

is the unwillingness of the natural man to follow his moral independence to the point where it becomes dependence upon a moral reality greater than ourselves, where it casts down all the rigid ethical boundaries he has set up for himself and brings him face to face with those infinite claims which destroy all idea of merit, and leave him, after he has done his utmost, an unprofitable servant.

As a practical concern, the issue is not doubtful when we divorce morality and religion. Morality has no more a wide heaven to breathe in, or religion a solid earth to walk on. Yet, if morals requires absolute independence and religion absolute dependence, how can they ever be agreed ?

JOHN OMAN.

EPHESIANS IV. 21 : " AS THE TRUTH IS IN JESUS."

Καθὼς ἐστὶν ἀληθεία ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ. None of the many renderings of this phrase seems to be satisfactory. For the popular form of the quotation—"the truth as it is in Jesus"—there is, of course, no authority; it would be interesting to know the origin of this all too common transposition of the words of the Authorised Version, "as the truth is in Jesus." The Revised Version giving the rendering "even as truth is in Jesus" corrects the A.V. in its insertion of the article before *ἀληθεία*, but raises a new question as to the true significance of the phrase, which presented little difficulty to the reader of the old Version. Dr. Abbott rightly rejects the interpretation given by Jerome and others which expands the meaning into "as truth is in Jesus, so shall it be in you," on one ground that it requires a forced meaning for *ἀληθεία* = holiness, and on a second, to which we should demur, that *ὑμᾶς* is not emphatic. He makes the following sentence the subject of the clause, and translates, "as is right teaching in Jesus: that ye put

off,” etc. But while this also postulates a somewhat forced rendering for ἀληθεία, it fails to account for the change from Χριστόν to Ἰησοῦ. Dr. Abbott’s note does not remove this difficulty: “When obedience to the practical teaching of a historical person is referred to, the historical name is used.” This is what we might expect, but not what we find. Rather is the contrary noteworthy in Paul, that when he does appeal to the authority of his Master he refers to Him as “the Lord,” or “Christ Jesus”; and in the passage to which on Dr. Abbott’s interpretation this would be most closely parallel (Rom. xv. 3) his words are, “for Christ also pleased not Himself.” Neither can it be seriously contended that the teaching which follows is indeed the “teaching of the historical person” Jesus of Nazareth. No doubt, it is in harmony with the teaching He gave; but the mould into which it is cast is clearly that of the Apostle’s thinking, and there is nothing in its contents to justify the suggestion that he is here appealing to the teaching of the historic Jesus rather than to the inspiration of the exalted Christ. Indeed the whole passage proceeds on the assumption that the Ephesians had “learnt Christ,” had “heard Him,” and been instructed in a spiritual sense, doubtless through the medium of human lips, but by the working of the Spirit which is the Lord.

All the renderings of this type take ἀληθεία as a nominative, and all are alike open to the objection, that they do not satisfactorily account for the change from “Christ” in verse 20 to the rare use of “Jesus” in verse 21. The other type of rendering, whether it takes ἀληθεία as nominative or as dative, makes it part of the predicate and supplies as subject Χριστός. Thus we get either “as Christ is truth in Jesus,” or “as Christ is truly in Jesus.” The former of these renderings is adopted by Von Soden in the *Handcom-mentar* without any reference to the one represented by our

Versions ; “ in view of the expressly repeated *αὐτόν, ἐν αὐτῇ* which takes up *τὸν Χριστόν* from the sentence with *οὕτως*, only “ Christ ” can be the subject of this sentence, and not *μανθάνειν* or *ἀκούειν*.” “ The thought,” he proceeds, “ is that they ought not only to believe on a Christ but to recognise Him in Jesus ; and if they wish truly to live in Christ, they must live like Jesus ; just as in v. 25, 29, and 1 Peter ii. 21, this Christ is set forth as an example.”

But these passages which Von Soden quotes precisely fail to support his view ; in all cases it is “ Christ ” not “ Jesus ” to whom they refer. And further his explanation seems to involve a misconception of verse 20. The point from which Paul starts is that these people are already “ in Christ.” Within that sphere they have received instruction. Christ is at once their teacher and their lesson. There is no question raised as to their believing in Christ, no occasion, therefore, to urge them to recognise Him in Jesus. What, again, is meant by the same commentator’s further remark, “ The thought is related to the proposition of Hebrews xiii. 8—Jesus is Christ ” ? The thought, according to his rendering, is that Christ is truth in Jesus, which, whatever it may mean, is not the same as that Jesus is Christ.

The suggestion adopted by Westcott and Hort in the margin of their text, to print *ἀληθεία* as a dative followed by a comma, leads to the translation, “ as He, Christ, truly is in Jesus.” But this does not appear to meet with favour among modern commentators. It yields a view of the relation between “ Christ ” and “ Jesus ” to which there is no parallel in the Pauline Epistles, or, indeed, in the New Testament, however it might be applied in support of later and not very orthodox speculations.

In view of the objections which thus present themselves against any of the current interpretations, some consideration may be invited for a suggestion of quite a different kind.

In the first place the logical pause is not after the *καθώς* clause but before it. This is against Von Soden among others, who “says the *καθώς* plainly corresponds with the *οὕτως* of verse 20, so that any construction of the *καθώς* clause with what follows resulting in a loosening of its close connexion with *οὐχ οὕτως* is excluded.” But this is surely to misconstrue the course of Paul’s thought. It makes him say, “Ye have not so learnt Christ . . . as He is truth in Jesus,” which is the precise opposite of what the Apostle means. The comparison involved in *οὕτως* is with the knowledge, or rather ignorance, of Christ which accounts for the immoral “walk” of those who are “cut off from the life of God.” And this comparison is, indeed, exhausted by the backward reference, so that there is no necessity to find it carried further in the *καθώς* clause. The difficulties above pointed out arise from the attempt to keep this clause in close connexion with what precedes it. Let us try what can be done by connecting it with what follows, by making it supply an analogy to the demand made upon the Ephesians that they should *ἀποθέσθαι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον*. The construction of *ἀποθέσθαι* is variously explained; but whether it depends on one or other or on all of the finite verbs in the sentence preceding it, there is no doubt as to its meaning, “that ye put off.” The *ὑμᾶς* calls for notice, and gets it from the commentators, some of whom feel that it is emphatic without knowing why, while other deny to it any emphasis at all. The truth is, that the *ὑμᾶς* is otiose unless it is emphatic. After three verbs in the second person plural with no disturbing intrusion the pronoun is uncalled for except for emphasis. Emphasis is governed not by any fixed convention as, e.g., “the place of the word in the sentence,” but by the rhythm of the whole; and if we make the logical pause after *ἐδιδάχθητε*, and then read on, *καθώς ἐστὶν ἀληθεία ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἀποθέσθαι ὑμᾶς*, we see the need of the pronoun; it is in

the contrast or rather the partial analogy between something in "Jesus" and something demanded of Christians. And the translation now suggested is: "that as is actual fact in the case of Jesus, ye put off the old man."

For the use of ἀληθεία with this significance a parallel may be found in 2 Cor. vii. 14, ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν ἐπὶ Τίτου ἀληθεία ἐγενήθη, "the boast I made before Titus turned out to be a fact." So Athanasius contrasts ἀληθεία as "fact" with σκιά (*de Incarn. c. 40*). Παρούσης τῆς ἀληθείας τίς ἐτι χρεία τῆς σκιάς ἦν; And there is a very close parallel in Plutarch (*Consolatio ad Apollonium*, 111 F.), εἰ δὲ ὡσπὲρ ἡ ἀληθεία ἔχει = ut res revera se habet. Cf. also the phrase from Diodorus quoted by Stephanus *ad voc. ἔνια* : ρὸ ἀληθείαν ἐξέβεινε = verum eventum habuere.

To what, then, does Paul refer as "actual fact" in the case of Jesus, in which he finds an analogy to the putting off of the old man? For it is only an analogy that we need look for; it is not suggested that the Apostles would have described that which was "put off" by Jesus in the same terms as he describes that which is to be put off by the Christian. The clue is offered by the collocation of the name Ἰησοῦς and the word ἀπόθεσθαι. On the one hand, an examination of the passages in which Paul uses the name "Jesus" shows that while in no case does he use it when appealing to His teaching or to His ethical example, in nearly every case (seven out of nine, if I am not mistaken) he uses it when referring to the facts or circumstances of the Saviour's death or resurrection. On the other hand, we have evidence that the idea of our Lord's having "put off" or "stripped off" something at His death, and of that as providing an analogy to what must be done by His followers was not only one familiar to the Apostle but one to which he attached considerable importance.

Reference may be made to two passages in the Epistle to

the Colossians. In the passage of that Epistle which corresponds to the one we are considering in Ephesians, the word which corresponds to ἀποθέσθαι here is ἀπεκδυσάμενοι (Col. iii. 9 ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον); and this provides a significant link between the thought of “putting off” (ἀποθέσθαι) or “stripping off” (ἀπεκδύσασθαι) the old man and the picture of Christ suggested by the difficult phrase in Col. ii. 15, ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας. Whatever may be said of the rendering of this last phrase offered by several of the Latin Fathers (Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine) as a translation—“having put off from Himself *His body* He made a show of them”—there is little doubt that as an interpretation it is correct. That is to say, Paul thought of Christ in His act of dying as divesting Himself of that body which was the medium through which He had been involved in the common human experience of the hostility of “principalities and powers,” the spiritual forces which had usurped authority over men. It was they who “crucified the Lord of glory”;¹ but in doing so they had defeated themselves. He escaped from their dominion when He stripped off from Himself at once the body and the unseen forces which used the body as an organ of tyranny and attack. Thus the putting off of the old man on the part of the Christian and the stripping off of principalities and powers on the part of Christ represent strictly analogous ideas. And it would be quite in accordance with Pauline thought to find the analogy underlying the language of our passage in Ephesians, and the achievement of Christ in His death held up as an example of the putting off of the old man.

Further, we may bring into illustrative connexion with our passage another verse, from the same context in Colossians : ii. 11, ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε περιτομῇ ἀχειροποιήτῳ ἐν τῇ

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 8. Cf. Everling, *Angelologie und Dämonologie des Paulus*, p. 13.

ἀπεκδύσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ.
 The current explanations of the phrase, "the circumcision of Christ," are none of them satisfactory. (Lightfoot passes over it in silence.) Abbott rightly rejects all renderings which find a reference to the circumcision of the infant Jesus. But he contents himself with a colourless rendering, "the circumcision which belongs to Christ, and is brought about by union with Him," nearly equivalent to "Christian circumcision." Bernhard Weiss takes it to mean, "the circumcision which is wrought by no human hand but by Christ Himself on the believer, who in his baptism is brought into life-fellowship with Him."¹ But there is no parallel for the idea that Christ somehow confers circumcision on the believer; and on the other hand the explanation takes no account of the *ἀπέκδυσις τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός*, which is really the *tertium comparationis* between the *περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ* and the "circumcision not made with hands."

It is true that the circumcision of Christ here referred to is not the circumcision of the infant Jesus, but nevertheless the genitive is a subjective one. Paul here describes as the circumcision of Christ the same stripping off of the body which has *σάρξ* for its substance. He assumes that the like circumcision takes place in the experience of the Christian when through ethical union to Christ he dies to sin and is made alive again unto righteousness—an experience of which his baptism is the vivid representation and the seal. The putting off of the body of the flesh is analogous to the "circumcision of Christ," because He also in the act of death stripped Himself of a like body.

If we now return to the passage in Ephesians we find verses 22–24 in closest correspondence with the passage in Colossians both as to underlying ideas and in the language in which they are expressed. In Colossians, when the Christians

¹ B. Weiss, *die Paulinischen Briefe*, 1905, *ad loc.*

are called on to ἀπεκδύσασθαι the old man the analogous achievement of Christ is cited and emphasised as an example and a type. When in Ephesians they are summoned ἀποθέσθαι the old man, it seems natural to find the same thought underlying a slightly different form ; and in the καθώς clause to recognise a reference to the laying aside by Jesus of the σῶμα τῆς σαρκός, rendering the phrase as already suggested, "that as is actual fact in the case of Jesus, ye put off the old man."

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THE MISHNA ON IDOLATRY.¹

DR. HARKAVY (I think) once observed that whereas the Biblical inheritance of the Jews had been appropriated by strangers, their Rabbinical inheritance was still left to themselves. Encroachments on such estates by capable workers are more often welcomed than resented, and Mr. Elmslie is likely to meet with gratitude from the owners of the Talmud for pegging out a claim. The treatise which he has selected for translation and illustration is the most interesting of all—that which regulates the relations between Israelites and their pagan neighbours ; it is packed full of matter that is of value to the anthropologist, the mythologist and the historian as well as to the Orientalist and theologian. Perhaps it feels strange in its new environment ; accustomed to a commentary that is harder than the text, in Mr. Elmslie's edition it is surrounded by the luxuries of European scholarship, a critical apparatus, a translation which shirks no difficulty, and a commentary which elucidates its various obscurities ; to these are added an Introduction, a series of excursuses and a glossary.

¹ *The Mishna on Idolatry* ('Aboda Zara), by W. A. L. Elmslie, M.A., Cambridge Texts and Studies, 1911.