

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

Didascalía or *Constitutions*; only the introduction is a little fuller: Οὐαὶ γάρ,¹ φησὶν ὁ προφήτης ὡς ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ, δι' οὗ, etc.

But we have to cite one more passage for this οὐαὶ, and perhaps the most interesting. In the so-called Second Epistle of Clement, we read (xiii. 1, 2, in the edition of Gebhardt-Harnack², 1876, i. p. 130): "Ἴνα τὸ ὄνομα δι' ἡμᾶς μὴ βλασφημῆται. Λέγει γάρ ὁ Κύριος· ΔΙΑ ΠΑΝΤΟΣ τὸ ὄνομά μου βλασφημεῖται ἐν ΠΑΣΙ τοῖς ἔθνεσι, καὶ διὰ βλασφημεῖται τὸ ὄνομά μου. Ἐν τίνι βλασφημεῖται; ἐν τῷ μὴ ποιεῖν ὑμᾶς ὁ βούλομαι. Gebhardt-Harnack print all the words from διὰ down to βούλομαι in the type used for quotations, and after quoting Isa. lii. 5 (Ezek. xxxvi. 20), Rom. ii. 24, for the first quotation, remark on the other διὰ βλασφ. 'Hæc in bibliis desunt.'

But now turn to the Syriac version of 2 Clement, and we shall have no doubt that for καὶ διὰ—which reading is still followed in the additional volume of the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, 1897, p. 254—we ought to read καὶ [πάλι]· οὐαὶ δι' οὗ and afterwards ἡμᾶς ἃ λέγομεν for ὑμᾶς ἃ βούλομαι. The words ἐν τίνι βλασφημεῖται are not any longer part of the quotation, but are words of the preacher. If this be so, the quotation introduced by οὐαὶ is at once distinguished from Isa. lii. 5. *But where is it then taken from?* I cannot say as yet; I have only to add, that

¹ In the edition of Zahn this γάρ ought not to be printed in the type which indicates a quotation. It belongs to the author who quotes, not to the quotation.

Chrysostom (iv. 49) also quotes the passage of the prophet with an introductory οὐαὶ, namely, οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς τὸ ὄνομά μου, etc. Can we suppose with Zahn, that the form of the saying with οὐαὶ was given to it by Ignatius, and that from him Polycarp, from Polycarp the author of the *Didascalía*, from him the writer who worked over the latter and the Epistles of Ignatius, and finally the author of 2 Clement took it, and that all these argued from this οὐαὶ as from a word of Scripture?

So much on the history of this quotation, now one word only on its text. Is the reading οὐαὶ δι' οὗ . . . βλασφημεῖται correct? διὰ with genitive = *per*, 'through,' but the context of the first and second quotations demands διὰ with accusative = *propter*, 'on account of.' A Christian incurs the Divine Woe when on his account God's name is blasphemed by others. The Syriac *Didascalía* seems to have read the accusative δι' οὗς, like Chrysostom, who has οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς. Shall we insert this single letter s? I am not sure; it is just as possible that the genitive sing. is used under the influence of such well-known passages as Matt. xxvi. 24; Mark xiv. 21; Luke xxii. 22, οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, δι' οὗ; Luke xvii. 1, οὐαὶ δὲ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται.

I should be very glad if any reader of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES could offer some further contributions on this passage. Perhaps I should find some in the *Clemens* of Bishop Lightfoot, but unfortunately this book is not at my command.

The Curse of the Law.

AN EXPOSITORY SERMON.

Gal. iii. 13: '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.'—(R. V.)

ONE of the characteristics of St. Paul was his tact. The late Dean Howson, who wrote a book on the character of St. Paul, devoted a whole chapter to the illustration of the apostle's tact. There was certainly nothing in St. Paul's tact of that worldly wisdom which subordinates truth to convenience. He spoke the truth always and at all hazards. But he spoke it in love. And

especially he was careful, when he had a new and untried audience before him, not to say anything that would prematurely and needlessly offend. His burning passion for his hearers was that they might be saved, and he used unwearied wisdom and tact in all his addresses that he might win them to look unto Jesus, in whom was their salvation, even the forgiveness of their sins.

Now there was one subject that was more offensive to St. Paul's audiences than any other. It was the subject of crucifixion. Whether his

hearers were Romans, Greeks, or Jews, crucifixion was offensive to them. It was a capital crime to crucify a Roman citizen. 'It is a crime,' says Cicero, 'to bind a citizen of Rome; a desperate crime to beat him; to slay him is almost parricide; how then shall I speak of his crucifixion? There is no word in the Roman tongue that can describe it worthily.' But if crucifixion was abhorrent to a Roman, it was yet more abhorrent to a Jew.

If, therefore, there is one subject which in his travels from place to place the Apostle Paul with his wonderful tact will avoid, we are sure it is the subject of crucifixion. But what do we find? We find that when he approaches the city of Corinth, where he knows his audience will consist of Jews, and Greeks, and Romans, he determines not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ and *Him crucified*. He knows how offensive that will be to the Corinthians. He knows that to the Jews it will be a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Yet he does not avoid it and say, 'Christ and *Him put to death*.' He says, 'Christ and *Him crucified*.' For his gospel lay in that.

When Jesus was tried by the high priest and the whole council, we are told that many bore false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together. Jesus held his peace. He need not answer their accusations, they answered one another. Then the high priest took the examination into his own hand. He put a simple question to Jesus. He said, 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' Jesus immediately broke His silence. 'I am,' He said; 'and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' In well-feigned horror the high priest rent his clothes, and turning to the council, 'Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?' And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death.

But Caiaphas is not content that Jesus be put to death. If Jesus is merely put to death, what is there to prevent His disciples from claiming that He is the Messiah still? It is true there is the popular understanding that the Messiah abideth for ever. They will get over that. But if Jesus is put to death *by crucifixion* they will never get over that. For the law is there; it is clear, it is irrevocable, it is held by Jesus' disciples as

firmly as it is held by Caiaphas. And the law says, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'

Now *we* do not understand what 'cursed' means. We do not feel the bite of it. But the Jew felt it, and understood. There is a Jewish saying that Abraham sits at the mouth of hell to watch lest any descendant of his should enter there; but if the descendant were 'cursed,' then Abraham knew him not, and he passed unrescued to his place. The saying is later than the time of our Lord, but it illustrates the feeling then. If Caiaphas can get Jesus crucified, that is, hung upon the tree, He has come under the curse of the law; He is anathema; He is cut off from all the privileges of the sons of Abraham; Abraham will know Him not in the world to come; and He will pass unrescued to His place.

Well, Caiaphas gets Jesus crucified. You can watch the chief priests as they instigate the people around Pilate's judgment seat. You can hear the sudden cry, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him,' for it has never ceased to ring in the ear of Christendom down through all these ages. You can see the amazement and then the shameful submission of the Roman governor. Caiaphas gets Jesus crucified. 'Now,' he says, 'these disciples of His may go away to their homes, we have nothing against them. They were grossly deceived, and they will suffer for it. But they never claimed to be the Christ, the Son of the Blessed. His disciples may go away home.'

But His disciples do not go away home. Not many days after the crucifixion, word comes to Caiaphas that the disciples of Jesus are preaching in the temple, and telling the people that Jesus has been raised from the dead. Now the resurrection of a man from the dead is not incredible. Caiaphas had once been told of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, and had found no difficulty in believing it. But it is incredible that Jesus has been raised from the dead, for Jesus has not only died but been crucified. He has come under the curse of the law. God can have no more interest in Him. Assuredly God cannot raise *him* from the dead and turn His own law into derision.

Caiaphas is not the only one to whom the preaching that Jesus has been raised from the dead is intolerable. To a man like Saul of Tarsus it is simply blasphemous. He has a zeal for the law of God. He cannot believe that one jot or one

title of it shall ever fall. And it is in the fervour of this honest zeal that he opens a bitter persecution of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. We need not blame him. He haled men and women and committed them to prison. He compelled them to blaspheme. When they were put to death he gave his voice against them. Yet we need not blame him. We cannot see how he could have acted otherwise. His whole honest and earnest soul was bound to the law of God. To preach that Jesus has been raised from the dead is not only incredible, it is to Saul intolerable blasphemy.

But one day, in the height of his zeal for the law, Jesus appears to Saul. He addresses him by name. He blames him for his persecuting zeal. 'Who art thou, Lord?' And to his astonished ear there comes the answer, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.' From that moment Saul is another man. We call it his sudden conversion; and then we take back our word, and grope in his earlier history to discover the steps that led up to it. But why should it not be a sudden conversion? How could it be anything else? Up to the moment that Jesus met Saul on the way to Damascus it was incredible to Saul that Jesus had been raised from the dead; the thought of it was intolerable to him. But at that moment he knew that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Up to that moment he persecuted the followers of Jesus in his honest though mistaken zeal for the law; after that moment he was a follower of Jesus himself. 'Whereupon,' as he himself afterwards expressed it to Agrippa, '*whereupon*, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.'

But what is Saul to do with the law? He believes now that Jesus has been raised from the dead. He believes also that He was crucified. And the law of God is unmistakable: 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' What is he to do with this law of God?

The answer to that question is the gospel according to St. Paul. We find St. Paul's gospel in his speeches and epistles. Of all that he spoke and of all that he wrote this is the sum: What is to be done with the law since Jesus has risen from the dead. He never tells us how he came to an apprehension of it. He never says when or where its marvellous meaning flashed upon his spiritual understanding. But he tells us that he found one Person upon whom the law had done its worst.

He found that Person, after the law had spent itself upon Him, return to earth again. Clearly the law has no more dominion over Him. The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth; but this Man has been dead, and now that He is back to earth again it has no longer any dominion over Him. So here is one spot upon the earth where the law has no dominion. It is the spot on which the crucified and risen Jesus stands. And if there are any that will go through the same process as Jesus has gone through; if there are any that will die with Him and rise again, then they also will be outside the dominion of the law. In other words, if there are any that will become one with Christ in faith, so that Christ may dwell in them and they in Christ, they shall be free from the law, the law can have no more hold over them. As the apostle puts it in his parable of the woman who has lost her husband, they are 'dead to the law through the body of Christ.'

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Why? Because there is no law to condemn them. The law is there. It is as true and as binding as ever. But it is no longer there for Christ Jesus, and it is no longer there for them.

Some short time since a shepherd was brought up before the Sheriff of Aberdeen, and charged with pasturing his flock by the highway side. He pleaded guilty. He said that he had been allowed three days to take his sheep from Stonehaven to Aberdeen, and he had walked them leisurely all the way, permitting them to pasture by the wayside as they went. 'But,' he added, 'I understand that there is no law against that now. I understand that that law has been abolished.' The Sheriff told him that he had made a mistake. Some change had been made in the law, but the law had not been abolished, and he fined him so much per head of the sheep he had allowed to trespass.

Now, if that shepherd had been right, is there any plea he could have tendered that would have been more effectual? If he had said, 'I understand there is no law against it,' and if the Sheriff had turned to his law-book and found that law blotted out, is there any defence that would have been so triumphant? The day is coming when you and I shall stand before a greater Judge than the Sheriff of Aberdeen that we may give an account of the deeds we have done in the body.

And I for one will not deny that I have done them. I will not deny that I have sinned exceedingly and come short. But I will add, 'I understand that there is no law against me; I understand that He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to His cross.' And I know that the Judge on that great day will find that there is no condemnation to me who am in Christ Jesus, because there is no longer any law to condemn me.

So to every one of you there remains a choice of two clear courses. Either you may abide by the law, or you may take your place by Jesus Christ. For the law is there still. Jesus came not to destroy it. It is God's law, and it is binding as ever it was on the creatures of God. So you may appear before the Judge on that great day, having your boast in the law if you will. You do not mean to deny that you have transgressed a little and come short; but then there are circumstances, and, after all, when you look around you,

you are able to say sincerely, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.' You do not wish that another—that any other—should suffer for your sins. You will endure the penalty of your own sins yourself. You will stand by the law.

But your position, which seems so reasonable, is surely most unsafe. Of the two pleas, 'Guilty or not guilty?' you plead the second. Yet you admit some slight shortcomings, and even some comparatively trifling transgressions. The admission is fatal. Your sentence is read already. For it is written, 'Cursed is every one which continueth not in *all* things that are written in the book of the law to do them.'

Will you not take your place in Christ, then? It is true you throw yourself then absolutely on the mercy of the Judge. You plead guilty without reserve. But there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made you free from the law of sin and death.

Recent Foreign Theology.

The New Testament Formula 'In Christ Jesus.'¹

WE do not generally think of St. Paul as representing the mystical side of Christian teaching. Our thoughts turn rather to St. John on this subject—perhaps rightly. Yet true Christian mysticism has a large place in St. Paul's writings, only it is overshadowed by other doctrines, which have bulked largely in Christian thought. Justification and redemption in all their bearings are linked inseparably with the name of Paul, while union and fellowship with God through Christ suggest at once the name of John. Yet Paul, no less than John, is a Christian mystic. This side of his teaching is focused in his favourite formula, 'In Christ Jesus,' which has been made the subject of careful investigation by a German author in the scholarly treatise named below.

First, as to statistics, the phrase is found 24

¹ *Die N. T. Formel 'In Christo Jesu.'* Von Lic. Theol. G. Adolf Deissmann. Marburg, 1892.

times in St. John's writings; 8 times in Acts and 1 Pet.; not at all in the Synoptic Gospels, or in Jas., 2 Pet., Jude, Heb.; 164 times in different forms ('in Christ Jesus' 48 times, 'in Christ' 34, 'in Jesus' once, 'in the Lord' 50, 'in Him (Christ)' 18, 'in Whom (Christ)' 11, 'in Him that strengtheneth' once, 'in the Beloved' once) in St. Paul. It begins with the earliest Epistles (1 and 2 Thess.), in proportion occurs oftenest in the Prison Epistles, and is found in 1 and 2 Tim. of the Pastorals. The only one of Paul's Epistles from which it is absent is Titus.

The peculiarity of the phrase is the use of *ἐν* (in) with the singular dative of a person. The use with the plural both of persons and things is, of course, common (= among); so with the singular of things. But here persons are said repeatedly and emphatically to be in a person. The phrase, if not exclusively peculiar to, is intensely characteristic of, Paul. What does he mean by it?

In an elaborate examination, first of profane Greek authors, then of Greek authors writing under Semitic (Hebrew) influence, Deissmann shows that the apostle has no precedent among them for