelenting persecution. "But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women (of Antioch in Pisidia) . . . and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts."

And then, finally, this abnormal position which the women of Asia Minor and of Macedonia enjoyed, became a disturbing element, serious and long-continued, within the Church itself. As already noticed, we have glimpses of its presence even in the earliest assemblies, and within the lifetime of St. Paul himself. Later it nearly rent the Church asunder. And that gospel which had done so much for woman, was held up to scorn as her jealous enemy; while first paganism and then heresy claimed the greater breadth and manlier conduct in restoring her to her rightful place and her ancient privileges.

In that early Greek and Latin manuscript of the Gospels and the Acts, which lies in the University Library at Cambridge, and is known as Codex Bezae, there is an interesting reading, which seems to Professor Ramsay to show us the actual progress of this burning question in the early Christian Church. The passage is Acts xvii. 34. In the received text it reads: "But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." Codex Bezae omits "a woman named Damaris," but adds the adjective "honourable" (or "of rank," as Bishop

Lightfoot translates it, *εὐσεβήμων*) after the words "Dionysius the Areopagite." Now there are many remarkable things in this "peculiar" Codex; but the omission of Damaris here, says Professor Ramsay, is specially remarkable. He has no doubt that it is deliberate and intentional. And this is the explanation which he gives of it, and which he tells us is founded on suggestions of Professor Armitage Robinson.

This word "honourable" is used only of women in the Book of Acts. First of all, then, it was added to the name of Damaris by some gallant scribe before this question had arisen in the Church. Then, however, when the Church had to take her stand against the pagan or heretical claims advanced on behalf of her ambitious women, a more orthodox if less chivalrous transcriber cut out the name of Damaris altogether, but left the adjective standing, a witness at once against his own deed and the deed of the scribe who had gone before him.

It does not seem likely—to how many will it seem even possible?—that a wholly new theory of the Atonement should be proposed and accepted now. And yet a volume has recently been published in America which not only proposes a wholly new and original theory of the Atonement, but also supports it by so many excellent reasons and authoritative scriptural arguments that—well, we may be far enough from accepting it, but it is quite certain that we cannot pass it by.

The volume is published by Messrs. Houghton of Boston, and the author is Charles Carroll Everett, Professor of Theology in Harvard University and Dean of the Harvard Divinity School. He calls his book *The Gospel of Paul*.

The book is not large; it just runs over the three-hundredth page of crown octavo size. But the writing is unusually close and compact, without one sentence of padding or relief from the first

page to the last. So it will not be possible to do the author justice in such an inadequate exposition of his theory as it is in our power to offer here; and we say so at the outset, that the reader may not lose his respect for the author when he finds that links are dropped and objections left unanswered. Whether Professor Everett proves his theory or not, it is quite certain that he strives to answer legitimate objections, while the strength of his position lies more than anywhere else in the harmony of its several parts.

What is his theory, then? No; first of all, what is it not? It is not substitution. That is the theory which at the present time is called "orthodox" amongst us. And so surely is that the current orthodox theory of the Atonement of Christ that there may possibly enough be readers of these pages who, the moment they hear that Professor Everett refuses the *substitutionary* Atonement of Christ, will refuse to have anything more to do with him. Nevertheless, let us go on.

There are two forms in which the substitutionary theory of Christ's Atonement is presented in the systems of theology. Dr. Shedd is taken as representative of the one; Dr. Cave of the other. Dr. Shedd holds the essence of the Atonement is in the *suffering* of Christ, and that therefore His whole life, and not His death only, must be taken as fulfilling the penalty due for sin. Dr. Cave insists that the death of Christ is the essential thing. Death is the penalty for sin. Christ did no sin and therefore did not deserve its penalty; so that when He suffered death, the penalty for sin, it was for our sin; He died in our room and stead.

Professor Everett does not believe that the supreme act which Christ wrought for men was either suffering or death. He does not believe that He suffered or that He died in their room and stead. He does not believe that what He did was in their room and stead at all. He did that which men could not have done, and He did it on behalf

of men, but not as their Substitute, not as enduring a penalty which was due to them.

Indeed, He did not *do* at all: it was done to Him. And that, not as a mere play of language, it is the essence of the whole matter. Professor Everett is scriptural. He got his theory from Scripture, and he rests it on Scripture. There is Scripture that he has had difficulty with, and some that puzzles him a little still—one that even baffles him altogether. Still, he starts from Scripture, and he holds persistently to Scripture throughout.

The Scripture he starts from is this:—

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. iii. 13.

We have printed the passage in italics, that the closest attention may be given to it. For not only is that passage Professor Everett's starting-point, it also contains the whole substance of his theory. It is, in Bengel's phrase, the *summa ac medulla Christianismi* to him, the substance and marrow of his gospel.

The question for Professor Everett, as for all of us, is how to get rid of the penalty due for sin. Dr. Shedd answers: Christ suffered, and so paid the penalty due to us for sin, and we go free. Dr. Cave answers: Christ died, and so paid the penalty due to us for sin, and again we who have faith in His name go free. Professor Everett says: No; He did not pay the penalty at all, He simply took away the right to demand a penalty. Like Samson in the city of Gaza, the Son of God imprisoned Himself in the likeness of our flesh of sin; but when midnight came He arose and lifted up the doors of the gate of the city, and put them upon His shoulders, and carried them away. Rather, let us say, *they* put them upon His shoulders, compelled Him to carry their own doors and bars away, and He did it, did it willingly all the while they compelled Him; but He paid no penalty, either of suffering or of death.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” He became a curse for us—how? By suffering? No. By dying? No. By hanging on a tree. He became a curse for us by being crucified; for that was the law. Not “Cursed is he that suffers,” nor “Cursed is he that dies”; but “Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.” It is undeniable that Jesus was crucified; that, therefore, He came under the curse of the law. Either, then, He is anathema to the law, or the law is anathema to Him. Henceforth there can be no truce between them, there cannot even be life henceforth for both of them. It is a death-grapple. If He falls to rise no more, then the law is victorious: *thou*, art in the miserable city of Gaza, and verily I say unto thee thou shalt in no wise come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. But if He only falls to rise again, then the law has done its worst and done its last, and there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

“We can now understand the nature of the curse that Christ underwent. It arose from the form of His death. It was because He was crucified that He was accursed. We here reach the centre of Paul’s thought, and the essential thing in his argument. It is a thing that has been too often overlooked; but so far as we overlook it, we fail utterly to understand what Paul is talking about. It is important to notice that Christ was accursed because He was crucified. He was not crucified because he was accursed.” Those are Professor Everett’s words.

Thus expressed, and left to stand alone, Professor Everett’s theory of the Atonement will probably seem both commonplace and weak. But we have already said that this will be owing entirely to the necessities of our space here. Professor Everett does not leave it to stand upon one text alone.

And even here it may be possible to show its capacity to meet the acknowledged difficulties of another text, and in that way remove something of its present reproach.

The text is Galatians ii. 19, 20: “For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ.” That is not the whole of the twentieth verse, but it is not necessary to quote the rest of it, either for its own sake or our present purpose. Now in this text there is an expression which our orthodox theologians, writing on the Atonement, have found it very hard to interpret. It is the apostle’s statement that it was *through the law* he died to the law. That he died to the law we know, and we think we understand how. But we do not think it was through or by means of the law, and we cannot easily see how that could have been.

Professor Everett’s explanation is on this wise. When Jesus was crucified He was made a curse. He was made a curse by the law itself. He did not force Himself outside the camp of Jewish law, He was driven by the act of the law itself. It declared every one accursed who hung upon a tree. Then it nailed Him to the tree. Thus it drove Him outside its pale, and made Him anathema for ever. He through the law died to the law. And when the persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, who could not endure that the followers of the accursed should pollute the temple courts or even any portion of God’s earth, saw the vision on that memorable mid-day, and discovered that He whom in the ignorance of unbelief he had called Anathema was the Lord from heaven, his own Lord, and the Lord of the very law itself, and when he joined himself to the name of the Nazarene, he too became anathema as respects the law; he too, like his Master, through the law died to the law, that he might live unto God, for he was crucified with Christ.