

ARTICLE VI.

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION.

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THE QUOTATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THEIR RELATION TO
THE QUESTION OF INSPIRATION.

IN the series of Articles which we bring to a close with the present number, the relation of the quotations of the New Testament to the question of inspiration has been, of necessity, considered to some extent. It seems desirable, however, to devote a separate Article to the more particular examination of this subject.

No candid reader of the New Testament can doubt the position of Christ and his apostles in respect to the scriptures of the Old Testament. If anything in the compass of sacred literature is indisputable it is that they everywhere regard these books as of divine authority, and appeal to them as the end of controversy. If only one or two among the New Testament writers took this attitude in respect to the Hebrew scriptures, there would be more show of reason in the favorite hypothesis of rationalism, that the disciples *misapprehended* their Lord. But we find not only "the very chiefest apostles," as Peter, John, and Paul, but Christ himself testifying in every possible way to the divine authority of the things written "in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms." We need not assume here the inspiration of the evangelists. It is enough to show that they were honest and competent men, and that they have faithfully reported the substance of their Lord's teachings. Had there been, in the discourses, only here and there an incidental allusion to the Hebrew scriptures, the case would have been different. But they constitute, so to speak, the warp into which the Saviour wove the woof of his daily instruction.

The explicit declaration of the apostle Paul, that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God";¹ and of Peter, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost";² — these declarations are but the formal statement of what everywhere appears, as well on the face of the evangelic narratives as in the apostolic epistles. The position that the scriptures of the Old Testament were given by inspiration of God is, to use a military illustration, commanded by the position of the New Testament writers that Jesus is the Son of God, and that he commissioned and qualified in a supernatural way the twelve apostles to preach the doctrines which they received from him, and to lay the foundations of his church. Whoever would successfully assail the former position, must begin by demolishing the latter. Both parts of scripture are so indissolubly connected that they must stand or fall as a whole.³

But when we have admitted, as we must, the *authority* of the New Testament writers, as interpreters of the Old, a very important question remains to be considered; and that is the *manner of their quotations*. As this question has an important bearing upon that of the mode and scope of inspiration, we propose to examine it in respect to both outward form and inward contents.

1. As it respects *outward form* we cannot but notice at once the *free manner* of these quotations. It is manifest that the writers of the New Testament are not anxious about the verbal accuracy of the words cited. The spirit and scope of a passage, which constitute its true life and meaning, are what they have in view, not the exact rendering of the words from the Hebrew into the Greek. It is well known that a large part of their quotations is made from the Greek version of the Seventy, called the Septuagint, which was in current use in their day. No one at the present time will, we think,

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

² 2 Peter i. 21.

³ The reader may see this question further discussed in the seventh Article of the present series, under the head of "Antecedents of the Gospel History." — Bibliotheca Sacra for 1870, pp. 721-740.

venture to assume that the translators who made the Septuagint were inspired, or that they always succeeded in hitting the true meaning of the Hebrew original. Yet, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the robust good sense of the New Testament writers went straight forward, without stopping to notice or criticise deviations from the Hebrew, provided they did not affect the use which they wished to make of the passages quoted. Of this we have a striking illustration in the narrative of the eunuch's conversion.¹ The eunuch, returning from his visit to Jerusalem, was sitting in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah, from the Greek version, as we know from the form of the quotation as given by Luke. The Hebrew and Greek of the passage quoted, when literally translated, read as follows :

He is brought as a sheep to the slaughter ; and as a ewe before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment ; and who shall declare his generation ? for he was cut off from the land of the living (Isa. liii. 7, 8).

He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter ; and as a lamb before the shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. In [his] humiliation his judgment was taken away ; and who shall declare his generation ? for his life is taken from the earth (Isa. liii. 7, 8 ; Acts viii. 32, 33).

The evangelist, without pausing to criticise the version, "opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." So far as the use which he wished to make of the passage was concerned, the deviations of the Septuagint from the Hebrew original were of no account. In like manner the Saviour, quoting from Isaiah xxix. 13 : "This people draw near with their mouth, and with their lips they honor me, but they have removed their heart far from me ; and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men,"² follows very closely the Greek version which reads : "but their heart is far from me ; and in vain do they worship me, teaching the commands and doctrines

¹ Acts viii. 27 sq.

² Matt. xv. 8, 9 ; Mark vii. 6, 7. The words of the Hebrew are : *וְיִרְאָתָם מִצִּוְתוֹת אֲנָשִׁים קִלְקָלָה*, which may perhaps be rendered : *And their fear of me has become the inculcated precept of men.*

of men." So also in quoting from Gen. ii. 24: "and they shall become one flesh," he follows the Septuagint in inserting the words *they two*, which are implied, but not expressed in the original.¹ One of the most remarkable variations of the Greek version from the Hebrew is found in the fortieth Psalm. Here, according to the original text (vs. 7-9) we read: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire. Ears hast thou opened (or bored) for me.² Burnt offering and sin-offering thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written concerning me (or, written for me; that is, laid upon me as a written command): I delight to do thy will, O my God; and thy law is within my heart." For the words: "ears hast thou opened (or, bored) for me," the version of the Seventy puts the clause: "but a body hast thou prepared for me,"³ and in this it is followed by the writer to the Hebrews.⁴ The attempted explanations of this singular variation are not satisfactory, and we will not delay to consider them. More important is it to note the fact that the writer manifestly *uses* this clause in the course of his argument. Commenting on the words he has quoted he proceeds thus: "Saying above, Sacrifices, and offerings, and whole burnt-offerings, and offerings for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure in them, which are offered according to the law, — then he said, Lo, I come to do thy will. He taketh away the first [the system of Mosaic sacrifices], that he may establish the second" — the

¹ See Matt. xix. 5; Mark x. 7, 8. We do not mean to be understood as asserting that the Saviour himself, in arguing with the Pharisees, used the Greek version. The evangelists have followed it in inserting the two words above noticed. Whether Jesus did or did not add them to the Hebrew text is a question of no importance. The same general remark holds good in respect to the quotation from Isa. xxix. 13, and other quotations in which the evangelists have followed the Septuagint.

² Heb. $\text{פָּתַחְתָּ לִּי אָזְנוֹתַי}$; *ears hast thou digged for me*. There is no valid ground for assuming a reference to the custom mentioned in Ex. xxi. 6. Whether we understand the words as meaning, Thou hast *made* ears for me, or, Thou hast *opened* ears for me, they express alike an obedient attitude towards the revelations made to him of God's will.

³ $\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\varsigma$.

⁴ Heb. x. 5.

doing of the Father's will, as explained in the following verse: "In which will [in the accomplishment of which will] we have been sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."¹ It was through the offering once for all of his body — the body which God had prepared for him (vs. 5) that Christ accomplished the will of God in the sanctification of believers. We seem then to come of necessity to the principle that a writer of the New Testament might, under the illumination and guidance of the Holy Ghost, use a clause of the Greek version which varied from the Hebrew so as to give a new shade of thought, provided this clause agreed with the general scope of the passage quoted, and expressed, moreover, the truth concerning Christ's person and offices. This is, for substance, the view taken by Calvin. He explains the meaning of the clause in the original to be that God has given to his servant a docile and obedient spirit, and then adds: "But the apostle, following the Greek translators, said: A body hast thou prepared. For in making quotations they were not so very scrupulous, provided they did not pervert scripture to suit their own convenience. We are always to consider to what end they adduce testimonies [from the Old Testament]. For in regard to the scope itself they are very careful not to change the sense of scripture. But in respect to words and other matters which have not a bearing on the question before them, they allow themselves much freedom."² So also Hengstenberg among the more recent commentators: "The Seventy have rendered the words, *σῶμα δὲ κατηρίσω μοι*, a *body hast thou prepared for me*; and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has followed them, inasmuch as the thought is not altered by this translation. The antithesis here also is that of thanksgiving manifested in the whole life and actions in contrast with particular purely outward offerings. Thou hast given me a body wherewith I may render to thee obedient service in the accomplishment of thy will."³ Neither of these com-

¹ Heb. x. 8-10.

² Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews in loco.

³ Commentary on Pa. xl. 7.

mentators, however, brings out clearly the fact that the new shade of thought contained in the version is sometimes used in the New Testament under the restrictions above specified. But this is done more explicitly by Alford: "How the word *σῶμα* came into the LXX, we cannot say; but being there, it is now sanctioned for us by the citation here; not as the, or even a proper, rendering of the Hebrew, but as a prophetic utterance, equivalent to, and representing that other."¹ The same general principle must be admitted elsewhere; for example, in the use which the writer to the Hebrews makes of Ps. viii. 6 (Eng. ver. viii. 5), and of Ps. civ. 4, according to the most approved rendering of the original passages.²

But there are passages in which the spirit and scope of the original are lost in the version of the Seventy; and here the New Testament writers quote directly from the Hebrew. Examples are the following: The Hebrew of Hosea xi. 1 reads: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." The rendering of the Seventy: "Out of Egypt have I called his children,"³ makes the passage inapplicable; since Israel, as God's first-born son,⁴ was the type of Christ, "the first-born of the whole creation,"⁵ not the individual Israelites. Here, accordingly, the evangelist cites from the original. Again, in citing from Zech. xii. 10, the evangelist John necessarily departs from the

¹ Commentary on Heb. x. 5.

² Calvin renders the first clause of Ps. viii. 5: *Quia minuiisti eum paululum a Deo: for thou hast made him a little less than God.* While he concedes the possibility of the rendering *angels*, he prefers that of *God*, as being "the more genuine version, in which almost all the Hebrews agree." And he meets the objection drawn from the use which the apostle, following the version of the Seventy, has made of the words (Heb. ii. 7), by the remark: "We know how much freedom the Apostles allowed themselves in citing scriptural passages; not, indeed, with the design of perverting them to a foreign meaning; but because they regarded it as sufficient to indicate by the finger (*digito monstrare*) that what they taught was sanctioned by the oracles of God." — Commentary on Ps. viii. 6. See, also, his remarks on Ps. civ. 4, in his Commentary on Heb. i. 7.

³ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετακάλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ.

⁴ Ex. iv. 22, 23.

⁵ Col. i. 15.

Greek version, which, as the text now stands, utterly fails to express the true sense of the Hebrew.¹

To sum up, in a single sentence, what relates to the outward form of these quotations: The writers of the New Testament quote very commonly from the Septuagint, but often from the original Hebrew also; using in both cases much freedom, their main design being to give the spirit and scope of the passages cited. "When nothing depended on a rigid adherence to the letter, the practice of the sacred writers not scrupulously to stickle about this, but to give prominence simply to the substance of the revelation, is fraught, also, with an important lesson; since it teaches us that the letter is valuable only for the truth couched in it, and that the one is no further to be prized and contended for than may be required for the exhibition of the other."²

2. We pass now to the consideration of these citations on the side of their *inward contents*. Here it is only necessary to assume (what it has been the scope of this series of Articles to demonstrate) that God has made to men a true supernatural revelation, and that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a faithful and reliable record of this revelation. From this it follows, at once, that all parts of the Bible, as being a history of God's dealings with man, must be connected as an organic whole; since all God's works have unity and progress towards a final end. And, inasmuch as the grand end of the Old Testament dispensation (in subordination to the plan of redemption as a whole) was to prepare the way for the Redeemer's advent, it is manifest that it must contain a perpetual prophecy of Christ. We do not mean that the Old Testament history is all type. It is a veritable record of God's dealings with his ancient people,

¹ Heb. וַיִּרְאוּנִי אֲשֶׁר אֶלֶּי אֲחַד מֵאֲשֶׁר הִקְרָו, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced; words followed by John (xix. 37), with only a change of person: Ὁφθαλμοὶ εἰς ἐν ἐξεκέντησαν; while the rendering of the Septuagint: καὶ ἐτιβλήθησαν πρὸς μὲ ἀνθ' ἧν κατηρχήσαντο, and they shall look to me, because they have mocked me, gives a totally different meaning.

² Fairbairn's *Hermeneutical Manual*, Part iii. Sec. 1. See also the Seventh Lecture of Lee on the Inspiration of Scripture.

valid for the men of its day, fulfilling its own office in the plan of God's providence, and containing, when we look at it simply as history, its own lessons of instruction. But it had constant reference to the future advent of Christ, and was so ordered and shaped in all its parts as to prefigure his person and offices. This is the view which the writers of the New Testament everywhere take of the Old; and it is as widely removed from the rationalistic principle of *accommodation* as light is from darkness. There is, indeed, a manner in which the authors of the New Testament sometimes employ the language of the Old which may be called *accommodation*; that is, they use its phraseology, originally applied in a different connection, simply as expressing in an apt and forcible manner the thoughts which they wish to convey. Of this we have a pertinent example in the Epistle to the Romans, where the apostle says, with reference to the proclamation of the gospel: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world,"¹ meaning that what the Psalmist says of the silent preaching of the heavens may be aptly applied to the preaching of the gospel; so that none of his countrymen are excusable for their unbelief. See another kindred example in vs. 6-8 of the same chapter. But that the Saviour and his apostles used *accommodation* in the commonly received sense of the term,—that is, that they quoted, in *accommodation* to the prejudices of their age, passages from the Old Testament as applicable to the Messiah and his kingdom, which they knew, or ought to have known, could have no such application when fairly and legitimately interpreted,—that, for example, they used the one hundred and tenth Psalm as a prophecy of the Messiah,² simply because this was the current view of their times,—this idea of *accommodation* is not to be admitted for a moment. That the Saviour dealt prudently with the prejudices of his age is

¹ Rom. x. 18.

² Matt. xxii. 41-46; Mark xii. 35-37; Luke xx. 41-44; Acts ii. 34, 35; Heb. i. 13.

true. But he did not build upon them his claim to be the Messiah. He did not solemnly appeal to the authority of Moses and the prophets, knowing this to be only a dream of fanciful interpreters. He and his apostles often cite the Old Testament *by way of argument*. Thus, the Saviour argues against divorce at the husband's will, "for every cause," by an appeal to the original institution of marriage;¹ and Paul proves that the man is the head of the woman from the order of creation and its accompanying circumstances.² Respecting this class of quotations, it is only necessary to remark that the validity of the argument stands or falls with the historic reality and divine authority of the passages cited. The Saviour and his apostles avowedly build their arguments on the record of the Old Testament. If this is sand, — mythical quicksand, — their house falls, and their arguments perish with it. But if the foundation is rock, — an inspired record of historic realities, — their house stands, and their arguments remain unanswerable.

Far more numerous are the passages which are cited as *prophecies of Christ and his kingdom*. These are introduced by various formulas, such as the following: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet";³ "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias";⁴ "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears"⁵; "This scripture must needs have been fulfilled";⁶ "Wherefore, also, it is contained in the scripture";⁷ "For these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled";⁸ "And again, another scripture saith"⁹ "This that is written must yet be accomplished in me."¹⁰

These varied forms represent the events to which they refer as the fulfilment of predictions contained in the Hebrew scriptures. The common formula, "that it might be fulfilled," means that the event recorded took place, *in order that* the purpose of God announced in the prophecy might

¹ Matt. xix. 3-6; Mark x. 5-9.

² 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9; 1 Tim. ii. 11-14.

³ Matt. ii. 15. ⁴ Matt. xiii. 14.

⁵ Luke iv. 21. ⁶ Acts i. 16.

⁷ 1 Pet. ii. 6. ⁸ John xix. 36.

⁹ John xix. 37. ¹⁰ Luke xxii. 37.

be accomplished. The prophecy was not the main thing, but the purpose of God contained in it. For the accomplishment of this purpose, and thus of the prophecy which revealed it, God's veracity was pledged. So, when the evangelist says of the Jews in our Saviour's day: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes,"¹ etc., the hinderance to their belief lay not in the prophecy itself, but in that which the prophecy announced.

Of the class of prophecies now under consideration, to which there is so frequent reference in the New Testament, some refer more specifically to *Christ's person and offices*. Such are those contained in the one hundred and tenth Psalm: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool";² "The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."³ So, also, the description of the Messiah's sufferings and exaltation, in Isa. lii. 13 — liii. 12, and numerous other prophecies, which it is not necessary to enumerate.

Others refer more generally to the *progress of God's kingdom*, of which the Messiah is the divinely-constituted Head. These have commonly a *progressive fulfilment* — a fulfilment stretching through many centuries, and coming, so to speak, in successive instalments. The noted prophecy of Isaiah, for example, respecting the blindness and obduracy of his countrymen, had, beyond doubt, a true fulfilment in the case of the generations of Jews who lived before the Babylonish captivity. But this did not preclude a more awful fulfilment in the days of our Saviour and his apostles; and this fulfilment was included in the mind of God, when he gave the prophet his commission: "Go and tell this people, Hear on, but understand not; see on, but perceive not,"⁴ etc.; so that the application made of the passage by Christ and his apostles⁵ is legitimate, and not a mere accommodation. To

¹ John xii. 39, 40. ² Compare Matt. xxii. 42 seq., and the parallel passages.

³ Compare Heb. vii. 21.

⁴ Isa. vi. 9 seq.

⁵ Matt. xiii. 14, 15; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26, 27.

take another example; the prophecy of Joel: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh," etc.,¹ had the beginning of its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost. But the promise of Jesus was: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."² The Comforter, who came with plenary power on the day of Pentecost, abides with the church to the end of time. With that first pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit was inaugurated the accomplishment of the prophecy; but its consummation will be in the day of Zion's millennial glory. Peter's application of it: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," was in the fullest sense legitimate, but not exhaustive.

A numerous class of prophecies, again, refer to Christ *under the veil of types*. The Mosaic institutions, as a whole, are, indeed, a perpetual adumbration of Christ. The writers of the New Testament refer to them as the shadow of which he is the substance; and the legitimacy — nay, more, the necessity — of this view must be admitted by all who believe in the reality and unity of divine revelation. On this point we do not propose to dwell. But we wish to say a few words on the two closely-related questions of *typical transactions* and the so-called *double sense* of scriptural prophecy.

We have an undeniable example of a typical transaction in the direction concerning the paschal lamb, that no bone of it should be broken.³ In noticing the fact that our Saviour's legs were not broken, the evangelist adds: "These things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."⁴ That the apostle, in this citation, made a legitimate use of the passage cannot be denied by any one, till he has first set aside the typical character of the paschal lamb. But, since this is involved in its being a prominent institution in the Mosaic system, it will be further necessary that he set aside the typical character of the Mosaic system as a whole — a hopeless task for one

¹ Acts ii. 17 seq.

² Ex. xii. 46; Num. ix. 12.

³ John xiv. 16.

⁴ John xix. 36.

who truly admits its divine origin. If, now, the paschal lamb was a real type of Christ, it is reasonable to believe that so remarkable a direction, twice given, should have had a prophetic reference to the great Antitype. Christ's natural body represented mystically his spiritual person, which includes in itself as members all believers, and makes them all one body.¹ This body might be pierced, but not mangled. Again, we read in Hosea: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt";² words which Matthew quotes as fulfilled in Christ.³ It was the purpose of God, namely, that the history of Israel, God's first-born son,⁴ should in his national childhood foreshadow that of Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God. Upon the same principle we may explain the use made by the writer to the Hebrews of David's words in the eighth Psalm: "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?"⁵ etc. It seems impossible to deny that the immediate reference of the Psalm is to man's exalted dignity and high prerogatives as the lord of this lower world. But, as the writer argues, the words have no complete fulfilment in man considered as apart from Christ. It is in Christ's person alone that the high destiny of human nature finds its realization. He is "crowned with glory and honor," not for himself alone, but for all his disciples also, who shall in him have all things put under their feet. To take one more example, Melchizedek was a pre-ordained type of Christ, not simply as a priest (as were all true priests), but also in the peculiar character of his priesthood: (1) He united in his person the kingly and priestly offices, as does the Messiah. (2) In official dignity he was higher than Abraham, and thus than any of Abraham's descendants by natural generation. (3) His priesthood was without genealogy, that is, was not held by virtue of his descent from a line of priests — a priesthood without any of the restrictions and

¹ See this idea variously expressed in John xv. 1-7; xvii. 23; 1 John iii. 24; Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 12 seq.

² Hosea xi. 1.

³ Matt. ii. 15.

⁴ Ex. iv. 22, 23.

⁵ Heb. ii. 6 seq.

limitations of the Levitical priesthood. In all these respects it was the design of God that his priesthood should shadow forth that of the Saviour.¹

The most striking examples of a primary lower meaning covering one that is higher are furnished by the so-called *Messianic Psalms*. A part of these (as Ps. ii. ; xlv. ; lxxii. ; etc.) describe the victories and universal dominion of a mighty King whom Jehovah establishes on Zion to reign there forever; another part (as Ps. xxii. ; xl. ; lxix. ; cix., etc.), the deep affliction and humiliation of a mighty Sufferer, and his subsequent deliverance, which has for its result the conversion of all nations to the service of Jehovah. That such Psalms have *somehow* a true reference to Christ's person and work cannot be denied, without imputing either error or fraud to the writers of the New Testament. The second Psalm, for example, is referred expressly to Christ by three of these writers;² and no less than nine citations can be gathered from the twenty-second and sixty-ninth Psalms, in which the Messiah is recognized as the great Sufferer there described.³ In the interpretation of such Psalms, then, we must assume, as a fundamental principle, that their ultimate reference is to Christ. The only remaining question is, whether they contain a lower reference also; and if so, in what way. Here evangelical interpreters are divided, as follows :

1. Those of one class deny altogether the lower reference, assuming that the writer speaks wholly in the name of Christ, without reference to himself or any merely human personage. Such is, in general, the view of the church

¹ See the elaboration of this matter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, v. 10, 11 ; vii. The difficult questions involved in it belong to the Commentators. We give only the general outline of the argument.

² Vs. 1, 2 compared with Acts iv. 25, 26 ; vs. 7, with Acts xiii. 33, and Heb. i. 5, and v. 5 ; vs. 9, with Rev. ii. 27, and xii. 5.

³ Ps. xxii. 1 compared with Matt. xxvii. 46, and Mark xv. 34 ; vs. 7, 8, with Matt. xxvii. 39 seq., and parallel passages ; vs. 18, with John xix. 23 ; vs. 22, with Heb. ii. 12 ; Ps. lxix. 4, with John xv. 25 ; vs. 9, with John ii. 17 ; vs. 9, with Rom. xv. 3 ; vs. 21, with John xix. 28 seq. ; vs. 22, 23, with Rom. xi. 9, 10.

Fathers. There are Psalms—the one hundred and tenth, for example—that may be legitimately explained in this way. But in the attempt to carry this principle consistently through all the Messianic Psalms one meets with serious difficulties. They contain, at least some of them, historic allusions of a character so marked and circumstantial that it is hard to believe the writer had not in view his own personal situation. In some of them, moreover, the writer makes confession to God of his sins.¹ Here it becomes necessary that those who apply these Psalms exclusively to Christ should assume that these confessions are made in a *vicarious* way—the Messiah assuming the character of a sinner, because “the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” But such an interpretation is inconsistent with the form of these confessions. When the Psalmist says: “Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me”; “O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee,” we cannot understand such language of anything else but personal sinfulness. It is true that the Messiah bore our iniquities, and that God “made him to be sin for us who knew no sin”; but the Saviour never spoke, or could speak, of “mine iniquities,” “my foolishness,” and “my sins.”

2. According to another class of interpreters, of whom Hengstenberg may be taken as the representative, the subject of certain Messianic Psalms, particularly of those which describe the Messiah as a sufferer, is an *ideal personage*, namely, the congregation of the righteous, considered not separately from Christ, but in Christ their Head; or, which amounts to the same thing, Christ considered not in his simple personality, apart from the church, but Christ with his body, the church. According to this principle of interpretation, David wrote the Psalms of this class on the foundation, indeed, of his own rich and varied experience, but composing them, from the very beginning, expressly for the use of the church. Every particular believer had a right to appropriate their promises to himself, so far as his character answered in

¹ Ps. xl. 12 (Heb. xl. 13); lxi. 5 (Heb. lxi. 6).

reality to the idea of the righteous man which underlies them. So, also, might the congregation of the righteous as a whole use them, under the same limiting condition. In both the individual believer and the congregation of believers, these Psalms had before Christ a partial fulfilment, but in Christ alone was their fulfilment consummated. The contents of these Psalms, then, pertain, *according to their nature*, partly to Christ alone, partly to believers alone, who are his members,—all those parts specifically which contain confessions of sin,—and partly to Christ in the fullest sense and believers in a subordinate sense. Much might be said in favor of this view; yet it labors under the difficulty, already indicated, that one cannot well read the Psalms in question, with their marked historic allusions, without the conviction that the author had in view, not in a general and indirect way the gathered experience of his past life, but immediately his present personal situation.

3. There remains a third, and perhaps preferable view, which may be called the *typical*, maintained, as is well known, by Melancthon, Calvin, and many of the later expositors. This begins with the well-established principle that David (and, more comprehensively, David's royal line, so far as its successive members were true to their office) was a divinely constituted type of the Messiah, not only in his office, as the earthly head of God's kingdom, but in the events of his history also; consequently, that these Psalms, whether they describe the writer's victorious might or his deep suffering at the hand of his enemies, had a true historic origin, and referred immediately to his own situation and the events which befell him; but that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he was carried beyond himself to describe the history and offices of the Messiah. These Psalms, consequently, have a lower fulfilment in David (the seventy-second in Solomon) and a higher in Christ the antitype.

The second Psalm, for example, which describes the vain conspiracy of the heathen rulers against the Lord's anointed king, had, according to this view, a true historic occasion.

In the victorious might with which God endowed David, and by which he was enabled to overthrow the leaders of this conspiracy, it had its primary lower fulfilment; and this was, so to speak, the first sheaf of the harvest of victories that was to follow — the earnest and pledge of the higher fulfilment of the Psalm in Christ, in whom alone the promise made to David: "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever,"¹ could have its real accomplishment.

The second class of Psalms, of which the twenty-second and sixty-ninth are well known examples, had, in like manner a true historic origin. The exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," with which the twenty-second Psalm opens, had immediate reference to the writer's own distressed condition. But since he was the divinely appointed earthly head of God's kingdom, and in this office a type of the Messiah in whom the line of earthly kings was to end, God so ordered the circumstances of his history as to shadow forth in them the future sufferings and triumph of Christ. Writing under the illumination and guidance of the Holy Ghost, he was led to say things which applied to himself only in a lower (sometimes figurative) sense, but which were appointed to have a complete fulfilment in Christ his antitype.²

How far the Psalmist understood this higher reference is a question of difficult determination. With regard to the sixteenth Psalm, the language of the apostle Peter: "He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ," etc.,³ implies that in penning this Psalm David was conscious of its higher application. And, we may say in general, that the spirit of the New Testament quotations from the Psalms indicates that their authors had a deeper insight into the prophetic meaning of their words than many modern ex-

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 16 compared with Luke i. 32, 33.

² See, for illustrations of this, Ps. xxii. 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 18; Ps. lxxix. 4, 7-9, 21; Ps. cix. 1-20.

³ Acts. ii. 31.

positors are willing to admit. But, however this may be, the Spirit of inspiration had in view the fulfilment of these Psalms in Christ; and his intention, clearly revealed to us in the New Testament, must be our rule of interpretation.

We add, as a final remark, that in the Epistle to the Hebrews some Psalms are referred to Christ as their subject, in which the authors apparently speak simply of God according to the Old Testament view of him. Such is the hundred and second Psalm, from which are cited, after the Septuagint, and applied to Christ the words: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a mantle shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."¹ Such also is the ninety-seventh Psalm, if, indeed, the words: "And let all the angels of God worship him,"² are taken from the seventh verse of this Psalm, and not rather from the Greek version of Deut. xxxii. 43.³ But with regard to all such passages the student of scripture should carefully note that they refer to *God's advent* as the Judge and Saviour of his people. Thus, in the hundred and second Psalm the writer says, in joyful anticipation of God's appearance in behalf of Zion: "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord,

¹ Heb. i. 10-12.

² Heb. i. 6.

³ Here the Septuagint version reads thus: Εὐφράνθητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ, καὶ προσκυνήσατέωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ· εὐφράνθητε ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ Θεοῦ· ὅτι τὸ αἷμα τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ ἐκδικᾶται, καὶ ἐκδικᾶται καὶ ἀνταποδώσει δίκην τοῖς ἐχθροῖς, καὶ τοῖς μισοῦσιν ἀνταποδώσει· καὶ ἁκαθαρσίαι κύριος τὴν γῆν τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ; Rejoice, O ye heavens, with him; and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice, ye nations with his people; and let all the sons of God be strong in him: for he shall avenge the blood of his sons, and shall execute vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and shall recompense those who hate him: and the Lord shall cleanse the land of his people.

and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.”¹ The ninety-seventh Psalm describes also God’s advent as the Judge of his people: “A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlighten the world; the earth sees and trembles. The hills melt like wax at the presence of Jehovah, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.”² Or, if we refer the words: “And let all the angels of God worship him,” to the song of Moses according to the Greek version, there also the theme is the advent of God to render vengeance to his adversaries, and to be merciful to his land, even to his people. Now the advent of God, as a Judge and Deliverer of his people, is a *process* which began when he appeared to Moses with the words: “I have surely seen the affliction of my people in Egypt,” “and I am come down to deliver them”;³ which was continued under the Mosaic dispensation in the form of repeated interpositions, partly miraculous and partly purely providential; but which is consummated in the advent of the Son of God, including his whole administration of the affairs of the church till his second coming in glory. The ultimate fulfilment, then, of all such passages is in the Messiah, and this truth the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews saw through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

¹ Vs. 13-16 (Heb. vs. 14-17).

² Vs. 3-6.

³ Exod. iii. 7 seq.