

with all things sweetly attuned to our mind, and all open to our inquiring gaze.

What a hope, what a promise is this for the man of science! All the secrets of force, causation, life, growth, consciousness, thought, thrown open to him; and, for the man of religion, all the mysteries of prayer and providence, of Divine purpose and grace, uncovered and published abroad!

If we have at all entered into the meaning of this great saying, if we have found in it the charter of science, a warrant for all honest inquiry, and a solid ground for the hope that all problems are to be solved one day, and all mysteries, even the darkest, to grow luminous to us, we shall not grudge the time we have spent in tracing out its history, in marking how it gathers force and volume from every repetition of it, and deepens its hold upon us as the great Teacher and Saviour of men touches it again and again.

S. Cox.

ON ROMANS V. 1.

No Verse in the New Testament has given rise to more divergent and strongly held opinions among the best scholars than has the Verse I have placed at the head of this paper. The three latest critical editors, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott, adopt the reading *Let us have peace*. This reading is accepted by Fritzsche, Hofmann, and Alford; by this last, however, with extreme and undisguised reluctance. But it is summarily rejected, for exegetical reasons, by the great commentators Meyer and Godet, who retain the more familiar reading, *We have peace*. In this they are supported by the first-rate textual critic, Dr. Scrivener.

Of the difficulty which has given rise to these conflicting:

opinions, I shall in this paper attempt a solution, or rather, I shall do my best to defend the solution proposed in my Commentary on Romans. And I shall at the same time discuss the exposition of this and the two preceding verses given in the very excellent commentary we have lately received from the pen of Dr. Godet.

The reading *Let us have peace* is found in \aleph^* A B* C D E K L, that is, in all the uncials earlier than the ninth century; and in some of the best cursives.

The words of Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, v. 13, "Monet justificatos ex fide Christi, non ex lege, pacem ad Deum habere," make it probable that the same reading was current in North Africa at the end of the second century. Origen expounds this verse at great length; and his exposition makes it quite certain that he had before him the subjunctive reading, and knew nothing of any other. For he uses the passage as a warning to avoid whatever conduct is inconsistent with peace with God. The same exposition is adopted by Chrysostom. Like Origen, he betrays total ignorance of any other reading; and this is the more remarkable because he discusses another exposition of the passage. The argument of each of these writers removes completely the doubt which usually clings to the testimony of the Fathers owing to the lateness and fewness of the existing copies of their writings. It is quite certain that Origen and Chrysostom, and almost certain that Tertullian, read, *Let us have peace with God*. We find, then, that in the former half of the third century, in places so far apart as Carthage and Palestine, the subjunctive reading was current; and that no other was known to the careful commentators Origen and Chrysostom.

The Versions confirm the testimony of the Greek manuscripts and the Fathers. The West, speaking to us in the Old Latin and the Vulgate, gives its vote as a unit in favour of the subjunctive reading. The Latin portions of F G

retain it, even in contradiction to the Greek portions of the same manuscripts. And the unanimous voice of the West is re-echoed by the old Syriac and the Armenian versions in the East, and by the Coptic and Ethiopic versions in the far South.

Of the reading *We have peace* the earliest trace is a correction in the Sinai MS., a correction attributed to the fourth century. We cannot now determine, or even guess, whether it was copied from an earlier manuscript, or was made for internal reasons. A similar correction, attributed to the sixth century, is found in the Vatican MS. *We have peace* is read in the closely related manuscripts FG and in P, all three from the ninth century. The Philoxenian Syriac has it; but no other early version. It is found in a majority, probably a large majority, of the cursives.

As witnesses for the indicative reading Tischendorf quotes Didymus, Epiphanius, three passages from Cyril, and Sedulius. But I notice that, in the quotations of Didymus and Epiphanius, and in the one quotation which is all I have yet been able to find of Cyril, the argument of the writer is not in the least affected by the variety of reading. All of them are discussing only the words *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Therefore, since of the writings of these Fathers we possess only a few late copies, of Didymus I believe only one copy, written after the indicative reading had become common, I cannot accept the testimony of the existing manuscripts of their works as any proof or even presumption that these Fathers found this reading in the copies of the Epistle current in their day.

We have then a practically unanimous testimony, coming to us from the West and the East and the South, and reaching back to the second century, that St. Paul wrote *Let us have peace with God*.

An important consideration gives special force to this unanimous testimony. If St. Paul had written *We have*

peace with God, these words would be a glorious testimony of present peace with God, a testimony very likely to make a deep mark in the spiritual life of the church. Such a verse would be frequently quoted, both by preachers and people, and held fast in the memory and heart of all; as the same verse in the indicative reading is now quoted and remembered in all Protestant churches. It is one of those readings least likely to perish. Yet we find no trace, during five centuries, of any such mark made by it. The use which an expositor like Chrysostom would have made of the indicative reading we may infer from his glowing exposition of the indicatives in the next verse. On the other hand, the disappearance of a reading of no special importance is much less unlikely.

The not infrequent interchange of the vowels in question does not lessen the unlikeliness of the disappearance of the indicative reading, unless it can be shewn that the interchange is always or usually in one direction. The occasional interchange warns us not to accept as decisive a mere majority; but does very little to lessen the force of a unanimous verdict.

We are therefore compelled to admit that St. Paul wrote *Let us have peace with God*; that the difficulty of this reading, which so many feel now, suggested the change of one letter needful to replace the subjunctive by the indicative; that, owing to its greater simplicity, this reading became common in the Greek and especially the Byzantine church; but, not having become current till after the various Versions were made, it did not find its way into them. Surely this is the easiest way of accounting for all the known facts of the case.

At the same time it is a matter worthy of serious consideration that the reading so strongly supported is nevertheless rejected by the very able and learned commentators, Meyer and Godet. It must be admitted that their rejection

of it is the strongest protest they can make against the expositions of the subjunctive reading hitherto propounded.

This strong protest emboldens me to propose now another exposition, one agreeable, as no one can deny, to the grammar and usage of the Greek language; and, as I hope to shew, consonant with the thought of St. Paul, and not open to the objections which have compelled Meyer and Godet to reject the subjunctive reading nor greatly removed from the sense of the reading these commentators prefer.

It has hitherto been assumed that, in the reading *Let us have peace*, the aorist participle implies that justification has already taken place, and is given as a reason why we should *have peace with God*. But this assumption is unjust. The aorist participle implies simply that the abiding state of peace with God must be preceded by the event of justification; and, so far as grammar is concerned, leaves the context to determine whether justification is looked upon as actual and as a reason for having peace with God, or as the means by which it must be obtained. The latter is the use of the aorist participle in, I believe, all the innumerable places in the New Testament in which it precedes a subjunctive or imperative. Compare 1 Corinthians vi. 15; Acts xv. 36; Ephesians iv. 25; Hebrews vi. 1; 1 Peter i. 13; Matthew ii. 8, 13, 20, iv. 9, v. 24, vi. 6, vii. 6, ix. 13, 18, xi. 4, xiii. 28, xvii. 27, xxii. 13, xxvii. 64, xxviii. 19. Also Aristotle, *Nicom. Ethics*, III. v. 23, ἀναλαμβάνοντες δὴ περὶ ἐκάστης εἰπωμεν τίνες εἰσὶ κ.τ.λ.; VI. iii. 1, ἀρξάμενοι οὖν ἄνωθεν περὶ αὐτῶν πάλιν λέγωμεν. Even with a future indicative the aorist participle denotes almost always an event still future; as in Romans xv. 28; Acts xxiv. 25. In Romans v. 9, 10, where for once we have the other use, that is, where the participle recalls an actual fact in proof of the future event foretold by the finite verb, this is plainly indicated by the word *νῦν* before the first participle. The Greek usage just expounded suggests at once that in the

passage under discussion, as we have seen to be the case everywhere else in the New Testament, the aorist participle denotes an event still future, which must precede that to which the subjunctive mood exhorts. Certainly, the burden of proof rests with those who seek to set aside in this passage the ordinary use of the aorist participle.

We notice also that in the LXX. the construction before us is very common, as a rendering of two Hebrew imperatives, jussives, or cohortatives, with or without *vav*. So Genesis xi. 7, *καταβάντες συγχέωμεν*; xviii. 21, *καταβὰς οὖν ὄψομαι*; xix. 2, 15, 34, etc. That the translators chose this rendering for a Hebrew construction which they might have reproduced literally by two Greek imperatives, etc., proves how thoroughly inwoven into the Greek mind is the construction in question.

It is not correct to say that in these cases the aorist participle is used in the sense of an imperative or subjunctive. The participle has here, as always, its own proper sense. In cases like this, the Greek looked upon the action denoted by the participle, not as itself an object of distinct desire, but as subordinate to, and merely needful to bring about, the action or state denoted by the finite verb. This grouping of subordinate thoughts, by means of participles, around one chief thought, is a conspicuous and beautiful feature of the participle-loving Greek language. Where two actions are matters of distinct thought and desire, even the Greeks used two imperatives, as in Matthew ix. 5. In the passages just quoted from the Hebrew Bible it is evident that the former imperative is subordinate to the latter; and therefore, in full accord with the genius of the Greek language, the LXX. render them by one imperative preceded by an aorist participle.

We need not wonder that, although the construction now before us might grammatically denote an actual fact given as a motive for that to which the subjunctive exhorts, it is

never so used in the New Testament, unless Romans v. 1 be a solitary case. For such use, though grammatically correct, would give a sense very far removed from the ordinary sense of this construction. And whenever any one use of a grammatical form becomes common, it always tends to monopolise that form. Writers are loath to use a form commonly associated with a sense different from that which they wish to convey. The present participle, which is much less suited to denote a means to something still future, is constantly used to convey a reason or motive for a subsequent subjunctive or indicative. So Hebrews iv. 14, x. 19; 2 Corinthians iii. 12, iv. 1.

All this shews that the assumption that *δικαιωθέντες*, in the passage before us, denotes a past event given as a motive for now having peace with God, is not only not justified by the grammatical construction of the sentence, but runs counter to the entire usage of the Greek Testament. Another construction is not only admissible but is in full accord with the genius of the language. And that this other construction is the correct one I shall now endeavour to prove.

It will be my aim to shew that here, as everywhere else in the New Testament, the aorist participle followed by a present subjunctive specifies, not a motive for, but a means of obtaining, peace with God, that justification by faith is the gate by which we are to enter the abiding state of peace with God. If this exposition be correct, the Apostle's words may be suitably rendered, LET US THEN, JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, HAVE PEACE WITH GOD.

That this exposition is strongly supported by the usage of the Greek Testament I have already shewn. It is also supported strongly by the meaning of the words in question. For justification implies peace with God, as we learn from Verse 10, which is evidently a compact restatement of the argument of Verse 9. Consequently, they who have been

justified already have peace with God. It is therefore much more likely that St. Paul would represent justification by faith as the means by which peace with God, its immediate and necessary result, must be obtained, than as a motive for having that which, if already justified, they already have.

Only one objection, so far as I know, lies against the exposition now proposed, viz. that in Verses 9 and 10 St. Paul assumes that his readers are already justified and reconciled, and that even in Verse 2 he assumes that they already stand in the favour of God and rejoice in hope of glory. It might therefore appear that he could not in Verse 1 write as though their justification were still future. This objection will, I believe, be removed by a consideration of the Apostle's mode of thought as revealed in this Epistle.

St. Paul writes constantly from an ideal and rapidly changing standpoint. He identifies himself with that which he describes. Just so, *the Coming One*, in v. 14, can only refer to the incarnation of Christ, when He brought life for those smitten with death through Adam's sin. It is evident that St. Paul throws himself back to the days of Adam, and from that ideal standpoint looks forward to the birth and death of Christ. Similarly, the words *we shall be*, in vi. 5, refer to the resurrection life which St. Paul was himself already living. Similarly again, in vii. 14-25, he throws himself back to his own life before conversion and speaks of it as though no change had since taken place. On the other hand, in viii. 30, he throws himself forward into what seems to him to be the near future, and speaks of the coming glorification of the predestined ones as though already accomplished.

This mode of thought is, in my view, the best explanation of iv. 24, *ἡμᾶς οἷς μέλλει λογιζέσθαι*. To refer these words, as Fritzsche does, to the judgment day, is to break away from the constant phraseology of St. Paul, without

any hint whatever in the context. If we had no other case of an ideal standpoint, we might with some reluctance suppose that *us* includes the writer and those who in days to come will share his faith, and that a thought of these last moved him to write *μέλλει λογιζέσθαι* instead of *καὶ ἐλογίσθη*. But it is much more easy to suppose that, as in v. 14, St. Paul places himself by the writer of Genesis and looks forward to the justification of believers in gospel days. This ideal standpoint, ever liable to change even in a moment, would account for *τοῖς πιστεύουσιν* instead of *πιστεύουσιν*. For St. Paul cannot mean that, to those who now believe, faith will at some future time be reckoned for righteousness. But, after writing *μέλλει* from an ideal standpoint in the past, he easily glides to his own actual standpoint of time present and speaks of the present faith of himself and his readers.

If this exposition of *μέλλει* be correct, we cannot doubt that v. 1 is also written from an ideal point of view. In ii. 1, iii. 9, St. Paul writes as though all his readers were still actually committing sin and under its condemnation and curse. In iii. 21, 22, he hears a proclamation of justification on the condition of faith. In Chapter iv. he discusses this condition. From the side of the writer of Genesis he looks forward to the justification of himself and those of his readers who believe. He tells us that to remove the obstacle to justification caused by our sins God gave up Christ to die; and raised Him from the grave in order thus to give a sure ground for faith, the one condition of justification. All obstacles are now removed. A prospect of immediate justification presents itself, and justification brings peace with God. It is thus the portal into personal Christian life; and this life, with its joyful and sure hope, St. Paul now proceeds to pourtray. And as he enters this new subject he conceives himself, in his intense and vivid thought, to be entering the life he is about to describe. He

bids his readers to join him in doing so. What he bids them do he conceives to be actually taking place in them and in himself. Consequently, in the next verse he speaks of them as already standing in the favour of God and rejoicing in hope of glory.

This hortatory form of speech is the more appropriate here because, although St. Paul himself rejoiced with unwavering faith in a present and assured justification, he could not forget that many of his readers had not the same full confidence. In order to help their faith by the influence of his own, he delights to speak, as in Verses 9-11, of their justification and their reconciliation with God as actual and undoubted. But his remembrance of the weakness of their faith prompts him in this verse to put himself by their side and join them in claiming, by justification through faith, the peace which is its immediate result.

This exposition of St. Paul's mode of thought is, I venture to believe, a complete reply to the objection that he could not speak of the justification of his readers as still future.

It now remains to me to shew that the interpretation offered here is the only one admissible; that is, to shew that those of Fritzsche, who follows Origen and Chrysostom, and of Hofmann, lie open to serious objection. This task has in great part been done for me by Meyer and Godet, who, rather than accept these interpretations, prefer to reject the overwhelming documentary evidence which supports the subjunctive reading. Even Fritzsche and Hofmann betray no small dissatisfaction with the expositions they offer.

If the words *justified by faith* are given, not as a means of, but a motive for, *peace* with God, we are left in great uncertainty as to the means by which St. Paul intends us to comply with his exhortation. Fritzsche, following Origen, supposes that he is warning us against whatever is inconsistent with peace with God, that is, against all sin. But surely a warning against sin needs a clearer specification

than is found in this verse. Moreover, as yet St. Paul has not said a word about the moral effects of the Gospel; and it is in the last degree unlikely that he would introduce so important a subject in so ambiguous a way. And there is nothing in the words used here which points forward to his subsequent teaching on the same subject. Again, a warning against conduct which involves loss of peace with God would be much more in place after, than before, the Apostle's exposition of the joyful hope which accompanies peace. For the greatness of the blessing is the best reason for holding it fast. I agree therefore with Meyer and Godet that a warning against sin would be out of place at this point of the Apostle's argument.

This last objection, however, so forceful against the supposition of an exhortation such as the exposition of Fritzsche involves, which exposition these commentators had in view in making the objection, has no force against the altogether different exposition suggested here. For, as I read him, St. Paul does not urge his readers in this place to retain the blessing of peace with God by avoiding sin, but to accept it by faith. Moreover, v. 1-11 is by no means "a piece of theoretical teaching,"¹ but is a glowing outburst of Christian confidence and joy. The theoretical defence of justification by faith has been completed in Chapter iv., and in the verse before us the Apostle passes from abstract doctrine to personal and experimental Christian life. Need we wonder that he marks the transition by urging his readers to join him in accepting that which, as he has just proved, God gave Christ to bring about, and now offers on the condition of faith, and which will bring with it the blessings he now proceeds to unfold?

Again, the ambiguity which, in Fritzsche's interpretation, clings to the words *let us have peace*, is altogether absent from that which I venture to advocate. For I hold that the

¹ Meyer.

words *justified by faith* themselves announce the means by which we are to *have peace with God*. Moreover, in Fritzsche's exposition, the words *by faith* are needless. For, if actual justification be given as a reason for having peace with God, the reason is equally valid by whatever means peace has been obtained. But if justification is given as the means of peace, very appropriately St. Paul adds the means by which justification is itself obtained. Analysed, the argument would be: Let us believe, and thus be justified, and thus have peace with God. This triple exhortation St. Paul, in full accord with Greek thought, threw into one exhortation supported by two subordinate explanations.

By what means we are to have peace with God, according to Hofmann's exposition, I am unable, after repeated reading, to discover. He endeavours to cast a veil over the real difficulty by bringing into special prominence the words *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. That these are the most prominent words of the Chapter, I admit. But of their special prominence we have no hint in this verse. Hofmann expounds: "Through Him we desire, having by means of faith become righteous, to allow our relationship to God to be a relationship of peace." But how the Apostle designs us to accomplish this desire, Hofmann does not tell us. His own exposition sadly needs an expositor.

It will doubtless be objected that the exposition propounded above is novel. This I cannot deny. Indeed I am compelled to admit that both Origen and Chrysostom assume that justification, already received, is made by St. Paul a motive for avoiding sin. But if I reject the exposition of these Fathers, Meyer and Godet reject both their exposition and the reading which they found in the manuscripts current in their day, the only reading known to them. And it seems to me that the testimony of the Fathers as to what the Apostle wrote is of immensely greater value than their testimony as to what he meant. This is not the only passage in which

modern scholarship has been compelled to reject an exposition supported by the general consent of the Fathers.

A few words now about Dr. Godet's suggestion, which he admits to be peculiar to himself, that in iv. 25 the word *justify* denotes a justification of the whole world at the death of Christ. He objects to the exposition adopted by all other writers that it gives to the same word *διά* two different senses in the same verse, and that it would require not *διά* but *εἰς*. Certainly *εἰς* would be correct, and would give a good sense not far removed from that intended by the Apostle. But *διά* is equally appropriate. It denotes here, as always with the accusative, a motive for action. Our sins prompted God to give Christ to die. And God's own purpose to justify believers,¹ when once conceived in the mind of God, became to Him a motive prompting Him to raise Christ from the dead that his resurrection might evoke that faith which He resolved to make the condition of justification. A good parallel is found in the *Symbol of Calcedon*, δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν. Dr. Godet objects to the repetition of *διά* as needless according to the usual exposition. Does he not feel, in both these passages, the beauty and force of the repetition? It directs our attention in the one case to two distinct acts of God, and in the other to two distinct thoughts in the mind of God.

That God justified the world at the death of Christ, is an idea which never finds expression in the writings of St. Paul. The words *justification* in v. 17, and *justify* everywhere, denote the justification of individuals. And that this is the sense intended in iv. 25 is made quite certain by the first word of the next verse, a word prompted, as *ὄν* indicates, by the word to which Godet wishes to give an altogether different sense. Nor are 2 Corinthians v. 19, Romans iii. 24, parallel cases. For although we there learn that the reconciliation of the world, the justification of *all*, who *sinned*,

¹ Rom. iii. 26.

was in process in the incarnation and death of Christ, and in the redemption-price paid in his blood, yet the present tense of the verbs there used forbids us to infer that the reconciliation was completed. The proposed exposition is alien from the mind of St. Paul as reflected in his Epistles : and we have seen that it finds no support in the preposition used in this verse.

One practical result of the foregoing discussion is, I think, increased confidence in our ancient documents of the New Testament. This confidence would be somewhat shaken if we were compelled to admit that in so important a passage as that before us the entire body of our oldest and best witnesses to the text of the New Testament had been corrupted. But I have endeavoured to shew that, although we find reason to reject an exposition proposed by the ablest of the early commentators, we may yet accept without doubt the words which they received and expounded, as being the actual language of the great Apostle.

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