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distinct from God, yet dependent on Him, it substitutes the notion of a Power, or Substance, or unknown Somewhat, of which the worlds of matter and mind are a two-sided manifestation—two aspects of the same Reality—identical in their origin, in their essential nature, in the power that operates in them. It is not with this connotation, we know, that our theistic Monists wish to employ the term; but it is still true that these ideas are deeply engrained into the word, and there is always a tendency in its expounders to fall back into them. For this reason we think it is better to discard the term “ Monism ” altogether, as prolific of misleading, if not of false, associations. The term is an unclear and ambiguous one, and Christian theology, while recognizing the truth that underlies its various uses, will do well to discard it for formulas better adapted to its own purposes.



Messages from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

BY THE BISHOP OF DURHAM.

XII.—HEBREWS XIII. 1-14.

THE last chapter of the Epistle has a character quite of its own. Unlike many of those often arbitrary divisions of the New Testament books which we know as chapters, it is a *naturally* separate section. The long and sustained arguments are over. The writer's thoughts, gravitating to a close, and occupied naturally as they do so with the personal conditions of his Hebrew brethren, attach themselves now to one, now to another side of their duties, their difficulties, their more particular and detailed needs, practical and spiritual. As he touches upon these, sentence by sentence, we often see at a glance the probable occasion of the words, but often again we are left in the dark about it. Who shall say precisely why he insists (ver. 2) upon the exercise of hospitality? or who were “ the prisoners ” (ver. 3) whom he bids them remember? Who shall tell what

in this particular community was the occasion for a solemn emphasis (ver. 4) upon the holiness of marriage, or why again, just for them, it was well to speak in warning (ver. 5) about the love of money and the temptation to discontent? Nor can we be certain who were those departed "leaders," "guides," of ver. 7, whose faith the disciples were to imitate, whose blessed "exit from their walk of life" they were to contemplate.

All we can say of these opening topics of the chapter is that, whatever the occasions were, the words occasioned are for us inestimably precious. Dear to the heart of the believing Church for ages have been these precepts to love the brethren (*φιλαδελφία*), to love the stranger (*φιλοξενία*), to remember Abraham at Mamre and Gideon at Ophrah with their angel-guests, and to see a possible angel-visitor in every needing stranger at the door. The call to remember the captive, and the sufferer of every sort, comes with solemn power from this paragraph, as it presses home the law of sympathetic fellowship, and in one passing phrase ("*as being in the body*") reminds us that, for the Christian, all sufferings, all burthens of pain and care, cease when once he is "out of the body." Sacred is the witness borne here to the pure dignity of wedlock: "Be¹ marriage honourable in all things, and the bed unspotted; for fornicators and adulterers"—not only adulterers, but those also who sin that other sin which the world so easily and so blindly condones—"God will judge." And when the Christian is warned against the greed of gain, the quoted words of the Old Testament make, by the use they are put to, a possession for ever valuable to the believing reader of the Scriptures. For not only are they in themselves wonderful in their emphasis: "I will never give thee up; I will never, never desert thee." They are inestimable as an example of the sort of use which this New Testament prophet could make of the spiritual riches of the Old Testament. For here he sees a Divine watchword for the new life, not only in the glorious outburst of faith (ver. 6) in Psalm cxviii., the *Hallel*

¹ The sentence demands an understood *imperative* verb, without which the *for* which (in the true reading) introduces the second clause is out of place.

of the Passover. In the words spoken to Joshua, and to all appearance spoken *to him personally and alone* (ver. 5: see Josh. i. 5), we are led equally to see a message from the heart of God straight to every Christian soul. Seldom, if ever, are we more powerfully and tenderly encouraged than we are here to use with confidence that old-fashioned and often disparaged sort of Bible study, the collection of eternal and universal principles of spiritual life out of an "isolated text."

Then comes the passage where the departed "guides" are commemorated. Whoever they were, were they a Stephen and a James, or saints utterly unknown to us, that passage is precious in its *principles*, true for all time, of remembrance and appeal. It consecrates the fidelity of the Christian memory. It assures us that to cherish the names, the words, the conduct, the holy lives, the blessed deaths of our dear teachers of days long done, is no mere indulgence of unfruitful sentiment. It is natural to the Gospel, which, just because it is the message of an unspeakably blessed future, also sanctifies the past which is the living antecedent of it. Just because we look with the love of hope towards "our gathering together unto Him," we are to turn with the love of memory towards all which we have known as God's gifts, given to us through the holy ones with whom we look to be "gathered together." "The exit of their walk of life" (ver. 7) is to be our study, our meditation. We are to "look it up and down" (*ἀναθεωροῦντες*) as we would some great monument of victory. And from that contemplation we are to go back into life, to "imitate their faith," to do just what they did, treating (xi. 1) the unseen as visible, the hoped-for as present and within our embrace. Thank God for this authorization and hallowing of our memories. Precious indeed is its assurance that the sweetness of them (for all its ineffable element of sadness, as eyes and ears are hungry for the faces and the voices gone, for the look and tone of the preacher, the teacher, through whom we first knew the Lord, or knew Him better) is no half-forbidden luxury of the soul, but a means of victorious grace.

But now comes in a passage of the chapter which more

obviously tells its own story of occasion and aim. The writer recurs to the supreme theme of the Epistle, the antithesis between the Lord Jesus with His finished work and absolute permanence and the transitory antecedents of the older dispensation. Once more the Hebrews are to remember His eternity, with its personal identity, unbeginning and without end (ver. 8); He is "the same, yesterday, and to-day, and unto the ages." Before all types and preparations, before law and ritual and prophecy, He is. And when, having done their long work, they cease, He is. Over the glory of His being and character passes no "shadow of turning." Never, to the endless ages, shall He need to be other than He is, or to be succeeded by a greater. "JESUS, MESSIAH"; He is Alpha; He is also Omega. And the whole alphabet of revelation between the first letter and the last does but spell out the legend of His unalterable glory.

In contrast to Him thus unchangeably Himself, place the "teachings variegated and alien" (ver. 9) which would draw you from beside Him (*παραφέρεσθε*) back to an outworn ceremonial distorted from its true purpose. "Looking unto Jesus," stay still and at rest in Him. The ritual law of "food" (*βρώματα*) had its perfectly befitting place in the age of elementary preparation. But to make it now a rival to the message of that "grace" which means your life direct by faith in the Son of God, is to defraud "the heart" of that which alone can "establish" it in peace, holiness, and hope. To walk in Him is to go from strength to strength. To "walk in them" (*οἱ περιπατοῦντες*) is to miss the very "benefits" you seek. It is to move away from the light, and backward into spiritual death.

Here follows in close sequence a passage of pregnant significance. It begins with ver. 10, and the connexion is not finally broken till ver. 16. The writer, prompted perhaps by the allusion to a ceremonial law of "meats," turns abruptly to the still existing ritual of the Temple, familiar to his Hebrew readers as to himself. From it he leads their thoughts once more to the supreme import and ultimate efficacy of the atoning sacrifice, in all its shame and all its glory, and to the call which

that great fact conveys to the believer to break for ever, at whatever cost, from the old order, *considered as a rival to the Cross*. Such is the true bearing of this often debated passage, if I am not greatly mistaken. The "altar" (ver. 10) which "we have" is not, if I read the argumentative context rightly, either the atoning Cross, at least as to the direct reference of the word, or the Table of the Christian Eucharist. As to this latter conjecture indeed the reference is totally unsupported by any really primeval parallel.¹ *And in this Epistle* it is scarcely conceivable that if that were the meaning, if we really were to be abruptly informed here that we Christians have in the Holy Table a sacrificial altar, no allusion, however slight, should intimate that the Christian minister is not a "leader" only but a sacrificing priest. The whole Epistle may be said to circle round the great topic of Priesthood. From various points of view, and with purposes as practical as possible in regard of faith, hope, and life, that topic has been handled. But is it too much to say that, for the holy writer, the one priesthood in the Christian system which is analogous to the Levitical priesthood, as a sacrificial and mediatorial function on behalf of the Church, is the High Priesthood of the Son of God? The Christian ministry indeed hardly, if at all, comes into view throughout the argument. We find it at length in this chapter, the chapter which tells the readers that they "have an altar." Twice over the pastors of the Church are mentioned here (vers. 7, 17), but how? As "leaders," "guides," *ἡγούμενοι*: as those who "speak the Word of God," as those whose vigilance over the souls of the flock claims a loving and grateful loyalty. That is to say, the Christian ministry is above all things a pastorate. To a sacerdotal aspect of its special functions no reference appears. And that is profoundly noteworthy just because of the supreme sacerdotalism of the whole context of the Epistle.

Assuredly on a careful review of the words before us

¹ Lightfoot (on *Ign. ad Eph. v., et alibi*) has clearly shown that Ignatius' use of *θυσιαστήριον* is altogether mystical. He means not the Holy Table but (among other references) the Church as the sphere or place of spiritual sacrifice.

(vers. 10-16), we are justified in the conclusion that the reference is not to a Christian institution at all, but precisely to the Hebrew ritual, in which writer and readers still had part as members of *the nation*. The thing in view is an altar whose law was such that the sacerdotal "ministers of the Tabernacle" might not use its sacrifices for food. But why? Not of course because they were not Christians, but because the sacrifices presented there and so were to be wholly "burned," "burned without the camp." The entire thought moves within the limits of the typical ceremonial. It deals with the holocaust which even the sacrificer might handle only to commit it to the fire, the victim whose destiny was to be—not eaten by the priestly family, but carried outside the camp as wholly devoted for the people's sins.

It is possible, within the lines of the Levitical ritual, to interpret in more ways than one the "altar" in question. It may be the great altar, regarded in its special use on the Atonement Day (Lev. xvi.); not another structure than that used for other sacrifices, but that same altar regarded (for the moment) as if separated and alone, because of the awful speciality of the dread but most merciful ritual of that great day. Or, again, as it has been argued with learning and force,¹ the reference may be to the altar of incense, the golden altar of the Holiest, on which the blood not only of the atonement victims but of all sin-offerings was sprinkled; and every sacrifice so treated was regarded as a holocaust; no part of it was reserved for food. But in either case the altar in question is not of the Church but of the Tabernacle. The "we" of ver. 10 is the Hebrew not the Christian community.

So the whole thought centres itself in the supreme Sacrifice, as antitype to type. Jesus is our holocaust, wholly sacrificed for our sins. And His sacrifice involved in its awful ritual the shame and agony of rejection by His own, excommunication from "the camp" of the chosen. Then let the Hebrew believer, "receiving that inestimable benefit," be ready also to follow his

¹ By the Rev. James Burkitt, in *The Golden Altar: an Exposition of Hebrews xiii.* 10, 11 (Elliot Stock).

Redeemer's steps in rejection and in shame. Let him also be prepared for casting out by priest and scribe. Let his yearning heart, with whatever anguish, inure itself to the thought that the beloved "city of his solemnities" is not the final and enduring Jerusalem. Let his "thoughts to heaven the steadier rise," as he looks, like Abraham before him, to "God's great town in the unknown land," where sits on high the Mediator of the New Covenant, the "Priest upon His throne."



The Report of the Five Bishops on Vestments.

BY THE REV. CANON NUNN, M.A.

III.

THE five Bishops, in concluding that portion of their Report which relates to the Authority of the Advertisements, do not appear to be quite confident as to the success of their arguments, but provide two ways of escape from the result, if it should be judged that the Advertisements were certainly "other order," under the Uniformity Act of 1559.

The first suggestion is that the "other order" thus taken may have been simply for enforcing a "minimum" of decency; the "maximum" being represented by the full employment of the Vestments under the Rubric.

The second suggestion is that the Rubric of the last Revision in 1662, being somewhat changed in form, and omitting all reference to the Act of Uniformity, in fact superseded all previous rubrics and orders, including the Canons of 1604. This Rubric is now become, it is urged, "by itself, with the Ordinal, a sufficient directory for public worship" (the Bishop of Salisbury in Convocation).

These two suggested methods of escaping from the controlling power of the Advertisements and Canons must, therefore, be carefully examined.