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THE NEW-CENTURY BIBLE

THESSALONIANS

AND

GALATIANS

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The New-Century Bible

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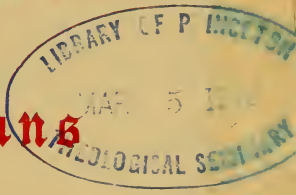
Thessalonians
and
Galatians



INTRODUCTION
AUTHORIZED VERSION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
INDEX AND MAP

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TO THE

THESSALONIANS

AND

GALATIANS

INTRODUCTION

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS AND GALATIANS

INTRODUCTION

THE TWO EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS.

THESE two short letters are closely associated together, not merely because they were both addressed to the same church, but also because there was but a short interval of time between them, and because they deal with much the same subjects and have certain features in common that mark them off from the other writings of Paul. They form a group by themselves, both chronologically and in character and teaching. There is good reason to think that they are the earliest of the Apostle's writings, or at all events the earliest that have survived, though there are students of the New Testament who would give the priority to the Epistle to the Galatians. If they come first among Paul's writings, we must conclude that, with the doubtful exception of the Epistle of James, they are the oldest books of the New Testament. With that one possible exception, it would seem that the great Apostle had written all his epistles before any other books of the New Testament were composed. The next writer whose work has been included in the Christian Canon is Mark, the author of our second gospel, and he comes nearly twenty years after the Thessalonian Epistles. Here, then, we

have the oldest but one, perhaps the very oldest, documents of Christianity. Simple as they are in thought and style when compared with Paul's later Epistles, they must have a peculiar value to us on account of their extremely primitive position in the history of Christian literature. One objection to the early date of the Epistle of James is that if that book is placed before the first of Paul's Epistles, its conservative Jewish author must be credited with the invention of a new style of literature—that which conveys religious instruction in the form of a letter. But whether this be the case or not, nobody will suppose that Paul borrowed his method from James. He was far too bold and original to need guidance as to his procedure; and certainly, if he had felt any such need, the very last person whom he would have imitated was the head of the Jerusalem church. As far as he was concerned, then, we must allow that the Apostle struck out for himself the idea of communicating religious teaching by means of letters. Nevertheless, though this was a novel form of literature when it appeared, there is nothing surprising about it. In this, as in so many other cases, necessity was the mother of invention. Paul was in the novel position of a religious leader called upon to direct his disciples from a distance. The letter was the natural means by which to carry on that work. There is nothing artificial about this epistolary form of the Apostle's writings. We cannot compare it with such works as *The Letters of Junius*, the appearance of which as a collection of letters is a mere literary device. These Epistles of Paul are real letters, and can better be compared with Cyprian's letters to his church at Carthage written from his retirement in the desert. They were actually sent by the Apostle to his correspondents as the best means he had of communicating with them. If he could have visited them at the time, undoubtedly he would have dispensed with writing, preferring the word of mouth communication of personal presence. In that

case, though two or three churches might have gained, the world and all subsequent ages would have been great losers, for we should have had no Epistles of Paul. The last thing the Apostle dreamed of in writing these letters was the composition of permanent literature that would be treasured up for all time and circulated throughout the world. He wrote to the occasion for his immediate readers in the church addressed. This fact will account for much of the obscurity that some people complain of when reading his epistles. This is why they need commentaries. Even with the best collateral information to guide us, we occasionally stumble on obscurities which are simply due to the fact that we do not possess the historical key that was in the hands of the readers to whom the letters were addressed. What is difficult to us may have been quite simple and easy to them. On the other hand, we must not forget that Paul was supremely concerned with eternal truths. Therefore his letters, though written for an immediate purpose, remain of permanent value for the church in all ages. These letters deal with religion, because to Paul religion was the one supremely important thing in the world; and their treatment of the great theme is deserving of constant attention, because their author was one of the two or three most inspired teachers of religion the world has ever seen. The letter form bears the stamp of the local and temporary on its surface; the underlying substance contains the essence of the spiritual and eternal.

THESSALONICA.

The city of Thessalonica—represented by the modern *Saloniki*—was situated at the head of the Thermaic gulf to the north of the Ægean Sea. It was the capital of one of the divisions of the Roman province of Macedonia. Accordingly Paul, who always uses the Roman political

names for the places he refers to, describes the Thessalonians as well as the Philippians as 'Macedonians,' or 'the churches of Macedonia' (2 Cor. viii. 1). There is no reason to suppose that he ever penetrated to the region of the original kingdom of Macedon. In race, these people of Thessalonica were not Macedonian, but Thracian, the natives of ancient Thrace, though with a considerable mixture of Celtic blood. They were very different in character from the quick-witted, lively, dissolute Greeks whom Paul met with in Athens and Corinth. Renan says of this district: 'It was probably the region the most honest, the most serious, the most pious of the ancient world.' It is noteworthy that Paul found his most devoted followers among these solid, reliable Thracians. He was grievously tried with the moral failings of his Greek converts and with the doctrinal errors of his churches in Asia. But he had no serious complaints on either of these grounds to make against his Thracian friends in Philippi and Thessalonica, whom he always found to be loyal followers, stanch supporters, generous and affectionate helpers.

Under the Romans Thessalonica had become a port of some consequence in the trade of the Mediterranean, and it had grown into a wealthy and populous city. It was the greatest city in the north-east of the Roman Empire before the rise of Constantinople. This fact adds some importance to our two small, simple epistles. They were directed to one of the chief centres of the world's life. Paul always aimed at these metropolitan centres, and therefore was most eager to bear his testimony in the imperial city of Rome itself. The Jews, who had a keen eye for promising marts of commerce, had flocked to Thessalonica in considerable numbers, and had built a fine synagogue, which served also for the neighbouring towns of Philippi, Amphipolis, and Apollonia. But Paul drew few, if any, adherents from among the rich and important citizens. There was a numerous artisan class

gathered in this busy city; the weaving industry was largely followed there, and many men must have been engaged on the quays in connexion with the shipping. It was among these working people that most of the disciples of the new faith were won.

The Apostle Paul visited Thessalonica on the occasion of his first journey in Europe, accompanied by Silas and Timothy. Luke had crossed over from Troas with them, and the three travellers, after touching at Samothrace, had landed at Neapolis and proceeded thence to the Roman colony of Philippi. Here Paul planted his first church on European soil; it was always his most affectionate and devoted church, and apparently the one he loved most. But the persecution he received at Philippi, although the magistrates were compelled to apologize for their illegality in scourging him, a Roman citizen, seems to have hastened his departure, probably so as to avoid occasioning fresh disturbances, which would have been a trouble and a danger to the new converts. Leaving Luke behind, perhaps because his home was in this city, Paul then proceeded with his two other companions along the famous *Via Egnatia*, among the dales and rocks and by the winding river of the beautiful pass of Arethusa, to Thessalonica. Thus the church he founded there was the second oldest of his European churches. Being a Jew, and longing for the salvation of his people, Paul followed his custom and made the first offer of the gospel to the Jews, visiting their great synagogue on three successive Sabbaths, and there delivering his message. His method was to reason from the Scriptures in order to prove that 'it behoved the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead.' Then he would apply the result of his argument and shew that Jesus, whom he must have described, since the historian says '*this* Jesus' (Acts xvii. 3), was the predicted Christ. The brief epitome of Paul's preaching at Thessalonica in Acts sheds an interesting light on his method of evangelizing his

own people. The main objection to the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah was that his life was not at all like what had been expected of the Mighty Deliverer of Israel, while his death had only completed the incongruity. Accordingly a completely new idea of the Messianic character and mission must be accepted if the crucified peasant from Galilee could be regarded as the long-expected Christ. This necessity controlled all the gospel preaching among the Jews. We see it in Peter's speeches at Jerusalem. It appears much later in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*, for Trypho was a Jew. Here we find Paul endeavouring to break through the thick wall of prejudice by demonstrating from the Jewish Scriptures themselves that the coming of a suffering Messiah was really quite in accordance with the prophecies contained in those venerated books. But while the Jewish objections compelled Paul to treat this subject, we know from his weighty words about it when writing to his own converts that even apart from those objections he would have made much of it, because it was central to his conception of Christianity. With Paul the gospel was rooted in the person of Christ, and the chief significance of the person of Christ was seen in his death and resurrection. This, then, was always found to be the substance and core of the Apostle's message.

The results of Paul's preaching at Thessalonica were very promising. Converts of various classes began to declare themselves for the new faith. Luke mentions three classes:—(1) Some of the Jews. These could only have been few in number, for it is manifest that the church of the Thessalonians was mostly Gentile. Still, it is something to know that even in Thessalonica, where Paul was to meet with the most violent opposition from his own countrymen, some of them were won. That argument from the Scriptures had told on the more open-minded or susceptible Jews in the synagogue. (2) Proselytes. These are called 'devout Greeks.' We

must not understand the phrase to mean Greeks who were pious according to their own pagan light, worshipping their national divinities, like Socrates or Marcus Aurelius. The term is always used in Scripture for those who had accepted the Jewish faith with more or less thoroughness, even if they had not actually become Jews by undergoing the rite of circumcision. A very considerable proportion of the early Christians was drawn from people of this class. They were religious in sympathy and intention to begin with, or they would not be found worshipping in the synagogue; they were in a measure prepared for the new revelation by their reception of the older revelation which pointed towards it and led up to it, in spite of the denial of this by the prejudice and bigotry of the Jews; and they were more ready to listen to reason than the Jews, having already moved one step towards the light out of their native pagan darkness. (3) Women of position—'chief women,' Luke calls them. The poorer women in their benighted ignorance would be the blindest, most infatuated devotees of the old local Thracian heathenism. But many women of the upper classes throughout the Roman Empire at this time were shewing a keen interest in questions of religion. At Rome, at Alexandria, at Damascus, women in high social position had adopted Judaism. The motives which led some to do this in their search for a deeper religion than the pagan cults in which they had been brought up would induce others to accept the Christian teaching. It would be these well-to-do women in the church who came to make up the bulk of the contributions that were subsequently sent by the Macedonian Christians to Paul when he was in other places, as it was by the gifts of grateful women that the temporal necessities of Jesus Christ and his disciples had been supplied.

This happy state of affairs was soon rudely disturbed—how soon, we do not know. One objection that has been

brought against our two epistles is based on the ground that such a church as they imply to be existing in Thessalonica could not have been constituted and have received the amount of teaching the epistles refer to all within the course of three weeks. But Luke does not state that Paul's visit only lasted that short time. He says that the Apostle delivered his message for three Sabbaths in the synagogue; but he does not say that Paul remained no longer in the city. As his converts were mostly derived from the pagan population, he must have preached to the Gentiles after the Jews had refused to hear him any longer. Indeed, the narrative in Acts suggests that this was the case, for it states that the Jews were 'moved with jealousy.' They would not have been so jealous of the offer of the gospel to their own adherents in the synagogue as of the fact that Paul was inviting Gentiles to its privileges. For anything we know, he may have been engaged in this work during several months. There is really no contradiction between Acts and the Epistles here. If there were such a contradiction it would be more reasonable to doubt the accuracy of Luke's work, since its author was not present at the time, than to reject what appears as the well-authenticated writing of the chief actor in this scene.

Here, as in most other places, the opposition to Paul arose from the Jews. It had been otherwise at Philippi, where the pagan master of a supposed Pythoness, or inspired prophetess, was enraged at the loss of his livelihood by the cure of the poor slave-girl, and later at Ephesus, where the silversmiths feared loss of trade. But these were exceptions. As a rule all the early persecutions were instigated by the Jews. Even as late as the middle of the second century the martyrdom of Polycarp was urged on by Jews. But while this was the origin of the disturbance, the Jews did not care to undertake the ugly business single-handed,

or indeed to carry it through with their own hands at all. They preferred to get more disreputable people to do their dirty work for them, and therefore they roused the mob, always easily excited in these Eastern seaports, which made for the house of a man named Jason, probably because this house was used by Paul for his teaching. At all events the Apostle was lodging there. Although the opposition began in an uproar, the authority of law and order in a city under Roman government was too strong for the mob to proceed to lynch-law. Accordingly, having broken into Jason's house, and perhaps being disappointed at not finding his lodger there, they carried the proprietor off to the police court. This was rather hard on Jason. Paul was supporting himself by his own labour at tent making, and was not dependent on Jason's hospitality. Possibly he was also paying for his lodging. And now the landlord is made responsible for his tenant's doings. Still, it is likely that he was a convert, and other Christians found in his house were taken with him. It may be remarked in passing that the magistrates of Thessalonica bore a peculiar name—'politarch'—which Luke is careful to record, a note of that historian's accuracy. The charge against the Christians was a serious one in the eyes of Roman magistrates. First, they were accused of being social revolutionists—'turning the world'—literally, the 'civilized, inhabited world'—'upside down.' The Romans were intensely conservative. There was nothing they suppressed more sternly than any attempt to upset the order of society. Then the Christians were accused of rebellion—going 'contrary to the decrees of Cæsar'; what decrees, we do not know, though probably the explanation is in the final item of the charge, that of proclaiming 'another king, one Jesus'—rank treason! No crime could be worse than that in the eyes of the emperor. The penalty was death. But the lenient way in which the politarchs

dealt with the accused shews that the case broke down. In fact, they were acquitted. Still, it could not be denied that there had been disturbances in the city arising out of the visit of the Christian missionaries. To prevent the repetition of such scenes, Jason and his friends were bound over to keep the peace and required to give security to that effect. This was quite in accordance with Roman law. It may be compared to the action of some English magistrates in forbidding processions of the Salvation Army because of the riots that followed, although they knew that the Salvationists themselves were not disturbers of the peace. Professor Ramsay points out that this magisteriai order involved the departure of Paul from the city, and prevented his return for some time. This may explain the Apostle's language where he says that he would fain have come to the Thessalonians once and again, but Satan hindered him (1 Thess. ii. 18). The mischief-making agency of the spirit of evil is credited with bringing about this unhappy state of affairs, which effectually keeps the Apostle at a distance from his Macedonian friends.

We can gather some information about the character and condition of the church at Thessalonica from a study of the two epistles.

1. The church consisted mainly of converted pagans. This is quite in accordance with what we read in Acts. In 1 Thessalonians Paul reminds his readers how they 'turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God' (1 Thess. i. 9); and after referring to the persecutions of the Christians in Judæa, he adds, 'for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews' (ii. 14), where the distinction between 'your own countrymen' and 'the Jews' shews that the people addressed were Gentiles. Then the vices against which the Apostle warns his readers were more Greek and pagan than Jewish, such as immoral relations between men and women (see 1 Thess. iv. 1–8), drunken-

ness (v. 7), indolence (2 Thess. iii. 10), mischievous gossiping (verse 11). The licentiousness of the peoples of Hellenic civilization was notorious, while the faults of the Jews lay rather in the direction of bigotry, pride, censoriousness, and greed of money.

2. Most of the members were of what we call 'the working classes.' Paul exhorts his converts to keep to their manual work, and not permit the elation caused by their enjoyment of rare spiritual privileges to induce them to become impatient of this drudgery or despise it. They are to study to be quiet, to do their own business, and work with their *hands* (1 Thess. iv. 11). Paul had done the same while among them, and he is careful to remind them of the fact in the hope that his example may stimulate the indolent and sober the flighty. We must suppose, therefore, that the well-to-do Jewish converts and the women from a higher social class formed but small minorities in the church, and that the bulk of the brotherhood consisted of working people. This church was not troubled with any of the refined subtleties of thought that interested the more dreamy, speculative Christians of Ephesus and the churches in the Lycus Valley, nor with the ambition of intellectuality in which the Greeks of Achaia indulged. The members were simple folk, and they took a simple view of the teachings they had received.

These facts need to be borne in mind when we are considering the ideas of the Apostle contained in the epistles. As the earliest of his extant writings, it seems natural to find them the most elementary. M. Sabatier has worked out a very definite scheme of the development of Paul's mind and thought through the course of his epistles, beginning with these two. But probably he has gone too far. It is true that the Apostle does seem to advance in some respects, especially in his teaching about the divine nature of Christ in Ephesians and Colossians. No doubt the controversies with which he was engaged helped to clarify and accentuate his

leading convictions. Thus the doctrine of justification by faith is most fully expounded in Galatians and Romans after the conflict with the Judaizers in Galatia; and the most exalted ideas of Christ's relation to the universe are expressed in the epistles of the Captivity in order to counteract vague gnostic and theosophic notions in the churches addressed. But while this is reasonable enough, there is another side to the case. The epistles do not only express their writer's views at the moment, they are especially adapted to the conditions and needs of his correspondents in the special circumstances they are designed to meet. This is one important distinction between real, living letters and mere essays intended for the reading of the general public, and perhaps not specially adapted to the particular state of society when they happen to be published. Certainly it would be unfair to assume that a writer put all his beliefs into every one of his letters. We cannot say that he did not hold a certain belief when writing any particular letter just because he did not there and then state it, unless the subject treated in the letter would naturally lead up to it. If Paul writes to a working man's church not disturbed by any novelties or irregularities of doctrine, it is not to be supposed that he has not yet thought out his ideas concerning certain abstruse subjects simply because he does not see fit to trouble his correspondents with them. We cannot say that when he wrote the two simple letters to the Thessalonians his mind had not yet moved beyond the most elementary conceptions of Christian truth. If, as seems probable, he had been engaged in mission work during some eighteen years before he wrote these epistles, he was no novice at the time, but an Apostle of wide and long-continued experience in Christian life, thought, and teaching. Here we have the utterances of a ripe mind, although the circumstances do not call for the exposition of the most profound ideas.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the two epistles, a glance may be permitted at the subsequent history of the church. The Apostle who was so longing to revisit his friends, but was prevented from doing so at the time when he wrote, was able to carry out his wish three or four years later. After his year and a half at Corinth, Paul returned to Jerusalem and Antioch without going to see his friends in Macedonia. His second missionary tour took him through Galatia and other parts of Asia Minor to Ephesus, where he remained two and a half years. After the riot he went north to Troas and thence across to Europe, as on his previous journey in this direction. Thus at length, after so long an interval, he once more found himself among his favourite disciples, the Macedonians. There he was much cheered by the good news brought him by Titus concerning the improved condition of affairs in Corinth, about which Christian centre he had been feeling considerable anxiety. At this time he was engaged in collecting the offerings of his churches for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, a work into which he threw himself heartily as a means of reconciling the two great sections of the church—the Gentile and the Jewish. He met with the greatest possible encouragement from his Macedonian friends, whose generosity, in spite of their poverty, was astonishing, so that he made much of it in writing to Corinth. Philippi seems to have taken the lead in giving—as it had done earlier in sending more than once to the support of the Apostle during his first missionary visit to Thessalonica. But it is not to be supposed that the church in the great Macedonian metropolis was backward with regard to the generous work. Thus Paul was able to go on south to Achaia with a good harvest of contribution gathered in Macedonia. After going to Corinth, Paul returned through Macedonia, and then no doubt revisited Thessalonica. Another interval of three or four years passes,

and Paul is a prisoner at Rome. Writing to his friends at Philippi, he tells them that he expects to be with them before long (Phil. ii. 24). If the tradition that he was liberated from this first imprisonment at Rome is correct, when visiting the Philippians we may be pretty sure that he would go also to see his Macedonian friends in the neighbouring city of Thessalonica. In 1 Tim. i. 3—if we may accept this as a genuine piece of the Apostle's writing—Paul refers to yet another visit he had paid to Macedonia while Timothy was left at Ephesus. After this, Macedonia, and with it the chief town, Thessalonica, fade out of the New Testament history, to reappear in the later history of the church and the Empire. For three centuries Thessalonica was the principal city in Greece. It obtained a terrible notoriety in the reign of Theodosius as the scene of a frightful massacre. Enraged with the citizens for their murderous the governor of the garrison—who had offended them by imprisoning a favourite charioteer of the game—them a gross offence—the emperor issued a savage order for Evil counsellors had made the worst of the case. roused his Spanish blood. The citizens were invited and to a fresh exhibition of the games, and while the assembled in the amphitheatre the soldiers rushed were and slaughtered them indiscriminately, men, in and children, to the number of 7,000. For the women, St. Ambrose refused to admit Theodosius to this crime at Milan, or even to see him, till he had given church of penitence and humiliation. During the signs invasions the city was the bulwark of the barbarian empire, the guardian of Eastern Christendom. Eastern wave after wave of heathen and Mohammedan against It was taken three times during the Middle assaults. Saracens in 904, by the Sicilian Normans Ages, by the the Turks in 1430. Under the name is in 1185, by is now a part of the Turkish Empire. of Saloniki it

I THESSALONIANS

Genuineness.

This is one of the New Testament books that have gained ground in the estimation of critics during the last fifty years until their position may be reckoned established and virtually unassailable. It was rejected by Baur, in the middle of the last century, that critic only allowing four of the Pauline Epistles to be authentic—viz. Galatians, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians. But now the Epistle is accepted by most even of those scholars who may be said to belong to the left-wing of criticism. Thus on the continent it is acknowledged by Pfleiderer and Holtzmann, as well as by Harnack and Jülicher who are more moderate in their views, and by the conservative scholars Godet and Zahn; and in England and America it is received by all classes of New Testament students. It was included in Marcion's *Canon* (about A. D. 140), though the earliest writer to quote it by name, as far as we know, is Irenæus (about A. D. 180), who says, 'And for this cause does the apostle, explaining himself, make it clear that the saved man is a complete man as well as a spiritual man; saying thus in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, "Now the God of peace sanctify you perfect (*perfectos*); and may your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved whole without complaint to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ[1]."'

[1] *Adv. Haer.* V. vi. 1; cf. 1 Thess. v. 23.

By the end of the second century we find Clement of Alexandria making use of it [1], and also Tertullian a little later [2].

Further, the constructor of that anonymous canon known as the *Muratorian Fragment*, which may be dated before the end of the second century, acknowledged the Epistle as Paul's. It is contained in the most ancient versions of the New Testament, the Syriac in the East, and the Old Latin in North Africa. After this it is needless to cite the testimony of later ages. Clearly the Epistle was known and recognized as Paul's throughout the greater part of the second century. The paucity of earlier literature is quite enough to account for its not having left still more ancient records of its existence and use in the church.

Then the Epistle speaks for its own genuineness. One objection that Baur brought forward against it was the absence of distinctively Pauline doctrine. But this fact can better be pleaded as an argument for the defence. There is not sufficient motive for a pseudonymous writer to have composed so simple and personal a letter as this and then published it under the name of the great Apostle in order to obtain acceptance for it in the church. It fits in well with the circumstances under which it professes to be written. Its silence on the controversy with the Judaizing Christians, which is so prominent in the Epistle to the Galatians, may be explained by its very early date, before that controversy had broken out, or, if it had already appeared in some quarters, by its not having extended to Thessalonica. Baur thought that there was a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem—which would make the writing later than the lifetime of Paul—in the sentence, 'but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost' (ii. 16). But the language is too vague to be fixed to that event, and it may be used of the

[1] *Paed.* v. 19; *Strom.* i. 9. 53. [2] *De Res. Carn.*, c. 24.

preaching of judgement[1]. Attention has already been called to the seeming inconsistencies between this Epistle and Acts. Now if these are as great as some suppose, the question rises, why should a pseudonymous writer of a later date, who presumably knew Acts, manufacture such difficulties for himself, having only plastic imaginations instead of stubborn facts to deal with? Moreover, if these inconsistencies are quite fatally irreconcilable it is Acts that must suffer in its reputation for accuracy, rather than the Epistle, since the history does not profess to be written by an eye-witness at this place. But let us look at these supposed differences a little more closely. According to Acts, Paul left Timothy and Silas behind him in Macedonia when he took his hasty departure from Berœa (Acts xvii. 14). From Athens he sent back a request that they would join him there (verse 15). But before they arrived he had gone on to Corinth, where at length these two friends came up with him (xviii. 1, 5). Now when we turn to our Epistle we find that Paul had sent Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica, and that when that attendant disciple joined the Apostle at Corinth it was on his return from this visit of inquiry at Thessalonica. Paul writes, 'Wherefore when we could no longer forbear'—i. e., as the previous sentence shews, when he was chafing under his own inability to return to his Thessalonian friends because, as he puts it, 'Satan hindered'—'we thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone'—'*Athens*,' mark, not Corinth—'And sent Timothy'—plainly from Athens—'. . . to establish you,' &c. (iii. 1, 2). Clearly then Timothy was with Paul at Athens, unless we are to suppose that the Apostle forgot that it was not till he reached Corinth that Timothy rejoined him, and that he was in fact dispatched from the latter city and not from Athens; but that is most improbable. We cannot

[1] See note on the passage.

quite piece the two accounts together. The simplest explanation is that Luke was not fully informed, that he did not know of Timothy's return to Thessalonica, and therefore concluded that his meeting with the Apostle at Corinth was on the occasion of his first visit to Achaia, whereas it really was his second visit. Slight discrepancies such as this are met with in nearly all separate accounts of events. They do not invalidate the general truthfulness of the narratives. In the present case we may suppose that what really happened was this. Luke is right in his explicit and detailed statement about the staying on of Silas and Timothy in Macedonia, and Paul's desire to have them with him at Athens and message to that effect. Then they did actually reach him while he was in that city. But the news they brought of the troubles of the Thessalonians was so disquieting that he immediately dispatched one of them, Timothy, back to Thessalonica to encourage and fortify the persecuted church. Then Paul moved on to Corinth, and while there welcomed Timothy back from his special mission. There is really no serious difficulty here.

The one difficulty of any weight is to be found in the amount of development in the life of the church and the experience of its members which the Epistle seems to imply. We have seen that probably Paul stayed on at Thessalonica some time after the conclusion of those three weeks during which he was visiting the synagogue. But we cannot allow more than two or three months between Paul's leaving Thessalonica and his writing this letter. The explanation must be sought in the recognition that those were times of wonderful enthusiasm, of rare spiritual power. It is not our happy experience to see new churches planted and fostered by a Paul. On the other hand, there are signs of a very primitive stage in the history of the church addressed. It was a trouble to the members that some of the brotherhood had died before the coming of Christ. They had been labouring

under the delusion that Christ would appear very soon, and that then they would enter into the joys of the kingdom with him. Now what would happen to the brethren who had died in the interval? would they miss the great privilege all were eagerly looking for? Such a question, one that strikes us as so quaint and remote, could only have occurred very early indeed in the history of any church, when the first breaches in the family circle were made by the hand of death. Then there is no indication of any elaborate church organization, such as we meet with even before the end of the New Testament times. We have no mention of bishops and deacons as in Philippians and the Pastoral Epistles. A vague allusion to 'them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you' (v. 12, see note) suggests the existence of some church officers, possibly corresponding to the elders of whom we read elsewhere, though as yet without any title. How very primitive all this is! Further, Paul, for his own part, expects to be alive at the coming of Christ. He says '*we* that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord' (iv. 15). No one claiming to write as Paul would have said that after his death, and so gratuitously manufactured a delusion.

Occasion, Place, and Date of Origin.

A comparison of our Epistle with the narrative in Acts will enable us to determine with some exactness the circumstances under which it was written. Silvanus and Timothy, who were Paul's travelling companions when he visited Thessalonica, are with him now, and have a share in the messages of the Epistle. The Apostle is still on the same missionary journey. He has been to Athens, for he says that he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica from that city (iii. 1). He does not say in so many words that he has left Athens. But we cannot suppose that the Epistle was dispatched from

that city. Timothy had returned after his special visit to Thessalonica, and there is some probability that he did not reach Paul till the Apostle had gone on to Corinth. We have seen that this is the natural explanation of the statements in Acts (xviii. 1, 5). Besides, a longer interval of time is required than the dispatch of the letter from Athens would allow. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, 'ye became an example to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia (i. 7). The inclusion of the latter province shews that Paul had evangelized Achaia to some extent, and this can hardly have been the case before he had reached Corinth, the capital, which he made the head quarters of his missionary work in that district. Then he adds, 'For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth' (verse 8). Now there were no other parts of Europe evangelized—Rome being out of the question. What then does Paul mean by 'every place'? He must be referring to the Eastern churches in Asia Minor and Syria. But for the fame of the Thessalonian Christians to have reached those remote places, and for Paul to have heard of this, requires some time. Paul has had communications from the Eastern churches making mention of what they knew about his missionary work at Thessalonica. 'For they themselves report concerning us,' he says, 'what manner of entering in we had unto you' (verse 9). This is a striking statement, shewing what close and frequent communication there was between the churches scattered round the Levant, and what warm interest they took in one another. In the flourishing state of trade under the Roman Empire at this time ships were sailing to and fro in all directions, and there was ready and frequent communication, especially between the great provincial capitals, and Thessalonica, Ephesus, Antioch, and Corinth—the centres of the chief Christian churches in which Paul was

interested—were all capitals of provinces. But while the communication between these places would be as easy and rapid as was ever known in ancient times, of course it would be very slow compared with our rates of motion—sailing-ships at sea, caravans of camels on land—and therefore we must allow some time. Paul's stay at Corinth extended to eighteen months. But we cannot assign the writing of the Epistle to the latter part of that period; its reference to the reception of the news of the conversion of the Thessalonians in other places shews that this is a recent event. The Epistle was written immediately after Timothy's return from his special mission (iii. 6). The purpose of that mission, which was in part to relieve the Apostle's anxiety about his friends at Thessalonica during his enforced absence from them, would not allow of long stay in the city. A few months, which would be sufficient for the travelling and spreading of news, is all that the circumstances require. Seeing, however, that winter was a close time for navigation we cannot well allow of less than six months. Probably Paul would travel down the coast to Athens before the autumn equinoxial gales. At the same time letters or messengers would go out to the Eastern churches with the wonderful news of what was happening in Macedonia. In the spring, when navigation was opened again, the churches in the East would send back their congratulations to Paul. By that time the dispatch of Timothy, and his return, would have taken place. Thus we come to the conclusion that the Epistle was written from Corinth after the Apostle's first winter in that city, which, according to the usually accepted chronology, would be A. D. 53.

These facts lead us to a pretty clear understanding of the circumstances under which the Epistle was written and the Apostle's object in sending it. He had been compelled to leave Thessalonica before he had finished his work there. While at Athens he had wondered what

was going on, and longed to be back among his converts in the north. The prohibition of the politarchs seemed to him just an instance of Satan's interference with his work. To relieve his own anxiety and give some counsel and encouragement to the Thessalonians he had sent Timothy on the special mission, already frequently referred to. Timothy had returned with cheering news about the constancy of the Thessalonians, though with painful information concerning the persecution they had to endure from their cruel neighbours. Besides these general facts there were certain specific details in the condition of the church at Thessalonica that called for counsel from its founder. Dr. Rendel Harris has suggested that Paul had sent a letter—which has been lost—with Timothy to Thessalonica, and that the Thessalonians had replied in another letter which Paul answers in our first Epistle[1].

This is an ingenious suggestion, but our Epistle does not bear the indications of a reply to another letter which we meet with in 1 Corinthians, an Epistle which plainly shews that it is an answer to a letter received from Corinth. The more general character of the allusions to the information brought by Timothy rather implies that this had been delivered by word of mouth.

The first and chief piece of information greatly relieved the Apostle's mind and filled him with joy and gratitude. The young plant, left by the gardener to be exposed to fiery heat so soon after he had set it in the soil, had not withered away, but was flourishing bravely and bearing fruit. These new converts from heathenism were remaining faithful, and were already developing the most beautiful graces of the Christian life. Nothing could bring greater joy to the heart of a true missionary. Nevertheless it was painful to hear of the wrongs and hardships they had to endure. Paul sympathizes with

[1] See *Expositor*, Sept. 1898.

them in their distresses while congratulating them on their fidelity. He never has to charge his Macedonians with the grave faults he mentions in writing to other churches—the factiousness and loose moral discipline of the Corinthians, the abandonment of the essence of the gospel for Jewish practices to which the Galatians were yielding, the philosophic speculations that were fascinating some in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. The two Macedonian churches, the Philippian and the Thessalonian, are the churches that receive the warmest commendation from the Apostle. At the same time there are two or three points in Timothy's report that demand attention. Something must have called for the Apostle's very explicit defence of his own conduct and protest of the unselfishness of his aims when at Thessalonica. This indicates that some suspicion had been raised with regard to his character and motives. Probably his Jewish antagonists had attempted to poison the minds of weak, credulous members of the church, suggesting that Paul was acting with self-seeking aims in claiming their allegiance.

That distress about the death of some of the members for fear they should not have their share in the blessedness of Christ's return especially needed to be set right. Probably the Thessalonians had asked Timothy to consult the Apostle on the point. He gives a definite and quite reassuring reply. The deceased Christians will miss nothing. They will accompany Christ in his triumph. The living will have no precedence over them in welcoming their Lord. There are certain other matters connected with Timothy's report on the condition of the Thessalonians that occasion the Apostle some anxiety. He gravely warns them against lapsing into immorality, the temptations to which are so frequent in a great, dissolute, pagan city given up to the habits of the later Greek corrupt civilization. A certain feverish restlessness, due to dwelling too much on the expected coming of Christ, needs to be subdued. The Christians must keep to their

daily work, and earn a good character for sobriety and industry among their neighbours. The possibility of the sudden coming of Christ at any time should induce this combination of sobriety and diligence. Reading between the lines of the concluding exhortations we may gather that some were disorderly, some faint-hearted, some weak and rather trying. There was a tendency to despise and repress the utterances of the more enthusiastic members of the church. These defects should be overcome in a spirit of wise and patient brotherliness.

Characteristics and Leading Ideas.

The Apostle's style in this Epistle, and also in the following Epistle, is much simpler than in his later works, just as Carlyle's *Essays* and *Life of John Sterling* are simpler than his *French Revolution.* There is neither the vehemence and passion we meet with in Galatians, nor the vigour and argumentative earnestness of the Corinthian and Roman letters, nor the rich elaboration of ideas in thick clusters that are found in the Epistles of the captivity. The style is limpid and easy; the sentences natural and readily intelligible; the thought clear and elementary. Nevertheless the essentially Pauline spirit and temper are here. First we have Paul's sublime egoism, not so prominent as in 2 Corinthians and Galatians, but still very marked. The apostle does not shrink from writing about himself, defending himself, revealing himself. Sometimes, as in the case of the other two Epistles, this is necessary in order to clear up misunderstandings and refute calumnies that are positive hindrances to his work; and possibly to some extent that is so here also. But apart from these special requirements we must allow that a natural trait of the Apostle's character here breaks out. We often see this in men of very pronounced personality—in Augustine, in Luther, in John Wesley—among the saints as evidently as in great men of worldly aims

such as Julius Cæsar, and that prince of egoists, Napoleon Buonaparte. The remarkable thing in the case of good men is that their egoism can be separated from selfishness. Paul was a most wonderfully unselfish man. If he talked freely about himself it was not that he wanted to gain any personal end or that he was affected with foolish vanity and love of admiration. His sublime, self-sacrificing, whole-hearted devotion to his life-mission excludes all such unworthy ideas. Paul is an egoist in part because his subjectivity is very intense. He is a man of deep feelings, and he cannot prevent his emotions from coming to the surface. His genius is seen in the power he possesses for impressing his own personality on others. No doubt this is one reason why the specific 'Pauline Theology' fell into neglect in the church immediately after the Apostle's death. It needed the magnetic influence of his presence to keep men in touch with great and difficult ideas that were so much in advance of the age.

Then, closely associated with this egoism as being very personal to the Apostle, but as the opposite pole in his character, balancing it and keeping it clear of the septic influence of selfishness, we have his warm-hearted affection for his converts. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the letters he addressed to his Macedonian friends at Philippi and Thessalonica. If he is egoistic enough to write 'be ye imitators of us,' he is generous enough to add, 'ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia.' If he speaks of having been 'gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children,' he is perfectly honest in adding, 'we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us.' That is why the Apostle felt his enforced absence so keenly. He was devoted to these people, whom he had won by his short ministry among them, to a degree only possible with a man of large heart and most warm affectionateness.

What is regarded as the characteristically Pauline doctrine is not at all prominent in this Epistle. There are no definite utterances about the person of Christ and the atoning influence of his death such as we meet with in the later Epistles. That the flesh is the seat of sin, that we are helpless to work out our own salvation, that the law is of no use for this purpose, that Christians are free from the law's claims, that Gentiles are on a level with Jews in the Christian privileges, that justification is by faith—these well-known, specific Pauline doctrines are not touched upon, or if in some cases alluded to, are never expounded and enforced as in the Apostle's subsequent writings. On the other hand, they are never denied ; there is nothing inconsistent with them ; all that Paul here says is in full agreement with them ; some of them are actually hinted at, and others may be said to underlie statements or exhortations that imply them. We may feel sure that if Paul had written this Epistle at a later period of his life he would not have repressed his intense interest in these themes ; they would have burst out again and again, as the waters of a full fountain must overflow. Still the purpose of the Epistle was not to discuss such subjects, and his thoughts were not now drawn to them.

Taking the ideas of the Epistle as they occur, we see, in the first place, how vividly the thought of God is present to the Apostle's mind throughout. The very name 'God' occurs no less than thirty-six times, and the relation of Christians to God is emphatically stated again and again. The 'gospel of God' is the name of the Christian message, and the striking characteristic of the Thessalonians which is being celebrated among the sister churches is their 'faith to God-ward' (i. 8). This may be explained by the fact that they had been idolaters and had turned from idols unto God—'to serve a living and true God.' Jews who knew the God of their fathers were called on to accept Jesus as their Messiah ; but the heathen had to be brought to the knowledge of a spiritual

God as well as to receive the message about Jesus Christ. In the next place we see that the relation of Christians to Christ is also dwelt on. The church is described as being 'in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' The Apostle does not refer to our Lord's earthly life and teachings, but he mentions the death of Christ in two aspects of it. (1) As regards the Jews who brought it about and who are charged with the guilt of it. They 'both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drave out us' (ii. 15). (2) As regards Christians, who are appointed 'unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who *died for us*' (v. 9), literally died on our behalf. This implies a purpose in Christ's death, that it was not a mere murder, that it was more than martyrdom, that some benefit for Christians, the salvation just referred to, was the end to be obtained by the death of Christ. Thus even in this earliest Epistle the Apostle hints at his great doctrine of the cross of Christ. Still he does not explain and elaborate it here as he does later in the Epistle to the Romans. Then he mentions the resurrection of Christ as effected by God, saying 'whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus' (i. 10). But the dominant idea concerning Christ running through the whole Epistle is the expectation of his return to this world in great glory and power. This 'second coming' of Christ, known as the 'Parousia,' is the most prominent thought in the Epistle, in part because it was a matter of keen interest to the Thessalonians, but also because the Apostle himself set a high value upon it. It has been recently argued that it was the principal topic in the teaching of Jesus Christ himself, who, whenever he spoke of the kingdom of God, meant that great triumphant new order of the future which would be set up on his return to this world in glory with the angels[1]. While few will agree with that extreme view of the case, it must be admitted that the idea of Christ's return bulked largely in the thoughts of the early Christians. We meet with it

[1] See J. Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes.*

throughout the Epistles of Paul, though it is less prominent in the later than in the earlier Epistles. In John this expectation is based on the materialistic pictures of the Messianic Age which are found in Jewish Apocalypses. The triumph and splendour there portrayed, which were not realized among the humble scenes of our Lord's ministry on earth, were thought by his followers to be postponed to the time of his Second Advent. Thus the church was in danger of coming down to as earthly a conception of the Messianic blessings as that which the Jews themselves were holding at the time of Christ. What these Jews expected at the first coming of Christ the Christians were inclined to look for at his second coming. Of course it must not be supposed that the whole difference between Jew and Christian turned on the merely arithmetical question of a first or a second advent of the Messiah to accomplish precisely the same results. Jesus had revolutionized the whole conception of the kingdom of heaven and of the Christ who was to bring it about, lifting it into the atmosphere of the spiritual. Still, old Jewish notions clung to the Christian hope, and it was long before they were outgrown. The Thessalonians had received all their teaching about Christianity from Paul and his fellow missionaries; but they had not observed true proportions in their reception of it. They had seized on that idea of the second coming of Christ with avidity, and allowed it to work on their imaginations so as to colour and rule everything else. Paul too participated in the belief with the rest of the early Christians, though he kept it in its place. At this period he seems to have expected a visible return of Jesus Christ during his own lifetime. Later he came to anticipate death for himself followed by union with Christ in the realm of the blessed (see 2 Cor. v. 1–5; Phil. i. 21–25). As sharing the common Christian belief in the speedy second coming of Christ, the Apostle writes to the Thessalonians, to whom it means so much, in order to relieve their minds of needless

anxiety about their departed friends and to warn them so to live that they may be ready for the sudden appearance of their Lord at any moment—'as a thief in the night.' Now the question arises, was all this a delusion? Certainly Christ did not return in the visible way expected by the early Christians. But 'illusion' is a better word than 'delusion' with which to describe their condition. We are always being educated by illusions. 'Things are not what they seem.' Yet they exist. To primitive man the sun seems to rise and set; to all of us who know better it wears that appearance. Yet we are not fundamentally deluded about the appearance of the sun. The phenomena of day and night are real, and they do really depend on changing relations between the sun and the earth. Christ might come in other ways than were expected—in the overthrow of the Jewish persecuting power, in the spread of Christianity and the victory of his spirit over the world, in any judgement of evil, in any triumph of God of which he was the centre and source and vital power. Then, though the sensation of wonders appearing in the clouds would not be enjoyed, the real end of the second coming would be accomplished. But this was not so understood at the time. When Paul wrote about the Lord descending from heaven, with the shout, the voice of the Archangel, the trump of God, the rising of the dead—i. e. coming out of their graves—and the living being caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, all this would be taken literally. And when he added 'comfort one another with these words,' the consolation would be found in the vivid anticipation that these things were shortly about to happen in a visible, audible, external way exactly according to the literal meaning of the Apostle's language.

For the rest, the Epistle consists mainly of expressions of personal interest in the Thessalonians and practical exhortations concerning their conduct. The Apostle does not hesitate to congratulate his readers on their

full acceptance of the gospel message and loyalty to it. But while Christian graces are generally acknowledged, an increase in them is to be desired. Therefore Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to make progress, especially in the supreme Christian duty of love. This he urges more than once, saying, 'the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men' (iii. 12); and again, 'But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more' (iv. 9, 10). Then the fussiness and flightiness of those who are too taken up with the grand expectation to attend to their duty are rebuked, and they are urged to give their mind to their daily work. One effect of this great expectation should be sobriety and purity of life. Constant care must be taken not to lapse into the vices of heathendom. Altogether the life of the church, in its devotion, purity, and brotherly sympathy should be maintained and strengthened. Thus we see that the chief purpose of the Epistle is not to establish doctrine, as in Romans; nor to refute error, as in Galatians; nor to correct irregularities of conduct, as in 1 Corinthians; but to cheer, edify, and encourage the Christian life. Much the same purpose influenced the Apostle in sending the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and again several years later in writing to the neighbouring Macedonian church at Philippi. We do not go to such outpourings of the heart as to a quarry out of which to extract materials for the construction of a system of theology. In the first place they throw an interesting light on the characters of the writer and of the readers for whom they were primarily intended, and also on the condition of primitive Christianity; and then they serve for all time as guides and inspiring influences for the encouraging and uplifting of the Christian life.

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According to his custom Paul begins by thanking God for the good that he recognizes in the people he is addressing. They are much in his prayers, and when he prays for them he gives thanks also. Not only in their own province of Macedonia and in Paul's present abode, Achaia, but everywhere else, the wonderful story of their reception of the gospel and rejection of idols for the living God is famed abroad.

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Paul thanks God that the Thessalonians have received his message as no less than the word of God, and have become imitators of the churches in Judæa, having suffered persecution as they too had suffered. This leads to a short digression in which the wickedness of the Jews in killing the Lord Jesus and carrying on other cruelties is denounced.

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II THESSALONIANS

Genuineness.

More doubt has been felt about the genuineness of this Epistle than concerning the question of the origin of 1 Thessalonians, and in the present day there are critics who reject it while accepting the earlier Epistle as Paul's—Hilgenfeld, for instance. There is no objection on the ground of lack of early references. On the contrary, this Epistle appears to have been in the hands of more ancient writers than any whose testimony can be cited for the use of 1 Thessalonians. It seems to have been known to Polycarp of Smyrna, who was a very old man when he suffered martyrdom in the middle of the second century. Writing to the neighbouring church of Philippi, he says: 'But I have not found any such thing in you'—i. e. covetousness or idolatry, which he has just been denouncing—'neither have heard thereof, among whom the blessed Paul laboured, who were his epistles[1] in the beginning. For he boasteth of you in all those churches which alone at that time knew God[2].'

This seems to be a reference to Paul's words in our Epistle, 'so that we glory in you in the churches of God' (2 Thess. i. 4). It is true that the application of the words by Polycarp is to the Philippians, while Paul wrote them in a letter to the Thessalonians. But the two

[1] No doubt a reference to 2 Cor. iii. 2, 'Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men.'

[2] Polycarp, *Epist. to Phil.* xi.

churches were comprehended in the one title 'Macedonian,' and we know that when Paul did what he here mentions, and celebrated the praises of these churches, it was under their common name, as when he says to the Corinthians, 'we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia' (2 Cor. viii. 1). In another place Polycarp uses the expression, 'count not such as enemies, but restore them as frail and erring members[1],' which appears to be an echo of the Apostle's words, 'count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother' (2 Thess. iii. 15). Then Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century, says: 'He shall come from heaven with glory, when the man of apostasy, who speaks strange things against the Most High, shall venture to do unlawful deeds on the earth against us the Christians[2].' This seems to be a clear reference to the mysterious passage in our Epistle about 'the man of sin' (2 Thess. ii. 1–12). He also has the expression 'the man of sin' in an earlier passage, where he is discussing the Second Advent[3]. Irenæus is the first writer to mention the Epistle by name. After quoting various other passages from Paul's Epistles, which he duly ascribes to that apostle, he writes, 'And again, in the second to the Thessalonians, speaking of Antichrist, he says, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus Christ shall slay with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the presence of his coming; [even him] whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders[4]".' This passage is evidently taken from 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9. A little later Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian quote from the Epistle. It was in Marcion's collection of Paul's Epistles, and admitted into the Canon of the 'Muratorian Fragment[5].' Both the old Latin and the Syriac versions,

[1] Polycarp, *Epist. to Phil.* xi. [2] *Dialogue with Trypho*, cx.
[3] ibid. xxxii. [4] *Against Heresies*, iii. 7. [5] See p. 18.

dating back to the second century of the Christian era, contain our Epistle. No one seems to have questioned it in ancient times. Eusebius, who discriminated between different books in the Canon, having one list in which he placed those that were universally accepted and another for the books which some questioned, placed 2 Thessalonians in the first list. This most learned and fair-minded historian, writing in the early part of the fourth century, and having the famous library of Pamphilus at Cæsarea, since scattered and destroyed, at his service, knew of no objections to the Epistle on the part of any more ancient author. Thus antiquity speaks with unbroken unanimity in favour of accepting the Epistle as a genuine production of the Apostle Paul.

When we examine the Epistle itself we see much that speaks for its genuineness. In many respects it resembles 1 Thessalonians. We have the same affectionateness of manner and the same earnestness and personal interest in the readers that arrest our attention in the study of the earlier Epistle. The writer is still grateful for the good progress that the church has made, and breaks out into the language of thanksgiving on this account repeatedly. At the same time he finds it necessary to administer practical exhortations and admonitions. All this strikes us as very natural and real; it is difficult to discover the motive for writing it if the Epistle is not genuine.

No objection appears to have been raised till early in the nineteenth century. In the year 1804 a German critic, Schmidt, first suggested doubts on the ground of the strangeness of the teaching about 'the man of sin,' the apparent contradiction between the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, the singularity of the precaution against fraud at the end of our Epistle, and other features of the Epistle. The attack was renewed in 1839 by Kern, and then pushed home by Baur, who was followed by the Tübingen School in rejecting the

Epistle, and by some not of that school. The principal Continental scholars of recent times who have discussed the question may be arranged as follows:—

Denying the genuineness: Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, Holsten, Hausrath, Pfleiderer, Steck, Holtzmann, Weizsäcker, von Soden.

In favour of the genuineness: Lipsius, Hofmann, Weiss, Renan, Reuss, Sabatier, Godet.

Most English and American scholars accept the Epistle.

The objections to its genuineness arrange themselves under four heads:—

1. The relation of this Epistle to 1 Thessalonians. It is said to be for the most part but a repetition and expansion of the earlier work; and yet it is accused of contradicting statements about the Second Advent found in that work.

2. The peculiar statements about 'the man of sin.' These are said to be not like Paul, and derived from the Apocalypse.

3. The supposed reference to a forged epistle in ii. 2. At so early a date this would not be looked for. The authentication at the close is also said to wear a suspicious appearance.

4. Certain variations of style that are said to be un-Pauline.

1. The relation of this Epistle to 1 Thessalonians comes to be considered as the first objection. Now it seems somewhat inconsistent to accuse it at once of imitating the earlier Epistle and of contradicting that work. Whether the contradiction be real or only supposed, the very appearance of it shews a certain independence of mind that could not be allowed to the mere imitator. There are close resemblances between Galatians and Romans, which are both allowed to be Paul's writings, and again between Ephesians and Colossians, and between 1 Timothy and Titus. The latter Epistles even, when denied to Paul, are generally allowed to have

both come from the same pen. The contents of our Epistle suggest that it was written very soon after the earlier Epistle. When the same man is writing a second letter to the same correspondents dealing with the same subjects shortly after his first letter to them, it is reasonable to expect to see a good many expressions common to both letters. This is really no serious objection.

Now what of the contradiction? In 1 Thessalonians Paul had warned the church to be on its guard, watching and ready for the sudden advent of Christ, which would be like the coming of a thief in the night (1 Thess. v. 2 ff.). But now the principal purpose of 2 Thessalonians is to shew that Christ cannot be coming immediately, because certain events must occur first, and thus, to dissuade the readers from living in an attitude of daily expectancy, to the neglect of the common duties of life (see 2 Thess. ii. 1–12). Is there any contradiction here? Did Paul say in the First Epistle that Christ was coming immediately? There is no statement to that effect from beginning to end of the Epistle. What he does suggest is that Christ will come suddenly, without warning; he says nothing about the time when that startling event will occur. The illustration of the thief in the night implies that we do not know when it will take place. Jesus Christ uses the same image to teach this very lesson, when he says, 'But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh' (Matt. xxiv. 43, 44). Jesus had distinctly said, 'But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only' (verse 36). It is not likely that the Apostle would have professed knowledge of a question concerning which his Master had confessed ignorance. The difference between the two Epistles is this: in the first, Paul teaches that Christ will come

suddenly and without warning, whenever that may be; in the second, he teaches that it cannot be just yet.

We must allow then that there is no actual contradiction on this point between the two Epistles. Nevertheless this is not to entirely remove the difficulty. The mental attitude of the writer in the Second Epistle is very different from that in the First. Although in 1 Thessalonians Paul does not say that the coming of Christ is near at hand, he certainly implies that it may be. Indeed, he rather suggests his own expectation that Christ will come very soon. The advice to be constantly on the watch implies a belief that something is likely to happen before long. It is only reasonable if the possibility of a speedy occurrence is allowed. When once we are assured that this cannot yet come about the requirement of instant and continuous watching for it ceases. Therefore we must allow that when Paul wrote the First Epistle, the idea of the intermediate occurrence, the appearing of 'the man of sin,' was not in his mind. But when the Second Epistle was written, this idea was brought forward prominently and made the chief object of contemplation, with the express purpose of postponing the expectation of the coming of Christ. Such a change of attitude as the introduction of this new idea involved could not but gravely modify the readers' views of the admonition to watchfulness, accompanied as it was by that arresting image of the thief in the night, to keep people on the tip-toe of expectation. But to allow of this is not to disprove the Pauline authorship of the Epistle. Could not the Apostle's own thought be moving on? We may suppose that during the interval his mind had been brooding over the subject; perhaps he had been reading some Jewish Apocalypse[1], with the result that he seemed to see it more clearly and so was able to fill out the interval of intervening time to some extent. This is

[1] See note on 2 Thess. ii. 1–12.

only in accordance with the growth of revelation which we see going on throughout the Bible. There is no difficulty in believing that it was taking place in the experience of the great Apostle.

But there is a serious difficulty in the way of accepting this as an explanation. In the midst of the passage about 'the man of sin' Paul says, 'Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?' (2 Thess. ii. 5). Then this is no new revelation, after all. Paul had told the Thessalonians of these very things when he was with them. When was that? It is just possible that he had carried out the desire of his heart, so touchingly recorded in the First Epistle, and paid a flying visit to Thessalonica between the writing of the two Epistles. In that case the difficulty vanishes. Paul could then have given the instruction which he now finds it necessary to explain more fully and enforce again. There is no reference in Acts to any such journey, but we know from 2 Cor. xii. that Paul made many journeys that are not recorded in that historical work. If, however, this was not the case we may allow for the changes of treatment of a subject which occur in a thinking mind, so that ideas which once were prominent may fall back for a time into obscurity, and then emerge later on into prominence again.

2. It is said that the peculiar statements about 'the man of sin' contained in this Epistle, together with the whole apocalyptic passage in which they occur, are not at all like Paul's teaching elsewhere and shew dependence on the Apocalypse. This objection may be broken up into two parts: first, the un-Pauline character of the passage; second, the supposed dependence on the Apocalypse. (1) As to the first part of the objection, it simply means that Paul does not discuss this obscure subject on any other occasion. But surely he might treat it once, and only once, if special circumstances called for the discussion. While he dwelt much on the coming glory of the

victory of Christ in his teaching throughout his ministry, his mind did not frequently turn to apocalyptic subjects. That must be allowed. But the circumstances of the Thessalonians at the moment demanded attention to them. These Christians had got so ill-proportioned a conception of Christianity that it was for them primarily a doctrine of the Second Advent. To correct the notions of people who had that way of thinking it was necessary to be as explicit as possible. Therefore the Apostle deals with this matter, not so much because it is a favourite theme with him, but rather because his correspondents require to be set right concerning it. (2) Then as regards the further difficulty that the idea of 'the man of sin' in particular, but also the general apocalyptic picture, are derived from the Book of the Revelation, it should be observed that the case is by no means proved. Indeed, some elements of Paul's teaching here are not at all harmonious with that book. It seems pretty clear that the hindrance to 'the man of sin' of which he writes must be the Roman Government, then restraining the outbreak of Jewish antagonism to Christianity. Thus Rome is regarded favourably as an instrument in God's hand for the protection of His people. But in the Book of the Revelation Rome is Babylon drunk with the blood of the saints, and judgement is denounced against the imperial city for her persecution of the Christians. Besides, there is a peculiar individuality in this mysterious 'man of sin' which is not found in the Revelation and belongs only to our Epistle among New Testament books. The resemblance may be accounted for in another way. It is now widely conceded that the New Testament book of the Revelation is based on some earlier Jewish apocalyptic writing. That writing, or rather the current ideas reproduced by it, may have been familiar to Paul, and he may have adopted them and applied them in a Christian sense. We must not suppose that the last book of our Bible, since it is unique in Scripture, is also unique in

all literature. On the contrary, it belongs to a kind of composition that was very popular at the time when it was written. It is exceptional in its Christian inspiration, not in its literary form or doctrinal character. Even in the New Testament there are other apocalyptic utterances. A great part of what Paul here writes may be regarded as a development of our Lord's own teaching on the subject of his Second Advent as that is recorded in the Synoptic Gospels.

3. The reference to a supposed forged epistle (ii. 2) and the emphatic authentication of our Epistle at the close (iii. 17) are pointed out as suspicious signs. Let us look at the earlier point first. Paul, in exhorting his readers to be calm, writes, 'to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, *or by epistle as from us*, as that the day of the Lord is now present' (ii. 2). Some have taken the Epistle here mentioned for our 1 Thessalonians, and have supposed that the church had misapprehended that communication, gathering from it the conclusion that the return of Christ was to be expected immediately. We can very well understand how such a mistake might have been made. After reading Paul's words about the sudden coming of Christ like a thief in the night, with the accompanying picture of the dead rising and the living, among whom the writer included himself, being caught up to meet their Lord in the air, nothing would seem more natural to believers than to be keenly excited with the expectation of seeing these wonders occurring very speedily. This application of Paul's words fits in well with the general situation. But it cannot be a true interpretation of them. The word 'as' is fatal to it. An 'epistle *as* from us' cannot mean 'an epistle which we wrote'; it must mean 'an epistle which appears or pretends to be from us.' If Paul had meant to refer to his former letter, why did he not write, 'the letter I sent you previously,' or other words to that effect? Still we

need not infer from his language in this place that he knew of the existence of a forged letter. He may only mean to suggest a supposititious case. However the impulse may come—whether by spirit, or by word, or by a letter purporting to be written by the Apostle himself—the Thessalonians should not permit themselves to be disturbed by it. The very mentioning of these alternatives implies that he is dealing with conceivable hypotheses rather than with known facts. If we must take his words as a statement of facts, it becomes necessary to do so throughout. Thus we have to conclude that three different kinds of influences were at work—represented by (1) 'spirit,' (2) 'word,' (3) 'a letter.' But the alternative form of the sentence with the conjunction 'or' excludes that interpretation. And yet the phrase certainly implies the possibility of a forgery, if not the probability of it. This is sufficiently remarkable. Who could be forging a letter in the Apostle's name so soon after he had been at Thessalonica? What could induce any one to do so merely in order to lead the readers to believe in the immediate coming of Christ? This is very strange. We can only conclude that there were cross currents and various movements in the early church of which we have no knowledge. Anyhow the statement lies before us in our Epistle. Now if Paul did not write it, somebody else must have done so. What could have induced such a person to have gratuitously cumbered his pages with words that would only add to the difficulty of passing off his production as a genuine apostolic writing? It may be said that he wanted to discredit 1 Thessalonians, while himself setting out a different idea of the Second Advent from that in the earlier Epistle. But surely if this were his object he would have stated it more explicitly.

Now let us turn to the concluding authentication, 'The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write' (iii. 17). It is said that

this expression reveals a suspicious anxiety on the part of the writer to have the Epistle accepted as a genuine work of Paul. Would the Apostle need to say this? The sentence must be read in the light of that previously considered. If Paul knew of the existence of a forged letter, or if he even suspected the possibility of such a thing, he would naturally wish to authenticate a genuine letter beyond the possibility of mistake. Thus the two passages throw light on one another and support each other's genuineness. If the Epistle is not genuine, this concluding statement with its pretended token is nothing less than a barefaced falsehood of the most inexcusable character. 'Pseudonymity' is not the word to apply here. It is a case of downright forgery, and that with a daring lie added to give it credence. Is it possible that anybody who could write the lofty moral and spiritual sentences contained in this Epistle could be guilty of such wickedness? A person of such a sinister character would not trouble himself to commit forgery in order to convey such teaching as we have here. He would be incapable of giving the teaching and he could not be credited with a desire to do so. The case is entirely different from that of the common practice of apocalyptic and other writers in affixing the name of some great personage to their own works—as for instance in the case of the so-called *Apocalypse of Enoch*. In such cases there is no solemn authentication, no plain declaration that the document is a letter coming with the authorizing mark of the person whose name is attached to it.

But, it is said, the phrase 'every epistle' is inappropriate at this early time, in what appears as only the second of the writer's letters, since it implies the existence of a number of epistles. We must remember, however, that we have no proof that our thirteen Pauline Epistles are all the letters the Apostle ever wrote. Did he never write any letters during all those eighteen years of Christian life and work that preceded the sending of our two Thessa-

lonian Epistles? We have references, apparently, to more than one lost epistle. Besides, in writing here Paul states a rule of his correspondence of which he desires his readers to take notice. He does not say how often it has been applied in the past. It is for universal application, and this should be noticed in the present instance and for the future. That is really all that his words mean. In point of fact the Apostle did authenticate his letters in the way he here describes. We have several clear examples, e. g. 'The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand' (1 Cor. xvi. 21); 'See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand' (Gal. vi. 11); 'The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand' (Col. iv. 18); 'I Paul write it with mine own hand' (Philem. 19). We know that at a later time the Apostle's footsteps were dogged by malignant enemies who would spare no means of thwarting his plans and hindering his work. We do not know how far suspicion and antagonism had gone already, but these cases of authentication shew that Paul did find it necessary to guard against the palming off of forged documents under his name.

4. In the last place there are phrases and expressions not in accordance with what we know from his undoubted writings to be Paul's literary style. This question can only be thoroughly examined by means of a discussion of the Greek terms which would be out of place here. Two points may be noticed, however. Thus twice we read, 'we are bound to give thanks to God' (i. 3, ii. 13), whereas in 1 Thessalonians, instead of this expression, we have twice simply, 'we give thanks to God,' or 'we thank God' (1 Thess. i. 2, ii. 13). Then this Epistle is characterized by a frequent use of the term 'the Lord' for God, which elsewhere Paul is not accustomed to employ, excepting in citations from the Old Testament. Thus we have 'the Lord of peace' (2 Thess. iii. 16), instead of 'the God of peace' (1 Thess. v. 23); 'beloved of the Lord' (2 Thess. ii. 13), instead of 'beloved of God' (1 Thess. i. 4);

'the Lord is faithful' (2 Thess. iii. 3) corresponding to 'faithful is he that calleth you' (1 Thess. v. 24); 'the Lord direct your hearts' (2 Thess. iii. 5), which we may compare with the sentence, 'Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you' (1 Thess. iii. 11). Such differences may be accounted for by a temporary change in habits of language, perhaps under the influence of some book that is being read at the time or some person with whom the writer is thrown into contact. If Paul had been consulting the Old Testament prophecies about 'the day of the Lord' in view of a letter which was especially designed to deal with that subject he may have caught the prophet's phrase. Or we may account for the change in another way. Possibly Paul employed a fresh amanuensis for the Second Epistle. We do not know what latitude he allowed his literary assistants. It may be that certain variations of style came in at their instigation. At all events, it will never do to urge these small points as disproofs of the genuineness of the Epistle in face of the very powerful evidence we have in its favour. On the whole, therefore, in spite of all that has been brought forward on the other side, there seems good reason for resting assured that we have here a true, original work of the Apostle Paul.

The Objects of the Epistle.

The Apostle's main purpose in writing this Epistle will be apparent from the considerations we have been just looking at. It is manifest, too, in the Epistle itself. Like the earlier Epistle this short missive is especially concerned with our Lord's Second Advent. But there is a difference of standpoint in regarding it—as we have seen already. In 1 Thessalonians Paul has to comfort his readers with regard to friends whom they have lost by death, assuring them that these departed friends will not miss the

privilege of taking part in the great event. Now he has to warn his readers against the expectation of its immediate occurrence. How this expectation has been engendered the Apostle does not say; apparently he does not know. It may have been by means of what was taken for an inspired utterance of prophecy in the church; possibly some saying, attributed to Paul or one of the apostles, perhaps even said to have been uttered by Jesus Christ during his life on earth, has been conveyed to Thessalonica and appealed to as an announcement of the speedy coming of Christ; or, lastly, Paul supposes it possible that the authority is some letter purporting to have emanated from him—though, as a matter of fact, he has written no such letter. Be that as it may—the Apostle leaves the question open, not caring how it might be settled—the notion having spread abroad in the church and being bolstered up by some shew of authority, it becomes necessary to save the Thessalonians from their delusion, which has brought the church into a state of agitation that is very inimical to sober work and the healthy development of the graces of Christianity. A feverish anxiety about the awful Apocalypse is throwing all other subjects into the shade. Men cannot even give attention to their daily tasks. This mischievous condition of affairs must be corrected. For one thing, when the disappointment comes, as come it must, since the eager anticipation is founded on a delusion, there will be a terrible reaction, in which faith itself will be imperilled. This is always the penalty of fanaticism. While it lasts it sweeps all before it with a flood of emotion; but when it is disappointed and disconcerted the ebb of the tide leaves a dreary and desolate region strewn with wrecked hopes. There is no collapse so desperate as that of inflated enthusiasm when the bubble is pricked. From this miserable end to their highly wrought anticipations Paul desires to save his readers by leading them to more sober ways of thinking. But this is not all. Even

during the present state of elation mischief is brewing. Such a condition of mind is morbid. Total absorption in the contemplation of a vain vision is making idle dreamers of its victims. Therefore, after correcting the noxious delusion, Paul will come down to the consideration of very mundane duties and urge a diligent attention to them.

The process by which the Apostle sets to work to correct the Thessalonian error is very remarkable. It must have been quite startling to his readers. Though he appeals to their memory of what he had said when with them, this could not have been as explicit as the statements he now proceeds to set forth with some fullness of detail. He uses the veil of figurative language because he cannot tell but that his letter may be intercepted and fall into unfriendly hands before reaching its destination in the north. But, difficult as it is for us to thread our way through the maze of vague hints, since the key is lost, no doubt the first readers of the Epistle would understand perfectly well what was meant. Three persons, or powers, are to be recognized—one of evil influence—'the man of sin,' 'the mystery of iniquity'; the second keeping this back and preventing it from breaking out to effect its malignant purpose; the third, the might that is to master and overthrow the dark and dreadful power after its great outburst. It is now generally agreed that the evil power is Judaism, or the Jews regarded as one in their united opposition to the Christians; and that the restraining influence is the Roman government, which in maintaining justice and keeping order prevented the Jews from persecuting the Christians. The third influence is Christ coming in his power and glory, no symbolism here disguising the prophecy. Thus the Apostle wishes the Thessalonians to understand that the Jews, now prevented by Rome from carrying out their will against the Christians, will at some subsequent time be released from that restraint; but

when they are about to do their worst Christ will come and destroy their power. As this has not yet happened he cannot be coming immediately. Therefore the Thessalonians are to see that their too eager anticipation of that event is a mistake.

But, it will be said, after all was not Paul himself labouring under almost as great a delusion as that from which he wished to liberate his readers? Did the removal of the power of Rome ever occur to give Judaism an opportunity for the more violent persecution of Christianity? Evidently Paul was expecting this to happen comparatively soon, though not so speedily as the Thessalonians imagined; and his anticipation of the coming of Christ to overthrow the power of wickedness was not satisfied with something that would not happen till 2,000 years had passed away. We have seen that Paul evidently shared the universal belief of the early church, that Christ would return during the lifetime of the generation of Christians then on earth. But he never made this a part of his gospel message. What he did preach with emphasis in this connexion was that the living, risen Christ would certainly return in judgement and for the deliverance of his people. Further, when he saw people expecting the great event to happen immediately he declared that this could not be. But he never made it part of his message to announce the Second Advent as an event to happen during his own lifetime. He may have expected this; but that is another matter. The most thoroughgoing champion of Paul is not called upon to maintain the doctrine of a sort of papal infallibility for his hero. Fallibility in regard to many ideas which do not enter into the Apostle's message will not set the message aside.

While the subject just discussed evidently afforded the main reason for the dispatch of this short letter, the opportunity was seized by the Apostle to treat of other subjects with which he was deeply concerned when

thinking of his friends at Thessalonica. They were still suffering from persecution; and the Apostle wished to cheer and encourage them in the midst of their troubles. It was hard that this should be their experience so shortly after the formation of the church; but it was wonderful that the church should have been so firm in faith and so thoroughly consolidated as to be able to withstand the long-continued trial. Only a few months before its members were heathens like their neighbours; now they are Christians under persecution shewing the spirit of martyrs. Here is striking testimony to the success of the Apostle's missionary efforts and to the power of that new life which it had brought. This is the subject with which the Epistle opens. Then, after dealing with the delusion about the Second Advent, it closes with some practical directions concerning the conduct of certain disorderly members of the church. These people are refusing to work, and imposing on the kindness of the brethren, so as to obtain a livelihood by drawing from the common funds provided for the poor and needy. Paul again reminds his readers—as he had done in the earlier epistle—that he had supported himself by his own manual labour when he was staying at Thessalonica. That was an example which he expected to be followed. The lazy busybodies must not be allowed to feed on the gifts of the charitable. The proper thing to do is to cease to have any communication with people who behave so meanly; still, only for a time. The Christian spirit must not fail in the treatment of such unworthy members, even when they prove to be recalcitrant. A man who acts in the way described is not to be treated as an enemy, but kindly admonished, with a recognition that even he is a brother. Such advice brings out the affectionate, merciful, kindly spirit which was in the Apostle and which he wished to see cultivated by the Thessalonians, while at the same time it shews his practical good sense and his anxiety for the preservation of order and the suppression of abuses.

Date and Place of Origin.

The data already discussed point pretty clearly to the time and circumstances of the origin of the Epistle. Nevertheless it has been maintained that this Epistle was written earlier than our 1 Thessalonians. The principal reason for that view is that it bears evidence of having been composed very shortly after the Apostle's presence among his friends, in the newly organized church, and his personal teaching of them. But, apart from the suggestion that he may have paid a flying visit to Thessalonica of which we have no notice in the history, it should be observed that the Epistles may both have been written nearly about the same time, and therefore the second of them as well as the first but a few months after the founding of the Macedonian churches. The advice, 'Hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by *epistle* of ours' (ii. 15), certainly implies that the Thessalonians had already received some letter from Paul when these words were written. The simplest explanation of them is that the letter referred to was our first Epistle. Then the treatment of the Second Advent in the two Epistles best suits the chronological order commonly given to them. The surprise and disappointment at the occurrence of death in the newly formed ranks of the brotherhood, discussed in 1 Thessalonians, would be likely to occur early in the history of the church, if at all. On the other hand, the misapprehension about the time of the Second Advent, and the restless state of expectancy referred to in 2 Thessalonians, would very naturally come in at a rather later period. We are not bound to insert any considerable interval between the two letters. If the reference to an 'epistle as from us' (2 Thess. ii. 2) applied to our 1 Thessalonians, it would require time for the earlier letter to have reached the church and produced its impression, and for news of this to have come back to Paul before he wrote 2 Thessa-

lonians. That would imply quite an appreciable interval. But if, as seems more probable from the use of the phrase '*as* from us,' Paul means some other letter not really his own, though pretending to be from him, the existence of which he knows, or which he imagines may have been written, this argument falls to the ground. It is quite possible that the news of the state of the church, which called forth our Epistle, reached the Apostle very soon after the dispatch of the first Epistle. In that case the second may have followed close behind it. The same two companion missionaries, Silvanus and Timothy, are associated with the Apostle in both Epistles. As I Thessalonians was written from Corinth, early in Paul's long residence in that city, probably this second Epistle was also dispatched from the same place, and perhaps also during the early part of the Apostle's time there. Thus we have the year A.D. 53, or at latest 54, according to the accepted chronology, for the probable date of our Epistle.

Characteristics.

The same elementary nature of the ideas and practical tone of the writing, which were seen in the earlier Epistle, is found in this shorter document. There are no arguments such as we meet with in Romans and Galatians, and very little is said about the doctrinal side of Christianity, that little coming in by way of allusion rather than in the form of direct statements. The thought of God is prominent here, as it was in I Thessalonians, and in a way that can be well appreciated when we recollect that the readers had but recently been rescued from polytheism and idolatry and brought into the knowledge of the one spiritual God. The 'man of sin's' great crime is that he 'exalteth himself against all that is called God,' 'sitteth in the temple of God,' 'setting himself forth as God.' The enemies 'know not God.' It is the privilege of the Christians to be under the blessing of God, whom

they know as their Father — 'the Father' and 'our Father.' Jesus Christ is often referred to in close relation with God. Thus the opening salutation unites 'God the Father' with 'the Lord Jesus Christ' as the source of grace and peace (i. 2); again, later, grace is attributed in common to God and Christ (verse 12). 'The Spirit,' as the source of sanctification, is mentioned in association with 'God' and 'our Lord Jesus Christ' (ii. 13); but there is no elaboration of statement concerning the mutual relation of the three. The Epistle contains no reference to the death or resurrection of Christ, nor does it mention justification, though it lays stress on the value of faith (i. 3: 'We are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your *faith* groweth exceedingly,' &c.). On the other hand, prominence is given to the exaltation of Christ and the great things he will do when the day of his manifestation has come. The Second Advent entirely overshadows the First Advent, though the frequent use of the human name 'Jesus' implies the earthly ministry of our Lord.

The same thankful spirit that was manifested in the earlier writing appears here also. The Apostle has but little fault to find with his Macedonian friends, and much good progress and steadfastness under trial for which to offer them congratulations and to give thanks to God. The persecutions they are enduring call out his sympathy, together with his admiration for their fidelity.

But one marked change may be noticed in the tone of the Apostle's mind. He is more stern and severe in his denunciation of the opponents of the gospel. Christ will come 'in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus' (i. 8). These people are to 'suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord,' &c. 'The Lord Jesus shall slay' 'the lawless one' 'with the breath of his mouth.' It looks as though the continuance of the opposition and the growing spite of the

opponents had roused the Apostle's indignation and moved him to utter language of an unusually drastic nature. In this Epistle, perhaps more than in any other, Paul approaches the tone and temper of the Hebrew prophets.

At the same time the warm affectionateness of the Apostle comes out in this short letter, as in everything he wrote. It is deeply rooted in his nature. A man of large-hearted kindliness, he is continually overflowing with sympathy and affection. Even his rebukes are meant in love. After describing the treatment to be meted out to the tiresome, idle busybody, he is careful to add, 'and yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.' That is Paul writing from the heart.

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

Salutation, i. 1, 2.

Paul, associating with himself his two travelling companions, Silvanus and Timothy, as in the previous Epistle, addresses the divinely ordered church of the Thessalonians and wishes them grace and peace from God and Christ.

Congratulations for fidelity under difficulties, i. 3–12.

According to his custom Paul begins by expressing his thankfulness for the good things he has heard about his friends, their faith and love, and especially their patience under persecution. The enemies who work this mischief will certainly suffer severe punishment. Meanwhile the Apostle prays for the highest blessings to come to the church, that the Lord Jesus may be glorified in them.

The mistake about the Parousia, ii. 1–12.

The readers are warned against being disturbed by the delusion of anticipating the immediate coming of Christ. There must be a falling away first and the manifestation of 'the man of sin,' who is at present under restraint. When the restraining influence is removed, the evil power

will break out, only to be destroyed by Christ, who will then appear. Meanwhile those who are under the influence of this mysterious evil power are condemned to believe a lie.

Further thanksgiving and exhortation, ii. 13–17.

Paul cannot but express his thankfulness for the Divine call of the Thessalonians. He exhorts them to steadfastness, and prays that they may be cheered and strengthened.

Prayer and Confidence, iii. 1–5.

The Apostle asks for his readers' prayers that his missionary work may be fruitful and that he may be delivered from his opponents. He has great confidence in them, and prays that they may be blessed with love and patience.

Admonition against disorderly conduct, iii. 6–15.

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Benediction and Salutation, iii. 16–18.

The Apostle prays for peace and the Lord's presence with his readers. He concludes with his invariable token, a salutation in his own handwriting, and so prays that the grace of Christ may be with them.

GALATIANS

Who were the Galatians?

Galatia proper was a compact district towards the north of Asia Minor, about 200 miles long from east to west, and 100 miles wide, dreary and monotonous, and afflicted with a severe winter climate. Its name was derived from the Gauls, warrior tribes who migrated from Western Europe in the third century and conquered the native Phrygian population. They came as savages from the woods, and at first lived a nomadic life with their flocks and herds, making the original population work for them in the fields as serfs. But, as was inevitable, in course of time the two races mixed. The advancing tide of Roman conquest absorbed the kingdom of Galatia; according to the custom and policy of the great victors with their genius for government, first under a native tributary king and then as an integral part of the empire, with Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus for its chief cities. This was the condition in which it was to be found at the time of Paul's journeys in Asia Minor.

Now until recently it has been generally held that Galatia proper was the region where the Apostle had planted the churches to which our Epistle was directed, and that the Galatians therein addressed were the descendants of the settlers from Gaul. This view is still maintained in Germany by some scholars, such as Weiss, Lipsius, and Sieffert. Under the powerful influence of Bishop Lightfoot it came to be almost universally accepted in England. Lightfoot drew attention to their Celtic sensuousness as inclining Paul's correspondents to accept the external and ritual elements of Judaism, for doing which the Apostle so sternly rebukes them, and again,

the Celtic fickleness to which Paul is supposed to refer in his expostulations when he writes, 'I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel' (i. 6), and 'O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you? &c.' (iii. 1.)

But another view that has been maintained by Renan, Hausrath, Weizsäcker, Pfleiderer, Zahn, and other scholars on the Continent, is now being widely accepted in Great Britain owing to the arguments of Professor Ramsay, the greatest authority on the geography and antiquities of Asia Minor. In New Testament times the title Galatia was applied by the Romans to a province which included the old Gallic kingdom and recognized Ancyra as its capital, but also extended further south into great parts of Phrygia, Isauria, Pisidia, and Lycaonia; and thus included Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, the cities in which Paul planted churches during what we call his first missionary journey. If we can accept this theory it will throw a flood of light on the origin and early history of the churches addressed in our Epistle. Instead of the obscure people in the north, of whose conversion and early Christian history we know absolutely nothing beyond what might be gathered from the Epistle itself, if it had been directed to them, we have communities that are well known to us from the full and graphic narrative in Acts. We must not let this difference weigh with us in determining the question between the claims of the two Galatias; but no one can deny that it adds zest to the inquiry and makes the result one of more than merely geographical interest. Let us then look at the merits of the case.

1. **The Apostle's habitual style.** We find that Paul invariably wrote of the places he visited under the names of the Roman provinces to which they belonged. Thus we have Asia, Achaia, and Macedonia mentioned frequently in his Epistles. The latter name is particularly striking. In point of fact Philippi and Thessalonica were not

Macedonian cities. The indigenous race where these cities stood was Thracian, and the ancient kingdom of Macedon lay further to the north-west. But a Roman citizen himself, and greatly interested in the imperial idea, Paul would not commit the barbarism of calling the inhabitants of these places Thracians; he always addressed them as Macedonians. It is not to be denied that if he were addressing the people of North Galatia he would call them Galatians, for they belonged to the same province as the inhabitants of South Galatia. But it is equally certain that if he were writing to the people of the south part of the province, though these were not of Gallic descent, and therefore ethnologically not Galatian, he would not use any local names, but, according to his invariable custom, would address them by the title of their province in the Roman Empire, and therefore call them 'Galatians.'

Then there are two or three special reasons why he would not depart from his settled habit in this place, why here in particular—if he were writing to the four cities—he would use the Roman provincial title. In the first place, he was addressing a group of churches drawn from different primitive races. Some were Phrygians, others were Lycaonians. There was no one original local name to include all the churches. It would have been clumsy to specify the racial differences or the towns in each case when a personal appeal was made. The quick, vehement style of the Epistle would not allow of descending to details in this way. If a common name to cover all the four churches could be found, certainly it would be most convenient to use it. Seeing that in all other cases Paul used the name of the Roman province concerned, he would have that name ready to hand in this case, and it would be as appropriate and serviceable as it would be in accordance with his favourite view of the places he passed through, which consisted of large divisions of the Roman Empire.

Secondly, one of the local names was not particularly flattering. The title Phrygian was used with some contempt by those to whom it did not apply. In the dramatists it stands for a drunken slave. If the only name we had for a Londoner were 'Cockney,' or for an inhabitant of New York 'Yankee,' when we wished to speak courteously we should avoid the local title and seek for some more dignified mode of address. This would be more especially the case where people of different districts and names were included together. The people of Lycaonia would resent the inclusion of their cities under the name Phrygian, or the association of them with Phrygia in a common appeal. Paul, who was always courteous and anxious to be conciliatory, would not commit so complete a blunder in tact as to alienate his readers, at the outset, by employing what they might think an offensive title in addressing them.

Thirdly, the members of the Christian churches would be townsfolk, and for the most part the younger and more intelligent persons in the community, at all events the more liberal-minded, such as were open to the reception of new, startling ideas. The country folk—'pagans' or *peasants*, 'heathen' or *heath men*—were long the most backward to adopt the Christian faith. It must have happened that in the towns the conservative, old-fashioned people would have no patience with the preachers of a new religion, while eager, open-minded young souls would be more inclined to receive it. But now these latter would also be the people most influenced by the new ideas of the Roman Empire. Thus it would be the members of the Christian churches in particular who would like to be addressed as members of the Empire also, and so would welcome the Roman name of their province in a letter addressed to them.

It may be remarked, as a slight confirmation of this question of usage, that 1 Peter is addressed to sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and

Bithynia (1 Pet. i. 1). Now the last three of these names undoubtedly designate Roman provinces[1]. It is probable therefore that the name 'Galatia' does also. We cannot argue certainly from Peter's language to Paul's. But 1 Peter is remarkably Pauline in style and phrase.

2. **The silence of Acts.** We have a full account of the planting of the South Galatian churches, but no description of the origin of churches in North Galatia. It is true that Luke does not, by any means, include a complete itinerary of Paul's journeys in his history, for the remarkable catalogue of experiences that the Apostle gives in 2 Cor. xii. contains several items which do not find a place in the Acts of the Apostles. It must be allowed therefore that Paul might have visited North Galatia, and yet Luke might not have described his missionary tour in that remote region. He mentions two visits to Galatia (Acts xvi. 6; xviii. 23). If he means North Galatia, the former of these references may be the occasion of evangelizing that district. But he gives no details, and yet the first visit immediately preceded Paul's meeting with Luke at Troas. If that were the occasion of the founding of the Galatian churches, Paul would be full of it at the moment of meeting Luke. Our Epistle shews how enthusiastic his reception had been, and how promising the conversion of the Galatians. How then shall we account for Luke's curt treatment of the whole matter in Acts? It is much more easy to explain this slight mention of the district through which Paul was travelling, if it were an old mission-field which he was revisiting, than if he were engaged in breaking up new ground and founding new churches, amid the scenes of enthusiasm and with the great results that our Epistle testifies to in regard to the origin of the Galatian church. By itself this might not amount

[1] Pontus may be an exception, but it was constituted a Roman province under Nero.

to a very strong argument. But following the consideration of greatest weight, that Paul invariably used the names of Roman provinces when it was possible to do so, it is more likely that Luke's full account of the origin of the four churches in the south refers to the very churches addressed in the Epistle, than that he said nothing specific concerning Paul's Galatian churches, as would be the case if those churches were up in the north at Ancyra and the other Celtic cities.

3. **The remoteness of North Galatia.** The question of the locality to which the Epistle is directed has usually been studied from a distance, with reference only to books and documentary evidence. Professor Ramsay has a great advantage over his predecessors in the fact that he has examined it on the ground, travelling in person over the very course that Paul is supposed to have taken. The result is a strong persuasion that this could not have lain in the remote regions of North Galatia. In the first place, that is quite an outlying district, off the main lines of travel which the Apostle was in the habit of following. Unless we have good evidence to shew that he travelled up into these parts, the presumption is that he confined his ministry to the great Greek towns that are mentioned in Acts and the Epistles. A deflection of his course in order to evangelize the Celtic population of an obscure portion of the Roman Empire would be a variation from his regular mode of procedure, and therefore would need to be proved on evidence that is not yet forthcoming before it could be regarded as having taken place. Then Paul was in the habit of travelling along great Roman roads, the highways of commerce, or at all events main, well-known routes. That was the case when he visited the cities of Southern Galatia. But it would not have been so if he had gone to Northern Galatia. In that case he would have had to take a very rough and little frequented path over a wild mountainous district. Of course it is not to be asserted

that the Apostle would have shrunk from the toil and risk of such a journey, liable as it was to the attack of brigands, if he had seen good reason to take it. But the circumstances of his first visit to Galatia were somewhat peculiar, as he shews in his Epistles. He reminds his readers that it was on account of bodily illness that he came among them at all ; for this is apparently the meaning of the phrase, 'but ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the first time' (Gal. iv. 13). Professor Ramsay conjectures that this illness may have been a malarious fever contracted when down on the coast of the Levant, after coming from Crete, the neighbourhood being notoriously unhealthy ; and he supposes that, in order to throw it off and escape from the depressing and even dangerous atmosphere of the sea-shore, the Apostle struck north among the Balkans for the more salubrious climate of the great upland interior of Asia Minor. He further suggests that the reason why Mark left him at this point and returned to Jerusalem was that this was a change of plan, and not a part of the tour contemplated by the missionaries when they left Antioch. The hygienic idea underlying such an explanation of Paul's movements may strike us as rather modern. Still it must be acknowledged as possible. At all events, since sickness is given as the reason for going to Galatia this fact must be reckoned with when we are considering the course of the Apostle's journey. It would not seem likely that the bad state of his health would induce him to take the long and arduous journey into North Galatia, and therefore this is a point in favour of the South Galatian theory. Professor Ramsay considers that the strange experience described by Paul in 2 Cor. xii. refers to this time and to the illness then endured. The 'thorn—or rather *stake*—in the flesh' he takes to mean the piercing agony of pain in the head that is one of the symptoms of malarial fever. Certainly such a distressful

condition was not in itself likely to induce the Apostle to undertake what would have been his most toilsome and adventurous missionary journey.

4. **The greater suitability of the Epistle to the South Galatians.** Professor Ramsay's commentary is largely occupied with an elaboration of this idea. Going through the Epistle point by point, the author shews again and again how apt many of the Apostle's phrases and arguments are when read with reference to what we know of the four churches in the south, and how much less suitable they would be for North Galatia. Some of his arguments will strike the ordinary reader as subtle and far-fetched. But there are considerations which all of us can appreciate. Let us glance at one or two.

In the first place, it is impossible to read the Epistle observantly without being struck with the tone of authority which the Apostle employs throughout. It is true he is writing to his own converts. But that is the case in the Epistles to Corinth, Thessalonica, and Philippi; yet in none of those Epistles, not even when rebuking the Corinthians, does he shew so much the air of a master correcting his pupils. He wonders at the Galatians' great declension, and expostulates with them on account of it in no measured terms. Now there was no district evangelized by Paul where such a tone would be more likely to rouse a spirit of pride and resentment than Celtic Galatia. The Gauls regarded themselves as the aristocracy settled in the land, like our Norman barons, and despised the original inhabitants, those poor Phrygians whom they had conquered and subdued. To use such an expression as 'O foolish Galatians!' to such people would be peculiarly annoying. Paul had no fear of man before his eyes, and held to his convictions with the utmost tenacity, no matter who might dispute them. And yet he declared that he would become all things to all men if by any means he might win some, and his conduct on more

than one occasion evinces great tact. But to address the proud Gauls, as the Galatians in this Epistle are addressed, in language which might almost be compared to the scolding of little children, must strike us as anything but tactful. The case would be entirely different if Paul were addressing the Asiatics of Southern Galatia. Those Phrygians and other races of men who had been in subjection for generations, always emotional, sometimes fanatical, would need firm treatment, and could stand it.

Secondly, there are two points of law raised in the course of the Epistle, each of which would be more suitable to the southern than to the northern Galatians, one touching the law of adoption, the other the law of inheritance. The Greek custom of adoption carried with it certain religious rights and obligations. This had been so with the Roman custom in ancient times; but it had ceased to be the case before the commencement of the Christian era. Now in our Epistle the Apostle assumes that it is still a current custom. To be made a son of Abraham by adoption is to come into the privileges of the patriarch's covenant. This then implies a Greek civilization, rather than a Roman. Then, according to the old custom, to be an heir implied sonship, because the son had a right to inherit his father's property. Thus to make a will in favour of anybody implied the adoption of that person. This custom had ceased at Rome by Paul's time, but in our Epistle he argues that the possession of Abraham's faith carries with it the sonship, as the inheritance implies the adoption, saying, 'Know therefore that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham' (iii. 7). In writing to the Romans, referring to their different customs, he argues conversely, 'If children, then heirs' (Rom. viii. 16). Now the civilization of the southern cities was thoroughly Grecian; they had been part of the Macedonian kingdom, and were immersed in the ideas and habits of the Greeks before they had come under the Roman authority. But this was not the case

with Galatia proper, in the north. Here their own Celtic king had reigned till he had to give place to the Roman governor, and Greek influence was much less felt. Consequently any reference to the law of adoption would be understood in the Roman sense, and therefore Paul's argument would not be appreciated in North Galatia as it would be appreciated in the south.

The other legal point is similar. There had come to be a difference between a Greek will and a Roman will. The Greek will was irrevocable when once it had been duly executed ; but the Roman will could be destroyed or altered by the testator at any time so long as he lived. Now Paul here assumes the Greek custom, when he writes, 'Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant (or *testament*, *will*, as the word's primary meaning is in the Greek), yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto' (iii. 15). That is to say, once made and executed it is irrevocable. This is not the Roman custom ; it is the Greek custom. Therefore it would suit the people of Southern Galatia with their Greek manners and customs as it would not suit the Romanized Celts of the north who knew little of Greek civilization.

In the third place, a small point which yet is not without its significance may be made out of the Apostle's references to Barnabas in this Epistle. He is first simply mentioned as Paul's companion in one of the Apostle's visits to Jerusalem. Paul writes, 'Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas' (ii. 1). But in describing the dispute with Cephas at Antioch the Apostle states as the climax of the mischief 'that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation' (ii. 13). Why '*even* Barnabas'? That remark would be without significance unless the readers were sufficiently acquainted with Barnabas to be surprised at his conduct. But the only place in the scheme of history as we have it in Acts which would allow of Paul

visiting North Galatia comes after the breach with Barnabas, when that great teacher was no longer the Apostle's travelling companion. The Gauls in the north could never have seen him. Paul, who always adjusted himself to the attitude of his readers, would scarcely have written as he did if that were the case. But in the visit to the four cities of South Galatia Barnabas was with Paul, or rather, as we read the narrative, Paul with Barnabas, for the senior disciple took the lead in that early mission. At Lystra the native people took Barnabas for Zeus, the supreme divinity, and Paul for Hermes, the messenger god, because he was the more eloquent speaker. The superior honour offered to Barnabas suggests that in presence he appeared to be the more imposing personage, as formally he was the leader of the mission. The two worked together quite harmoniously. They delivered the same message. The gospel which Paul preached was also Barnabas' gospel. If then Barnabas turned aside from the spirit of it and by his example contradicted its principles, this would be a most surprising thing for the people of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They would quite understand the emphasis of the phrase '*even* Barnabas'; but in Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus, away in the north, places Barnabas had never visited, where he had never been heard of, or at best where he was known only by name, the remark would be pointless.

There would be little or nothing to say against this view, that the Galatians of our Epistle are no others than the members of the churches which Paul and Barnabas planted during their first missionary journey in Asia Minor, the South Galatians, if it were not that certain things in the Acts are thought to point in the opposite direction. Let us look at these objections.

Objections to the South Galatian theory. In the first place, it is to be observed that Luke does not usually adopt the nomenclature of Roman political geography,

giving the districts he describes the names of provinces, but, following the older and local custom, he uses the native names according to the divisions of races or ancient kingdoms. Thus when describing the visit of Paul and Barnabas to the four cities of South Galatia he does not use the word Galatia, the title of the Roman province, but has 'Antioch of Pisidia' (Acts xiii. 14), 'the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe' (xiv. 6), &c. If that were all we might conclude that while Luke chose to use the local names Paul preferred the Roman names for the same regions. But we find Luke also twice mentioning 'Galatia' (xvi. 6, xviii. 23). If then he is adhering to his custom here he must mean ethnological Galatia, Galatia proper, in the north, not the Roman province of Galatia. And in each of these places Luke says that Paul went through the region of Galatia. That would seem to indicate two visits to the Celtic district. Thus after all it would seem that Paul had evangelized that part of Asia Minor. If so, is it not reasonable to suppose that when he wrote a letter to the 'Galatians' it was to people living there? Luke was the attendant companion of Paul in some of his journeys. Is it not likely that he used the word 'Galatia' in the same sense as his master? That indeed is most probable. But are we sure he does not mean the province of Galatia? It is true that this would be a departure from his custom. But Professor Ramsay has shewn a good reason why he should have departed from it in this instance. The churches of South Galatia formed a certain missionary unit in that they lay along the same travelling route and were all four planted at the same time. They were the earliest Pauline churches in Asia Minor, the harvest of his first missionary journey on the mainland after leaving Crete. It was desirable therefore to comprehend the group under one common name. This could not be done if only the local names were used. In that case Luke would have to write Pisidia and Lycaonia. Besides, it is likely that Paul had come to

speak of these churches in his own way as Galatian. Though when describing the first visit to the district Luke would follow his custom and use the local names, after the churches had been formed, and had had some history, and had often been mentioned by Paul, it would be natural for Luke to adopt his master's phraseology, and call them Galatian.

But now in the two passages above referred to we have mention of 'the region of Galatia and Phrygia,' literally in the first case 'the Phrygian and Galatian region' (Acts xvi. 6), and in the other either the same thing, or 'the Galatian region and Phrygia' (xviii. 23)—for the order of the words is different. Now the question is, Do these phrases mean one district with two names? That was Lightfoot's view, on the supposition that as the original population of North Galatia was Phrygian, the expression means 'the region which was originally Phrygian and afterwards Galatian'—surely a cumbrous notion, and one dragging in a needless archæological allusion. If one and the same district is meant, it is much more probably one known in Luke's day both as Phrygia and as Galatia. That would apply to the Phrygian part of South Galatia. Then the adjectival form of the phrase favours the view that the larger Galatia of the province and not the original ethnographical Galatia is meant. Professor Ramsay adduces an analogous case: '*Lakōnia* is the old historic land of Lacedæmonia; but *Lakōnikē gē* (the Lacedæmonian land) comprises the entire region which had passed under Spartan rule and had been added to Laconia, including Messenia and the land near Pylas' (Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, article 'Galatia, Region of'). There is no reason why Luke should say 'the Galatian region' if he meant Galatia proper; but it would be quite in accordance with Greek usage if, not being so enamoured of the Roman usage as Paul, he employed it for the larger district which took its name from the more ancient kingdom in the north. If in the second passage we read, 'the

Galatian region and Phrygia,' we may understand the latter name to refer to that part of Phrygia which was not included in Galatia, or we may take 'the Galatian region' to be the Lycaonia part of Galatia. In any case we have no insuperable difficulty here.

What looks more like a serious difficulty comes up in the content of the earlier phrase. The whole passage runs thus: 'And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas' (Acts xvi. 6–8). Let us study this passage with a map open before us. As we read it in our English versions it seems to mean that the missionaries were first forbidden to preach in Asia—i.e. the province called Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. Accordingly they turned aside and went into the region of Phrygia and Galatia, and thence towards Mysia, and so on to Troas by the north-west coast. Now if South Galatia is intended, a difficulty arises on this understanding of the narrative. In the previous paragraph (verses 1–5) we see that Paul had just been to Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium. The province of Asia lies west of those cities, and Mysia is north of that. It seems absurd to say that, being forbidden to go into Asia on his journey from the cities of South Galatia, Paul went back to the province of Galatia, meaning those very cities, and thence round by Mysia to Troas. Therefore, it has been said, the passage must refer to North Galatia. But this is on the assumption that the dependent clause 'having been forbidden ... to speak the word in Asia' must refer to what happened before the statement of the primary clause and condition it, the primary clause consisting of the statement, 'And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia.' That this is the natural reading of the passage in English must

be granted. It has been argued that it must also be the meaning of the Greek text. But there are instances of a clause with a past participle coming after one in the indicative mood to describe what followed, not what preceded and conditioned the action first stated. Thus in Acts xxv. 13 we read, 'Now when certain days were passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Cæsarea, and saluted Festus.' The Revisers' margin has 'having saluted,' and this is the exact translation of the Greek, which is a dependent clause with a past participle, similar to that in the passage before us. It would be misleading to translate it literally here, because 'having saluted Festus' would mean in English that Festus had been saluted by the king and queen before they arrived at the place where they met him—an obvious absurdity. A similar construction is found in Acts xi. 30: 'Which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.' Here a past participle (Greek aorist) is translated by the English present participle 'sending,' and it does not mean a previous action[1].

Therefore it is perfectly in accordance with Luke's style to understand the passage before us to mean a series of events in the following order:—

(1) A journey through the region of Phrygia and Galatia.

(2) An intention to preach in Asia (Divinely frustrated).

(3) A course of travel by Mysia.

(4) An intention to visit Bithynia (Divinely frustrated).

(5) The course of travel continued through Mysia to Troas.

These are the principal objections to the South Galatian theory, and they do not seem to go far to dispose of it, while we have seen that the reasons for accepting it are very strong indeed. It may seem superfluous to have

[1] For other instances of this form and a full discussion of the subject the reader may be referred to *The Epistle to the Galatians: An Essay on its Destination and Date*, by E. H. Askwith.

devoted so much attention to a mere geographical question; but we have this result, that we can now feel assured that our Epistle was not directed to an obscure people of whom we know nothing, but was sent to those converts of Paul's first journey in Asia Minor concerning whom we have very full information in the narrative of Acts. Thus we get a frame for our picture, or rather a background clearly outlined and richly coloured.

The Four Galatian Cities.

Having now located the destination of the Epistle, we are in a position to gather some information concerning the places in which the Galatian churches were founded. These, we have seen, were four—Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

Antioch. The reader of the New Testament meets with two cities of this name. One is the capital of Syria and the head quarters of Gentile Christianity in the days of the apostles, the church in which city had ordained and commissioned Paul and Barnabas for their missionary expedition (Acts xiii. 1–3). The other is known as Antioch in Pisidia, or more strictly 'Pisidian Antioch,' to distinguish it from various Antiochs of which there were as many as sixteen scattered over Asia Minor and Syria, all named in honour of the Seleucid kings. This city had been founded about 300 B. C. by Seleucus Nikator. Some time before the year 6 B. C. Augustus made it a Roman colony. Under the emperors a colony was a city in some conquered territory where soldiers at the end of a campaign, or those who had completed their term of service, were allowed to settle with the privileges of citizenship. The citizens of a military colony possessed a right called *ius Italicum*, which apparently included not only personal freedom, but also immunity from the poll tax and the payment of tribute. In fact, a colony

was like a piece of Rome carried away into the province and still retaining the proud rights of Roman citizenship. Paul would rejoice to preach in such a city, as he always felt drawn to bring his message to bear on what was most central and potent in the life of his age. If, as Professor Ramsay suggests, the Apostle turned his footsteps towards the uplands where this city was situated in order to escape the mischievous effects of the malarious sea-coast, he should have found Antioch bracing and health-giving, for the city was planted at an elevation of 3,600 feet above the sea level, on the skirts of a long ridge now called *Sultan-Dagh*, overlooking an extensive, fertile plain that stretches away in a south-easterly direction. The ruins are said to be imposing and to cover a considerable space, but they have never been thoroughly explored. The original population was Phrygian, and the Roman soldiers on account of whom the city was converted into a colony could only have formed a minority of the inhabitants. According to the narrative in Acts (xiii. 50) 'the Jews urged on the devout women of honourable estate' as well as 'the chief men of the city' to persecute Paul and Barnabas. This is a peculiar feature of the persecution at Antioch, not met with elsewhere, as far as our information goes. It is interesting to learn that throughout Asia Minor, and in the Phrygian cities in particular, women of social standing enjoyed great consideration and even held office. Then the Jews were also an influential body in Antioch. Thousands of them were settled in the Phrygian cities. At Antioch they had a synagogue, and were able to influence the chief people of the city enough to secure the expulsion of the Christian missionaries.

Iconium. This city, still existing under the name of *Konia*, and now the terminus of the railway that comes across Asia Minor in a southerly direction from the Bosphorus, was strictly speaking within the confines of Lycaonia, though the inhabitants were regarded as

Phrygians, a fact which accounts for the statement in Acts (xiv. 6) that when the apostles were driven out of this city 'they fled unto the cities of *Lycaonia*, Derbe, and Lystra,' as though they were not already in that district. Antony had conferred the city on Amyntas, the king of Galatia, after whose death in 25 B.C. it became an integral part of the Roman Empire. Under Claudius it received the name Claudiconium. Unlike Antioch, it was not a Roman colony during the apostolic age, though it became one under Hadrian in the next century. It remained for two centuries part of the province of Galatia. Situated on one of the great routes between Cilicia and the West, Iconium became an important commercial city, and accordingly attracted a number of Jewish settlers. The modern *Konia* stands in the midst of luxuriant orchards, and is watered by a stream from the hills on the west which loses itself in the great central, uncultivated plains that spread out to the east from this point. The natural advantages of the situation must have made it a garden of beauty and fruitfulness in ancient times when the city was most flourishing.

Lystra. A journey of eighteen miles in a southerly and slightly westerly direction from Iconium would bring the traveller to Lystra, a city which was reckoned as in the same district with Derbe, but which was really nearer to Iconium. The road between the two sites rises considerably, so that Lystra was 430 feet above Iconium and stood at a height of 3,780 feet above the sea level. Yet it was situated in a mountain valley at the extreme north of the hills that form the southern rampart of the great central tableland. The valley is refreshed with a stream which flows in an easterly direction till it loses itself in the plain. About a mile north-west of the modern village of *Khatyn Serai* is a large mound which marks the site of the ancient city; that, however, must have extended over the lower, level ground for some distance, since a large stone basin, bearing an inscription

in honour of Augustus, has been found some distance from the mound, and apparently on the site of a sacred place dedicated to the worship of the emperor. In the year 1885 a coin was discovered with the Latin legend: COLONIA . IULIA . FELIX . GEMINA . LUSTRA, proving that Lystra was a Roman colony. The city was off the main highway that ran east and west through Asia Minor, but an imperial military road connected it with the head quarters of the army at Antioch. In the apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla* it is stated that when Paul was expelled from Antioch he went along the 'royal road' that leads to Lystra till he came to the crossways, where Onesiphorus, who was waiting for him, induced him to turn aside and visit Iconium. There would be Latin-speaking veterans of the Roman army at Lystra as in other military colonies, but the majority of the inhabitants would be the native Asiatics—Lycaonians, as they were then called. Here were Jews also; but as we do not read of any synagogue in this city, probably they were not very numerous.

Derbe. The last of the four cities, that which marks the termination of the Apostle's journey in an easterly direction through Asia Minor, is Derbe, another town of Lycaonia, still within the large province of Galatia. The site of this city has been identified with some probability as *Zoska* or *Loska*, where is a large mound called *Gudelissin*, which appears to be ancient but has not been excavated. This site was identified by Professor Sterrett, and his opinion is accepted by Professor Ramsay, who states, however, that 'the evidence is not yet perfect.' Derbe was situated on the main eastern road, to which therefore Paul had returned after turning aside to visit Lystra. For a time (from A.D. 41 to 72) it was the frontier city of the Roman province, and was entitled Claudio-Derbe, after the Emperor Claudius.

The Origin of the Galatian Churches.

The churches in the four cities of Southern Galatia were all founded in the course of Paul's 'first missionary journey.' It has been said that the title of this journey is not strictly correct, since the Apostle had been engaged in evangelistic preaching for years among the towns and villages of Syria and Judæa before he set out on this more distant expedition. But that work was the spontaneous, irresponsible, independent activity of a man burning with zeal for the cause he had previously persecuted, sanctioned by the highest of all authorities —the authority of the Lord who had called him and made him an apostle, but not commissioned by any human community. He always based his right to teach on this primary, Divine call. But when he set out as the companion of Barnabas for the wider field of evangelizing, which included more remote regions than any hitherto visited, it was with a distinct mandate from the church at Antioch in Syria. That church solemnly set apart and sent out the two missionaries. Their journey was missionary in the sense that they were commissioned by the Syrian church to undertake it, and it was the first of Paul's expeditions of this character, and also the first of his extensive journeys. The two travellers sailed to the island of Cyprus, where they were remarkably successful in one respect, for they actually won over to their faith the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus. Thence they sailed across to the mainland of Asia Minor, landing in the gulf of Attalia, opposite to Cyprus. Not staying long at Perga, they made their way up through the Balkans to Antioch in Pisidia. We have already noticed the Apostle's statement that this inland journey was taken, or perhaps we should say expedited, because of his illness[1].

[1] See p. 64.

Even in the present day it is the common practice of the inhabitants of the hot, unhealthy sea-border to retire to the mountains on the approach of summer. 'When the time arrives, the people may be seen ascending to the upper grounds, men, women, and children, with flocks and herds, camels and asses, like the patriarch of old. If then St. Paul was at Perga in May, he would find the inhabitants deserting its hot and silent streets. They would be moving in the direction of his own intended journey. He would be under no temptation to stay. And if we imagine him as joining some such company of Pamphylian families on his way to the Pisidian mountains, it gives much interest and animation to the thought of this part of his progress [1].'

Mark declined to accompany the apostles in this extension of their expedition and returned to Jerusalem, leaving Barnabas and Paul to prosecute the mission by themselves. The first halting-place was Antioch in Pisidia, the Roman colony and great military centre. Here, according to custom, they entered the synagogue on the first sabbath and took their seats among their fellow Jews. After the usual reading of two lessons, one from the *Torah*, the sacred book of the law, and the other from the second volume of the Hebrew Scriptures, the two visitors were asked if they had anything to say. This was quite in accordance with the custom of the synagogue, where the preaching and teaching were not confined to any order of ministry, but were open to any capable person who might be invited to speak by the elders in authority. Paul, already appearing as the chief spokesman in the mission, responded to the courteous invitation of the synagogue rulers, rose to his feet, and attracting attention

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[1] Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, chap. vi.

with a beckoning wave of his hand, delivered the great message of the gospel for the first time in the hearing of any people of Asia Minor. Luke shews that he perceives the importance of the occasion by giving the speech in full. It must be allowed that, in harmony with the recognized licence of the ancient historian, the author of Acts would feel free to compose such a speech as he would believe Paul might have uttered on the occasion. This was the invariable practice of Thucydides, who nevertheless must be reckoned an honest and trustworthy writer. But then we must not forget that Luke became a travelling companion of the Apostle. In contemplating the production of his narrative, is it not likely that an accurate and diligent author, such as the preface to the Third Gospel leads us to expect Luke to be, would do his best to learn from the lips of Paul himself what the Apostle had said on so historic an occasion? At all events we may rest assured that we have here the line of thought and the method of presenting his subject followed by the Apostle. In view of our Epistle it is important to see how the Galatians were first approached with the gospel message. Here in the first discourse in the first of the four towns visited by Paul and Barnabas we have the first presentation of Christianity to these people. What form did it take?

Paul begins with a brief review of the history of Israel, calling attention to God's choice of the people and His directing hand at every great crisis. Thus they should be prepared for some new manifestation of Divine power and grace. In a few swift strokes the Apostle touches on leading points – the bondage in Egypt, the obtaining of Canaan, the mission of the judges up to Samuel, the appointment of Saul in response to the people's demand for a king, the substitution of David as king when Saul was rejected. Here the recital ceases. The mention of David suggests David's greater son. At this point Paul plunges at once into his new message. It is all in line

with what preceded. God had sent the judges and kings ; now God has brought a descendant of David, according to the promises of Scripture, to be a Saviour. This is Jesus, for whose coming John the Baptist—of whom the Galatian Jews must have heard, for he had disciples even at Ephesus—prepared the way, and to whom the prophet of the wilderness bore witness as being a much more honourable personage than himself. This Jesus came to bring salvation to the Jews ; but the inhabitants of Jerusalem rejected him and induced Pilate to put him to death. Their opposition was futile, for God raised him from the dead, in accordance with prophecy. Through this man forgiveness of sins is now proclaimed. Every one who believes is justified as he could not be justified by the law of Moses. A solemn warning not to despise the message concludes this clear, virile declaration of the gospel. The statement about justification should be especially noted. Luke here reproduces the exact Pauline doctrine. It is the doctrine which the Apostle enforces in our Epistle—justification by faith over against the failure of the Jewish law to effect it. When writing his letter he expresses astonishment that the Galatians should have fallen back from this position, fascinated by the weak and beggarly elements of the law. He assumes that they know his teaching of justification by faith perfectly well. Now in Luke's account of the first sermon preached to the Galatians we see that this idea is distinctly set forth. Here we have the very teaching, departure from which Paul deplores in his Epistle.

The effect of this sermon was remarkable. No one seems to have taken offence at it, although it was delivered to Jews in their synagogue. It is to be observed that while Paul spoke of the ineffectiveness of the law, assuming that the Jews were conscious of this in their own experience, he did not announce the abrogation of the law. It was a moderate, considerate

statement of his position. The Jews requested Paul to speak to them again the next sabbath. They were interested, but not yet convinced, and perhaps perplexed. Still, after the meeting many of them followed Paul and Barnabas, who urged them 'to *continue* in the grace of God,' implying that they had yielded to the message and become converts. These were of two classes—Jews and 'devout proselytes,' i. e. men and women of the native race who had previously accepted Judaism. As yet no heathen were included. But the novel teaching made a great stir. The synagogue was open to the public, and on the next sabbath it was found to be crowded with the pagan inhabitants of the city. This roused the jealousy of the Jews, and as Paul was preaching, though it does not appear that as yet he was making any explicit offer of his gospel to the Gentiles—that came a little later—since his teaching was of such a character as to break down the wall of privileged seclusion about the covenant people, they interrupted him, contradicting his statements, and at length descending to personal abuse. Then Paul made a bold declaration of policy. It was necessary that he should first deliver his message to the Jews. But since they had rejected it the missionaries would turn to the Gentiles. Of course this pleased the latter class of people, and many of them came over to the new movement. Not only the city, but the region—a technical term for the suburban parts under the jurisdiction of the colony—were affected. Thus quite a considerable church was gathered. We can see from this narrative how it was composed. There was first the nucleus of Jews and Jewish proselytes won over on the first sabbath; then there was the much more numerous body of converted pagans from the city and 'the region.' The majority would be Gentile, but there was a Jewish minority.

This success was not to go on unmolested. The Jews

roused the religious women of influential position and the chief men of the city, who commenced a persecution which induced Paul and Barnabas to leave, shaking off the dust of their feet, according to their Master's directions. Thence they made their way to Iconium. In connexion with this journey we have the earliest account of the Apostle's bodily appearance. It is found in the apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, an early Christian romance, based to some extent on tradition. We cannot put much faith in the description contained in such a work. Still it is so definite that it may contain a genuine reminiscence of what Paul looked like. Onesiphorus, who with his wife and family is waiting at the crossroads for the Apostle as he comes from Antioch, recognizes him by the description Titus[1] had given. It is as follows: 'He saw Paul coming along, a man of moderate stature, with crisp hair, . . . scanty, crooked legs, with blue eyes, and large knit brows, long nose, and he was full of the grace and pity of the Lord, sometimes having the appearance of a man, but sometimes looking like an angel.'

At Iconium the missionaries proceeded on lines similar to those followed in Antioch. They first went to the synagogue, and their preaching resulted in the conversion of many people, both Jews and Greeks. Here too the Jews aroused opposition on the part of the heathen population, and the whole city was divided into two factions. At length the antagonism became serious. Gentiles and Jews, including the elders of the synagogue, united in a plot to stone the apostles, hearing of which they fled from the city. Still they had been there for some time preaching, and miracles had appeared. They left a considerable church behind them as the fruit of their labours.

The next places to be visited were the Lycaonian cities

[1] An anachronism; this was before Titus had met Paul.

of Lystra and Derbe, with '*the region round about*.' The mission was not confined to the towns. Outlying parts were also evangelized. At Lystra the cure of a cripple led to a scene of wild enthusiasm. The excited populace, more devoted to the old pagan cults in the interior of Asia Minor than people nearer Rome, were for sacrificing to the missionaries as to two divinities who were paying them a visit. They actually brought oxen crowned with garlands for this object. Barnabas, the leader of the expedition, they took for Zeus, the king of the gods, and Paul, the chief spokesman, for Hermes, the herald god. There was a temple or shrine, or perhaps only an altar of Zeus, at the gate of the city, and here the sacrifices were to be offered. A stranger scene has never been witnessed in all the romance of missions. It was with the greatest difficulty that Paul could restrain the crowd from their fanatical purpose. Now we know that our Epistle was addressed in part to converts from these very people, we can see how suitable some of its expressions are. Thus when Paul writes, 'ye received me as an angel of God' (Gal. iv. 14), he may be referring to their mistaking him for Hermes, the winged messenger god of the pagans. If so, then his words in an earlier passage, 'But though we, or *an angel from heaven*, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema' (i. 8), may contain an allusion to the same incident. Then his reminder of the enthusiasm of the Galatians, which went so far that Paul could say of it, 'for I bear you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me' (iv. 15), might well be based on a recollection of that frantic attempt to offer garlanded oxen and so render Divine honours to the apostles.

But the amazing changeableness of temperament to which the Epistle bears witness as a painful characteristic of the Galatians was previously witnessed in the city of Lystra. Jews from Antioch and Iconium persuaded the

mob to turn against the missionaries, no doubt representing them to be no better than cheats and charlatans. Chagrin at their own humiliation in having taken such people for gods would whip the fickle multitude into a rage. What was only planned at Iconium was effected at Lystra. Paul was stoned and dragged out of the city as a dead man. But while the mourning disciples were gathered round him he recovered consciousness and was able to return. The next day the two missionaries left for Derbe. The mention of 'disciples' shews that at Lystra there were some converts. But they do not seem to have been numerous. There is no statement to that effect, as in the cases of Antioch and Iconium, and probably Paul's visit to the city was quickly terminated. The disturbance must have followed almost directly after the cure of the cripple, and that miracle is described immediately after the general statement that 'they preached the gospel' in these parts. But one important result of the Apostle's work at Lystra was that Timothy was won to the faith (see Acts xvi. 1).

Luke gives the briefest notice of the Apostle's work in Derbe, the last of the four Galatian cities visited; but he tells us that the missionaries 'made many disciples.' Here also a church was founded. Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps, again visiting the cities by the way, encouraging and instructing the converts and appointing elders in the churches, after the pattern of Jewish synagogues. Coming down to Perga they now stayed longer at that place than when they passed through on their outward journey, and delivered their gospel message there. Then, embarking at the port of Attalia, they returned to Antioch, to the church that had sent them forth, with a report of the adventures and results of their mission. The chief point was that 'God had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles.' We can imagine with what eagerness the Christians of Antioch would listen to this report. They had sent out the missionaries under an

impulse of the Divine Spirit, perhaps because directed to do so by prophets in their church. But the mission had been directed to Jews in the first instance. It would be known that Paul and Barnabas, both Jews, would visit the synagogues and preach the gospel in those centres of the old faith. And yet the majority of the Antioch church was Gentile; it consisted of 'Greeks,' as the name was then used, that is to say, of people of Greek culture and civilization. And it was liberal in spirit as well as alive with the passion of evangelizing. Now it learnt to its delight that the signs of grace manifested among its own members were also appearing among the 'Greeks' of Asia Minor. Experience was shewing, the logic of facts was proving, that the gospel was no narrow message only for Jews. It was good news for the world at large. Galatia came in to confirm what hitherto had been seen at Antioch only, or scarcely anywhere else, viz. the saving power of the gospel for 'Greeks' as well as Jews. This was a confirmation of the Antiochian position; and it opened up a magnificent prospect for the future of Christianity. Like the enlargement of horizon brought about at the Renaissance by the discovery of America, and further by the appearance of the Copernican system of astronomy, an immense widening of outlook, a vast increase of possibilities, now opened up to the Antioch Christians. The Gentile churches of Galatia were the firstfruits of a world-wide harvest. This must be borne in mind when we read of the Apostle's extreme disappointment at the defection to Judaism of these very churches. It was like the corruption of his proof-text, the tearing up of his sheet anchor. He was accustomed to point to Galatia as affording the Divine proof that his liberal gospel was true and right, for there God was seen to be blessing it greatly as a message of grace to the heathen apart from the Jewish law. Bitter indeed must have been his disappointment, deep and dark his dismay, when he found these specimen churches of their own

accord cutting the ground from beneath them by voluntarily abandoning the position of Christian liberty which their very existence was vindicating in the eyes of the timorous Jewish Christians of Jerusalem.

Subsequent Visits to Galatia.

We learn from the narrative in Acts that Paul paid two later visits to the Galatian churches. The first (described in Acts xvi. 1–6) was after the Jerusalem council—that meeting of the church at Jerusalem recorded in Acts xv, in which the problem of Gentile Christianity was discussed and in some measure decided (*c.* A.D. 50). The proposal came from the Apostle who would have had Barnabas go also; but when Barnabas wished to take his nephew Mark, who had left them in Pamphylia on the previous occasion, Paul objected, and there was 'a sharp contention' between them, with the result that Barnabas sailed for Cyprus, his native island, with Mark, and Paul then took Silas as his companion. This time he approached Galatia from the east, coming round through Syria and Cilicia. Thus Derbe, the last town visited on the former occasion, was now reached first. At Lystra Paul found Timothy, and took him to be his attendant disciple and assistant evangelist. The decision of the Jerusalem council was communicated to the Galatian churches. It allowed of Gentile Christianity apart from circumcision. Paul's great point was gained. Converts from heathenism were not required to become Jews in accepting Christianity. They could receive the salvation of Christ without keeping the law. But certain simple restrictions, especially aimed at excluding heathenism and its vices, were included in the 'decrees' from Jerusalem. The result of this visit was an increase and strengthening of the churches. For the third visit (*c.* A.D. 53), which followed a return to Jerusalem and Palestine after the great tour in Macedonia and Greece,

Paul's first visit to Europe, he again travelled to Galatia from Antioch, though Luke does not say which way he approached the province. He 'went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, stablishing all the disciples' (Acts xviii. 23). The Galatians were included in the contributors to the fund for the relief of the poor members of the Jerusalem church.

The Date and Place of Origin of the Epistle.

Date. There is some uncertainty, not only as to the exact date of the Epistle—a comparatively unimportant matter—but as to its position in the life and history of the early church and its order in the list of Paul's letters. These are questions of some interest, because a right understanding of the Epistle itself and of its relation to the Christian life and thought of the day, of which its ideas are important factors, depends in some measure on our answer to them. The principal question is, Did it precede or follow the 'council of Jerusalem'? Manifestly the whole discussion contained in the Epistle will take a different complexion according as we consider it to be prior to that decision, and therefore quite out of any relation to it, or subsequent and perhaps more or less modified by it.

It was maintained by Lightfoot that the Epistle came later. But there is a tendency in the present day to put it earlier, and even to make it the first written of all our thirteen Pauline Epistles. Let us look first at the reasons in favour of an early date.

1. In writing to the Galatians the Apostle expresses his astonishment at the quickness with which they have permitted themselves to be perverted. He says, 'I marvel that ye are *so quickly* removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel' (Gal. i. 6). That is said to imply a perversion very soon after the founding of the churches. A period of some six years,

which would be required if we accepted the later date of the Epistle, would seem too long to allow of such an expression. But how do we know that the Apostle is counting from the time of the founding of the churches? If he had visited them twice since and had found them steadfast on each occasion, and if he had received letters and messages even after his last visit, perhaps with reference to the collection for the Jerusalem church, and these had conveyed favourable reports, and then all of a sudden the Galatians had been led astray into teaching quite contrary to that of their Apostle, this would strike him as an amazingly quick change. The news would come on him like a thunder-clap, however long an interval may have elapsed since the conversion of the Galatians. Professor Ramsay understands the words 'so quickly' to mean 'so soon' after the second visit. But they may just as well mean so soon after the third visit, or not even that, but so quickly, taken in an absolute sense, implying that it had been a hasty change of mind and belief on the part of the Galatians, no matter when it took place.

2. In iv. 13 we read, 'But ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you *the first time*.' Here the Revisers note in their margin that the Greek word rendered 'first' means 'former.' The former time would seem to mean the first of two. Thus this would seem to imply that Paul had only paid two visits to Galatia when he wrote the Epistle. Accordingly it should not be dated after the third visit. But if we take the word more indefinitely as meaning just 'formerly,' this difficulty vanishes (see note on the text).

3. In ii. 3 Paul writes, 'But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.' Why does Paul say 'being a Greek,' if Titus was known to the Galatians, as would be the case at the later date assigned to the Epistle? The phrase, however, is not merely introduced in order to inform the Galatians

of the fact that Titus was a Greek. The point is that, inasmuch as Titus was a Greek, Paul would not permit him to be circumcised.

These arguments for the early date of the Epistle do not amount to much. They all turn on small verbal points. On the other hand, the reasons for assigning it to the later period stand on a broader basis. They are drawn from the character of the Epistle and the subject it discusses. Paul's Epistles naturally fall into four groups according to character and contents as well as in chronological arrangement. First we have the simple, practical Thessalonian Epistles, second the great doctrinal and controversial Epistles, third the meditative, spiritual, partly mystical, Epistles of the imprisonment, fourth the Pastoral Epistle. There cannot be the slightest question as to which of these groups would claim our Epistle on the ground of its subject and characteristics. This Epistle is immersed in the controversy with the Judaizers. Paul's authority has been challenged, and he is vehemently defending his apostolic rights. His specific teaching has been set aside, and he is expounding and justifying it in a polemical temper. His style has a peculiar force and incisiveness in keeping with the tone and spirit of the Epistle. Something of the same spirit and style may be detected in the other great doctrinal Epistles. In 1 Corinthians Paul alludes to various parties in the church, one of which claims his name, while the rest take other names. In 2 Corinthians he vindicates his own apostolic authority against opponents. He does not find it necessary to do this when writing to the distant church at Rome which he has never visited. But in the Roman letter he deals with similar doctrinal subjects, and he uses the same vigorous style. Thus our Epistle naturally falls into line with the other doctrinal Epistles, those which belong to the second group. None of the remaining three groups manifest these characteristics either of subject-matter or of style. To place

Galatians before 1 and 2 Thessalonians would be an anachronism, viewed in the light of the Apostle's personal history and the development of his own thought and style. Those Epistles give us no hint of the great controversy; they contain no trace of the logical strenuousness found in all the four doctrinal Epistles. Of course we must allow that if the troubles dealt with in our Epistle had not broken out in Macedonia Paul might have had no occasion to refer to them when writing to the Thessalonians. Still it is easier to bring this Epistle into close connexion with the other doctrinal Epistles than to separate it from them and place the mild, simple Thessalonian letters between.

There are some who accept this position, but who place Galatians before the two Corinthian Epistles, dating it from Ephesus during the Apostle's long residence in that city. They thus bring it near to Paul's third visit to Galatia (or his second visit, if they hold to the North Galatian theory). But we have seen that if the words 'so quickly' do not refer to the Apostle's recent presence in Galatia, then we have no reason for saying that the Epistle was written soon after Paul had been with the Galatians. If we may allow a little interval of time, there is reason for placing our Epistle after the Corinthian letters. This is found in its close resemblance to the Epistle to the Romans both in idea and in phrase. The two Epistles expound the doctrine of justification by faith with a fullness and force not met with elsewhere, and they both treat of the relation of Christianity to Judaism as the one burning question of the hour. Dr. Lightfoot worked out the comparison in detail, and nothing that has been said since his time could possibly demolish the facts of close resemblance which he has set before us. Both Epistles contain the same appeal to Abraham as affording the typical example of righteousness obtained by faith, the same idea that they who have faith are Abraham's true children. Then both contain what to

Jews must have seemed the amazing statements that the law brings a curse rather than a blessing and that no man is justified by it. Further, in both it is argued that this failure of the law is for the ultimate blessing of those who come to the righteousness of faith. The result is shewn in both Epistles to be the same—that those who have faith become sons of God in the power of the Spirit.

Several striking and peculiar phrases are common to the two Epistles, shewing that in language as well as in thought they are often very close together. For instance:—

Gal. ii. 16: 'Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.'

Rom. iii. 20: 'Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight.'

Here we have identically the same variation from the Old Testament, which is as follows both in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint: 'For in thy sight shall no man living be justified' (Ps. cxliii. 2).

Gal. ii. 19: 'Died unto the law.'

Rom. vii. 4: 'Dead to the law.'

Gal. ii. 20: 'Crucified with Christ.'

Rom. vi. 6: 'Crucified with him.'

Gal. iii. 22: 'The scripture hath *shut up* all things under sin.'

Rom. xi. 32: 'God hath *shut up* all unto disobedience.'

Gal. iii. 27: 'As many of you as were baptized into Christ.'

Rom. vi. 3: 'All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus.'

Gal. iii. 27: 'Did put on Christ.'

Rom. xiii. 14: 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Gal. iii. 29: 'Abraham's *seed*, heirs according to *promise*.'

Rom. ix. 8: 'The children of the *promise* are reckoned for a *seed*.'

Gal. iv. 28: 'Children of promise.'
Rom. ix. 8: 'Children of the promise.'

Gal. v. 14: 'The whole *law is fulfilled* in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'
Rom. xiii. 8, 9: 'He that loveth his neighbour hath *fulfilled the law*; . . . it is briefly summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Gal. v. 16: '*Walk* by the *spirit*, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the *flesh*.'
Rom. viii. 4: 'Who *walk* not after the *flesh*, but after the *spirit*.'

Gal. v. 17: 'Ye may not do the things that ye would.'
Rom. vii. 15: 'Not what I would, that do I practise.'

Gal. vi. 2: 'Bear ye one another's burdens.'
Rom. xv. 1: 'We . . . ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.'

In each case the context shews that the 'burdens' or 'infirmities' are faults or moral defects.

It has been suggested that the identity of subject in the two Epistles may account for the close resemblance of style, even if other Epistles come between. But some of these phrases do not belong to the main argument; and in all cases it is easier to think that both Epistles were written at the same time while the Apostle's mind was deeply stirred with the great question raised by the Judaizers. This is the more likely when we consider the peculiarity of the Epistle to the Romans. Unlike all the other of Paul's Epistles, except Colossians, this was not written to one of his own churches; nor was it called forth by any immediate necessity. There was no reason for it to be sent at the particular time when the Apostle chose to dispatch it, excepting that his mind was then full of the subject. This was so supremely important that he wished the church in the imperial city to come to see it clearly and be fully impressed with its

significance. Possibly too he desired to write out once for all a complete exposition of the subject that might serve for other churches also. It is probable that the idea would occur to him when the desperate state of the Galatian churches urgently called for instruction and expostulation, rather than at some subsequent period. If Paul wished to do this at all, that would be the time when he would be most strongly impelled to write the Roman letter. It seems reasonable then to say that the two epistles were written about the same time. We have a parallel case in the close resemblance between Ephesians and Colossians, the natural explanation being that they were companion Epistles, composed in the same period of the Apostle's imprisonment.

These considerations help us also to decide which of the two letters was written first. It has been said that Galatians comes after Romans, since it shews an intensifying and further accentuating of the ideas contained in the earlier epistle. This is a perverse statement; or rather, it is not too much to say that it is an inversion of the case. Nothing can be more certain than that Galatians comes hot from the roused feelings of the Apostle. He is astonished, distressed, indignant. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Here we have the psychological moment, and in it the psychological explanation of the unique phenomena of the Epistle. This is just the condition in which new thoughts are brought to the birth and new phrases coined. The calmer atmosphere in which the longer epistle is written, the absence of any special need of immediate guidance and help in the church at Rome, the fact that the Apostle had no personal relations with that church, these are all conditions under which the later discussion could best be developed when based on the strong phrases and fiery, passionate ideas of the Galatian letter. First we have the rough draft, then the elaborate treatise; first the epistle of urgent necessity aimed at effecting a vital

result, an epistle the writing of which is a deed; afterwards the enlarged, finished document which partakes more of the character of literature.

This position of our Epistle, just before Romans and therefore next after 2 Corinthians, is confirmed by a comparison with the latter epistle. Dr. Jowett called attention to certain points of resemblance between the two. Thus in both Paul vindicates his own apostleship and in both he mentions his bodily weakness or illness, the 'thorn in the flesh' of 2 Corinthians (xii. 7) corresponding to the 'infirmity of the flesh' mentioned in Galatians (iv. 13). Accordingly it seems that we should fix the date of our Epistle between 2 Corinthians and Romans, and probably near the time of the latter epistle. This will give us the end of A. D. 57 or the beginning of 58 (according to the usually accepted chronology of the Apostle's missionary journeys). The date is fixed thus—the epistle to the Romans was written in Achaia (Rom. xv. 25, 26), and therefore probably from Corinth. This must be during the second visit recorded in Acts (xx. 2). It could not be the first visit to Corinth recorded in Acts xviii, because Paul had preached the gospel as far as Illyricum (Rom. xv. 19), and we have too full particulars of that first visit when he came down through Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berœa to allow of an interval for any deviation towards Illyricum. Besides, Romans evidently belongs to the second group of epistles, and has 1 and 2 Corinthians as well as Galatians for its companion epistles. It cannot possibly be put back to the time of the Thessalonian letters, which were written during the first visit to Corinth. If then Galatians belongs to the same period, this too must have been written during that second missionary visit to Greece.

An objection to this late date assigned to Galatians has been raised on the ground that it makes the letter to be subsequent to the Jerusalem council. We can best appreciate and meet this objection when we have

considered the occasion and purpose of our Epistle. Let it stand over for a little while.

Place of Origin. The question where the Epistle was written is virtually settled when we have decided its date. According to the theories as to the date are the theories concerning the locality. There are the claims of three places which demand our attention.

1. Antioch in Syria. The claims of this place are advocated by Professor Ramsay. He considers that Paul supported his arguments with the authority of the church in that city, the church which had sent out the mission that led to the evangelizing of Galatia, and for which therefore grateful converts should feel some deference. The expression, 'all the brethren that are with me,' in the opening salutation (Gal. i. 2) is taken as a reference to the church at Antioch. But if that church were appealed to, why was it not named? In the *Epistle of Clement* the church at Rome addresses the church at Corinth. And the phrase, 'all the brethren that are with me,' is not suitable to the church which had commissioned Paul for his tour. It applies much more aptly to his own travelling companions. The words 'with *me*' point to inferiors or subordinates rather than to a respected body such as the great church at Antioch. The phrase is used elsewhere for the Apostle's personal friends and companions, as in Philippians iv. 21, where we read, 'The brethren which are with me salute you.' But by far the most serious difficulty in the way of accepting Professor Ramsay's view comes from the fact that it runs counter to the spirit of the Epistle and the line of argument maintained through the whole writing. Paul's apostolic authority has been called in question. He has been accused of presenting a second-hand gospel. His teaching has been discredited by an attempt to lower the status of the teacher. Paul meets this personal charge boldly and unequivocally. He maintains his absolute independence. He ascribes his apostleship to God and

Christ, not to any human being. On the authority thus secured he expects his readers to shew deference to his instructions. He would only have weakened his argument in this direction if he had appealed to the church at Antioch or associated that church with himself in his letter. It is the one Epistle above all others that stands on the personal, independent authority of the Apostle.

The only other reason for suggesting Antioch as the place from which the letter was sent which is of any weight, is dependent on Professor Ramsay's theory of its early date, a time when Paul would be found at Antioch. But if there is validity in what has been here said about the date, of course that argument vanishes. If the Epistle was written as late as A.D. 57 or 58 it could not have come from Antioch.

2. Ephesus. The claim for this city as the place from which the Epistle was dispatched, put forth by Dr. Zöckler and others, especially in Germany, is also dependent on the question of date. Placing the Epistle earlier than the two Corinthian letters, though later than the two Thessalonian letters written during the first visit to Corinth, it finds the Apostle's long stay at Ephesus as the most likely period for the writing of it. 1 Corinthians was written at Ephesus at this time. Galatians is assigned to an earlier part of the Apostle's residence in that city. On the North Galatian theory it could not be written earlier; but on the South Galatian theory, advocated in this Introduction, it is not necessarily confined to this time. The quickness with which the Galatians were perverted is given as a reason for preferring Ephesus, during the early part of Paul's residence there, rather than Corinth, after the whole time of his stay in the capital of Asia was over. But we have seen that his words will not bear the construction put on them in this argument[1].

[1] See p. 87 f.

3. Corinth. If we accept the date above assigned to the Epistle we seem driven towards Corinth for the place of its origin. Coming later than 2 Corinthians, which was written in Macedonia, and earlier than Romans, which was written at Corinth, the only alternative would be Macedonia or some place on the route round through Achaia. But Paul would not be likely to stay long at any place during this journey. He wrote to Corinth, it is true; but he had special reasons for doing so, after Titus had come to him from that city. It is more probable that news of the state of the churches in Galatia would reach him when he was in an important metropolis such as Corinth, which was in constant communication with the East, than while he was journeying through Macedonia and Achaia. Corinth then seems to be the most likely place of origin for the Epistle.

There is no authority for the subscription to the Epistle in our Authorized Version, 'Unto the Galatians written from Rome.' This is not found in the oldest MSS., which simply have, 'To the Galatians,' and even that would not have been part of the original writing.

The Occasion for Writing the Epistle.

Most of Paul's Epistles were written to meet certain specific requirements of the moment. They all contain truths of profound significance and lasting worth. It was characteristic of the Apostle's depth of spiritual thought to treat every topic he had occasion to handle from the standpoint of the 'eternal verities.' That is why his writings remain of permanent value. They are 'Scripture' for us to-day, because they are inspired with ideas that live through all the ages and bring light and life to readers of every generation. Nevertheless they were not drawn up as manifestos for the benefit of the church in perpetuity. We cannot suppose that their author had the least idea of the immense debt under which he was laying all future

Christendom. Such an elaborate work as the Epistle to the Romans may have been designed for more than local use. Sent to the church in the centre of the empire, a church the Apostle had never seen, and for which he was in no special way responsible, it bears the character of a careful declaration of his essential gospel intended to be of general service if widely circulated. But this is wholly exceptional—though Ephesians and Colossians approach the great Roman Epistle in their detachment from local circumstances. For the rest, Paul's Epistles were all written to meet immediate, pressing requirements. Thus we must understand what those requirements were if we would discover the drift and purpose of the Epistles.

These considerations apply with force to the Epistle to the Galatians. No other Epistle is more clearly stamped with the marks of its origin. It springs up hot and eager to meet its provocation. That is really not too strong a phrase. The Epistle was called forth by nothing less than provocation. The Apostle was literally provoked into writing it. Sudden news that fell upon him 'like a bolt from the blue' roused the fire of his indignation. Still, passionate as it is, this is no mere outburst of feeling. The Apostle never thought more clearly than when he felt most deeply. Like Byron's *English Bards and Scottish Reviewers*, which is said to have been written in a night under a stinging sense of stupid injustice, our Epistle owes its point and piquancy to the rousing circumstances of its origin.

For this was the situation. The Apostle was regarding the four churches of Galatia as the firstfruits of his missionary labours. Though he had been successful elsewhere in his earlier work, there is no evidence that he had actually succeeded so far as to found and organize churches before he established the churches at Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. And this remarkably successful work had been aided and prospered by the very enthusiastic reception he had received among the

Phrygian and Lycaonian people. Here in the course of what we call his 'first missionary journey' he had met with eager souls who had responded to his appeals with all their hearts. They had received him as an angel of God; they would have plucked out their eyes and given them to him, if he had demanded such a sacrifice. Nor was this enthusiasm the mere effervescence of transitory emotion. When the Apostle passed through the cities on his return journey he was able to thoroughly organize their churches. Since then he had visited them again, perhaps twice, and on each occasion he had been well received and had found everything in a most encouraging condition. Thus he had every reason for thankfulness in thinking of these churches of Galatia now ripening in Christian experience.

Suddenly the Apostle was amazed and confounded by the receipt of absolutely unexpected information of what he could regard as nothing less than a revolution in the beliefs and practices of the Galatians. They had come to reject his authority as an Apostle, treating it lightly, as quite inferior to the authority of the Jerusalem apostles, and no better than a delegated position received from them and dependent on their good-will. This is the first surprise, and it calls forth the personal explanations which occupy the first part of the Epistle. In the second place, in rejecting the authority of their founder and guide, the four churches had also abandoned his specific teaching and adopted that of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. Those Christians continued to observe the law of Moses as they had observed it from their childhood. They were loyal followers of Jesus Christ, believers in him as their Lord and Saviour, his servants, working out what they could see of his will, for this persecuted by their unbelieving brethren among the Jews, and ready to suffer martyrdom for their faith. Still, they did not abandon the practices of the Jewish law. Circumcision was not superseded by baptism, nor the passover by

the Lord's Supper, nor the temple by the church. These Jerusalem disciples were law-abiding Jews who accepted Jesus as Christ, Jews who added Christianity to Judaism and considered that the amalgam made one perfect religion. Now the Galatians were going over to the same position. Yet it was really entirely different with them. For the most part these people were not Jews by birth. Unlike the Jerusalem Christians they had never been under the yoke of the law, had never confessed any obligation to accept it. It was the law of the Jews, and they were Gentiles. They had received Christian baptism and had been formed into churches without the least idea that in so doing they were becoming Jews. The omission of the rite of circumcision on their reception into the pale of Christianity was a plain proof that they were not expected to adopt Judaism. And then the gospel which Paul had preached, and which they had received, tacitly excluded Judaism by leaving no room for it. They had seen his picture of Christ crucified vividly set before them, and in it the promise and pledge of full redemption. After that no more could be needed to secure the very richest blessings which God could give or man receive. For people with such a history, men who had been heathen, Gentiles, never under the Jews' law, and who were now Christians enlightened with knowledge of the gospel of freedom, to be adopting Judaism was indeed an astounding piece of perversity. And the change had come about so quickly. There had been no premonitory symptoms. It was not like the case of Newman's recession to Rome, a slow movement through successive stages of deep meditation, soul struggle, and agony, as the story is set forth in his *Apologia pro Vitâ suâ*. When last seen by the Apostle these Galatians were apparently unchanged, still steadfast in the faith they had learnt from their founder. And now they are in full pursuit of the Jewish gospel, quite infatuated with it.

How could so great a change have come about so suddenly? Dr. Lightfoot puts it down to Celtic fickleness. But we have seen that the Galatians were not Celts, but Phrygians and Lycaonians. These people of Central Asia Minor were exceptionally liable to be captured by appeals to religious excitement. Their very enthusiastic reception of the Apostle on the occasion of his first visit is a revelation of their temperament. People who had behaved in that extravagant manner once would be ready to do so again if some equally novel, though not equally deserving, influence were brought to bear upon them. Like those Jews of the following of James who went down to Antioch and disturbed the peace of the church there, some Jewish Christians, perhaps jealous for the position of the primitive apostles, possibly sincerely anxious for the good of the new heathen converts, and fearing that Paul had given them a one-sided representation of Christianity, went over to visit the four Galatian churches, the fame of whose prosperity had reached Jerusalem. There they set to work to depreciate the authority of Paul, and so to undermine his teaching, at the same time introducing their own teaching of Judaistic Christianity. This they would assert to be more authentic since they would claim to represent the original Christianity of the apostles in Palestine. The idea was that the Gentile converts should accept the ordinances of Judaism as these were observed by the Jewish Christians who constituted the primitive church at Jerusalem.

The Galatians were fascinated. Paul in his indignant amazement can only describe their condition as that of people bewitched. Still, it must be admitted that the intruders could make out a specious case. They would support it on the highest authority, that of Christ's twelve apostles. There is not the faintest evidence to shew that they were authorized by the apostles at Jerusalem. We have no indication that James at the head of the mother

church had commissioned them for their unfortunate task. We do not even know that they claimed to be the emissaries of those authorities, though it is quite possible that they would pose as such. But at all events they would be able to cite the precedent of Jerusalem, telling the Galatians how the venerated community in the parent church thought and acted ; and this would go for much. Then the substance of their teaching would have a fascination for the people of Central Asia Minor. These people had been brought up in a religion of outward rites and ceremonies. Judaism presented itself as a system of outward rites and ceremonies. So similar in spirit and character were the heathen and Jewish cults in this respect, that Paul could describe the adoption of Judaism —new as it was to the Galatians in name and form—as nothing less than a return to the 'weak and beggarly elements' which they had abandoned at their conversion. In the Apostle's opinion their adoption of Judaism was tantamount to a reversion to heathenism. Then the natural tendency to return to the primitive type which is seen as much among men and women as it is in the cultivation of gardens and orchards would aid the Judaizers. The introduction of a new ritual would awaken the old habit of ritual observance in the minds of the Galatians.

But now it is said that all this is inconsistent with the decision of the council of Jerusalem as described in Acts xv. The supposed inconsistency is variously interpreted. Baur and the early Tübingen critics used it as an argument for discrediting the historicity of Acts. A modern Dutch school, represented by Steck, reverses the reasoning and endeavours to upset the genuineness of the Epistle. Lastly, Professor Ramsay, and others who agree with him on this point, consider that it makes for the early date of Galatians, since the trouble in the Galatian church could not have arisen after the Jerusalem settlement of the status of Gentile Christians ; or, at all events,

that if it did arise later—though most inconsistently—Paul would certainly have appealed to the decision of the council in this letter. Yet he never does so.

Now to take up the last of these ideas in the first place, we have to face the question, Why did not Paul refer to the council and its decision if he was writing after that event? According to the chronological arrangement here set forth he had already done so, for he had gone through the Galatian cities with 'the decrees' some time before the date of our Epistle. Still, it must be granted to be somewhat perplexing that he makes no reference whatever to the subject in the Epistle. This point, however, should be considered. Paul's personal authority had been assailed. His originality had been challenged. It was said that he was only the lieutenant of the primitive apostles and the bearer of a second-hand gospel. Under such circumstances he would not feel inclined to fall back on the authority of the Jerusalem church. He must base his contention on completely independent grounds.

When we turn to the question of the introduction of Judaism into the churches of Galatia after the decision at Jerusalem two facts should be considered.

First, it is not at all probable that the whole church loyally held to that decision. There must have been at least a minority who were overawed by the weight of the great leaders Peter and James, and compelled, for the time being, to be silent in face of the very remarkable testimony concerning the conversion of the heathen, which so trusted a member of their community as Barnabas joined with Paul in presenting to the church. But though silenced for the time they would not be convinced, much less would they be finally suppressed. The spirit that shewed itself in the meddlesome visit of the Judaizers to Antioch would prompt a similar invasion of the liberties of Galatia. The disturbance may have come from this minority, disloyal to the decision

at Jerusalem, and determined if possible to frustrate its influence.

Second, the question decided at Jerusalem was not the same as that subsequently brought up in Galatia. The point on which the Christians at Antioch had consulted the mother church concerned the reception of the heathen into the privileges of Christianity. Should the rite of circumcision be insisted on? In becoming Christians must they also become Jews? Was Christianity only a phase of Judaism, and should it be bound down to the rules and customs of that religion even when it received Gentiles into its fold? This question was answered in the negative. The heathen need not be circumcised; the Gentiles were under no obligation to keep the law. Thus the main position Paul contended for was gained, though some slight restrictions in regard to the ritual of diet were imposed on the Gentiles, as well as obligations of moral purity. Now quite another question had come before the four churches of Galatia. They had been recognized as Christian, quite apart from the observance of the Jewish law. But the Judaizers who had come among them were persuading them to adopt and practise the rites of the Jewish religion in order to perfect their Christian life. This was not presented as the preliminary to Christianity, but as the perfection of it: not as the foundation on which to build, but as the crowning pinnacle. And it was not demanded as obligatory; but it was made out to be eminently desirable. Having become Christians by faith in Christ while Gentiles, free from the Mosaic law, the Galatians were invited to go on to perfection by voluntarily adopting that law and practising it. This is the situation Paul had to face. Thus he writes, 'Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' (Gal. iii. 2). The Galatians had welcomed the gospel message with faith, and the result was that they had received the gift of the Spirit, always regarded in apostolic times as the sure sign that God

was acknowledging those on whom it descended. It was their Divine seal, the proof that they were duly authenticated Christians. Then Paul proceeds with his expostulation: 'Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?' (verse 3)—'*perfected* in the flesh.' The idea is that some bodily rite is to perfect what was begun in a spiritual way. Circumcision, then, was not the door of entrance to the church, as it was to the synagogue, but a subsequent performance in which the further advance of a Christian life already commenced was aimed at.

The Judaizers might argue thus:—'It is true you have been excused the rite on your entrance into the church, and with it the obligation to keep the law. Thus you have a religion made easy for you as an accommodation to your Gentile habits. But do you desire an easy religion? See! We observe all these regulations about days and diet, fastings and washings. We grant that they are somewhat of a burden. But we are eager to live the highest life, to do our utmost in religious service. The same is open to you. Accept these rules from that of circumcision onwards and you will not only be Christians just admitted within the gate of the fold; you will be advanced Christians following on to perfection.' Some such presentation of the case would appeal to enthusiastic natures. These Phrygians and others of Asia Minor who had witnessed the wild, orgiastic rites of Cybele, who had even known fanatics mutilate themselves in the frenzy of their devotion, were not the men to shrink from a religion that exacted much. They were ready to despise an easy road if a more arduous path were set before them. The very severity of the discipline would constitute its fascination. Reading between the lines, may we add yet another idea? These people of Asia Minor had been brought up in all the dissoluteness of a most corrupt heathen society. Suddenly they were called to live a life of spotless purity. When the first enthusiasm

died down, old habits would threaten to reassert their power. How were they to be kept under? Turning with wistful hope to the rules of Judaism, the Galatians would be tempted to think that here perhaps was the aid they needed. If so, there is something very pathetic in their delusion. They were engaged in a desperate struggle for which every possible assistance was requisitioned.

Purpose and Teaching of the Epistle.

The Apostle's aim in writing this Epistle was to counteract the mischievous influences that were at work among the Galatian churches. Since these were twofold in their ends, though of common origin, the reply and refutation were necessarily also twofold. Paul's personal authority as an Apostle had been attacked, and the gospel which he proclaimed had been assailed. Accordingly he had in the first place to defend his apostleship and in the second to justify his doctrine. These two subjects, though so different in form and in the treatment they called for, were vitally connected. It was only because of his teaching that the Judaizers had made their personal attack on the Apostle, seeking to undermine his influence in order to discredit his message. And it was only in order to secure what he saw to be his all-important message and its hold upon the Galatians that Paul set himself to the distasteful task of vindicating his office. This was necessary in the first instance, if only in order to gain a hearing for the exposition of the great truths with which he followed in the doctrinal part of the Epistle.

The personal claim. The ground Paul takes in the vindication of his own apostleship is the highest possible. He claims to have received it direct from God and Christ, through no human instrumentality whatever. The same claim extends to his message. He has not received this from the older apostles, nor from any other

Christian teachers. It has come to him by revelation from heaven. In proof of this high claim he describes all his interviews with the apostles previous to the missionary journey when he founded the Galatian church. That is the object of the autobiographical reminiscences with which the Epistle opens. Paul declares that after his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem in order to learn from its custodians the principles of the new faith which he had just adopted; he went direct to Arabia, to the desert, to solitude. There, alone with God, meditating on the facts that he had now come to see in a new light, especially the death and resurrection of Jesus whom he now acknowledged to be the Christ, he was led to perceive the gospel that grew out of them. This perception, since it came to him when under the influence of the Divine Spirit, was reckoned by him as a revelation from heaven. It is true he met the apostles on subsequent occasions. These he distinctly enumerates and exactly describes. They all occurred later than his adoption of that form of Christian truth which he preached as in an especial sense his own gospel, and they were too brief to account for his knowledge of that gospel. They did not allow of the idea that he had ever sat at the older apostles' feet, as their disciple.

With this negative conclusion to be drawn from the recital of the autobiographical incidents there are associated two deductions of a positive character. It shews that his apostleship, with its peculiar claims and the mission to which it was dedicated, was fully recognized by the older apostles; and it also shews that he did not shrink from asserting his full equality with the chief among them. The first comes out in the description of the interview at Jerusalem, in which the leading apostles gave him the right hand of fellowship; the second in the meeting with Peter at Antioch, when Paul 'withstood him to the face' and rebuked him sternly for what he regarded as cowardly vacillation. These two deductions account for

the introduction of the incidents that lead to them, and are themselves important factors in the main argument by which Paul establishes his right to full, independent apostleship.

In thus claiming originality for his message, as well as independence for his office, Paul must not be understood to assert that he was in no way helped by human testimony in regard to the facts of the life of Christ. To suppose that he knew those facts by revelation and not by report from eye-witnesses is to bring in a needless supernatural agency. Luke tells us that he gathered his information for the life of Christ from the testimony of witnesses. He was a disciple of Paul. If the Apostle had received the story direct from heaven, why did not Luke take it down from the lips of his master? Why did he resort to the laborious process of the secular historian in hunting up his facts, if they were all ready to hand in the information that had been flashed into the mind of Paul? If we are to understand the Biblical idea of revelation by studying the character of revelations received through prophets and apostles, we shall recognize that they are not vehicles for conveying information about the events of external history, which could be obtained from earthly sources—mere expedients to save the trouble of historical research. Besides, the Apostle does not despise or ignore testimony in regard to these matters. He cites the evidence for our Lord's resurrection, carefully specifying the witnesses. In giving his account of the Lord's Supper he states that he had received it 'of the Lord' (1 Cor. xi. 23). Yet the narrative is parallel to the synoptic accounts, and even in verbal texture very like that of Luke, who has told us that he got the materials for his book from eye-witnesses. Are we to understand that a revelation from heaven would shape itself in words agreeing with the synoptic tradition? When we examine Paul's language in the Greek, we find that it does not point to a direct com-

munication. He uses words that are applied to tradition, therefore suggesting not that what he is about to communicate was given to him immediately by Jesus Christ, but that 'the Lord' was the original source of it, so that it has his authority, though it reached Paul through the channels of human testimony. In referring to his own original message the Apostle calls it his gospel—'the *gospel* which was preached by me.' Now the word 'gospel' is never used by Paul, is never used anywhere in the New Testament, for a narrative of the life of Jesus Christ. The meaning attached to it when it stands as the title of four books in our Bible is not met with before the second century, certainly not before Ignatius, not definitely before Justin Martyr in the middle of that century. In apostolic times the word invariably stands for the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Paul's gospel was his conception and presentation of that message. It was based on the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. These were facts widely known, the first in the world, the second in the church. Viewing them in relation to human sin, the Jewish law, and the failure of the struggle for deliverance from sin by way of the law, Paul was led, under the influence of the illuminating Spirit that he felt he possessed, to strike out new paths and shape his message of salvation on broader lines and with a freedom from Jewish prejudices not yet attained by the older apostles. That was his gospel. He had not received it from Peter, or John, or James, or any other human teacher. It had come to him from God. It was a revelation.

And now the question arises, What differences between Paul and the older apostles does this Epistle make apparent? According to Baur they are in open and pronounced antagonism; the church is divided into two by a wide cleft, and we have Pauline Christianity on the one side and the Christianity of the Twelve Apostles on the other, each disowning and opposing its rival.

In arguing against this extravagant representation of the case Bishop Lightfoot went to the other extreme, denying that there was any appreciable difference between the two schools of teaching. More moderate views have been maintained by Hort, Harnack, and McGiffert, and even by Pfleiderer and Weizsäcker, although the two latter are more inclined to the left wing of criticism.

It is sheer perversity to maintain that there was an irreconcilable quarrel between Paul and his seniors in the apostleship. They recognized him as an apostle, and he acknowledged them. This Epistle is sufficient to demonstrate the fact of their fundamental agreement and mutual respect. Paul says, 'and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship' (Gal. ii. 9). What could be more explicit? what more definite? The elder apostles, suspicious at first, originally questioning the legitimacy of Paul's free preaching of the gospel to the heathen, apart from Judaism, but subsequently convinced by the logic of facts, were compelled to allow that the conversion of the heathen, their changed lives, the appearance of the Christian graces among them of which Paul had given evidence, were signs that the work was of God, that it had the stamp of His approval. Seeing this, they ceased to criticize, withdrew their opposition—if indeed they had ever really opposed, and we have not clear evidence to that effect—and generously welcomed Paul and Barnabas to their fellowship.

At Antioch there was a sharp contest between Paul and Peter. But according to the account of it in our Epistle there was no fundamental difference between the two apostles. Peter had been eating with the Gentiles till his scruples were roused, or his fear of criticism excited, by the advent of strict Judaizers from James. Then he

had turned round and ceased to have brotherly intercourse with the Greek section of the church. Paul was indignant. What most roused his anger was the appearance of moral weakness and culpable inconsistency in the older disciple. Peter appeared to be acting contrary to his own convictions. If they had taken different lines all along Paul would not have been surprised at Peter's exclusiveness, nor would he have had any occasion to rebuke it as hypocrisy.

On the other hand, it must be allowed that there were considerable differences of view and method of work existing between Paul and the Jerusalem church with its leaders. 1 Peter, which is essentially Pauline in spirit, and the Epistles and Gospel of John, which are as anti-Jewish and as liberal towards the Gentiles as Paul's own writings, shew that the two senior apostles came over to Paul's position in later years. The Epistle of James is not anti-Pauline. Even Pfleiderer admits this, holding that it is directed against an extravagant perversion of Paulinism by disciples who misinterpreted their master. But at the time covered by the Acts, and when our Epistle was written, it is not clear that these three reputed 'pillars' accepted Paul's position. Probably the Jerusalem church never reached it. To the last that church was essentially Jewish, observing the law, and frequenting the temple, as long as the temple stood. After the destruction of the city by Titus it returned from Pella, where it had been in retreat, appointed Symeon, a relative of James, as its bishop, and apparently resumed the James tradition of Jewish Christianity. After the revolt of Bar Cochbar, in the reign of Hadrian, when no Jews were permitted to approach the site of Jerusalem—now occupied by a pagan city named Aelia Capitolina with its temples of Jupiter and Venus—the Jewish Christians were scattered. Some passed into the Catholic Church. But those who held together still maintained their Judaism, and were accordingly regarded as heretics by the Catholic Church.

Thus the Jerusalem church right down its history was Jewish, observing circumcision, keeping the law. In this respect, then, James and the Jewish Christians differed from Paul and the Greek Christians who followed that Apostle's leading. This was so even on the grounds of the compact contained in the Jerusalem treaty. Jewish Christians were to keep the law; Gentile Christians were to be exonerated. But our Epistle goes much further than that compact. It proclaims the abolition of the law for Jews as well as for Gentiles. The Jerusalem Christians had never faced such a revolutionary proposal. It must have shocked them greatly when they heard of it. But Paul was anxious to preserve the peace of the church. In this condition of affairs we can see why he attached great importance to the collection of money in the Greek churches for the assistance of the poor members of the Jerusalem community. We must not regard this in the light of a vulgar bribe. It is not to be supposed that sincere men would change their views on receipt of a dole. But it was an evidence of brotherly sympathy; the generosity it implied was to be recognized as a fruit of Christian grace. Paul hoped that the freedom practised by his converts would be pardoned in view of the spirit of love and peace and self-sacrifice they were manifesting towards their more conservative brethren in Jerusalem.

The teaching of the Epistle. This was both positive and negative; but its negation was the necessary result of its affirmation. It asserted justification by faith in Christ crucified, and maintained that this was so complete, so all-sufficient, that no room was left for any additional justification by means of the Jewish law. Thus the perfection and triumph of the Christian method abolished the Jewish by superseding it. The older method was no longer needed. It had been proved to be inefficient. To introduce it in addition to the Christian method was to detract from the latter by usurping some of its offices, since it covered the whole ground and effected

the whole work of salvation from beginning to end much better than the old method could do with any part of it. The Judaizing proposal might be compared to a suggestion from the rural owners of stage-coaches, when the railway was constructed from London to Edinburgh, to the effect that they admitted the higher power and speed of the trains, and would accept them for the greater part of the journey, say as far as Berwick, but thought the rest of the route should be taken by road. Paul was sure that his gospel introduced the one efficient means of salvation. To allow any space for the clumsy, ineffectual Jewish method was to detract so much from the range and scope of the gospel, and so to check and retard the Christian progress, not to carry it a stage further on towards perfection, as the Judaizers maintained.

The theme of the doctrinal part of the Epistle appears in the Apostle's speech at Antioch, his expostulation with Cephas, or perhaps his comment on that speech. 'Knowing,' says Paul, 'that a man is not justified by the works of the law, save (or rather, 'but only') through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified' (Gal. ii. 16).

The object then aimed at by both methods is 'justification.' The only question is as to the means of reaching that object. The word justification is legal and technical[1].

It means the establishment of a claim to stand right in the eyes of the law. Such a term with its forensic associations, would be especially appropriate in an argument

[1] It would be suggested to Paul by his professional training, for while by trade he was a tent-maker, by profession he had been a lawyer. As we should say, he had been educated for the bar, the Jews considering that the work of a trade, as the means of a livelihood, was by no means incompatible with the practice of a profession as the chief interest of life.

with people who were posing as champions of law. Paul uses their own term to shew that the legal status they aim at acquiring by their method is reached by his method. Some of our difficulty in understanding the Apostle arises from the necessity of reading his words from the standpoint of Jewish law and Rabbinical discussions if we would see their exact force. Under the influence of modern science we are more accustomed to discuss religious problems in terms of biology. But the technicality of the Apostle's language is not really abstruse, nor is it very difficult to understand. From the legal standpoint he uses the word 'justify' in the sense it invariably bears both in the Old Testament and in the New, and that is the sense we usually attach to it, viz. to clear from a charge of guilt, to acquit. What is special is rather in the application of the word. With Paul it represents not the clearing of the innocent from a false charge, but the clearing of the guilty from a true charge. In other words, it stands for forgiveness when looked at from the standpoint of law. This we may regard as Paul's limiting, specific application of the word. It is not really far from the Jewish application. In so far as Christianity awakened a keener sense of guilt than Judaism, Paul's justification gave more prominence to the idea of pardon, while Jewish justification admitted of self-complacency, as when a self-righteous man attempted to justify himself, not admitting his guilt, excusing and defending his conduct. Yet even here the idea of the final result was the same, viz. to stand right in the eyes of the law, to stand right with God, the Judge of all.

Then, further, Paul continually identifies justification with righteousness. This is most manifest in Romans; but it is more or less apparent throughout all his writings on the subject. When a man was accounted righteous by being justified, Paul would say that he possessed righteousness. He guarded himself against an immoral use of this teaching by continually insisting on the fact of

experience, that the faith which justifies also brings a new life, because it is the act of surrender to Christ, through union with whom the transformation of character takes place. Therefore if the transformation of character is not there, this is a proof that the faith which would bring it about is absent, and therefore that there can be no justification.

Now Paul teaches that this justification is realized by faith in Jesus Christ. How does he prove it? In two ways—by an appeal to experience, and by an appeal to Scripture.

(1) The appeal to experience. The Galatians had received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and it was working wonders among them (Gal. iii. 5). These facts were not to be denied. The Galatians themselves were conscious of the gift, and they saw its good effects in their community. What was the source of the wonderful gift? Originally heathen, living in idolatry and all kinds of gross corruption, these people had heard Paul and Barnabas preach. They had received the message, they had yielded their faith to what it had set before them. This is all they had done. There had been no performance of the rite of circumcision, no attempt to practise the requirements of the Jewish law. And yet unmistakable spiritual results had followed. The substance of the preaching had been the setting forth of Christ crucified (Gal. iii. 1). Then it was faith in Christ thus made known that had effected all this. Here was the proof of experience. But this seems to imply that the receipt of the Spirit was equivalent to justification, for what is sought is justification, but what is received is the Spirit. The Apostle's idea is that this great gift is a result of justification, or at all events is only given to the justified, and therefore is a proof of justification. Moreover it contains the promise and potency of every needful grace. Paul reverts to this phase of the subject in the practical exhortations with which he draws the Epistle to a close.

The Galatians possess the gift of the Spirit; then let them live in accordance with their high privilege, and it will work out in their lives all the Christian graces. 'Walk by the Spirit,' he says, 'and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh' (Gal. v. 16). A little further on he appends a catalogue of fruits of the Spirit to shew how those who have received this gift have implicitly received these graces, and will enjoy them in actual experience if they make use of the gift. What more could they want?

(2) The appeal to Scripture. Paul cites the example of Abraham. This was especially apt in dealing with people who had been fascinated by the glamour of the Jewish law, because the story of Abraham was to be found in the law. Paul will answer them from their own much-vaunted authority. We have here a specimen of the *argumentum ad hominem* which was a favourite method of reasoning with the Apostle. This is not a mere *ad captandum* argument. It is valid for all who accept the inspired authority of the Old Testament. He cites the classic text, 'Abraham believed God'— though he does not now complete it as when he is writing his more deliberate Epistle to the Romans. Still the point on which he lays emphasis is here. It was Abraham's faith that was commended, not his submitting to a rite. And a promise of blessing to all nations was connected with the name of Abraham. Then the source of his own blessings, faith, must be the source of the Gentile blessings also. Paul adds a second Old Testament testimony to the value of faith, this time citing a text from the prophets—'The just shall live by his faith' (Hab. ii. 4), and then he returns to the example of Abraham on which he mainly relies.

The negative position is necessarily associated with this positive position, as its complement or counterpart. If faith does everything, there is no room for the Jewish law. Still the law exists. How then can it be ignored

or evaded? It is not ignored or evaded. It is satisfied and superseded. At this point Paul brings in his doctrine of the cross. The law pronounced a curse against everybody who did not keep all its requirements. Hence the strenuousness of the Jewish endeavour. But Christ had died a death which the law itself had pronounced to be accursed, for he had been crucified, and the law had said, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on the tree.' Then Christ had experienced the worst thing that the law had threatened—not merely death, its more common supreme penalty, but the accursed death. What more could it do, since Christ had endured its very worst?

Now it is possible for some one to object here that the logic halts. Christ did not break the law, and his death was not a legal infliction in consequence of any such action, but a grossly illegal crime on the part of its perpetrators. This Paul does not stop to consider. It is enough for him that Christ did endure the fate which the law accounted accursed. This could not be required a second time. But, it will be objected further, even if Christ could not receive the doom a second time, how does that affect us? We have not experienced it, and we are the offenders, not he. Christian theology has endeavoured to solve the problem by the doctrines of imputed sin and imputed righteousness. Our sin is said to be imputed to Christ, and then he is punished for it as though he were the guilty person; Christ's righteousness is said to be imputed to us, and then we are acquitted as though we were innocent people. This is not the place in which to discuss a much controverted theological dogma. All we are endeavouring to do here is to understand Paul's teaching in our Epistle. It cannot be said that the doctrines referred to are here explicitly set forth. Probably we should look for his explanation of what he leaves unexplained in quite another direction—not along the lines of what might be called a legal fiction, but rather in the region of the Apostle's mysticism. On one side of his nature

a lawyer arguing according to the Rabbinical logic of the schools, on the other he was a mystic penetrating to the deep things of God beyond the reach of words. These two phases of thought are never far apart. The Apostle passes swiftly, easily, unconsciously, from the one to the other. The mystical supplements the arguments of the logical and furnishes data for further reasoning. In the present case Paul does not reason about the relation of Christians to Christ. He assumes it. He takes it as a fact, realized in mystical experience, that there is a union so close between the Redeemer and his people that what he does is equivalent to their doing it, so that if he satisfies the law by enduring the curse they are redeemed from that curse.

Moreover, Paul argues, returning to his main position, even while the law held good it could not set aside the promise to Abraham: even a human covenant once confirmed cannot be thus treated, nor can it have fresh clauses inserted. The covenant with Abraham was older than the law. That law, only appearing, according to the conventional Jewish reckoning, 430 years later, could not interfere with the venerable covenant. Once confirmed this stands for all time. If then Christians become Abraham's heirs by sharing his faith, they have a right to claim the permanent covenant, notwithstanding the interlude of law which appears in Jewish history.

What then was the purpose of the law? What end did it serve? Here we must see that, while Paul separated himself from the Judaizers, he did not take the position assigned to him by Marcion in the second century. He did not treat the law as an evil thing, or deny its inspired origin. He regarded it as a Divinely ordered system, intended to benefit the people to whom it was given. The benefit was not what the Judaizers claimed. It was not to confer the gift of justification. It was to prepare the people for Christ. Paul does not

here say how the preparation was carried on, though he hints at the process when he adds, 'the scripture hath shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe' (Gal. iii. 22). This idea is developed and explained in the Epistle to the Romans, where the Apostle shews that the law awakens conscience, creates the sense of helpless guilt, and so shews the need of Christ and drives us to h ur only refuge and hope. There is no thought w carries us a little way towards goodness Christ meets us and completes the process. take us a step. What it does is to reveal the f redemption in Christ.

But now representing the law to be the tutor or attendant slave who brings to Christ, Paul does more than indicate its inferiority of function, he hints at its temporary nature. This he declares more explicitly a little later. Tutors and governors are only set over the heir so long as he is an infant in the eyes of the law. As soon as he is of age he is liberated from their authority and surveillance. After this he has nothing more to do with them. Therefore Christians, who are regarded as God's adult sons, are entirely free from the Jewish law. This argument only applies directly to Jews, since they were formerly under the law. But *a fortiori* Gentile Christians must be very foolish if they subject themselves to such a yoke.

Thus Paul comes to the absolute abolition of the law of Moses. It was a great step to take, a daring step. It went far beyond the Jerusalem decision, for it not only exempted Gentiles, it made Jewish Christians equally free from the law, the sanctity of which they had been brought up to venerate from their childhood. Paul writes as the conclusion of the whole matter, 'For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature' (Gal. vi. 15). The situation among the Galatian churches had evoked that great utterance.

We may almost thank the mischievous intruders for having provoked so complete an answer to their contention. It is impossible to say how far Paul had gone in this direction in his earlier teaching. But for all we know, never before had he made this explicit announcement. It might be regarded as a logical necessity. Even the half measures of the Jerusalem council pointed in this direction. If Gentiles could be saved without the law, why not Jews also? If there was a better method of salvation which could be preached to the Greeks, why should the chosen people be excluded from it? Still, few people have the courage to be logical in face of prejudice. It is Paul who saw distinctly to the end of the argument, and then dared to pronounce the conclusion in clear, ringing words that nobody could misunderstand. It is Paul, therefore, who liberated the church from the Ghetto and secured for all future ages that Christianity should go forth as a religion for mankind, free from the shackles and fetters of an antique, provincial cult. And yet he was but developing the teaching of his Master who had said, 'No man putteth new wine into old wine-skins.'

The practical application to the condition of the four churches was obvious. The Galatians would gain nothing by adopting the Jewish law as a counsel of perfection. It would be a degeneration, not a progress, and it would put them under the intolerable burden of complying with impossible obligations from which they were now free. Paul therefore exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty which Christ has given them.

It is beyond the scope of an Introduction, which is confined to the literary and historical problems of the book it seeks to explain, to discuss the application of its teaching to the circumstances of later ages. Yet it cannot be ignored that the great controversy of Paul with the Judaizers has been repeated more than once in the history of Christendom, whenever the doctrine of faith

and the claims of ritual have come into collision. Most markedly was this the case at the time of the Reformation. Luther, with an eye of genius for the true inwardness of the situation, selected the Epistle to the Galatians as the chief weapon in his armoury with which to do battle against Rome; and the most beautiful of his writings is his early work *Concerning Christian Liberty*, in which he urges on behalf of Christianity, as opposed to priestly and Papal tyranny, exactly the same claims which Paul here puts forth in opposition to the interference of Jewish legalism.

It has already been remarked in connexion with the discussion on the date of the Epistle[1] that the topics of Romans and Galatians are closely similar. But there is a great difference in the methods of treatment followed in the two epistles respectively. While Galatians is written in a tone of vehement expostulation, Romans is courteous in manner and without any fault-finding; for in writing to Rome Paul is addressing strangers, and these are people against whom he has no cause of complaint. To them he is simply sending an exposition of his gospel for their edification. The earnestness of his argument implies that they need it, that they have not yet clearly seen it. That is all. While the Galatians are blamed for an amazing falling back, the Romans are encouraged to advance to what the Galatians were supposed to have attained previously and lost. The positive doctrine is the same in both cases—justification through faith based on the redeeming death of Christ. But the negative attitude is not the same in the two epistles. Among the Galatians the opponents are Judaizing Christians. No such persons are contemplated in the case of the Roman church. At Rome the rival influence is that of the unbelieving Jews. Therefore in Romans Paul's doctrine is opposed to Judaism pure and simple—not to Judaism

[1] See pp. 90 ff.

as an addition to Christianity, the Galatian position, but to Judaism as claiming to be superior to Christianity and so to make out the gospel to be needless.

Literary Style and Characteristics.

This is the most characteristic of all Paul's writings. He reveals himself in the sincerity of his argument and the eagerness with which he presses it home. The last thing that he is thinking of is the production of a finished piece of literature to stand the criticism of the fastidious in all ages. He is too terribly in earnest. Cicero worked up his correspondence with an eye to effect. Pope wrote letters for the express purpose of publication. No such thought entered Paul's mind while he was dictating these fiery sentences. We shall not expect to find in such an unstudied composition the delicacies of phrase that delight the admirers of Mr. Walter Pater. But there is a style the very excellence of which is to be found in its ruggedness. *Fors Clavigera* does not emulate the richly embroidered sentences of *Modern Painters*. But Mr. Ruskin's style is as great in vehement expostulation as in elaborate description. This Epistle of Paul is more than a word; it is a deed. As we read it we watch the swing of the sledge-hammer that is breaking the fetters of Judaism.

Even for us in these late days, when the controversy with which it deals is relegated to the museum of theological antiquities, the Epistle burns and throbs with life; it speaks to us in trumpet notes that we cannot keep apart from the vexed controversies of our own religious thought. There is immortality in such an inspired utterance.

The Apostle's tone in this Epistle differs from that of any other of his writings, except the latter part of 2 Corinthians, with which it may be closely compared. It is vehement, indignant, sometimes approaching sarcasm, at other times indicative of profound concern. The opening

and close differ markedly from the corresponding parts of all the rest of Paul's Epistles. Elsewhere it would appear to be his invariable habit to commence with congratulations and thanksgiving and to conclude with affectionate messages. Even in writing to Corinth, when he had several complaints to make about the conduct of the church, he was able to find some ground of congratulation. He could not praise the Corinthians for their love one to another, nor for their spiritual attainments, as for instance he praised the Philippians and Colossians. But he knew that they were gifted with intelligence and faculty of speech. Therefore he expressed his thankfulness to God that they 'were enriched in him, in all utterance and all knowledge' (1 Cor. i. 5)—meagre praise for a Christian church, but still indicating so much to the good. Paul cannot even say that of the Galatians. The Epistle opens without a word of congratulation or thanksgiving. The Apostle begins with an assertion of his high claims and their Divine authority. He proceeds to greet his correspondents with language of earnest well-wishing; for he is writing in love and for their good, although he is constrained to adopt a tone of severity. Then he plunges right into his subject with the indignant outburst, 'I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel,' &c. (Gal. i. 6). It is the same at the close. There is an entire absence of those pleasant personal greetings with which Paul usually ends his letters. He wishes peace for those who will follow his advice—'as many as shall walk by this rule'; and then he flings off the painful controversy with the almost disdainful words, 'From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus' (Gal. vi. 17). The briefest possible benediction is appended. There is a sternness about Paul's method of addressing his old friends that might well strike them with consternation. This was necessary. If they were

'bewitched,' caught in the toils of an evil fascination, they needed a rude awakening.

For the rest, we notice that Paul's method is by way of vigorous argument. Here is no hectoring and browbeating, no mere scolding, no denunciation on the bare authority of the apostleship. Paul always treats his correspondents as persons of intelligence who are free to cherish their own opinions and who, if they are to be saved from error, must be convinced in their own reason. He is opposing what he regards as a deadly heresy, but it is not in the spirit of the Inquisition. His very contention is that Christians are God's free sons, and he is careful to treat even erring Christians with due respect to their liberty and independence.

While he argues his point, however, Paul does not write like a scholastic divine, more interested in the abstract theme than in the personal relations of the disputants. He would care nothing for a barren logical victory such as the Rabbis of the schools or the Greek sophists delighted in. His concern is wholly practical. He is a father pleading with his children—though for the moment a somewhat stern father, since a severe treatment is what they need. His one desire is to rescue them from the snare of a most disastrous delusion. Their welfare, not the mere triumph of his doctrine, is what he is labouring to secure. This gives an intensely human interest to the Epistle. We do it an injustice when we discuss it with cold criticism, as though it were an abstract theological treatise. The humanity of Paul is revealed in the passion that stirs the pages, and the humanity of his readers is suggested by all he says about them. The keynote of the motive of the Epistle is struck in the sentence, 'I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain' (Gal. iv. 11).

And now in conclusion the question arises, What was the effect of this letter? If we could accept one of the earlier dates assigned to it we should have good

reason for considering that it had accomplished its purpose. For in that case we should have a record of at least one more visit of Paul to Galatia in Acts, and even of two if we could admit Professor Ramsay's very early date. The fact that these visits are but briefly alluded to would imply that nothing remarkable had happened. If Paul had found the trouble still working, painful scenes would have ensued, and Luke could scarcely have passed them over in silence. But with the date assigned in this Introduction we have no record of a later visit to Galatia. Still we have some light on the question. 1 Peter is addressed to Galatians, among other peoples of Asia Minor (1 Pet. i. 1); and this Epistle is thoroughly Pauline in tone. But it is not in any way controversial on the question of the law. Thus it implies that the vexed controversy is over, and it assumes that its readers agree with its author, sharing with him the spirit of liberty from the law. Subsequently when we meet with Judaistic Christians it is not in Galatia. Known as Ebionites, these people were found in Judæa, and they even penetrated to Rome in the second century. But we meet with no reference to their presence in the cities to which this Epistle was written. Then about the same time, that is, before the middle of the second century, there arose in Phrygia, the very district of some of the Galatian churches, an enthusiastic movement known as Montanism, which magnified the gifts of the Spirit and claimed the widest freedom for the exercise of them. It was in part a revolt against the growing clericalism of the Catholic Church, and it claimed liberty of prophesying for laymen and even for women. This was regarded as a breach of discipline and an abuse of Christian liberty. Therefore it exhibited tendencies in some respects the very opposite to that fascination for legalism against which Paul contends. Accordingly we may safely conclude that the Epistle was successful, that its powerful arguments and its urgent

appeals were effectual, that the mischievous leaven was purged out and the churches brought back to their old allegiance to the gospel they had received from Paul, its liberty, its faith, its spirituality.

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THESSALONIANS.

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THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

AND

GALATIANS

AUTHORIZED VERSION

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

Chap. 1

Salutation.

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving for the happy condition of the Thessalonians.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, 3 making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 4 knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men 6 we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy 7 Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that 8 believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that 9 we need not to speak any thing. For they

Chap. 1

themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

A description of the Apostle's conduct of his mission at Thessalonica.

2 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: but even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention. For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: as ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every

12 one of you, as a father *doth* his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. Chap. 2

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that 14 believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews: 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please 16 not God, and are contrary to all men: forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. Thanksgiving for the way in which the Thessalonians had received the apostolic message.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. 18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. 19 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord 20 Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. The Apostle's disappointment.

3 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; 2 and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: Timothy's mission and report.

Chap. 3

That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you: therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

A fervent desire for the progress of the Thessalonians.

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the

Exhortation to purity of life.

Chap. 4

3 Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, *even*
your sanctification, that ye should abstain from
4 fornication: that every one of you should know
how to possess his vessel in sanctification and
5 honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even
6 as the Gentiles which know not God: that no
man go beyond and defraud his brother in *any*
matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of
all such, as we also have forewarned you and
7 testified. For God hath not called us unto
8 uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore
that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who
hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

Exhortation to increase of brotherly love in the church and quiet industry in the world.

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not
that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught
10 of God to love one another. And indeed ye do
it toward all the brethren which are in all Mace-
donia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye
increase more and more;
11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your
own business, and to work with your own hands,
12 as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly
toward them that are without, and *that* ye may
have lack of nothing.

The Parousia.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant,
brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that
ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God
15 bring with him. For this we say unto you by the
word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and*
remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not
16 prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord

Chap. 4

himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive *and* remain shall be 17
caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another 18
with these words.

Sons of light.

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye 5
have no need that I write unto you. For your- 2
selves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they 3
shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, 4
brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children 5
of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us 6
not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; 7
and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, 8
putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God 9
hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died 10
for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort your- 11
selves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Practical exhortation.

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them 12
which labour among you, and are over you in the

13 Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Chap. 5

14 *And* be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be
15 patient toward all *men.* See that none render evil for evil unto any *man;* but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men.*

17 Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.
18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

20 Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesy-
21 ings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is
22 good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; Conclusion.
and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
24 our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it.*

26 Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren
27 with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

The first *epistle* unto the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

Chap. 1

Salutation.

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Congratulation for fidelity under difficulties.

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: *which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with ever-

lasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, Chap. 1
10 and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.
11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and
12 the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming Mistake about the Parousia.
of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering to-
2 gether unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ
3 is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be
4 revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.
5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you,
6 I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.
7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken
8 out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the bright-
9 ness of his coming: *even him*, whose coming is

Chap. 2

after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

10 11 12

Further thanksgiving and exhortation.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

13 14 15 16 17

Prayer and confidence.

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.

3 2

But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

3 4 5

Chap. 3

Admonition against disorderly conduct.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.
7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among
8 you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any
9 of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.
10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither
11 should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not
12 at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat
13 their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary
14 in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.
15 Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

Benediction and salutation.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all.
17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.
18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

The second *epistle* to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

GALATIANS

Chap. 1

Opening salutation.

PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, 1
but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who
raised him from the dead;) and all the brethren 2
which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:
Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, 3
and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself 4
for our sins, that he might deliver us from this
present evil world, according to the will of God
and our Father: to whom *be* glory for ever and 5
ever. Amen.

The Galatian perversion.

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him 6
that called you into the grace of Christ unto an-
other gospel: which is not another; but there be 7
some that trouble you, and would pervert the
gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel 8
from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you
than that which we have preached unto you, let
him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now 9
again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto
you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.
For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I 10
seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men,
I should not be the servant of Christ.

Chap. 1

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel
12 which was preached of me is not after man. For
I neither received it of man, neither was I taught
13 *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye
have heard of my conversation in time past in
the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I
persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:
14 and profited in the Jews' religion above many my
equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly
15 zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when
it pleased God, who separated me from my
16 mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, to
reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him
among the heathen; immediately I conferred
17 not with flesh and blood: neither went I up
to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before
me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again
18 unto Damascus. Then after three years I went
up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with
19 him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw
20 I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now
the things which I write unto you, behold,
21 before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into
22 the regions of Syria and Cilicia; and was un-
known by face unto the churches of Judæa which
23 were in Christ: but they had heard only, That
he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth
24 the faith which once he destroyed. And they
glorified God in me.

Paul's account of his own conversion.

First visit to Jerusalem.

2 Then fourteen years after I went up again to
Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me*
2 also. And I went up by revelation, and com-
municated unto them that gospel which I preach

Another visit to Jerusalem.

Chap. 2

among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, who 3
was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren 4
unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom 5
we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But of these who seemed to be somewhat, 6
(whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw 7
that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; (for he that wrought effectually 8
in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed 9
to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only 10
they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Dispute with Peter.

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I with- 11
stood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did 12
eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other 13

Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their
14 dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the
15 Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,
16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the
17 law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister
18 of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a trans-
19 gressor. For I through the law am dead to the
20 law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Chap. 2

The new life in Christ.

3 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth,
2 crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of

An appeal to experience.

Chap. 3

the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so 3
foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now
made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so 4
many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain. He 5
therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and
worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the
works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The example of Abraham.

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was 6
accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye 7
therefore that they which are of faith, the same
are the children of Abraham.

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would 8
justify the heathen through faith, preached before
the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall
all nations be blessed. So then they which be of 9
faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

The curse of the law.

For as many as are of the works of the law are 10
under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every
one that continueth not in all things which are
written in the book of the law to do them.

But that no man is justified by the law in the 11
sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall
live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, 12
The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the 13
law, being made a curse for us: for it is written,
Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: that 14
the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive
the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The ancient covenant.

Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; 15
Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be*
confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.
17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none
18 effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

The place and function of the law.

19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.
20 Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.
21 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness
22 should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that
23 believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which
24 should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer
26 under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children
27 of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put
28 on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor

Chap. 3

female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And 29
if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and
heirs according to the promise.

Sonship.

Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, 4
differeth nothing from a servant, though he be
lord of all; but is under tutors and governors 2
until the time appointed of the father. Even so 3
we, when we were children, were in bondage under
the elements of the world: but when the fulness 4
of the time was come, God sent forth his Son,
made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem 5
them that were under the law, that we might receive
the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, 6
God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into
your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore 7
thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a
son, then an heir of God through Christ.

The return to the old bondage.

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did 8
service unto them which by nature are no gods.
But now, after that ye have known God, or rather 9
are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak
and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again
to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, 10
and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest 11
I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

The earlier sympathy between Paul and the Galatians.

Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am;* for I *am* 12
as ye *are:* ye have not injured me at all. Ye 13
know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached
the gospel unto you at the first. And my tempta- 14
tion which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor
rejected; but received me as an angel of God,
even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessed- 15
ness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if

it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.
16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I
17 tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye
18 might affect them. But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in *a* good *thing*, and not only
19 when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be
20 formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

The allegory of Hagar.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law,
22 do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid,
23 the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he
24 of the freewoman *was* by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth
25 to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her
26 children. But Jerusalem which is above is free,
27 which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which
28 hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac
29 was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now.
30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out

Chap. 4

the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children 31
of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith 5
Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled
The danger of Judaizing. again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul 2
say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ
shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to 3
every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor
to do the whole law. Christ is become of no 4
effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified
by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we 5
through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteous-
ness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circum- 6
cision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;
but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run 7
well; who did hinder you that ye should not
obey the truth? This persuasion *cometh* not of 8
him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth 9
the whole lump.

I have confidence in you through the Lord, 10
that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he
that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, who-
soever he be. And I, brethren, if I yet preach 11
circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?
then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would 12
they were even cut off which trouble you.

Love the fulfilment of the law. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; 13
only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,
but by love serve one another. For all the law 14
is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt
love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and 15

devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Chap. 5

16 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye **The Spirit and the flesh.**
17 shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things
18 that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit,
19 ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these;* Adultery,
20 fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath,
21 strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things
22 shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering,
23 gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:
24 against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the
25 affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let
26 us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

6 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye **On burden-bearing.** which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou
2 also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens,
3 and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing,
4 he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in

Chap. 6

himself alone, and not in another. For every 5
man shall bear his own burden.

On well-doing.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate 6
unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be 7
not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever
a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he 8
that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap
corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall
of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not 9
be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall
reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore oppor- 10
tunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto
them who are of the household of faith.

Conclusion written by Paul himself.

Ye see how large a letter I have written unto 11
you with mine own hand.

As many as desire to make a fair shew in the 12
flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only
lest they should suffer persecution for the cross
of Christ. For neither they themselves who are 13
circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you
circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the 14
cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the
world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.
For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth 15
any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.
And as many as walk according to this rule, peace 16
be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of
God. From henceforth let no man trouble me: 17
for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ 18
be with your spirit. Amen.

Unto the Galatians written from Rome.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

AND

GALATIANS

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of **1**

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i. 1. *Salutation.* Paul and his two companions salute the Thessalonian church, wishing them grace and peace.

1. Paul. The name is given without any title. This is quite unusual in Paul's Epistles. In all other cases, except the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, there is some descriptive name or phrase. Usually Paul designates himself an 'apostle,' sometimes very emphatically, as 'an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God,' 'an apostle not from men, neither through men, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father,' &c. In writing to the Romans and to Titus he also describes himself as 'a servant of Jesus Christ,' and 'of God'; and in writing to the Philippians he unites the name of Timothy with his own name, describing both as 'servants of Christ Jesus'; in this case, the only one beside the letters to the Thessalonians and that to Philemon, he does not name himself as an apostle. In the beautiful little Epistle to Philemon—quite a private letter—he is simply 'a prisoner of Jesus Christ.' Thus out of the thirteen Epistles—

In nine Epistles Paul introduces himself as an 'apostle.'
In two of these he is also a 'servant.'
In one, joined with Timothy, he is only a 'servant.'
In one he is a 'prisoner of Christ Jesus.'
In two he appears without any title.

The omission of the title in the two Thessalonian letters implies that when he wrote them he had no reason to assert his claims. This was early, before the opposition of Judaizing Christians had arisen.

Silvanus: a lengthier form of the name 'Silas,' and indicating

the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

Paul's travelling companion, of whom we read in Acts under that name. He had been a prominent member of the Jerusalem church, and as such he was sent, together with another member named Judas, by the apostles and elders of that church to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas on their return, in order to convey the answer of the church at Jerusalem to a momentous question on which the Antioch Christians had sought advice. Paul having had a difference of opinion with Barnabas, his travelling companion, on what we call his 'first missionary journey,' chose Silas instead for the second journey, that in which, having travelled through Asia Minor, he crossed to Europe. Thus Silas was with the Apostle when the Thessalonians—who were evangelized during this mission—received the gospel. He remained behind at Berœa when the Apostle went on to Athens, and joined Paul later at Corinth. There he took an active part in preaching the gospel. Possibly he was with Peter some years later, as the name Silvanus occurs in 1 Pet. v. 12, an epistle directed to Christians residing in districts that Silvanus had traversed when he was Paul's travelling companion. There is a tradition that Silvanus was bishop of Thessalonica, but it is late and of little value.

Timothy: named last as junior to Silvanus. Paul's favourite, most trusted, and most useful disciple and helper. The son of a Greek father and a Jewess mother named Eunice (Acts xvi. 1; 2 Tim. i. 5), he had been trained in the Hebrew Scriptures when he first met Paul. He was living at Lystra, and apparently he was there won to the Christian faith by the preaching of the Apostle during the first missionary tour in Asia Minor. On his second visit to Lystra Paul took Timothy to be his personal attendant and fellow worker, according to 'Acts' first having him submit to the Jewish rite of initiation, that he might be received among the Jews. He accompanied the Apostle to Europe, and was present at the founding of the church in Thessalonica, and he remained behind at Berœa when Paul hurried on to Athens. There he joined the Apostle, to be sent back, however, to Thessalonica, as our Epistle shews (iii. 1, 2). He had just returned a second time to the company of Paul, coming up with him at Corinth, when this letter was written. It is therefore most appropriate for Timothy's name to appear in the salutation of an Epistle to the Thessalonians. The three names—Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy—recur precisely in the same way in the opening of 2 Thessalonians.

the church of the Thessalonians. The word *ecclēsia*,

rendered 'church,' was the name of the lawful assembly of free citizens in a Greek city. But it seems to have come to be employed loosely for an assembly of any kind, in accordance with the less accurate usage of later Greek, for we find this name given to the riotous mob at Ephesus in Acts xix. 32, 41. In the O. T. it is used for the assembly of the Israelites, 'the congregation of Israel.' It only occurs at two places in the gospels, both of them being in Matthew (i. e. xvi. 18, and xviii. 17). We meet with it frequently in Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. Most commonly it is used for a local community of Christians, defined by the town in which it is situated. It is used in this sense here; 'the church of the Thessalonians' is the Christian community at Thessalonica. In Ephesians and Colossians the Apostle uses the word 'church' for the communion or mystical assembly of all Christians. In that sense of the word there is but one church, geographically coextensive with Christendom, but everywhere limited by individual discipleship to Jesus Christ.

the Thessalonians. See Introduction, p. 5 ff.

in: a preposition very extensively used by Paul to express the idea of mystical union between God or Christ and Christian people. They are so closely united to God and Christ, so much under Divine influence, so entirely drawing their life from above, that they are said to live in the Divine Being.

God the Father: a peculiarly Christian name for God, consequent on our Lord's revelation of the Fatherhood of God. This Paul had made known to the Thessalonians.

the Lord Jesus Christ. The first title, 'the Lord,' is one of honour and reverence, carrying with it a confession of loyalty from the servant who uses it. 'Jesus' is the personal name by which our Lord was known among all acquaintances from his childhood. 'Christ' is just the Greek rendering of the Hebrew 'Messiah,' literally the 'Anointed-one,' but in usage meaning the expected Deliverer and King of Israel. With Paul it has become a surname of Jesus.

Grace: an echo of the Greek salutation—'All hail!' but with a Christian meaning. The word in N. T. usage means the free favour of God and its happy effects, manifested in the Christian gospel.

peace: an echo of the Hebrew salutation—the 'Salaam!' but having a deepening of its meaning with Christian ideas, Christians having the privilege of peace with God and peace in their own hearts and in their happy relations one with another.

The additional clause in the A. V., 'from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,' is omitted by the Revisers as it is absent from some of the best MSS., though found in others. There could

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making
3 mention *of you* in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our

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be no reason for cutting it out. But it may easily have been inserted by some scribe copying the Second Epistle, where it stands on undoubted MSS. authority.

i. 2–10. *Thanksgiving for the happy condition of the Thessalonians.* Paul thanks God for the graces seen in the Thessalonians. They prove that his preaching has not been ineffectual. These people, manifesting joy in spite of persecution, have become an example to others north and south of them, the word of the gospel thus sounding out from Thessalonica in both directions; and thus the report of their conversion has come round to the Apostle from Macedonia and Achaia.

2. We: not the 'editorial we,' but meaning the Apostle together with Silvanus and Timothy. This plural continually recurs throughout the Epistle, and for the same reason. Still, it is used in courtesy, not because the two companions are really joint authors with the Apostle. It is Paul's Epistle.

for you: *lit.* 'about' or 'concerning you.'

3. Paul here mentions the three Christian graces of which he writes later in 1 Cor. xiii. 1. In both cases he names faith first, not for its pre-eminent importance, because in Corinthians he expressly gives the palm to love, but no doubt because he regards it as coming earlier in experience than the other graces, and in a measure laying the foundation for them. In the passage before us the graces are not by themselves, but associated with their fruits. It is these fruits that the Apostle describes himself as remembering. They are more concrete and perceptible than the graces, but they are valued as evidences of the existence of those graces.

work of faith: work that springs from faith, or is characterized by faith.

labour of love: 'labour' is a stronger word than 'work.' In the Greek original, as well as in the English translation, the term used points to painful effort. Love is capable of going beyond faith in inspiring and sustaining painful efforts. This labour springs from love, or is characterized by love—the phrase admitting of either interpretation.

patience: more than uncomplaining submission. There is an active sense in the Greek word which points to a sustaining by effort, a bearing up.

hope. The patience is based on hope, or is characterized by

God and Father; knowing, brethren beloved of God, 4
your election, how that our gospel came not unto you in 5
word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost,

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hope, a similar alternative being open to us in interpreting each of these three phrases.

in our Lord Jesus Christ. This must not be connected with the whole phrase 'patience of hope,' nor with all three phrases, but only with the word 'hope.' It is not the work or labour or patience, but the hope that is in Christ. In Col. i. 27 Paul writes of Christ as our hope. The meaning is that the Christian expectation is based on Christ and what he will do. It may mean the hope of Christ's return, that subject occupying attention later in the Epistle (iv. 13–18). But the word 'hope' occurs three times again in this Epistle, at iv. 13, where it refers to the condition of the blessed dead, and at v. 8, where its object is 'salvation,' or final deliverance from all evil. It is best therefore to take it here in a wide, general sense. The gospel instils hopefulness with regard to the future generally; this rests in Christ and what he will accomplish; meanwhile it gives the power to bear up amid present adverse circumstances.

4. beloved of God: the reading of R.V., preferable to the arrangement in A.V., which is 'brethren beloved,' the following phrase then being 'your election of God.' That arrangement disjoints the phrases.

your election: the selection of these people out of the great population of the city of Thessalonica.

5. how that: not 'for' as in A.V. The words that follow expand the notion of the selection of these people, shewing for what end they were chosen.

our gospel: the gospel which Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy had preached. The word 'gospel' is never used in the Bible for a book, as we use it for the works of the four Evangelists, but always for the preachers' message, the good news they were proclaiming.

in power: manifested in the effects of the mission. This was at Thessalonica. Now Paul is in Corinth. Writing subsequently to the Christians of the latter city he refers to the 'power' of his preaching witnessed there also, describing 'the word of the cross' as 'the power of God' (1 Cor. i. 18).

in the Holy Ghost: the coming of the Spirit of God on the converts as spiritual gifts conferred by the apostles. This may be illustrated by an incident at Ephesus, where Paul, finding twelve converts who had not heard of this gift, laid his hands on them, with the consequence that 'the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied' (Acts xix. 6). Probably

and *in* much assurance; even as ye know what manner
of men we shewed ourselves toward you for your sake.
6 And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having

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similar signs which expressed the extraordinary enthusiasm of the new movement were witnessed at Thessalonica. Still the deeper, more permanent, and more valuable effects of the working of the Divine Spirit were also seen there, as this Epistle clearly shews.

assurance: rather, 'fullness.' The word admits of both senses; but as here it follows references to the power of the preaching and the accompanying outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it is not so likely that we should have the thought of the Apostle's own confident mood as the third idea brought before us; it is much more probable that the abundant working of the gospel among the Thessalonians should be the idea that crowns the other two. Besides, the preposition 'in' is not repeated the third time. We have (1) 'in power,' and (2) 'in the Holy Ghost and fullness'—one common, complex idea. There was a wealth of grace and good effects in association with the gift of the Holy Ghost.

even as ye know, &c. Paul appeals to his readers' experience. They had seen the missionaries who had preached in the effective way just described to be themselves living witnesses of the power of the gospel they proclaimed.

we shewed ourselves: *lit.* 'we became,' not merely 'we were,' as in A. V. The expression occurs several times in the Epistle, and is generally equivalent to 'we proved to be' this or that. Still it might be read more literally here. In point of fact the missionaries adapted themselves to the requirements of their converts, toiling for their daily bread (see ii. 9), labouring in teaching, denying themselves innocent delights, almost incurring martyrdom, as the history in Acts shews. All this they *became* for the sake of the Thessalonian Christians; and that the people themselves knew right well. This was the secret of their influence. We see the same thing repeated in the story of Robert and Mary Moffat, where the Africans are impressed by their self-denying kindness in coming out from England and living among the native people solely for the good of these people.

6. ye became: corresponding to the 'we became' of the previous verse.

imitators: better than 'followers,' as in A. V. The Greek word is that from which our term 'mimic' is derived, but it does not convey the belittling associations of the English derivative. It points to the grave imitation of the master by the pupil.

received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye became an ensample to all that 7
believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you 8
hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to

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and of the Lord. The Thessalonians were led on to the *imitatio Christi* by first of all copying the conduct of those of Christ's servants who were living among them.

affliction: the persecution described in Acts xvii. 5–9, where we read how the Jews of Thessalonica collected 'vile fellows of the rabble' with whom they assaulted the house of Jason, Paul's host, and dragged him before the Roman tribunal.

joy of the Holy Ghost: the joy that springs from the reception of the Spirit of God. Elsewhere in specifying 'the fruit of the Spirit' Paul gives 'joy' as the second item in his list of products—the first being 'love' (Gal. v. 22). Prof. Harnack has pointed out that the two great characteristics of the early Christians were brotherly love and an enthusiasm of gladness.

7. an ensample. As the Thessalonians had imitated the missionaries, so they in turn became examples to neighbouring Christians, and particularly in this, that they cheerfully surmounted persecution. The idea is that gladness of soul shining out of the troubles of life furnishes an attractive example to others.

Macedonia: the Roman province of northern Greece.

Achaia: the Roman province of southern Greece. Paul always uses these large names of the political divisions of the Roman Empire when referring to the districts they include. Thus he writes of 'Asia,' 'Cilicia,' &c.

8. sounded forth. This can scarcely point to missionary enterprises undertaken by the Thessalonians. It seems to mean that the fame of their glad endurance of persecution was itself a powerful declaration of the gospel. Their joy was like a merry peal of bells ringing out the good news of the Christian message, and reverberating far and wide.

the word of the Lord: either (1) 'the Lord's word,' his teaching and commands, or (2) 'the word about the Lord,' the gospel story of his grace. The very frequent use of the expression in the O. T., and always with the first of these meanings, points to that meaning here (cf. Isa. i. 10). Thus the idea is the Divine word, the word from God and Christ.

every place: besides Macedonia and Achaia; therefore the Eastern Churches, see Introduction, p. 22.

God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak
9 anything. For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and
10 true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come.

we need not to speak anything: i. e. in commendation of the Thessalonians, their character being so well known.

9. they themselves. These people having heard the fame of the Thessalonians are sending to congratulate the Apostle on the wonderful reception his message has met with in the Macedonian city.

idols. Those marble statues that we now admire as works of art were to Paul mere idols, and rightly so, since in his day incense was burnt before them as though the gods lived in them.

living: in contrast to the lifeless stone.

true: in contrast to the false, the unreal divinity of the images. The first and most fundamental change in the religion of these Greeks was their abandonment of idolatry and their commencement of the spiritual worship of God.

10. This verse indicates the second great change in the Thessalonians, viz. their reception of the Christ-thought.

to wait for his Son: i. e. for the return of Christ. It is characteristic of this Epistle to direct attention forward to our Lord's second Advent, rather than back to his earthly life, his death and resurrection, mention of which only comes here in a subsidiary clause, the main thought being that of the attitude of expectancy. These two things characterize the new faith of the Thessalonians—(1) abandonment of idolatry for the worship of the living, true God, and (2) expectation of the return of the risen Christ.

whom he raised. This is Paul's usual manner of describing our Lord's resurrection. It is not that Christ rises; but that God raises him up (e. g. Rom. iv. 24, vi. 4, 9; 1 Cor. vi. 14, xv. 12, &c.). The fact is mentioned here as a ground for the expectation of our Lord's return.

even **Jesus**: our Lord's personal name.

delivereth. The verb is in the present. The process is now going on.

us. In humility, and truth also, the Apostle associates himself with these converts from heathenism. He too as well as they was in danger of the wrath, and was being saved from it by Christ.

God w yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto 2
were that it hath not been found vain: but having suffered 2
before, and been shamefully entreated, as ye know, at
Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you

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the wrath to come: *lit.* 'the coming wrath'; the participle is in the present, not to indicate that the wrath is on the way, but to shew the certainty of its future advent, whenever that may be. Paul is referring to the anger of God that will descend in vengeance on the guilty race.

ii. 1–12. *A description of the Apostle's conduct of his mission at Thessalonica.* The Thessalonians know how Paul and his companions came to them after having been shamefully treated at Philippi, preaching boldly the pure, true message that was entrusted to them. They did not flatter, they did not seek their own profit, but they cherished their converts, giving them their very selves. Not to be a burden to the Thessalonians, they supported themselves by their own labour, and lived a good and holy life among them, treating them as a father treats his children, and so encouraging them in the Christian life.

1. our entering in: the coming of the missionaries to the city of Thessalonica.

hath not been found: *lit.* 'did not become'—i. e. did not prove itself to be.

vain: *lit.* 'empty.' They did not come as helpless fugitives, as pauper immigrants, empty-handed and useless. They came in fullness of power and with gifts for the people they visited.

2. shamefully entreated . . . at Philippi. Luke gives a full account of this shameful treatment in Acts xvi. 19–23. In this case it was not Jewish jealousy that raised opposition to Paul, but a much more rare source of antagonism, an alarmed commercial self-interest in heathen circles. Some soothsayers were enraged because Paul had cured a supposed Pythoness, a girl said to be possessed by a divining demon, out of whose performances they were making their living. These men got Paul and Silas arrested and dragged before the praetors in the forum as disturbers of the peace and innovators in opposition to Roman customs. The mob were excited against the apostles, and the magistrates had them stripped and scourged with the lictor's rods and then flung into prison, conduct for which Paul subsequently exacted an apology on the ground of his Roman citizenship.

Philippi: a city in the east of Macedonia situated on a steep hill at the edge of a great plain. It was named after Philip of Macedon, its founder, but in Paul's time it was a Roman colony.

3 the gospel of God in much conflict. For our exhortation
4 *is* not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but
even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted
with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but

Our Epistle to the Philippians was addressed to the church in this city.

waxed bold. The Apostle's courage grew all the stronger in face of opposition. The word, taken literally, means 'became bold in speech.'

in our God: by the help of God, the source of the courage.

the gospel of God: God's gospel, meaning the gracious message which He sends, not the glad tidings about God. The subject of the gospel is Christ. The expression is a favourite one with the Apostle, and his use of it is clear in Rom. i. 1–3, where after referring to 'the gospel of God,' he adds that it is 'concerning His Son.'

much conflict: the opposition at Thessalonica already referred to. See note on i. 6.

3. exhortation: the appeal that follows the 'preaching' or proclamation of the gospel, and 'teaching' or exposition of its truths.

of error: meaning 'out of error,' 'having its source in error.' Compare the phrase in the Creed, 'light of light,' i. e. derived light coming from original light. The apostolic exhortation did not spring from a delusion.

uncleanness: 'impure motives,' i. e. low, self-interested aims, as the words that follow shew the Apostle's meaning to be. He was not deceiving and flattering, with secret motives of covetousness. The Greeks were familiar with such conduct on the part of sophists and rhetoricians, travelling lecturers, clever to gather audiences with taking speech, but caring only for the fees they could extract.

nor in guile. All was open and above board in the apostolic exhortation. There were no sophistical attempts to entrap the unwary.

4. approved of God: as regards their characters.

intrusted with the gospel: with reference to their mission. God had considered Paul and his companions fit and proper persons to have the responsibility of expounding His message of grace intrusted to them. In the pastoral epistles the Apostle says that the gospel 'was committed to my trust' (1 Tim. i. 11), and calls it 'the message wherewith I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour' (Titus i. 3).

so we speak: i. e. in accordance with their character, the

God which ly weth our hearts. For neither at any time 5
were we found using words of flattery, as ye know, nor
a doke o' covetousness, God is witness; nor seeking 6
glory of men, neither from you, nor from others, when
we might have been burdensome, as apostles of Christ.
But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse 7

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character of which God so much approved that He intrusted them with the gospel.

proveth: tries and tests, and so discovers the true inner character.

5. a cloke of covetousness: some trick to disguise covetousness, flattering the people with pleasant phrases only to get money out of them.

God is witness. He only can see if there is any hidden selfish motive or deceitful aim. Therefore here the Apostle appeals to God. When dealing with external conduct, visible to all, he appeals to his readers.

6. been burdensome. The alternatives are 'used authority' (margin of A.V.) and 'claimed honour' (margin of R.V.). If we accept either of these the idea is that the apostles did not assert their dignity as they might have done. The previous statement, that they did not seek 'glory of men,' and the following words in which Paul writes of their gentleness favour this view. But a little further on he uses a form of the same Greek word here rendered 'burdensome,' saying, 'that we might not burden you,' when reminding the Thessalonians how he had worked for his living rather than take anything from them. It seems reasonable therefore to conclude that the meaning is the same here.

7. we were: or 'proved to be,' the word so frequently met with before in this sense.

gentle. Curiously enough some of the oldest MSS.—including the two most ancient of all, the *Vatican* and the *Sinaitic*—have 'babes' instead of this word: 'But we were *babes* in the midst of you.' But this is quite inappropriate to the immediate context, where Paul compares himself to a nurse cherishing her children. The change of the word is easily accounted for. In the Greek it only involves the addition of one letter. 'Gentle' = *ēpioi*; 'babes' = *nēpioi*. Moreover in the Greek text the previous word ends with this letter *n*. In the old MSS. there is no division between the words. If that final *n* got detached from its own word and joined to the following word in reading, then *a* was would give us 'babes' instead of 'gentle'; or the coming of the of a scribe of God writing the *n* twice would produce with the idea,

8 cherisheth her own children: even so, our g affection-
ately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart
unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our
own souls, because ye were become very dear to us.
9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail:
working night and day, that we might not burden any of
10 you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are
witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and righteously and

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stands in the MSS. referred to. This is an instance of how the best MSS. may sometimes be demonstrably wrong, and of how therefore we must sometimes prefer the readings of inferior MSS.

a nurse: a nursing mother, not a slave or a hired nurse, because she is described as cherishing 'her *own* children.'

8. affectionately desirous: a single word in the Greek, indicating the keen interest the Apostle felt in the Thessalonians.

our own souls: our very selves, and even our lives.

9. labour: toil with the idea of its weariness.

travail: work with the idea of its effort and strenuousness.

working night and day. The Apostle supported himself at Thessalonica by his own labour. In writing to the Corinthians Paul reminds them how he had worked among them also, as he says, with his 'own hands' (1 Cor. iv. 12). We learn from Acts xviii. 2 that his trade was tent-making, an employment in which Priscilla and Aquila joined the Apostle when at Corinth. This work by which he earned his daily bread, added to his missionary labours, necessarily involved long hours. After preaching the gospel and discussing questions arising from it with all possible inquirers during the day-time, instead of taking his much needed rest he would have to sit late into the night, cutting the coarse goat's-hair cloth and sewing it to the requisite shape for the shelters of the Greek shepherds out on the hills.

that we might not burden any of you: the reason for undertaking this manual work. Note Paul's delicacy of feeling in this matter.

10. holily. This is not a form of the word commonly rendered 'holiness,' which really means being dedicated and set apart for God; but a term pointing to purity and elevation of character, and therefore meaning more nearly the same as our word 'holiness.'

righteously: with integrity and uprightness of conduct, that calls it commandm[illegible] their ch[illegible]

so we spea[illegible]

unblameably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe: as ye know how we *dealt with* each one of you, 11
as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging *you*, and testifying, to the end that ye 12
should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory.

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unblameably. Nobody could sustain any accusation against the missionaries.

11. each one of you. There was personal care and attention given to every individual convert separately.

as a father. Previously Paul had spoken of his being like a nursing mother (verse 7). Thus he heaps up the images of most affectionate solicitude.

exhorting: to rouse the sense of duty.

encouraging: to cheer with the prospect of a glad performance of it.

testifying: solemnly charging. The word is used in this sense in Eph. iv. 17, 'This I say therefore, and *testify* in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles,' &c.

12. walk: a Hebraism pointing to the common course of daily life.

calleth: according to the best MSS., not 'called' as in A. V. The call is continuous. (1) This may mean that one and another are called successively, the gospel invitation being continually repeated to bring in new converts. (2) Or it may mean that the whole church is being continually called to an inheritance not yet enjoyed. Perhaps the reference to the 'glory' which is a privilege of the future rather favours this second view. But it is not at all in the line of Paul's usual teaching. The Apostle always regards the call of each individual as one act of God. Therefore probably we should fall back on the first meaning. The evangelistic work in Thessalonica has not ceased; although the Apostle has left the city God is still calling new followers of Christ into His Church.

his own: an emphatic pronoun. This is the high privilege of Christians, not to be treated as aliens, but to be made citizens of God's own kingdom. Paul is a Jew; the kingdom of God was regarded as the privilege of his race. The Thessalonians are Gentiles; yet they are being called into it.

kingdom: the most familiar word in the teaching of Jesus; much less frequent in the apostolic writings. The idea was Jewish in origin—the Jews looking forward to the coming of the kingdom of God. The Greek world was not familiar with the idea,

13 And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message,

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and therefore would not so readily apprehend the presentation of the gospel in this form. Still occasionally it is so described even for Greeks, for the idea itself is true and important. In Christian teaching, as our Lord has shewn, it represents the spiritual, inward rule of God in the hearts of His people with all the benefits personal and in the social system that result from that rule. Here the union of the idea of glory with it shews the kingdom to be regarded as something future, not yet realized, just as we are taught to pray, 'Thy kingdom come,' with a view to its future advent. It is to be observed that Paul had made the preaching of the kingdom prominent at Thessalonica, since there the Christians were accused of 'saying that there is another king, one Jesus,' and thus 'acting contrary to the decrees of Cæsar' (Acts xvii. 7). May it be that the misunderstanding here made apparent induced the Apostle to avoid references to the Jewish conception of Christianity as a kingdom in his subsequent work among the Greek cities? Thus we can account for the rarity of the occurrence of the term in the Epistles compared with the Gospels.

ii. 13–16. *Thanksgiving for the way in which the Thessalonians had received the apostolic message.* Turning from the description of his own work at Thessalonica the Apostle makes mention of the good reception of it on the part of his converts in that city. This is a matter of ceaseless thankfulness on his part. The Thessalonians received the gospel as the word of God, and it continued to work in them so that they followed the example of the Judæan Christians, enduring from their fellow countrymen persecutions like those the Jewish Christians were suffering from Jews. This leads the Apostle to describe the guilt of those Jews who both reject Christ for themselves and refuse the gospel to the Gentiles.

13. for this cause. For what cause? The Apostle might be referring to the call of the Thessalonians into God's own kingdom; but as the mention of that call only occurs in a subordinate clause it is more likely that his reference is to the whole of the previous sentence. That is to say, he never ceases to thank God for his work at Thessalonica.

we also: we who conferred the benefit, as well as you who have received it.

thank. The Greek word is that from which the term 'Eucharist' is derived.

the word of the message: *lit.* 'the word of hearing,' i. e. the word heard, corresponding to 'the preached word.' It was

even the word of God, ye accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe. For ye, brethren, 14
became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judæa in Christ Jesus: for ye also suffered the

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a word that reached the Thessalonians, a message they themselves had been able to hear.

the word **of God**: not the word about God, but the word that came from God, God's word, as is proved by the antithesis of 'the word of men,' a word of merely human origin. The Thessalonians had perceived that what the Apostle taught had its origin in God. This word of God is not Scripture, but the preaching of Paul and his companions.

which also worketh. This Divine word has power, and makes itself felt by its influence. The present condition of the Thessalonians which has been reported to Paul is a fruit and sign of the working of the truth in them.

you that believe. The Pauline teaching is that the benefit of the gospel is conditional on the faith of those who receive it. Observe the present tense of the verb. The word is operative while the hearers believe. The two things are continuous. If the faith ceased the influence of the message would cease also.

14. became imitators: a consequence of the operation of the word just mentioned. Previously Paul had described the Thessalonians as imitators of their missionaries (i. 6). Now he notes that they are imitators of the primitive churches in Judæa.

churches . . . in Judæa. It has been said that there was no friendliness, that there was even bitter antagonism, between the Jewish Christian in Palestine and Paul. This passage does not favour that notion. Still the Epistle to the Galatians shews that at a later period the party of James in Jerusalem was opposed to the Apostle, and the subsequent history of the old Jewish communities of Christians in Palestine tells how they gradually got out of sympathy with the Greek churches, till at last they were regarded as heretics under the title of 'Ebionites' and 'Nazarenes' for clinging to the law and Jewish notions of Christianity by the general body of the Christians elsewhere. Then the Greek churches would not dream of imitating the churches of Judæa. But at the early date of this Epistle the schism had not appeared, and the primitive churches were naturally regarded as patterns whose example the new, raw converts from the heathen would do well to follow.

suffered the same things: a third reference to the persecutions endured by the Thessalonians. The two earlier references

same things of your own countrymen, even as they
15 did of the Jews; who both killed the Lord Jesus
and the prophets, and drave out us, and please not
16 God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to
speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up

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are at i. 6 and ii. 2. Here, as in the earlier of the two passages just cited, where the Apostle says the Thessalonians were imitators of their missionaries, the imitation is in the endurance of persecution. The martyr spirit of the Judæan Christians inspired the fidelity of the Thessalonians when under similar trials.

your own countrymen. The persecution had been carried on by the rabble of the city, fellow Macedonians, though it had been instigated by the Jews (see Acts xvii. 5).

15. killed the Lord Jesus. The Apostle lays the charge of this supreme crime against the Jews generally. Their present attitude shewed their consent to the deed. They did not repudiate it; they continued to act in the spirit of it. It could be regarded as their national action.

the prophets: not the Christian prophets—there is no sign that these had been killed by the Jews—but the Hebrew prophets of former ages. The mention of them here resembles the accusation Jesus brought against the Jews of being the murderers of the servants sent to his vineyard by the husbandman in the parable (Mark xii. 4, 5), and his warning that on them would 'come all the righteous blood shed on the earth from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah,' &c. (Matt. xxiii. 35).

drave out us. The narrative in Acts describes the expulsion of Paul and his companions from Thessalonica (see Acts xvii. 5-10). Prof. Ramsay considers it to imply that the magistrates settled the case that was brought before them on the understanding that the missionaries, as disturbers of the peace, left the city forthwith.

contrary to all men. The exclusiveness of the Jews led to their being regarded by the Gentiles as misanthropic. This is mentioned by Tacitus. But here Paul suggests that their antagonism to the preaching of the gospel rendered them really enemies of the human race.

16. forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles. The Jews, while rejecting the gospel for themselves, were wildly jealous of Paul's work in evangelizing the Gentiles. In this jealousy we may see the ground of the persecution they stirred up.

to fill up. The idea is an allusion to the common Jewish image of the cup. When this is filled to the brim it will overflow.

their sins alway: but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

But we, brethren, being bereaved of you for a short 17

There will then be no more scope for sinning; the judgement will follow.

alway: i. e. the Jews always act in this way. They never cease from the dreadful work of filling up their sins.

the wrath: i. e. God's anger, mentioned thus simply with the definite article, both as known from previous warnings, and also because it is so dreadful as not to be confounded with any other being's anger. It is emphatically *the* wrath.

is come. This is clearly a verb in the past tense, for the form of the Greek word is the aorist. It cannot mean 'is coming,' or 'will come.' Accordingly it has been argued from the phrase that the great outpouring of Divine wrath in the destruction of Jerusalem had already taken place. This would place the Epistle later than A. D. 70. Baur pointed to this as a reason for concluding that it is not a genuine work of Paul's. But the context does not bear out this view, since there we read of the Jews still filling up their cup of sin, indicating that the great outpouring of wrath is yet to come. Besides, the whole passage has manifest reference to a time but shortly after the evangelizing of the Thessalonians. Perhaps the Apostle means that the preaching of judgement which goes with the gospel message is the coming of the wrath. In this preaching, wrath hangs over the heads of the Jews like a thundercloud ready to burst at any moment, sure to burst directly the cup of sin is full.

to the uttermost: to be connected with the verb—'is come to the uttermost,' i. e. has completely come.

Schmiedel considers verses 14 to 16 to be a late interpolation, both because of the harsh language used concerning the Jews, and also because of the complete accomplishment of their doom here affirmed. Thus the Epistle may be still regarded as genuine and of early date, although a late date is given to this passage. But this theory is not needed if we may regard the 'wrath' as coming in the message of judgement delivered the by Apostle. Possibly the troubles caused by the insurrection of Theudas (Acts v. 36), the Jerusalem famine (xi. 27-30), and the expulsion of the Jews from Rome by Claudius (xviii. 2) were taken by Paul as signs of Divine wrath against the Jews. The recent Jewish persecution of the Christians at Thessalonica would account for Paul's stern thoughts concerning his people.

ii. 17-20. *The Apostle's disappointment.* Temporally separated from the Thessalonians—in presence, though not in heart—

season, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more
18 exceedingly to see your face with great desire: because
we would fain have come unto you, I Paul once and
19 again; and Satan hindered us. For what is our hope,

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the Apostle has made several attempts to visit them, but has been hindered by Satan. He rejoices, exults in them before Christ at his coming.

bereaved. A very expressive compound Greek word is used here, including the two ideas of separation and bereavement, i. e. 'bereaved by separation.'

a short season: *lit.* 'a season of an hour.' In point of fact it was a few months. There was the time of the Apostle's visit to Berœa, his journey to Athens and stay there during which he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica, and Timothy's return to the Apostle, then at Corinth.

18. we would fain: *lit.* 'we wished.'

I Paul. Throughout the Epistle Paul associates Silvanus and Timothy with himself by writing in the plural. But evidently that is an act of courtesy towards the two companions. It is the Apostle who writes, and his personal references are really to his own feelings and experience. At this point he breaks from the plural form of language to emphasize the idea of his individual wish to visit the Thessalonians. Indeed the plural would be out of place here, since one of the three, Timothy, had been to Thessalonica.

once and again. We have no particulars as to these two occasions. Possibly one was when the Apostle was rejoined at Athens by his travelling companions who would bring news from Macedonia. The other occasion might well be on the receipt of the news that Timothy brought to Corinth. Then this letter would have to take the place of the visit.

Satan: *lit.* 'the adversary.' Accordingly some have understood the word in that general sense here, as meaning that somebody or something that Paul called his adversary hindered him. But throughout the N. T. it clearly stands for the Prince of Evil, and therefore so we must understand it here. In Job i. 6 Satan appears among the sons of God as the Patriarch's accuser. But in 1 Chron. xxi. 1 he is the evil spirit who tempts David to take a military census of his people. In Ps. cix. 6 and Zech. iii. 1, 2 he appears rather as an adversary than as a tempter. These are the only O. T. books in which Satan is mentioned. In the N. T. he is the (1) Evil Spirit as the great tempter and promoter of wickedness. It is Satan who tempts Jesus in the wilderness (e. g. Mark i. 13) and later through Peter (Mark viii. 33). (2) Satan is also referred to as the Prince of the demons who is exorcised,

or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before

together with his instruments, when the possessed are cured (Mark iii. 23). This is coming near to some physical power, and that is distinctly referred to in the case of a woman bowed together with 'a spirit of infirmity,' for Jesus speaks of her as one 'whom Satan had bound' (Luke xiii. 16). Paul seems to have this way of regarding disease as the work of Satan in mind when describing the 'thorn in the flesh' with which he was afflicted as 'a messenger of Satan' (2 Cor. xii. 7), and perhaps also when recommending as an act of discipline on an offender, that the church 'deliver such a one unto Satan' (1 Cor. v. 5). (3) He is the evil world-power, because tempting men to sin, and thus ruling through human wickedness, as the 'Prince of this world' (John xii. 31), and the 'Prince of the power of the air' (Eph. ii. 2).

hindered. The expression is vague, and we are left to conjecture as to the way in which Paul conceived Satan to have prevented him from going to Thessalonica. (1) The Apostle cannot possibly be thinking of temptation here, as though some morally evil influence on himself held him back. (2) He may mean illness; but if that were the case probably he would be more explicit. (3) It would seem then that the third form of Satan's influence is in the Apostle's mind—Satan mismanaging human affairs. This might take the form of some adverse conjunction of circumstances, some hindrance to the arrangements of travel, perhaps the watchful opposition of the Jews, or perhaps the attitude of the magistrates at Thessalonica in their determination to prevent fresh disturbances of the peace.

19. crown of glorying: better, 'garland of exulting.' The word rendered 'crown' does not stand for the gold and jewelled decoration worn by a king; it is used for the wreath of laurel, myrtle, or olive, given to a victor or honoured person, and for the garland worn by a guest at a banquet. The 'crown of life' (Rev. ii. 10) is the victor's wreath. But here the idea of a festive garland is more appropriate. The Thessalonians are like this sign of joy to the Apostle, for he can exult and rejoice in them, so noble has their Christian character proved to be when under trial.

before our Lord Jesus. The Apostle looks forward to the happy time when he shall see his Lord. It will be like a banquet, and he will appear there with his festal garland, of which the Thessalonians will be the flowers. To put it in plain prose: the Apostle will be proud of these disciples, full of joy and exultation about them, when he appears before Christ. It is they of all his converts in Asia and Europe who will have this first place of honour. Some years later he called the

20 our Lord Jesus at his coming? For ye are our glory
and our joy.
3 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we

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neighbouring church at Philippi his 'joy and garland' (Phil. iv. 1). These Macedonian Christians seem always to have held the first place in the Apostle's heart. When writing to the Corinthians he cites their example with enthusiasm (2 Cor. viii. 5).

his coming: *lit.* 'his presence'—the *Parousia*. This thought is very prominent in both the Epistles to the Thessalonians. It bulked largely in the minds of the early Christians, who lived in the hope of the return of Christ to establish his kingdom, deliver his people, and call their enemies to judgement. Now this was very like the Jewish expectation concerning their Messiah. Thus it would appear that the Christians were transferring to the Second Advent what Jesus had not fulfilled at the first, namely, the fulfilment of Jewish Messianic hopes. No doubt this was largely so. But there were differences. The Christian expectation of the Parousia was not merely for Jews, but for Christians, and therefore to the exclusion of unbelieving Israelites, but admitting Gentile believers. Then though probably many Christians like the Jews were only too ready to take materialistic views of the future and regard the good time coming as one of temporal prosperity, in so far as the Christians had received the teaching and spirit of Christ they must have risen to his more spiritual ideas. It is to be observed that the expectation is less prominent in the later period of Paul's life.

20. glory: a different word from that translated 'glorying' in verse 19 R. V., which would have been better rendered 'exulting,' to maintain the distinction. 'Glory' is the right word here. It does not point to the Apostle's own feelings of pride and joy in the Thessalonians, but indicates that they are to him like the radiance of the sun, like the light that gilds, the source of the honour to be given him at the appearing of Christ. This accounts for the word 'for' with which the verse opens. Here is the reason for the exultation, viz. that the Thessalonians are a credit to the Apostle of highest value.

iii. 1-10. *Timothy's mission and report.* Unable to bear his separation from the Thessalonians without intercourse with them, the Apostle sent Timothy with the object of encouraging them to the faithful endurance of persecution. He had warned them of the danger when with them, and now it has come. He was dreading lest they should succumb to the temptation and thus his labour among them be in vain. But Timothy on his return has brought tidings of the fidelity of the Thessalonians.

thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone; and 2
sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the

They have not forgotten their evangelist. This news greatly cheers Paul. Now he is full of thankfulness, but he does not cease to pray that he may see them in person.

1. Wherefore: because of what is stated in the previous paragraph, i. e. that the Thessalonians are the Apostle's 'garland of exulting.'

we: plainly meaning the Apostle himself, and not including Silvanus and Timothy. This verse would suggest that Paul is using the editorial 'we' throughout the Epistle. But that would be contrary to his custom. Moreover, since he expressly associates two companions with himself in the opening of the Epistle (i. 1), the pronoun 'we' in the next sentence would naturally include all three. And yet we often meet with expressions of such intense personal feeling associated with this plural pronoun that we must assign them to the Apostle individually. The explanation seems to be that he chose the plural pronoun in order to associate the two companions with the letter, and then held to it even when he was writing what really only expressed his own thoughts. In this verse he can only mean himself, as he speaks of being left alone.

forbear: endure separation from the Thessalonians without having communication with them.

Athens: where the Apostle had stayed for a time when on his way from Macedonia to Corinth. From Acts xvii. 14, 15 we learn that he arrived there before his travelling companions. From this Epistle we discover that he sent Timothy to Thessalonica from Athens. Acts only mentions a separation before coming to Athens; our Epistle only refers to a separation after arriving there. It has been said that there is a contradiction here. But it is needless difficult to piece the two accounts together, and understand that the news of the distressed state of the Thessalonians which Timothy brought to Paul at Athens induced the Apostle to send him back with a message of encouragement and to obtain later information.

2. minister. The Greek word is *diakonos*, from which our word 'deacon' is derived. It means a servant viewed in regard to his work, and not with reference to his relations with his master. It is not here used as an official title. The minister is one who renders service. The addition, 'and our fellow-labourer,' which was in the A. V. disappears from the text in the R. V. because it is not found in the best MSS. There is a reading found in old Western Greek and Latin MSS. which gives 'fellow-worker' instead of 'minister'; but it is not well attested.

in the gospel. This is the sphere of service. Timothy labours

gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort *you*
3 concerning your faith; that no man be moved by these

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in preaching and expounding the gospel. He is not 'serving tables,' like the 'Seven' who were apointed for that work at Jerusalem, although we might think the word 'deacon' pointed to such service. Plainly it is used here in a general sense, which, however, is limited by the qualifying words confining the ministry to 'the gospel.'

to establish: a familiar Pauline metaphor (e. g. 1 Cor. viii. 1, x. 23, xiv. 17) derived from the O. T., e. g. in the expressions, 'he established a testimony' (Ps. lxxviii. 5), 'I will build them, and not pull them down' (Jer. xxiv. 6), 'And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first' (xxxiii. 7). But while in the older usage the idea is national prosperity, in the N.T. the metaphor refers to individuals, and indicates spiritual progress in the enlargement, advance, and strengthening of the Christian life.

comfort. The word has four meanings: (1) 'exhort,' as in ii. 11 and iv. 1; (2) 'beseech,' as in Eph. iii. 13; (3) 'encourage,' as in Eph. vi. 22 where the English is that 'he may comfort your hearts'; since there is no idea of trouble needing consolation, 'encourage' would be a better word here; (4) 'comfort,' the usual word in the English versions. This word formerly included the ideas of strengthening and cheering, apart from sorrow. Thus in the treaty between England and Scotland in the reign of Richard III it is agreed that neither of the kings 'shall maintayne, fauour, ayde, or *comfort* any rebell or traytour.' Wycliffe translates Isa. xli. 7, 'And he *coumfortide* [Vulg. confortavit] with nailes, that it shulde not be moued,' where the A. V. has 'fastened.' Frequently where our English Bible has 'comfort' it would be better to read 'encourage.' In the present case, as the word is connected with faith, and not with the trouble against which the Thessalonians were suffering, it would be desirable to render it 'encourage,' especially as it is associated with the word 'establish' or strengthen. We meet with the same association in 2 Thess. ii. 17, 'comfort your hearts and stablish them,' where again 'encourage' would be more suitable than 'comfort,' with our modern idea of consoling.

concerning your faith. In these early times the word 'faith' is always used subjectively. It does not mean the creed or the religion, i. e. the object of faith; it means the inner state of trusting. This would be much tried by the persecutions the Thessalonians were passing through, and therefore in need of strengthening and encouragement.

3. moved: agitated, disturbed. In its primary sense the word is used of a dog wagging its tail.

afflictions; for yourselves know that hereunto we are appointed. For verily, when we were with you, we told 4 you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause I also, 5 when I could no longer forbear, sent that I might know your faith, lest by any means the tempter had tempted

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these afflictions: the persecutions before referred to.

yourselves know: an allusion to warnings the Apostle had given the Thessalonians when he was with them, as the next verse explains.

we. Paul here associates himself with his correspondents. He too is appointed to persecution. It is the common lot of the Christians. By using the first person the Apostle reminds the Thessalonians that they were not being treated with exceptional severity.

appointed: by God's arrangement. The trouble should be borne patiently, seeing that it is really no accident or misadventure, but a part of God's previous plan concerning His people. Why it is so the Apostle does not attempt to say in this place, although subsequently he describes trouble as a wholesome discipline (e. g. see 2 Cor. iv. 17). For the present it is enough to know that it is God's ordinance. The knowledge of that fact should encourage those who trust God to bear it patiently.

4. beforehand: or 'plainly,' as in the margin of R. V. The same word occurs at 2 Cor. xiii. 2 and at Gal. v. 21, in both of which cases 'I tell you plainly' seems more suitable than 'I tell you beforehand,' or 'forewarn you.' But here the meaning in the text fits best, as it is followed by the statement 'even as it came to pass.'

ye know: now from experience.

5. For this cause. Paul was not only anxious because of his separation from his recent converts, he was especially concerned for them on account of the persecutions they were enduring.

that I might know your faith: a second reason for sending Timothy to Macedonia. The first was to strengthen and encourage the Thessalonians. The Apostle also wants a report of the state of the church. Have the persecuted people stood firm under persecution? or has their faith failed? It was an anxious time for Paul. He could not endure the suspense. He must know the worst.

the tempter: Satan.

tempted: by fear of suffering inducing the Thessalonians to lose faith.

6 you, and our labour should be in vain. But when
Timothy came even now unto us from you, and brought
us glad tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have
good remembrance of us always, longing to see us, even
7 as we also *to see* you; for this cause, brethren, we were
comforted over you in all our distress and affliction

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our labour, &c.: the work of the Apostle and his fellow missionaries at Thessalonica. If the Thessalonians had yielded before the temptation to save themselves from persecution by renouncing Christianity, the church would have been broken up and Paul's work in the city brought to nothing.

6. when Timothy came: Timothy's return from this journey with its double purpose of encouraging the Thessalonians and obtaining information for the Apostle.

even now. This shews that the Epistle was written immediately after Timothy had reached Corinth and given in his report.

glad tidings. This was the answer to Paul's anxious inquiry. Though sorely tried, the young church was standing firm. Then the Apostle's labour was not in vain.

faith: the one subject of the Apostle's inquiry. Faith had not failed.

love: love to one another. A grateful addition. Faith was bearing fruit in brotherly love.

good remembrance: a kindly recollection. In his unselfishness the Apostle had not pressed for an inquiry on this point. But Timothy brings the additional information: not only have the Thessalonians not lost faith in God and Christ while under persecution; they have not forgotten the founder of their church, nor turned against him as the cause of this trouble, nor even grown cold towards him, their enthusiasm damped by disappointment.

always: even in the most trying times, when persecution tempts them to regret the Apostle's ever having come among them.

7. for this cause: because of the good news brought by Timothy, especially its items of personal interest just referred to.

distress: *lit.* 'necessity,' and so 'hard straits,' 'distress.'

affliction. While the Christians were being persecuted at Thessalonica, Paul in Corinth had his troubles to face. According to the narrative in Acts the violent opposition of the Jews at Corinth, following on Paul's preaching Jesus as Christ, compelled him to leave the synagogue and commence work with the Gentiles in a private house. That the situation was dangerous is indicated by Paul's vision in which the Lord said to him, 'Be not afraid,

through your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in 8
the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we render again 9
unto God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy
for your sakes before our God; night and day praying 10

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but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee,' &c. (see Acts xviii. 9-11). The disturbance which led to Paul being brought before the proconsul Gallio occurred at a later period—about a year and a half after his coming to the city.

your faith. It was the faith of the Thessalonians about which Paul had directed Timothy to make inquiry. Now it is their faith that cheers the Apostle. The brotherly love and the kindly remembrance were fruits of this faith. If faith had failed, they would have vanished. Although the Apostle does not here develop his doctrine of faith as in the Epistle to the Romans, even this early Epistle reveals his consciousness of the unique importance of the fundamental grace.

8. now we live. It has been suggested that the Apostle regards his depressed state before Timothy arrived with the good news from Thessalonica as like a condition of death. This glad tidings has revived him, and he will continue to live if only the Thessalonians will continue faithful.

stand fast: a change of phrase, indicating the result of faith. Faith produces steadfastness.

in. The use of this preposition in the N. T. is very varied and extensive, partly owing to the fact that it is often a rendering of the Hebrew *b'* a preposition which means 'by' as well as 'in,' and partly because it lends itself readily to certain specifically Christian ideas. To be in Christ is one of these ideas. The phrase is distinctly a Christian idiom. It signifies close vital union with Christ, like the branch that abides 'in the vine.'

the Lord: Jesus Christ. See i. 1, where this title is given together with the personal name.

9. for you: *lit.* 'concerning you.' It is not giving God the thanks which was due from the Thessalonians themselves, but thanking God because of the good news that had come from Thessalonica.

all the joy. This is the immediate occasion of the thanksgiving. Paul does not know how to thank God enough for giving him this great gladness.

for your sakes: simply 'because of you' as the occasion of the joy, not, on your behalf, as its end and purpose.

before our God. Surely not to indicate 'the pure nature of the joy . . . such as could bear the scrutiny of the eye of God,' as Bishop Ellicott says. That would be a thought too remote from

exceedingly that we may see your face, and may perfect
that which is lacking in your faith?
11 Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord

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the context. The Apostle is thinking of his prayers and thanksgivings when he presents himself before God. These are made glad by the news from Macedonia.

10. night and day. This cannot merely refer to morning and evening prayers, at the two set hours of devotion. The same phrase was used earlier for the Apostle's twofold work of preaching the gospel and supporting himself by manual labour—'working night and day' (ii. 9), where continuity was indicated. The same idea is in mind here. Paul is continually praying this prayer. It is in his heart in the quiet night and in the busy day.

perfect: *lit.* 'adjust,' 'put in right order'; but the word is used in a secondary sense with the idea of completing. It is not of the same root as the word usually rendered 'perfect,' as, for instance, where Jesus says, 'Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Matt. v. 48). It has nothing to do with what is technically called 'Christian perfection.' The real meaning of the word 'perfect' in the N. T. is adult or mature. Here the idea is of setting to rights what is defective.

your faith. The faith of these new Macedonian converts could not but be defective as to its contents, however strong it might have been in its sense of loyalty and confidence. There is no evidence that the Thessalonians were deficient in trustfulness of spirit or fidelity to Christ. What they lacked was a clear and reassuring view of truth, as the subsequent words of the Apostle about the Second Advent shew. By giving them further enlightenment the Apostle would enlarge and strengthen the contents of their faith.

iii. 11–13. *A fervent desire for the progress of the Thessalonians.* The Apostle earnestly prays that his way may be Divinely directed so that he may come to his friends. He also prays that they may abound in love, in order that they may be well established in holiness at the coming of Christ.

our God and Father: a favourite expression of the Apostle. It also occurs in i. 3, and again in iii. 13; in i. 1 Paul writes of 'God the Father.' Then in the Second Epistle he has 'God our Father' (2 Thess. ii. 16), and 'our God' (2 Thess. i. 11, 12). The full phrase brings before us (1) the personal relation with God as '*our* God,' and (2) the Divine Fatherhood, a doctrine especially revealed and expounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and fully accepted by the Apostle Paul.

Jesus, direct our way unto you: and the Lord make you 12
to increase and abound in love one toward another, and

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direct: *lit.* 'make straight.' The verb is in the singular, and yet there are two subjects to it, 'our God and Father' and 'our Lord Jesus Christ.' This indicates that to the Apostle the two were one. We must not deduce any elaborate Trinitarian doctrine from this simple expression, as Paul is not here formulating a creed. It took the church three centuries to arrive at the metaphysical refinement of the Nicene Creed. But Paul could not possibly write as he does here unless he viewed our Lord in closest union with God. The very casualness of the phrase where another subject is in mind shews that the idea in it was familiar to the Apostle. The optative form of the verb approaches the language of prayer. In breathing this wish the Apostle is virtually praying that God and Christ will make a way for him to visit Thessalonica.

our way unto you. The desire to see his friends is on the mind of the Apostle, and therefore repeatedly coming out in his letter. This sentence must be set off against the earlier statement that Satan was hindering the journey (ii. 18). If the hindrance is from Satan the help must come from God and Christ. Circumstances are too strong for the Apostle. But the supreme Providence can frustrate the machinations of the great mischief-maker.

12. the Lord. It may be questioned whether Paul here means God, or Christ. Throughout the Epistle he writes of Jesus as Lord, sometimes with the personal name added, as 'our Lord Jesus,' or 'the Lord Jesus.' Here, as in verse 8, it stands alone, and therefore it might mean God according to the frequent usage of the O. T. But then Paul elsewhere plainly uses the title by itself for Christ. Thus in iii. 13 he has 'the coming of our Lord Jesus,' but in iv. 15, 'the coming of the Lord,' manifestly with reference to the same future event. In the latter passage, and in the verses that follow, 'the Lord' is evidently Jesus Christ. It is likely that the intended application is the same here. But the indefiniteness of the expression agrees with the inference deduced from the previous verse, viz. that Paul is assuming the Divinity of Christ. Otherwise he would scarcely use a term so familiar to readers of the O. T. as a name of God without guarding it against misapprehension. Right feeling, a shrinking from what might seem to approach blasphemy, would lead him to avoid this danger.

increase: pointing to the process of growth.

abound: pointing to superlative attainment.

in love: or 'in your love.' It already exists; the prayer is for its advance to overflowing fullness. Love is the one Christian

13 toward all men, even as we also *do* toward you; to the
end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness

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grace which the Apostle here expressly desires to see flourishing. His following words shew that he regards it as the foundation of holiness and of a ripe Christian character generally. This was the most marked characteristic of primitive Christianity. There had come into the world a new religion distinguished from the old religions especially in this, that its followers were cultivating a spirit of unselfish kindness.

one toward another: the peculiarly Christian grace known in the N. T. as 'love of the brethren.'

toward all men: philanthropy. By what looks like a cruel irony of fate the Christians were hated as enemies of mankind. Thus, referring to Nero's persecution of the Christians after the burning of Rome, Tacitus writes, 'a vast multitude was convicted, not so much of arson, as of hatred for the human race.' Nevertheless history gradually dispelled this monstrous illusion. Charity was a visible feature of the new religion. Rich men would give all their property to the poor. Orphanages were established, hospitals supported, prisoners relieved, slaves treated kindly, and in some cases emancipated, by the Christians. Seeing that they held a gospel of salvation, their missionary zeal in spreading it abroad was the outcome of their large and warm philanthropy.

as we also. It was the broader philanthropy that led the missionaries to preach to the Greeks at Thessalonica after they had been repelled by the Jews. Then after the church was established there grew up between the converts and their teachers the new, strong emotion of brotherly love. This Epistle affords abundant evidence of Paul's affection for the Thessalonians.

13. to the end. This twofold love is not the end of all perfection. It is the basis on which the complete Christian character is to be built. The Apostle therefore proceeds to describe the object he has in view when desiring the Thessalonians to abound in love.

stablish: the same Greek word that the Apostle had used in verse 2 when expressing his desire that he could visit the Thessalonians in order to 'establish' them. Here again it suggests the notion of making firm and strong. But while in the former passage Paul wrote as though he could bring about this result, now he prays that God may do it. Unable to visit the Thessalonians in person as yet, he prays that God may make up his lack of service to them. We must not suppose, however, that he would think of the Divine strengthening as a mere alternative to his own, to be substituted simply because he is not able to go to Thessalonica in person. If he went, it would be as God's messenger and servant,

before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

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and as the human instrument through which the Divine grace would be bestowed. What he prays is that, while he is unable to go, God will bestow that grace directly, apart from the instrumentality of the Apostle.

your hearts. Throughout the Bible, both in the O. T. and in the N. T., the heart stands for the whole inner life—the will and thought as well as the affections. It is the inner life that the Apostle desires to see made firm and strong.

unblameable: in view of the judgement at the *parousia* referred to further on.

holiness. The primary idea of holiness is consecration. In the O. T. it represents what is set apart for God, and therefore sacred in contrast with the common things of the world; but even there the moral character of holiness gradually emerges. God cannot endure sin. Therefore what is devoted to God must be separated from sin. God Himself is holy as being perfectly good and as not permitting the approach of evil. Thus in Isa. vi. while the seraphs adore Jehovah as holy the prophet shrinks in contrast as a man of unclean lips. In the N. T. the physical conception of holiness in ritual disappears and the moral and spiritual are exclusively present. Thus holiness is purity considered as a condition of approach to God, freedom from sin in His sight. It is the same moral state as goodness, but with the addition that it is goodness in God's presence and for His sake. This idea of holiness is clear in 2 Cor. vii. 1, where we read of 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' In the present instance the Apostle bases holiness on love. He prays that the love of his friends may abound in order that their hearts may be made strong in holiness. Since sin is selfishness, love which expels selfishness must make for purity, the ethical aspect of holiness.

before our God and Father. The clause might mean (1) that the blamelessness was to be such as God would recognize, or (2) that the holiness should be that which would stand in His sight, or (3) taking the two ideas together, that to be blamelessly holy in God's sight is what the Apostle desires for the Thessalonians. This third interpretation is the more probable, as the words are all closely connected together. There is a blamelessness that may stand with men, but while this is inoffensive and not chargeable with crime, it may not amount to holiness. To be blameless before God, holiness must be added to virtue, internal purity to external goodness. Then there is a holiness that is not without blame, being imperfect and defective. The conjunction of the two ideas is necessary for satisfying God and standing clear in His presence —blamelessness as regards holiness.

the coming: *lit.* 'the presence,' the *parousia*; see note on *ii.* 19. This will be the occasion of the judgement of Christians as well as of godless people. It is necessary, therefore, that Christians should be ready for the presence of Christ by having that blamelessness of holiness that is the only fit condition for being presented to God.

with all his saints. It is usual to address Christians, the members of the apostolic churches, by the title 'saints.' Thus the Roman Christians are 'called to be saints' (Rom. i. 7). Similarly the Corinthians (1 Cor. i. 2) and the Christians of Achaia (2 Cor. i. 1). The title is not given to the Galatians, with whom the Apostle was much displeased; but neither is it applied to the Thessalonians, with whom he was greatly pleased. The Christians in the churches to which the epistles of the captivity are directed are all addressed as 'saints' (Eph. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 2; Philem. 5, 7). Thus the saints are not the blessed dead, but men and women living in this world; nor are they a selection of eminent souls that have been canonized in distinction from their brethren, but all the Christians. The case is different here: Christ does not come *to* his saints as he would come if they were the members of the churches on earth at his advent; he comes *with* them. They accompany him. This is only a variation of the Jewish picture of the Messiah coming with his angels which our Lord himself adopted when he said, 'when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels' (Mark viii. 38). Pearson in his work *On Creed* understands that the word 'saints' here simply means the angels. But that is contrary to usage. Paul believes in the usually accepted idea that Christ will come attended by angels, for he states it in the next Epistle, describing 'the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power' (2 Thess. i. 7). There he uses the word 'angels.' If he has 'saints' here his meaning cannot be the same. It will not do to say that the word 'saints' includes both men and angels. That too is quite contrary to usage. It seems clear that in the present case Paul substitutes the saints for the angels. The saints are to be Christ's attendants at his *parousia*. The Apostle can only mean the spirits of the departed servants of God. This is further explained by iv. 14, where Paul says that they 'that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.' As that was a very important idea in the mind of the Apostle just now, and in some measure the occasion of writing the Epistle, Paul hints at it here, though he intends to explain it fully later on. Perhaps the idea may be traced back to the primitive apocalypse of Daniel, where, after the vision of one like a son of man coming in the clouds of heaven (Dan. vii. 13), we read how 'the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom,' &c. (verse 18).

Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in 4
the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought
to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk,—that ye

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iv. 1–8. *Exhortation to purity of life.* Paul urges his readers to continue as they have begun to live, but going further in the same direction. So he charged them before. God's will is for their sanctification, which in their case means especially abstinence from sexual impurity. They should know how to keep the body holy in contrast to the lustfulness of the heathen, and not wrong one another in this matter, since God is the Avenger. The Divine call was not for uncleanness, but for holiness. He who rejects this message goes beyond the rejection of a man, he is renouncing God and His gift of the Holy Spirit.

1. Finally. How can this word occur when we are only half-way through the Epistle? The Revisers have substituted it for 'Furthermore,' which was the rendering of the A. V., and this is more correct as a translation of the original, which means literally 'For the rest.' But the Greek word does not necessarily imply that the writing is coming to an end. Here we see it occurs before half the Epistle is written. Similarly we have it in the middle of the Epistle to the Philippians (iii. 1). It has been said that it indicates an intention to close; but that the rush of fresh thoughts leads in each case to additions previously not contemplated. But the word does not mean this. It rather points to a transition than to a termination. It contemplates all the subjects that remain to be dealt with, but these need not be few, nor the treatment of them brief.

then: in view of what has just been said about being blameless in holiness at the coming of Christ. This is a great motive for the purity of life about which the Apostle is about to speak.

brethren: the specific title of Christians among themselves.

in the Lord Jesus: not '*by* the Lord Jesus' as in the A. V. This is not a form of adjuration. The language is in what we may call the Christian dialect. It is not to be interpreted by the ordinary usages of Greek literature. It is as Christians, with reference to their close relation to Jesus Christ, that the Apostle exhorts his readers.

as ye received of us: when the missionaries were at Thessalonica.

to walk: a Hebraism for the conduct of life. Thus it is said, 'Enoch *walked* with God' (Gen. v. 22). According to Paul Christianity is not merely concerned with the crisis of conversion, or public worship, or the blessedness of heaven. It is for the continuous course of life in the world day by day.

2 abound more and more. For ye know what charge we
3 gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will
of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye abstain from
4 fornication; that each one of you know how to possess

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and to please God: i.e. by the way in which they walk, walking so as to please God.

abound: in walking so as to please God. This expression delicately implies that the Thessalonians are already living in the right way in accordance with the apostolic injunctions. They are not rebuked as though their walk were wrong, or urged to commence the right course as though they were sitting in indolence, but simply encouraged to do better in the course they are now following.

2. charge: literally, 'precepts,' 'commands.' The Apostle had not merely given the Thessalonians the invitations of the gospel, he had followed these up with practical directions to guide the conduct of his new converts.

through the Lord Jesus: on the ground of the authority of Christ. It was as Christ's messenger that Paul gave these commands. They were not his own ideas urged by his own will. The mind and will of Christ were behind him when he issued them. It was therefore by reason of their relation to Christ that they had weight. Cf. 'I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing,' &c. (1 Cor. i. 10). Cf. Rom. xii. 1, xv. 31; 2 Cor. x. 1.

3. the will of God: the thing that God wills.

sanctification. The Greek word signifies the process of being sanctified. This is God's will, that His people should be sanctified. To sanctify means primarily 'to set apart for God.' Thus it has the same original meaning as 'to make holy.' But for those who are morally evil this necessarily involves a cleansing, because impurity cannot be brought into the presence of God. Thus we come to the secondary meaning of sanctifying, the process of purification which fits souls to be consecrated to God. In the N. T. the two ideas are interwoven, and sanctification is purification for the sake of devotion to God. See note on 'holiness,' iii. 13. The words that follow shew that sanctification is directly related to purity of character. In writing to new converts from heathenism Paul felt it necessary to be very urgent on the point of sexual morality. Nothing is more wonderful in the progress of Christianity among the Greek cities than its maintenance of a standard of purity in startling contrast to the comparative indifference of paganism in regard to this matter.

4. know how. A mere effort of will was not enough. The

himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which 5

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lofty ideal must be conceived and comprehended, and then the way to attain it by the grace of Christ understood.

his own vessel. The commentators have been divided between two explanations of this metaphor, some taking it to mean 'his own body,' others 'his own wife.' Most now incline to the latter meaning; the language is more easily explained with this reference in mind. (1) The word 'possess' is out of place with regard to a man's body. It fits in better with the idea of having a wife. (2) The strong phrase 'his own' seems superfluous if the body is intended; it would be enough to say 'his vessel' for 'his body.' But with reference to a wife it excludes adultery with other women who are not 'his own.' (3) While we never meet with the image of a 'vessel' for the body, we do meet with it elsewhere for a wife in the passage 'giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker *vessel*' (1 Pet. iii. 7), where the mention of 'honour' in connexion with the 'vessel,' as in the passage before us, suggests that Peter actually had our passage in mind when writing. It is now generally admitted that 1 Peter contains several allusions to the Epistles of Paul. Elsewhere the image of a vessel is used for men, e. g. 'vessels of wrath' (Rom. ix. 22). In such passages it does not represent the body, but the whole person. For these reasons it would seem that the Apostle is here following up his admonition to abstain from the licence of pagan immorality by urging each man to be faithful to his own wife.

5. even as the Gentiles. This might seem to imply that the readers were Jews; but other passages make it certain that such was not the case, e. g. 'how ye turned unto God from idols' (i. 9; see Introduction, p. 12). But Paul is a Jew, and to the Jew Gentile and heathen are equivalent terms. Then he regards Christians as spiritual Israelites, the true Israel of God, in contrast with whom the unconverted pagan world is still Gentile. He is here referring to the vicious habits of the heathen.

which know not God. In analysing the genesis and development of the world's wickedness Paul traces it back to a suppression of the knowledge of God which even the heathen had obtained from the observation of His works in nature. This led to idolatry; idolatry to immorality (see Rom. i. 18–25). Or perhaps ignorance of God might be thought some excuse for the vices of paganism. That excuse the Thessalonians do not possess. Then it would be peculiarly wicked for them with their new light to fall back into the practices of heathen darkness.

6 know not God; that no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter: because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and

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6. transgress. The A. V. has 'go beyond,' the literal meaning of the Greek; but it makes no sense here. The Revisers suggest 'overreach,' in the margin, which is a classic usage of the word. This meaning will suit very well if the words further on rendered 'in the matter' be translated 'in business,' but, as we shall see when we come to them, that is not their probable meaning. The word does not necessarily involve the idea of the cunning that cheats. It will be suitable for any case in which a man wrongfully gets the better of another. 'Transgress' is too vague. Injustice to some other person is what is intended.

wrong: *lit.* 'get an advantage over.'

his brother: his fellow Christian. The early Christians treated one another as brothers.

in the matter: i. e. the matter just referred to. With this meaning the passage must be a warning against adultery. A man is not to overreach his brother or get an advantage over him by an intrigue with his brother's wife. The indefinite expression of the A. V., 'in any matter,' is clearly wrong, because the definite article is employed. 'In business' would be a possible meaning of the words—though for this the Greek should be in the plural—'in affairs.' Then the passage would be a warning to Christians not to take advantage of their fellow Christians and wrong them in commercial transactions, a very suitable admonition in itself. But the context is against it. We have seen that the subject of the morality of the sexes precedes this passage; the same subject follows in verse 7, and that verse is connected with the intermediate sentences by the word 'For'; i. e. verse 7 gives the reason for what is said here. This seems to make it clear that one and the same subject is under treatment throughout the whole paragraph.

avenger: even against Christians if they fall into the sins of the heathen. Paul does not teach that the forgiveness of all past sin with which the Christian life commences carries with it immunity in regard to the future. The coming judgement will be for Christians who fall away as well as for those who have never been brought into the kingdom of grace.

all these things: the immorality mentioned first as well as the adultery referred to later.

forewarned: rather, 'said before,' not meaning 'before the day of vengeance.' as 'forewarned' implies. The Apostle must be alluding to his utterances at a previous time when in Thessalonica. The margin of R. V. has, 'told you plainly,' but there

testified. For God called us not for uncleanness, but in 7
sanctification. Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not 8
man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you.

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are no clear instances of this meaning in the N. T. (cf. Gal. i. 9). See also Acts i. 16, where the same Greek word is used in the phrase, 'which the Holy Ghost spake before by the mouth of David.'

testified: charged. A strong word which in Grimm's Dictionary is rendered 'testify earnestly,' 'solemnly affirm.' In 2 Tim. ii. 14 it is rendered 'charge'—'charging them in the sight of the Lord.' So it is in 2 Tim. iv. 1, 'I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus.'

7. For: introducing the reasonable justification of the preceding admonition. Immorality is not merely to be shunned for fear of God's vengeance. It is the contradiction of the Christian vocation. This fact makes the Divine vengeance on it especially just. Such a breach of the condition of discipleship and complete missing of its end deserves severe punishment.

for uncleanness: pointing to the purpose and end. There is a similar expression in Gal. v. 13, 'For ye, brethren, were called for freedom.' Similarly, 'created . . . for good works' (Eph. ii. 10). The same preposition is used in each case. The statement is not superfluous, since there were pagan cults that involved their votaries in immoral ceremonies.

but in sanctification. Schmiedel takes this to mean 'in order to be sanctified'; but observe the change of preposition. Besides, sanctification is a process, not an end. Christians are undergoing the purifying and consecrating which is to fit them for future union with God. Therefore the meaning seems to be that the vocation brings Christians into the condition of being sanctified. This is the opposite state to one of indulgence in immorality.

8. he that rejecteth: he who sets this advice at nought and takes no account of it.

but God: because the call came from God, and this call is not for uncleanness, but its opposite. The Christian who indulges in immorality is flouting the character and purpose of his call, and therefore repudiating the message of God.

who giveth: in the present (as R. V.) according to the best MSS., not 'who hath . . . given,' as in the A. V. The phrase refers to a continuous process. This might mean the giving of the Spirit to a succession of people, each new convert in turn receiving it. But as the Apostle adds 'unto you,' and as he is writing to the members of a Christian church who have already all received the first gift of the Spirit, he must mean that God is continually giving more and more of His Spirit to each one of them. Paul more

9 But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need

frequently writes of the Holy Spirit as given in the past by one definite act, e. g. 'the Holy Ghost which was given unto us' (Rom. v. 5); 'God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts' (Gal. iv. 7); see also 2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5. Here we have an additional plea. Not only did God call the Thessalonians at the first. He is continually breathing His Spirit into them. But the purpose of this is sanctification; the Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit. To live licentiously while receiving this gift is grossly insulting to the Giver. The obligation to purity, growing out of the reception of the Holy Spirit, is similarly urged by the Apostle when writing to the Corinthians, 'know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?' (1 Cor. vi. 19).

iv. 9-12. *Exhortation to increase of brotherly love in the church, and quiet industry in the world.* The Thessalonians being taught by God to love their fellow Christians, and practising the duty among all their brethren in Macedonia, do not need to be reminded of it. Still the Apostle exhorts them to increase in this fundamental grace of character. At the same time he recommends a quiet life of diligent activity at their handicraft work, that they may stand honourably with the world without and duly provide for their own necessities.

9. But: better, 'Now.' The word is frequently used to indicate a transition to a fresh subject, e. g. 'Now concerning spiritual gifts' (1 Cor. xii. 1), 'Now concerning the collection for the saints' (xvi. i), &c. It recurs with this meaning at iv. 13, v. 1, 12.

love of the brethren: this is expressed in the Greek by one word, *philadelphia*, which has a fixed and definite meaning wherever it occurs in the N. T., standing for the affection of Christians for one another. It involves the *esprit de corps* of an organized community to which the members are devoted, but it is much deeper, and partakes of a family nature. Jesus had exhibited this love in his own person and character, not only honouring but claiming as brothers and sisters all who did the will of God (Mark iii. 35); and nothing is more indicative of the way in which his spirit went with his gospel than the fact that even in remote Greek cities no sooner was faith in Christ obtained than this family feeling also sprang up among the converts. Nothing approaching it is recorded of the pagan religious societies that were spreading through the empire at this time, an external resemblance to which might be seen in the Christian churches. Harnack points to 'love of the brethren' as one of the two most marked peculiarities of the early Christians, the other being 'enthusiasm.'

ye have: the Syro-Latin text (here represented by the MSS.

that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed ye do it toward all 10
the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more; and that 11

D*FG, and the Vulgate and one of the Syrian versions) has 'we have,' a not uncommon change which Nestle points out may be due to the habit of the reader of Scripture in public worship of thus associating himself with his hearers. Similarly perhaps it is owing to the use of Scripture in the church services that we sometimes meet with the change of direct statements into exhortations.

no need. Ellicott treats this remark as a 'rhetorical turn,' meaning a polite and insinuating way of conveying advice; but there is reason to conclude from other statements of the Apostle that the Thessalonians were exceptionally marked by kindliness and generosity of spirit (e. g. 2 Cor. viii. 1).

one. A.V. has 'I.' The Greek verb is in the infinitive without any pronoun. Thus the phrase is general. The Thessalonians did not need an exhortation on this matter from any human correspondent.

taught of God: by the influence of the Spirit of God on their hearts. This is why they did not need a human counsellor concerning brotherly love.

to love. The form of the Greek is peculiar here. It has a preposition signifying an end or purpose. The exact expression means, 'ye are God's pupils for this purpose—that ye may love one another.' This is the great object that God has in view, the supreme reason why He is schooling them.

10. all the brethren, &c.: not only in their own church, but in neighbouring churches. We only know of two of these centres of Christian life, viz. Philippi and Berœa. But possibly there were also scattered believers who had heard the missionaries when marketing in the towns.

all Macedonia: the Roman province of that name. Wherever there were Christians in Macedonia the Thessalonians manifested brotherly love for them. The expression '*all* Macedonia' was in accordance with the Apostle's large way of speaking in the sanguine spirit that anticipated winning all for Christ. Thus he writes of 'all Achaia' (2 Cor. i. 1).

abound more and more: i. e. in love of the brethren.

11. study: *lit.* 'make it your ambition.' The primary meaning of the word is 'to be fond of honour'; thence comes the secondary meaning, 'to be ambitious.' Paul uses it in two other places—Rom. xv. 20, where according to the R. V. we read, 'making it my aim to preach the gospel,' &c., and 2 Cor. v. 9, 'we make it our

ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and
12 to work with your hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing.

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aim . . . to be well-pleasing unto him.' This milder sense of the word is adopted by Ellicott here; but Schmiedel adopts the stronger meaning[1], which is more in accordance with usage as well as etymology.

to be quiet. The paradox is striking. Ambition is usually for publicity, noise, stir in the world. Paul would have the end of ambition to be the attainment of quiet. This advice, together with what follows, suggests the idea that the Apostle fears the Thessalonians are too restless. In his second letter he distinctly says that he hears that some of them are 'busybodies' (2 Thess. iii. 11).

work with your hands. This shews that they were artizans. It was a working-man's church. Probably many of them were weavers, as weaving was an industry carried on at Thessalonica. Thus their position was not unlike that of Paul the tent-maker. But the advice here given suggests that they were becoming indifferent to their daily toil in the new enthusiasm that had taken possession of them. There was no fault to be found with them in the matter of brotherly love; but this must not be pleaded as an excuse for the neglect of daily duty.

even as we charged you. The enthusiasm had appeared as early as the time of the Apostle's missionary labours in Thessalonica, and even then he had felt it necessary to warn his converts not to be so carried away with religious emotion as to fail in attention to their business affairs. This advice is not often called for in the present day.

12. honestly: *lit.* 'becomingly,' 'decorously.' An idle habit indulged in with negligence of the work of life is most unseemly.

them that are without: the pagan neighbours. For Christians to be seen neglecting the duty of earning their daily bread while giving themselves up to religious excitement would prejudice their cause in the eyes of the world, which could appreciate the value of sober work, while it could not understand the spiritual pursuits of the new faith.

have need of nothing. Ellicott translates this, 'have need of no man,' i. e. not to be dependent on any one. The Greek admits of either interpretation. But Schmiedel points out that the reference to persons rather than things would be far-fetched and not so clear. Moreover, it would be somewhat harsh. We do

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[1] 'Eure Ehre darein zu setzen.'

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even

not want to feel that we have need of nobody. The notion is churlish. But it is reasonable that people should make proper provision for themselves and their families by their own industry. Thus Paul advances two reasons for assiduity in common work: (1) Seemliness of behaviour in the eyes of the world, and (2) avoiding want.

iv. 13–18. *The Parousia.* The Thessalonians are not to be without the hope of seeing their departed friends again. God will bring them back when Jesus returns, and we who are alive at the time shall not then have precedence of them, because at the coming of the Lord the dead Christians will rise in the first place, and after that those living at the time will join them.

13. But: rather, 'How,' indicating transition to another topic. See note on verse 9.

we would not have you ignorant: a favourite expression of the Apostle when he is about to introduce some new assertion or to impart some new teaching (e. g. Rom. i. 13, xi. 25; 1 Cor. x. 1, xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 8), and so to be contrasted with such expressions as 'know ye not?' (1 Cor. iii. 16, v. 6, vi. 2, &c.), or 'ye remember' (1 Thess. ii. 9), where an appeal is made to what should be already in mind as previously taught or learnt by experience.

them that fall asleep. The best MSS. have the present participle, not the perfect, which gave the A. V. the expression 'them which are asleep'—a reading of the Syro-Latin text. This present tense points to what is now going on. The temptation to despair is most keen at the moment of loss. The thought is that as one and another of the Christians are taken away, even while this very thing is happening hope must not be lost. The image of sleep is the specifically Christian idea of death, though it is found in the O. T., e. g. 'So David slept with his fathers' (1 Kings ii. 10), and even in pagan writers—Homer, for instance, who has 'He slept an iron sleep' (*Iliad*, ii. 241), Sophocles, and others. But it is most frequent in the N. T.; and it is peculiarly suitable to the Christian idea of death, first as being a safe and peaceful rest free from terror, and then as giving the prospect of an awakening.

that ye sorrow not. The comma at the end of this clause is important. The idea is that there should not be sorrow at all among Christians, not that their sorrow should not be the same in kind and degree as that of the heathen. Human nature forbids the absolute following of such advice. But when we think of the wild abandonment to grief that accompanied an oriental mourning we can understand how the Apostle would deprecate anything of the kind in the case of Christians.

14 as the rest, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are

the rest: other people in Thessalonica, the pagan neighbours.

no hope: i. e. of again meeting departed friends. The old Greek cemetery at Athens, containing pathetic expressions of love for the departed, and its sad 'Farewells,' without any hope of meeting the beloved parent or wife or child again, is in striking contrast with what we read in the catacombs at Rome of the Christian hope of life beyond the grave. Classic writers abound with dreary expressions of the hopelessness of death. Thus among the Greeks Theocritus says, 'Hopes are among the living, but the dead are without hope' (*Idyll* iv. 42), and Catullus among the Romans, 'Suns can set and rise again. When once our brief life sets, there must be the sleep of one perpetual night' (v. 4; see Jowett's commentary in loc.). On the other hand, an inscription in the catacomb of Callistus begins, 'Alexander is not dead, but he lives above the stars and his body rests in this tomb[1].' (Quoted in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, art. 'Catacombs.')

14. if we believe that Jesus died and rose again. As the resurrection of our Lord was the corner-stone of the Apostle's faith, he must have made it prominent in his preaching at Thessalonica, and must have looked for belief in his testimony to it among his converts. Therefore he could say, 'we, on the assumption that they as well as he accepted it as an established fact. Observe, this verse is the earliest written statement of our Lord's resurrection, occurring as it does in the first of Paul's Epistles. Thus we have a documentary record of it from little more than twenty years after the event, according to the accepted chronology, and even with less interval of time if we admit Harnack's scheme of dates. This may be compared to an assertion made to-day of the fall of the Beaconsfield Cabinet and the return of Mr. Gladstone to power on the occasion of the agitation about the Bulgarian atrocities made by a contemporary of those events.

Jesus: our Lord's personal name on earth, very rarely used by itself in Paul's Epistles. Whenever it is so used the Apostle is directing attention to Christ in his life on earth.

died. Observe, it is never said that Jesus slept. He died; there is no softening of that fact. It stands out in grim horror by its close juxtaposition to what is asserted of his people who are said to sleep.

even so. Paul takes the resurrection of Christ as at once the assurance and the type of the resurrection of Christians. Both these ideas are elaborately worked out in 1 Cor. xv.

[1] 'Alexander mortuus non est sed vivit super astra et corpus in hoc tumulo quiescit.'

fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this 15

them also that are fallen asleep. This is more correct than the A. V., 'them also which sleep,' for the verb is in the aorist tense, and therefore indicates not a continuous present condition, but a single past action. It would be more accurate to say, 'them also that were put to sleep,' since the verb is in the passive voice; it is the very act of dying compared to putting to sleep, as with a child whom his mother hushes to slumber.

in Jesus. This cannot be a correct translation. The preposition [1] here used primarily signifies 'through.' Then it means 'by' in the sense of the relation of an agent or an instrument. When it expresses the state through which one is passing, it may sometimes be rendered by the English word 'in,' e. g. 'those who believe, though they be *in*[1] uncircumcision' (Rom. iv. 11), i. e. while passing through that condition of life. For this sense of the preposition, however, there must be some indication of a continuous state or process. But that cannot be the case here, since the aorist form of the verb indicates a single action. Therefore we must say 'by,' or 'through Jesus.' Two interpretations are now possible: (1) To connect this phrase with the falling asleep. Then it will mean 'those who were put to sleep by Jesus,' a beautiful idea of Christian death, but one nowhere else met with in the N. T. (2) To connect the phrase with the words that follow, reading the whole sentence thus, 'even so them also that were put to sleep will God through Jesus bring with Him.' This view, perfectly legitimate as a translation of the original Greek, is accepted by Schmiedel. It indicates that while it is God who effects the resurrection, He will do this through the instrumentality of Christ, with whom after they have been raised the departed Christians will return. This conception is more in harmony with Paul's teaching generally, in which Christ is seen as the Divine agent through whom God creates (Col. i. 16) and redeems (Rom. v. 1). In 1 Cor. xv. 22 the Apostle expressly describes Christ as bringing about the resurrection, saying, 'As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.'

will God bring. The originating power of the resurrection is always ascribed to God who raises Christ from the dead; though here it is also through him that God raises His people.

bring: *lit.* 'lead,' without indicating direction, in the sense of 'lead to us,' implied by the word 'bring.' The idea is explained by the context. When Christ comes back from the unseen world the departed Christians will come with him. Paul conceives of this earth as then revisited by the blessed dead. Thus, though the word rendered 'bring' does not imply all that the English term

[1] διά.

we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that

contains, that term goes no farther than what is suggested in the sequel. The same Greek word is used in Heb. x. 10 where we read of God 'bringing [*lit.* 'leading'] many sons to glory.'

15. For: pointing to the explanation of the previous verse, as that verse, introduced by the same conjunction, is the justification of its predecessor. This is one of the common features of the Apostle's style. He pushes his explanations further and further back, sometimes with quite a string of sentences each beginning with 'For.' These are not parallel sentences, giving several reasons for one earlier statement; but each sentence supports that which goes before. Still the whole series is intended to substantiate the statement with which the paragraph opens.

this we say: an emphatic introduction of some new, important assertion.

by: *lit.* 'in.' The preposition does not point to the authority that gives Paul a right to speak, but to the nature of what he is saying. This preposition is very common in the N. T. as an equivalent of the Hebrew *b'*, which may mean 'with' as well as 'in.' Similarly we read, 'We speak of God's wisdom *in* a mystery' (1 Cor. ii. 7), and, 'Unless I speak to you either *in* a revelation, or *in* knowledge, or *in* prophecy, or *in* teaching' (xiv. 6), where the A. V. has 'by,' and the R. V. 'by way of,' e. g. 'by way of revelation,' &c., i. e. indicating the kind of speech. The case before us is analogous. The kind of utterance Paul is about to give is a word of the Lord. We might render the phrase, 'as a word of the Lord' (Schmiedel).

the word of the Lord: *lit.* '*a* word of the Lord,' one specific word. By 'the Lord' Paul here means Jesus Christ; that is indicated by other references to the same title in the words that follow, e. g. 'the coming of the Lord,' 'the Lord himself shall descend,' &c. The phrase may be explained in either of two ways: (1) As an appeal to some saying of Christ during his ministry on earth; or (2) as a reference to the inward and spiritual teaching of Christ. There is nothing in the gospels that corresponds to Paul's statements here. It is possible that he is referring to some traditional saying: but, if so, probably he would have given the utterance more directly, as for instance when he cites a saying not in the gospels with the phrase, 'He himself said' (Acts xxi. 35), or when he wrote, 'I give charge, *yea*, not I, but the Lord' (1 Cor. vii. 10). Here his method is quite different; for he writes, 'We say unto you.' Elsewhere the Apostle claims to possess direct teaching from Christ, e. g. when declaring that he has received his gospel 'through revelation of Jesus Christ' (Gal. i. 12); and probably he is referring to something of the kind here.

we that are alive. The use of the first person evidently

are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the 16

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indicates that the Apostle is expecting to be of the number of those who will not die before the coming of Christ. Five years later, when he is writing to the Corinthians, this expectation is not so definitely expressed, the Apostle saying, 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed' (1 Cor. xv. 51), a prediction that leaves it open whether he himself will be of the first group, that containing those who sleep (cf. 1 Cor. i. 7, 8, iv. 5, xvi. 22). Yet another five years, and it would seem that the Apostle has definitely renounced the idea of living till the return of Christ, for then he writes of his 'desire to depart and be with Christ' (Phil. i. 23, but cf. iv. 5, which points to the near coming of Christ). Possibly he had reached this stage earlier, i. e. by the middle period, because in 2 Corinthians, written only a few months after 1 Corinthians (just cited), he speaks of the possible dissolution of 'the earthly house of our tabernacle' (2 Cor. v. 1). Ellicott considers that the passage before us 'supplies no *certain* elements for such startling deductions' as that the Apostle identified himself with the first-named group and expected to be alive at the Second Advent. It is true that the pronoun 'we' might be used indefinitely for all Christians, so that possibly Paul only means 'those of us who will be alive,' but the frequent use of this pronoun throughout the Epistle with a definite reference to the Apostle himself forbids that interpretation.

in no wise: a double negative in the Greek, meaning 'certainly not,' 'not by any means'—a strong denial.

precede: a great improvement in the R. V. over the word 'prevent' in the A. V., which is there used in an old English sense, now obsolete, as in the collect, '*Prevent* us, O Lord,' &c.; in Shakespeare, 'So shall my anticipation *prevent* your discovery' (*Hamlet*, Act ii. Scene 3); and in Milton :—

> 'Half way he met
> His daring foe, at this *prevention* more
> Incens'd.' (*Paradise Lost*, Book vi. line 129.)

The idea is that those living on the earth at the time of our Lord's advent shall not have precedence over those who shall have died before that event. It would seem that the Thessalonians feared that their deceased friends would miss the joy of participating in the great event, the joy of the virgins who go out to meet the Bridegroom. The Apostle assures them that this will not be the case; those who will be alive at the time will have no advantage over their departed brethren in being the first to welcome Christ. It is to be remarked that this quaint fear of the Thessalonians

Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout,

indicates a very early date for the Epistle. It must have been felt most acutely at the first appearance of death in the happy community. Previous to this, it would seem, the enthusiastic Christians at Thessalonica imagined that they would all live to welcome the return of Christ to earth. The first breach in their numbers disappointed and perplexed them.

16. the Lord himself: no less a being. The phrase suggests the august Presence.

shall descend from heaven: the idea being that Christ is now in heaven seated at the right hand of God (Col. iii. 1). Inasmuch as the latter statement must be figurative, the infinite and omnipresent God not being confined to a physical and local throne, it follows that Christ's descent from his heavenly seat should not be expected as a movement in space. If the language which describes the throne of God, by the side of which Jesus is pictured as sitting, cannot be taken literally, then that which indicates his coming from that seat to another place must be equally metaphorical. The word *parousia*, or 'presence,' which Paul uses in this passage and elsewhere is less figurative. Christ's presence will be manifested, and to our limited imagination the truth and its accompaniments can only be described in figurative language. But while not forgetting its figurative form we must perceive that this language contains a great idea, the real presence of Christ revealing itself by indubitable signs and resulting in stupendous consequences.

a shout. The Greek word means literally 'a shout of command.' It is commonly used of the call of the officer in a ship to the rowers. Plato has it in his famous description of the soul as a charioteer with two horses, one of which is obedient to 'the word of command,' while the other is restive (*Phaedrus*, 253 D). Homer uses it of the hero's shout to his followers in battle; Xenophon of the huntsman's call to his dogs. The Vulgate has *in jussu* ('with a command'). Two questions may be asked, Who issues the word of command? What is its meaning and purpose? The answer to neither question is quite clear. The shout might be supposed to come either from Christ, or from the archangel. But since 'the voice of the archangel' is mentioned afterwards as something additional to the shout, it seems more likely that the shout, or rather 'word of command,' is ascribed to Christ himself, like the captain of the host calling to his followers. This is the view of the Greek expositors; so also Schmiedel. Ellicott refers it to the archangel. Nothing is said as to the meaning and purpose of this commanding word; but as the rising of the dead follows, it would seem that the shout is the call to slumbering souls to awake.

with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we 17
that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:

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the voice of the archangel: following and echoing the Lord's word of command. Jesus had spoken of the summons coming from 'angels' (Matt. xxiv. 31), and Paul refers to Christ's coming 'with the angels of his power' in 2 Thess. i. 7. The only passage in the N. T. besides that before us where we meet with the word 'archangel' is Jude 9, and there the archangel is named 'Michael.' The word does not appear in the O. T. But in Daniel we meet with Michael described as 'one of the chief princes' (x. 13), 'your prince' (verse 21), and 'the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people' (xii. 1). Michael appears again in the Apocalypse, and there as the leader of the angels, for we read 'Michael and his angels fought against the dragon' (Rev. xii. 7).

the trump of God. The genitive is possessive. The angel sounds God's trumpet. The conception of this trumpet comes down from the description of the giving of the law at Sinai with 'the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud' (Exod. xix. 16). In Isaiah it is said that for the return of the scattered Israelites 'the great trumpet shall be blown' (Isa. xxvii. 13). The trumpet appears again in 2 Esdras vi. 23. Jesus mentions it in connexion with his return (Matt. xxiv. 31), and Paul writes of 'the last trump' when 'the dead shall be raised incorruptible' (1 Cor. xv. 52). In the Apocalypse seven angels appear each with a trumpet (Rev. viii. 2). All these instances indicate the trumpet as an instrument to rouse and summon, after the manner of the use of trumpets among the Jews in time of war (Num. x. 9), and in the temple ritual (2 Chron. v. 12).

the dead in Christ: deceased Christians.

shall rise first: before the living meet Christ. The meaning is not that 'the dead in Christ' shall rise before the dead who are not in Christ. There is no reference to the latter class in the whole passage, where the two contrasted groups are living and dead Christians. The next sentence makes this indubitable. First the dead in Christ are raised; then follow—not the other dead people—but 'we that are alive.'

17. then: immediately; the words do not allow of any interval.

we that are alive, &c. See note on verse 15.

in the clouds: in accordance with the vision in Dan. vii. 13 that the son of man comes 'with the clouds of heaven.' Jesus mentions this when predicting his return (Matt. xxiv. 30, xxvi.

18 and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

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64). The ascension is described as Christ being taken up into a cloud, after which angels declare that he will return 'in like manner' (Acts i. 9, 11). Perhaps the conception may be traced back to the poetic image of the Psalmist, who says of God, 'who maketh the clouds his chariot' (Ps. civ. 3).

in: *lit.* 'into.' If the preposition[1] is used in that sense it must mean lifted up from the ground into the air, so that the sentence would run thus: 'caught up in the clouds into the air to meet the Lord.' But the strict limitation of the preposition's meaning is not observed in the Greek of the first century, which allows of its being used in the static sense of our word 'in.' This gives us the more simple signification, as it is expressed in the English versions. The Lord is met in the air while he is in the act of descending from heaven to earth.

and so. The result is brought about in the way just indicated. Thus, meeting Christ in the air, it comes to pass that we shall be with him for ever after.

18. comfort one another. The thought goes back to the situation indicated in verse 13. The Thessalonians were grieving over the fact that some of their number had died previous to the *parousia*, fearing that these people would miss sharing in that event. Paul has declared that so far from anything of the kind being the case, the deceased Christians will even anticipate their living brethren in meeting Christ.

The earnestness of the Apostle's treatment of this subject shews that he considers the issues at stake to be very grave. This would lead us to think that something much more serious than missing the sight of the return of Christ as a sort of celestial pageant must be feared by the Thessalonians. It would seem, as Schmiedel holds, that with this there was feared to be lost all the future life and blessedness of union with Christ, the being 'for ever with the Lord.' Thus these distressed people would seem to be much in the same state as those members of the Corinthian church who did not believe in a resurrection, though not, as in the latter case, owing to any deliberate rejection of the doctrine (see 1 Cor. xv. 12). The sorrowing without hope, like the pagans, involves some such attitude towards the future. These new converts had taken in the idea of the return of Christ, and with it the thought that his people would meet him in order to live with him for ever, thus escaping the doom of death by not dying at all. They did not see that those who died could enter into the same state of blessedness.

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[1] εἰς.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, 5
ye have no need that aught be written unto you. For 2

Paul's new revelation is to remove their distress by shewing that this is a mistake, since the joy and privilege, not only of meeting Christ at the *parousia*, but, what is infinitely more important, living with him for ever, is for the blessed dead as surely as for the living, and even with a certain precedence for the former. The reason for this precedence is not stated ; but it may be that, being already in the unseen world, they will be spiritually nearer to Christ when he manifests himself than those who are still going through their life on earth.

v. 1–11. *Sons of light.* It is not necessary for the Apostle to write anything about the time of the *parousia*, as his readers know that this will be sudden and unexpected. But they are not in darkness ; so that the event will be no terror to them, like the visit of a thief. Being sons of the day we should act accordingly with becoming sobriety, arming ourselves against any possible attack, especially since the purpose of our Lord's death on our behalf was that whether awake or asleep we should live with him.

1. the times and the seasons. The word rendered 'times' indicates time generally, the simple idea of the succession of moments, e. g. 'after a long time' (Matt. xxv. 19), 'after so long a time' (Heb. iv. 7), 'there shall be time no longer' (Rev. x. 6). In the plural it represents several periods of time. The word rendered 'seasons' stands for specific epochs, points of time, crises, or periods in some way distinguished from one another. It may be illustrated by our four seasons of the year, with their characteristic differences as Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter ; but it has a much wider application. Thus we have 'the season [A. V. and R. V. have 'time'] of harvest' (Matt. xiii. 30), 'the season of figs' (Mark xi. 13), 'in due season' (Rom. v. 6). These two words are frequently found together (e. g. Eccles. iii. 1 ; Dan. ii. 21 ; Wisd. of Sol. viii. 8 ; Acts i. 7). Thus the phrase as a whole means both the periods of time that are to elapse before the coming of Christ—how many days or years—and the specific epochs, with their several characteristics, that may have to accomplish their own special ends or prepare for the *parousia* and usher it in. (See Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, lvii.)

no need, &c. : in contrast with what was needed. They had great need to be set right as to what the *parousia* involved ; but the questions as to when it would happen and at what kind of epoch in history did not require to be answered. If only the survivors, only those who escaped death, were to share in the coming blessedness, these questions would be of the most acute interest, seeing that the longer the final consummation was post-

yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so
3 cometh as a thief in the night. When they are saying,

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poned the more numerous would those Christians be who would have to miss it by dying first. The Apostle has dispelled that delusion. Then it matters not how long the interval of waiting may be. But further, there is quite another way of looking at this great event. It will be the advent of the Judge of all, the return of the Master to call his servants to account, the coming of the King to destroy his enemies. Those who would view His coming with terror might be anxiously inquiring how near the dread day would be; those who were unprepared for it might shrink from the startling occurrence. Not so Paul's readers; the sequel indicates why they have no alarming concern on this point. They already know of the suddenness that will characterize the *parousia*. But this thought need not distress them, because it will be no terror to them.

2. yourselves know: from the teaching received during Paul's stay at Thessalonica.

perfectly: better, 'accurately.' There was no haziness about the missionaries' instructions on this point.

the day of the Lord: a familiar O. T. phrase used by the prophets for the time of Jehovah's interference whether (1) to deliver His oppressed people and destroy the power of their enemies (Isa. xiii. 6), or (2) to bring judgement on Israel herself (Amos v. 18). In later ages it came to be identified with the time of the coming of the Messiah. In the N. T. it is always applied to the Second Coming of Christ. His first advent did not realize that portion of the Messianic ideal which comprehended the thoughts of victory, kingship, and judgement, and which therefore were reserved for some future advent. Thus the early Christians came to live in an attitude of mind similar to that of devout Jews under the prophets' teaching, but with this important difference, that, while the old hope was a vague expectation of God's manifestation of His power or the coming of some then unknown deliverer, the Christian hope was more specific, being the anticipation of the return of the Christ who was already well known by means of his life on earth.

as a thief in the night. The origin of this illustration is in our Lord's teaching (Matt. xxiv. 43). It is likely that Paul had repeated the tradition of Christ's words to the Thessalonians, so that this gave him reason for saying, 'yourselves know perfectly.' But the saying of Jesus about his coming as a thief does not include the idea of it being 'in the night.' Cf. Rev. iii. 3 and xvi. 15; 2 Pet. iii. 10, where Christ is seen coming 'as a thief,' but again with no mention of the night. It would seem that this was

Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon

an addition of the Apostle's, perhaps suggested by the parable of the Virgins, if that was known to Paul, where we read, 'But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom!' Still Christ's words about the householder watching against the thief naturally suggest the night as the season of his coming. Possibly this passage is the origin of the church tradition that the Second Advent is to occur at night. Thus Lactantius writes, 'Then the middle of the heaven shall be laid open in the dead and darkness of the night, that the light of the descending God may be manifest in all the world as lightning: of which the Sibyl spoke in these words: "When He shall come, there will be fire and darkness in the midst of the black night"' (*Institutes*, vii. 19). It is not probable that Paul knew the Sibylline oracle here cited, even if it had made its appearance as early as the date of this Epistle. Nevertheless it indicates an impression that the night was to be the time of the advent. Later tradition fixes this at Easter Eve. But all the Apostle intends is probably an emphasizing of our Lord's teaching in which he compares his coming with that of the thief simply to shew that the time will not be known beforehand.

3. they are saying: people generally, in distinction from the enlightened watchers, though Schmiedel holds that those who are not Christians are intended, since they are referred to in the verses that follow. But they have not yet been introduced, and the phrase is indefinite. Most people are not expecting the day of the Lord. This attitude of mind is illustrated by our Lord in his references to the people of the days of Noah (Matt. xxiv. 38, 39; Luke xvii. 26, 27) and Lot (Luke xvii. 29, 30).

Peace and safety. Like the Jews of Ezekiel's time who cried, 'Peace' when, as the prophet says, 'there is no peace' (Ezek. xiii. 10).

sudden destruction: as in the days of Noah's flood and the destruction of the cities of the plain. Here the coming of Christ is associated with those events which the prophets ascribed to 'the day of the Lord,' judgement and the destruction of the enemies of God and of His people, e. g. 'Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty'—literally 'the Mighty to destroy' (Isa. xiii. 6); cf. verse 9, Ezek. xxx. 3 ff.; Joel i. 15, ii. 1, 2, 11, 31; note especially Amos v. 18, 'Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.' See also Zeph. i. 14–17, ii. 2, 3; Zech. xiv; Mal. iii. 2. The same is seen in our Lord's teaching, e. g. Luke xvii. 22–37; and repeated by the apostles, e. g. Peter (Acts ii. 20), Paul (the passage before us, Phil. i. 10, &c.), John (Rev. xvi. 14).

them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they
4 shall in no wise escape. But ye, brethren, are not in
darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief:
5 for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are
6 not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not
7 sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. For

4. darkness. The mention of 'night' earlier suggests the contrast of darkness and light, and thus introduces a new line of thought. The darkness here referred to is primarily ignorance. The sequel shews that moral depravity is also in mind, but rather as the behaviour of the children of darkness than as that darkness itself. Though Christ will come to the world as a thief in the night, i. e. suddenly and unexpectedly, this will not be the case with Christians who are taught to expect his advent. They are not in darkness, being enlightened by the revelation of the mysteries proclaimed by the apostles. Cf. Eph. iv. 18, 'darkened in their understanding.'

5. sons of light: a phrase found in the teaching of Jesus (Luke xvi. 8). It is a Hebraism; cf. 'son of wickedness' (Ps. lxxxix. 22), 'sons of thunder' (Mark iii. 17). The idiom is used to express an essential characteristic. 'Sons of light' are people characterized by their intimate relation to light. The phrase is more forcible than our expression 'enlightened people,' for the light is not a mere accident; it has become part of the nature and being. The primary idea must be the possession of knowledge, in contrast with the benighted state of the heathen to whom the day of Christ's coming will be a terrible surprise. The contrast is further emphasized by the synonymous expression 'sons of day.' Since the Thessalonians have received the light of Christian truth they belong not to the night, but to the day. The moral and spiritual significance of the contrast of light and darkness is a prominent idea in the Fourth Gospel, e. g. John i. 5, iii. 19-21, xi. 9, 10, xii. 35, 36, where, while ignorance and moral depravity are blended in the notion of darkness, light symbolizes purity as well as knowledge. Some such secondary signification appears to be emerging here, since the Apostle turns directly to the treatment of the conduct that becomes Christians as sons of light.

6. so then: in the Greek a strong conclusive phrase, very characteristic of Paul's style. It points to a sure inference.

not sleep. Sleep represents careless indifference which would be startled by the sudden coming of a thief.

the rest: those who are not Christians, especially heathen fellow citizens at Thessalonica. See iv. 13.

watch: the first duty, as in view of a thief's sudden coming;

they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, since we 8 are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

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a duty frequently insisted on by Christ, e. g. Matt. xxiv. 42; Luke xii. 37, 39. It is also elsewhere urged by Paul—Acts xx. 31; 1 Cor. xvi. 13; Col. iv. 2; and it is prominent in the Apocalypse—iii. 2, 3, xvi. 15.

be sober. In Grimm-Thayer the Greek word is rendered, 'to be calm and collected in spirit.' It occurs again in verse 8, and then only at 2 Tim. iv. 5 in the Pauline Epistles. The only other N. T. instances of its appearance are in 1 Peter—viz. i. 13, iv. 7, v. 8. It is not enough to watch. The watcher must be in a calm and self-possessed temper of mind to be ready for the great event. In Christ's teaching prayer is commonly associated with watching, e. g. 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation' (Mark xiv. 38). The word does not have our modern specific sense of the opposite to intemperance in strong drink, although that intemperance is referred to in the context.

7. Two ways of spending the night—in sleep and in revelry, neither of which is appropriate to the day. The non-Christian world may be said to be spending its time largely in one or the other of these ways—in careless indifference to the coming judgement, equivalent to sleep; or if with keen interest and excitement, only with a passion for what is base and unworthy.

8. let us. The pronoun is emphatic in the Greek—meaning 'us Christians,' in contrast with 'the rest' just referred to (verse 6).

putting on, &c.: the harnessing of the soldier with his armour for fight—a new image. Of course there is no reference to the notion of defence against the thief. The illustration of the thief was only introduced to suggest the alarming suddenness of the advent of Christ for those not prepared to expect it. Now we have an instance of the Apostle's frequent allusions to the warfare of the spiritual life, introduced apparently by the sober, alert attitude of the Christian in contrast with the careless slumbers or dissolute excitement of others.

breastplate: rather, 'corselet,' or 'cuirass,' a coat of mail protecting the body from the neck to the waist.

of faith and love: a genitive of apposition. Faith and love constitute a breastplate, protecting the heart from the assaults of evil. In the parallel passage in Eph. vi. 14 the breastplate consists of righteousness.

the hope of salvation. Salvation in the N. T. is usually

9 For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the ob-
10 taining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who

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regarded as a future good, the final deliverance from all evil, e.g. Rom. xiii. 11. Here the image is similar to 'the helmet of salvation' in Eph. vi. 17, but more explicit, since it shews that the protection is to be found in the hope of future deliverance. Such a hope is a safeguard against yielding either to despair or to the fatal allurements that attack the uninterested soul.

It is difficult to carry the analysis further and discover the specific suitability of faith and love as a breastplate and of the hope of salvation as a helmet. Fanciful analogies may be easily suggested; but probably the Apostle had none such in mind, and only intended to indicate that the whole person—especially the two most vital parts, the head and the heart—should be covered with this armour of the spiritual graces. Observe, these are the same three graces that he eulogizes in writing to the Corinthians as being permanent in contrast with the temporary gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge (1 Cor. xiii. 8), saying, 'But now *abideth* faith, hope, love, these three' (verse 13). The trio to be thus permanent must consist of tough and enduring substance—such as will be suitable for armour that is to stand the assaults of evil.

9. appointed: indicating the Divine end and purpose in calling us to be Christians.

wrath: the destiny of abandoned souls, designated elsewhere 'children of wrath' (Eph. ii. 3); cf. Rom. i. 18, ii. 5, 8, iii. 5, v. 9; and especially, 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction' (Rom. ix. 22), where a certain Divine destiny of some people to come under the wrath of God in future times is indicated, although the Apostle is careful to shew that this is not independent of character, saying, 'by their unbelief they were broken off' (Rom. xi. 20), so that it was 'towards them that fell' that he shewed 'severity' (verse 22).

obtaining of salvation: as a future possession. Elsewhere the word rendered 'obtaining' sometimes means 'possession,' e.g. Eph. i. 14; Heb. x. 39; 1 Pet. ii. 9. But here it plainly points to a future acquisition, since it balances the 'wrath' which belongs to the future. It has the same meaning in 2 Thess. ii. 14, where R. V. follows A. V. in rendering it 'obtaining'; and, as there the object is the 'glory of the Lord Jesus Christ' a share in which undoubtedly belongs to the future, it is impossible to read 'possession,' as though a present state were intended.

through: pointing to the means or the agent. The primary source of salvation will be God, who effects His redeeming purpose by means of the action of Jesus Christ.

died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should

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10. died: not simply 'was killed.' The voluntary element in our Lord's death is here indicated.

for us. The preposition[1] rendered 'for' signifies 'on behalf of,' 'for the benefit of.' Thus it occurs with reference to intercessory prayer in the phrases 'pray for them' (Matt. v. 44), 'pray ye for me' (Acts viii. 24), 'praying always for you' (Col. i. 3), 'pray one for another' (Jas. v. 16); cf. Rom. x. 1; 2 Cor. i. 11, ix. 14; Eph. vi. 19; Phil. i. 4. But here what is said elsewhere of intercessory prayer is affirmed of the death of Christ, which is stated to be on our behalf or for our benefit. This is chronologically the first statement of the great truth in the N. T., occurring as it does in the earliest of Paul's epistles, and, with the possible exception of the Epistle of James, which does not contain the idea, the earliest written book of the N. T. It has been described as an essentially Pauline thought, originating in the mind of the great Apostle. The speeches ascribed to Peter and Stephen in 'Acts' do not contain it. But it is found in our Lord's teaching (Matt. xx. 28, xxvi. 28), and therefore must be ascribed to the original gospel of the Founder of Christianity, whence Paul may have received it. Still the idea is much more prominent in the preaching and writing of the Apostle after the death of Jesus had been witnessed than it was in the utterances of his master before that event. Paul made the crucifixion central in his preaching (see 1 Cor. ii. 2). That was inevitable when once he had come to see the purpose of it. Directly it is perceived that death was voluntarily accepted by Jesus Christ for our benefit, that event becomes of supreme interest to our thoughts of what he was and what he did, for it must be regarded as the greatest thing that he did, self-devotion for others reaching its utmost possible limit. It is to be observed, however, that Paul here simply states the supreme fact without adding any details to specify the way in which the death of Christ comes to be for our benefit. His present object is not to elucidate what we call 'the doctrine of the atonement'; it is not theological and theoretical. It is wholly practical, viz. to urge this truth as a motive for our complete consecration to one who has made the greatest possible sacrifice on our behalf. Lastly, observe that in using the first person plural Paul associates himself with his converts. In this amazing relation to Christ—the obligation of devotion springing from the fact that he has given his life for both parties—the differences between an apostle and his disciples sink into insignificance.

that: pointing to purpose. The object of Christ's sacrifice of

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[1] ὑπέρ.

11 live together with him. Wherefore exhort one another,
and build each other up, even as also ye do.
12 But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that

himself was that his people might be brought into close union with himself.

wake: *lit.* 'watch,' the word so rendered in verse 6.

sleep. The verb is in the present tense, signifying sleeping as a continuous condition. It is not the same word as that rendered sleep in iv. 15[1], which is a transitive verb meaning 'to put to sleep,' while here the verb is intransitive, signifying 'to be asleep.' The meaning is the Christian sleep of death. Whether living and performing our duty of watching while we live, or sleeping in death, we are to live with Him.

live: a strong word indicating the vitality of Christian being. Even when we sleep in the state commonly reckoned death, if we are in the relation to Christ here indicated we are alive as really as when we are 'awake' and 'watching' on earth. Cf. 'Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die' (John xi. 26).

together. This word must be connected with what precedes, not with what follows. It indicates the union of Christians, both those now living and those who have died. Thus it points to the consolation of the Thessalonians in their grief over the loss of some of their number. They are not to sorrow as those who have no hope. The chief hope is that the deceased Christians shall not miss the great joy of welcoming Christ on his return and then entering on the resurrection life of eternity. But the more human hope of reunion may also be cherished, since both the dead and the living will be together in that happy future.

11. exhort. A. V. had 'comfort.' Perhaps here a better meaning than either would be 'encourage,' the Greek admitting of all three significations. The principal aim of the whole Epistle is to cheer the Thessalonians in their distress and despondency concerning departed friends.

one another. The encouragement was to be mutual in accordance with the simple order of the most primitive times, which allowed free scope to the members of a church to address the brotherhood, as we see clearly from the case of the church at Corinth (see 1 Cor. xiv. 31).

build . . . up: see note on iii. 2.

v. 12-22. *Practical exhortations.* The leaders of the church are to be honoured and the brethren to live peaceable together, admonishing and encouraging one another according to their several characters and requirements. There is to be no revenge.

[1] Here we have *καθεύδωμεν*; in iv. 15 the word was *κοιμηθέντας*.

labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in 13

Life is to be glad, prayerful, grateful. The spiritual gifts of the various members of the community are not to be checked, but are to be tested, the good held fast, the bad of all kinds rejected.

12. But: or 'now,' indicating a transition to a new subject. See note on iv. 9.

know: an unusual use of this word, apparently meaning 'recognize,' 'acknowledge'; cf. 'acknowledge [a different Greek word] ye therefore them that are such' (1 Cor. xvi. 18), also 'Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?' (Ps. cxliv. 3).

labour: a stronger word than 'work,' meaning 'toil,' 'work to weariness.'

are over you: indicating official status in the church. No titles of church officers appear in either of the epistles to the Thessalonians; nor is there any distinct reference to such officers in the four epistles of the succeeding group—Galatians, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians. The first such reference is in Phil. i. 1: 'bishops and deacons.' Still the Apostle's language here plainly points to office; but we cannot be sure that there was as yet any definite organization of the very young church at Thessalonica. In describing the Lord's Supper as observed in his day Justin Martyr uses the same indefinite word that we have here in order to indicate the president (1 *Apol.* 65). But he has it in the singular; in this passage the form is plural, indicating several persons in a position of leadership, like the elders in a Jews' synagogue.

in the Lord: in regard to Christianity, as distinguished from civil magistrates or business employers.

admonish: *lit.* 'put you in mind.' Practical teaching is intended. The three expressions 'labour among you,' 'are over you,' and 'admonish you' are not ascribed to three separate orders of the ministry. The presence of but one article before all these expressions shews that only one class of persons is intended. The same leaders of the church perform all three functions; or better, these are not three formally distinct functions, but merely three aspects of the relation of the leaders to the members of the church.

13. to esteem them exceeding highly in love. Two renderings of this phrase have been suggested: (1) to connect 'exceeding highly' with 'esteem,' and to regard the last two words, 'in love,' as supplementary, with this meaning—'To have a very high opinion of them and to cherish that in a spirit of love.' (2) To connect the words 'in love' with 'esteem,' taking the

love for their work's sake. Be at peace among your-
14 selves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the
disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak,

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intermediate clause as an intensifying of the idea this gives, thus—'To esteem them with love, and that exceeding highly.' This second meaning is preferable, because (*a*) the Greek word (*hēgeomai*) rendered 'esteem' does not contain the idea of respect and honour that we attach to the English word, but only means 'reckon,' 'consider,' and (*b*) also because the phrase rendered 'exceeding highly' only means 'very much indeed,' without the specific idea of elevation in honour. Therefore something more specific is needed to complete the thought. We have this if the conception of Christian love is made central to the whole sentence. Then it means that the church is to regard its leaders with very warm affection. It is not high dignity, but great love that the Apostle wishes to be given to them. In the next century we find Ignatius urging on the churches to which he writes the duty of honouring their ministers; and with him it is the elevation of their authority, rather than the rousing of affection for them, that is most earnestly enforced. Thus he says, 'It is therefore necessary, even as your wont is, that ye should do nothing without the bishop; but be ye obedient also to the presbytery, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ our hope; for if we live in him, we shall also be found in him' (*Epist. to Trallians*, 2); and again, 'Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment' (*Epist. to Smyrnæans*, 8). Thus Ignatius magnifies the authority of the ministry, while Paul only desiderates very much love for the ministers.

for their work's sake: *lit.* 'because of their work.' It is their work, not merely their office, that is to elicit the affection of the church for them. They should be loved for what they are doing, since that is for the benefit of the church. The love should spring from gratitude for the services they are rendering.

Be at peace, &c.: the duty of the ordinary members one to another, following the special duty of love to the leaders.

14. admonish: the same word that had described the work of the leaders in verse 12. Therefore the duty of admonishing is not confined to those men, though they are especially entrusted with it. As yet the church order is so fluid, and the rights and duties of the private members are so extensive, that no official admonition dispenses with the mutual counsel of the members among themselves.

the disorderly: strictly, 'those who do not keep to the ranks,' with reference to military discipline. Plato uses it of

be longsuffering toward all. See that none render unto 15
any one evil for evil; but alway follow after that which

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intemperance in pleasures. Ellicott suggests that, 'Here the precise reference is probably to the neglect of duties and callings into which the Thessalonians had lapsed owing to mistaken views of the time of the Lord's coming.' This view is borne out by such passages as iv. 10, 11; 2 Thess. iii. 6, and especially verse 11: 'for we hear of some that walk among you disorderly [a form of the same Greek word], that work not at all, but are busybodies,' where the disorderliness is associated with idleness. These people are Christ's soldiers who fall out of the ranks instead of following the call of duty.

the fainthearted: the opposite class of people to the disorderly enthusiasts, people who are discouraged, perhaps especially those who have lost friends by death and are despondent on that account, since this ground of despondency has been noted as conspicuous in the church (see 1 Thess. iv. 13).

the weak: weak in the spiritual life, especially before persecution, rather than the weak in faith of Romans xv. 1, who are over-scrupulous because too timorous to use Christian liberty.

15. See that, &c.: surely not meaning that the church as a whole is to exercise discipline over its individual members in restraining outbreaks of the spirit of revenge, but rather urging each member to see to it that for his part he does not manifest that unchristian temper.

evil for evil. The prohibition of private revenge is an especially Christian duty required by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount, with a distinct recognition of its repudiation of the old Jewish *lex talionis*, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth' (Matt. v. 38, 39). The more general duty of love to one's enemy had been recognized in Prov. xxv. 21. This passage is quoted by Paul (Rom. xii. 20) after he has given the advice to the Romans which he here gives the Thessalonians, and in almost identical words, 'Render to no man evil for evil' (Rom. xii. 17). It is plain that the precept has no direct reference to the duty of the magistrate in dealing with offenders against the law. Under the Roman government none of Paul's converts could be in the position of responsible administrators of justice. Besides, the words 'See that none,' &c., point to the action of private persons, not to that of officials in the discharge of their public functions.

that which is good: 'the good,' an expression often met with in Plato and discussed in the *Dialogues*. Here it is not taken in an abstract sense, but with reference to the benefits that one member of the church is to confer on another. Thus it is the opposite to the 'evil for evil' just forbidden. In this connexion

16 is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice
17, 18 alway; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks:

to follow after the good for the benefit of one another must mean to make the welfare of our fellow Christians a definite aim and pursuit, to seek and labour for this end.

16. Cf. Phil. iii. 1, iv. 4. This is (1) essentially Christian, since Christianity is based on glad tidings; (2) characteristically Pauline, the Apostle being deeply emotional and himself finding joy in his work (e.g. Phil. iv. 1); and (3) specifically appropriate, inasmuch as the Thessalonians were sorrowing beyond necessity (cf. verse 13). The remarkable part of the advice lies in the adverb 'alway.' Paul is no blind optimist; but he would point to perennial springs of joy beneath passing sorrows. Thus he writes 'as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing' (2 Cor. vi. 10). The explanation of this paradox is to be found in Rom. viii. 18; and especially in 2 Cor. iv. 16–18.

17. pray: a word used for worship generally, and not only for petition.

without ceasing. Cf. Luke xviii. 1 ff., a passage which suggests perseverance in prayer rather than the habit of incessant prayer. The Christian is to persevere like the widow who continued appealing to the unrighteous judge till he attended to her case. If he does not at once obtain an answer to his prayer he is not to abandon the quest in despair, nor to cease praying. But both the precept that precedes and that which follows pointing to a continuous habit, it is better to read the words of the Apostle in a more general sense. Thus they recommend a life of prayer, as one pervaded by the spirit of worship. It is quite plain that he is not advising the neglect of daily duty for the sake of a 'religious life' given up entirely to prayer in the cloister. Such a vocation was not thought of in the primitive church, though the habit of Anna the prophetess had approached it (Luke ii. 37). In this Epistle Paul emphatically commends his readers to carry on their business duties, working with their hands (iv. 11). The spirit of his advice may be realized in accordance with Coleridge's lines:—

> 'He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all.'

Still the prayer must be a reality, the actual lifting up of the heart and life to God in worship. This is to be a habit. Cf. 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor. x. 31).

18. in everything. Schmiedel understands this to mean 'in

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward. Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings; 19, 2

all places,' or 'under all circumstances'; but Ellicott calls attention to 2 Cor. ix. 8, where the same Greek words mean 'with regard to everything.' (Cf. 2 Cor. ix. 11, with the same meaning.) Probably therefore this is the idea here.

this, &c. It is a question whether Paul here intends to refer to the three foregoing precepts, or only to the last of them. It is more in accordance with his habit to connect the sentence simply with the last precept. Besides, the singular 'this,' not 'these things,' also points to the same conclusion. Thus great emphasis is laid on the duty of thankfulness. This is especially what God wills to see in His children.

the will of God: the thing that God wills to be done by men.

in Christ Jesus: God's will with regard to His people being manifested in the life, work, and teaching of Christ, and thus coming in Christ.

to you-ward: so R. V. 'Concerning you' in A. V. is not so accurate, as the preposition points to an end or object. God's will has come to Christians by means of Christ Jesus.

19. Quench: a word based on the idea of the Spirit regarded under the image of fire. Thus John the Baptist says of Christ, 'he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire' (Matt. iii. 11), and the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost as tongues of fire (Acts ii. 3). To smother and suppress the working of the Spirit is to quench the fire.

the Spirit. R. V. uses a capital 'S,' indicating the Spirit of God; A. V. has a small 's,' meaning our own spirit. It is nearly certain that R.V. is right here, for two reasons: (1) Paul is accustomed to name the Divine Spirit in this absolute way, while he generally defines the human spirit in contra-distinction as 'our spirit,' or with the use of some similar limitation, e. g. 'The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit' (Rom. viii. 16). When 'the spirit' is mentioned in contrast with 'the flesh' (e. g. Rom. viii. 4) no doubt the human spirit is intended. But when the expression stands by itself it indicates *the* Spirit *par excellence*, i. e. the Holy Spirit. (2) In the next verse the Apostle goes on to one of the chief manifestations of the Spirit of God in the church; and the two verses are evidently almost parallel. Therefore he means here, 'Do not suppress and stifle the working of the Spirit of God.' The application is left open to be as widely comprehensive as possible. The Spirit is not to be quenched either in one's self or in others; either by self-suppression or by hindering the working and manifestation of the Divine Spirit in others. The sentence

21, 22 prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

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which follows shews that the Apostle is referring to those various manifestations of the indwelling power of the Spirit in the early churches that were seen in miracles, tongues, prophesyings, &c., a full discussion of which is preserved in 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. The enthusiasm of primitive Christianity sometimes took on extraordinary forms. The Apostle warns the people of cooler temperament not to damp it in others, as perhaps they are inclined to do, and also those who feel ashamed of it in themselves not to suppress it.

20. prophesyings: inspired utterances, not necessarily predictions. Paul puts these first in the order of spiritual gifts when he says, 'desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy' (1 Cor. xiv. 1). Possibly some such utterances struck men of common sense as not very profound or important. There was danger lest they should be treated with contempt. That would be quenching the Spirit.

21. prove all things: with reference to what precedes. Whatever prophesyings are uttered in the church are to be tested or proved before being accepted. On the one hand, the utterances are not to be discouraged; on the other hand, they are not to be accepted with implicit faith, as certainly inspired and infallibly true. The words have no direct reference to the wider range of thought and the question of proving all possible propositions.

hold fast, &c.: as a result of the test. The prophetic utterances are to be tried and sifted. Those proved to be good are to be accepted and retained. The Greek word rendered 'hold fast' is very strong, signifying decisive and firm action.

good: in Greek, *to kalon*, the fair and excellent, not merely what is morally good. The utterances that stand examination and are proved to be worthy of belief and attention are to be welcomed and retained.

22. form: not 'appearance' as in the A. V. The Greek word admits of both meanings. It occurs at Luke iii. 22, 'in a bodily *form*, as a dove,' where the idea is the appearance of a dove, and Luke ix. 29, 'the *fashion* of his countenance,' where again the idea of appearance is meant. The meaning is similar in 2 Cor. v. 7, 'We walk by faith, not by *sight*,' where the Revisers' margin has 'appearance.' Cf. John v. 37. On the other hand, the word is used in Greek philosophy for 'species.' And a phrase similar to that of Paul here occurs in Josephus, *Antiq.* x. 3. 1, plainly meaning 'every kind of evil.' Moreover, the context suggests that meaning in the present case. The antithesis to holding fast the good is rejecting the evil, not merely its appear-

And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly ; 23
and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved

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ance. Reality is thought of in the first clause; reality will be intended in the second.

v. 23–28. *Conclusion.* Paul commends the entire sanctification of his readers to the faithfulness of God, asks for their prayers, sends a salutation to all the brethren, commands the Epistle to be read to them all, and ends with a benediction.

23. the God of peace: a Hebraism, meaning God as connected with peace. He dwells in peace, and He gives peace. The thought of peace does not suggest the notion of any discord among the Thessalonians, since it is usual in oriental salutations; still, see verse 13. But with Paul the word has the deeper Christian meaning of the interior restfulness which is the experience of God's people. Peace is wished for the Thessalonians in the opening salutation (i. 1).

himself. The word is very emphatic in the Greek. It is God, He and He only, who can sanctify.

sanctify: consecrate and purify. Following the description of the Sanctifier as 'the God of peace' this suggests that peace is to be obtained through sanctification.

wholly: a word found nowhere else in the N. T., but frequent in later Greek. It means 'wholly attaining the end,' i. e. complete in all respects. The Thessalonians are already consecrated in some degree; the Apostle desires that this may be complete.

your spirit and soul and body: the threefold division of human nature adopted by Paul. It is not found in the sayings of Christ, who uses the twofold division more familiar to us—body and soul. Paul's trichotomy has been traced through Philo to Plato. But the Platonic division of human nature, though threefold, is not the same as the Pauline. With Plato the highest of the three parts of man is intellect (*nous*), and Plato is followed by Philo. The idea of 'spirit,' as we meet with it in the Scriptures, is Hebraic, not Hellenic. Paul uses the word to denote man's highest nature in its religious perceptions and activities, and its relations with the Spirit of God. Then the soul stands for the animal nature with its appetites and propensities, and the lower life generally. In 1 Cor. ii. and iii. Paul discusses the distinction between the operations of soul and spirit, the 'natural man' there representing the soul, or lower nature. Plainly this does not exclude a certain intelligence, but that is 'carnal,' i. e. sensuous and worldly, and therefore unable to appreciate the spiritual, i. e. that which moves in the higher plane when the Spirit of God touches the life and consciousness of man. But while with Paul there is thus a certain opposition between

entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus
24 Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also
do it.
25 Brethren, pray for us.

spirit and soul, the vital antagonism is between spirit and flesh (see 1 Cor. v. 5). The soul is too much the slave of the flesh, and is in danger of being quite degraded and ruined by the flesh, unless rescued and uplifted by the spirit. The idea of the sanctification of all three parts of the nature is significant as regards both extremes: (1) In regard to the spirit. The spirit needs it. Thus Paul writes, 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God' (2 Cor. vii. 1). (2) In regard to the body. This is capable of sanctification. Accordingly Paul desires the body to be presented to God as a living sacrifice (Rom. xii. 1), and describes it as 'a temple of the Holy Ghost' (1 Cor. vi. 19).

entire: *lit.* 'entire in all its parts.' It occurs in one other place in the N. T., where we read, 'that ye may be perfect and *entire*, lacking in nothing' (Jas. i. 4). It is used in the LXX for stones untouched by a tool (Deut. xxvii. 6). Philo uses it for a body without blemish or defect (*de Vict.* 12).

24. Faithful: i. e. to the promise involved in calling. If God gives an invitation, He will grant that to which He invites.

he that calleth: God. This expression might seem to imply either (1) that each Christian was being continually called, or (2) that God was calling a succession of new converts into the church. The first meaning would be unsuitable, as Paul always regards the call of Christians as an act previous to their becoming such; the second is a possible meaning, though even this meaning would only be appropriate if the Apostle were addressing a series of new converts in the act of entering the church, and it would be more suitable for those who had not yet entered. Probably therefore there is no thought of time in the passage, the expression simply meaning 'your Caller' (so Ellicott).

who will also do it: i. e. what is necessary to be done; equivalent to, 'who will act and produce the results.' There is no object to the verb. The idea of what is to be done is not expressed. But the call and the faithfulness imply that God will do for His people that to which He invites them. The phrase is too comprehensive to be limited to what precedes in verse 23. Still it must include those two things—the sanctifying and the preserving.

25. pray for us: *lit.* 'pray *about*[1] us'; make us a subject

[1] περί, 'about,' 'concerning'; not ὑπέρ, 'on behalf of.' But

Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. I adjure 26, 2

of your prayers. The Apostle highly valued the prayers of his friends; cf. 2 Thess. iii. 1; Eph. vi. 18; Col. iv. 3. It is to be observed that these requests for prayer are all found in the earlier and later Epistles, written at leisure and calmly; none of them in the four strenuous Epistles of the period of conflict (Gal., Rom., 1 and 2 Cor.).

26. It would seem that verses 26, 27 were especially addressed to the leaders of the church. The charge to have the Epistle read to *all* the brethren implies that it would first go to some people who might otherwise not make it known to the others. Then it is to be observed that the salutation differs in form from that in other places where the members of the church are exhorted to salute one another, e. g. 'salute *one another* with a holy kiss' (Rom. xvi. 16; cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 14). Here the phrase is **Salute all the brethren,** as though some other persons not known simply by that general name for the members of the church were to give the salutation.

a holy kiss. The kiss is a common mode of salutation between men and men, as well as between women and women, in the East at the present day, as it is also in Continental countries. It was especially appropriate among the Christians, since such people were taught to regard one another as brethren. In very primitive times it was exchanged indiscriminately among the members of a church; subsequently the men kissed the men, and the women kissed the women. It must be understood here that the word 'brethren' includes the 'sisters' in the church. Enthusiasm and simplicity made this possible; but we can understand how such practices gave rise to scandalous libels among prurient critics in the heathen world. They may help to account for the gross charges that were brought against the early Christians, the purest people of their day being falsely accused of impurity. In Peter (v. 14) we have 'the kiss of love,' the word for 'love' being the specially Christian word *agapē*, a different word from that used to designate the love of the two sexes—*erōs*.

27. I adjure you: an unusually strong expression not easily to be accounted for. Baur even took this as a sign that the Epistle was not genuine. It has been suggested that Paul is only calling attention to the importance of what he is about to say. But the language is too strong for that. It seems to imply a fear that the Epistle may not be read to all the members

the distinction must not be pressed, as the prepositions are used more loosely in late Greek than in the classics.

you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

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of the church. If, as seems probable, this verse is especially designed for the elders or other leading persons who would receive the letter in the first instance, it indicates the Apostle's apprehension lest they should retain it and only communicate its contents to those whom they chose to take into their confidence. Paul puts them on oath not to do this.

all the brethren: including (1) the most poor, humble, ignorant, and obscure members of the church, (2) those for any reason out of favour with the leaders of the church, and (3) any who might be absent when the Epistle arrived. This shews Paul's anxiety that his teaching should not be limited to any privileged order in the church, that it should be shared by every member on the most democratic principle. Paul's nine Epistles to churches contain his most advanced teaching, and therefore the most difficult theological statements of the Bible. Yet they are not to be reserved for an esoteric group of theologians. Even the most doctrinal discussions are to be freely set before all private Christians.

28. grace: a modification of the Greek salutation (*chairé*), with deeper meaning, as our Lord's salutation, 'Peace be unto you,' is the usual Hebrew salutation, but also with deeper meaning (John xx. 19). The two were combined in the opening of the Epistle (i. 1). One only is found at the close, and that the more characteristically Christian. The Apostle desires that the free favour of Christ and its good effects may be with his readers.

our Lord Jesus Christ. This salutation is thus confined to blessings given by Christ as especially the Divine Being through whom grace comes. A usual form of salutation in Paul's Epistles, it is repeated in identical words in Rom. xvi. 20; at the conclusion of 2 Thessalonians (except that there the word 'all' is added—'with you *all*'); and in 1 Corinthians (with the slight modification, '*the* Lord,' &c., instead of '*our* Lord,' &c.). In 2 Corinthians we have the full benediction: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all,' in Galatians, Philippians, and Philemon: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit'—with the word 'brethren' added in Galatians. The form is more varied and longer in Ephesians, but there too grace is named (see Eph. vi. 23, 24). Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus have simply 'Grace be with you,' but Titus adds the word 'all'—'with you *all*.' Thus 'grace'

appears in the closing salutation of every one of the Pauline Epistles. It is also found in Hebrews—'Grace be with you all,' but not in the Epistle salutations of James, Peter, John, or Jude. Thus it is characteristically Pauline.

The subscription in the A. V. stating that the Epistle 'was' written from Athens disappears from the R. V. because it certainly was not in the original text. Moreover it is incorrect. See Introduction, p. 21 ff. The subscriptions to Epistles were added by Greek editors of a later age, perhaps in the second century.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus

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i. 1, 2. *Salutation.* Paul and his two companions salute the Thessalonian church, wishing its members grace and peace from God and Christ.

1. Identical with 1 Thess. i. 1, except that there we read 'God *the* Father,' while here we have **God our Father.** For explanations see annotations on the companion passage. The similarity of the opening words points to the probability of there not having been any long interval between the writing of the two letters.

Silvanus, and Timothy. These two companions being still with the Apostle are associated with him in this letter as they had been in the former letter. Thus we have the same curious complexity of authorship again. The letter is written in the first person plural in order to include these men. Yet for the most part it evidently expresses the individual convictions of Paul, who drops the plural form in one place and uses the pronoun 'I' (ii. 5).

God our Father: an expression most frequently used at the opening of Paul's Epistles (e. g. Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 2; Phil. i. 2; Col. i. 2; Philem. 3). This slight variation on 1 Thessalonians is probably accidental. Still it is illuminating, for it shews that while God the Father and Jesus Christ are here named together, and again in verse 2, the Divine Fatherhood referred to is not that of the Trinitarian idea in which God is the Father of Christ, the Son, but that Fatherhood of God's relation to men which is prominent in our Lord's teaching. The Apostle uses

Christ; Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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the term especially with regard to Christians, whom he regards as God's adopted sons. Thus he writes, 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God' (Rom. viii. 14), and refers to Christians having 'received the spirit of adoption' (verse 15), this spirit enabling them to cry 'Abba, Father' (ibid). Accordingly the Divine Fatherhood is that of adopted children realized by them through their reception of the Holy Spirit. Probably therefore the pronoun 'our' as here used points to Christians rather than to mankind at large. Nevertheless, in a later Epistle Paul writes of the larger Divine Fatherhood which includes the whole human race, and indeed other spiritual beings also, describing God as 'the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named' (Eph. iii. 14).

the Lord Jesus Christ. See note on 1 Thessalonians i. 1.

2. Grace . . . peace. See the same note.

from God the Father, &c. This clause appears in the A.V. of 1 Thessalonians i. 1, as well as here, probably, however, only because it was transferred to some MSS. from the Second Epistle, as it is absent from equally good MSS. But here it has the support of full MSS. authority, and unquestionably belongs to the original text. It is a thoroughly Pauline phrase, the same words occurring in the salutations of all Paul's Epistles to churches, except Colossians and 1 Thessalonians and also that to Philemon, with the slight variation of the use of 'our' instead of 'the,' as 'God *our* Father' in all the Epistles but Galatians, and the substitution of 'our' for 'the' in the second clause, as '*our* Lord Jesus Christ' in that Epistle. The Revisers omit this second clause from Colossians altogether, and the salutation in that Epistle reads simply, 'Grace to you and peace from God our Father' (Col. i. 2). We have the same form of salutation in the three pastoral Epistles, though rather more modified, the word 'mercy' coming between 'grace' and 'peace' in 1 and 2 Timothy, and the title 'our Saviour' being appended to the name 'Christ Jesus' in Titus, and 'our Lord' in 1 and 2 Timothy. Thus we have:—

'Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom.; 1 and 2 Cor.; Eph.; Phil.; Philem.).

'Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Thess.).

'Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ' (Gal.).

'Grace to you and peace from God our Father' (Col.).

'Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour' (Titus).

'Grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord' (1 and 2 Tim.).

The salutations in other N. T. writers are as follows :—

'Grace to you and peace be multiplied' (1 Pet.).

'Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord' (2 Pet.).

'Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied' (Jude).

'Grace, mercy, peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love' (2 John).

Hebrews, James, 1 and 3 John contain no opening salutations.

God the Father. The A. V. has 'God *our* Father,' and Tischendorf in his critical text retains that reading. The MSS. are about equally divided; but Westcott and Hort omit the Greek word for 'our,' and are followed by the Revisers. It is likely to have been inserted by a later hand as an assimilation to the more usual form of the Pauline salutation. Still, the fatherhood in the phrase 'God *the* Father' is evidently the same as that in 'God *our* Father,' since that expression occurs in the previous verse as well as in most other salutations. It does not refer to the Father as the first Person of the Trinity in contradistinction from the Son as the second Person, but points to God's fatherly relation to His human children, especially Christians.

and the Lord Jesus Christ. The structure of the sentence indicates that both grace and peace flow from God and Christ, a twofold blessing from a twofold source. Such a sentence certainly implies very close union in the Divine action. Still it is possible to make a logical, if not a real, distinction. In that case 'grace' will be especially associated with 'the Lord Jesus Christ,' and 'peace' with 'God the Father.' This is in accordance with the usage of the Apostle. Thus the phrase 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' occurs frequently in his benedictions (cf. Rom. xvi. 20; 1 Cor. xvi. 23; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Gal. vi. 18; Phil. iv. 23; 1 Thess. v. 28; 2 Thess. iii. 18). On the other hand, Paul writes of 'the peace of God' (Phil. iv. 7), and 'the God of peace' (Rom. xv. 33, xvi. 20; Phil. iv. 9; 1 Thess. v. 23, &c.). He also has one reference to the 'peace of Christ' (Col. iii. 15). But he more frequently ascribes the gift of peace directly to God. Thus he says, 'God hath called us in peace' (1 Cor. vii. 15). When reading the whole verse we may understand that peace, the gift of God, is encircled by the grace of Christ, guarded by it, the peace of God being in a frame of the grace of Christ. Grace is named first. That is thoroughly Pauline, as the argument of the Epistles to the Romans shews. Through the grace of Christ we enter into the peace of God. Nevertheless, the compact sentence indicates the close union of the two gifts as it does the close union of their two sources.

We are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, 3
brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth
exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward

---

i. 3–12. *Congratulations for fidelity under difficulties.* God is to be thanked for the growing faith and love of the Thessalonians. The Apostle is exulting among the churches over their faith and patience under persecution, by means of which they are being made worthy of the kingdom of God. At the revelation of Christ they will have rest and their enemies severe punishment. Therefore he is continually praying for them that God may reckon them worthy of their calling and that Christ may be glorified by means of them.

3. We: Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy; but chiefly Paul. The two companions soon fade into shadowy presences and pass out of notice altogether, and then, though the plural pronoun is retained throughout the Epistle, it really represents the personality of Paul alone.

are bound: *lit.* 'owe'; it is a debt. We *must* thank God, a strong expression indicating unusual reason for gratitude.

to give thanks. As in the previous Epistle to the Thessalonians (i. 2), and all his Epistles to churches except Galatians, the Apostle begins by congratulating his readers on the good news that he has received concerning them and thanking God for their spiritual progress. This progress is always ascribed to God, never attributed to the unaided efforts of his readers, and therefore the congratulations always take the form of thanksgivings.

as it is meet: 'worthy' or 'fitting.' While the phrase 'we are bound' indicates duty towards God, this additional phrase points to suitability in the condition of the readers. Thanksgiving on the Apostle's part when contemplating their progress is appropriate to what he sees in it.

faith: named first, because the root-grace from which the other graces spring, as in the previous Epistle (1 Thess. i. 3).

groweth exceedingly. This is something additional to the ground of thanksgiving in the earlier letter, where the work of faith was simply referred to as a fact. Subsequent information has led the Apostle to perceive a great and continuous increase in the faith of his converts.

love of each one of you all, &c.: a remarkably full and comprehensive expression. The Apostle is careful to make it clear that there are no exceptions to the experience of brotherly love. It is found in every member of the church. This, too, shews an advance beyond the earlier writing, which merely mentions 'labour of love' in a general way. In that Epistle the Apostle exhorted his readers to 'abound more and more' in love

4 one another aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in
you in the churches of God for your patience and faith
in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which
5 ye endure; *which is* a manifest token of the righteous

---

to all the brethren (1 Thess. v. 10). Now he acknowledges that the end of his exhortations is attained. He has nothing more to wish for in this direction.

4. glory: rather, 'exult.'

the churches of God. What churches? We only know of the one church at Corinth, in Achaia, where the Apostle wrote the Epistle. This phrase suggests that other churches had been founded in the villages round the metropolis. 2 Corinthians is addressed to 'all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia' as well as 'the church of God which is at Corinth' (2 Cor. i. 1), implying that there were Christians in other parts of the province. But the Apostle may have written to churches in his older mission-fields in Asia, giving them an account of these remarkable Christians at Thessalonica.

patience: also referred to in the opening of the earlier Epistle (1 Thess. i. 3); evidently much needed at Thessalonica.

persecutions: more particularly referred to in the previous Epistle, where we see that they were caused by the converts' fellow countrymen, provoked by the Jews (see 1 Thess. iii. 14–16).

5. a manifest token, &c.: a clear sign that the righteous judgement of God will take place. The phrase must point to that future event; it cannot mean that the judgement has already happened, or is now in process, because there is nothing in the context to suggest either position. On the contrary, the immediate scene is that of the endurance of persecution by the Christians from the unrestrained antagonism of their opponents, which therefore is not yet judged and condemned. It is difficult to see the connexion of the clause with its context, either in what precedes or in what follows. If this clause were omitted the whole passage would run on smoothly, thus:—verse 4, 'in the afflictions which ye endure,' followed immediately by the second part of verse 5: 'to the end that ye may be accounted worthy,' &c. Accordingly Schmiedel suggests that the sentences may have been transposed by a copyist, and that the clause in question may have stood originally after the word 'suffer' in verse 5. But we have no MS. authority for such an alteration in the text. Reading it as it stands we must take the clause as a parenthesis. Still, to find a place here at all, it must have a point of attachment, and the question arises, Where is that to be found? what is the 'manifest token'? Two answers have been offered to this question: (1) That it consists in the persecutions and afflictions.

judgement of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: if so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recom- 6
pense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that 7
are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord

But these are not in themselves clear signs of the judgement that is to follow them. (2) That it consists in the patient endurance of these troubles—a much more probable idea. The display of such a martyr temper is an eloquent protest against the injustice done to the Christians, and an indication that God, who cannot but approve of such conduct, will vindicate it in the punishment of the oppressors.

In illustration of this thought Mr. Garrod quotes Browning's *Abt Vogler*:—

> And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
> For the fulness of the days?'

to the end: the Divine purpose in permitting the persecution. It is discipline, education, or at least a test of fitness.

the kingdom of God. See note on 1 Thess. ii. 12. As in the earlier passage the kingdom is here regarded as in the future, as the happy condition when the reign of God is established on earth, no doubt associated in the mind of the Apostle with the *parousia*, the return of Christ.

6. if so be: rather, 'if indeed.' The Greek word (*eiper*) is used 'by a species of rhetorical politeness ... of that about which there is no doubt' (Grimm-Thayer).

7. rest with us: referring to the future establishment of the kingdom of God just mentioned. That will be an end of the present condition of conflict and hardship from which the missionaries as well as their converts are suffering. As they are troubled with the same persecutions, so they will enjoy the same rest. And the association in the rest will be closer. Now the Apostle is separated from his friends at Thessalonica. At the happy time coming they will be together. The idea of participation together in this blessedness is suggested elsewhere, for instance, 'as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort' (2 Cor. i. 7).

the revelation. The Greek word is *apocalypsis*, the apocalypse. The *parousia* will result from an apocalypse. It is not merely that Jesus will come; he will be manifested. This may imply that he is already present, but invisible. What we call the Second Coming is really the revelation of the Christ who is present all along, though hitherto unseen.

8 Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord

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from heaven. No doubt, in form, the idea is that of coming from above, from the distant heaven. But if in reality heaven is to be thought of as the presence of God in the sphere of the spiritual, local terms do not strictly apply to it. In becoming manifest Jesus passes from heaven to earth.

the angels of his power. This might be read, 'his angels of power,' i. e. a Hebraism meaning 'his mighty angels,' as in the A. V. But probably Ellicott is right in understanding it to signify the angels who belong to his power, through whom it is exercised. Jesus spoke of coming with accompanying angels (Matt. xxiv. 31, xxv. 31). In the previous Epistle (1 Thess. iv. 16) Paul wrote of the advent of Christ 'with the voice of the archangel.'

8. in flaming fire. The R. V. associates these words with the preceding clause, thus taking it as descriptive of the accompanying terrors of Christ's advent to judgement. The A. V. connects it with the sentence that follows, and so reads it as describing the instrument of vengeance. Mr. Garrod prefers the latter reading, comparing it with the text lower down, 'whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth' (ii. 8) as though he were breathing out fire (cf. Ps. xviii. 8). But in favour of the Revisers' reading we have the familiar O. T. image of the manifestation of God in fire as at the burning bush (Exod. iii. 2), the pillar of fire (xiii. 21), Jehovah descending at Sinai in fire (xix. 18), the glory of the Lord 'like devouring fire' (xxiv. 17; cf. Pss. xviii. 12, l. 3, xcvii. 3), 'behold the Lord will come with fire' (Isa. lxvi. 15). This O. T. conception is now applied to Christ in his revelation for judgement. It signifies a splendid terror, a dangerous majesty.

them that know not God: the heathen. This reads harshly, as though the heathen were to be punished merely for their ignorance. No explanation is given here. But in writing to the Romans Paul enters into an elaborate explanation of the case. He there attributes the present benighted condition of the pagan world to moral causes. There was a knowledge of God displayed in the creation. But this was wilfully suppressed and stifled by wickedness. Therefore God is justly angry (cf. Rom. i. 18, 19).

them that obey not, &c. The Greek clearly indicates another class of people, by repeating the article. We are not to think of the heathen remaining in their ignorance because they reject the gospel; but first we have the heathen condemned for their guilty ignorance, and then those who reject the gospel. This second class consists primarily of the hearers of the missionaries, and

Jesus : who shall suffer punishment, *even* eternal destruc- 9
tion from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his

especially those people at Thessalonica, both Jews and pagans, who rejected their message.

obey: not merely 'believe.' The fault is moral, not intellectual. It lies with the will. These people will not submit to the claims of the gospel

9. punishment: not the Greek word rendered 'punishment' in the parable of the 'sheep and the goats' (*kolasis*, Matt. xxv. 46), which really signifies 'chastisement,' but a word (*dikē*) connected with the same root as the Greek for 'judge' and 'judgement,' meaning first of all 'right,' 'justice'; then a 'judicial hearing,' and a 'judicial decision,' a 'sentence' (cf. Acts xxv. 15); and so finally, 'the execution of a sentence,' which is its signification here. It is the word rendered 'punishment' in Jude 7.

eternal. The primary meaning of this adjective is 'that which belongs to the ages.' Thus its strict application would be indefinite, pointing to that which is vast and age-long, without any determination of endlessness. But in usage it stands for what is everlasting, as in the phrase 'eternal life.' There is another word (*aïdios*) used for the complete philosophical idea of endlessness which is applied to the doom of fallen angels in Jude 6, but nowhere in the N. T. to the punishment of human beings. The word rendered 'eternal' 'gives prominence to the immeasurableness of eternity' (Grimm-Thayer). In Philo we find it associated with punishment or chastisement (*kolasis*).

destruction. This cannot be a long process of being destroyed, to which the adjective 'eternal' is added in order to suggest its continuance. The word points to a condition once for all settled. Thus an eternal destruction is equivalent to a lasting destruction, a destruction which is never, or at least not soon, superseded by a restoration. Still it is too much to read into the word absolute extinction of being, annihilation. It is an indefinite term in popular usage. Thus Paul adopts it in the phrase 'the destruction of the flesh' (1 Cor. v. 5), where he evidently does not even mean physical death, but indicates the restraint of carnal appetite through the chastisement involved in bodily sickness. The word is used in a general sense in the earlier Epistle (1 Thess. v. 3).

from the face, &c. : a Hebraism, the face representing the presence and the favour. This destruction involves banishment from God and the loss of His favour. Trouble is regarded as God hiding His face (Pss. x. 11, xiii. 1). To behold God's face is great joy (Ps. xvii. 15).

the Lord: God. Both before and after this verse Christ is indicated, as 'our Lord Jesus Christ' and 'the Lord Jesus Christ.' The O. T. idea of the face of Jehovah appears in this verse.

10 might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed (because

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the glory of his might. This could be read as a Hebraism meaning 'His mighty glory.' But such an idea is not consonant with usage. It would be better, therefore, to understand the phrase to mean 'the glory that belongs to His might,' the splendour radiating out of God's great power and the exercise of it. Those who suffer punishment are cut off from the glad appreciation of this glory of God's great deeds of might in which His true people will share.

10. when he shall come. The previous verse would grammatically lead us to take the pronoun 'he' for God, and the sentence for a description of a theophany. Yet the language is so plainly in line with the Apostle's frequent references to the coming of Jesus Christ that we must so read it here. The transition from the Father to the Son is made quite readily and almost unconsciously here as in other places by means of the indefinite term 'the Lord.'

to be glorified: his splendour to be made manifest.

in his saints: as though the glory were shining through them. The idea seems to be that what Christ does for his saints will be seen to redound to his glory.

saints: godly people, and therefore including all Christians, not merely exceptionally holy Christians, according to the usage of primitive times. The members of a church are all 'called to be saints' (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1), and are even addressed as being already saints in such expressions as 'all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi' (Phil. i. 1), 'the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossæ' (Col. i. 2), 'Salute every saint in Christ Jesus' (Phil. iv. 21). But in addition to Christians probably the word 'saint' here includes the godly of O. T. times, as the following clause about those who believed points specifically to Christians. It is not likely that two clauses so markedly distinct should refer to exactly the same people.

to be marvelled at. The word 'admired' in the A. V. is used in a sense now obsolete, but once familiar, meaning 'wondered at.' Thus in Milton we read—

> 'The undaunted fiend what this might be *admired;*
> *Admired,* not feared' (*Paradise Lost,* ii. 677, 678);

and in Shakespeare—

> 'I perceive, these lords
> At this encounter do so much *admire*
> That they devour their reason' (*Tempest,* Act v. Scene 1).

in, &c.: the same relationship as in the previous clause.

our testimony unto you was believed) in that day. To 11
which end we also pray always for you, that our God
may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every

What Christ does in the case of those who believe in him will be so manifested in the great day as to be a source of wonderment—whether to themselves, or to other beings, such as angels, who might be conceived of as spectators, we are not told.

all them that believed: Christians, those who accepted the apostolic message with faith. The word 'believed' (in the Greek aorist tense, a correction of the A. V. 'believe,' in accordance with all good MSS.) indicates a single act of faith experienced in some past time, and therefore points to the commencement of the Christian life.

because: justifying the previous clause. The Thessalonians had accepted the apostolic message with faith. They are specimens of the people who believed and, as such, instances of the fact that there will be those in whom the marvel of Christ's redeeming power will be exhibited at the great day of revelation and judgement.

our testimony. The substance of the apostolic preaching is frequently called 'testimony,' because the apostles present themselves as witnesses of what they themselves have seen and experienced, especially the great, convincing fact of the resurrection. This is distinctly set forth in the narrative of the selection of a substitute for Judas (Acts i. 21, 22, 'a witness with us of his resurrection'). Paul claims to have been such a witness himself (1 Cor. xv. 8). Thus we have 'the testimony of Christ' (1 Cor. i. 6), meaning witness-bearing to what is known about Christ.

in that day: to be connected with the main sentence, 'to be glorified . . . to be marvelled at,' not with the clause immediately preceding; the R. V. rightly agrees with the A. V. in treating this as a parenthesis. 'That day' is the day of the revelation of Christ just described.

11. To which end: the end referred to in verse 5, 'that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom,' &c., repeated in the sentence here beginning. The letter takes a new turn. The great prospect of the future just described is the motive of the Apostle's prayers to which he now refers.

also: praying in addition to glorying or exulting mentioned in verse 4.

your calling: not that to which you are called, your vocation, but the process of calling you. Schmiedel takes this to be a future call, the last call to participation in final blessedness. Such an interpretation would agree with the summons in the parable of the

desire of goodness and *every* work of faith, with power;
12 that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ten Virgins, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him' (Matt. xxv. 6). But it is not in accordance with Paul's references to the calling of Christians, which invariably stand for the invitation to enter the Christian life (cf. Rom. viii. 30, ix. 24; 1 Cor. vii. 15, 17; Gal. i. 6, 15; 1 Thess. ii. 12, iv. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 9, in all of which cases the verb is in the past tense). Paul uses the word three times in the present tense in a similar connexion (Rom. ix. 11; Gal. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 24); but there he is referring to the custom and way of God, how he is a God who calls with certain ends in view. The Apostle never has the verb in the future, and never suggests any future call for Christians. Mr. Garrod, who agrees with Schmiedel here, cites 1 Thess. ii. 12, 'That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom.' But, though that verse describes a call to what is yet future, it sets the calling itself in the past.

every desire of goodness. The A. V. understood this to refer to God, translating the phrase, 'all the good pleasure of his goodness.' The word that the Revisers render 'desire' usually stands for God's good pleasure (cf. Eph. i. 5, 9; Phil. ii. 13). But there are reasons for rejecting this interpretation: (1) The addition of the Greek word *agathōsunē*, here translated 'goodness,' which Paul never applies to God, but always to men (cf. Rom. xv. 14; Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 9). (2) The following clause, which refers to human experience. Thus we have the two clauses in parallel line—'the desire of goodness' and 'the work of faith,' both being found in the Thessalonians.

every **work of faith.** These like the desires of goodness are to be fulfilled. To fulfil a desire is to realize it, to acquire the thing wished for. It is not so usual to associate the idea of fulfilment with the thought of works. Paul seems to mean the bringing these works to a successful issue.

with power: associated with the word 'fulfil.' God's power is sought to accomplish what is desired, whenever the desire springs from a good motive, and to make effectual every labour that is inspired by faith.

12. the name: the character and fame (cf. Phil. ii. 9, 'the name which is above every name').

glorified in you: in what happens in your life and experience, thus exhibiting the goodness and greatness of Christ, since he is the source of every Christian excellency.

ye in him: Christians sharing in Christ's glory and receiving

Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming 2
of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together

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glory from him. The servants come in for a share of the honour of the master whose livery they wear.

according to the grace, &c.: in harmony with the whole system of grace. That involves many favours, among which may be placed the favours just mentioned.

ii. 1–12. *Mistake about the parousia.* The Apostle begs his readers not to be easily disturbed by what they take to be communications from him to the effect that the day of the Lord is already present. There will be a previous apostasy and the revelation of a mysterious person or power described as 'the man of sin,' who is already opposing God and usurping the place of God. This the Apostle had stated when he was with the Thessalonians. At present there is a restraining influence. When that is removed the lawless one will be slain by Christ, although he is working with the power of Satan and using methods of deceit which entangle unrighteous people who are given over by God to the delusion.

The previous part of the Epistle is all in a way introductory, the salutation being followed by thanksgiving and prayer down to the end of the first chapter. Now the specific purpose of the Epistle appears. It is written in the main in order to counteract mistaken ideas about the Second Coming of Christ.

1. we beseech you. Thanksgiving and prayer are followed by exhortation.

touching: *lit.* 'on behalf of,' not 'by,' as in the A. V. When Paul beseeches or exhorts with such an appeal as '*by* the mercies of God' (Rom. xii. 1), '*through* the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. i. 10), he uses another Greek preposition (*dia*); here the preposition is *hyper*. Thus the Apostle may mean his exhortation to be a preparation for the Second Advent. In order that the great event may be rightly treated he will beg his friends now to take a right view of it. But the simpler meaning given in the R. V. is allowable, and it seems more suitable here. The preposition is taken as indicating the subject discussed, as if we read 'about' or 'concerning.' The meaning is very similar in i. 4 where it is translated 'for' in the clause '*for* your patience and faith,' these graces being the subjects concerning which the Apostle exults.

coming: *lit.* 'presence,' the *parousia*.

our gathering, &c. The reference is to the gathering of Christians to Christ on his appearance at the Second Advent, or revelation of his Presence. This had been fully described in 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, the dead rising first, then the living being

2 unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the

caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and dwell with Him for ever after (cf. v. 10). In Matt. xxiv. 31 Christ says, 'they shall gather together his elect from the four winds.' Probably the early Christians understood these predictions quite literally. In the present day few will be ready to believe in the actual levitation of human bodies and collection of a multitude of living men and women in the vapour that floats half a mile or so above the ground when the barometer has fallen. But if this physical scene is not to be reasonably expected, and the language of Christ on the subject is to be accepted in his customary parabolic sense, as when he spoke of faith removing a fig-tree, the essential idea is unaffected. This is the promise that Christ's people shall meet him and dwell with him for ever.

2. to the end that: a clause pointing forward. The object arrived at is stated in this verse, the means by which that object is to be obtained in the verses that follow. Thus the Apostle writes, 'In order that ye be not quickly troubled ... let no man beguile you,' &c.

from your mind: from your normal state of mind, your settled convictions; not 'in mind' as in the A. V.

nor yet ... troubled. The two words 'shaken' and 'troubled' point to two possible effects of the disturbing influence, the first unsettling the ideas and mental views of the Thessalonians, the second causing them distress. Three possible disturbing influences are contemplated by the Apostle—spirit, word, epistle.

spirit: not necessarily the Holy Spirit as Mr. Garrod and others assert. The reference would be to some inspired utterance, what was called a 'prophecy' in the primitive church. But the indefiniteness of the word 'spirit' standing here boldly by itself points to the wide, general sense of the word. Christians and Jews both believed in spirits influencing men, and no doubt the Thessalonians were familiar with the Greek notion of *demons*. Even if the influence were attributed by the church to the Spirit of God, when it was seen to be erroneous or hurtful in character Paul would ascribe it to some mischievous spirit (cf. 'a lying spirit,' 1 Kings xxii. 23). He leaves the nature and character of the source open by simply saying 'spirit,' a word which may be taken here generically.

word: a vocal utterance, as distinguished from the 'epistle,' introduced as a third possibility. This may be taken separately, or joined to the clause that follows. In the latter case, the word as well as the epistle would be ascribed to the Apostle, and here

the idea would be that some officious person may have brought a report of what he asserted Paul had said and thereby disturbed the minds of the Thessalonians. This seems the probable meaning, since after the reference to a prophetic message received by inspiration it is difficult to think what word—clearly distinguished from such a message—could have weight enough to upset the church unless it were attached to apostolic authority. It is conceivable that Paul may have intended to refer to some traditional saying of Christ, or perhaps to some utterance of one of the older apostles. But in that case it is probable that he would have described the source of the word as he proceeds to describe the reputed source of the Epistle.

epistle as from us. Is Paul referring (1) to 1 Thessalonians, or (2) to a known forged epistle, or (3) to the possibility of some epistle reporting ideas ascribed to Paul having been received at Thessalonica? In favour of (1) it has been remarked that the earlier Epistle refers to Christ coming suddenly 'as a thief in the night' (1 Thess. v. 2). Moreover it seems highly improbable that anybody would be forging a letter in the Apostle's name at this early date. Such a letter as is here suggested would not help the cause of the Judaizers, the only people in the early church whom we know to be meddlers in the Apostle's work. That there were men who wished so strongly to make out that Paul taught the immediate advent of Christ that they forged a letter in his name with that object in view is a conception of the history wholly unsupported by evidence from any other quarter, and in itself perplexing, indeed inexplicable. On the other hand, the phrase before us cannot be explained if the Apostle is only referring to his previous Epistle. The word 'as' is an insuperable difficulty to that view. Why should Paul write 'an epistle *as* from us' if he meant his own Epistle? Such language must have suggested a different meaning to the readers. And even apart from the word 'as' the phrase is not what one would expect. We know how Paul did refer to previous letters, e. g. in writing to the Corinthians he says with reference to an earlier letter, 'I wrote unto you in my epistle' (1 Cor. v. 9), a perfectly clear, intelligible phrase, quite different from what we have here. Nevertheless there is some difficulty in accepting (2)—the notion of a known forged epistle. Surely the Apostle would not have joined this to a prophetic utterance and a reported saying (represented by 'spirit' and 'word') as though all three means of influence were in some respects similar. That is too mild a treatment for a forgery. We should have looked for indignant denunciation of the impudent crime. Accordingly we come to (3)—the idea that the Apostle imagines that some letter purporting to convey his teaching may have reached the Thessalonians. The mention of three possible influences implies that Paul does not know which of them has been the cause of the present trouble

3 Lord is *now* present; let no man beguile you in any wise: for *it will not be*, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,

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at Thessalonica. He merely surmises that it may have been some such influence as he specifies. Schmiedel points out that the use of the same preposition (*dia*) in all three cases and before the pronoun 'us' does not suit the supposition that the authorship of the letter was ascribed to Paul. To preserve the identity of phrase we might read 'either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle, as by us.' This might mean that the Thessalonians should not be affected by a prophecy, a word of report, or a letter, as they would be affected by the Apostle himself.

now **present**: more accurate than the expression of the A.V. 'at hand.'

3. let no man beguile you, &c. It has been said that this Epistle shews a change of mind in the Apostle compared with his views in the earlier letter. But he does not contradict himself. In 1 Thessalonians he had spoken of the sudden coming of Christ, not of its being immediate. Still the tone of the earlier Epistle suggested the nearness of the advent, which the later Epistle explicitly denies. We should rather say that there is a development of thought. The Apostle had declared the suddenness without going further; now he advances to fuller details. It is likely that the subject had occupied his thoughts in the interval with the result that he had reached the definite conclusions here stated.

the falling away. The definite article, appearing in the R.V., points to some expected apostasy of which Paul knew the Thessalonians had heard. Dr. Denney refers the phrase to the Jews because there is no mention of the Christians throughout the passage, treating it as their rejection of Christ. But that was already an accomplished fact. Most commentators take it for a future Christian defection from the faith. The expectation of this might be based on our Lord's prediction that many shall be led astray by false prophets and that 'the love of the many shall wax cold' (Matt. xxiv. 12).

the man of sin: a Hebraism meaning 'the sinful man.' Cf. 'man of Belial' (1 Sam. xxv. 25). The article indicates either (1) 'the pre-eminently sinful man,' or (2) some known person. Verse 5 suggests the latter interpretation.

sin. The margin of the R.V. substitutes 'lawlessness,' following the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. and other good authorities, probably the correct reading. This word occurs later, at verse 7. Thus 'the mystery of lawlessness' must be identified with 'the man of lawlessness.'

he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all 4
that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he
sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.

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revealed: implying that he already exists, and may even be present; but he is hidden from view, or his true nature and character are not yet known. The coming revelation, i. e. the manifestation and declaration of the man of iniquity, corresponds to the revelation of Christ previously mentioned (i. 7), which it is to precede.

the son of perdition: a Hebraism meaning 'the lost and ruined person, one who is going to perdition.' The expression was applied by Christ to Judas Iscariot in John xvii. 12. Cf. 'son of death' (2 Sam. xii. 5, marg.), for one doomed to die.

4. he that opposeth: the negative attitude indicated first.

exalteth himself. Cf. Dan. xi. 36, 'And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods'; a passage which with its context seems to have been in the Apostle's mind. Thus Daniel is at the root of Paul's apocalypse, as he is at the root of nearly every other apocalypse. In Daniel the reference is to Antiochus Epiphanes, the insolent tyrant who persecuted the Jews and insulted their religion.

all that is called God: corresponding to 'every god' in the Daniel passage just cited. This must mean an opposition to religion, not merely to Christianity.

he sitteth. The words 'as God' in the A. V. disappear from the text in the R. V., not being found in the best MSS. and versions.

the temple of God. The word for temple (*naos*) is that which represents the inner shrine, with the Jews the Holy Place, not the whole temple enclosure (called *hieron*). Three possible applications of the phrase in this place have been suggested: (1) The Jews' temple at Jerusalem; (2) the Christian church; (3) a pagan centre of worship. (3) is suggested in support of the view that 'the man of iniquity' is the Roman emperor assuming to be a god and claiming worship. But in that case would Paul write '*the* temple,' and add the clause 'of God'? (2) has been supported by an appeal to Paul's conception of the church, as when he writes, 'Ye are a temple of God' (1 Cor. iii. 16). But the notion of the man of lawlessness *sitting* in this temple is somewhat incongruous. We seem therefore to be driven back to (1), the view taken by Irenæus in the 2nd century (*Hær.* v. 30. 4), an interpretation which is adopted by those who regard the mysterious personage to represent the Jews in their anti-Christian attitude. It is possible, however, that the phrase may be

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told
6 you these things? And now ye know that which restrain-
eth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season.

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used in a wide allegorical sense, being, as Mr. Garrod suggests, 'a forcible method of shewing that the man of sin will by his own deliberate action usurp the dignity and prerogative of God.' About 15 years before this (A. D. 40) the Emperor Caligula had ordered his statue to be set up in the temple at Jerusalem; he died before his command was executed (Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. 8).

setting himself forth as God. This well describes the action of the Roman emperors in accepting and even demanding Divine honours.

5. If this verse is to be taken literally Paul is not giving the Thessalonians any fresh information. Probably, however, he means that he had told them generally about these things; now he is entering more into detail. Possibly the division here indicates that, while hitherto he has recapitulated his personal teaching, what follows contains more fresh instruction. This verse will account in part for the vagueness of the Apostle's language. He assumes that his readers will understand the allusion which in writing he couches in vague terms, perhaps for fear of the letter falling into the hands of enemies. But this very fact of the mutual understanding between writer and readers must make us cautious with our attempts at explanations and lead us not to be surprised if the riddle may seem to us insoluble. We have not the key to the cypher with which the Thessalonians had been supplied.

6. ye know. Again the reference is to what had passed between the Apostle and the Thessalonians during his stay in their city.

that which restraineth: a neuter form in the Greek, indicating any restraining influence, in the most indefinite way. In the next verse Paul writes of 'one that restraineth,' and thus indicates that the restraining influence is personal. He uses the same verb in both cases, a fact that was obscured in the A. V. by rendering the word 'withholdeth' in verse 6 and 'letteth' in verse 7. This influence or person is restraining the man of lawlessness so that as yet he cannot work his will.

that he may be revealed: i. e. the man of lawlessness, who is not yet seen because repressed by the restraining power. This mysterious being will be revealed when the restraining influence is removed.

his own season: the time of the man of lawlessness, when he will have free range and scope to work his evil will. The

For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only 7
there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of

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idea is that some such season is fixed in the order and arrangement of things, so that when it arrives the outbreak will appear. It is one of the 'times and seasons' referred to in 1 Thess. v. 1. The date of it cannot be given; the Apostle does not know that. Even Jesus declared that his knowledge did not extend to a definite date in the future (cf. Mark xiii. 32). Prophecy foreshadows the future in indicating the development of principles and their conditional or inevitable consequences, but it does not pre-date the almanack and fill in the future at fixed periods. It predicts what is to occur in time; it does not define and limit time itself.

7. mystery. This word is always used in the N. T. for what has been hidden, but is subsequently revealed; never for that which cannot be understood, in our modern sense of the term. Thus Paul writes, 'Behold, I tell you a mystery' (1 Cor. xv. 51), and then proceeds to make a declaration about the resurrection, declaring what had previously been hidden. A mystery is a revelation. Here the word applies to the restrained power of wickedness, still hidden, but ultimately to be revealed. In view of that coming revelation, and not because it is unintelligible, in our sense of the word 'mysterious,' it is called a mystery. Thus this is another name for the man of lawlessness, or perhaps it represents his power and his doings, which of course will be made evident when he is unmasked.

doth already work. Though the revelation, the unmasking and manifestation, is future, this evil power is even now at work, undiscovered and unrecognized, or at all events not seen in its naked wickedness.

one that restraineth: a more definite description of the restraining influence mentioned in the previous verse, now seen to be personal. The word 'let' in the A. V. is there used in an an old English sense now obsolete, as equivalent to 'hinder' or 'restrain.' Thus we have it in Shakespeare:—

'I'll make a ghost of him that *lets* me' (*Hamlet*, Act i. Sc. 4);

and in Bacon: 'But there must be no alleys with hedges . . . for *letting* your prospect upon this fair hedge from the green' (*Essay*, lxvi).

There is some difficulty in the construction of the whole sentence. The Revisers make good sense by inserting the words '*there is*' before 'one that restraineth,' their italics shewing that these words are not in the original. But though the verb 'to be'

8 the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his

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must often be supplied when it can serve as a simple copula, here it appears as the predicate and even as the most emphatic word in the sentence, which is thus made to assert the existence of the lawless one. If Paul had meant that, it is probable that he would have used the word himself. This difficulty is avoided in the A. V., but by supplying other words not in the Greek, viz. 'only he who now letteth, *will let*,' &c.—'will let' being added by the translators. Any such intrusion of foreign elements is escaped by a third rendering, that suggested in the margin of the R. V., viz. 'only until he that now restraineth be taken,' &c., i. e. the mystery of lawlessness is already working in an underground fashion, under restraint. But this malignant activity is only to continue till the restraining influence is removed; for no sooner will that happen than the wicked one being revealed, swift destruction will fall upon him, as the next verse declares.

8. And then: when the restraining power is removed.

revealed: the unveiling, or unmasking mentioned in verse 3.

the lawless one: evidently the same as 'the man of lawlessness' (verse 3). In the Greek the same root word is used in the three places where different words obscure the meaning in the A. V.:—

The A. V.	The Greek.
1. Man of sin.	1. Man of lawlessness (correct text).
2. Mystery of iniquity.	2. Mystery of lawlessness.
3. That lawless.	3. Lawless one.

the Lord Jesus. The A. V. has only 'the Lord.' The R. V. adds 'Jesus' on important documentary authority, though the good MSS. are divided as to the question of retaining or omitting the word. The Revisers have followed Tischendorf and other critics of the text in inserting it. Thus, while the ambiguity of the word 'Lord' might have left us in doubt whether God or Christ were intended, the admission of this correction settles the point. It is quite in accordance with N. T. teaching, and with Paul's ideas in particular, that the coming of Christ should be associated with wrath and vengeance. John the Baptist says, 'the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire' (Matt. iii. 12); Jesus refers to the punishment he will inflict in his parables of judgement (Matt. xxiv. 51, xxv. 30, 46); and Paul in this very Epistle describes him as coming 'with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance,' &c. (i. 7, 8).

slay: in the best MSS. and therefore substituted for 'consume' (A. V.).

mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; *even he*, whose coming is according to the 9
working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them 10
that are perishing; because they received not the love

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with the breath of his mouth. The Greek word (*pneuma*) rendered 'breath' here in the R. V. is that which usually stands for 'spirit' (as in the A. V. here). But the meaning 'breath' best suits the context, and the whole phrase seems to be an echo of Isa. xi. 4, 'with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked,' where the same Greek word occurs, and plainly means 'breath.' The same expression occurs in Ps. xxxiii. 6, 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.' The Apostle may be referring to a word of command for the destruction of 'the lawless one,' and the analogy of the passage in the Psalms would suggest that idea. On the other hand, the passage from Isaiah, and the subsequent description of the destruction to be brought about by the 'manifestation of his coming,' or presence, point to a metaphorical idea of more direct influence, as though the very breathing of Christ on the great enemy would be sufficient to slay him.

manifestation: not 'brightness' as in the A. V. The Greek word (*epiphaneia*) is the original of our word 'Epiphany.'

9. whose coming. The same word (*parousia*) is here used for the 'coming' or 'presence' of the lawless one that is used for the 'coming' or 'presence' of Christ in other parts of the Epistle.

according to the working of Satan: i. e. he acts as Satan would act, in agreement with Satan's ways.

power . . . signs . . . wonders: the three N. T. words for what we call miracles. Thus we have 'he could there do no *mighty work*' (Mark vi. 5, the Greek word *dunamis*, rendered 'mighty work,' being the same that is here translated 'power'); 'Except ye see *signs* and *wonders*, ye will in no wise believe' (John iv. 48). But here, since the word 'power' is in the singular while the other two words are in the plural, the suggestion is that a Satanic power is causing the signs and wonders.

lying: not mere conjuror's illusions, but real miracles that mislead.

10. deceit of unrighteousness: a Hebraism, meaning 'wicked deceit.'

them that are perishing: as contrasted with those who are being saved, the people on the broad road that leads to destruction.

because they received not, &c.: indicating that the perishing

11 of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they
12 should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

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of these people is due to their own fault in refusing to cherish love for the truth. They would have been saved if they had done so.

the love of the truth. This may mean either (1) the love of truth in general, or (2) the love of the specific truth contained in the teaching of Christ and the apostles, the truths of the Christian faith. The latter meaning is most in accordance with Paul's use of the word, e. g. 'who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?' (Gal. v. 7), where the context shews that 'the truth' stands for the Christian teaching as opposed to Judaism (cf. 2 Cor. iv. 2, xiii. 8). Nevertheless perhaps the first meaning—the love of truth in general—should be preferred here because (*a*) it is contrasted with belief in a lie (verse 11), and (*b*) it seems to be referred to later when we read of belief of the truth (verse 13, see note). The idea is not that these people are lost because they have never heard of this truth of the gospel, as is the case with the heathen world, nor because they are unable to understand it or believe in it, but because they do not love truth and therefore come to reject the Christian message. Thus the cause of their ruin is moral, not intellectual.

11. for this cause: i. e. because they shewed this disposition of aversion to the truth.

God sendeth them, &c. Two points must be noted in regard to this assertion: (1) The state of confusion with erroneous ideas is distinctly described as coming from God; (2) this is so because the people who are afflicted with it have first of all deliberately shut themselves out from sympathy with the Christian truth. We can understand this better if we translate it into terms of natural law, since that is what we can more immediately perceive, while at the same time we regard it as the expression of the Divine will. Those people who harden themselves against Christian truth will suffer the penalty of their perverse conduct by becoming the victims of delusion. The specific delusion here suggested is faith in the evil power called 'the man of lawlessness' and a credulous acceptance of his 'lying wonders.'

12. judged: not 'damned,' as in the A. V.; the word only describes the process of judgement. Still in the N. T. it is generally used where an adverse judgement, a condemnation, is implied. Plainly that is so here.

who believed not the truth. The unbelievers are to be

condemned, but not simply for unbelief; the cause of that unbelief has been clearly indicated already, and it is again described in the clause that follows, as in itself morally culpable. We are not to infer from this that all unbelief flows from a morally culpable source. The Apostle is only referring to the doom of the victims of the delusion introduced by 'the man of lawlessness.'

the truth. The word truth must be taken generally throughout the passage for that which is true. Still the Apostle has the message of the gospel in mind, and to the general sense of the word truth must be added here the mental associations of the special Christian truth.

pleasure in unrighteousness: the correlative of not receiving the love of the truth; a further confirmation of the idea that the unbelief and the state of delusion in question spring from culpably moral sources. The phrases of this sentence are distinctly balanced: those 'who believed not the truth' are the people who 'had pleasure in unrighteousness.'

NOTE.—This is one of the most perplexing passages in the N. T. A volume might be written on the history of the views that have been advocated concerning it. The following are the most conspicuous, turning chiefly on the identification of 'the man of sin.' (1) Some personage in history prophetically indicated—Mahomet, according to the Greek church; the Pope, according to the Preface of the A. V. (in 1611); Napoleon; modern Atheism, &c. (2) Some contemporary personage, perhaps Caligula, if Paul was referring to the mad emperor's attempt to thrust his image into the temple at Jerusalem; or Nero, but if so with a later date for the Epistle than allows it to be written by Paul. (3) The persecuting Jewish authorities personified as one malignant enemy. This view is largely advocated in the present day. The Jews had been Paul's great opponents at Thessalonica and they were the instigators of the persecution of the Christians in that city. That some contemporary power or person is intended seems clear from the use of the present tense 'opposeth,' 'exalteth,' 'sitteth,' 'doth already work'; the same applies to the restraining influence which 'now letteth.' Thus interpretations of the first kind must be excluded, as indeed they should be excluded in any case, because it is a mistaken view of prophecy to regard it as 'history written before the event,' with definite references to distinct human personages. Further, in favour of the third view we have the reference to the temple of God. This would seem to be the Jerusalem temple, the only temple Paul, a Jew, could so describe; and the Jewish authorities had possession of it. The language is suspiciously strong here, and the phrase 'setting himself forth as God' which would well fit a Roman emperor could not be applied literally to the Jews. Still in a figurative sense Paul might use it for the dogmatic assumption of the Jews to judge and

condemn all who differed from them. We can hardly think that he would write so strongly in denunciation of a Roman emperor, because everywhere else he treats the imperial government with respect and speaks well of it. Then if the 'man of sin' represents the Jewish authorities, the 'one that restraineth' will be easily interpreted as the Roman government. Again and again Paul was protected by the civil power from the attacks of the Jewish mob, and he saw in this government the authority which held back the malignity of persecuting Jews. Here he foresees a time when that restraint will be removed. It did not happen in his own lifetime, but it came about in the revolt of Bar Cochbar, in the reign of Hadrian, whose temporary overthrow of the Roman government in Palestine resulted in a persecution of the Christians of that district. That something of the kind must happen Paul felt sure. Nevertheless this interpretation is not wholly satisfactory. The reference to miracles wrought by the power of Satan is obscure. Besides, the Apostle's language would suit one definite person better than the personification of the Jewish authorities. The origin of the phraseology is to be found in the Book of Daniel; and there the opponent is a person, Antiochus Epiphanes. Possibly the Apostle is thinking of some great enemy of Christianity whom he expects to appear, corresponding to the 'Antichrist' of John and later writers, if 'Antichrist' is indeed one person. But there is doubt on that point, for John seems to use the title 'Antichrist' generically for any violent opposers of Christ (cf. 1 John ii. 18, 22, iv. 3). The use of the present tense, and in particular the expression about sitting in the temple, do not well suit the conception of a purely ideal apocalyptic figure. Some more distinct idea, recognizable by the Thessalonians at the time, seems to be indicated. On the whole, therefore, the third interpretation given above seems to be the most probable, though there is considerable doubt on the question. According to this view the passage would be explained as follows :—Do not be deceived. Christ will not come yet. First there will be a falling away of some of the Christians; then the full malignity of the Jewish power will be made manifest. It is very haughty and insolent now, claiming the temple as its own and assuming the authority of God; but for the present the Roman government restrains it. When that restraining influence is removed it will break out with full violence. But then Christ will come and destroy it.

If it is asked, Why did not the Apostle write more plainly? the answer must be that he adopted the enigmatic symbolism of the apocalyptic style for the same reason that led other apocalyptic writers to use it, namely, because more open language was dangerous. The Christians at Thessalonica were surrounded by Jewish enemies, and perhaps watched by Jewish spies. While he was with them Paul had said enough to make his

But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for 13
you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose

meaning when writing this letter clear—for he here refers to that earlier teaching. As we have not the key we must be content to leave the passage in some obscurity. After all, though of intense interest to the Thessalonians, it is not of much importance for us in the present day, since it refers to events which now lie far back in the primitive history of the church, rather than to those eternal principles which we prize as the treasures of inspired Scripture.

ii. 13-17. *Further thanksgiving and exhortation.* Returning to a phrase employed in the earlier part of the Epistle (i. 3), the Apostle again declares that he must thank God for choosing the Thessalonians and calling them by means of the gospel. He exhorts them to steadfastness in accordance with the truths they have received from him, and prays that Christ and God may cheer and establish them.

13. we: an emphatic word in the Greek text, implying a contrast with others previously mentioned. The Greek pronoun was not given in the parallel passage (i. 3) as it was not usual to write it except for emphasis, and this fact makes the insertion of it here the more significant. We should rather have expected the emphasis to have been laid on the word 'you,' contrasting the redeemed Thessalonians with the abandoned persons just described. But we must understand Paul to mean that as to himself and his companion missionaries, for their part, they have good grounds for thankfulness, while the miserable people of whom he has been writing can have no such reasons for congratulating themselves.

beloved of the Lord: an additional description, not found in the earlier passage (i. 3), contrasting the Thessalonians with the unhappy people on whom God 'sendeth an error,' though it is to be observed that the difference is not arbitrary, since if those reprobates seem to be hardly dealt with by God it is as the consequence of their own fault in refusing to entertain the love of the truth—'And *for this cause* God sendeth them a working of error' (verse 11). Conversely we must not set down God's love to the Thessalonian Christians as a mark of partiality. That too must have had its selective *cause*.

chose. This choice comes previous to the salvation and faith of the Thessalonians in which it issues. Apart from a mysterious theological conception of 'election' there is a plain historical fact which illustrates this idea. The gospel was preached effectually in Thessalonica, as it was not yet preached in many other places, and that was a consequence of the providential ordering of events and also of the special guidance of the missionaries by the Spirit of

you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of
14 the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called

God. Paul may be alluding to these obvious facts. Still he goes behind them to a previous Divine purpose and action. A gloss which has crept into some of the MSS., including the great Vatican MS., probably from the margin, though most critics do not accept it as part of the original text, may serve as an admirable explanation. This consists of the addition of the words 'as firstfruits.' In point of fact that is what the Divine choice of the Thessalonians amounted to. They were chosen thus early in the preaching of the gospel, but not to the exclusion of other believers who would come in later, only as the firstfruits of a large harvest.

from the beginning: i. e. the beginning of all things, when God laid out His plans for the ordering of human affairs. Thus Christ speaks of 'the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' (Matt. xxv. 34) and Paul writes, 'He chose us in him before the foundation of the world' (Eph. i. 4). For the phrase cf. Gen. i. 1; Prov. viii. 22; John i. 1.

unto salvation: as the end to be attained, not yet realized (cf. Rom. xiii. 11).

in: or 'by means of,' a common Hebraism.

sanctification. See note on 1 Thess. iv. 3.

of the Spirit. This might mean (1) the human spirit, with reference to the consecrating and purifying of the spirits of Christians, as implied by the A. V. 'spirit.' But (2) probably the R. V. is correct in printing the word 'Spirit' with a capital 'S' to suggest the Holy Spirit. It is usual to refer to sanctification as brought about by the Spirit of God. In 1 Pet. i. 2 we have this phrase 'in sanctification of the Spirit' associated with references to God the Father and Jesus Christ, making it clear that there the word Spirit stands for the Holy Spirit.

the truth. There is no article before the word 'truth' in the Greek, which shews that Paul does not mean *the* specific truth of the gospel, but truth generally. We have here a manifest contrast between the Christians who have 'belief of the truth' and the deceived persons referred to in the previous paragraph who are subject to 'a working of error, that they should *believe a lie*' (cf. notes on verses 10 and 12).

14. whereunto: to the salvation just referred to.

called: subsequently to the choosing mentioned in the previous verse. Cf. 'whom he foreordained, them he also called' (Rom. viii. 30). This call came in the preaching of the gospel by Paul and his companions. There is no hint of any other call, any mysterious call in the interior life.

you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand fast, 15 and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our 16

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our gospel: the gospel we preached.

to the obtaining, &c.: the end and purpose of the call, as salvation is the end and purpose of the choosing. Christians are chosen to be saved and called to share in the glory of Christ.

the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ: the splendour and honour which belong to Christ now that he is exalted to the right hand of God. Christians are called to participate in this glory. Cf. 'enter thou into the joy of thy lord' (Matt. xxv. 21), where the faithful servant's reward is to be a sharing in his Master's joy.

15. So then: a strong phrase in the Greek, and a favourite one with Paul. The greatness of the privileges just enumerated is a reason for steadfastness, in spite of the discouragement of present trials.

stand fast. The Greek is simply 'stand,' meaning 'do not be moved by the flood of adverse influences,' 'hold your ground in spite of all opposition.'

traditions: not of course ancient sayings handed down from one to another, in our modern sense of the word 'tradition,' but simply 'what has been conveyed to you.' This would consist of the substance of the gospel truths (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 2). A verbal form of the same term is used in Paul's words introducing his account of the Lord's Supper: 'I received of the Lord that which also I *delivered* unto you' (1 Cor. xi. 23). Mr. Garrod refers the 'traditions' especially to teaching about the Second Advent, but it is better to take the word more comprehensively for all the apostolic teaching of the Thessalonians.

taught. There had been more than preaching, a general proclamation of the gospel. The missionaries had taken pains to instruct their converts in the truths of the faith.

by word: oral teaching when Paul and his companions were at Thessalonica.

by epistle: a letter written to the Thessalonians. Probably the reference is to our previous Epistle.

16. himself. This word holds the most emphatic position in the Greek text. Thus it lays special stress on the appeal to Christ himself to help his people. This and the following verses are closely parallel to 1 Thess. iii. 11–13; but there the words run 'Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus,' &c.,

Father which loved us and gave us eternal comfort
17 and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and
stablish them in every good work and word.

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and the word 'himself' is in the same emphatic position as here, and yet it refers to God the Father. It cannot be that the changed application of the emphasis is meant to mark a contrast between God and Christ, that in the First Epistle God Himself more especially, and in the Second Christ himself more especially, are invoked. A comparison between the two passages shews that, whether Christ or God be thus emphatically named, the thought is of heavenly influences coming directly down; no mere human or angelic ministry would suffice. Still there must be a reason for the change of order, especially as it is contrary to the custom of the Apostle, who generally writes the name of Christ after that of God when he introduces both names. Probably the previous reference to the coming of Christ and his glory led the Apostle to name Christ first here. He follows a similar order in the benediction at the end of 2 Corinthians, a benediction that has been adopted by the churches in preference to all other Scripture forms of blessing: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,' &c. (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

which: i. e. God our Father. The relative pronoun is in the singular, and therefore does not stand for both Christ and God our Father.

loved: the ground of all that follows.

us: the Apostle now including himself with his readers.

gave. The verb is in the aorist tense, referring to a specific act in the past. This must be the gift of grace in the very institution of the gospel by the sending of Christ with all its consequent blessings. That was done once for all; the gift was then made, though the individual reception of it is a matter of time and is repeated again and again.

eternal comfort: better than 'everlasting consolation' as in the A. V., for the word rendered 'comfort' stands for general cheering and encouragement, and not only the relief of sorrow (cf. note on 1 Thess. iii. 2).

good. Grimm gives this passage as an instance of the Greek word (*agathos*) rendered 'good,' meaning 'pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy.' Cf. Titus ii. 13, 'the blessed hope.'

through grace: to be connected with the verb 'gave.' It was by His grace that God gave these rich gifts.

17. comfort. Cf. note on 1 Thess. iii. 2.

hearts: the inner life generally, thought, feeling, and will, according to the Hebrew idiom.

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the 3
Lord may run and be glorified, even as also *it is* with you;
and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and 2
evil men; for all have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, 3

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iii. 1-5. *Prayer and confidence.* The Apostle requests the prayers of his readers for the progress of his missionary work and his deliverance from vexatious opponents. The Lord being faithful will establish and preserve them. Paul is confident that the Thessalonians will obey his directions; he prays that they may love God, and patiently wait for Christ.

1. Finally. See note on 1 Thess. iv. 1.

pray for us. Cf. 1 Thess. v. 25.

the word of the Lord. See note on 1 Thess. i. 8.

the Lord: Jesus Christ. The title is often expressly given to Jesus Christ where he is named in these Epistles (e. g. 1 Thess. i. 1, 3, ii. 15, 19, iii. 11, 13, iv. 1, 2, v. 9, 23, 28; 2 Thess. i. 1, 2, 7, 8, 12, ii. 1, 8, 16, iii. 6, 12, 18), and sometimes evidently intended to apply to him where it stands alone, as where we read of being 'imitators . . . of the Lord' (1 Thess. i. 6), 'the coming of the Lord' (iv. 15). On the other hand, it is not certainly applied to God the Father anywhere in these Epistles.

run: make rapid progress by means of swift and unhindered evangelizing (cf. Ps. cxlvii. 15).

be glorified: by proving its power and grace; cf. 'they were glad, and glorified the word of God' (Acts xiii. 48).

2. unreasonable and evil men. If this Epistle were written later, in the period when the Epistle to the Galatians was written, we might take the people here referred to for the Judaizing Christians who sheltered under the name of James, and became the jealous opponents of Paul's liberalism. But there is no indication that these men were molesting the Apostle in Greece so early as this. Probably he means the Jews who did not accept Christianity at all. Both in Macedonia and at Corinth the most bitter antagonism came from Jews. Paul might call Jewish Christians 'unreasonable men,' but he would not describe them as also 'evil men.'

all have not faith. This sentence might favour the idea that the men just referred to were Jewish Christians lacking in faith, if it had not been excluded on other grounds; for it would seem superfluous to say that 'all' have not what as yet is possessed by but a small minority. Therefore Mr. Garrod suggests that the word 'all' here does not apply to the world at large, but means 'all the Jews'; that, however, is scarcely possible since the Jews have not been named. The phrase is a reminder

who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil *one*.
4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that
ye both do and will do the things which we command.
5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,
and into the patience of Christ.

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that, however successful the gospel may be at certain places, there are still those who do not accept it.

faith. The margin of the R. V. has 'the faith' which would mean 'the Christian religion,' but the term is not used in this sense so early. It must mean 'faith' as a subjective condition, i. e. faith in Christ.

3. the Lord. See note on verse 1.

faithful. In the Greek this word comes immediately after the word 'faith,' and thus a sharp antithesis is marked. All men have not faith. But there is faithfulness in Christ.

the evil one. The Revisers have given this expression in place of the abstract word 'evil' in the A. V., just as they have done with the same Greek form in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 13). This Greek term admits of either meaning according as it is taken as a neuter or as a masculine. In favour of the Revisers' correction we have (1) the more frequent use of the word in the masculine to indicate Satan. Cf. 'the fiery darts of the evil one' (Eph. vi. 16); 'ye have overcome the evil one' (1 John ii. 13, 14); 'Cain was of the evil one' (iii. 12); 'the evil one toucheth him not' (v. 18); 'the whole world lieth in the evil one' (verse 19). (2) The analogy of the Lord's Prayer, the similarity of phrase here suggesting that perhaps the Apostle had that prayer in mind. (3) The contrast between the Lord as a person who protects and Satan as a person who would hurt. In his previous Epistle the Apostle had written of Satan acting as a hindrance (1 Thess. ii. 18). The suggestion that 'the evil one' is 'the man of sin' cannot be sustained, seeing that the phrase is well known elsewhere as a name of Satan. Paul's thought here reminds us of his words in the previous Epistle, 'lest by any means the tempter had tempted you' (1 Thess. iii. 5).

4. confidence in the Lord: that Christ will lead the Thessalonians to carry out the precepts of Christian teaching.

5. the Lord. See note on verse 1.

hearts: Hebraism for the whole inner life of thought, emotion, and will.

the love of God. This may mean either (1) God's love to us, or (2) our love to God. Probably the latter is the meaning here, because it suits the context best. (*a*) It is more natural to think of our hearts being so directed that we come to love God than that they should be directed into God's love for us. (*b*) The

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our 6
Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from
every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the

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analogy of the companion phrase 'the patience of Christ' leads to the conclusion that both should be taken subjectively, for conditions of our minds.

the patience of Christ. If 'the love of God' meant the love that is in God's heart, we should be compelled to understand 'the patience of Christ' to be the grace of patience exercised by Christ. In itself that would seem to be the natural signification of the phrase, just as we have 'the patience of Job' (Jas. v. 11). With this sense the passage would consist of a prayer that God would lead us to imitate the patience revealed in the example of Christ when he was cruelly treated. On the other hand, this thought has nothing elsewhere in the Epistle to introduce it. The Apostle has not been writing about the patient behaviour of Jesus when he was on earth. But the dominant theme of both Epistles is the Second Coming of Christ. This, however, was expected by the Thessalonians to be seen immediately, and the consequence was considerable disarrangement of their life and conduct. They should learn patience in waiting for the great consummation. The chief purpose of our Epistle is to inculcate patience with that end in view. For this reason probably patience with regard to Christ and his coming is the idea intended by the expression.

iii. 6–15. *Admonition against disorderly conduct.* The Thessalonians are solemnly commanded to withdraw from disorderly Christians and follow the example of Paul who supported himself when among them by his own manual labour. If a man declines to work he is not to be allowed to live on the funds of the church. Busybodies are exhorted to earn their own living, and that quietly. Any one who will not obey what the Apostle commands in this Epistle is to be shunned, yet admonished in a brotherly way.

6. in the name of: by the authority of, as an ambassador speaks in his sovereign's name and so with his sovereign's authority.

withdraw yourselves: a more kindly and seemly idea than the notion of expelling a faulty member or suspending his membership.

walketh disorderly. The negative character of this conduct is indicated by the words immediately following; it consists in divergence from the apostolic precepts. Its positive features may be learnt from the subsequent directions, which imply that there were people in the church at Thessalonica who neglected their daily work, depending for their support on the charity of their fellow members. These idlers went about making mischief by

7 tradition which they received of us. For yourselves
know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not
8 ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat
bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labour and
travail, working night and day, that we might not burden

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interfering in other people's affairs. The expectation of the immediate return of Christ was disarranging the daily course of life and duty. Warning against this same disorderly conduct had been given in the previous Epistle (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 11). Nevertheless the evil had grown worse during the interval between the two Epistles, for while in the first letter Paul simply exhorts the church in one brief sentence not to fall into such conduct, here he specifically mentions persons who are behaving in the way he has condemned and devotes a whole paragraph to a discussion of the mischievous state of affairs. The very enthusiasm that the new religion has introduced has led some people to neglect the prosaic affairs of daily work, and the new spirit of brotherhood has been imposed upon by idlers who are glad to avail themselves of the generosity of their fellow members so as to escape the necessity of working for their own living.

tradition. See note on ii. 15.

they. This pronoun is adopted by the textual critics as required by the best MS. authority. There are no ancient MSS. in support of the reading 'he' which stands in the A. V., evidently as a correction of the text, since in strict grammar it is more suitable than the plural. Some very ancient MSS. (including the great Vatican codex B) have 'ye,' which therefore must be allowed as a possible alternative.

7. Cf. 1 Thess. ii. 10.

8. labour: hard work.

travail: toil in face of difficulties.

working: tent-making (cf. Acts xviii. 3).

night and day. If the Apostle was supporting himself by manual labour while at the same time he was preaching the gospel, founding the church, and training his converts, he must have been very fully occupied. We may suppose that after meeting the church in the early morning, and conversing with strangers and preaching the gospel during the daytime, he would have to sit long into the night sewing the harsh goat-hair cloth of which tents were made. It is said that the craft of tent-making was but poorly paid. The Apostle laboured so much in this way that he had the industrial worker's hands with their marks of toil, as he seems to have implied when, perhaps holding them out before his hearers, he said to the Ephesian elders,

any of you: not because we have not the right, but to 9
make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should
imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we 10
commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him
eat. For we hear of some that walk among you dis- 11
orderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. Now 12
them that are such we command and exhort in the

'Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me' (Acts xx. 34). The last clause of this quotation shews that the Apostle supported, or helped to support, his fellow missionaries.

that we might not burden any of you: the motive for undertaking this manual work. The Apostle was not unwilling to accept the means of support when this was freely given him. The Philippians sent him contributions to Thessalonica (Phil. iv. 16), Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 9), and Rome (Phil. iv. 14).

9. Paul recognized the right of the Christian teacher to be maintained by those who enjoy the benefit of his instructions (cf. 1 Thess. ii. 6; 1 Cor. ix. 3–12). The Apostle had this right; but he did not use it, in order as he says, 'that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ' (verse 12). The right was recognized by Christ (Matt. x. 9, 10).

an ensample: in industry and independence.

imitate us: in this particular of working for your own living.

10. even when we were with you: shewing that even then the Apostle perceived the danger of the selfish indolence he is here condemning.

this we commanded you: i. e. the command that follows.

If any, &c. Idlers are not to be fed from the funds of the church.

11. we hear: evidently reports that had reached the Apostle after the time of writing the previous Epistle; therefore not brought by Timothy (1 Thess. iii. 6).

work not... are busybodies. In the Greek these expressions are represented by two very similar words. We might say 'busybodies not minding their own business.'

12. command: with apostolic authority.

exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ: urge and plead on the ground of their relation to Jesus Christ and for his sake, that his name be not dishonoured, and that his grace be recognized by diligence in work to please him. This is raising the duty of daily work to the rank of Christian service. It is a Christian duty to be gaining an honest, independent livelihood,

Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and
13 eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in
14 well-doing. And if any man obeyeth not our word by
this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company

with quietness: in opposition to the noisy, fussy behaviour of the busybodies.

their own bread: which they have earned, not the bread of their fellow members, taken by an abuse of Christian brotherly kindness.

13. But ye, brethren: the rest of the church, as distinct from the idlers and busybodies.

well-doing. Chrysostom understood this to refer to the work of Christian charity in relieving the poor, the abuse of which by the idlers would tend to check it altogether. But there is no evidence that the word was ever used in that limited sense. In the LXX it is used of doing good generally as opposed to doing evil: thus we read, 'to do evil, or *to do good*' (Lev. v. 4). This is the only meaning in the Grimm-Thayer Dictionary, and it is adopted by most modern commentators here, e. g. Ellicott, Schmiedel, Garrod. The antithesis is to the conduct of the idlers. They have grown weary of work. To the church at large the Apostle gives this admonition not to follow their evil example. The saying is repeated in Gal. vi. 9, though with a slight variation in the Greek terms.

14. This sentence seems simple enough; and yet three distinct interpretations of it have been maintained, viz. (1) Joining the phrase **by this epistle** to the words that follow, 'note that man by means of this epistle,' i. e. 'use the epistle as a standard and rule by which to prove the unworthiness of his behaviour.' This is an unlikely meaning. To write of noting a man by an epistle is a strange expression. (2) Translating the phrase 'by *the* epistle' and understanding it to refer to an epistle the Apostle is expecting to receive from Thessalonica, in which, as he directs, his correspondents are to give him the offender's name. This also is improbable, seeing that we have not met with the slightest allusion to the Apostle's expectation of any such letter. (3) We come therefore to the third interpretation: associating the phrase 'by this epistle' with the preceding words. This gives good sense and is the meaning suggested by the punctuation of both the A. V. and the R. V. Thus the reference is to anybody who is disobedient to what Paul has just been saying in this Epistle, especially concerning his rebuke of indolence and his directions about honest industry. If any man will not follow out these directions, but will continue to behave as an idle busybody, his fellow church members are not to associate with him. There is no indication of a formal act of

with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And 15
yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him
as a brother.

Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace at 16
all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all.

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censure, much less can we see here a rule for excommunication. Quiet withdrawal from friendly intercourse is all that is suggested. This silent rebuke should lead the offender to be ashamed of his conduct.

15. The offender is to be treated in a Christian spirit. The church is not to forget that he is still a brother. Therefore he should receive kindly admonition. Cf. Christ's directions for the treatment of an offending brother (Matt. xviii. 15–17).

iii. 16–18. *Benediction and salutation.* Drawing to a conclusion the Apostle prays for abiding peace and Christ's presence to be enjoyed by his readers. He adds the token of a salutation in his own handwriting and ends with the benediction.

16. the Lord of peace: probably meaning 'God,' because of the parallel phrase in the earlier Epistle—'the God of peace' (1 Thess. v. 23; see note on that verse). But Mr. Garrod understands the phrase to refer to Christ, as 'the Lord' represents Christ elsewhere in our Epistle. Paul does not seem to discriminate between God and Christ in this place.

give you peace: not meaning the ceasing of divisions and quarrels. None such existed at Thessalonica. The irregularities referred to had not issued in any breach of the peace. In Hebrew the word rendered 'peace' also means 'welfare.' It has something of this wider meaning in the N. T. The Apostle desires for his readers true welfare in peacefulness of soul and life.

at all times: even times of trial, such as the Thessalonians had to pass through.

in all ways: by all sorts of leadings of Providence, all things working together for the good of God's people.

The Lord be with, &c. Evidently it is Christ's presence that the Apostle here desires for his friends, since the title 'the Lord' when standing by itself in this Epistle represents Christ. Thus the Apostle contemplates that presence of Christ with Christians on earth which our Lord himself had promised (cf. Matt. xxviii. 20).

you all: including in particular (1) Those who were distressed by the death of friends and relatives, (2) those who were upset by the idea of the speedy coming of Christ, (3) those who were especially selected for persecution.

17 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which
18 is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

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17. mine own hand. These two concluding verses were written by Paul himself, the Epistle having been written as a whole by dictation to an amanuensis. In Rom. xvi. 22 the amanuensis appends his own salutation.

the token, &c. This expression has been used as a ground for discrediting the genuineness of the Epistle. Certainly it seems strange that the Apostle should have to guard his readers against forged epistles thus early. Is it likely that any such should have been sent to the Thessalonians so soon after the founding of the church? Who would be at the pains to do this? What would be his motive? We cannot answer these questions from our limited knowledge. Doubtless there were currents in the life of the early church of which little or no trace has been left in history. We must not forget that Paul had been carrying on his apostolic labours for some eighteen years when he wrote this Epistle, during much of which time jealous rivals and pronounced antagonists would have been seeking opportunities to hinder him. Then ii. 2 suggests the possible existence of a fictitious letter.

in every epistle. Another difficulty here meets us. This is only the second of the Pauline Epistles. Yet the Apostle writes as though there were quite a number of epistles in which the custom here described was observed. But (1) we do not know but that he may have written several other epistles which have been lost; (2) he may mean that he has started a custom which he will observe with all subsequent epistles. This is to be the authentication. Though the epistle will be written by an amanuensis it will always conclude with a salutation in Paul's own handwriting.

so I write: i. e. these very words and the benediction that follows are written by the Apostle's own hand.

18. The usual concluding benediction. See note on 1 Thess. v. 28.

all. The one addition to the words of the benediction at the end of the previous Epistle, possibly written here, as at the end of verse 16, for the advantage of those various classes whose troubles or defects have been referred to in the Epistle, especially anybody to whom verses 13 and 14 might apply. No one is to be excluded. May the grace be given to faulty brethren as well as to the more worthy members!

The subscription of the A. V. stating that the Epistle was 'written from Athens' disappears from the R. V. as it certainly was not in the original text. Moreover it is incorrect: see Introduction, p. 5.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

GALATIANS

PAUL, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, 1

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

i. 1-5. *Opening salutation.* Paul, describing himself as a Divinely appointed apostle, and associating all the Christians who are with him in his greeting to the churches of Galatia, wishes them spiritual prosperity from God and from Christ who gave himself for their deliverance.

1. apostle: *lit.* 'one sent,' 'a messenger,' from a Greek root that corresponds to the Latin root of the word 'missionary,' which also means 'one sent.' The word was used in classic Greek for an ambassador, one who represents the sender with some authority, but in the later Greek it is used in its primitive, simple meaning (cf. John xiii. 16, 'one that is sent,' the same Greek word, *apostolos*, that is elsewhere rendered 'apostle'). It is doubtful whether the word (or its Aramaic equivalent) was used as an official title of the Twelve by Jesus Christ. It is very rarely applied to them in the gospels; but after the resurrection of Christ, when these men took the lead in the church, it became their recognized title. The word was still sometimes used in a wider and more general sense, and thus applied to Barnabas (Acts xiv. 14), and by Paul, apparently, to two of his friends, Andronicus and Junias, with others (Rom. xvi. 7). Later in the first century it was given to an order of ministry in the church, as we learn from *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a primitive church manual. But Paul nearly always uses it in the stricter sense as the title of the Twelve, which title with its implied gifts and authority he claims for himself. Plainly that is the meaning here. It occurs in the opening words of all his Epistles except those to his Macedonian friends, the Philippians and the Thessalonians, and the little private letter to Philemon. But nowhere else is it placed so emphatically as in the opening of Galatians. Here it is accompanied by no humbler title, such as

but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raise
2 him from the dead), and all the brethren which are wit

'a servant of Jesus Christ,' which precedes it in Romans (i. 1 and it is followed by words that accentuate its importance. Pa felt it necessary to assert his claims more forcibly when writin to the Galatians than in any other Epistle. The note of authori that pervades this Epistle is struck in its very first words.

not from men: not of human origin. The source a fountain of his apostleship is not human. Since he was not o of the original Twelve his opponents might assert that this w the case, alluding perhaps to his designation for missionary wo by the church at Antioch (see Acts xiii. 2, 3).

neither through man: better 'a man.' No human agent b ordaining him had conferred on him the grace of apostleshi The first clause refers to the origin of the apostleship, the seco to the immediate gift of it. Neither a human source nor huma instrumentality had brought this gift to Paul.

through Jesus Christ: in antithesis to 'neither through man. Paul claims to have been appointed directly by Christ himself.

and God the Father: in antithesis to 'not from men.' The original source of the apostleship is in God, His will and grace. It is always taught by Paul that the primary disposal of men's lives and destinies is with God the Father, rather than with Jesus Christ. Paul does not here say when and how he received his apostolic mission, but further on (verse 15) his reference to his conversion leads us to think that it was at the same time, i. e. in the amazing experience that befell him on the road to Damascus (Acts ix).

who raised him, &c. It is the teaching of Paul generaly not that Jesus rose, by himself, in his own power, but that it was God who raised him from the dead (cf. Rom. iv. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 1, xv. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 14, &c.), as it is also the teaching of the N. T. generally (cf. Acts iii. 15, iv. 10; 1 Pet. i. 21). The subject s here introduced to account for Paul's claim to have been appointed by God through Christ, although he had not been associated with our Lord during his earthly life, like the other apostles. He had been called by the risen Christ and his appointment came from the same source as Christ's resurrection, the supreme authority of God.

2. and all the brethren, &c. The question as to who these brethren might have been depends on the date and place of writing the Epistle (see Introduction, p. 87 ff.). Lightfoot, supposing it to be written from Macedonia or Achaia during Paul's second tour through those parts, considers that the company perhaps included Timothy (2 Cor. i. 1), Erastus (Acts xix. 22), Titus and

me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace 3
from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who 4
gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out
of this present evil world, according to the will of our

two brethren from Corinth (2 Cor. viii. 16–24), and possibly Tychicus and Trophimus (Acts xx. 4, 5), who afterwards accompanied him on his return to Asia, though it may be that these men were no other than the two brethren from Corinth. Prof. Ramsay, regarding Antioch as the place from which the Epistle was written, understands this clause to refer to the church in that city, which was the mother church of the Galatian churches, as it had sent out the missionaries Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii. 2), whose authentication therefore, he thinks, the apostle is here giving. But would he not have named the church explicitly if that had been the case? Besides, the general character of the clause scarcely suggests an official authentication. It was the Apostle's custom to associate his travelling companions with himself in his letters, generally proceeding to write in the first person plural on that account. But this Epistle to the Galatians demanding a more emphatic assertion of apostolic authority is written throughout in the first person singular.

the churches. Note the plural form. There were separate churches in the several towns where the gospel had been planted. Each Christian congregation was called a 'church.' Subsequently the Apostle developed the idea of one Catholic Church comprehending all Christians, both those living in this world and the blessed dead, though without ever refusing the word to the local congregations.

Galatia. See Introduction, p. 58 ff. Observe the bald style of address. Paul usually adds some descriptive characteristics referring to the graces and privileges of the people to whom he is writing. Nothing of the kind appears here.

3. Grace to you and peace: a common form of salutation in Paul's Epistles. See notes on 1 Thess. i. 1.

4. who gave himself. Thus early in the Epistle the Apostle introduces Christ's sacrifice of himself for the redemption of sinners. In so doing he puts in the forefront of the Epistle the fundamental truth which the Galatians have begun to set aside in favour of Jewish ritual (see ii. 21, iii. 1). His aim will be to bring them back to this truth.

for our sins. The Greek expression, if we follow the MS. reading accepted by Tischendorf and Lightfoot, is that used in the O. T. for sin-offerings. Thus it means that Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice in order that our sins might be forgiven.

world: *lit.* 'age.' The word is used in both senses. If

5 God and Father: to whom *be* the glory for ever and
ever. Amen.
6 I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that

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we take it to stand for 'world,' then it means the world as it now is, in its present state of corruption. The Jews were accustomed to distinguish between 'this age,' a dark and evil age, and 'the age to come,' the glorious Messianic age.

according to the will of our God, &c. This is all in accordance with God's will, i. e. both the deliverance itself and the means by which it is effected, Christ's sacrifice of himself for our sins.

5. whom: i. e. God. The glory is ascribed to God. It was a Rabbinical custom to interject a doxology when the name of God was mentioned. With Paul there is more than obedience to custom. He writes with real feeling.

i. 6–10. *The Galatian perversion.* Paul is astonished at the quickness with which the Galatians are being turned aside from his gospel. If the most authoritative of teachers proclaimed any gospel different from that which they had received at first, he would deserve to be accursed. Paul is not to be stayed by considerations as to whether he may give offence in the determined stand he is taking; if he were influenced by such motives he would be no servant of Christ.

Thus the Apostle plunges at once into the subject of his Epistle in a tone of indignant expostulation. This is wholly unlike his method in any other of his letters. Elsewhere it is his invariable custom to commence with thanksgivings and congratulations. He always begins in a spirit of kind appreciativeness and Christian courtesy by gladly enumerating the merits of his correspondents and expressing his joy at their progress. Even when writing his First Epistle to the Corinthians, wherein he has occasion to introduce several matters of fault-finding, he is careful to begin by gratefully referring to the one point of progress that he can discover in the very imperfect church, and therefore he congratulates them on their growth in knowledge, eloquence, and various gifts, though he cannot speak of their growth in grace. But here there is nothing of the kind. The churches had been named at first in the baldest way, without the ascription to them of any attributes; now they are addressed without the recognition of any merits in them. This is a painful letter. It must have distressed the readers, as we may be sure the writer was pained in having to send it.

6. I marvel. Observe the startling and abrupt commencement.

called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel;

The declension of the Galatians is so swift that it is a matter of astonishment to the Apostle.

so quickly. This phrase has given rise to much discussion concerning the date of the Epistle. Those who favour an early date point to it as a reason for supposing that it could not have been written long after the founding of the Galatian churches. But may not the word 'quickly' here have reference not to the time of the conversion of the Galatians, but to the time of the visit of the disturbing teachers who had come from Jerusalem? They had been but a short time among these Galatians when the fickle people came right round to their views. It was a quick process of perversion. Lightfoot suggests that the word rendered quickly (*tacheōs*) may here signify 'readily,' 'rashly.'

removing: as in the R. V., not 'removed' as in the A. V. The verb is in the present tense and thus it indicates a process still going on. The perversion is not yet complete. Paul hastens to arrest it before it goes any further. The word is used for military desertion, and also for a change in religious opinion. Lightfoot cites the case of Dionysius of Heraclea who from being a Stoic became an Epicurean and therefore was said to have become a 'turncoat.' These Galatians were becoming 'turncoats.'

from him that called you: from God. So serious a view does Paul take of this perversion. He has not yet said in what it consists; but he begins by characterizing it in the gravest terms, that the essential significance of it may be felt.

in the grace, &c.: or, '*by* the grace,' according to a familiar Hebraism.

different. The Revisers have followed Lightfoot in substituting this word for 'another,' the term in the A.V. The Greek word (*heteron*) is not the same as that rendered 'another' (*allo*) in the next verse, and Lightfoot took it to indicate difference in kind and the second word simply to mean an additional one of the same kind. Thus the two clauses would mean that the Galatians were being perverted towards a different kind of gospel which was not really another gospel because it was no gospel at all. But Prof. Ramsay has shewn that this distinction is not borne out by usage and that the exact reverse is the case. Accordingly if we retained the present punctuation we should read the passage as meaning 'a second gospel, which indeed is not really a different gospel,' because all the apostles preached essentially the same gospel. But would Paul say that here? Surely he would not allow that the intrusive teachers who were leading the Galatians astray were preaching his gospel; and verse 9 distinctly brings up the idea of an essentially different gospel.

7 which is not another *gospel*: only there are some that
8 trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But
though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto
you any gospel other than that which we preached unto
9 you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so

A third possibility is suggested by a change in the punctuation of the following verse.

7. Lipsius rejects the idea just described and understands 'not another *gospel*' to mean 'no *gospel* at all.' But the American Revisers propose to remove the colon that occurs in the R. V. after the first five words of this verse—a perfectly legitimate treatment of the text, since there were no punctuation marks in the original MSS. Then they read 'a different gospel which is nothing else save that there are some that . . . would pervert the gospel of Christ.' That is to say, this other gospel they offer is only a perversion of the one true gospel. This view is advocated by the German classical scholar Prof. Blass and favoured by Prof. Ramsay.

8. we. It has been suggested that Paul's actions in bringing to the Galatians the decision of the Jerusalem council (Acts xvi. 4) and in circumcising Timothy (xvi. 3) may have given rise to the supposition that Paul had modified his views and come round somewhat to the position of the Judaizing party. The Apostle repudiates the notion.

an angel from heaven. Some of the Galatians had taken Paul for 'Hermes,' the wing-footed messenger god, i. e. the Greek angel (Acts xiv. 12). He seems to be alluding to that incident here, and again in iv. 14, where he says, 'ye received me as an angel of God.' Now Paul is so absolutely sure of the one gospel he has preached to the Galatians that even if, on superhuman authority, something else were preached as the gospel the preacher must be denounced. It may be said that this is the language of bigotry and intolerance. But observe, it rests on the assurance of experience; it is the language of an apostle missionary addressing his own converts with whom other people have been wantonly interfering; and the Apostle does not propose to take any external action, affording a precedent for Inquisitors with their *autos da fé*.

anathema: a Greek word, *lit.* 'devoted'; in the first instance used in a good sense for that which is consecrated to God and therefore forbidden to be handled profanely; then used in a bad sense for that which is devoted to destruction or misery, an accursed thing or person (cf. Deut. vii. 26).

9. As we have said before: not referring to the previous verse.

say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now persuading men, or God? or 10
am I seeking to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the 11

The language points to utterance by word of mouth, and that on some quite distinct occasion. Probably the Apostle is reminding his readers of what he had said during his second visit to Galatia. He had then warned them against any teaching that would lead them away from the gospel they had received when he and Barnabas had been preaching among them on their first missionary journey. This shews that the danger of the perversion had been perceived by Paul as early as his second journey.

which ye received: an advance on the expression in the previous sentence where Paul had said 'which we preached.' There had been more than the proclamation of the gospel; it had been welcomed by the Galatians. To turn from it now would be to shew inconsistency, would be to belie their own history.

10. This implies that the Apostle had been charged with unworthily shifting his ground to win favour, by a misjudging of his policy of becoming 'all things to all men,' perhaps with reference to his action in the matters of the Jerusalem decree and the circumcision of Timothy. But what he has just said is a repudiation of all vacillating conduct. After that vehement outburst, so clear and uncompromising, will his enemies venture to accuse him of mincing words to win the approval of men?

persuading men: to regard him favourably.

or God. We cannot actually speak of persuading God. Paul means seeking God's favour and approval.

servant: *lit.* 'slave.' Contrary to his common custom Paul has not introduced this title of himself at the opening of the Epistle. Yet he will not keep it back even from the restive Galatians. He is not ashamed of it. He counts it his supreme honour to be the slave of Christ. But to seek to please men as the chief aim of his life would be the abandonment of the service of Christ.

I. Personal Defence. i. 11—ii. 21.

i. 11–17. *Paul's account of his own conversion.* The Apostle now embarks on his 'apologia.' His first aim is to shew from the facts of his life-history that he was not dependent on any human source for the gospel he had preached in Galatia. To begin with, his conversion was brought about directly by means of a revelation

gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man.
12 For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but *it came to me* through revelation of Jesus Christ.

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of Jesus Christ. He had been a loyal Jew of exceptional zeal when God, who from his birth had destined him to his apostolic mission, was pleased to give him an inward revelation of Christ for the purpose of sending him as a preacher to the Gentiles. Immediately after this Paul refrained from consulting any human being, and did not go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles, but retired in seclusion to Arabia, whence he returned direct to Damascus.

11. I make known: the Apostle's customary phrase in making some new assertion, declaring something that was not in his previous teaching (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 1). The correlative to this when reference is made to what has been previously taught, or at all events ought to be familiar, is 'Know ye not?' (Rom. vi. 16).

not after man: not according to a human standard or customary ways of thinking.

12. neither did I receive it: the usual word for receiving a tradition handed down from one to another. It was no mere tradition of the church that Paul passed on to the Galatians.

nor was I taught it. Paul had not been taken in hand by Christian teachers to be trained in the doctrines of the faith. This may seem to contradict the record in Acts where we read of the commission of Ananias. But that record says nothing of teaching; it only mentions two things done for Paul through the instrumentality of the Damascus disciple—the restoration of his sight and the gift of the Holy Ghost, followed by his baptism (Acts ix. 17, 18).

through revelation. Paul claims to have received his gospel by means of a Divine revelation. We need not conclude that all his knowledge of the details of the life and death of Christ and of our Lord's teachings were communicated to him in this way. In 1 Cor. xi. 23–25 he gives an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper which closely corresponds with the synoptic record. It is reasonable to suppose that he had this by word of mouth from the apostles, or perhaps in some written notes containing it, together with other reminiscences of our Lord's life on earth. Paul only claims to have received his *gospel* by means of a revelation. Now we know from this Epistle and other of his writings what this gospel was. It was not any historical narrative, such as the narratives that make up our four gospels. It was the message of redemption by means of the death and resurrection of Christ to be enjoyed on condition of faith in him.

Jesus Christ: the subject of the revelation. This was making

For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in 13
the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted
the church of God, and made havock of it: and I ad- 14
vanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own
age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly
zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it 15
was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, *even*

Christ known, what Paul calls God revealing His Son in him (verse 16). When he was made to see Christ aright and understand him he could perceive the nature and character of the gospel of which Christ is the centre.

13. For ye have heard, &c.: more correctly, 'ye heard'; perhaps because Paul had confessed it; possibly because his opponents had busied themselves to circulate the tale.

the Jews' religion: *lit.* 'Judaism,' but with reference to its practices rather than its beliefs. Paul had been a rigid observer of Jewish rites.

the church of God. The word 'church' here does not represent any one local community. It points to Christians generally. This is the earliest reference in Paul to this larger sense of the word.

made havock. Lightfoot has 'devastated.'

14. of mine own age. The Revisers wisely adopted this phrase from Lightfoot in preference to 'my equals' in the A. V.

my countrymen: Jews. Paul is writing to Gentiles.

more exceedingly zealous: i. e. than other Jews of his own age.

traditions: not the law, but Rabbinical details, pretended explanations and applications of the law, often false to its spirit and purpose, as Jesus Christ shewed (cf. Mark vii. 8). Thus Paul's conduct was the exact opposite to that of Christ, whose principal polemic was against the traditions which his future chief Apostle once so zealously advocated.

15. the good pleasure. Though this word originally meant no more than choice, i. e. that which one is well pleased to do, in the Bible it has come to mean favourable choice, and when applied to God, that which He chooses to do for the good of those to whom He is gracious, or simply His pleasure in them (cf. applied to men, Rom. xv. 26; 1 Thess. ii. 8; applied to God, Matt. iii. 17). Paul counts it as a favour that God chose him to be an apostle.

separated: marked off from others for a special calling. This, Paul recognizes, had been done from his very birth. Cf. 'separated unto the gospel of God' (Rom. i. 1).

from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace,
16 to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among
the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh

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called me. That came later, in the revelation on the road to Damascus.

through his grace. The call was brought about by reason of God's free favour, not on account of any merit or claim on the part of the man called. This does not exclude essential fitness in gifts and capacities as a reason for the call, a fitness which is implied in the previous idea of being marked off from birth for the special vocation.

16. to reveal his Son in me. Two explanations of this phrase have been maintained: (1) Taking the preposition 'in' according to a common Hebraistic usage as instrumental and equivalent to 'by means of,' so that the expression would mean 'to reveal his Son by means of me,' i. e. in Paul's preaching of the gospel. This is Lightfoot's view; he points out that the next clause describes that preaching and he calls attention to similar statements elsewhere, e. g. 'they glorified God in me' (verse 24), i. e. on account of me (cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 3; Phil. i. 30; 1 Tim. i. 16). (2) Understanding the phrase to refer to an internal revelation enjoyed by the Apostle himself. This view is maintained by Lipsius, Pfleiderer, and most other interpreters. (*a*) It has strongly in its favour the fact that Paul has just been mentioning a revelation made to him in the words, 'through revelation of Jesus Christ' (verse 12). (*b*) It is required by the context. Without this idea there would be no mention of Paul's conversion in the autobiographical sketch. He speaks of his Divine destiny, then of his call, next comes this phrase, and the mission to the Gentiles follows. Thus it comes in just at the right place to refer to his conversion. The revelation would seem to be the great occurrence on the road to Damascus which turned the course of Paul's life. That it is here said to be internal need not disturb us. The narrative in Acts implies that the manifestation of Christ was made to Paul alone, and was not perceived by his companions, which shews that it was not physically objective, though it was not the less real, a real revelation made by God to Paul, not a creation of his own imagination (see Acts ix. 7).

that I might preach, &c. Paul connects his conversion with his mission. The revelation was made to him in order that he might become a preacher.

among the Gentiles: the specific sphere of Paul's mission, of interest to the Galatians who were Gentiles, and bearing on the object of the Epistle which is to maintain Paul's own gospel with its freer outlook for the Gentiles as against the interference of Judaizers.

and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which 17
were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia;
and again I returned unto Damascus.

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immediately I conferred not, &c. The Apostle's point is that he did not derive his gospel from men—that he had it direct from God. Proving this he shews how he went away immediately after his conversion into seclusion without any conference with the Christians who might be supposed to have instructed him. The word 'immediately' does not exclude later conferences.

flesh and blood. A common Hebraism for 'man' is 'flesh.' Evidently the fuller expression has the same meaning; cf. 'flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee' (Matt. xvi. 17), i. e. it was not revealed by any human being.

17. up to Jerusalem. Not simply as we say 'up to London' as to the capital, but because the city is only reached by ascending to a great height, since it is about 2,000 feet above the sea level. Thus leaving Jerusalem is called 'going down' (cf. Acts xviii. 22, xxiv. 1).

apostles before me: the Twelve and possibly also James the Lord's brother (cf. verse 19). It would have been most natural for a new convert who felt himself called to a great mission to have consulted the leaders of the church, his seniors in the faith, on the subject. We do not know why Paul declined to do so, perhaps because he feared they would not welcome the persecutor so suddenly turned disciple. Doubts may be felt as to whether he acted wisely in this matter. Possibly if he had taken the Jerusalem church into his confidence future troubles and misunderstandings, to be discussed in this Epistle, might have been avoided. But it looks as though Paul had been overwhelmed with a torrent of ideas and feelings which simply drove him into seclusion, where he might adjust himself to his entirely altered view of truth and his entirely new conception of his own vocation. So we read how, when Jesus at his baptism had consecrated himself to his great mission, 'straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness' (Mark i. 12).

Arabia: probably the desert country in the environs of Damascus and to the south, which was reckoned part of Arabia at this time. It is not to be supposed that Paul went there to preach to the Bedouin. No doubt he only sought solitude for his own meditations. This journey to Arabia is not mentioned in Acts. We have it here on the unquestionable authority of the traveller himself.

again I returned. Paul has not yet stated that he had previously been to Damascus as recorded in Acts; but this phrase implies that fact and thus indirectly confirms Luke's narrative.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit
19 Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Damascus. A most ancient city situated between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges of mountains, formerly the capital of Syria and thus frequently brought into the O. T. history, since that country was the neighbour and sometimes the enemy of Israel. Our knowledge of its history begins with the capture of it by David (2 Sam. viii. 3–6). It was overthrown by the Assyrians under Tiglath-Pileser. Subsequently it was possessed by the Macedonians and then by the Romans, but when Paul was there it was in the hands of Aretas, king of Arabia, by whose ethnarch it was then governed. Elsewhere Paul states that he escaped from Damascus through a window, being let down in a basket by the wall (2 Cor. xi. 33; cf. Acts ix. 23–25).

i. 18–24. *First visit to Jerusalem.* Paul tells how after three years he visited Cephas at Jerusalem, staying with him a fortnight, seeing no other apostle except James the Lord's brother. He says he is speaking the truth in this matter. After this he went into Syria and Cilicia without having become personally known to the churches of Judæa, only they heard of his conversion and glorified God on account of him.

18. after three years. Prof. Ramsay states that according to the ancient way of speaking about time this might mean only between two and three years, so long as it was after the beginning of the third year. But, while the instances he cites shew that the expression 'three years' might be used for two years and a portion of a third, they give no authority for understanding the very definite '*after* three years' to mean less than that full period. He must mean more than three years. The question has been raised whether this period is to be reckoned from the date of Paul's conversion or from that of his return to Damascus. Probably the former, in contrast to 'immediately' (verse 16). Paul had gone to Arabia directly after his conversion and not to Jerusalem till three years subsequent to that great crisis.

visit: rather 'to become acquainted with' (margin of the R. V.).

Cephas: the Aramaic for Peter (Greek).

fifteen days: long enough for personal acquaintance, much too short a time for instruction in the gospel and the establishment of the great principles of his teaching.

19. other of the apostles: any other besides Peter.

save James. This might mean 'I did not see any other apostle, but I did see James.' But the use of the expression 'any

Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, 20
before God, I lie not. Then I came into the regions of 21
Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto 22
the churches of Judæa which were in Christ: but they 23

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other of the apostles' makes it more natural to take the passage to mean 'I did not see any other apostle except James,' i. e. reckoning James as an apostle. Paul used the word apostle occasionally for others besides the Twelve, e.g. for Andronicus and Junias (Rom. xvi. 7).

the Lord's brother: to be distinguished both from James the son of Zebedee and from James the son of Alphæus (see Mark vi. 3). During our Lord's life none of his brethren had believed on him (John vii. 5). But Jesus appeared to James after the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7), and a little later we meet with him as the leader of the church at Jerusalem (Acts xii. 17, xv. 13 ff., xxi. 18; Gal. ii. 9, 12). Observe the distinction: Paul went up to Jerusalem with the sole object of becoming acquainted with Peter, the foremost apostle, preacher, and teacher, not with the intention of seeking out James; but while there he did also see James.

20. A vigorous assertion of the truthfulness of what is now stated, amounting to an oath (**before God**), implying that Paul's opponents had made contrary statements concerning his intercourse with the apostles to the intent that he had learnt his doctrines from them.

21. the regions of Syria and Cilicia: a Roman province including these two districts—Syria, with the capital Antioch, and Cilicia, whose chief town, Tarsus, was Paul's birthplace. Both cities became centres of Paul's subsequent missionary work. Probably his reason for evangelizing this province was that it was 'his own country.'

22. still unknown by face, &c., and therefore could not be learning his lessons as to the nature of the gospel from the primitive Christians of Palestine.

the churches of Judæa: i. e. others besides that of Jerusalem. It is not to be inferred that Paul's visit to Jerusalem had been so secret that he had not come into contact with the church in that city. Nevertheless there is some difficulty in reconciling with this what Luke says about Barnabas introducing Paul 'to the apostles' and Paul 'going in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord' (Acts ix. 26–29). There is no actual contradiction, since Paul writes of his having seen two apostles, and does not deny that he saw the Jerusalem church, and Luke does not say that he visited any other church. Then it

only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth
24 the faith of which he once made havock; and they
glorified God in me.
2 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up

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should be observed that the two writers have different ends in view; for while Paul is simply concerned to shew that he did not learn his gospel from the Palestine Christians, Luke is interested in tracing out the growth of missionary enterprises. Still it cannot be denied that the two accounts leave very different impressions as to the character of Paul's visit to Jerusalem, and a later account in Acts (xxvi. 20) tells of his evangelizing 'all the country of Judæa.' Between the two records we must give Paul's own statement the preference as regards accuracy over that of the later historian.

23. they only heard: only had reports of Paul, did not see him.

the faith. This cannot mean 'the Christian religion' in the modern sense of the expression, as that meaning does not seem to have been given to it so early as our Epistle. In this primitive time the word 'faith' is always used for the internal experience of trust. To preach the faith would seem to be 'to proclaim the glad tidings of faith in Christ' (Grimm). Lipsius calls this 'the belief in the Messiah as the way of salvation.'

24. glorified God: gave glory to God, praised God.

in me: on account of what they heard had happened to me and what I was doing in preaching the gospel.

ii. 1–10. *Second visit to Jerusalem.* Paul declares how in the course of fourteen years he again went up to Jerusalem, travelling with Barnabas, and accompanied by Titus. This time it was as the result of a Divine revelation, and his object was to explain his preaching among the heathen to the chief people in the church in order to prevent his work from failing. Titus, a Greek, who accompanied him was not compelled to be circumcised by some false, spying members of the church to whom Paul and his friends would not yield. The leading people at Jerusalem then contributed nothing to his knowledge and beliefs; but on recognizing how God was blessing his work among the heathen the three who were reckoned the pillars of the church, James, Peter, and John, heartily acknowledged him as a brother in Christian work, agreeing that while they laboured among the Jews, Paul and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles, though not forgetting also to care for the wants of the poor in the Jerusalem church.

1. after the space of: a different preposition (*dia*) from that

again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with

translated 'after' at the commencement of the previous paragraph (*meta*, verse 18). Strictly rendered it means 'in the course of,' lit. 'through.' Still there would be no sense in the note of time if Paul did not mean that what he was about to relate occurred at the end of that period.

fourteen years. Are we to reckon these fourteen years from the conversion of Paul, or from his previous visit to Jerusalem? Prof. Ramsay considers that the former view must be adopted, because Paul is reckoning everything from his conversion and regarding all the later events in relation to that supreme crisis of his life. Mr. Turner in the article on 'Chronology' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* and Harnack also count the fourteen years from the conversion. Nevertheless Lightfoot is followed by Lipsius in taking the fourteen years on from the first visit to Jerusalem, and there is much in favour of that view. The repeated use of the word 'then' (i. 18, 21, ii. 1) seems to indicate a regular chronological succession of events. Besides, Paul would wish to mark the periods during which he had no intercourse with the apostles; and further the use of the expression 'in the course of' so many years excludes from this period another visit to Jerusalem previously named. On the whole, therefore, it seems desirable to reckon the fourteen years from the previous visit.

with Barnabas. Paul accompanies Barnabas who is the senior Christian teacher. We learn from Acts iv. 36 that Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus, who had sold land for the benefit of the poor, and who subsequently commended Paul to the church at Jerusalem (Acts ix. 27). At a later time he fetched Paul from Tarsus to Antioch (xi. 25, 26). The two friends brought the gifts from the church at Antioch for the relief of the church at Jerusalem during a famine (xi. 30), and afterwards travelled together on what is now known as Paul's 'first missionary journey' (xiii. 1 ff.), and together were deputed to go up to the Jerusalem conference (xv. 2); they parted company on the eve of the 'second missionary journey' (xv. 36–39). The Galatians would have a special interest in hearing anything about Barnabas since the missionary journey in which he and Paul were together was through their towns, and Barnabas was one of the founders of their churches.

taking Titus also. The relation of Titus to Paul was entirely different from that of Barnabas. He was a young disciple and attendant of the Apostle. He is not mentioned in Acts, and all we know of him is gathered from Paul's Epistles, which shew that he was a Gentile whom the Apostle employed as his travelling companion and occasional messenger. Thus he was sent to Corinth and anxiously awaited at Troas by Paul (2 Cor. ii. 13). But it was not till Paul reached Macedonia that Titus met him with news of the

2 me. And I went up by revelation; and I laid before
them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but
privately before them who were of repute, lest by any
3 means I should be running, or had run, in vain. But not

Corinthian church (2 Cor. vii. 6, 7, 13–15). Titus was then sent back to Corinth with the Second Epistle, in charge of the collection for the Jerusalem poor (2 Cor. viii. 6, 17). One of the Pastoral Epistles is addressed to him, and from this we learn that at some later time Paul had left him in Crete to set things in order and appoint elders in the island (Titus i. 5).

2. by revelation: either made directly to himself, or through one of the Christian prophets.

the gospel which I preach. This implies that there was some doubt among the Jerusalem Christians as to what Paul was preaching. The main message of the Christian missionaries was the same in all cases—the preaching of Jesus as Christ, of his resurrection, and of salvation through him. Nor was there any unwillingness on the part of the Jewish Christians to admit Gentiles to the church—if they would become proselytes to Judaism and observe the law. But Paul was dispensing with this condition and that was especially his gospel.

privately. This does not exclude a subsequent public meeting with the whole church. The explanation of his peculiar doctrinal standpoint was private.

them who were of repute: or 'who are'; there is no verb in the original Greek. Verse 9 shews who these were, viz. James, Cephas, and John, though perhaps other leaders are also included here in the less definite expression. There is nothing satirical in the phrase, though the emphatic repetition of it (verse 9) may convey a touch of irony.

should be running, &c.: referring to his present and past work. The illustration is from the Greek stadium—a favourite form of illustration with Paul (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 26).

had run: referring to his past work, the good results of which were endangered.

in vain. It could not be that Paul was in doubt as to the correctness of his teaching. His attitude in this Epistle is that of such perfect independence of human authority that he could not mean he had any hesitation about what he was doing till he obtained the sanction of the Jerusalem leaders. His fear must have been lest the influence of the Jerusalem church should be exercised to hinder his missionary labours among the heathen; and it was to prevent that disaster that he explained his teaching in a private conference with the chief apostles, in the hope of eliciting

even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of the false 4

their sympathy. He did not require their sanction; but he deprecated the hindrance that their disapproval would have caused.

3. Was Titus circumcised? The verse may be read in agreement with either answer to this question. It may mean that the known fact of his circumcision was not brought about by compulsion; that it was done in accordance with what he and the Apostle also felt to be wise. Luke tells us that Paul had Timothy circumcised 'because of the Jews that were in those parts' (Acts xvi. 3). But the cases are not parallel, for Timothy's mother was a Jewess (Acts xvi. 1), while Titus was wholly Gentile. Timothy, by undergoing the initial rite of Judaism, would be fitted to carry on evangelistic work among the Jews of his own neighbourhood. It is much more likely that Titus was not circumcised. Paul's position was uncompromising; he says that he did not give place 'in the way of subjection' in the least degree. Under such circumstances a voluntary acquiescence must have been misunderstood. Besides, the circumcising of Titus, a Gentile, would have been in direct conflict with the very position Paul is vehemently contending for in the doctrinal part of this Epistle. The expression 'not *even* Titus' implies that great pressure was brought to bear on Titus.

4. and that because of the false brethren, &c.: *lit.* 'and because of the false brethren.' The sentence is incomplete. Paul cannot mean that though not compelled to circumcise Titus he did it to please these false brethren; nor that he refused to do it to please the false brethren, though otherwise he might have performed the rite, both of which ideas would conflict with his position throughout the Epistle. Lightfoot suggests that if Paul had completed the sentence it would have run thus: 'But to satisfy, to disarm, the false brethren, &c., the leading apostles urged me to yield.' That view implies that the Apostle never worked out the idea of the sentence at all. The thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be that the importance given to the question of the circumcision of Titus arose from the action of false brethren in the matter, but certainly he never sufficiently finished the sentence actually to say this. These 'false brethren' would be Jews, who contrived to get an entrance into the church for the express purpose of thwarting Paul's work. Whether that was at Jerusalem, or at Antioch, or among the Gentile churches which Paul had founded, is not made clear. They must not be identified with the Judaizing disturbers of the Galatian churches, who belong to a later period and are not charged with hypocrisy.

brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they
5 might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth
6 of the gospel might continue with you. But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's

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our liberty: the liberty of dispensing with the Jewish law in Gentile churches.

in Christ Jesus. This liberty is enjoyed by virtue of the relation of Paul and his converts to Christ. If full salvation is found in Christ alone, no bondage of the law can be required for these converted heathen who have it.

5. the truth of the gospel. If Paul had yielded, the truth of his large gospel of liberty would have been obscured.

with you: the Galatians. Paul had been fighting their battle at Jerusalem. It was in order that they, in common with the other Gentile churches, might retain their gospel unimpaired, and so their freedom from the law of the Jews, that Paul had explained the whole case to the Jerusalem leaders. How supremely disappointing then it was that, after this, the Galatians should be voluntarily putting themselves under the very yoke from which the Apostle had been at such great pains to keep them free!

6. But from those, &c. This sentence also, like that in verse 4, is not completed, or rather the Apostle changes the form of it as he proceeds, beginning by saying 'from those,' &c., never adding what comes from them, but returning to them in the nominative case to describe their conduct directly: 'they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me.' The bad grammar must be accounted for by the vehemence of the Apostle's mind. He rushes on from point to point quite heedless of the construction of his sentences. This is living writing, though awkward to construe.

reputed to be somewhat: the three apostles named in verse 9, with perhaps other leaders.

whatsoever they were: i. e. in the past, as men who had been personal disciples of Jesus on earth. This could not be said of Paul. The apparent irritation of his language shews that the fact had been flung at him to mark his inferiority. Paul will not let that affect the measure of authority he allows the senior apostles.

accepteth not man's person: a Hebraism, meaning to shew favouritism. It may be said that Paul goes too far here. Mere

person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been 7 intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with *the gospel* of the circumcision (for he that 8 wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); and when they 9 perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars,

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favouritism was not claimed for the elder apostles. Their supposed privilege was based on the historical fact of their personal intercourse with Jesus on earth and all they had derived from it.

imparted nothing: in the way of authority to preach, spiritual power, or understanding of the principles of the gospel.

7. but contrariwise. Not only did not the leaders correct or complete Paul's apostolic equipment; they recognized to the full his mission to the heathen, and gave him brotherly sympathy with regard to it.

intrusted: by God, the context shewing an admission that God's hand was in this.

the gospel of the uncircumcision: the gospel for Gentiles, i. e. the mission of evangelizing the heathen.

Peter: as the leading Christian missionary to the Jews.

the gospel **of the circumcision**: the gospel for Jews, in distinction from the mission of evangelizing the heathen.

8. The same influence was at work with both of these great apostles in their missionary labours. The successful results of both proved that God was in them. If the recognition of this fact in Peter's case stamped and authenticated his mission, the same should be said of Paul.

9. and when they, &c.: completing the sentence of verse 7 which had been interrupted by the parenthesis in verse 8.

the grace, &c.: probably not referring to Paul's personal character, but meaning the signs of God's favour and the effects of His gracious assistance given to Paul, as seen in the fruits of his missionary work.

James: the Lord's brother. See note on i. 19.

Cephas: Peter. See note on i. 18.

John: the son of Zebedee, appearing in Acts (iii. 1, 11, iv. 13 ff.) as the companion of Peter. Thus Peter, James, and John are now the leading apostles, just as the three chief disciples in the gospel history were Peter, James, and John (cf. Mark v. 37, ix. 2, xiv. 33). But while Peter and John are the same men,

gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the
10 circumcision; only *they would* that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

James the brother of Jesus now takes the place of James the brother of John.

reputed: the third use of this word (cf. verses 2, 6). Paul does not deny that the three men were as great as what the church reckoned them to be. Still his repetition of the same expression lays emphasis on the estimation in which they were held, rather than on their actual characters and worth. This would help the Apostle's argument. If those who were most highly honoured and considered to be of most importance in the Jerusalem community treated Paul as he here describes, it was unreasonable for the Galatians to listen to the insinuations of smaller people, who had come from that church to undermine their confidence in their own apostle.

pillars: a metaphor applied by Jews to great teachers of the law.

Barnabas. The narrative in Acts shews that Barnabas had been a trusted member of the Jerusalem church long before this. But when associated with Paul in missionary work among the heathen he joined in that Apostle's methods, and therefore appeared before his old friends in new relations.

the right hands of fellowship. Brotherly sympathy of the most unqualified nature is here implied. Baur maintained that there was a feud between Paul and the older apostles. This undoubtedly genuine statement is quite irreconcilable with such a hypothesis.

that we should go unto the Gentiles, &c. This division, as Lipsius says, is ethnographical, not geographical. It could not be maintained permanently, but it represented the main distinction of work among the apostles. Nothing is said here of any difference in the preaching, but as Paul's full rights were recognized, evidently it would be understood that he would preach to the heathen a gospel free from the Jewish law, while the other apostles would continue to preach to Jews without relaxing the requirements of their law.

10. remember the poor: i. e. of Jerusalem. Before this Paul had come up to Jerusalem with gifts from Antioch (Acts xi. 29, 30). He had been eagerly gathering similar offerings from his Galatian friends before the writing of our Epistle (1 Cor. xvi. 1).

NOTE. There is considerable difficulty in determining how this incident stands related to the narrative in Acts. The commonly

accepted view is to identify it with Paul's visit to Jerusalem described in Acts xv. But serious objections have been urged against that view: (1) Luke describes an intermediate visit (Acts xi. 27-30, xii. 25). In proving his independence of the older church authorities could Paul omit all reference to this? (2) Here he says he went up 'by revelation'; but the narrative in Acts xv shews us Paul and Barnabas dispatched by the church at Antioch as a deputation to Jerusalem. (3) Paul writes of a private interview with 'them of repute,' in which he gave an account of his preaching, and he makes no reference to any meeting with the church or any decree coming thence; but in Acts xv there is an important church meeting, commonly called 'The Jerusalem Council,' in which the condition of the Gentile churches is discussed and a proposal to settle the differences between the two classes of Christians is formally adopted. Could Paul omit all reference to this when sending the Galatians an account of the very visit to Jerusalem at which so important a decision was reached? These apparent discrepancies have been used to discredit the history in Acts, and vice versa, by a recent Dutch school, to throw doubts on our Epistle. Prof. Ramsay denies the suggested identification, and understands Paul to be here referring to the second visit (that in Acts xi). To do so he has to make the fourteen years date back from Paul's conversion. He finds 'the revelation' which induced Paul to go up in Agabus's prophecy (Acts xi. 28), and he thinks that verse 10 in our section has a distinct bearing on the fact that Paul was then the bearer of aid to the poor. Then Prof. Bartlet, dissatisfied with all attempts at a reconciliation between the two documents, supposes Paul to be referring to a still earlier visit to Jerusalem not recorded in Acts, and Wieseler identifies it with a visit set later than all of these in Acts xviii. 22. But is the older view, identifying our section with Acts xv, really untenable? Lightfoot argued strongly in its favour, and he has been supported by Hort. (1) If the apostles were absent from Jerusalem when Paul came up during the famine, he would not have to mention this visit (*Judaistic Christianity*, p. 61). The fact that Luke describes the relief as given to 'the elders,' and does not make any reference to the apostles in his account of the famine visit, points to the conclusion that the apostles were then absent. (2) Could not Paul describe a solemn embassy dispatched by the church, probably after prayer and with full faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit, as the result of a revelation? Besides, he may have had a private revelation encouraging him to go. All his other references to revelations in their bearings on his conduct point to personal experiences of his own (cf. i. 12, 16). (3) Paul is here dealing with his apostolic rights and authority; Luke, in Acts xv, is concerned with a question of public policy. It is quite reasonable to suppose that

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to

Paul might have a private interview with the leading apostles to settle his personal relations with them. When dealing with that here he might think it irrelevant to add an account of the other object of his visit. After all, Acts and Galatians agree on the main point—the freedom of the Gentiles from any obligation to become proselytes to Judaism as a condition to reception in the church. That was the essential point Paul desired to get the apostles to assent to, and concession to which was implied in their admission of his right to preach his gospel; and that was also the main result of the 'Jerusalem Council.' On the whole, therefore, it seems best to identify this visit with that of Acts xv. Prof. McGiffert cuts the knot by suggesting that 'Acts xi and xv both refer to the same event,' i. e. in each case 'the second of the two visits mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians.' He adds, 'It is entirely conceivable that Luke found two independent accounts of the same journey in his sources; and as the occasion was given differently in the two cases, he supposed them to refer to separate events, and inserted them at what seemed to him the proper point in his narrative' (*Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, p. 171).

ii. 11–14. *Dispute with Peter.* Paul tells how he had a dispute with Peter—here called by his Aramaic name 'Cephas'—at Antioch, because that Apostle drew back from social intercourse with the Gentiles after some messengers from James had arrived, carrying with him the rest of the Jews and even Barnabas. Paul openly expostulated with Peter for this inconsistency.

11. when. There is nothing to fix the chronological position of this incident, and Prof. Ramsay agrees with Prof. Zahn and Mr. Turner (article 'Chronology' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*) that Paul's language would allow of it coming earlier than the incident just recorded, i. e. if that referred to the visit to Jerusalem in Acts xv. Lightfoot considered that Paul was still continuing his narrative in chronological order; but the phrasing is changed. Instead of reading 'then,' after such and such a time, Paul here writes 'but when,' quite indefinitely.

Cephas. See note on i. 18.

Antioch: a large city founded by the Greeks and named after Antiochus; the capital of the Roman province of Syria, on the Orontes, and well situated for communication with the west by the Levant. Josephus calls it the third city of the empire, only Rome and Alexandria standing before it in importance (*Wars*, III. ii. 4). The church at Antioch was founded by unknown and unofficial Christians from Cyprus and Cyrene, who preached to the Greeks there and so originated the first Gentile

the face, because he stood condemned. For before that 12
certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles:

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church (Acts xi. 20). It became the church of greatest influence next to that of Jerusalem, and in resources and energy even went beyond the mother church. Antioch was the great missionary centre, and it was from this city that Paul and Barnabas were dispatched on the mission which resulted in the evangelizing of the Galatians. These people, therefore, would be especially interested in hearing anything of significance concerning the church in that city. After the Mohammedan conquest the position of the chief town in Syria reverted to Damascus, the ancient capital in the desert. Antioch is now represented by a town of only 6,000 inhabitants, called in Turkish *Antaki* and in Arabic *Antakiyeh*, with little ancient remains except the ruins of Justinian's wall.

stood condemned: more correct than the A. V. rendering 'he was to be blamed.' Another possible alternative is 'he had been accused,' the idea with that rendering being that the Greek Christians had brought a charge against Peter; but this is a less likely meaning. 'Stood condemned' here means 'plainly proved to be in the wrong by his conduct.' There is no thought of a formal trial or act of church censure. It is not to be denied that the difference between the apostles was real. Origen started the theory that it was only simulated, and he was followed by Jerome on the same lines, which led to a controversy between that father and Augustine. There can be no doubt that Augustine was right in his contention that to allow the idea of the two leading apostles conspiring to act a lie would be to undermine the whole authority of Scripture.

12. certain . . . from James: messengers from James, we do not know on what errand. Mr. Turner is inclined to identify them with those of whom we read in Acts xv. 1: 'and certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, *saying*, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.' If we accept this view we must place the incident just before the Jerusalem council recorded later in Acts xv, and therefore prior to the previous incident in Galatians. Acts represents Barnabas as united with Paul in resisting the Jewish influence, while in Galatians he follows Paul in being carried away by it. Besides, the questions are not identical. In the present case there is no mention of compelling the Gentiles to be circumcised; the only point is that of Jewish Christians eating at the same table with their Gentile brethren. Still, if so serious a breach of church unity as the exclusive policy which the Jewish party would advocate were brought about, Gentile Christians

but when they came, he drew back and separated himself,
13 fearing them that were of the circumcision. And the rest
of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that

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would feel themselves ostracized until they had embraced the Jewish law, and thus a measure of constraint would be brought to bear upon them in order to induce them to do so. In any case, it would not be fair to make James up at Jerusalem responsible for the action of his messengers at Antioch, when we do not know but that they were exceeding their authority, if the words in Acts xv. 1 are to be attributed to them.

eat with the Gentiles: contrary to Jewish custom and especially reprobated by the Pharisees, the party specified in Acts xv. 1–5 as interfering with the liberty of the church at Antioch. Peter's conduct at this point is not to be set down to weakness or lack of principle. Further on Paul implies that it was based on that Apostle's convictions of Christian liberty. The vision at Joppa points in this direction (Acts x. 15). The custom of the *agapē* in the early church gave great importance to the question. To refuse to eat with the Gentiles would mean to decline to meet them at those feasts of brotherly love, and the Lord's supper, with which it was then associated.

drew back: in the imperfect tense, signifying a slow and cautious movement.

separated: in the aorist tense, indicating the final result. Peter gradually withdrew himself till at length he was quite separated from the Gentile Christians.

fearing, &c. Thus it is Paul's view of the case that Peter changed his conduct simply out of fear, dreading the censure of the narrower-minded Jewish Christians from Jerusalem. We should like to have Peter's version of the incident. Possibly that Apostle actually wavered in his opinion as to what was right in the matter when strong pressure was brought to bear upon him. His whole career reveals him as a man under the influence of the impressions of the moment. To a man of Paul's strong, independent character such a nature would not be easily intelligible.

13. the rest of the Jews: Jewish members of the church at Antioch. Previously, encouraged by Peter's example, these people had freely associated with their Gentile brethren. Thus unity of a very liberal stamp had prevailed. Peter's conduct led to a serious breach of church unity.

dissembled likewise. Thus Paul considers that this change of conduct was pure dissimulation, holding that both Peter and the Jewish Christians really believed in the liberal position and only pretended to share the principles of James's messengers. Whether this is quite fair to them or not, it is plain that

even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.
But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according 14
to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before
them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles,

Paul did not believe Peter's fundamental position to be that of the strong Judaizers, the view of the so-called Tübingen hypothesis which represents the early church to be divided into two antagonistic parties, on the one side Paul and his followers, on the other James, Peter, John and all the other apostles and Jewish Christians. Paul here declares that when Peter sided with the Judaizers that Apostle was hiding his real convictions, so sure is he that Peter was at heart in agreement with his own position.

even Barnabas. Why 'even'? Because Barnabas had been Paul's travelling companion, and indeed, as the senior, regarded as the leader in the mission to the heathen which had resulted in the founding of the Galatian churches. The Galatians might well be amazed that their senior evangelist should have succumbed to the influence of the party of exclusiveness. Indirectly the prominence given to Barnabas is a testimony in favour of the 'South Galatian theory,' since it was on the tour through Antioch, Pisidium, Derbe, and Lystra that Paul and Barnabas travelled together.

14. uprightly: more exactly 'in a straight course.' Paul does not mean to insinuate want of integrity. His words should be interpreted objectively, with regard to the course pursued by Peter and his followers. This Paul finds to deviate from the norm of the gospel.

according to the truth, &c.: the line from which they deviated. Paul holds that the truth of the gospel is with the liberalism that unites Jews and Gentiles in the common Christian family.

before them **all:** perhaps neither a wise nor a kind course, considering that Peter was the senior Apostle. Peter's conduct was public and his example had spread, and therefore Paul would feel that it must be publicly rebuked. Still, if we read between the lines we may see that he was carried away by the heat of his indignation beyond the bounds of the considerateness due to such a man as Peter. His excuse is that his indignation—if not his way of shewing it—was justified by the seriousness of the crisis. To Paul everything vital was at stake. If the Gentiles were to be cut off from communion with the Jewish Christians, the unity of the brotherhood would be fatally severed, and all who believed in the position of the apostolic church would necessarily regard the converts from heathenism, who followed Paul's liberal teaching, as of a lower grade.

and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles
15 to live as do the Jews? We being Jews by nature, and

how compellest thou, &c. Peter had lived in the free Gentile style until the friends of James had arrived at Antioch. By using the present tense, 'If thou livest,' Paul here assumes that this is the older apostle's habit. And yet by now changing his line of action he is tending to draw the Gentiles after him into the narrower Jewish way. When Paul uses the word 'compel' he cannot mean direct action, of which we have no hint. To people of scrupulous conscience anxious to follow the lead of so eminent a personage, Peter's example virtually amounted to compulsion. The result would be that such people would seek circumcision, become proselytes to Judaism, and take on them the yoke of the Jewish law.

ii. 15–21. *The new life in Christ.* Even Peter and Paul, though Jews by nature, were not justified by the law, but had their justification through faith in Christ, since nobody can be justified by the law. This does not allow of continuance in sin, which would be most inconsistent with faith in Christ. The old life is crucified with Christ: the new life is enjoyed through faith in the Son of God who manifested his love by dying. This grace of love would be nullified if, after all, justification were to be got by way of law.

This passage begins as part of Paul's expostulations with Peter and so continues to the end of verse 17, where the plural is dropped and the paragraph passes into the first person singular, indicating that the Apostle is adding his own comment. Still the whole passage is so much of a piece that it is best to read it as one section. It would seem that even in the earlier part Paul is not certainly reproducing the *ipsissima verba* of his address to Peter. The passage reads rather like a meditative working up of what was said in the heat of controversy with later reflection. Thus the historical recital melts into doctrinal discussion, and we are not told how the incident ended—probably not satisfactorily, for if Peter had yielded at the time Paul would have said so. It would have made an excellent point in the argument with the Galatians. Probably therefore the apostles parted on this occasion without coming to an agreement. Yet the quarrel passed off in course of time, and Peter came more and more to accept Paul's views. This is proved by the fact that 1 Peter is thoroughly Pauline, and betrays a sympathetic acquaintance with some of Paul's Epistles.

15. We: Peter and Paul.

Jews by nature: Jews born, not even proselytes, much less uncircumcised Gentiles. Cf. Phil. iii. 4, 5.

not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is 16
not justified by the works of the law, save through faith

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sinners of the Gentiles: an ironical expression. The Jews reckoned the Gentiles as such to be sinners. Cf. 1 Macc. ii. 44: 'they mustered a host, and smote sinners in their anger.' In Luke vi. 32 we have 'even *sinners* love those that love them,' corresponding to Matt. v. 47, 'do not even the *Gentiles* the same?'

16. knowing, &c. Again Paul assumes that Peter shares his fundamental position. As Christians they had both reached justification by means of faith.

justified: 'pronounced righteous,' 'reckoned to be righteous,' and in Paul especially 'treated as righteous.' (1) The Greek word (*dikaioō*) is often used in the sense of clearing of guilt; cf. Gen. xlv. 16, 'How shall we clear ourselves?' Exod. xxiii. 7, 'I will not justify the wicked'; Ps. cxliii. 2, 'In thy sight shall no man living be justified.' This is a familiar English use of the word. Thus Shakespeare has it: 'I cannot justify whom the law condemns' (2 Henry VI, Act ii. Scene 3). This is the most frequent sense of the word in the gospels (cf. Matt. xii. 37; Luke x. 29). But for this usage the original innocence of the person justified is requisite. (2) A secondary meaning appears in the teaching of Paul when the word is used for a guilty person. Here it does not mean making righteous in character, but treating as righteous, i. e. treating as though a person were justified in the original sense of the word. This is equivalent to forgiveness; it is forgiveness viewed from the standpoint of law and right. At the same time as implying the re-establishment of right relations with God, the result of it is called 'righteousness' (Rom. iii. 21–24). This peculiar meaning of the word—since made familiar, especially through Luther's teaching—is frequent in Romans and Galatians, but scarcely to be met with anywhere else—only once in 1 Cor. (vi. 11) and once in Titus (iii. 7). It also appears once in Acts (xiii. 39). In this sense of forgiveness the word occurs nowhere else in the N. T., except perhaps in Luke xviii. 14. It is used in James in the earlier sense of acquitting or pronouncing innocent, apart from the notion of forgiveness. It does not occur at all in Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, or Revelation.

the works of the law: rather 'works of law,' i. e. works prescribed by law.

save: more correct than 'but' (A. V.), the Greek expression (*ean mē*) meaning 'except.' Yet Paul cannot intend to teach that justification is by works of the law if only faith is added, the very position of the Judaizing Christians which he is contesting.

in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall
17 no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners,

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Lightfoot connects the clause directly with 'justified' as 'not justified except through faith.' Otherwise we are bound to give it the meaning 'but,' although no satisfactory instances of such a meaning can be adduced, and the grammarians (Winer, &c.) deny that it ever has it.

through faith. Faith is not the ground of justification, but the means through which it is received.

faith in Jesus Christ: not '*the* faith of Jesus Christ,' as in the A. V. There is no article. It does not mean the Christian religion, but trust reposed in Jesus Christ. The great positive idea of the Epistle is here introduced, that justification is given on condition of personal faith in Jesus Christ.

even we: Peter and Paul; emphatic.

believed: came to have faith. The verb is in the aorist, signifying a single act in the past.

by faith. A different preposition is used here, meaning literally 'out of,' which might suggest that faith is itself the ground of justification, if we had not just had the more exact expression 'through faith.' Probably Paul has no subtle distinction in mind, but varies the prepositions for the sake of euphony, as he varies the names—Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus.

no flesh: Hebraism, meaning no man. The sentence is a quotation from Ps. cxliii. 2, 'for in thy sight shall no man living be justified,' somewhat freely rendered. The LXX has the expression 'no flesh' in this passage. The clause 'by the works of the law' is not in the psalm, but is here added by Paul. He would consider it appropriate because the psalm was part of the Scriptures of Jews living under the law, who would be seeking justification by legal works, if at all. In Rom. iii. 20 the same passage is quoted and with the same addition by Paul, but also with the words 'in his sight,' not given in Galatians, which more certainly identify the sentence with the verse from the psalm where it also occurs. The impossibility of obtaining any other justification asserted in order that we may be shut up to the one available justification through faith in Christ.

17. The following are the most important of the various proposed interpretations of this verse:—(1) It is a Jewish objection complaining that since to abandon the law is sinful, if Christ encourages such conduct he must be ministering to sin,

is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build 18
up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself

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a conclusion which Paul indignantly repudiates because he rejects the premises, and does not admit that to abandon the law is sinful. There is no indication that Paul is bringing in an objection from any opponent; and such an objection would demand a more complete answer than an indignant repudiation. Moreover it would not lead on to the next sentence. (2) It is an argument by the Apostle to shew that abandonment of the law is not sinful, since if it were, Christ by encouraging it would be ministering to sin, an utterly unbelievable conclusion. For this argument to have a starting-point there must have been some previous statement of the assumption that it is sinful to abandon the law. (3) It is admitted that to abandon the law is to place ourselves in the position of sinners, not because it is wicked to do this, but because we lose the privileges of the law and range ourselves with the heathen in this matter. Yet it is outrageous to charge Christ with ministering to sin. This view gives the same meaning to the word 'sinners,' with its touch of irony, that we had in verse 15, i. e. as equivalent to Gentiles, or heathen, people out of the pale of the law. Thus we see how it is introduced here. With the previous interpretations it comes in abruptly, apart from any apparent reason. Then the expression 'found' best suits this meaning. It does not point to a definite overt act, such as the abandonment of the law would be; it indicates the discovery of a condition already existing. The Pauline Christian, though a Jew, is seen to be on a level with the Gentile sinner. He too, notwithstanding his law, must be regarded as a sinner in order to be justified by Christ. Nevertheless it would be outrageous to say that Christ brings about this condition.

God forbid: *lit.* 'let it not be'; an indignant repudiation of an utterly impossible notion.

18. I. Paul now passes to the first person singular, thereby dropping the form of speech suitable for his expostulation with Peter and directly addressing the Galatians.

build up again, &c.: reconstruct the obligation of the law, as Peter had been doing at Antioch by returning to Jewish exclusiveness.

which I destroyed. There is no evidence that Paul had destroyed the obligations of the law before this by directly agitating against them. But in dispensing with those obligations when carrying on his missionary work he had been virtually destroying them.

I prove myself a transgressor: in having previously

19 a transgressor. For I through the law died unto the law,
20 that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; *and yet* no longer I, but Christ liveth

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abandoned the law. The word 'transgressor' is always used for one who breaks the definite commandments of the written law, an offender against the law as such. If the law is to be restored as a standard of judgement, the man who is guilty of having repudiated it is plainly an offender against it.

19. through the law, &c.: *lit.* 'through law died to law.' The absence of the articles helps the interpretation of the phrase. It cannot mean that the law as containing types and prophecies of Christ tends to liberate us from its own bondage, because this would involve allusions to the specific contents of the Mosaic law, *the* law. It must refer to the operation of law in general. This Paul discusses more fully in Rom. vii, where he shews that it was the function of law to awaken the consciousness of guilt. Now he also shews that there is no escape from guilt by way of law. Therefore the only liberation must be found in ceasing to live under the accusing law. Thus the law, by making its yoke intolerable, provokes us to abandon it.

that I might live unto God. The purpose of this abandonment of law is not antinomian licence, but a life set in relation to God. That was prevented by the bondage of law and the oppression of guilt accompanying it. Then the supreme consideration in life was our depressing relation to condemning law. When that is dissolved we are free to come into personal relations with God. Henceforth the chief consideration becomes how we may adjust our lives in regard to God. Thus God takes the place of law.

20. crucified with Christ: Paul's doctrine of the mystical union. His union with Christ involves a personal experience corresponding to the death of Christ on the cross, and produced by it. In that experience his old life perishes under the influence of the cross of Christ. Cf. Rom. vi. 6, 'our old man was crucified with *him*'; Col. ii. 20.

yet I live; and yet **no longer I.** The reading in the margin of the R. V. seems preferable on account of the contrast that follows, viz. 'And it is no longer I that live, but Christ,' &c. Paul teaches that crucifixion with Christ is followed by resurrection with him (cf. Col iii. 1). Here he writes of the new life, after death with regard to the old state. So completely is it dependent on Christ and directed by Christ that Paul considers it to be no longer his only life, but simply Christ, who has taken possession of him, living in him.

in me: and that *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, *the faith* which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void 21
the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.

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now: after the great change, in the present Christian condition.

in the flesh: *lit.* 'in flesh,' a Hebraism indicating human life on earth. Although the Christian life is like a resurrection, it is still spent amid material surroundings and with a human body.

in faith: set in antithesis to 'in flesh,' indicating another sphere in which this new life is spent. It is in the body and in the world, but not confined to these things; it is also lived in the sphere of faith. Possibly, however the preposition 'in' is instrumental (a Hebraism), so that the phrase means 'by faith'; but this misses the antithesis of 'in flesh.'

the Son of God. Some of the oldest and best MSS. read 'God and Christ.' But in verse 16 Paul wrote of Jesus Christ only as the specific object of the faith here referred to, and in any case the clause which follows can only refer to Christ.

loved me: a touching personal utterance shewing how deeply the Apostle feels what he is writing. The past tense is used because he is thinking especially of the one past proof, love, which he proceeds to specify. The love of Christ here appears as the reason for faith in him.

gave himself up: i. e. to death (cf. i. 4). The word is frequently used in the gospels for the giving up of Jesus to death by God or by men (cf. Mark ix. 31, x. 33). Here Paul applies it to Christ's own act in surrendering himself to death.

for me: on behalf of me, for my benefit. The Greek preposition is *hyper,* which has this meaning, not *anti,* which would be used if the Apostle meant 'instead of,' in the sense that Christ gave himself to die instead of our dying. Whether Paul would have said that or not, all his language here implies is that Christ's death was for our benefit. This is according to the Apostle's invariable custom. He frequently uses the word *hyper* in this connexion (e. g. Rom. i. 32, ix. 3; 1 Cor. i. 13, v. 7; Gal. iii. 13), never *anti.*

21. make void: nullify, sometimes rendered 'reject' (cf. Luke vii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 19). To return to the law would be to nullify or reject the grace which God has manifested in the love of Christ and his surrender to death.

the grace of God: that special favour which was manifested in the love and sacrifice of Christ.

righteousness: primarily 'rightness,' a substantive corresponding to the adjective which means 'right' and 'just.' This is the sense of the word in the O. T. (cf. Ps. vii. 8; Prov. viii. 20; Isa. lxiv. 5, &c.). It is also used in this sense in the gospels (cf. Matt. iii. 15, v. 20; Luke i. 75; John xvi. 8, &c.) and other parts of the N. T. (cf. Acts x. 35; Jas. i. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 John ii. 29; Rev. xix. 11, &c.). In fact wherever it is employed by our Lord or by any O. T. or N. T. writer, except Paul, this is the meaning of the word. Moreover Paul himself uses it in this sense (cf. Rom. vi. 13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 2 Cor. vi. 14; Eph. v. 9, &c.). But the Apostle also employs the term in a specific theological sense which is peculiar to him among Scripture authorities, identifying justification with righteousness. Manifestly he does so here. In verses 16, 17 he discusses justification, which we have seen is simply forgiveness regarded from the standpoint of law and right (see note on verse 16). Then in verse 21 he is evidently referring to the same subject. That is clear from (1) the use of the connecting word 'for,' and (2) the reference to the law as not bringing about the desired result, which was more fully described in verses 16, 17. Yet it is not 'justification' that he names here, but 'righteousness.' Righteousness then is the condition of being justified. The idea is that the Divine act of forgiveness puts the soul in right relations with God. Seeing that in Paul's teaching those right relations are the sources of the new life of holiness, they must contain the germs of righteousness in the old sense of the word, i. e. of a right character and right conduct. When Paul writes about 'righteousness of God' (Rom. i. 17) as a gift to us, and more explicitly as 'righteousness which is of God' (Phil. iii. 9) he means forgiveness of sins in the first instance; but this forgiveness is viewed as restoring right relations with God, so that the man who has it stands right with God. The same identification of justification, or forgiveness of sins, with righteousness is worked out more fully in Romans (iii. 21–26) where Paul first described 'a righteousness of God' given to men, and then proceeds to refer to this as a 'being justified.'

through the law: better 'through law'; if law is the means by which righteousness is attained.

for naught: rather 'unnecessarily,' 'without sufficient reason,' a meaning of the Greek word (*dōrean*) not found in classic authors, but met with in the LXX (Ps. xxxiv [xxxv], 7; lxviii [lxix] 4, quoted in John xv. 25). If the end of Christ's death, which was to give us righteousness, put us in right relations with God through the forgiveness of sins, could be effected in some other way, namely by means of law, then that great sacrifice was unnecessary.

O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose 3
eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? This 2

II. Doctrinal Argument. iii. 1—v. 1.

iii. 1-5. *An appeal to experience.* Paul appeals to the experience of the Galatians, whom he considers to be quite senseless, since they have received the clearest instruction in the gospel, and yet now are resorting to the law. Did they receive the Spirit by the law? If not, having begun in the better way, do they expect to be perfected by adopting the inferior method? Is their present exercise of spiritual gifts derived from works of law or from what they hear in faith?

1. foolish: senseless, wanting in intelligence.

Galatians. See Introduction, p. 58 ff. Prof. Ramsay points out that this title, drawn from the name of the Roman province, would be especially appropriate for those of the inhabitants who had adopted the Græco-Roman civilization, among whom the Apostle would be likely to find most of his converts. In contrast to the rest of the population, which was still involved in Asiatic customs of thought and life, these more cultured people would regard themselves as superior in intelligence. Yet even they are behaving senselessly. The personal address by name only occurs here and in 2 Cor. vi. 11; Phil. iv. 15; 1 Tim. i. 18, vi. 20; and in all cases the context shews that Paul is moved with deep feeling.

bewitch. The Greek word (*ebaskanen*) means the blighting of the evil eye. The Galatians are behaving so senselessly that they must be under a spell. Who is it that has cast an evil eye on them?

openly set forth. The more usual meaning of the Greek word is 'to write before' (cf. Rom. xv. 4; Eph. iii. 3), and if intended here would refer to the O. T. prophecies of Christ. But it would be out of place to bring in such an allusion at this point with reference to the Galatians. Besides, the expression 'before whose eyes' points to a different meaning. Lightfoot renders the word 'was posted up,' 'placarded,' seeing that it was commonly used in this sense for public notices and proclamations. But is not this meaning harsh when applied to the idea of presenting Christ as crucified? The root-word (*graphō*) is used of a painter's art—hence our word 'graphic' for what is vividly pictorical. Accordingly Grimm-Thayer suggests here the meaning 'depict (paint, portray) before the eyes.' Paul in his preaching had vividly portrayed Christ as crucified; the picture had been set before the eyes of the Galatians. For them to be bewitched as by the evil eye shews that they had taken their eyes off that central object of contemplation.

only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by
3 the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are
ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now
4 perfected in the flesh? Did ye suffer so many things

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crucified: without the addition 'among you' as in the A. V., which is absent from the best MSS. The notion of Christ being crucified afresh among the Galatians in their crucifixion with him and dying to sin is not in Paul's mind. The word refers to the actual, historical crucifixion of Christ; it stands at the end of the sentence for emphasis, the significance of which is made evident by the previous verse. The Galatians were behaving as though the death of Christ had not been necessary to their salvation. Did they forget that it was as crucified, with especial reference to his cross, that Christ had been depicted to them in Paul's preaching?

2. This only, &c. Here is a critical dilemma. Paul will be satisfied if his correspondents will answer this one question, for that will settle the dispute. If they had the gift of the Spirit by means of the law, well and good; let them keep to the law. But if not, they have no excuse for turning to the law.

Received: the aorist tense, indicating one event in the past, an experience frequently referred to in the apostolic church, when the Spirit of God was given to the converts (cf. Acts x. 44, xix. 20).

the works of the law: rather, 'works of law.' See note on ii. 16.

the hearing of faith. This might be rendered 'the message,' as in the margin of the R. V.; but as it is contrasted with works it is more likely to refer to the personal experience of the Galatians, and 'hearing' is therefore the probable idea.

of faith: not '*the* faith' as the substance of Christian teaching, a meaning never found in Paul, or at least not so early as this; nor 'faith' as a topic of preaching, for the gospel was what Paul preached; but faith characterizing the hearing. The whole expression means 'the hearing which was with faith.' This is the view of Lipsius. Lightfoot's interpretation, 'which comes of faith,' is less natural. The hearing does not come from faith; but faith accompanies and characterizes it.

3. having begun in the Spirit: in the power of the Spirit of God, the receiving of which has just been mentioned.

perfected. The Galatians were not formally abandoning Christian grace and falling back on mere Judaism. Their position, as here indicated, was that of adding the observance of the Jewish law to their Christian faith as a means of attaining perfection.

in vain? if it be indeed in vain. He therefore that 5
supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among
you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing

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This is different from the question at Antioch referred to in Acts xv. 1, which made circumcision a condition of salvation. Here it is only proposed to be added to Christian faith as a means of attaining perfection.

in the flesh: by external ordinances, especially circumcision. The paradox is in the notion that this lower process could come after the higher in order to crown it with perfection. To imagine such a thing is extremely foolish.

4. Did ye suffer, &c. Lightfoot remarks, 'The history indeed says nothing of persecutions in Galatia'; but that is on the North-Galatian theory. Lightfoot himself points out that 'the converts to the faith in Pisidia and Lycaonia . . . were exposed to suffering' (as recorded in Acts xiv. 2, 5, 19, 22), and now it seems to be proved that the Galatians to whom the Epistle is directed were the people of these very districts (see Introduction, p. 58 ff.).

in vain. The history in Acts shews that the persecution from which the Galatians suffered had been stirred up by the Jews. But if the Christians had accepted Judaism, of course this persecution would not have occurred. And now if after enduring it they proceed to adopt the Jewish religion, all they have suffered for their distinctive Gentile Christian faith goes for nothing. Why did they make the bold stand before persecution if afterwards they would voluntarily concede the very point on which the persecution turned?

if it be indeed in vain. The Apostle cannot really believe them to be so completely stultifying themselves.

5. He: God, who is always regarded as the Giver of the Spirit.

supplieth: an emphatic word meaning 'to bestow liberally.'

miracles: *lit.* 'powers'; but one of the usual words in the N. T. for those events which we call 'miracles' (cf. Mark vi. 2, 5, 14, &c.). Paul here assumes that miracles were occurring among the Galatians. In writing to the Corinthians he distinguishes 'workings of miracles' ('powers') from 'gifts of healing' (1 Cor. xii. 9, 10). Possibly by 'miracles' he means the exorcism of demons, one of the works of the Spirit most frequently referred to in the early church. Paul appeals to the testimony of these miracles. On what condition were they brought about—by performing works of law? or as a result of hearing with faith the message of the gospel? Experience must tell the Galatians that the latter was the case.

6 of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was
7 reckoned unto him for righteousness. Know therefore
that they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham.

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iii. 6-9. *The example of Abraham.* Paul appeals to the classical instance of Abraham, whose faith was reckoned to him for righteousness. Then surely those who have faith are the true sons of Abraham. The Scriptures predicted the justification of the Gentiles by faith in the promise of Abraham's blessing, which blessing the men of faith share with the patriarch.

6. Quoted from the LXX of Gen. xv. 6; cited again in Rom. iv. 3; Jas. ii. 23.

Abraham. This patriarch was venerated by the Jews as their great religious hero, and it was a common practice for Rabbis to argue points of difference with reference to his life-story, seeking to determine their controversies by the precedents they found in it. Therefore Paul could distinctly score a point by shewing that this supreme historical authority supported his teaching about faith.

believed God. The specific act of faith was concerned with God's promise of a son to Abraham in his old age and numerous descendants.

for righteousness: not 'instead of,' but 'as equivalent to righteousness.' The preposition (*eis*) is used in the sentences, 'they shall be one flesh' (Gen. ii. 24), *lit.* 'for (*eis*) one flesh'; and 'they shall be my people' (Jer. xxxi. 33; cf. Heb. viii. 10), *lit.* 'to me for (*eis*) a people.' God takes Abraham's faith in His promise as itself equivalent to righteousness, apart from the performance of any external actions by the patriarch.

7. **Know.** The R. V. margin has 'Ye perceive,' and Lightfoot advocates the indicative 'Ye know.' But did the Galatians know what Paul proceeds to state here? It rather follows as a consequence of the previous verse. If the specific characteristic of Abraham is faith, then they who share in his faith are his true children. The point of the argument lies in the fact that the Judaizing tendency of the Galatians revealed in them a desire to come in for the privileges of the sons of Abraham which Jews claimed to enjoy. They will do that, Paul argues, by resembling Abraham in the righteousness God recognized in him, i. e. in possessing faith.

they which be of faith: *lit.* 'they who come from faith,' in accordance with a common idiom. Cf. 'them that are factious' (*lit.* 'them that are of faction,' Rom. ii. 8), 'they which are of the law' (Rom. iv. 14). Though the idiom in John expresses origin, that idea is lost sight of in common usage. Thus the phrase simply means 'men of faith,' 'men who have faith.'

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the 8
Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto
Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all the nations be blessed.
So then they which be of faith are blessed with the faith- 9
ful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the 10
law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every

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8. the scripture, foreseeing. The singular means some specific passage of Scripture (cf. Mark xii. 10; Luke iv. 21; John vii. 38; Rom. iv. 3), the plural 'Scriptures' being used for the O. T. as a whole (cf. Mark xii. 24; Luke xxiv. 27; John v. 39; Rom. xv. 4). The passage of Scripture is here personified as though it were a teacher. In verse 22 a passage of Scripture is supposed to be active—'the scripture hath shut up,' &c.

preached the gospel beforehand. The promise to Abraham is taken as a proclamation of the gospel of blessing for the heathen.

In thee, &c.: a sentence combining Gen. xii. 3, 'in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,' and Gen. xviii. 18, 'all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.' O.T. critics consider these passages to mean that the nations will bless themselves by Abraham, taking his blessing as the type of blessing they will desire for themselves. Be that as it may, evidently Paul understands them to convey a distinct promise of blessing which the heathen are to receive through Abraham.

9. faithful: possessing faith, believing; not here 'trustworthy.' We have this meaning elsewhere (cf. 2 Cor. vi. 15, 'a believer,' for the same Greek word).

iii. 10–14. *The curse of the law.* Paul proceeds further. Not only is the law needless and superfluous, as the instance of Abraham shews, it is positively hurtful. Those who go the way of the law are actually under a curse, since that is threatened against all who do not keep it with absolute fidelity. That nobody is justified by law is proved by the Scripture statement that the righteous shall live by faith, which is not the way of the law. Christ, by becoming a curse for us in his crucifixion, redeemed us from the law's curse in order that through him Abraham's blessing might come to the Gentiles and we receive the promised gift of the Spirit.

10. of the works of the law. For the idiom see note on verse 7, 'they which be of faith.' Here it means the people whose characteristic way in religion is to observe the works of the law.

it is written: a phrase indicating authoritative Scripture.

one which continueth not in all things that are written in
11 the book of the law, to do them. Now that no man is
justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for,
12 The righteous shall live by faith; and the law is not
of faith; but, He that doeth them shall live in them.

It is met with in contemporary Greek in Egypt for any authoritative document to which an appeal is made.

Cursed, &c. Deut. xxvii. 26, the conclusion of the curses pronounced on Mount Ebal. Since nobody ever has kept the whole law it follows that all who are under the law are subject to its curse. It is a curious fact that the words 'every one' and 'all things' are not in the Hebrew, although they occur in the LXX Greek from which Paul quotes them. Lightfoot points out that Jerome attributed the omission to a wilful corruption of the text on the part of the Jews for fear they should appear to be under the curse—a groundless charge.

the book of the law: the Pentateuch.

11. justified. See note on ii. 16.

by the law: *lit.* 'in law,' meaning either (1) 'by means of law,' according to the common Hebrew idiom which uses the preposition 'in' instrumentally; or (2) 'in the region of law,' in the law religion. Lipsius prefers the latter meaning; but the absence of the article favours the former, which is both in the A. V. and in the R. V.

The righteous shall live, &c.: quoted from Hab. ii. 4; also cited in Rom. i. 17, and Heb. x. 38. The LXX has '*my* righteous man.' Paul corrects this by returning to the Hebrew, which has not the pronoun 'my.' In the language of the prophet 'faith' stands for 'fidelity'; so that the sentence meant originally 'the righteous man shall live by his fidelity,' that is to say, as the context shews, he shall be preserved amidst the dangers of the Chaldæan invasion because of his steadfastness and loyalty to God. But of course such fidelity is the outcome of faith.

righteous: better than 'just' as in the A.V. The word does not mean 'the strict,' 'the upright,' simply; but it has the more comprehensive sense of general righteousness.

12. not of faith: not possessing faith as its characteristic principle. The preposition (*ek*) literally means 'out of' and Lightfoot gives it that signification here; but see note on verse 7.

He that doeth, &c.: quoted from Lev. xviii. 5.

in them: meaning 'by means of them,' the Hebraistic instrumental sense of 'in.'

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having 13
become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every

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13. redeemed: not the usual Scripture word for redemption (*apolutrōsis*), which directs attention to the consequent liberation. The Greek word used here (*exēgorasen*) points rather to the act of buying. It might be rendered 'bought up,' but it is commonly employed for the ransom of slaves. The word is in the aorist tense, indicating a single act, which the context shews to be the dying of Christ.

us: Paul and other Christian Jews who had been under the law and therefore liable to its curse.

the curse of the law. See note on verse 10.

having become a curse. The Hebrew language, being deficient in adjectives, frequently employs substantives with an adjectival meaning. The expression 'becoming a curse' in our language would most naturally mean 'coming to be a means of cursing people.' Of course that is not the idea here; Paul means 'becoming accursed,' or 'coming under a curse.' Similarly he writes of Christ being 'made to be sin' (2 Cor. v. 21). This language might be interpreted by readers of the O. T. with reference to the transactions of the 'Day of Atonement,' when the goat, over the head of which the high-priest had pronounced the sins of the people, was driven out to the demon of the wilderness as an accursed thing (see Lev. xvi. 8, 21, 22). The miserable fate of this creature is powerfully portrayed in Holman Hunt's picture of 'The Scapegoat.'

for us: on our behalf. See ii. 20, note.

for it is written: appeal to the authority of Scripture. See note on verse 10.

Cursed is every one, &c.: quoted from Deut. xxi. 23 in the LXX. The Hebrew original is, 'for he that is hanged is accursed of God.' To be hanged, impaled, or crucified was reckoned as undergoing an accursed form of punishment. If it was brought about under the law it was regarded as the infliction of God's curse. Now Christ suffered from one of these horrible kinds of death. Consequently, Paul argues, the curse of it fell on him. Yet the Apostle does not give the full phrase 'accursed *of God*,' for he could not apply that to Christ whom he would not think of as coming under God's curse. Still, as Christ died the accursed death in the mere fact that he was crucified, that curse, the very curse of being crucified, fell on Christ. His being crucified was his endurance of the curse; so awful a death could not be thought of as anything short of a curse. The teaching of the whole verse is that by submitting to that accursed death on our behalf Jesus Christ freed us from the curse of the law.

14 one that hangeth on a tree: that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been

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14. that upon the Gentiles, &c. The purpose of Christ's redemption is that the Gentiles might receive the blessing of Abraham. A gap in Paul's argument is here apparent. He has just spoken of deliverance from the curse of the law. Now he assumes that, as a consequence, the law itself ceases to be binding. The implied idea is that, if it has lost its sanction in the punishment it threatens, it ceases to be effective. Consequently it is now a dead letter. Therefore, in spite of its proscriptions, the Gentiles whom it had excluded from the privileges of Israel are now able to enjoy them.

the blessing of Abraham. See verse 8.

in Christ Jesus: by spiritual union with Christ Jesus.

we. Here Paul joins himself with the Gentiles. The pronoun is now most comprehensive, embracing all Christians.

the promise of the Spirit: not the promise made by the Spirit, but the promised gift which consists in the Holy Spirit bestowed on Christians; because (1) Paul has not spoken of this promise as coming from the Spirit; he has referred it to Scripture personified; and (2) he continually treats the gift of the Spirit as the chief present blessing of the gospel (cf. verse 5). This he takes to be part of Abraham's blessing; elsewhere he calls it the 'firstfruits' (Rom. viii. 23).

through faith: an emphatic final clause. This promised gift is received by means of faith, not by works of law, as the Galatians are bewitched into imagining.

iii. 15–18. *The ancient covenant.* Taking an analogy from human custom Paul points out that a covenant which has once been confirmed cannot be set aside. Such was God's promise to Abraham with its application to Christ. The law which was 430 years later than the confirmation of the covenant could not supersede it. And yet if the inheritance were to come by the law the promise would be neutralized.

15. Brethren: an urgent and affectionate address indicating the Apostle's desire to convince.

after the manner of men: according to the analogy of men's common actions in the world (cf. Rom. iii. 5; 1 Cor. ix. 8, xv. 32).

but a man's: introducing an *a fortiori* argument. Even

confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto.

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a man's covenant duly executed is inviolable ; much more then must this be the case with God's covenant.

covenant: the Greek word (*diathēkē*) usually means a 'will.' It has been generally supposed that this meaning only occurs once in the Bible (Heb. ix. 15–17), and that in all other cases the word means a formal agreement between two parties. This sense is given to it in the LXX, where the translators employ it as their rendering of the Hebrew word for 'covenant' (*bĕrîth*), probably preferring it to the usual Greek word for 'covenant' (*sunthēkē*), because the Divine covenant is an arrangement made by God which men accept from Him, not a bargain settled on equal terms. It is the classic use of the word for a 'will' or 'testament' that gives us our popular titles of the two parts of the Bible—the 'Old Testament' and the 'New Testament'—really the Old and New Covenants. But now a flood of light has been thrown on this remarkable word by means of the Greek papyri recently discovered in Egypt. Prof. Ramsay shews, on the testimony of Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt, how the wills that have been found among those documents, and the Greek customs concerning them, illustrate Paul's statements here. Accordingly he argues that in the present case the word means a 'will' and not a 'covenant.' The following considerations point in this direction : (1) The phrase 'after the manner of men' indicating the analogy of ordinary human practice, and therefore not the special LXX use of the word; (2) the mention of an inheritance; (3) the Greek custom which made the will a public document and irrevocable even before the death of the testator, though the Attic law allowed of codicils. Nevertheless, while Paul is apparently appealing to the example of a Greek 'will' for his argument, it is evident that he has the O. T. 'covenant' also in mind, since he argues from its history. Thus he seems to apply the Greek usage concerning wills to the ancient covenant, without considering any difference of meaning in the two applications of the word. The nature of the Greek 'will,' as public and unchangeable when once executed, would assimilate it to such a covenant as we meet with in the O. T., an agreement between two parties, but really determined in the first instance by one, since it is God's covenant offered to man.

confirmed. A Greek will had to be lodged in the Record Office and there examined, and if found valid duly authenticated.

no one maketh it void, &c. : according to the Greek custom, even during the life of the testator. The Roman custom, on which our law is founded, was different.

addeth thereto: fresh clauses, codicils. The Judaizers treated the law as something subsequently added to the original agreement with Abraham. But inasmuch as that was a covenant

16 Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his
seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as
17 of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I
say; A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law,
which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not

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or will, ordinary human usage in Greek society was contrary to such an interference with its original provisions.

16. promises: in the plural. Abraham received more than one promise (see Gen. xiii. 15, xvii. 8).

seed: Hebraism for 'children,' 'descendants.' The reference is to Gen. xiii. 15, 16.

not... to seeds, &c. Great ingenuity has been exercised in the attempt to prove the formal validity of Paul's argument here; but it is only reasonable to admit that he was using a Rabbinical method of treating Scripture which cannot be made to agree with exact exegesis. (1) The word 'seed' in the Hebrew original is collective, and stands for any number of seeds, the plural only being used for different kinds of seeds or for crops. (2) The narrative in Genesis distinctly refers to the multitude of Abraham's descendants, and makes no reference to one particular descendant who is to inherit the promises. Nevertheless the Rabbis applied these promises to the Messiah, and Paul was following a Jewish usage in the specific personal application he made of them. While his logic might not be called sound, the point to which he was coming could not be confuted, since it was in Christ that the promises to Abraham were fulfilled.

17. confirmed: see note on verse 15.

beforehand: before the law-giving.

the law: the Mosaic law, which was acknowledged in the Pentateuch.

four hundred and thirty years after: i. e. after Abraham received the covenant. The figure seems to be taken from Exod. xii. 40, where, however, in the Hebrew Bible 430 is given as the number of years for the sojourn in Egypt. The Samaritan Pentateuch and the LXX correct that by reading, instead of 'in Egypt,' the words 'in the land of Egypt and in the land of Caanan.' Paul here follows the LXX reading. Josephus also follows this reckoning in one passage (*Antiq.* ii. 15. 22), though elsewhere he follows the reckoning of the Hebrew text (*Antiq.* ii. 9. 1; *Bell. Iud.* v. 9. 4), which is borne out by Gen. xv. 13, where 400 years of oppression in Egypt are predicted, a prediction quoted by Stephen (Acts vii. 6). The obscurity of the early history of Israel renders it impossible for us to determine which reckoning may be nearest the facts of the case.

disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. For 18
if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise:
but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise. What 19
then is the law? It was added because of transgressions,

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doth not disannul. The later law cannot set aside the earlier covenant, since by its nature this is made for ever unalterable. Yet the Judaizing movement in Galatia assumed that to be the case, more or less, by requiring something beyond faith, although in the case of Abraham faith had been the sole condition of the covenant, God reckoning that for righteousness.

disannul: an old English word, an intensive form of annul. Thus Shakespeare has it:—

'Then Warwick *disannuls* great John of Gaunt' (3 *Henry VI*, iii. 3).

The Greek word is the negative form of the word previously rendered 'confirmed' (verses 15, 17). Being once 'confirmed,' the covenant cannot be subsequently made unconfirmed so as to have its provisions invalid.

18. the inheritance: as according to will, Abraham's blessing passing on to his 'seed.'

of the law: *lit.* 'out of law,' law regarded as the source from which it is derived.

no more: no longer; it had been a matter of promise from Abraham's time for those 430 years. On the supposed hypothesis this would be the case no longer.

of promise. The absence of the article before the word 'law' as well as before this word brings the contained ideas into comparison—law *versus* promise.

iii. 19-29. *The place and function of the law.* Having shewn that the law cannot supersede the older covenant Paul proceeds to discuss its place in the Divine economy of history. Temporarily necessitated for the sake of transgressions, it came through intermediary angels, by way of a mediator; while God in giving and executing His promises requires no such intermediaries. Not that the law stands in any way opposed to God's promises. If it could have given life it would have been admitted to be the way to righteousness. But what the O. T. does is to confine everything in subjection to sin in order that they who have faith in Christ may thus receive the promised blessing.

19. What then is the law? The argument seems to have led up to the conclusion that the law was a mere superfluity, even an unwarrantable intrusion. It is necessary then to see what the law really is.

added: i. e. in addition to the covenant.

till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; *and it was* ordained through angels by the hand
20 of a mediator. Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one;

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because of transgressions: not in order to prevent transgressions, for the context shews no such purpose in the law; nor in order to punish transgressions; but, according to Paul's peculiar conception of the law, in order to bring out transgressions as clearly acknowledged breaches of law. Therefore he uses the almost technical word 'transgression,' which means a breach of law, not the more common word 'sin.' Of course Paul could not deny the obvious, immediate purpose of the law as the Israelite code to be in part the restraint of evildoing. But much of this law did not concern crime or ethics; much of it was purely ceremonial. Besides, with Paul the supreme Divine purpose was much more than the immediate end to be served. That purpose, he held, was to convert vague, dormant sin into what could be recognized as the transgression of definite precepts. Cf. Rom. vii. 9: 'when the commandment came, sin revived' (or 'sprang into life').

the seed: Christ (cf. verse 16). The law was to do its work in bringing out transgression down to the time of Christ—no longer.

through angels. The Rabbis held that angels assisted in the giving of the law, basing the idea on the words 'he came from the ten thousands of holy ones' (Deut. xxxiii. 2, R. V.) This idea is referred to in Stephen's speech (Acts vii. 53). It is also found in Josephus (*Antiq.* xv. 5. 3). Paul mentions it here to indicate the inferiority of the law to the covenant which God gave directly to Abraham. If it be said that the O. T. does not warrant such a belief, at all events the Apostle's word would serve as an *argumentum ad homines*, since his Jewish opponents would accept this view of the law-giving.

a mediator: an intermediary, i. e. Moses. The specific notion of mediation in a quarrel is not here suggested.

20. Lightfoot observes that 'the number of interpretations of this passage is said to mount up to 250 or 300.' His own view is that now most generally adopted, viz.: The very idea of mediation supposes at least two persons between whom the mediation is carried on. That was the case with the law. There were two parties to it, God and Israel; and therefore it was conditioned by the action of each party. But it is different in the case of the promise. God gives this promise. Thus there is but one party to it, for God is one. Therefore the promise is absolute and unconditional. Another interpretation takes the word '**one**' qualitatively, understanding it to mean that God is not divided in

but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of 21
God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given
which could make alive, verily righteousness would have
been of the law. Howbeit the scripture hath shut up all 22
things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus
Christ might be given to them that believe.

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will and counsel, so that there can be no other will in Him conflicting with the will which gave the promise; but this does not suit the previous clause so well. Then there is the view that, since a mediator requires two parties, and God is one, man, or specifically Israel, must be the other. But Paul does not draw that conclusion, nor would it be in place.

21. promises. For the plural form see note on verse 16.

God forbid. See note on ii. 17.

make alive: more than justify; an actual personal change of condition from death in sin to life in God. Cf. ii. 20, iii. 11; Rom. vi. 23.

righteousness. See note on ii. 21. This is here closely associated with the idea of making alive. He who is justified and therefore has righteousness is, according to Paul's teaching, *ipso facto* endowed with the gift of eternal life. Cf. Rom. v. 21: 'that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through *righteousness* unto eternal *life*,' &c. The life is a consequence of the righteousness.

The whole verse is the answer to a supposed objection. If, as Paul has just been saying, the law is so different from the promises, must it not be in conflict with them and therefore after all nullify them? That would be so if the law were the Divinely appointed means of conferring the gift of eternal life. Then of course it would be the way to righteousness. But it is nothing of the kind.

22. the scripture: apparently a single passage in the O. T., personified as in verse 8. See note on that verse. But since Paul does not here cite any such passage it may be that he is using the singular 'scripture' for the Scriptures generally, though this would be contrary to custom.

shut up: as in prison; stronger than 'conclude' (A. V.).

all things: neuter for comprehensiveness, as we say 'the whole world' when we mean 'all mankind.' Cf. Col. i. 20, 'to reconcile all things.'

under sin: sin being the tyrant holding the world in subjection.

that: indicating the purpose of the universal imprisonment. It is to drive men to resort to the sole method of escape.

23 But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the
law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be
24 revealed. So that the law hath been our tutor *to bring us*

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the promise: not the word promising, but the thing promised, i. e. Abraham's blessing, now interpreted by Paul as developed into the gift of righteousness leading to eternal life. This is implied in the references to 'making alive' and 'righteousness' in the previous verse. What the law could not do is conferred in the promise.

by faith: *lit.* 'from,' or 'out of faith,' the same preposition (*ek*) that is translated 'of' in the phrase '*of* the law' (verse 21). It is a pity the Revisers did not mark the antithesis by translating this preposition in the same way in each case. The blessing does not spring from law; it springs from faith.

in Jesus Christ: as the object of faith.

them that believe: them that have faith—in Greek the verbal form of the word rendered 'faith.'

23. faith: rather, 'this faith'; *lit.* 'the faith,' which however might seem to mean 'the Christian religion,' a sense not given to the expression at so early a date as the Epistle. Paul means 'the faith just mentioned,' i. e. faith in Christ. His idea is that before 'this faith' came the Jews were imprisoned under the law.

we: Paul as a Jew and other Jews—not including the Gentile Galatians.

kept in ward: a word usually meaning 'guarded by soldiers.'

under the law. Paul had just said, 'shut up . . . under sin.' Here he must be referring to the same restraint. He does not think of the law as a system of obligations to be fulfilled, but as a standard of judgement for transgressors. Thus subjection to sin and being held in keeping by the law are two aspects of the same condition; it is because of sin that law has its power of holding in ward. It is only the law-breaker who loses his liberty and can be retained in a lock-up by the police as guardians of law.

unto: or 'for,' indicating the object of this guarding and imprisonment.

the faith. See note on 'faith' earlier in this verse.

afterwards . . . revealed: in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

24. tutor: an unfortunate word of the Revisers, not much better than the 'schoolmaster' of the A. V. The Greek word (*paidagōgos*) stands for a slave who was entrusted with the charge of children. In the Roman world he was also their teacher; but this was not the case among the Greeks, and Paul is writing to a people living in a state of Greek civilization, as several of his references to manners and customs shew. He does not mean that the law was the teacher training for Christ, and that the ideas

unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now 25
that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. For 26
ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For 27

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of Judaism were preliminary and preparatory to the fuller Christian truth. He simply means that the law was like a servant whose business it was to conduct the children to school. Christ is the one teacher.

to bring us **unto Christ**: (1) not by the partial development of a religious life under Judaism, which Paul never teaches; nor (2) as typical and symbolical of Christianity, leading to Christianity by foreshadowing it, an idea never found in Paul, though it is met with in Hebrews and pushed to an extreme in the so-called *Epistle of Barnabas*; but (3) by making people perceive their need of Christ through the sense of guilt and the consciousness of the danger of judgement which the law awakens, so that there is felt to be an imperative necessity of seeking what Paul calls justification, i. e. deliverance from this state of guilt, where alone it can be found, in Christ. His argument has distinctly led up to this point.

justified by faith. See notes on ii. 16.

25. we: still only Paul and the Jews, as far as they have become Christians.

26. ye . . . all: the Galatians, Gentile Christians.

sons of God. (1) According to Lightfoot, and apparently Prof. Ramsay also, this sonship is contrasted with the condition of childhood under a servant-custodian, as involving the liberty of older years. (2) Lipsius denies the contrast, and there is some reason for his view. Paul now deliberately drops the first person and uses the second person. That breaks the line of argument. The Gentiles never were as children under the law. Besides, the boy child is also a son. The notion of sonship does not in itself imply adult age. Still Paul evidently means that, since the Galatians are brought into sonship only as Christians, they do not have to undergo the irksome process to which Jewish Christians had been subject, since that was previous to their conversion to Christianity. Then the following paragraph distinctly contrasts the privilege of sonship with the restraints of childhood, and this throws us back on the first view.

in Christ Jesus. The Revisers are plainly right with their punctuation, which separates this clause from that which immediately precedes and connects it with the first clause of the sentence. He does not mean 'faith in Christ Jesus,' but 'sons of God . . . in Christ Jesus,' this sonship being realized by means of faith. He has written of the Jews being led to Christ (verse 24), and further down he describes Christians as being 'in Christ'

as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on
28 Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can
be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and
29 female: for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. And if ye

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(verse 28). The sonship is a state of intimate union with Christ. Paul is not here thinking of the universal Fatherhood of God and consequent Divine childhood of man, but of the sonship which he elsewhere compares to adoption when by their union with Christ the Gentile heathen enter God's family (cf. Rom. viii. 23).

27. baptized into: rather 'to,' or 'for,' a common usage of the Greek preposition (*eis*) signifying an end or purpose. Thus Paul uses the same preposition where he says that the Israelites were 'baptized *unto* Moses' (1 Cor. x. 2); it is employed with reference to the baptism of John the Baptist, where we read of a 'baptism of repentance unto remission of sins' (Mark i. 4; Luke iii. 3). It occurs in the baptismal formula where the A. V. reads 'baptizing them *in* the name of the Father,' &c. (Matt. xxviii. 19). The R. V. has 'into' in this passage; but the analogy of the other passages cited would rather suggest 'unto' or 'for,' in all cases the preposition indicating the object of the baptism.

into Christ. The phrase 'baptized to Christ' indicates the primitive form of baptism as simply 'to Christ' (Rom. vi. 3), or, 'to the name of Jesus' (cf. Acts xix. 5; 1 Cor. i. 13).

put on: a common O. T. idiom (cf. Job viii. 22, xxix. 14, xxxix. 19; Ps. xxxv. 26) found also elsewhere in the N. T. (1 Pet. v. 5). Cf. Rom. xiii. 14, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.' As the garment covers the person and is closely wrapped about him, so Christ is thought of as closely united to his people and giving them their characteristic appearance.

28. Jew . . . Greek: the racial distinction, named first, because it had given rise to the trouble in the Galatian churches. 'Greek' is the title of people of the Greek language and civilization, not simply Hellenes by birth. This title would suit the people of South Galatia, as it would not suit the North Galatians, the Gauls, who were Romanized, but who had not adopted Greek customs (see Introduction, p. 66 ff.).

bond . . . free: the great social distinction in the ancient world. Christianity did not formally denounce slavery. More misery than good would have come of that premature action. But by making master and slave equally brethren in the church it tended to remove the distinction between them, and so in the end to destroy the system on which that distinction rested.

male and female. Christianity, more than any other religion, gives equal rights to men and women.

are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he 4

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all are one: not of one kind or nature but a unity. Being all as one man in Christ by reason of the close union with him in which they all participate, Christians cannot maintain the old lines of separation. This is a favourite doctrine in Paul's teaching, and the establishment of the fact to which it refers was one of the principal ends of his labours. A great part of his work, as in collecting the contributions of the Gentile churches for the assistance of the Jewish church at Jerusalem, was directed towards bringing about the union of these two branches of Christendom.

29. Christ's: of Christ, by being in Christ.

then . . . Abraham's seed: because Christ is Abraham's seed.

heirs: because Abraham's family. Therefore Abraham's promises will be realized by all Christians irrespective of any difference of race, social distinction, sex. Then there is no room for the Jewish privileges after which the Galatians were so foolishly hankering. As Christians they already possess the best privileges of Israel.

iv. 1–7. *Sonship.* So long as he is a child the heir is kept under the authority of certain officials till the time determined in his father's will. Similarly while Paul and the Jewish Christians were in religious childhood, they were in subjection to the elements of the world. But on the completion of this time of tutelage God sent His Son in a human life subject to the law in order to redeem those under law and grant them sonship. The Galatians, too, being sons, have received the Spirit of God whereby they can acknowledge Him as their Father. This privilege of sonship involves freedom from servitude and the rights of heirs.

1. But I say. Paul reverts to the idea of verse 23 in order to confirm it from another point of view, and thus explain more fully both why the law was given and how it came to be superseded.

the heir. The whole argument here proceeds on the supposition of a case in which property is left to a child under a will by the death of his father. Since Paul regards God as the Father, this part of the analogy cannot be worked out in detail. Still it serves to set the case of the heir before us as, in some respects, representative of the Jews in the pre-Christian age.

a child: an infant in the eyes of the law, a minor. According to Roman law the title *infans* ceased at the age of seven,

differeth nothing from a bondservant, though he is lord
2 of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the
3 term appointed of the father. So we also, when we
were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments
4 of the world: but when the fulness of the time came,

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after which the child was competent to perform certain legal acts; he was under a guardian till he was fourteen; and he did not have full power over his property till he was twenty-five. But Prof. Ramsay has shewn that Paul is following the Greek usage, known in Syria and therefore probably also in Southern Galatia.

differeth nothing, &c.: in being under authority and not allowed to dispose of property.

lord of all: i. e. of all the estate left by his father, including the slaves, like whom, for the time being, he has to be in subjection, and even the very officials whom he has to obey.

2. guardians: the recognized Greek legal word for the guardians of minors, having personal charge of them, as seen in the inscriptions.

stewards: having charge of the property. Cf. the parable of 'The Unjust Steward' (Luke xvi. 1 ff.).

the term appointed of the father. Roman law did not permit the testator to fix the age at which a son came into his estate; but this was allowed by the Syrian Greek law, to the example of which therefore Paul is now appealing. It would be the law of his own native province Cilicia, and that also of the churches to which he was writing.

3. we: Paul and fellow Jews (cf. verse 5, 'that he might redeem them which were under the law'), distinguished from the Galatians who are addressed in verse 6 as 'ye.'

when we were children: reverting to the idea of verse 24 where the law is the servant in charge of children. Paul regards the pre-Christian condition of the Jews as a state of childhood. This has an important bearing on his whole argument, shewing why he regarded the Galatians as foolish in adopting Judaism. They were voluntarily putting themselves in that state of restrained infancy from which Christianity was giving the Jews deliverance.

bondage. Law is essentially bondage compared with the freedom of the Christian state.

the rudiments of the world. The Revisers follow Lightfoot in giving the word 'rudiments' here, Lightfoot understanding the reference to be to elementary teaching. The Greek word is sometimes used for the alphabet. With this sense the passage

God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the

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would describe the state of the Jews as possessing but the alphabet of religious knowledge in pre-Christian times. But there is much in favour of retaining the word 'elements' as in the A. V. That is a common use of the word (cf. Wisd. of Sol. vii. 17, xix. 18; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12, 'the elements shall be dissolved,' 'the elements shall melt with fervent heat'). The addition of the phrase 'of the world' favours this view. It is difficult to see any sense in the expression 'the rudiments of the world' understood as we apply the word 'rudiments' to a grammar or a science. But then it is difficult to see how the Jews were especially subject to the elements of nature. Most of the Fathers understood the expression to mean the sun, moon, and stars. In Jewish speculation these were supposed to represent angel-powers. In the apocryphal *Testament of Solomon*, the spirits say, 'We are the so-called elements, the world rulers of this world.' In verse 9 'the weak and beggarly rudiments' (A. V. 'elements') seem to be identified with 'them which by nature are no gods' (verse 8), and then the idea of the Galatians turning back to these old influences implies that even they, though heathen, had been under them previous to their conversion. This would not apply to the Jewish law; and yet we must give the word the same meaning in both places. If then we understand it here to refer to the heavenly bodies, the Jewish observance of sabbaths, new moons and other seasons (verse 10) would be thought of as like a heathenish return to subjection to the heavenly bodies that were supposed to rule these seasons (so Lipsius, and Prof. Massie, article 'Elements' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*).

4. the fulness of the time: the completion of the time, when the preliminary period had come to an end. This corresponds to 'the term appointed' (verse 2) by the father in his will determining when the heir shall enter into his estate (cf. Eph. i. 10).

God sent forth his Son. The idea is Christ coming into this world from God and as a result of God's action.

born of a woman: indicating an actual human birth, with consequent human nature and its physical frailty, not a mere Christophany, or appearance of Christ on earth. This phrase has no direct bearing on the subject of the virgin birth of Jesus, since every man is 'born of a woman.' On the other hand, it contains nothing to exclude the virgin birth, being simply silent on the question of paternity. Evidently no such question was in the Apostle's mind, his purpose being simply to point to our Lord's actual humanity in contrast with his Divine origin.

born under the law: a Jew by birth; not like the Galatians

5 law, that he might redeem them which were under the
6 law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And
because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son
7 into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art
no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then
an heir through God.

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who, though born apart from the law, were voluntarily subjecting themselves to it.

5. redeem. See note on iii. 13. Evidently Paul here connects redemption with the incarnation and subjection of Christ to the law. He was sent into these humiliating conditions for the purpose of effecting the redemption.

them which were under the law: Jews, to whom alone this verse applies.

we: strictly Paul and other Jews, as the context proves; and yet the next verse shews how ready Paul will be to extend the content of the pronoun to include all Christians—Gentile as well as Jew.

adoption: a familiar Greek and Roman custom. The striking thing is that the Apostle even describes the Divine sonship of Jewish Christians as obtained by adoption, not by nature.

6. ye are sons. Paul suddenly passes from the sonship he shares with Jewish Christians to that of the Galatians, as though having asserted the former he might take the latter for granted. He is not engaged in proving the sonship in either case. He appeals to it as an acknowledged fact. But he assumes that it has the same origin both with Jews and with Gentiles.

the Spirit of his Son. Paul does not tie himself down to exact Trinitarian distinctions. Here he is referring to the Divine Spirit, elsewhere known as the 'Holy Spirit,' now regarded as dwelling in Christ.

Abba: Aramaism for Father; hence our word 'Abbot.' It would seem that the Aramaic and Greek words were repeated together by the early Christians as a sort of familiar formula in prayer, marking the Divine Fatherhood common to both sections of the church. Paul here refers to it as prompted by the Spirit of Christ; elsewhere he argues that this inspired acknowledgement of God as our Father is a testimony to the sonship of Christians (Rom. viii. 15, 16).

7. thou. The singular makes the appeal personal to each reader.

no longer a bondservant. Both branches of the church had been in subjection—the Jews as children under guardians and stewards because subject to their law (verses 1, 2), the Gentiles as slaves to idolatry.

Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in 8
bondage to them which by nature are no gods: but now 9
that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known
of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly

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then an heir: not merely of the promises to Abraham which extended to his heirs, as might be said of Christians when considered to be 'sons of Abraham' (iii. 7), but an heir of God's inheritance as His son.

through God: by God's action of adoption, not by nature (verse 5).

iv. 8–11. *The return to the old bondage.* The Galatians had been in bondage to false gods previous to their knowledge of the true God; but how after that could they return to the miserable degradation? In their observance of sacred seasons they are really doing so. Such conduct makes Paul fear that he has thrown away his labour on them.

8. at that time: previous to conversion.

in bondage. Paul regards the heathen condition as a bondage to superstition just as he regards the Jewish condition as a bondage to law when contrasted with the liberty of Divine sonship.

them . . . by nature . . . no gods: 'the weak and beggarly elements,' i. e. the sun, moon, and stars. The commonest worship throughout the world was sun-worship. Renan points out that in the second century this pagan cult, under the form of adoration of the Persian Mithra, was the most serious rival to Christianity.

by nature . . . no gods: only gods by convention and superstition.

9. come to know God. Paul's preaching to the heathen, as that of every wise missionary must necessarily be, was based on an explanation of the pure Christian theism as opposed to pagan polytheism (cf. Acts xvii. 23–29).

or rather to be known of God: in the sense of being acknowledged by God, i. e. as sons. Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 3, 'If any man loveth God, the same is known of him.'

turn ye back again. Paul regards the adoption of Judaism as virtually a reversion to heathenism, a startling opinion for Judaizing Christians who would regard themselves as further removed from paganism than the freer living Gentile Christians. Throughout the argument he insists on the essential resemblance between Judaism and paganism in contrast to Christianity.

weak. The pagan divinities were ineffective, impotent to save as the Christian God saves in His redemption. But it was bold to say this in the hearing of sun-worshippers, in effect to call the blazing sun of Asia 'weak'!

rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over
10 again? Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and
11 years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain.

12 I beseech you, brethren, be as I *am*, for I *am* as ye
13 *are*. Ye did me no wrong: but ye know that because

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beggarly: unable to bestow any gifts of value, such as the Christian God gives in His grace.

rudiments: 'elements' as in the A. V. See note on verse 3.

10. days: sabbaths and perhaps fast days; cf. Col. ii. 16.

months: new moon festivals; cf. Isa. i. 14, lxvi. 23.

seasons: various other periodical festivals.

years: annual Jewish feasts—Passover, Pentecost, &c. Lightfoot suggests the Sabbatical and Jubilee years; but these were not really observed. The pagan education of the Galatians would predispose them to adopt especially this aspect of Judaism, since it fell in with their traditional reverence for the heavenly bodies.

iv. 12–20. *The earlier sympathy between Paul and the Galatians.* The Apostle entreats the Galatians to follow his example, reminding them how he was first led to preach to them through his physical infirmity; and yet they did not despise him on that account, but gave him a most enthusiastic welcome. No sacrifice would have been too great for them to have made for him. But now has he become their enemy merely because he tells them the truth? Their new friends have no good end in view, though in itself it is well that people should shew an interest in them. Paul feels like a mother in birth-pains for them again. He longs to be present with them and to be able to change his tone from the style of grieved expostulation.

12. I beseech: a strong word in the Greek, 'I beg and pray.'

be as I am: i. e. free from the bondage of Jewish ordinances. This shews that not only did Paul not require his Gentile converts to adopt the law; though a Jew by birth he himself had abandoned it. There is no reason to believe that the other apostles had thus wholly renounced Judaism, though Peter had taken a timid step in that direction (ii. 12).

I am **as ye** are: like the Gentiles who are free from the Jewish law. Since Paul has taken the bold step of breaking with the law of his fathers in order to put himself on a level with his converts, he begs them to come back to that position of freedom from law in deference to his example.

Ye did me no wrong. The punctuation of the A. V. connects this sentence with what precedes, and seems to imply that the

of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto
you the first time: and that which was a temptation 14

Apostle is repudiating any feeling of personal offence. In this their perversion the Galatians have not wronged Paul personally. But the punctuation of the R. V. better suits the context, in associating the sentence with what follows, especially as the pronoun 'me' is not in an emphatic place. In the old time the Galatians had behaved well to Paul. He will proceed to enlarge on that subject. Possibly, as Lightfoot suggests, Paul is alluding to some unrecorded incident of his intercourse with the Galatians in which they may have thought to have done him an injustice.

13. because of an infirmity, &c.: not 'through infirmity' as in the A. V. Paul distinctly asserts that it was because of some bodily ailment that he came to preach the gospel at all to the Galatians, and this they themselves know. Prof. Ramsay makes an ingenious suggestion to explain this position, viz. that Paul's 'infirmity of the flesh,' which he takes to be the same as the 'thorn' (or 'stake') 'in the flesh' (2 Cor. xii. 7), was an attack of malarial fever brought on while he was in the low-lying district of Perga in Pamphylia (Acts xiii. 13). This induced him to seek restoration of health by crossing the bracing range of Taurus mountains. Thus the Apostle was brought into the region of the South Galatian cities, and came to carry on evangelistic work there as recorded in Acts xiii, xiv. The change of plan would account for Mark's desertion of the party and return to Jerusalem (ibid.). The attacks of this fever are intermittent, and when they occur they produce extreme prostration with severe headache. Now it was a tradition in Asia Minor as early as the second century (see Tertullian, *De Pudic.* xiii) that Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' was severe headache, a pain which in its acuteness of agony fever patients have compared to 'a red-hot bar thrust through the forehead,' 'the grinding, boring pain in one temple, like the dentist's drill—the phantom wedge driven in between the jaw,' so that the patient seems to have 'reached the extreme point of human endurance.'

the first time: or 'the former' (R. V. marg.). This would mean that Paul had been twice to the Galatian district: (1) Acts xiii, xiv and (2) xvi. 1–6. Thus he would be now referring to the former of these two visits, which was the occasion when he founded the churches at Antioch, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra. This would shew that the Epistle was not written till after the second visit, when apparently he had not been so well received. But the word may mean 'formerly,' irrespective of the number of visits, e. g. Eph. iv. 22, 'your former manner of life.'

14. a temptation to you. All the best MSS. give this reading

to you in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but
ye received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus.
15 Where then is that gratulation of yourselves? for I bear
you witness, that, if possible, ye would have plucked
16 out your eyes and given them to me. So then am I
17 become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They

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in preference to 'my temptation' as in the A. V. Paul means that the wretched appearance he presented in his illness was a temptation to the Galatians to treat him with contempt.

despised: the word used by our Lord in predicting his rejection, where it is translated 'set at nought' (Mark ix. 12).

rejected: *lit.* 'spat out.' This strong language favours the idea that Paul's physical infirmity was such as to make him present a humiliating spectacle. Accordingly some have suggested that it was 'epilepsy.'

as an angel of God. Some of the Galatians, at Lystra, had taken Paul and Barnabas for divinities (see Acts xiv. 12), regarding the Apostle as Hermes, the Greek messenger-god. Seeing that the word 'angel' means 'messenger' it seems likely that Paul is here referring to that incident. We had an earlier reference to this idea of the angel (see note on i. 8).

15. gratulation. Lightfoot has 'felicitation.' Paul means the joy which the Galatians experienced in receiving him and his message.

if possible: i. e. to give their eyes to Paul, not merely to pluck them out, which of course was possible.

would have plucked out your eyes. This expression has led some to conjecture that the thorn in the flesh was some affection of the eyes. The fact that Paul was in the habit of dictating his Epistles to an amanuensis, and his reference to the 'large letters' in which he wrote with his own hand the sentences he thus appended (vi. 11), have been thought to bear out this suggestion. But the illustration was very natural, quite apart from any such specific use of it. The 'apple of one's eye' was proverbial for something very precious (Ps. xvii. 8).

16. So then: in view of the changed attitude of the Galatians to Paul.

your enemy. This word could be used in the passive sense as 'one whom you hate'; but then it would require the dative of the pronoun, whereas it has the genitive. Therefore it must mean 'your antagonist' or 'one who injures you,' probably with reference to the insinuations of the Judaizers that Paul was hurting his converts by withholding from them the privileges of the law.

zealously seek you in no good way; nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them. But it is good to 18
be zealously sought in a good matter at all times, and

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tell: rather, 'in telling.' The form is participial. Paul is not referring to what he is now saying, which of course could not be the ground of offence and occasion of expostulation before the Galatians had read it; he is going back to his teaching during his visits to the Galatians.

the truth: i. e. that they have the blessings of Christianity solely on condition of faith in Christ and apart from the law (cf. ii. 5, 14).

17. They: the Judaizing intruders.

zealously seek. The sense of 'zeal' is not appropriate here. 'To desire one earnestly,' one of the meanings given in the Grimm-Thayer Dictionary, is more suitable (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 2, where the rendering is 'jealous'). In the O. T. the Septuagint translators used the word for 'envy' (cf. Ps. xxxvi. [xxxvii.] 1; Prov. xxiii. 17, xxiv. 1). Here it seems to be used for courting one's goodwill and favour.

to shut you out. (1) Lightfoot understands this to refer to the tendency of the false teaching which, by insisting on ceremonial, would in fact exclude the Galatians from Christ. But the idea of 'desiring' is not suitable to such a meaning. Therefore (2) it seems better to take the phrase with a more direct application. The Judaizers would desire to shut the Gentiles out of the church, not indeed finally, but until they consented to circumcision, and in order to drive them to undergo the rite.

seek them: not simply accept their teaching. Paul implies that personal ambition was at the bottom of this strenuous proselytizing.

18. to be zealously sought. The same meaning for this word must be preserved throughout, and also the same application of it. Therefore the Apostle cannot mean that it is well for him to be courted favourably by the Galatians during his absence as well as when present with them. He must refer to the treatment they receive. In itself it is well that the Galatians should have some who desire to win them if only it be for a good cause. This desire Paul displayed while he was with them. It would be good for them to experience the same thing during his absence if anybody would shew the same solicitude. The Apostle does not blame the Judaizers for being interested in the Galatians, but for the kind of influence they exert. He does not wish to deprive the Galatians of solicitous friends, if only those friends will shew their solicitude for a good object. The next verse hints that he is really

19 not only when I am present with you. My little children,
of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed
20 in you, yea, I could wish to be present with you now,
and to change my voice; for I am perplexed about
you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye

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thinking of himself as the friend who desires to win the Galatians during his absence as well as when present among them.

19. My little children: a mode of address found nowhere else in Paul's writings, though common in John (cf. 1 John ii. 1, 12, 18), not only very affectionate in tone, but also, as the context shews, implying some rebuke for the childishness of the Galatians and their backwardness in religious knowledge and life. Unlike our Lord in the gospels and John, Paul thinks of childhood especially in relation to its immaturity (cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 11). Yet the word 'My' is personally affectionate. The Apostle regards himself as a mother of his childish converts.

again. Their conversion was like a birth brought about through the travail of the Apostle. He is now going through the process again in endeavouring to bring them to the true Christian life after their perversion by the Judaizers.

until Christ be formed in you. The word rendered 'formed' is very explicit, meaning brought into a certain form. The idea seems to be that of the Christ life and character being shaped in the lives of the Galatians. There is some confusion of metaphor; but the Apostle cannot be thinking of them as the mother, since he has just applied the image to himself; and the image as applied to the Galatians is not one he would be likely to use (cf. Eph. iv. 13).

20. to change my voice: from the present tone of painful expostulation. If he were with them he might see it possible to change his manner of address in proportion as he saw them yield to his persuasion. As it is, he is at a loss to know what to think of them.

iv. 21—v. 1. *The allegory of Hagar.* Following the familiar method of a Rabbinical allegory, Paul compares Abraham's free wife and the handmaid Hagar to the two covenants, the second represented by Sinai, where the bondage of the law was given, and then Jerusalem, and the first by the heavenly Jerusalem which is the mother of Christians, who like Isaac are children brought forth according to promise. Just as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so now Jews persecute Christians. But the Scripture commanded the handmaid and her son to be cast out.

not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had 22
two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the free-
woman. Howbeit the *son* by the handmaid is born 23
after the flesh; but the *son* by the freewoman *is born*
through promise. Which things contain an allegory: 24
for these *women* are two covenants; one from mount

Since we are not such, but are the children of the freewoman, we ought to hold to our liberty.

21. ye that desire, &c.: the Galatians, or at least those of them who were hankering after Judaism. Paul is proceeding to an *argumentum ad homines*. Let those who think so much of the law listen to the law.

hear the law. The title 'the law' was used for the whole Pentateuch, the narratives as well as the precepts.

22. one by the handmaid: Ishmael, Hagar's child (Gen. xvi. 15).

one by the freewoman: Isaac, Sarah's child (Gen. xxi. 2).

23. While the birth of Ishmael was according to the course of nature, the birth of Isaac was described as a consequence of God's promise which enabled Sarah to bear a child in her old age. This was the great historic promise, faith with regard to which was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness (Gen. xv. 1–6). Thus Isaac has two advantages over Ishmael: (1) The status of his mother, who is a freewoman, while Ishmael's mother is a slave; (2) the circumstances of his birth, which included a specific Divine promise and its fulfilment, while Ishmael's birth was a mere natural event.

24. an allegory. The word 'allegorize' (Greek, *allēgoruein*) means literally 'to say something different,' and it is used in Jewish, and especially in Alexandrian, literature for giving a secondary spiritual or metaphorical meaning to narratives which in their first intention record external events. It is not used in the sense in which Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory, as something written solely with the intention of teaching ideas through the narrative of events that are only suppositious; but it is applied to ancient history, without denying the actuality of what is there stated, but seeing within it a deeper, secondary meaning. This allegorical treatment of their own sacred history was common among the Jews. Philo pushed it to an extreme, and under his hands the original sense of the history, though not denied to be true, is lost sight of and completely buried beneath a system of philosophizing metaphors.

covenants. See note on iii. 15.

Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar.
25 Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth

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one from mount Sinai: the covenant of the law (see Exod. xxxiv. 10 ff.).

unto bondage: better, 'for bondage'; Jews under the law being regarded as children whose mother is the covenant of the law. This Paul has already described as a condition of restraint (iii. 23), equivalent to that of a bondservant (iv. 1). Now he calls it actual bondage, as he has described the condition of the heathen when subject to their superstitions (iv. 8).

which is Hagar. The covenant of the law is represented by Hagar.

25. Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia. Another reading is 'For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia,' and the MS. authorities are about equally divided between the two; but most of the versions and citations in ancient writers support the latter, which is accepted by most textual critics. This sentence is very apposite to the argument. Paul has made a daring use of allegory in comparing the law to Hagar the slave instead of Sarah the wife. To strengthen his position he reminds his readers that the scene of the law-giving was situated in the country of the Arabs, who were considered to be her descendants. Israel went to Sinai, to Arabia, to the land of Hagar, to the country of the slave for the much-vaunted law. Some who retain the reading in the text consider that the sentence contains a play upon words, since *chagar* is the Arabic for a 'rock'; but Paul could not expect the Greek-speaking Galatians to recognize this.

answereth to: *lit.* 'is in the same row or column with.' The Greek word is used in military language for a file or rank of soldiers. Here it means that mount Sinai is in the same line of comparison with Jerusalem in the allegory. This pushes the argument further home. Jerusalem was the head quarters of Judaism in Paul's day. Thus Jerusalem = Sinai = Hagar's country = bondage. Lipsius proposes a much more elaborate and recondite comparison. An ancient form of puzzle was to take the sum of the numerical value of the letters of a word as a cryptogram for the word. Thus in the Apocalypse 666, as 'the number of the beast,' is understood to be the sum of the numerical values of the Hebrew letters for 'Nero Cæsar.' The grammarians use the Greek word (*stoichos*), which appears in a compound form in our text, for such a series of letters. Accordingly Lipsius understands it to mean here a corresponding series of letter-numbers. Thus out of the Hebrew letters for the present and the future Jerusalem he gets the numbers 999 and 607, and arrives at similar totals

to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with
her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, 26
which is our mother. For it is written, 27

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not;
Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not:
For more are the children of the desolate than of
her which hath the husband.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 28

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with sentences that introduce the name 'Hagar.' This is mere guess-work.

26. Jerusalem that is above. This expression was quite in agreement with the Rabbinical teaching in which Paul had been trained. The Rabbis used to speak of a heavenly Jerusalem, the ideal city of the future, as already existing in upper regions and destined to descend to earth in the Messianic era. We meet with 'the heavenly Jerusalem' (Heb. xii. 22), and in Rev. xxi. 2, with 'the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven.' With Paul it scarcely seems to correspond to the church, or Christianized society, as in Augustin's *City of God*. It is an idea, the heavenly idea which is realized in Christian lives on earth, and therefore thought of as their source, allegorically as their mother.

free. This is the leading conception of the allegory, Christian freedom contrasted with Jewish bondage.

27. Quoted from Isa. liv. 1. The context shews that the prophet was referring to the deliverance of the Jews from overwhelming calamities. Israel is pictured as a forsaken wife who is to be restored and comforted. But the language has a manifest reference to the story of Sarah, who indeed is mentioned earlier (Isa. li. 2); and the Rabbis were accustomed to associate these two passages. Paul would now compare this joy of Sarah at having a child and descendants with the gladness of Christian privileges. Thus Christians = restored Israel = Sarah when blessed with a child.

28. we. Another reading is 'ye,' and the authorities are about equally divided between them. With the reading 'we' in our text Paul cannot now mean only himself and other Jewish Christians, as in earlier passages (cf. iii. 24, iv. 3, 5). He must be including his readers, since he addresses them as brethren in a tone that implies that they share the privileges of God's children. The transition has come gradually and easily. When Paul thought of Jews becoming Christians by faith, just as Gentiles became Christians by faith, he recognized that there was no distinction

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted
him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so it is now.
30 Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid
and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not
31 inherit with the son of the freewoman. Wherefore,

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between them (cf. iii. 28). Christians, whether Jewish or Gentile, are the true children of Sarah.

children of promise, i. e. born as children in consequence of a Divine promise in contrast with those born merely in the course of nature (cf. verse 23). Such was Isaac, and such are Christians, who inherit God's promise to Abraham.

29. he . . . after the flesh. Ishmael, but now with a distinct reference to the actual words used, so as to introduce the idea of the carnality of the Jewish law in an allegorical use of the example of Hagar's child.

persecuted: a reference to the incident in Gen. xxi. 9, where the Hebrew only means 'laughing'; but the Septuagint gives a longer phrase, probably corresponding to the original Hebrew—'playing with her son.' This incident was made much of in later Jewish writings. Since it is connected with a feast in honour of Sarah in the original narrative some mockery seems to be intended. Possibly Paul was also thinking of the later historical relations between the descendants of the two mothers (cf. Ps. lxxxiii. 6, where the Ishmaelites appear in a confederacy of the enemies of Israel).

him . . . after the Spirit. A variation of the phrases 'through promise' (verse 23) and 'of promise' (verse 28), the promise being attributed to the Spirit of God. No doubt the change of language is made in order to get the contrast between flesh and spirit, and so that between the external character of Judaism and the spiritual character of Christianity.

30. Quoted from Gen. xxi. 10, but with an alteration towards the end, where Paul has 'the son of the freewoman' in place of 'my son, even with Isaac.' Thus Paul brings the passage round more directly to the line of his argument. He must have felt the desirability of changing its form, because in Genesis it appears as a saying of Sarah, while Paul has introduced it simply as a Scripture utterance.

31. Wherefore: the conclusion brought home to Christians. It must be evident to every reader, however, that this can only be admitted when the points of comparison in the allegory have already been assumed. This allegory of Hagar cannot be regarded as a logical argument. By a little manipulation it would be easy to construct one with a very different lesson. Philo

brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman. With freedom did Christ set us free: 5 stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

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allegorizes the same story, taking Abraham as the human soul, Sarah as Divine wisdom, and Hagar as secular learning. But as an illustration Paul's allegory vividly sets forth the truth he is teaching. Of this passage, as of much else in the Apostle's writings, we must say that the conclusions are true, but the arguments Rabbinical.

a handmaid: better than '*the* handmaid' as in the A. V. There is no article in the Greek, and the idea is indefinite. As Christians our origin is not in bondage.

the freewoman: 'Jerusalem that is above,' described as 'our mother.' See note on verse 26.

v. 1. With freedom, &c. This reading must certainly be preferred to that of the A. V., 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty,' which has the great weight of MS. authority against it. But Lightfoot prefers a reading which introduces a relative pronoun, and connecting the sentence with the previous verse runs thus, 'Sons of the free by virtue of the freedom which Christ has given us,' or preferably, 'of her who is free with that freedom which Christ,' &c. But there is little MS. authority for this reading, and most of the textual critics reject it. Accepting the reading of the R. V. we must still connect this verse with its predecessors rather than with what follows. It gives us the practical conclusion of the allegory.

Christ set us free. In iii. 13 Paul had written of Christ liberating Jews from the curse of the law (cf. iv. 5). But now the pronoun 'we' includes Gentiles. He had written of both as being in bondage to 'the elements'—Jews in iv. 3, and Gentiles in iv. 9. This applied to Jewish ordinances and Gentile superstitions. Christ bought freedom from both.

stand fast: in spite of temptations to swerve, such as came from the Judaizing influences in Galatia.

therefore: because there has been a great act of liberation at a heavy cost, as the previous arguments have shewn (cf. iii. 13). It would be unreasonable to go back from this, flinging away all its advantages.

again. Paul persists in his identification of Judaism with heathenism. The Galatians who were adopting the Jewish law had never been under it before; but Paul regards it as equivalent to their old superstitions. Therefore in taking it up they are really entangling themselves a second time with a yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive
3 circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I
testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision,
4 that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed

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a yoke: not '*the* yoke' as in the A.V. The Jewish law is not actually the same thing as the pagan superstitions, though the consequent bondage is the same in both cases.

III. Practical Expostulation. v. 2—vi. 18.

v. 2-12. *The danger of Judaizing.* The Apostle warns his readers that in being circumcised they will come under an obligation to keep the whole of the Jewish law. Then in seeking justification by means of law they stultify their relations with Christ, for we look for our righteousness by faith in him with whom this Jewish ritual counts for nothing. How was it that the Galatians who were making progress have come to be thus hindered? A mischievous leaven must be spreading through them; the person who has introduced it has incurred a heavy responsibility. Paul trusts that the Galatians will resist this influence. He reminds them that his own course would have been easy enough if only he had fallen in with the policy of the Judaizers.

2. Behold, I Paul: very emphatic. The Apostle is addressing the Galatians with all the weight of his authority as their founder and inspired director. At the same time he seems to be refuting the calumny of those who claim his example in favour of the Judaizing notions (cf. verse 11).

if ye receive, &c. This implies that the Galatians had not yet actually undergone the rite of circumcision, though they were inclined to believe in its efficacy.

Christ will profit you nothing. They cannot add legalism to Christianity as a sort of counsel of perfection. In accepting the former they renounce the latter.

3. testify: not 'bear witness,' but 'solemnly assert as in the presence of witnesses.'

again. Paul had not said this in any earlier part of the Epistle. He must be alluding to what he had declared to the Galatians during his second visit to them.

receiveth circumcision. The form of the Greek word implies a voluntary act on their part.

a debtor to do the whole law. Possibly the Galatians imagined that as Christians they might accept Judaism in a general way without being bound by all the rigour of its legal system. This *dilettante* method is impossible. There is no middle course.

from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye
are fallen away from grace. For we through the Spirit 5
by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. For in 6

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4. severed: *lit.* 'brought to nought.' Applied to a person the word means the cessation of all connexion. In Rom. ii. 2 and 6 Paul uses it of the wife who is '*discharged* from the law of the husband' by his death, and so of Christians who are '*discharged* from the law.' The idea is that a voluntary submission to the obligation of the law *ipso facto* nullifies any connexion with Christ.

justified by the law. Paul here introduces the aim and purpose of this singular perversion of the Galatians. They were seeking justification, and supposing that they could obtain it by means of law. That is why they thought it would be well to undergo circumcision.

fallen away from grace: i. e. from the special grace of justification on condition of faith. The acceptance of another condition of justification implies the abandonment of the Christian method. Lightfoot understands the expression 'fallen away' to correspond to the casting out of Hagar in the allegory. But though the classic usage of the word would allow of this, it is doubtful whether he has that illustration still in mind.

5. we: Christians, those who are living in the grace of Christ.

through the Spirit: or 'in spirit'; there is no preposition or article in the Greek, but merely the dative of the word for spirit (*pneumati*). By using a capital 'S,' which was not in the A. V., the Revisers indicate that the Spirit of God, not our own spirit, is intended. Elsewhere, however, they use a small 's,' indicating the human spirit, where the expression is very similar (cf. Rom. viii. 13). Lipsius understands the word to mean 'the Divine life-principle in believers.' Here, if Paul still has the allegory of Hagar in mind, the expression might be due to a comparison with Isaac as the son 'born after the Spirit' (iv. 29), in which case only the Spirit of God could be intended; but as that is doubtful it is perhaps best to understand the word in a sense very common with Paul, as meaning the human spirit when under the influence of the Divine Spirit.

by faith. The order of the words requires the reading of the R. V., which connects this expression with the verb 'wait,' and not with the word 'righteousness' as in the A. V. Paul is not here thinking of justification by faith, but of the patience to wait which is made possible by faith on the part of those who live the spiritual life.

the hope of righteousness. This cannot mean the hope

Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor
7 uncircumcision; but faith working through love. Ye
were running well; who did hinder you that ye should
8 not obey the truth? This persuasion *came* not of him

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of receiving righteousness in the future, because (1) the expression 'waiting for' implies that the word 'hope' itself represents something future, and therefore must mean 'the thing hoped for' (cf. Col. i. 5; Heb. vi. 18); and (2), in Paul's own peculiar sense of the word, 'righteousness' is a present possession of Christians reckoned to them as soon as they are justified, not a future attainment only to be hoped for, not enjoyed as yet. Accordingly it must mean the future good we are hoping for which is associated with righteousness as its source and condition, i. e. the great Christian hope of eternal life.

6. For: confirming the previous sentence. Our expectation is based on our spiritual relations and our faith, not on deeds of the law, because with Christ the external ordinances count for nothing.

in: in communion with Christ, in living union with Christ, and in all our spiritual relations with Christ.

neither circumcision . . . nor uncircumcision. The two are put together as equally useless. Circumcision will do no more good than uncircumcision, which, as all allow, can have no religious efficacy. The only thing which will avail in us, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, is faith shewing itself active in love.

working through love. The Revisers suggest in their margin 'wrought' as an alternative for 'working'; but Paul never uses the word in a passive sense, nor does he teach that Christian faith has to be produced by a previous experience of Christian love. The idea is that faith when in action manifests itself in love. Faith finds scope for activity in the region of love.

7. running well: a reference to the Greek athletics of the stadium (cf. ii. 2; 1 Cor. ix. 26; Phil. iii. 14). Paul is thinking of the earlier course of the Galatian churches. That part of their race was excellently run.

who: in the singular, as though some one person were at the bottom of this mischief; we have another reference to this person in verse 10. But though one takes the lead others are associated with him (cf. verse 10). No name is given, and we have no means of identifying the offender.

hinder: a word used for breaking up a road to impede the advance of an army, but here evidently meaning simply impeding the course of a runner in a race.

not obey the truth. Paul takes for granted that the Galatians

that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole 9
lump. I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that 10
ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth
you shall bear his judgement, whosoever he be. But 11

know his gospel to be true. Therefore in not living according to its teaching they are not simply perverted in mind and thought, they are acting disobediently. Truth is regarded as a sovereign whose commands cannot be lightly neglected.

8. This persuasion: your being persuaded so to act.

him that calleth you: God. The present, as Lightfoot justly remarks, is used because 'the stress is laid on the *person* rather than the *act*' (cf. 1 Thess. v. 24).

9. A proverb, also quoted in 1 Cor. v. 6. Lightfoot understands the image to be applied to persons, the idea being 'a small and compact body disturbing the peace of the church.' Lipsius considers the illustration of spreading leaven to be more suitable to the doctrine taught by these people. But the context is concerned with men, not with ideas. Paul has just referred to some hinderer, and he will proceed to speak of a troubler. It is reasonable therefore to think him to have a personal reference here also. The illustration of **leaven** is always used in the N.T. in an evil sense both by Christ (cf. Matt. xvi. 6) and by Paul (cf. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8), with the solitary exception of the Parable of the Kingdom spreading like leaven (Matt. xiii. 33). The thought is of the gradual, silent, insidious, but thorough spread of an evil influence. The persons who exercise such an influence should never have been admitted to the church, and being in, should be removed.

10. I: emphatic here, in the Greek, as in verses 2 and 11. The Judaizers hope to win the Galatians to their practices; but on the other hand Paul, for his part, cannot but believe in their ultimate return to wiser ways.

to you-ward: a late Greek usage of the preposition *eis*, meaning 'with reference to.'

in the Lord: a peculiar Pauline or contemporary Christian phrase, meaning the association with Jesus Christ in life and thought which his people enjoy. It is because both Paul and his readers are thus living that he has hope for them.

none otherwise minded: than in that old time when 'ye were running well.'

he that troubleth you: a single individual, as in verse 7, and more definitely so here.

his judgement: the judgement that will be passed on him by God.

whosoever he be. Certainly this cannot be Peter, as some have said; nor is it likely to be James, though Lipsius allows that

I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? then hath the stumblingblock of the

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identification to be more probable; seeing that Paul has mentioned both these men earlier, he would use the name again if he had it in mind. Still, the phrase indicates some important personage in the church. The Apostle is not overawed by his position. Great as he may be in the estimation of his brethren he will come under the judgement of God.

11. I: once again emphatic, and now with reference to his own doings and a possible misconstruction of them.

still preach circumcision: as he had done before his conversion. The action of Paul in having Timothy circumcised when the Apostle was visiting the very churches to which he was now writing would afford his opponents a fine excuse for claiming the authority of his example. There was a difference, since Timothy was half a Jew by birth, while the Galatians were wholly Gentiles; and, besides, there is no proof that the circumcision of Timothy was for his own advantage; it seems to have been effected in order that he might be free to work among Jews. Still, even with these qualifications it does not look consistent with Paul's uncompromising position in our Epistle. Accordingly the narrative in Acts has been taken as an indication of the unhistoricity of that work. But are we sure that Paul was never inconsistent? In his eagerness to fit so hopeful a disciple as Timothy for evangelistic work, himself confessedly ready to become all things to all men if by any means he might win some, the Apostle might not have considered the bearing of his action on the freedom of his gospel from Judaism. The great controversy had not then broken out. We cannot imagine Paul circumcising Timothy after writing the strong words of the Epistle to the Galatians on the subject of circumcision.

why . . . persecuted? Paul's persecutions came from the Jews, who were opposed especially to the freedom of his gospel and to his offer of it to the heathen without requiring the converts to submit to Judaism. If he were preaching Judaism, what reason would there be for such persecution? The fact that he has to endure it is a proof that he does not preach Judaism.

stumblingblock: better than 'offence' (A. V.). The Greek word means primarily 'the trigger of a trap,' then a 'trap' or 'snare,' and so anything that trips up, catches, and hinders.

the cross: odious in the eyes of all contemporaries as a barbarous mode of execution, introduced by the Romans from the usage of the Phœnicians, and only inflicted on slaves and subject people. If Paul had preached salvation by circumcision, he might have been silent about the cross. But he was preaching

cross been done away. I would that they which un- 12
settle you would even cut themselves off.

For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only *use* 13
not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but
through love be servants one to another. For the 14

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salvation by means of the crucifixion of Christ. That was what chiefly provoked the Jews to resist his work.

12. they. Paul passes to the plural. There is one leader in the Judaizing movement; but others are associated with him in troubling the church.

cut themselves off: i. e. 'sever themselves from connexion with the church.' This meaning is adopted by Prof. Ramsay, who vehemently opposes the alternative in the margin of the R.V., 'mutilate themselves,' which is accepted by nearly all other modern scholars. The latter meaning of the word is the usual sense in which it is found in classic literature, and the only meaning in the LXX (Deut. xxiii. 1). It seems imperative therefore to understand it so here. The horrible act referred to would be familiar to readers in Asia Minor, as it was practised by devotees of Cybele. Prof. Ramsay holds that for Paul to speak of it in this connexion would be to descend to the scurrilous speech that disgraces enraged orientals. But he could not have used the term seriously in its literal sense, or as a mere insult. There is an allusion to the rite of circumcision. In dismissing his reference to the troublers he expresses the wish that, if they are urging that on the Galatians, it would be as well that they did a more serious thing to themselves. If salvation is to be had by the knife, the more effectual the use of that instrument the better; the Cybele fanatics are the saints to imitate! The utterance is ironical.

v. 13–15. *Love the fulfilment of the law.* Called to freedom Christians should not abuse their liberty, but use it in the service of love, which is the fulfilment of the law.

13. ye. The word is emphatic—'you' as distinguished from the Judaizers.

called, &c. The very purpose of the Divine call was to lead out of bondage into a state of freedom.

not . . . for an occasion to the flesh: a warning against Antinomianism. The subject is more fully discussed in Rom. vi.

but through love, &c. This is the use to be made of our Christian liberty. It gives scope for love, not room for licence.

be servants: the verbal form of the word for bondage. The Galatians were hankering after the bondage of the law. Here is a better bondage, and one within the limits of Christian liberty.

whole law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou
15 shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and
devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed
one of another.

16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil
17 the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the

Let them voluntarily enslave themselves to the loving service one of another.

14. the whole law. Paul had said that circumcision made a man a debtor to do the whole law (verse 3). Yet he could never do it in the way of law. Now the Apostle teaches that if he abandons the service of the law he will find a better way of completely carrying out its requirements.

fulfilled: fully kept (cf. Rom. xiii. 8).

Thou shalt love, &c.: Lev. xix. 18, quoted by Jesus as the second commandment, following that of love to God, on which 'hangeth the whole law, and the prophets' (Matt. xxii. 40). Possibly Paul derives this from the teaching of Jesus; but, if so, we should expect to see a reference to the first commandment. Therefore, though he may have heard a general report of our Lord's words on the subject, he does not seem to have been in possession of an exact account of them.

v. 16-26. *The Spirit and the flesh.* Christians are urged to live under the influence of the Spirit of God as a means of escape from the tyranny of the senses. There is a conflict between the two. A life under the influence of the Spirit is free from law. The flesh produces a multitude of evil works against which Paul warns his readers, for the practice of them will exclude from the kingdom of God. On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit is seen in a number of graces; there is no law against them. Christians are people who have crucified the flesh; therefore they should live as becomes their new relation to the Spirit without vanity or envy.

16. Walk: a common Hebraism indicating the course of daily life.

the Spirit. Here as elsewhere the Revisers suggest the Holy Spirit by using a capital 'S' where the A. V. has a small 's' indicating the human spirit (see note on verse 5). The expression '*by* the Spirit' (the Greek dative without a preposition) points both to the power by means of which the life is to be sustained and also to its character.

ye shall not: future, not imperative. If the life is maintained in its relations to the Spirit of God, this will of itself be a safeguard against the invasion of the lower desires.

17. lusteth: an old English word for 'desires.' It is more

Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the 18
Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the 19
flesh are manifest, which are *these*, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, 20

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suitable for the flesh than for the Spirit; yet in this case it is used for both. Here is a conflict of desires, the lower desire of sense meeting the higher desire inspired by the Spirit of God. The result is a deadlock, or rather that the higher desires are frustrated.

that: 'in order that,' not merely 'so that'; the word indicates purpose.

the things that ye would: implying that the will sides with the impulses of the Spirit; the Apostle is writing to Christians. This conflict is differently viewed in Rom. vii, where the better self conflicts with the lower self and is reduced to despair in the pre-Christian stage, the next chapter shewing how victory is attained through Christ by means of a life influenced by the Spirit of God.

18. are led: the present tense, 'are being led,' for the continuous course of life.

the Spirit: undoubtedly the Divine Spirit here, therefore probably also elsewhere throughout the passage.

not under the law: because being led by the Spirit. 'No man can serve two masters.'

19. the works of the flesh: the operations of the lower nature when this is allowed full sway to rule the man through his senses and appetites.

manifest: especially in the shameless empire of the Cæsars, where little or no attempt was made to hide these corruptions. But probably Paul is not merely referring to contemporary circumstances. He means that there is no mistaking what this self-abandonment to the lower life leads to. Dr. Jekyll cannot keep the secret of Mr. Hyde. Meanwhile, the present is not an academic discussion; it treats of obvious facts.

20. idolatry: classed with these works of the lower nature, because essentially sensuous in its nature and, too, observed with immoral rites, especially in Asia Minor and Syria. Idolatry must be distinguished from paganism. All pagans were not idolaters.

sorcery: the black art was too commonly associated with malignity and uncleanness. The resort to wizards was expressly condemned in the O. T. (Isa. viii. 18). Sorcery and spiritualism

21 jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they which practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom
22 of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

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were very fashionable in the decadent civilization of the Roman Empire. Paul has already referred to the Galatians being bewitched with the evil eye (iii. 1).

divisions: not 'seditions' (A. V.). There is no reference to politics.

heresies: rather, 'parties.' The word is used by the orator Tertullus in speaking of 'the *sect* of the Nazarenes' (Acts xxiv. 5), and Paul takes note of it in his reply as though it were inappropriate, saying, 'the Way which they call a *sect*' (verse 14). It is derived from a word indicating choice, and it points to narrow opinionativeness resulting in petty exclusiveness. It has nothing to do with theological divergence from the standard of doctrine, in the later sense of the word.

21. forewarn. An alternative, 'tell you plainly,' is in the margin of the R. V.; but there is no clear proof of that use of the word in the N. T., and here it refers to the future—'not inherit.'

I did forewarn you: probably during Paul's second visit to the Galatian churches.

practise: are in the habit of doing.

the kingdom of God. An expression singularly rare in Paul's writings considering that it was the central topic of our Lord's teaching. Meaning primarily both the rule of God and also the realm, the sphere of that rule, it had come to have a specific sense among the Jews as the realization of the Messianic ideal. Among Christians it takes its form and character from the teaching of Jesus Christ, who not only realized the Messianic ideal, but also exalted it as the conception of a spiritual kingdom. Paul writes of it as something to come (cf. Matt. vi. 10, 'Thy kingdom come'). It is a future inheritance (cf. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, xv. 50). In this passage we have a full, emphatic pronouncement against Antinomianism.

22. the fruit of the Spirit contrasted with 'the works of the flesh' (verse 19). Those works were of a lower order, made, produced, but not conceived of as the outgrowth of any true life. On the other hand, the Spirit vitalizes, and therefore does not simply do works, but rather develops fruit. Here is the idea of the Christian character growing and ripening.

love: named first, in contrast with the impish mockery of it

longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, 23
temperance: against such there is no law. And they 24
that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with
the passions and the lusts thereof.

If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk. 25

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that stood first in the black list; and rightly first on its own account as the fulfilling of the whole law (verse 14; cf. 1 Cor. xiii.).

joy: as distinguished from the pleasures of the life of sense.

peace: in all relations, with God, with our fellows, as contrasted with the enmities, &c., in the previous list, and in ourselves as a state of calm. Joy and peace go together in Rom. xiv. 17.

longsuffering: the opposite to 'strife, jealousies,' &c. (cf 2 Cor. vi. 6).

kindness: more exactly, 'friendliness of disposition.'

goodness: active beneficence.

faithfulness: a better word than 'faith' (A. V.). The original Greek admits of either meaning. But as moral excellences, and especially those that concern our relations with our fellow men, are chiefly enumerated here the idea of fidelity to a trust is what seems to be intended (cf. Rom. iii. 2, 3).

23. meekness: especially opposed to the strife, &c., of the earlier list.

temperance: self-control, as opposed to the outrageous licence of the vices previously enumerated. It fitly brings the list of fruits of the Spirit to a conclusion. Here we see the victory of the Spirit of God over the lower appetites as promised in verse 16.

24. they that are of Christ Jesus. The A. V. seems preferable here: 'they that are Christ's' (though we must add the word 'Jesus' on the best MS. authority), the meaning being, 'they who belong to Christ Jesus,' his people.

have crucified the flesh. An allusion to Paul's mystical doctrine of union with Christ, according to which his people die, rise, and ascend with him (cf. Col. ii. 20, iii. 1). The Christian unites himself to Christ in the crucifixion. As Christ's body died nailed to the cross, so his disciples' tyrannous appetites and passions are killed by their spiritual union with him (cf. Rom. vi. 6). The past tense is used to indicate one definite act, as the crucifixion was one event in the past. It points to the first surrender of the converts to faith in Christ.

25. Not merely a justification of the mandate in verse 16. Another word for **walk** is here used, meaning 'to go in a row,' 'keep to the line.' In this way the outer life should correspond to the inner life.

26 Let us not be vainglorious, provoking one another,
envying one another.

6 Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass,
ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of
meekness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of

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26. vainglorious: thirsting for empty praise. Cf. Phil. ii. 3, where 'vainglory' is associated with 'faction' and opposed to 'lowliness' and a humble opinion of oneself.

provoking one another: by the self-assertion and pretentiousness just mentioned. According to Mommsen urban rivalries were common in Asia Minor.

vi. 1–5. *On burden-bearing.* The more spiritual should restore a fallen brother with meekness, bearing his burden. It is a mistake to think much of oneself. Each man has just his own work to do.

1. overtaken: not overcome by sudden temptation, but suddenly surprised and discovered. It is '*in* any trespass,' not 'into.'

trespass. The word 'fault' (A. V.) is too weak. A real sin is meant by the Greek term.

spiritual: implying that the sin came from unspirituality.

restore: not simply bring him back to a place of honour, but influence him personally so that his character may be rectified. The word refers to the inner experience of the fallen man, not to his status in society. It is the duty of the more spiritual members of the church to lead their brethren who have fallen into sin back to the better life, not to treat the offence with indifference, but also not to regard the offender with contempt.

a spirit of meekness: a spirit that inclines to meekness. Paul sees the difficulty of carrying out his advice without the pride of superiority which would effectually frustrate all attempts at restoring the offender (cf. 1 Cor. iv. 21).

thyself: the singular number, to make the appeal more direct and personal.

2. Bear ye. The verb is in the present tense, indicating a continuous habit of life. Let this be your habit; be continually bearing 'one another's burdens.'

one another's burdens. The word 'one another' is in the most emphatic position in the sentence. Paul concentrates attention on it, no doubt to contrast these burdens of sympathy with the useless burdens of Judaism which the Galatians were taking on themselves. The context shews that by 'burdens' he here means especially things like the trespass just referred to. The

Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something, 3
when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let each 4
man prove his own work, and then shall he have his
glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his
neighbour. For each man shall bear his own burden. 5

But let him that is taught in the word communicate 6

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idea is, that, if people are to wear a yoke, let it not be the useless yoke of rigorous religious practices, but the serviceable yoke of rescue work.

fulfil: a stronger word than that rendered 'fulfil' in v. 14; meaning literally to 'fill up,' like a measure filled to the brim. He who does this particularly delicate and difficult work of restoring a brother effectually, most completely accomplishes the will of his Master.

the law of Christ: the law Christ laid down, exhibiting it in his own redeeming work, in contradistinction from the law of Moses, which imposed the rite the Galatians were hankering after. Though Paul repudiates the religion of law he has room for law in the religion of grace. Thus he speaks of 'a law of faith' (Rom. iii. 27), 'the law of the Spirit of life' (viii. 2), and here of 'the law of Christ,' in each case meaning some authoritative rule of conduct.

4. prove: test and try.

The meaning of the passage seems to be—Let not anybody be puffed up with vainglory, especially by comparing himself with other people. But let each man examine his own conduct and what comes of it. Then if after the self-examination he is honestly convinced that it is not a failure he may congratulate himself. Still, this is a wholly private and personal matter. He is not to compare himself with his neighbours in order to increase his self-complacency; much less is he to pose for his neighbours to admire him.

5. his own burden: a different word for 'burdens' from that in verse 2, which means a heavy weight, something distressing to be borne. The word in this verse is used for a soldier's kit, and also for anything to be carried, apart from any idea of its weight. Therefore 'load' which the Revisers suggest in their margin is more appropriate. In the one case, the burden is a defect of character; in the other, it is the obligation of duty. The contradiction between the two verses is only apparent and verbal. We are to help each other out of evil ways; at the same time each man must do his own duty.

vi. 6-10. *On well-doing.* The church teachers should receive

7 unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not
deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man
8 soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth

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temporal support. The harvest will be according to the sowing. Patience in working for the harvest of well-doing will be rewarded. Meanwhile every opportunity should be seized for doing good, especially to our fellow Christians.

6. the word: a term used in the early church for the sum of Christian truth as preached and taught.

communicate. This word is frequently used for making contributions, but inasmuch as its original meaning involves the idea of association, it indicates something more than the mere act of giving, and excludes any patronizing. The giver bestows himself with his gift, the idea being that he is sharing his goods with the recipient.

him that teacheth. This Epistle contains no reference to church officers as such. According to Acts xiv. 23 Paul and Barnabas had appointed elders in every church on their return from their first missionary journey through the district to which we now know our Epistle was directed. There is no mention of elders in the Epistle. Still, we cannot infer their non-existence from mere silence. Moreover, this passage plainly implies that there were recognized teachers, who, since they required support, must have been definitely set apart for their work. Elsewhere we read of 'teachers' as a distinct order in the church (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. iv. 11). But here another word is used, the precise meaning of which is to 'catechize.' Jewish teaching was catechetical, and in all probability early Christian teaching was also.

The duty or custom of supporting the ministry is frequently referred to by Paul (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 7 ff.; Phil. iv. 10 ff.; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18).

7. mocked: a word meaning literally 'to turn up the nose.' To connect this verse with its predecessor we must conclude that Paul suspected the Galatians of meanness towards their recognized instructors, while they were under the spell of the Judaizing visitors. To pretend to be very religious while refusing to make the necessary pecuniary sacrifices is a form of meanness that cannot be practised in defiance of the notice of God.

whatsoever a man soweth, &c. Lightfoot calls this 'a common proverb'; but his instances from Plato, Aristotle, and the Bible (Job iv. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 6) illustrate the principle rather than the phrase. Nothing could be more natural than thus to draw the obvious and yet striking lessons of harvest over and over again without the aid of any formal proverb. But Cicero

unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not be weary in well- 9

comes close to Paul's words here, writing, 'ut sementem feceris, ita metes' (*de Orat.* ii. 65).

8. unto his own flesh . . . unto the Spirit. The preposition 'unto' or 'into' shews that the 'flesh' and the 'Spirit' are here regarded as seed-beds. In the previous verse the character of the harvest is seen to be dependent on the nature of the seed. Now the metaphor is changed, and the harvest depends on the soil, as in our Lord's parable of the Sower (Mark iv. 3–9).

It is usual to take this as a contrast between a carnal and a spiritual course of life. But Lipsius applies it to the contrast between the Judaizing and the more spiritual Christian life, taking the resort to circumcision as the one sowing, and the life of faith taught by Paul as the other. Against the more common view observe (1) the opening (verse 6) and closing (verses 9, 10) sentences of the paragraph refer to generosity of conduct; (2) the phrase 'his own flesh' is evidently to be contrasted with 'the Spirit,' the Revisers rightly printing that word with a capital 'S' to signify the Spirit of God in contrast with a man's *own* flesh, or bodily life. Therefore the contrast seems to be between living for self, and especially for the lower self, as is usually the case with the purely selfish character, and living for God in pursuit of the aims inspired by His Spirit.

of the flesh: *lit.* 'out of,' as the harvest is drawn out of the soil.

corruption: 'blighted and putrescent grain' (Lightfoot), corresponding to a life perishing like a rotten thing.

eternal life: *lit.* the 'life of the ages,' the word (*aiōnios*) rendered 'eternal' meaning that which belongs to the age, or the ages. Thus it points to a vast and indefinite future. Practically it is used as equivalent to 'everlasting.' The compound phrase 'eternal life' is a well-known expression in N. T. teaching and evidently among the early Christians. It is found in the Synoptic records of the teaching of Jesus as a blessing of the future (cf. Mark x. 30); so it is regarded by Paul here and elsewhere (cf. Rom. v. 21). In John it is treated as a present possession (cf. John v. 24), though the conception of it as something future also appears in the Fourth Gospel (cf. vi. 27). As a phrase in contemporary Jewish speech it would mean the resurrection life, and the enjoyment of this in contrast with the doom of lingering in the gloom of Hades as a dead soul without a resurrection. Carried over to Christian thought, it still means the life of the resurrection, even in John the life which, though

doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.
11 See with how large letters I have written unto you

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begun here, outlasts death and realizes itself fully after the resurrection. But Christianity deepens its meaning, bringing out the rich spiritual nature of the gift—making much of the substantive as well as the adjective, the life itself as well as the fact that it is eternal.

9. be weary: lose courage, flag, in the long interval between sowing and reaping. There is a play upon words in the Greek. This verb is founded on a word meaning 'evil' (*kakon*), and so it stands in contrast to the word 'well' (*kalon*) in 'well-doing.'

well-doing: doing what is good and morally beautiful.

in due season: *lit.* 'at its own season,' i. e. when the grain is ripe for harvest.

10. opportunity: the same word that is rendered 'season' in the previous verse. The harvest will come at its own season; then let us see to it that we seize the season for sowing when that is with us.

that which is good. In this expression (*to agathon*), as well as in the earlier one, the 'well' of 'well-doing' (*to kalon*), Paul uses language familiar to every reader of Plato, the current language of Greek ethics. There is a more distinctly moral tone in the word rendered 'good,' as with that term in our language; and it is especially applied to the goodness shewn in kindness to other people, for being good to them.

toward all men: the Christian duty of universal philanthropy; and yet the early Christians were accused of misanthropy and hated as 'enemies of the human race'!

the household: regarding Christians as all members of one family.

the faith: a misleading rendering of the R. V., due to pedantic exactness. It is true the article is found in the Greek text. But this is possible before an abstract noun where we should not have it in English; and the Apostle may mean 'the well-known experience of Christian faith.' Still, the A. V. rendering 'faith' without the article is really more accurate. The expression 'the faith,' meaning 'the Christian religion,' is not found so early as this. The whole phrase means 'the household of those who share in the experience of Christian faith,' 'the household of believers.'

vi. 11-18. *Conclusion written by Paul himself.* Writing with

with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a 12

his own hand in large letters, the Apostle gives a final warning against the Judaizing intruders, whose honesty of purpose he does not believe in. He will only glory in Christ, for neither circumcision nor uncircumcision count for anything, but only a renewed life. He desires that he may be troubled no more with these matters, and concludes with a brief benediction.

11. with how large letters: not 'how large a letter.' This fact has been explained (1) as a sign of Paul's bad eyesight. The willingness of the Galatians to pluck out their eyes and give them to him (cf. iv. 15 and note) has been taken by some as a hint of this trouble, which is then regarded as Paul's 'infirmity in the flesh' (iv. 13), and 'thorn in the flesh' (2 Cor. xii. 7). (2) An indication of his difficulty in writing owing to his hands having been roughened by the manual labour of his craft, the tent-making, and to his unfamiliarity with the use of the pen. (3) A sign of the importance of what he is going to write. There is not sufficient reason for his making the statement on either of the first two grounds, except as a casual remark; and the gravity of what he adds, with its stern and almost angry tone, excludes any but grave and serious reasons for what he says. Prof. Ramsay points out that when a document was to be exposed in public 'attention was often called to some specially important point, especially at the beginning or end, by the use of larger letters.' Instances of this may be seen in advertisements at Pompeii.

I have written. This is an instance of what grammarians call the 'epistolary aorist,' a Greek verb used in a letter in the past tense for what will be past when the letter is read, although it is present while the letter is being written, the sentence being constructed from the reader's, not the writer's, standpoint. Paul is not referring to the previous part of the Epistle: he is drawing attention to the paragraph which he is in the act of writing. It would be better to read 'write' with the A. V. and the margin of the R. V.

with mine own hand. From this point, then, all that follows was written in the original document by the author himself. In common with many ancient authors Paul was in the habit of dictating to an amanuensis. In Romans (xvi. 22) the amanuensis gives his name as Tertius, adding his own salutation. We cannot say how many of the Epistles this man may have written out for Paul. Since the Apostle was accompanied by various attendant evangelists at different times, probably the letters would not all be dictated to the same person. The Apostle who obtained his livelihood as a mechanic would not be able to keep a private secretary. Slaves did this work in the Roman Empire; but Paul owned no slave, we may be sure. It was the Apostle's custom to authen-

fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of
13 Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision

ticate his dictated letters with a few words in his own handwriting. Cf. 2 Thess. iii. 17, 'The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle.' The short personal letter to Philemon was written by the Apostle entirely with his own hand, but he calls his friend's attention to the fact as something exceptional (Philem. 19).

12. a fair show in the flesh: not meaning 'in the world and among men,' nor 'in things observable by the senses,' but more specifically 'in ordinances that are bodily and external.' Cf. 'in your flesh' (verse 13). The context shews that the reference is to the Judaizers.

that they may not be persecuted. Persecution in these primitive times came from the Jews, and it was directed especially against those Christians who were of Jewish birth. The special ground of the persecution was disloyalty to the law of Israel. If Jewish Christians shewed themselves zealous in winning proselytes to that law they might hope to escape. Paul roundly declares that this is their only motive. He will not admit that they really believe in the law which they would impose on the Galatians; their own carelessness in regard to it reveals their personal indifference to it. Neither will he allow that they have the slightest genuine interest in the Galatians; he holds that their motive is purely selfish and of the meanest possible kind, leading them to impose irksome obligations on other people simply in order to gain a false reputation for zeal, so as to escape being suspected themselves. Thus they appear in a very odious light. One cannot but hope that the vehemence of his indignation carried Paul too far in this wholesale condemnation of his opponents. No letter of the Judaizers has been preserved to represent their view of the case. Still, we may be sure that Paul was perfectly true to his convictions in uttering this severe judgement, and the next verse certainly points in that direction and goes some way to verify it.

for the cross of Christ: for preaching the cross instead of Jewish ideas. Cf. v. 11 and note.

13. they who receive circumcision: the circumcision party, the Judaizers, who indeed receive that rite themselves, though they do not fulfil the obligations it imposes.

not even . . . keep the law. This can scarcely mean that the Judaizers share in the common inability of all mankind to perfectly fulfil the requirements of the Pentateuch, as Paul shews elsewhere. The charge is too specific. A distinct laxity is meant. The free atmosphere of the church made it easy to abandon

do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But far 14
be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision 15

---

the tiresome rigour of Judaism in many matters, and these Judaizing Christians were availing themselves of this fact to ease their own burdens. Thus their Judaism was more external and formal even than that of the Pharisees. It consisted in little more than submission to the rite of circumcision themselves and pretentious zeal in forcing that rite on Gentile Christians.

that they may glory: exult and boast.

in your flesh: in regard to a rite that is only performed on your bodies, apart from your spiritual condition, irrespective of the question whether any change in that condition, such as the becoming 'a new creature' (verse 15) which Paul aims at for his converts, has taken place.

14. But far be it from me, &c. The pronoun 'me' is in the most emphatic place in the sentence. Paul says in effect, 'Whatever may be the grounds of exulting these people take up, as to myself, for my part, I will not exult except,' &c.

in the cross. Paul had recognized that 'the cross' was a stumblingblock to many (v. 11), and the preaching of it a reason why Christians were persecuted (vi. 12). Yet he never obscured it, but set it in the most prominent place in his teaching. When going to visit the clever people at Corinth, all he previously determined was that he would preach to them about Christ in regard to his crucifixion (1 Cor. ii. 2). Here, far from apologizing for it, he makes it his one ground of exultation. This would appear absolutely paradoxical in the view of contemporaries who only thought of the cross as a cruel, disgraceful instrument of execution. It is to be explained by what Paul saw in the cross. (1) On Christ's side, the centre of his supreme act of love in sacrificing himself for the redemption of the world; (2) on the Christian's side, the symbol of his crucifixion to the world, and the influence by means of which his old evil life was destroyed in order that he might live the new life in Christ.

the world . . . crucified unto me: ceasing therefore to live as a power to fascinate, terrify, or hurt.

I unto the world: no longer concerning myself with it. The scope of this verse must be determined by its context. Paul is not here repudiating any interest in politics, business, society, nature, art, or literature. He is contrasting his position with that of the proselytizers who are trimming their sails

16 anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace *be* upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

---

to catch the breeze of popular favour. He is perfectly indifferent to this. It cannot really hurt him—for the world is crucified as far as he is concerned; he will not consider it—for he is crucified as far as the world is concerned.

15. The first part of this verse resembles an earlier phrase in the Epistle (v. 6), but with some alterations. (1) The former passage begins with the words 'in Christ Jesus,' indicating that for Christians both the rite and the absence of it count for nothing; now that clause is dropped and the sentence is given absolutely as of universal application. Even for those who are not Christians, yes, even for Jews, when its true nature is known, this is seen to be nothing. (2) Paul had said that it was of no avail; now he says that it is nothing at all, i. e. that in all considerations of religion it does not find any place; as far as they are concerned it is not anything. (3) The former contrast was with 'faith working by love'—the Christian spiritual experience; now the contrast is with **a new creature,** indicating the most fundamental change, and therefore the greatest possible difference in comparison with a merely external rite.

a new creature. The phrase may mean (1) 'a new creation,' i. e. 'a new act of creation' (cf. Rom. i. 20), and in favour of this view is the contrast with circumcision as a process and supposed means of salvation; or (2) 'a new creature' as a newly created being. While the Greek word (*ktisis*) admits of both meanings, the latter is the more usual in the N. T. (cf. Rom. i. 25, viii. 39; 2 Cor. v. 17; Heb. iv. 13), and especially suits the phrase 'a new creature' in 2 Cor. v. 17.

16. walk: *lit.* 'walk in line,' like soldiers in a file or rank.

this rule: *lit.* 'canon,' a word used for a carpenter's or surveyor's measuring line; here meaning the way of the Christian life by faith in Christ and the power of his cross, as just indicated, in distinction from the way of an external rite such as circumcision.

peace . . . and mercy. The usual greeting is 'grace and peace.' Probably 'peace' is named first here because it is especially needed in view of the troubles disturbing the Galatian churches. Then 'mercy' rather than 'grace' may be mentioned, (1) because these troubles call especially for the Divine pity and saving grace, (2) because they reveal faults that need forgiveness, and (3) because in distinction from the Jewish spirit of self-made righteousness Paul has been insisting throughout on the gospel of God's pity for man's helplessness received only on condition of faith.

From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear 17
branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your 18
spirit, brethren. Amen.

---

the Israel of God: neither (1) only Jewish Christians, nor (2) Israel as such, but (3) all Christians as 'the spiritual Israel,' and therefore 'the true Israel' in contrast with those who are only Israel 'after the flesh' (1 Cor. x. 18; cf. Rom. ix. 8). These are the 'children of promise' (iv. 28). This idea of Christians as the true Israel appears in 1 Pet. i. 1, where they are called 'sojourners of the Dispersion.' Appearing here at the close of the Epistle, it is a parting shot at the Judaizers, and a concluding claim for Paul's contention maintained throughout the argument.

17. From henceforth. Paul would dismiss the subject. He has completely disposed of the contentions of his opponents. He hopes he may hear no more of them.

for, &c. The reason for this demand is now to be given. It is to be found in the way in which the Apostle's status and mission are duly authenticated.

the marks of Jesus. It was customary for slaves to be cut or branded with marks which would identify them as their master's property. Paul claims that he has such marks proving him to be in the service of Jesus. The notion of the 'stigmata' as the nail-prints in the hands and feet, reproduced in St. Francis, is quite out of place in the time of Paul. The use of the simple name 'Jesus,' according to the best MS. authority, without the titles 'Christ' or 'Lord' which Paul nearly always applies, might seem to point to our Lord in his earthly life. But 'Jesus' was the personal name. Paul seems to use it here to indicate distinctly that he is marked for the one Person, Jesus. The simplicity of the phrase emphasizes the idea that he belongs to Jesus and to Jesus only; then let no one else interfere with him. Deissmann, relying on the analogy of contemporary documents, thinks that Paul alludes to the 'protective marks' of magical amulets. But it is not probable that the Apostle would compare his Christian experience to the doings of sorcery. His marks would be the scars of persecution left by the stoning at Lystra, the lictor's rods at Philippi, &c.

18. See note on 1 Thess. v. 28. This Epistle closes as abruptly as it is opened, with the briefest possible salutations. Here are no personal greetings. Paul will not omit his usual benediction, and his last word is **brethren,** for he still owns the Galatians as Christians in a brotherly relation with himself, and he wishes them to receive the blessing of Christ. It is a Christian conclusion, and one of well-wishing. That is all.

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