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## ARTICLE IX.

## NOTES.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITHFULNESS: THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF  
JESUS AND PAUL.

ONE of the oldest conflicts known to religion is that between faith and works. On the one side is the theoretical and on the other the practical, on the one the external and on the other the internal, overt act and inner intent being pitted against each other.

Zoroastrianism is a religion of good morals, and yet as a system it abounds in superstitious rites and observances to disbelieve in which means certain death. Brahmanism, on the contrary, is a religion of speculative theories, yet its scriptures abound in texts making all hinge upon the deeds of righteousness performed. In the Christian Scriptures the same conflict goes on. Amaziah's priest makes all the favors or disavors of Jahweh, the national God, circle around the correct performance of a ceremony, and Amos, the prophet, combats him with a theology in which the common moralities are paramount. Isaiah protested against a religion of faith which was without works, Paul as earnestly assailed a religion of works which was without faith. It was this same Paul who said: "A man is not justified by the works of the law, but only through faith in Jesus Christ"; and over against him in the New Testament is the common sense Jewish Christian, James, asserting that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Is there any way out of the difficulty which shall be at once both sensible and biblical? Certain it is that there is nothing under heaven a mere belief in which will save a man, if by salvation we mean anything that is at all worth while, and James does well to say so in the very faces of the Martin

Luthers who persist in calling his book "an epistle of straw." On the other hand, it is equally as certain that there is no list of duties a mere mechanical performance of which will bestow salvation,—the salvation which is force of character, and magnetism of person,—and Paul deserves praise for telling us this, all his modern detractors to the contrary notwithstanding.

Personally, I believe the problem is soluble; with Browning,—

"I have tried each way singly; now for both."

There is an English word ready at hand that bridges the chasm, and, above all, gives good sense. Furthermore, by substituting it in the texts where it rightfully belongs, it presents an excellent composite picture of the biblical teaching as a whole concerning salvation.

Dogmatic theologians have often lamented the absence from the chapters of the Old Testament of the doctrine of salvation by faith. It is the purpose of this Note to show that the doctrine, as usually apprehended, is present in the New Testament only by virtue of mistranslations and misunderstandings. The story is long and somewhat involved, but its main outline is worth the telling. It amounts simply to this, that our New Testaments are not Greek, as we have so long boasted, but Hebrew (or Aramaic) with Greek words; and, if we would understand them at all correctly, we must translate them back into Hebrew, and this Hebrew again into English. To illustrate: "How do you find yourself?" is not English. The words, to be sure, are; but the idiom, or way of putting it, is not. The greeting is German with English words. "How do you carry yourself?" is the corresponding French, and "How do you do?" the equivalent English. A German professor once said of an enemy, "If I was not peaceful, like a lamb, I killed him already before a long time." He was thinking in German, and giving the corresponding English words as he went along. To find the meaning of "already" in the professor's sentence, we must go to the German dictionary rather than to the one lying upon our own desk. So, if we would ascertain the meaning of the New Testament doctrine of Justifi-

cation by Faith, we should search the Hebrew rather than the Greek lexicon.

The evidence for this latter statement is overwhelming. A few examples only will be given.

In Hebrew a single word is used to express the ideas of both "word" and "thing." The New Testament follows suit, giving to the Greek word *rema* a meaning which it never has in the Greek writers (Luke ii. 15).

The Hebrew word "heart" is always used also of mind, and as a consequence the Greek word "heart" is in the New Testament repeatedly used of mind. The Revisers of the Old Testament were aware of this, and frequently substituted "mind" for "heart" in their revision. The New Testament translators should have done the same. In Luke x. 27 the phrases "with all thy heart" and "with all thy mind" are a double translation of the "with all thy heart" of the Deuteronomy original.

The same Hebrew word means both "righteousness" and "alms." The King James Version of Matt. vi. 1, correctly assuming that Jesus meant "alms," adopted the Greek word that said so; the Revisers, with equal assurance, assuming that here, as in so many other cases, we have a Greek word in a Hebrew sense, restored the Greek word which means "righteousness." Now, though this word never means "alms" in classic Greek writers, it does mean "alms" here, and should have been so translated.

The Hebrew word "bowels" is the common word throughout the Old Testament for compassion, pity, and is so translated in all cases where it occurs. The Greek word "bowels" is less often used figuratively; and, when it is so used, the passions are prevaillingly those of anger (!) and enmity (!). Yet in the New Testament the Greek word has the Hebrew meaning assigned to it without a word of explanation (see, however, Phil. ii. 1), and our translators retain the word "bowels" in English, and add an explanatory phrase (1 John iii. 17). "To shut up the bowels" is not Greek any more than it is English: it is Hebrew, meaning "to withhold pity."

The Greeks said, "bear fruit," as we do: the Hebrew and the New Testament say, "make fruit" (Luke iii. 8). The Greeks said, "behold me": the Hebrew and the New Testament say, "behold I" (Acts ix. 11). The Greek salutation is "grace": the Hebrew is "peace." Paul uses both, though the latter meant nothing to native Greek hearers.

The preposition "in" is used in various ways in the New Testament that would baffle a Greek scholar. In scores of places it means "with," as, for example, in the baptismal formula; or "by," as in the phrase "we are saved by hope." The Hebrews had few adjectives, and circumlocutions are common (Luke xvi. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 9). They did not compare their adjectives, and therefore the New Testament does not know how to manage the comparatives and superlatives. Comparisons were made, not by the help of "than," as in English and Greek, but by the use of the preposition "from"; and this idiom forces the Greek *para* into the most outlandish situations (Heb. xii. 24; Rom. i. 25). The relative in Hebrew merely expresses the relative idea, but has no pronominal force in oblique cases, and hence the proper pronoun must be used along with the relative where there would be any ambiguity. The sentence "This is the man who I saw him" is good Hebrew for "This is the man whom I saw." This peculiarity of Hebrew speech forces its way into the New Testament repeatedly.

The Jew said, "Not every lie is of the truth," when he meant, "No lie is" (1 John ii. 21). This is not Greek.

Now the significance of this whole string of facts for our argument is this, that the Hebrew word "believe" means both "to have faith in" and "to be faithful to," and the Hebrew word "faith" means more often "faithfulness"; and, the New Testament being so often Hebrew with Greek words, may we not conclude that such is the case in its use of faith? It is certainly an ominous fact that the word "faithfulness" occurs so often in our English Old Testament and so seldom in our New. This in itself strongly argues that something is wrong somewhere. Shall we change "faithfulness" to

“faith,” and so introduce the doctrines of Paul into the Psalms of David; or shall we translate our Paul as we do our David, and thus find the doctrine of Salvation by Faithfulness in both Testaments? But one answer is possible. The word “faithfulness” has dropped out of our New Testaments through a failure on the part of scholars to recognize that our New Testaments are essentially Jewish. Professor Delitzsch has turned the New Testament into Hebrew for the purpose of converting Jews. Let us turn to some familiar passages and note how he renders them. Galatians iii. 11 reads exactly as in Hab. ii. 4: “The just shall live by his faithfulness.” Romans v. 1, 2, has added charm when rendered, “Therefore, being justified by faithfulness, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faithfulness unto this grace wherein we stand.” One after another the familiar texts rush to our minds; and have they lost aught in sense or suggestiveness or spiritual power? “By grace are ye saved through faithfulness”; “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that is faithful”; “Be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house”; “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever is faithful to him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The American Revised Version lends aid to my argument by changing “faith” to “faithfulness” in a half-dozen important passages. They certainly should have added Matthew xxiii. 23, where *krisis* is the Hebrew *mishpat*, “justice,” and *eleos* is *chesed*, loving-kindness, and *pistis* is *emunah*, “faithfulness.”

With one more quotation I close, and I give this in the words of our English versions: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life” (Rev. ii. 10).

*Speer, Illinois.*

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#### GROUND OF AUTHORITY IN RELIGION.

AMONG the most prominent representatives of the New England theology is Dr. George Nye Boardman, late Professor in

Chicago Theological Seminary. While he has no formal statement of his system of theology, he has issued a pamphlet, privately printed for his friends, in which a pretty fair summary of his system is given. We are permitted to publish the following sections from it relating to the authority of the Scriptures. They are certainly very timely:—

“The ultimate authority in religious doctrine is a question of the highest importance. The preacher must have something to rest upon with perfect assurance as he proclaims a scheme of salvation. Much of his power will depend on his impressing his hearers with the fact that he himself believes what he says. He must be able to argue the positions which he assumes with such cogency that his hearers will be compelled to admit their truthfulness, at least their strong probability. It would be worse than useless to appeal to myths or bare traditions. That which is merely possible, that which requires apology or modification, does not compel assent, does not enforce conviction. Religious teaching must have a more special adaptation than mere congeniality to the inquiring spirit, it must carry conviction to the cold, severe intellect, for our gospel has the mission of calling not the righteous but sinners to repentance.

“The clearest and most direct argument for Christianity, as it seems to me, is the ordinary argument adopted by our Congregational Churches and by Protestants generally, the argument stated with inimitable clearness and cogency by Dr. Paley. Christ stands before the world a teacher sent from God. His mission is attested by miracles, works that must be attributed to the First Great Creative Cause. The messenger from heaven sanctioned as the divinely appointed teacher must be accepted as speaking with a divine commission; and his followers, so far as they repeat his words, can base their faith, and call upon their hearers to base their faith, upon a *Thus saith the Lord*. This has been adopted by traditional orthodoxy among the Reformed Churches as the unquestioned ground of confidence in the gospel. And since the sacred Scriptures are received as the word of God, it has been considered proper to require of those professing the Christian faith to aver that they receive the Old and New Testaments as the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice. These views I accepted and taught. They seemed to me to embrace the facts known to us concerning the rise of Christianity, God’s revelations, and man’s response to them.

“But I allowed myself some latitude of opinion and of Scripture interpretation. I could not believe in a strictly verbal inspiration. I believed that the canon of Scripture had not been authoritatively settled. I doubted the inspiration of Esther and the Song of Solo-

mon. I thought many narratives and imprecations, if inspired, had no authority as precepts but were offset as guides to conduct by contrary teachings. Inspiration does not imply approval.

"I was well aware of the difficulties that beset my view of the evidences of Christianity.

"No one can pass lightly over Hume's assertion that a miracle cannot be proved to have occurred, whether it has occurred or not.

"Supernatural interpositions seem of themselves improbable. Some of the miracles narrated in the Bible seem, in their nature, incredible. To say nothing of those reported in the Old Testament, the feeding of the multitude and transforming the water into wine, are of a character to raise questionings. It is a kind of damper upon the acceptance of miraculous evidence that Dante should place the wonders connected with the founding of Rome by the side of those occurring at the introduction of Christianity, and infer from them the divine affection for that city and the approval of monarchy as the best form of government. It is to be noted also that Christianity is not the only religion that claims the sanction of miracles.

"My lectures were given before the higher criticism had attained its present influence, but it could not then be set aside as undeserving of notice.

"Notwithstanding the force of these objections, it seems to me we must adhere to a religion based upon a supernatural revelation,—supernatural not to be confounded with natural.

"The attempts to base Christian certitude on other foundations than a certified revelation have not seemed to me satisfactory. Evolving a scheme of religion from the consciousness of Christ appears to me both accepting and rejecting revelation, and then making vague surmisings the foundation of a system. Personal convictions may satisfy an individual but cannot be enforced upon the world at large. Christian experiences are strong confirmations of our religion, and may be justly made the ground of appeal to the worldly mind, but they must be preceded by principles to be embraced by the intellect."

#### THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST AS A RANSOM PAID TO THE DEVIL.

As there is frequent reference in popular discussion to the idea that the doctrine of the early church was that the sacrifice of Christ was a ransom paid to the devil, it may be well to quote the authority of Macpherson's "Christian Dogmatics,"<sup>1</sup> a recent very thorough theological work for the following statement. He points out that in fact there is no developed

<sup>1</sup> Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$3.00, *net*.

theory of the Atonement in the writing of the Fathers. They were content with the fact, which was generally stated in scriptural phraseology; but in no case do they work out elementary hints as to the direction in which a theory is to be sought, in the form of any complete theory of the idea and purpose of the death of Christ. That is not to be found until the time of Anselm and the Scholastics. His statement is as follows:—

“It is very commonly maintained that the notion of a redemption paid to the devil, which finds expression under a variety of forms in the patristic writings, is such a theory, and that the fathers who make use of that conception meant to propose it as a regularly elaborated exposition of the work of Christ in man's redemption. A careful study of the works of Irenæus, Origen, Augustine, and even Gregory of Nyssa, will show that the idea of ransoming the sinner from the power of the devil is with them nothing more than a concrete way of representing the truth that Christ's death must be considered as having a real power in eliminating evil from the nature and life of man, and overthrowing its dominion. This, however, is merely a restatement of the fact of the atonement in reference to one of its important aspects. The concrete representation of this fact led to the adoption of a certain unfortunate phraseology, which, however, ought to be regarded as simply an exaggerated use of the personification of sin, which within legitimate limits has been employed by Paul himself. The statement, which has given just cause of offence, made most distinctly by Gregory of Nyssa, that the devil was deceived into accepting Christ in the place of the sinful race of men, is simply an odd conceit by which it was supposed that certain aspects of the Saviour's work could be illustrated. There was evidently no intention on the part of those early Christian writers to go beyond a restatement of the New Testament exhibition of the work of Christ, and no thought of formulating a theory on the basis of these Scripture facts. It is only with the opening of the scholastic age that we meet with any attempt to frame a theory as to the meaning and the essential idea of the atonement. The history of the theories of the atonement properly begins with Anselm.”

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