

THE SOURCES OF ST. PAUL'S TEACHING.

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IT is impossible in the compass of one short paper to do anything like justice to such a subject as St. Paul's use of the Old Testament. It is a subject on which volumes might be written, and all that can be attempted here is to point out a few of the different ways in which the Apostle refers to the ancient Hebrew Scriptures, and to suggest lines of thought which it is believed may be profitably followed up by the student for himself. How impossible it is will be seen the moment it is realized how wide and extensive is the use of the Old Testament in the various Epistles of St. Paul. The table of quotations at the close of the second volume of Drs. Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament gives a total of something like a hundred and eighty references; but, as the same passage often appears more than once, some deduction has to be made. A careful examination of the list, however, shews that no less than a *hundred and forty-one* different chapters of the Old Testament have left distinct traces upon the Apostle's language; and, if we reckon up the single verses to which allusion is made, we shall find that they are considerably over *two hundred*.<sup>1</sup> Nor are these quotations drawn from one part of Scripture only. They are fairly spread over the whole range, each division, (1) the Law, (2) the Prophets (including the historical books), and (3) the "Writings," being represented. Of the five books of the Law each is quoted. Of the books reckoned by the Jews as prophetic allusion is made to 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, the four greater Prophets, and six of the minor ones, viz., Hosea, Joel, Amos, Habakkuk, Zechariah, and Malachi; while three of the

<sup>1</sup> For obvious reasons no account has been taken of the Epistle to the Hebrews in these calculations.

poetical books, Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, are represented on the list. And to shew the wide stock of passages for quotation which the Apostle had at his command, and the intimate knowledge he possessed of the text of the Old Testament, it is worth noticing that from the Psalter he quotes no less than thirty-three different Psalms, and of another book—the prophet Isaiah—twenty-nine chapters. It should be noticed, also, that these quotations are not confined to one or two Epistles, or found only in those written to Churches in which a Jewish element was preponderant. They are found in every single Epistle written by the Apostle, except the tiny one to Philemon, which afforded no opportunity for reference to the Old Testament. It is sometimes said, *e.g.* by Canon Farrar, that “there are no Scripture quotations in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philippians, Colossians.”<sup>1</sup> If it is meant by this that there are no *formal* quotations introduced by such a phrase as “what saith the Scripture,” or “as it is written,” then the words are true enough. But if it is meant that in these Epistles St. Paul makes no use whatever of the Old Testament, the words will not pass muster, for by referring again to Drs. Westcott and Hort’s table we find that in Philippians there are six quotations, in Colossians four, in 1 Thessalonians seven, and in 2 Thessalonians as many as nine. Some of these are but slight verbal coincidences, as if words and phrases from those Scriptures which he loved so dearly were floating in the mind of the Apostle, and were almost unconsciously adopted by him. But sometimes, *e.g.* in 2 Thessalonians i. 8–10, the allusion is so clear and decided that there can be no doubt that it was *meant* by St. Paul.

These remarks will serve to indicate the wide extent of material for quotation which the Apostle had ready to hand, and the facility with which he was capable of using

<sup>1</sup> “St. Paul,” vol. i. p. 50; cf. Professor Jowett, “Epistles of St. Paul,” vol. i. p. 6.

it. Illustrations and "Scripture proof" are drawn by him with equal ease from all parts of the Jewish Scriptures, and in Epistles written under widely different circumstances. It matters not to him whether he is elaborating some great doctrinal treatise at his leisure, as in the case of the Epistle to the Romans, or writing hastily during his journey, when he is actually *en route*, as in the case of the Epistle to the Galatians, or whether he is in prison, deprived of his "books and parchments." Wherever he may be, the words of the Old Testament flow naturally from his lips. The original Hebrew and the Greek version of the LXX. are equally familiar to him. He can quote either as best suits his immediate purpose; and he ranges at will over the wide circle of books, calling forth from the storehouse of memory passage after passage of those sacred writings which he, like Timothy, must have known "from a child," and which he felt were able to make him wise unto salvation (2 Tim. iii. 15).

We have seen the *extent* of St. Paul's use of the Old Testament, and how largely he is indebted to it. The passage last referred to leads us on naturally to consider the *purpose* for which he employs it, and what his view of its value is. "Every Scripture," he proceeds to tell Timothy, "inspired of God, is also profitable for teaching (*πρὸς διδασκαλίαν*), for reproof (*πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν*), for correction (*πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν*), for instruction which is in righteousness (*πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ*)." He thus lays down *four* uses of Scripture, one doctrinal and three practical (so far as it is correct to draw a distinction between the two); and it is remarkable how fully his own writings bear out his conviction of this four-fold value of Scripture. With regard to the *first*, we have a similar statement to that which we have already seen, in Romans xv. 4. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning (*εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν*), that

through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." We hear a great deal sometimes about peculiarly "Pauline" doctrines; and there can be no question that St. Paul *does* dwell on certain great truths with greater emphasis than do other writers of the New Testament, and that he sometimes presents them in a different light and under a different aspect from that in which they are held up elsewhere. But it is well to notice that just these so-called Pauline doctrines are all based by him upon the letter of the Old Testament. They were the result of no fresh revelation made to him by the Holy Spirit of new truths of which there had been no hint breathed before. Rather he was enabled, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit enlightening his understanding and quickening his powers, to grasp and comprehend, as none other had yet done, the fulness of meaning that was contained in the letter of those Scriptures of the Old Covenant which were in the hands of all men, but were still as a sealed book to those who lacked the teaching of the Spirit of God. It is, of course, in the Epistle to the Romans that the truths in question are stated most fully and most systematically. Five may be mentioned for the sake of completeness.

1. The universality of sin, among both Jews and Gentiles.
2. Justification by faith only, apart from works of the law.
3. The doctrine of Election.
4. The rejection of Israel and the calling of the Gentiles.
5. The doctrine of the "remnant," and the ultimate conversion of "all Israel."

Each one of these came with the force of a new truth to those who heard the Apostle; and yet he is prepared to shew that each one of them was taught in those very writings which every Jew revered as the oracles of God.

The first of them is proved by the citation of a number of passages which speak in strong terms of the extent of human depravity (see Rom. iii. 10-18, where the quotations are drawn from Pss. xiv. 1; v. 9; cxl. 3; x. 7; xxxvi. 1; and Isa. lix. 7). The second is established from the famous passage in Habakkuk ii. 4, "The righteous shall live by faith," and proved fully from the history of Abraham (see Romans chap. iv.), and confirmed by the language of David in Psalm xxxii. 1. The third is illustrated by such a well-known story as that of Jacob and Esau, and from the Divine statements with regard to Pharaoh (Exod. ix. 16) and supported by Exodus xxxiii. 19 and Malachi i. 2; while the fourth is built upon the language of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 21), Isaiah (Chapter lxv. 1), and Hosea (Chapters i. 10; ii. 23); and the fifth is drawn from the history of Elijah (1 Kings xix.) and the statements of the prophet Isaiah (Chapters i. 9; x. 22; xxvii. 9; lix. 20).

Thus each one of these important doctrines is shewn to be contained in the ancient Scriptures. There they were; they had lain hid for centuries, till they were brought to light by the teaching of the Spirit, and impressed upon the great Apostle of the Gentiles. And in a similar way it is believed that a careful study of St. Paul's Epistles will prove that there is hardly a doctrine to be found in them which is not built upon an Old Testament foundation. It is only a specimen taken from a single Epistle that has been given here; but I would strongly urge any who are interested in the subject to examine the rest of the Epistles in the same way; for I am convinced that they would rise from the study with fresh feeling of admiration for the wonderful powers and knowledge of St. Paul, and an increased conviction of the marvellous harmony of the Old and New Dispensation.

With regard to the *practical* use of Scripture, in its three aspects, a very few words will suffice. A reference

to Romans xiii. 9 will illustrate its use for *instruction* (πρὸς παιδείαν); while in Chapter xii. 19, 20 we have an instance of its value for *correction* (πρὸς ἐπανάρθωσιν), and in Chapter ii. 24 for *reproof* (πρὸς ἔλεγμον). Instances might, of course, be multiplied almost indefinitely, but every one can find them out for himself; and, as space is limited, I will pass on to notice a further use of Scripture made by St. Paul which does not exactly fall under any of the heads already considered. It may be called the *illustrative* use. It is seen in passages containing statements which scarcely require *proof*, but which yet suggest or are suggested by words and expressions from the Old Testament which cling to the Apostle's memory. For example, the argument in Romans xi. is concluded with the exclamation, "O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" (R.V. margin). There is nothing here that requires proof. Nothing, we should say, that needs in any way to be fortified or established. And yet the Apostle cannot pass on without illustrating the truth of his exclamation from the Old Testament, and taking the three ideas of God's *riches*, *wisdom*, and *knowledge* in the reverse order, he establishes the depth of each in turn from Isaiah xl. 13 ff. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" shews that God's knowledge is indeed unfathomable: "Who hath been his counsellor?" shews the same with regard to his wisdom: while the depth of his riches is suggested by the question, "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" It will be seen that this passage is introduced by no formula of quotation. The words are simply adopted by the Apostle as expressing the thought which he has in his mind, and he is not careful to tell us in every case whence his thoughts and words are drawn. But his mind is so thoroughly *saturated* with the teaching of the Old Testament that he can hardly write a single chapter without

directly, or indirectly, borrowing largely from it. Thus it would give a very inadequate idea of the way in which his Epistles are literally *steeped* in Old Testament phraseology were we to be content with merely counting up the acknowledged quotations, viz., those introduced by such a formula as "It is written." It is only a thorough familiarity with the letter of the Old Testament that can enable us to grasp the extent to which it has coloured and moulded St. Paul's thought and diction, and to realize how largely he is indebted to it both for doctrines and for language. But if the student is ever on the watch for references and allusions, and has his Old Testament fully in his mind as he reads St. Paul's Epistles, he is in possession of a master-key which will unlock the meaning of many difficult passages and often stand him in better service than the most elaborate of commentaries. Nor should he be content with merely hunting up the text of the Old Testament in a reference Bible or Concordance. *Let him examine the whole context of the passage quoted,* and he will sometimes find in it a clue to the meaning of St. Paul, and will gather from words and expressions used that a whole passage was in his thoughts, although he may have directly quoted only a very few words from it.

It will be well to conclude this paper with two examples which may serve to illustrate and substantiate these remarks. (1) Romans xii. 19, 20, "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath ( $\tau\eta\ \delta\omicron\pi\gamma\eta$ ); for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

It is well known that commentators have differed about the meaning of "the wrath" spoken of in Verse 19, and have doubted whether it is the wrath of man or the wrath of God that is referred to. But surely there is little

room for difference of opinion on this point. St. Paul seems expressly to have guarded against it, and to have added the quotation from Deuteronomy xxxii. 35 for the very purpose of shewing that it is God's wrath to which we are to give place.<sup>1</sup> Verse 20 however is more difficult. What is the meaning of the phrase, "thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head"? Here, again, commentators are divided. Chrysostom and other Greek Fathers see in the "coals of fire" a figure of severe Divine punishment, which will be heaped upon the sinner who hardens himself against deeds of love. Augustine, on the other hand, and other Latin Fathers, understand the same expression as "an oriental figure of the burning pains of shame and remorse."<sup>2</sup> Which interpretation is to be preferred? Something may be urged in favour of each in turn, but the balance of probability seems to be decidedly in favour of the second: and for this reason. The whole verse is really an unacknowledged quotation from Proverbs xxv. 21, 22, and if we turn to that passage we shall find that the whole context and complexion of the words there are opposed to the former interpretation, and directly suggest the second; and we cannot fail to notice that a not dissimilar figure is found in Proverbs only a few verses before the passage which St. Paul has quoted. "*A soft tongue breaketh the bone*" (Verse 15). Thus a reference to the original source of the words used gives us what we may fairly take as a sure clue to the Apostle's meaning, and aids us materially in the interpretation of a difficult passage.

(2) A second illustration may be drawn from St. Paul's latest Epistle. In 2 Timothy iv. 16-18, we read, "At my

<sup>1</sup> It may be added that the use of *δραμή* with the article elsewhere makes this interpretation of the passage certain. Cf. chapter v. 9; 1 Thessalonians ii. 16; and notice that "both the language and the thought are illustrated by Ephesians iv. 27, which shows that by avenging ourselves we *give place to the devil*." Dr. Gifford in the "Speaker's Commentary."

<sup>2</sup> See the "Speaker's Commentary" *in loc*.

first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

"The lion's mouth" is an expression that has largely exercised the ingenuity of commentators. Some have compared 1 Peter v. 8, and have seen in it a direct reference to the devil. Others, remembering the remarkable expression used by Agrippa's freedman in announcing the death of Tiberius (*τέθνηκεν ὁ λέων*, Josephus, Antiquities XVIII. vii. 10), have interpreted it of the Roman Emperor Nero; while others again have supposed that the words are to be taken literally and refer to the shows of the amphitheatre. But there is no need of any of these explanations. A simple one is at hand, and a reference to Psalm xxii. 21 will shew that St. Paul is simply adopting and making his own the proverbial expression for great and imminent danger which is there used by the Psalmist. And, further, we find that we are now in possession of the key to the thoughts and words of the whole passage in this Epistle, and that we are able to trace out the connexion of ideas in a most remarkable manner.<sup>1</sup> The words of Verse 18 are striking, and it has been suggested that they contain an allusion to the close of the Lord's prayer. "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work (*ῥύσεται με ὁ Κύριος ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔργου πονηροῦ*) and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom (*τὴν βασιλείαν*): to whom be the glory (*ἡ δόξα*) for ever and ever. Amen." (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων ἁμήν*).

<sup>1</sup> It is only right to make the acknowledgment that some of the following ideas are due to the recollection of a lecture given by Dr. Kay, which I heard many years ago at Oxford.

Compare Matthew vi. 13: "Deliver us from evil (ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ) for thine is the kingdom (ἡ βασιλεία) and the power and the glory (ἡ δόξα) for ever (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν).

The suggestion is a *most* attractive one; and, for my part, I am free to confess that I should be heartily glad if I could see my way to accept it. But—"magis amica veritas," and the evidence against the genuineness of the doxology of the Lord's prayer is overwhelming. There can be no doubt that it is a later interpolation, and that it was not in existence as part of the Prayer when St. Paul was writing. We are compelled, therefore, however unwillingly, to give up this view of the source of his words. But now let us turn back to Psalm xxii. and see if we cannot there find some hint which will amply compensate for the loss of this reference to the Lord's Prayer. The Psalmist begins (Verse 1) with the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou *forsaken me?*" (ἐγκατέλιπές με); and further on, as we have already seen, he prays (Verses 21, 22) "*deliver (ῥύσαι) my soul from the sword. . . . Save me from the lion's mouth*" (σώσον με ἐκ στόματος λέοντος); while, a little lower down, there follow the words, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and *all* the kindreds of *the nations* (τῶν ἐθνῶν) shall worship before thee. For *the kingdom* (ἡ βασιλεία) is the Lord's: and he is the governor among *the nations*" (τῶν ἐθνῶν).

Is it not probable that we have here the source of St. Paul's thoughts? It is certainly very remarkable that a large number of the same words which we have just noticed in the Psalm reappear in the passage of the Epistle which we are examining. "At my first defence . . . all forsook me (ἐγκατέλιπόν με). . . . But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and *all the Gentiles* (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) might hear: and *I was delivered out of the mouth of the*

*lion* (ἐρύσθην ἐκ στόματος λέοντος). The Lord will *deliver* (ῥύσεται) me from every evil work, and will *save me* (σώσει με) unto his heavenly *kingdom* (τὴν βασιλείαν)." And the last clause, "to whom be the glory for ever and ever," recalls Verse 26 of the Psalm, "They shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever" (εἰς αἰῶνα αἰῶνος). Nor is the similarity confined to the actual words that are used. It is seen as strikingly in the thoughts and ideas. The central thought in the latter part of the Psalm is that the writer, though in imminent danger, is certain of being saved from it by the Lord; and that the result of this Divine interposition will be not only that he will declare God's name to his brethren, but also that a faithful Church will be established in which even the Gentiles will be included. And in terms which are almost identical with these, St. Paul expresses his conviction that the Lord has delivered him from the imminent dangers which surrounded him, in order that through him "the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear." The coincidence of both thought and language seems to me to be too close to be accidental; and it appears probable that the Apostle had but lately been reading and meditating upon this Psalm until his mind was full of it, and words and phrases from it haunted him and clung to his memory, and half unconsciously he reproduced them as he wrote. If this be correct, there is one other fact that we should not overlook; and it is one that is full of interest and significance for us. This Psalm xxii. is the very psalm from which our Saviour drew that mysterious cry as he hung upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Thus we seem to see the disciple in the lonely hours of his imprisonment—when all men had forsaken him, and he was almost daily expecting the end—drawing comfort and consolation from the selfsame Scripture which his dying Master had

made his own, and hallowed for him. The last words of our Lord's earthly ministry, and those of St. Paul in the last chapter of his latest Epistle are thus connected together in a remarkable manner. Where the one sought consolation, there the other found it too. And I know not where we could find a grander commentary than this on the Divine law, that "it is sufficient for the disciple that he be as his Master."

EDGAR C. S. GIBSON.

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## STUDIES IN THE MINOR PROPHETS.

### IV. HOSEA.

THE three great offices of the Jewish polity were those of the king, the priest, and the prophet. The province of the king was to rule, the province of the priest was to sacrifice, the province of the prophet was to teach. Of these, the last was incomparably the greatest. Indeed, it is not too much to say that, in the person of the prophet, the three offices became one. The prophet was at the same time both king and priest. He was the true representative of the Theocracy, and therefore he gave the law to kings; he was the true representative of sacrifice, and therefore he was the priest of humanity. The prophet was essentially a spokesman, a legate, an ambassador, and in that capacity he represented at once humanity and God. At one moment he stood forth as the representative of Deity and delivered his message in the room of God; at another, he appeared as the representative of humanity, and uttered his prayer in the room of man. In the one case he represented royalty, in the other he assumed the attitude of subjection; but, alike in his royalty and his service, his mission was one of priestly sacrifice. As the representative of God