

When the myth was employed for the purpose of religious politics, the *θήριον*¹ became the Roman Empire or its head, while the dragon became the world-opponent of God,² and further applications to contemporary history, e.g. in the present case to Herod's persecution of Jesus and to the flight from Pella, were natural. Upon the other hand, no attempt to explain chapter xii. has much chance of success, if it does not recognize that the oracle is more than an allegorizing version of history or an exegetical construction of Old Testament texts or a free composition of the author, and also if it does not recognize the danger of modern scholarship attempting to give an unnatural precision to what in the nature of the case was often vague and undefined tradition.

JAMES MOFFATT.

STUDIES IN THE PAULINE THEOLOGY.

IV. THE NEED OF SALVATION.

(1) IN the *First Study* an endeavour was made to present the whole experience of Paul as the basis of his theology. In the *Second Study* the object of his faith—Christ—was described. In this *Third Study* we ask, and seek to answer the question, What need did Christ so fully meet as to become the object of his faith? It was from *sin* that Christ saved Paul. But sin is presented to us in two aspects in his teaching, as it affects a man's own nature, and as it affects his relation to God. While for modern thinking there can be little doubt the former is most important, for Paul's thought it is certain the latter held the foremost place.

¹ *Bellua* (*θηπιον*) was not an uncommon term for a tyrant in ancient terminology.

² The Dragon became the symbol and embodiment of the Babylonish spirit just as *renardie* in the thirteenth century stood for the depraving and cruel influences abroad in human society. Cp. Oesterley's *Evolution of the Messianic Idea* (1908), 177 f., for an admirable statement of the relation between *Tehom* and Satan.

To distinguish these two aspects we may use the terms *guilt* and *power*; the first belongs specially to the religious consciousness, the second to the moral character. We may follow the order in which these topics are dealt with in the Epistle to the Romans.

(2) Paul did not hold, as some modern revisers of Christian theology maintain, that God is either because of His infinite transcendence of the world and man, or because of His absolute identification with the cosmic process so indifferent to man's sin that man's relation to Him is not, and cannot be affected by wrong doing. Paul inherited, not only the ethical monotheism of the prophets, who taught a God so holy that He punishes iniquity, and shows pardon only to the penitent; but also the rigid legalism of the Pharisees, for whom man's relation to God depended wholly on his keeping of the law. But it is not only as Jew and as Pharisee that Paul is concerned about the *guilt* of mankind, or his own guilt. He claims—and rightly—that the human conscience is upon his side. There is a witness to God and a witness to right and wrong in the breast of man; and both the moral standards men apply to themselves, and the moral judgments they pronounce on others imply the recognition of a more righteous Will, and the anticipation of a more searching judgment (Rom. i. 28–32; ii. 14–16). It was a fundamental article of Paul's creed that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness" (i, 18). From this universal divine judgment the Jew is not exempted. By his failure to keep the law, of the possession of which he makes his boast, he too is condemned, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God" (iii. 19). As the objects of the wrath of God, His punitive justice, men are His enemies (*ἐχθροί*, Rom. v. 10, xi. 28),

that is, not only hostile to Him, but, as the context in each case seems clearly to show, exposed to His hostility. The readers of the Epistle to the Ephesians are described as "by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (ii. 3). In order that God and man might be mutually reconciled "by God's not reckoning unto them their trespasses," that is, by His not treating them as they as sinners deserved to be treated, He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf" (that is, He treated Him as a sinner, 2 Cor. v. 19-21). On those who do not continue "in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" there rests a curse; and from that curse there is redemption only because Christ has "become a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 10-13). Whether Paul ascribed to God the passion of wrath, the emotional disturbance, or not it is certain that he was sure that sin involved guilt, that is, so changed the relation of the soul to God that it became liable to divine punishment as expressing divine displeasure. Although in the autobiographical passages in Romans vii. 7-25, it is the other aspect of sin which is emphasized, yet there can be little doubt that the wretchedness he there confesses was due not only to the sense of his moral weakness, but also to the dread of the *death*, that is, God's judgment on sin, in which this weakness involved him. He found the wrath, the enmity, the curse of God towards sin in his own soul, nay, it is not improbable that what he met in the microcosm of his own experience he saw writ large in the macrocosm of human history.

(3) Before we go further with our discussion we must ask ourselves whether in this representation of God's relation to sin Paul is simply reproducing the opinions of his own time and people, and not expressing truth of permanent and universal validity. The most important consideration is that Jesus who taught the Fatherhood of God also spoke of the divine judgment on sin and unbelief. "It shall be

more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you" (Matt. xi. 22). This He declared of "the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done." How pathetic is the appeal and solemn His warning to Jerusalem (Matt. xxiii. 37-39). That judgment of Jesus finds confirmation in the human conscience. Remorse is one of the realities of human experience. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* cannot be charged with theological prejudice. Even where there is no explicit recognition of God there is the sense that suffering will and must follow sin. Does not human history—the course of events—bear the same testimony? The lot of individual men and the fate of nations alike declare that penalty falls on wrongdoing. The scientific tendency of to-day, with its emphasis on the invariable sequence of cause and effect, is here in accord with conscience and faith. It is the opinion of many who would reject Paul's terms, the wrath, the hostility, or the curse of God as Rabbinisms, that forgiveness cannot prevent the consequences of wrong-doing, that payment must always be to the uttermost farthing. But if the divine immanence is to be understood as personal, can we detach this moral order of the world, with its mirror in the soul of man, from the reason and the purpose of God? It may be granted that Paul's terminology is liable to misunderstanding, that under cover of it unworthy human passions may be ascribed to God; but what those terms seek to express is not an illusion, but a reality. There is an opposition of God to sin, which is felt by the sinner as guilt, and falls on him as punishment; and it is probable that we do err in trying to conceive this antagonism too abstractly. If we may invest God's love with emotional content, may we not also His wrath, remembering always, however, that this is not inconsistent with, but a necessary element in, holy love? The need Paul felt then of being saved from guilt was a real need for him, and is a real need to-day.

(4) The second aspect of sin which Paul presents to us is its power. The classic passage on this subject is Romans vii. 7-25. It was indicated in the *First Study* that the writer must regard this as a confession of Paul's experience before he found deliverance in Christ. Although after his conversion Paul was still subject to temptation, and had to exercise a rigid discipline over himself lest he should fall from grace ("I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage, lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected," 1 Cor. ix. 27), yet it is certain he, as united by faith to Christ, never passed through such despair of soul because of his moral impotence, as he describes in the words, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" (22-24). There he lays bare to us the inward conflict which Christ alone was able to bring to an end with His peace. On the one hand there is his mind which knows, approves, and delights in the law of God as holy, righteous, and good; and on the other there is the *flesh*, in which sin dwells and works, the law in his members. The antagonists are not equally matched, for the lower gains ever the victory over the higher, so that he, identifying himself with his mind as his real self, and distinguishing himself from his flesh though his own, yet alien to him, is morally impotent both negatively and positively; he does not what he would do, and does what he would not do (verse 15). Two questions in connexion with this passage have already been discussed. In verses 7 to 13 is Paul describing a particular occurrence, a moral crisis in his life, when he discovered his moral impotence, and so lost his Pharisaic complacency? Is his use of the term *flesh* as the seat and vehicle of sin to be explained

by a personal peculiarity, a special liability to sensual temptations? The affirmative answer was in the first case regarded as certain, in the second as probable, and the results of this previous discussion may be here assumed.

(5) What Paul meant by the *flesh* is one of the most hotly debated questions in regard to his theology. As a fact of experience he was conscious of appetites, passions, desires, tempers, or ambitions contrary to the law of God, but so strongly entrenched in his nature that he could not of his own will withstand, overcome, and expel them. Had he thought as some modern thinkers do, he would doubtless have found an explanation in his heredity or his environment, and would not have felt the shame, or taken the blame of these tendencies towards evil ever passing into actualities, as he surely did. It is true that he appears to deny his moral responsibility in the words, "So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me" (verse 17); but in the verse that follows he identifies himself with the flesh in which this sin dwells, although elsewhere he distinguishes himself from it. This is not scientific psychology, nor dogmatic theology, but, personal experience passionately and vividly expressed. In all his vain struggles against the temptation, whatever it was, which so overcame him, he always felt that his true and abiding self did not consent to this bondage, did not find any satisfaction in the surrender to evil. Had Paul regarded himself as naturalism would have us regard man to-day, as the necessary resultant of the forces of heredity and environment, his subjection to sin would not have been the misery it was to him. Such a confession shows a sensitive conscience and a religious passion or which liberty and responsibility are real. As he has himself told us in his review of his life in Philippians, he was "as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless" (iii. 6), we may infer that his failure was not,

in outward conduct, in the standard morality. His reference in this confession in Romans to the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet" (marg. R.V. lust), if combined with this statement in Philipians, seems to indicate that it was sin in the inward parts which was his torment. If this be so, the intensity of his pain shows the loftiness and largeness of his moral ideal; he thought and felt about sin as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. That he could not subject feeling and desire to God's holy law, that was his real moral need.

(6) His moral experience, which is common to all morally vigorous natures, explains Paul's doctrine of the flesh without any assumption of the influence of Greek dualism. The arguments need not here be repeated by which it has often been shown that for Paul it is not flesh as material substance which is evil, but that he uses *flesh* as a compendious term for the nature of man as a creature, who not only in weakness as destitute of the indwelling power of God, but in wilfulness opposing himself in his individuality to the holy will of God, becomes in this very nature the seat and the vehicle of sin. On the one hand the works of the flesh are not confined to sensual sins, and on the other the flesh itself is represented as capable of sanctification. Paul's view of this condition of inward conflict in which man finds himself, apart from any explanation he offers of its cause, is not in necessary opposition to more modern views of the moral problem. Mr. Tennant, who seems to have set himself the task of disproving the traditional views of original sin and total depravity, and of demonstrating the scientific view of man's moral life, writes: "The moral life is a race in which every child starts handicapped. the pleasures of forms of conduct which are destined to be forbidden him have been tasted and known; pleasure-giving actions have already become forged into chains of habit; the expulsive power of the new affection which is to establish another rule

cannot at first be strongly felt. When will and conscience enter, it is into a land already occupied by a powerful foe. And, in the opening stages of the moral life, higher motives cannot, from the very circumstances of the case, appeal so strongly as the lower and more accustomed already in possession. Into the 'seething' and tumultuous life of natural tendency, of appetite and passion, affection and desire, is introduced the new-born moral purpose, which must struggle to win the ascendancy." (*The Child and Religion*, p. 178.) This is a description of the moral experience at its commencement. Paul's confession refers to a much later stage, when, while on the one hand the conscience has become more sensitive, yet on the other the yielding of the will to desire has lessened its powers of resistance, and when as a consequence there is a keen sense of blameworthiness as well as of weakness. Whether, as in the older view, the foe in possession at the beginning of the conflict is any inherited tendency towards evil, or, as in this view, natural, and till opposed to conscience non-moral desires, the reality of the conflict remains the same, unless, as will not be the case in any sound moral consciousness, the naturalness of the desires be used as an argument against the authority of the conscience that forbids them. This danger Mr. Tennant does not adequately recognize; and certainly the older view of these desires as not merely natural for man, whatever they may be for the lower animals, but as already morally affected by the sin of previous generations, does guard against this peril. What now may be noted, however, is this, that personal blameworthiness is not represented as less in the newer than the older view, as a man is not personally responsible for inherited tendencies more than for natural desires.

(7) In his representation of the two aspects of sin, as guilt towards God, as power in man, Paul cannot be regarded as antiquated, but as correctly interpreting universal and per-

manent realities. This cannot be maintained, however, regarding his explanations of the origin of sin in man. It seems to the writer to be quite unreasonable to ascribe to Paul two distinct explanations of the origin of sin by altogether disconnecting his doctrine of the flesh from his doctrine of the fall. It is not only a legitimate, but seems even a necessary assumption that he did "think things together" so far as to explain the entrance of sin into, and the operation of sin in the flesh by the disobedience of Adam. But we must not draw hastily the conclusion that the account he gives of the origin of sin is the ground of his belief in the sinfulness of mankind. Because we cannot now accept the story of the Fall as literally history, that does not throw any doubt on the reality of Paul's experience of his bondage to the flesh, or of the wrath of God against sin. The Gospel of Paul does not rest on his view of the origin of sin, but on his own knowledge of man's double need of deliverance from the guilt and the power of sin. Looking more closely at the passage in Romans v. 12-21 we must observe that it is not introduced in the course of the argument to prove either man's sinfulness or even the universality of that sinfulness, for that proof ends at verse 20 in chapter iii. ; but to demonstrate the efficacy for all mankind of the reconciliation in Jesus Christ (v. 20). The first premiss of the syllogism, if for clearness we may reduce the proof to that logical form, is the universality of sin and death as the effect of Adam's disobedience. The second premiss is the necessarily greater effect for man's salvation of the obedience of Christ, as the act of a greater person. The conclusion is the more exceeding abundance of grace than of sin. In this passage Paul sets forth an adequate moral cause for the stupendous moral effect of man's universal sinfulness. Hence he emphasizes the voluntary character of Adam's act. It is *disobedience*. The edge of the argument is blunted in the attempt to find in

1 Corinthians xv. 47 ("The first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is of heaven") an extenuation of Adam's fault. He is not contrasting Adam before the fall with the risen Christ; but Adam as the head of sinful and mortal humanity with the firstborn from the dead among many brethren, the head of the redeemed humanity. We have no warrant to assume that Paul thought of Adam as subject to the flesh as his posterity is. Without assigning to him the extravagant notions of later dogmatics about the perfection of Adam, we must admit that this passage indicates that he thought of Adam as possessing a liberty and responsibility greater than any of his descendants. The animal, just emerging into the human consciousness with a rudimentary conscience and will, as modern anthropology represents the primitive man, has no resemblance whatever to the Adam of Paul's thought. A childlike ignorance and innocence even as the moral condition of the ancestor of the race could not invest his moral act with the significance and consequence which Paul in this argument assigns to it. Let us frankly admit that his view of the origin of sin leaves the problem for us unsolved.

(8) There are two questions dealt with in this passage which, however, deserve further notice. Paul represents death as the consequence of sin. Now it is generally admitted that death is a natural necessity for animal organisms such as man's, and that before man was in the world death prevailed. It seems vain to justify Paul by speculations such as these, that God anticipating sin introduced death into the natural order as a penalty already prepared for sin, or that had man preserved his innocence, he might have risen above this natural necessity. Paul's interest is primarily in the moral character and the religious consciousness. What he was concerned with was man's sense of the mystery and dread of the desolation of death, man's looking for judg-

ment after death. In such totality, including what man thinks of, and feels about, death, surely Paul's view of the connexion between sin and death is not altogether false. It is man's sense of guilt that invests death with its terror. Nor are we warranted in saying that conscience here is playing tricks on man, frightening him with illusions. If there be indeed, as has been argued in a previous section of this discussion, a moral order in the world, an antagonism of God to sin, and if, as there is reason to believe, there is a moral continuity between this life and the next, such a change as death may be conceived as fraught with moral significance, as introducing the soul into such conditions as have been determined by the judgment of God on the moral character of this life.

(9) It seems clearly to be Paul's intention to represent both sin and death as introduced into the world by Adam, and as passing from him to all his descendants; but in his statement he obscures his meaning by an ambiguous clause. We might have expected him to write, "As through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so sin and death passed unto all men"; but he changes the structure of the latter half of the sentence, and writes: "And so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" (Rom. v. 12). In what sense did all sin? Some hold that all sinned in Adam as the physical source or as the moral representative of the whole race: his sin was also theirs as included physically in him or represented morally by him. Others maintain that Paul simply affirms that all men have by personal choice sinned, and consequently shared Adam's doom of death. But he goes on to argue that in the absence of law sin could not be imputed, and, therefore, the sin of Adam's descendants until the law came could not in his view involve the same personal guilt and consequent penalty as Adam's. The comparison with Christ would be incomplete unless

Adam's disobedience had some causal relation to the sin of his descendants. Accordingly we are driven to conclude that Paul represents Adam's sin as the source of the sin of the human race. Without expressly stating it he assumes the doctrine of original sin in the sense of an inherited tendency to sin, for he does undoubtedly affirm here that both the sin and the death of mankind result from Adam's transgression. Does our modern knowledge allow us to find any truth whatever in this view? It is very often assumed that the whole matter may be dismissed without any further inquiry. It is said, for instance, that breeding means more than birth, that is, education is a more potent factor in development than inheritance. That is not at all improbable, but it does not prove that inheritance is not a factor. And in the education the social inheritance of religious beliefs, moral standards, social customs, which constitute the environment, is potent. If that has been tainted by sin, can the individual life be unaffected thereby? The sin of the race is thus perpetuated and diffused along all the channels of the relations of men to one another. This consideration is too often ignored. But are we compelled to concede that heredity, in the stricter sense of physical heredity, does not affect at all the moral development of the individual? Granted that it is not a strictly correct use of words to speak of original sin, and still less of original guilt, as there is sin or guilt only where there has been free personal choice, and granted that what is inherited is only the raw material for moral choice, is it not likely that the appetites and passions, which may be natural, have been increased in their intensity by the self-indulgence of previous generations? Children do resemble their parents mentally and morally, however we may explain the resemblance. Is not sensuous desire likely to be more ardent in the offspring of the sensualist than of the chaste? Does not the

drunkard bequeath to his children a greater liability to succumb to the temptation from strong drink? Our modern knowledge does not disprove Paul's view, although it may necessitate a change in the form of statement.

(10) There is one statement of Paul's on this subject of sin which demands closer scrutiny. He regards the moral corruption of paganism as the result of its idolatry. Because they "changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves" (Rom. i. 23, 24). "Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting" (v. 28). We must first of all recognise the Hebraic mode of speech. Paul describes as direct divine action what we should regard as the necessary moral consequences. As God is the Author of the moral order these consequences are willed by God in that order; but it does relieve our moral difficulties to regard God's action as mediated and not immediate. Secondly, it is now impossible for us to hold with Paul that polytheism and the accompanying idolatry were a deliberate choice of a lower religion when a higher religion was equally possible. We regard these as stages in the development of the religious consciousness of the divine. This, however, is not to affirm that human sin did not adversely affect that development. Evolution is not uniform progress. There were dark shades in the picture of paganism which we cannot confidently affirm to have been inevitable. As an ethical monotheist, who was not conscious of the slow growth by which the race to which he belonged had reached this faith, Paul probably painted paganism in darker colours than it altogether deserved, although his qualifications of his description in his

recognition of moral standards and judgments, and of life according to the inner law known even among the Gentiles must not be overlooked. But lastly, that polytheism, and especially the mythology of Greece and Rome, exercised an adverse moral influence can scarcely be doubted. The moral conscience was often in advance of the popular religion. Plato's care about the selection of the tales to be told in the education of the citizens in his model-state is one evidence that immoral views about the gods might inflict moral injuries. Is not Lucretius' passion against the wrongs religion had inflicted another proof that religion may corrupt morals? Can we wonder, then, that Paul connected the gross immorality of paganism with its debased religion? In this statement the principle is recognized that sin itself may be punitive of previous sin, that one consequence of wrongdoing is a tendency towards worse doing, that sin grows from the less to the greater. Here, as in other statements of Paul regarding sin, we are not concerned merely with speculations of the schools, but with realities of man's life. There is the husk of traditional views, and we should freely cast that away; but there is also the kernel of real experience of himself and of the world. The guilt and the power of sin were facts for him; these are facts for us. In these facts is to be found the need of the salvation in Christ, with the nature of which the next Study will deal.

ALFRED E. GARVIE.

THE ASCENSION IN LUKE AND ACTS.

THAT the writer of our Third Gospel and of Acts is the same individual is an established fact of modern criticism. In accordance with tradition we will designate him "Luke," without committing ourselves on the hotly debated question of his identity. It seems to be almost an axiom, however,