

tial idea properly belonging to it is not that of sacrifice but of service, and that the service thus designated may be of a civil character as well as religious or sacred; and that, in general, a careful study of the Mosaic institutions leads us to the following conclusions:—That both priests and Levites appeared before God as the servants of the people, rendering *their* service; offering *for them their* sacrifices; acting as their representatives, and leading them in the public worship of God. In fact, their office was one of wide and varied duties, and by no means limited to the performance of a routine ritual. They were the appointed juriconsults of the people. It was their province to adjudicate upon all controversies between man and

man. They were bound to explain the law in cases of trespass or injury; to decide cases of conscience; to settle disputed points concerning rites and ceremonies; and, in short, to perform the office of judges and of teachers of religion. And it is to these high duties of his office that the prophet Malachi so pointedly and solemnly refers when he says (chap. ii. 7), "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts."

After this survey of the comprehensive character of the office of the ancient Jewish priest we shall be prepared to take up in our next article, as we have already intimated, the relationship, if any, between it and the ministry of the New Testament.

## Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John.

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### CHAPTER II. 9-11.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes."

Ver. 9. Up to this point John has not expressly mentioned the commandment of brotherly love; he could all the more readily take for granted that his readers would understand him, as they were well aware how in all his exhortations brotherly love was the Alpha and the Omega. If he presupposed on the part of his readers a knowledge of his gospel, he could be altogether without doubt in regard to this matter; for in connection with ver. 8 they must inevitably have recalled to mind John xiii. 34. He, therefore, now repeats the thought that the keeping of the commandments of Christ is the sure token of one's Christianity being real (ver. 3); he repeats it by substituting for the abstract notion of the commandment of Christ the more concrete notion of *brotherly love*. To be a Christian now appears to him as a "being in the light;" for he has just set forth the state of the Christian as one in which the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shining. Here *one's own brother* is not one's neighbour in general, but one's fellow-Christian. Here, seeing he is writing to Christians of their relation to one another (i. 7), he can from the nature of the case be speaking only of Christian brotherly love in the narrower sense (2 Pet. i. 7). The *hating* spoken of is not to be weakened into a mere "not loving," although there is an important truth in the idea that each lack of love is actual hate. Here, however, John,

with a definite purpose in view, sets love and actual hatred over against one another,—they are opposed to one another as light and darkness, which also form a direct antithesis. Of the middle stages between the two, he does not speak at all here. Upon the basis of the position laid down here, such stages naturally judge themselves in accordance, namely, with their greater or less approximation to the one or other of the two mentioned poles. According to Paul also, hatred is the principal vice of the non-redeemed world (Rom. i. 29 ff.; Titus iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 2-4).

The state of being in the light absolutely involves brotherly love. Not only do we in the new light recognise brotherly love as a commandment that cannot be set aside, but that new light by its quickening brightness also awakens in us this brotherly love by an inner necessity. Its opposite—hatred of the brethren—is absolutely incompatible with living in that new Christian light. If the Christian hates his brother, he is still in the old darkness. John cannot conceive the light that has risen upon us in Christ otherwise than as a power awakening brotherly love in us. For that light is a ray of the eternal love of God, a ray that shines upon us in mercy; and therefore it must bring forth love in us. Moreover, it shows us our brother in a form in which he appears not only in need of our love, but also worthy of it. Hatred has essentially a

contracting and obscuring power. Inasmuch as it reflects our consciousness wholly upon ourselves, and, by referring everything to ourselves, unnaturally contracts it, it presents everything to us in an oblique light, and thereby closes our inner eye against the influx of the only true light, the idea of God. When the inmost source of light possessed by man's spiritual eye is thus obstructed, everything round about man is transformed into darkness. It is only as love that God can be understood; to hatred, however, love is absolutely incomprehensible. The measure of our brotherly love is, according to the Apostle, the measure of our true enlightenment. The keenest theoretical subtlety and the greatest intellectual culture are compatible with deep darkness in our inmost being; whereas, on the other hand, the eye of love is sensitive to all other illumination, and affords the firm basis upon which rests the knowledge of all divine and human mysteries. This enlightenment is not conditioned by the measure of one's intellectual culture; it can dwell in the simplest heart as well as in the most cultured spirit.

Ver. 10. There now follows the other side of the contrast. If a man loves his brother, the light (in Christ) does not merely shine transiently into his life; it is the abiding element of his life. He does not again fall out of the life in the light. In virtue of the brotherly love cherished by him, there are no effective hindrances and obstructions to his life in the light. Nor is there any occasion of stumbling in him:<sup>1</sup> he abides in the light, the occasions and inducements having, so far as he is concerned, ceased to exist, which could draw after them a falling out of the light. The occasion of stumbling thought of here is not that which is given to one's neighbour; for that would not fit in with the context. The contrast in which ver. 11 stands to the verse we are considering, compels us to think here of an occasion of stumbling which he who loves his brother does not *take*. John conceives the occasions of stumbling, which imperil the Christian life, as lying really in the Christian himself, not without him, in the world. If brotherly love is really living in him, by that very fact everything in himself has been removed that could make him stumble upon his path through life, the whole might, namely, of carnal self-seeking (i. 5-7). Pure, perfect brotherly love cannot have a downfall; for with the eye of its simplicity it easily finds a safe way, even through the thickest entanglements. It enlarges the inner eye, and thereby at the same time makes it keener. All duties are readily recognised

by love, and they are not grievous to it. It has already overcome temptations before it has even become aware of them. This is specially true of the temptations which social life occasions in such abundance. For the relations of men to one another are undoubtedly involved; they are so, however, only in proportion as selfishness has sway over us. With self-denial those collisions cease to exist which add so much to the difficulties of man's life in society. Even in the sense (which we have rejected) of the occasion of stumbling which is *given*, the Apostle's statement is perfectly correct. True brotherly love gives no occasion of stumbling to one's neighbour; and the only way to avoid giving an occasion of stumbling is true love. Mere prudence will not suffice us. But if true love rules us, our walk can only be edifying to our neighbour, and we may devote ourselves to him entirely, without thereby running the risk of preparing an occasion of stumbling for him.

Ver. 11. The first half of this verse is a repetition of ver. 9. The Apostle repeats what he has already said, in order to obtain a basis for the contrast to the words, "there is none occasion of stumbling in him." The beginning of the verse is, therefore, only a way of linking on the words, "*he walketh in the darkness*," with which the train of thought resumes its progress. John means to give prominence to the danger that follows in the train of being in the darkness, a condition which exists wherever there is hatred of one's brother. He says, He who is in darkness *walketh* also in darkness. But woe to him that walks in darkness! He falls headlong, without anticipating it, into an abyss. *He knoweth not whither he goeth*, for darkness prevents one from knowing one's goal and direction. Destruction is certain; but the man who walks in the darkness does not see where it is, because the *darkness hath blinded his eyes*. "He has eyes, but they see nothing without light; in the darkness they are as if blind" (*vide* 2 Cor. iv. 4). He is not without an organ to perceive danger; but the efficiency of this organ is hampered by the element in which he stands, viz. by his ungodly, carnal, and egoistic life.

To walk in the darkness is a dreadful thought. No doubt there are some to whom such a walk is what they love most and find most convenient; but only men who are altogether ignoble can do so,—only those who attach no value to the fact that they are men. Whoever at all feels himself to be a man must find it intolerable to walk without knowing where and whither. Every one is in this case who hates his brother. He may, indeed, have correct ideas as to man's destiny in general; but he is in total darkness as to whither his own way is tending. He must avoid all sober-minded investigation of the subject from fear of being led to the most horrible prospects. The consequence

<sup>1</sup> Footnote by Dr. Mühlhäuser:—In a note added later to his manuscript, Rothe makes "in him" refer to the previous word "light": "In the light there is nothing upon which one could stumble, over which one could fall." This seemed to him a more definite contrast to the words, "he knoweth not whither he goeth," in ver. 11.

is a total blindness. If we vividly represent to ourselves the whole frightfulness of that thought, and are compelled to regard it as the inevitable consequence of hatred of one's brother, we must be greatly deterred from everything that is hated. It is, however, unfortunately a daily experience that hatred has a blinding effect upon the human mind. It makes a man guilty of deeds of which he would have held himself to be altogether incapable. Nothing entangles one more completely in the power of

the passions than hatred; and wherever only scope is given it, it ultimately leads inevitably to an abyss. Love, on the other hand, knows whither it goes; it seeks not its own, and can therefore easily abide upon the straight, divine way. Surrendering what is its own, it knows that it therewith gains the love of the brethren, and the love of the heavenly Father Himself. Perfect self-satisfaction in love of the brethren and of God is the goal towards which love surely tends.

## Possible Zoroastrian Influences on the Religion of Israel.

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### PART III.

(c) The preceding argument is of course only valid if, on independent grounds, chaps. lxv. and lxvi. be denied to the Second Isaiah. My view of the next passage, Dan. xii. 2, will hardly be disputed, the Maccabean date of the Book of Daniel being an accepted critical result. It runs thus: "And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth (*i.e.* in Sheól) shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to disgrace and everlasting abhorrence." The "awaking" means the revival of the soul to earthly consciousness in a body. The "everlasting life" and "everlasting abhorrence" are the recompenses of the good and the bad respectively among the dead. It is not, however, a general resurrection which is meant; the writer is probably thinking, on the one hand, of faithful Israelites of the better time, especially those who have suffered martyrdom (*cf.* Rev. xx. 4), and, on the other, of base renegades who are raised from the dead that they may be put to open shame. To a great extent, then, this passage agrees with Isa. xxv. 8, xxvi. 19, taken together. It goes beyond them in its coinage of the new phrase "everlasting life"<sup>1</sup> ("everlasting death" is evidently avoided), and in its extension of the resurrection to the wicked. Is this latter feature merely derived by inference from Isa. lxvi. 24 (from which the rare word *דְּרֵאָן* is borrowed)? Scarcely, for the objects of perpetual abhorrence in that passage are (see ver. 16) partly Jews, partly Gentiles, but here (to judge from the context) exclusively Jews. Nor is it a fresh product of the Maccabean struggle, for (unless we are prepared to follow Olshausen in his view of the date of the psalms) open or virtual apostasy was not unknown before the Greek period. A form of

the resurrection belief resembling that in Daniel may have existed long before, and why should we hesitate to suppose that the feature in question was suggested, not only by a natural craving for justice, but by its existence in Zoroastrianism? Surely the psychological and the historical explanation must be combined.

(d) Ps. xlix. 15, 16. The forty-ninth psalm is, one can hardly doubt, post-Exilic; it may be plausibly assigned to some part of the long reign of the second Artaxerxes (405-359 B.C.). Verses 15 and 16 are the central part of the *khida*, the "dark speech," or, better, the "enigma," which the poet opens to the accompaniment of the harp (ver. 5). Can we re-read it in a Zoroastrian light? First of all, something must be said as to the form and contents of the verses. The text has been suspected of corruptness. One of the difficulties complained of is the abruptness of the transitions; this, however, is mitigated by transposing the words, "And the upright shall trample upon them at the dawn," to the end of the verse. Other difficulties spring from the peculiarity of the phraseology; but this hardly justifies us in altering the text; the poet has warned us that there is an "enigma" to be solved. Prof. Abbott, indeed, after Kamphausen, proposes to read in ver. 16, *וַיִּרְדּוּ בְּמִשְׁרֵי לַקֶּבֶר*, but it seems to me that this can only mean, "and they shall go down gently to the grave," which is a description of a euthanasia (*cf.* Job xxi. 23), and unsuitable here. For my part, I adhere to the rendering, "And the upright shall trample upon them at the dawn," and I put this line at the end of ver. 15 (transposition is of course an allowable critical process), as the greatest and hardest utterance which the poet has to make. The other statements in these verses are simpler. They are (1) that the wicked remain in Sheól for ever, and never see (or for ever see not) the light, and (2) that the soul

<sup>1</sup> It is possible of course to explain *חַיֵּי עוֹלָם* "life of long duration" (*cf.* Enoch x. 9), where the phrase seems to mean "(at least) 500 years." This would agree with Isa. lxv. 20, but is in our present context most improbable.