

presentation of the roll upon the king's mind; and so, before they took it to him, they managed to hide both Jeremiah and Baruch in some safe place, whence probably they escaped into Babylonia (see Chap. xiii. 4-7), and spent there most of the intervening period; till once more, in the eleventh year of Jehoiakim, the Prophet's voice, after seven years' silence, was again heard in the streets of Jerusalem.

But Baruch's roll meanwhile was doing the Prophet's work. Silently, but surely, the leaven was reaching first one and then another; and when at length the removal to Babylon came, those carried away with Jeconiah were, to a large extent, true-hearted and faithful men; and so the promise became their own, and the eyes of God were upon them for good in a heathen land, while those left in Jerusalem, on ground so hallowed, perished miserably.

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THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

CHAPTER I. VERSES I-II.

THE Letter addressed to Titus was as follows. *Verse 1.*—*Paul, a servant of God, and moreover an apostle of Jesus Christ*—If a writer had been personating St. Paul in the second century, he would not have deviated in this remarkable way from the customary designation given by St. Paul to himself. The phrase resembles that chosen by St. James, and by St. John in the Apocalypse, but was never exactly adopted by the Apostle of the Gentiles on any other occasion.—*with special reference to the faith of the elect of God, and to their full recognition of the truth that*

tends to godliness. The function of the apostolic office, as an office, sinks into insignificance by the side of the faith which the message and earnestness of an apostle evokes. "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (διάκονοι) by whom ye believed?" The word "elect" is not equivalent to "believer," and God's election of men contemplated their sanctification by the Spirit and their belief of the truth (1 Peter i. 2); so there is a grand co-operation with God, possible to an apostle of Jesus Christ, when God uses him to evoke and guide this "faith of God's elect," and to produce a deep understanding and full knowledge of the truth about Christ in its immediate relations with godliness. The eternal purpose of God is too deep for an apostle to fathom, he knows that it can only be revealed with reference to individuals, in the fact of their faith and godliness. Since faith is apt to become faint, and truth to be valued in inverse proportion to its direct ethical quality, it was well for Paul to say to the reckless predestinarians of Crete that his apostolate was sanctioned and worthy of respect, in proportion as it was calculated to produce these two moral results. But a faith which bore no fruit, and a truth or a godliness which had no relation to eternity, and was bounded by the world of sense, would neither be Christian faith, nor Christian truth, nor the "mystery of godliness;" and consequently Paul qualifies the whole clause descriptive of his apostolic work by *resting upon the hope of eternal life which the God who cannot lie promised before the age-long times.* The phrase (πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων) occurs in 2 Timothy i. 9, where it is clearly capable of the translation "before the eternal periods," and is equivalent to "before the foundation of the world." But the word "eternal" dif-

fers in breadth according to the context, and here Calvin, Mack, and Ellicott agree in seeing the difficulty of a promise of eternal life being given before the creation of man. Jerome said that the promise was made in eternity to the Son of God. Chrysostom and Cornelius regarded the promise as "a decree to give;" but notwithstanding these various interpretations, I believe that the Apostle was dwelling upon the periods and dispensations that had passed over the world of men, at the very commencement of which "the God who cannot lie" gave the indefeasible promise, which all through the ages had stimulated hope, and quickened faith, and given an infinite force to the distinction between right and wrong.

The realization of the full significance of the promise detains him for a moment still. *But he manifested in his own seasons his word in the proclamation wherewith I have been entrusted, according to the appointment of our Saviour God.* The construction appears to be slightly broken here. We expect the object of the manifestation to be the very same promise which had been uttered in less explicit form before the age-long periods; but, on the contrary, the Apostle introduces a new term, which, while it corresponds with it, gives it a fresh character. There has been a promise given in the bare constitution of man, given in the aspirations and hopes of prophetic souls. Its full meaning was concealed in the changeless counsels of God, but it needed ample expression and appropriate form, and only in the fulness of the times did this become possible. The eternal thought which circulated in the bosom of man as a *hope*, at length became manifest, took the form of WORD, clothed itself in an authentic

proclamation, provided for itself adequate voices, trustworthy embodiments of its spirit, and safe channels for its communication. This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. This is the word wherewith Paul was entrusted by the "Saviour God."¹

To Titus my very own child, in regard to the faith common to me as your spiritual father and to you whom I have begotten in the gospel, grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour. Some modern editors, Tischendorf (eighth edition), Ellicott, and Tregelles, omit here the word "mercy." Huther is doubtful, Lachmann inserts it. The ascription of the phrase "Saviour" in one verse to "God," and in the next to "Christ Jesus," reveals a state of mind on the part of the Apostle perfectly incompatible with any doubt as to the Divinity of our Lord.

Verse 5.—For this cause, subsequently stated, I left thee behind in Crete. This translation for the verb is demanded by the revised reading,² and strengthens the inference that Paul had just completed a lengthened visit to the island. Mack supposes that the visit was so far prolonged as that the original formation of the Church might be attributed to the Apostle. *In order that thou mightest further bring to orderly arrangement the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city.* "The things lacking" may have been—though this cannot be absolutely determined by the use of the *καὶ*—the appointment of the elders. If so, it would seem that the Churches hitherto had existed without any official superintendence. At all events the infer-

¹ We have considered already (THE EXPOSITOR, vol. ii. pp. 60, 61) the two expressions, *Σωτῆρ Θεός* and *γενήσῃ τέκνῳ*.

² *ἀπέλιπόν* is preferred by Huther, Ellicott, Tischendorf (8), on good authority, to *κατέλιπόν*.

ence is strong that this peculiarity was at least one of the things which needed to be forcibly brought forward. Paul does not imply that this is the first time that the advice was given, but adds, *as I commanded thee*. The two "middle" verbs here used preserve no reflexive sense, except this, that Titus may have felt that the order which Paul called for, rested like a burden of personal responsibility upon the Apostle's own heart. It would seem that numerous elders were appointed in the several Churches to which reference is made in the New Testament;¹ that they corresponded with the office held in the Jewish synagogues and in the Christian communities of the Dispersion; and that the office was subsequently extended to the Gentile Churches. When Peter (Acts xii. 17) desired that the news of his deliverance should be reported to the Church at Jerusalem, he did not discriminate the elders from "the brethren," although the office of elder was in existence (Acts xi. 30) at the time. When Paul came on his last visit to Jerusalem, we find that all the elders were present (Acts xxi. 18). Long before the period when this letter was written there were elders in the Church at Ephesus (Acts xx. 17), so that the "appointment" of them by public election or imposition of hands implies that there had previously been much spontaneous and unregulated Church-life in the cities of Crete. The strong statement of Pearson that the elders were "under, in, and from the apostles," is simply reading into the text what is not there. The general qualifications mentioned in Verse 6 have been already discussed (*cf.* comment. 1 Tim. iii. 2 and 10). *If any one should be blameless:* not of such a character that no one could bring an ac-

¹ Acts xi. 30, xiv. 23, xv. 2, xx. 17; 1 Peter v. 1; James v. 14.

cusation against the candidate—for none can limit the power of malicious detraction—but of blameless life and unblemished name, since the office of elder is not one intended to cover or condone damaged reputations. I have already discussed¹ the phrase *husband of one wife*, and shewn reason to believe that the references in these Epistles to the monogamy of the “elders” and the “widows” are not prohibitions of second nuptials, but a solemn demand for purity and blamelessness in the marriage relation, amid widespread concubinage and license. *Having believing children*. In 1 Timothy iii. 4, 5, we find a more abundant representation of the holy home of the pastor or elder. Here the phrase implies the long prevalence of Christian influences in the elder’s household. The second clause tends to limit the ambiguous word (*πιστά*) to its active rather than its passive meaning, to “believing” rather than to “trustworthy.”

Those who have been cradled and nourished in the faith might yet be exposed to accusations of various kinds, while of those who were already characterized as trusty, it would hardly have been necessary to add, *not under accusation of dissoluteness*. This word (*ἀσωτία*) in its origin suggests the idea of “the incapacity of saving,” and a consequent profligate expenditure upon personal fancies or lusts. The adjective (*ἀσωτος*) has also, in the classics, a passive meaning, “an incapability of being saved,” carrying in its quality the doom of its own folly. The adverb is translated “riotous,” Luke xv. 13, and the noun, Ephesians v. 18, is rendered, E. V., by “excess.”² Such wasteful and perilous living

¹ THE EXPOSITOR, vol. ii. p. 398.

² Archbishop Trench, “Synonyms of Greek Testament,” sec. xvi. Ellicott on Ephes. v. 18.

suggests the possible tampering with Church funds on the part of some of the families of Christian brethren, aggravated by some notorious illustrations of the *unruly* and unmanageable character of the young people. The pure family life, the domestic order, and the irreproachable bearing of the wives and children of the elders, were placed in the first rank of indispensable qualifications for the office.

Verse 7.—*For the bishop must be blameless.* There can be no doubt that the office spoken of is personally identical with the elder who has been referred to in the preceding verses. This identification is admitted by all modern scholars. The passage before us, compared with 1 Timothy iii. 1–10 and 17, ff., shows throughout that the qualifications both here and there assigned to the “bishop” are to guide Titus in the appointment of “elders” in every city. The same blending of the two ideas, the one referring to the station and character, and the other to the nature of the duties, viz., of superintendence and pastoral oversight (*episcopate*) devolving upon the elder, comes out if we compare Acts xx. 17 and 28, where the “elders of the church” are spoken of by St. Paul as “bishops.” St. Peter also (1 Peter v. 1, 2) addresses the elders as “fulfilling the office of bishop” (*ἐπισκοποῦντες*). The same usage occurs in the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians (sec. 42, 44), where “bishops” are not distinguished as officers from “the elders whose departure was crowned with fruit and perfection.” Mack, in his voluminous commentary on the passage, admits the force of the inference, but builds up the theory that the true episcopal office was at that time in the hands of the apostles and their immediate representatives; and Cornelius à

Lapide simply evades it by speaking of the presbyter as *futurus episcopus*. When the Ignatian Epistles were written, the three orders of "bishop, presbyter, and deacon" were fully developed. This simple fact throws the Pastoral Epistles back into a much earlier period than that assigned to the Ignatian literature. The bishop must be a blameless person, because he is, moreover, *a steward of God*, "the director of the house of God." Timothy had been told how he was to conduct himself in the (*oikos Θεοῦ*) house of God, and now Titus is told that every bishop or elder has similar responsibilities. He is responsible to God for the conduct of his house, and must be faithful (1 Cor. iv. 1, 2) to the solemn charge, which, when once entrusted to him, may be known and felt to be a Divine commission. *Not self-willed or self-pleasing, nor irascible*. A greedy desire for the realization of personal ends and pleasures is the provocative to angry speech and choleric temper; and for a pastor who has the charge of the weak, the ignorant, the trembling, or the sinful, to give way to passion under the imperious sway of his own selfishness, is to demonstrate unfitness for the high office to which he lays claim. The characteristics mentioned in Verses 7 and 8 closely resemble those on which I have commented already.¹ *Not a brawler nor a striker* (either with fists or hard words), *nor one greedy for shameful gain; but a lover of the stranger, a lover of all that is good* (cf. 2 Tim. ii. 3), not so much of good persons as of good things. The bishop is bound to be generous and hospitable, even to strange and new thoughts, if they are good thoughts. It is thus that the largest-hearted men, being not forgetful to enter-

¹ THE EXPOSITOR, vol. ii. pp. 400, 401.

tain strangers, have found themselves entertaining "angels unawares."

The comprehensive terms, *sober-minded, righteous, holy, temperate*, cannot be thoroughly treated here without wandering too far from the purpose of this commentary. The first term is used by Plato¹ to denote strength of soul, soundness, healthiness of mind, mastery of the pleasures and passions; and, as Trench observes, it occupies a larger place in classical ethics than in Christian ethics, because in those who are "led by the Spirit" the condition of "self-command" is taken up and transformed into the higher and better condition of being commanded by God.² The term "righteous" connotes a strict recognition of all claims upon us, human and divine, accordance with what is "right." The term "holy" (*ἅγιος*, not *ἄγνος*) involves a sacred inward purity, a principle of goodness, and an inward loathing of the unjust, untrue, and impure; while "temperate," though in the form of an adjective it occurs in this place only, yet, as a noun, is placed by St. Peter (2 Peter i. 6) after "valour" and "knowledge," as the adequate development of Christian faith. Since "temperance" concludes here the catalogue of graces, it would present an anticlimax if we should suppose it to mean "continence," chastity, or physical "temperance" only. I imagine that the cultivation of some of the graces themselves, here referred to, is exposed to temptations peculiarly their own. There may have come under the Apostle's eye some good men whose hospitality verged on recklessness, and whose welcome given to what is good, in thought, in person, or in measures, occasionally

¹ The *Charmides* is mainly taken up with the exposition of this virtue.

² Archbishop Trench, "Synonyms of Greek Testament," sec. xx.

indicated lack of judgment and prudence; or others whose sobriety of mind savoured of dulness if not of inertia, and tempted them to a useless neutrality and occasional indecision. On the other hand, Paul may have seen specimens of elders who were "righteous" in such a degree, or were so fiercely just, that scarcely would the most sanguine or enthusiastic disciple "dare to die" for them; or they may have been so conspicuously "holy," that their "profiting appeared—effusively, if not obtrusively—to all men," in such an impressive form that it ran the risk of being confounded with sanctimoniousness. Thus, even in the higher departments of the Divine life, as well as in the lower regions of the mind and the flesh, the Christian pastor is to be characterized by "self-mastery."¹

The following clause (Verse 9) contains three of the technical phrases often found in the Pastoral Epistles—"the faithful saying," "the sound or healthy doctrine," and "the teaching." Almost all commentators translate the first of these terms, "faithful word or doctrine," and mean by it the whole compass of apostolic instruction. On that understanding the verse has a very tautologous character. Thus take Lange: "Holding fast the trustworthy doctrine, according to the teaching, that he may be able by the sound doctrine," &c. Ellicott and Fairbairn agree. Huther coincides, and makes *πιστός λόγος* identical with the *διδάσκαλία ὑγιαίνουσῃ* of the next clause. Now, as we have seen already, these Epistles as well as the Acts² reveal the presence in the Christian community of many "faithful sayings," originating with Christ and with the apostles or prophets of the early

¹ The Vulgate *continens* and Luther's translation, *Keusch*, are not by any means the representation of the large and comprehensive meaning of the word.—*Rost und Palm, sub voce.*

² THE EXPOSITOR, vol. ii. p. 143.

Church, passing, as we imagine, freely from lip to lip as the watchwords of the kingdom of heaven. Note carefully 1 Timothy i. 15, iii. 1, iv. 9; 2 Timothy ii. 11; from which it is possible to estimate the breadth and variety of these "faithful sayings." I understand the phrase here in a similar sense. Though no one "faithful saying" is quoted, yet it may be used comprehensively of them all, and is here guaranteed by the (*διδασχῆ*) "teaching" of the Apostle himself. He seems to claim for himself the authorship of the sayings, and to recommend them, as furnishing the "elder" with the elements of that healthy instruction which would console the believer and convince the gainsayer; and thus he finally characterizes the "elder" or "bishop" as a man who should *hold fast the faithful saying which has been the substance of and is in harmony with the apostolic teaching, in order that he may be able both to exhort or comfort with sound instruction, and to confute the gainsayers.*

Gainsayers there are in abundance. *For (Verse 10) there are many unruly vain talkers and mental deceivers, especially those of the circumcision.*¹ The words used are not common in their substantival form, but present no difficulty. The gift of vain and deceptive speech, the faculty of *vox et præterea nihil*, has produced more "unruly" spirits than any other misused talent, and the Jewish element in the Cretan Churches sinned most conspicuously. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." The loquacious reckless talker, who *must* say something, has broken the peace of many a home and shattered the prosperity of many a Church.² The

¹ Tischendorf, in his eighth edition, has removed the *kai*, which, with *Text. Rec.*, he once preserved after *πολλοι*, and on which Ellicott congratulated grammarians.

² Cf. James iii. 1-12.

multitude of teachers, who have nothing true to say, is the curse of the kingdom of God, and Paul would keep no terms with them. What the precise trouble was which afflicted the Cretan Churches from the self-deceiving Jews, who mingled with them, revealing imperfect knowledge and obtrusive temper, we can only conjecture. "Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks of silence," said Thomas Fuller; and Paul would provide against such peril by sound and stern advice.

Verse 11.—*Whom it is needful to silence.* The verb (*ἐπιστομίζειν*)¹ may mean to bridle, or to muzzle the mouth, and most authorities, from Theophylact downwards, agree that the suggestion is to compel silence by stopping the mouth, either by well-merited rebuke, or personal authority, or ecclesiastical discipline, *inasmuch as they subvert whole households, teaching, for the sake of dirty gain, things which they ought not to teach, and which they know they ought not.*²

The motives of these "gainsayers" were not regarded as worthy of *any* respect. They were not making proselytes to Judaism from any mistaken sense of the sanctity of their ancient faith, but for *base* reasons; and they had subverted the peace of entire households. Paul felt that his own teaching embodied in the "faithful saying," reproduced and enforced in "the sound doctrine" of the truth of Christ, ought to confute the most reckless adversary, and to comfort and to rescue their deceived and bewildered victims.

¹ "Obturare os."—Beza.

² This final and severe turn of the sentence is justified by *ἄ μὴ δεῖ* being used, rather than *ἀ οὐ δεῖ*, which would mean that which was positively forbidden.