

For their conviction of His Resurrection and all that was involved in that depended on their recognition of the risen Lord when He appeared to them. They did recognize Him in spite of some mysterious transformation, which seems to have made it difficult. St. John was the first to discover Him on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. He had been a witness of that which had come to pass on the mountain side. It was he who could affirm with confidence, *ἑθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ* (John i 14).

Of course we feel that this can only be an hypothesis. And such hypotheses have to be put forth with great delicacy and caution in a region so obscure and transcendent as that which embraces the resurrection-life of our Lord. But if it does anything to suggest an aspect of the Transfiguration which is apt to be overlooked, it may not have been stated in vain.

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#### A POSSIBLE VIEW OF ROMANS x 13-21.

THE late Professor Jowett said of this passage, that in style it was one of the most obscure portions of the whole Epistle. He particularly referred to the fact that the argument was founded on passages from the Old Testament, without the relation of those passages to the argument being clearly brought out. This is true, but there is a further difficulty in the exact value to be assigned to verse 17.

- v. 13. 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be  
 v. 14. saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?  
 v. 15. and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!  
 v. 16. But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?  
 v. 17. So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.  
 v. 18. But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily,  
     Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.  
 v. 19. But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith,  
     I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation,  
     With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.  
 v. 20. And Isaiah is very bold, and saith,  
     I was found of them that sought me not;  
     I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.

*v.* 21. But as to Israel he saith, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.'

It is usual to divide *v.* 16, 'but they did not all hearken to the glad tidings; for Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?' into two parts: making 16 *a* an objection 'yet in spite of the fact that the message was sent, all did not obey the Gospel'; while 16 *b* is considered to be S. Paul's answer, couched in the words of Isaiah, and with some such clause understood as 'But this fact does not prove that no message had been sent, for Isaiah describes also the failure of the people to receive the message.'

And verse 17, 'So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ,' receives scanty treatment.

Dr. Sanday and Mr. Headlam comment on the verse thus: 'Hence may be inferred (in corroboration of what was said above) that the preliminary condition necessary for faith is to have heard, and to have heard implies a message.' They continue: 'This sentence is to a certain extent parenthetical, merely emphasizing a fact already stated, yet the language leads us on to the excuse for unbelief suggested in the next verse.'

Is it possible that such a parenthetical explanation should be given of what had only just been said in the preceding verses 14-15? There has been no long digression, necessitating a reminder of a distant conclusion which S. Paul is anxious his hearers should not forget. And we fail to see that the language can be really said to lead up to the excuse for unbelief.

Moreover, according to Sanday and Headlam, *v.* 17 merely asserts that faith comes by the hearing of a message, a statement which, however true it may be, has already been made by the Apostle, and consequently for them *v.* 17 marks no advance upon S. Paul's previous thought; and it is hard to reconcile the statement that 'hearing (cometh) by the word of Christ,' (whether this refers to the divinely commissioned preaching of Him, or be a mere parenthesis), with *v.* 21, where Christ is represented as saying: 'All the day long did I spread out My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.' This should, according to the above explanation, have been sufficient, and the Apostle has assigned no cause for their want of belief.

That there is one thought dominating the whole passage, ought, we think, to be conceded. The Apostle has shewn in *vv.* 4-13 that faith is the requisite; now he wants to shew that it is the Jews' *own fault* if they have not had this faith. *vv.* 14-17, which in themselves constitute a syllogism, may also be considered as a major proposition laying down the two essential requisites for shewing the truth of S. Paul's contention that it is their own fault if they have not believed. In *vv.* 18 and 19, the minor proposition, he asks whether the Israelites have had these

requisites, and he answers in the affirmative, leaving his readers to draw the evident conclusion that they in consequence have only themselves to blame if they have not believed. Now what are those two requisites? They are given us in the two parts of the minor proposition. In *v.* 18, 'But I say, Did they not *hear*?' In *v.* 19, 'But I say, Did Israel not *know*?'

These two requisites for proving that their want of faith was their own fault, must be somewhere in the major proposition, viz. in *vv.* 14-17.

Now in this major proposition which, as we have suggested, is itself a syllogism, S. Paul has shewn in *vv.* 14-15, that in order to call upon the name of Christ, men need to believe in Him, and therefore to have heard of Him, and therefore to have received a preacher, and therefore that the same Christ should have sent that preacher.

We can trace then in these *vv.* 14-15, the first of the later requisites, namely:—'did they not *hear*?' But where is the second 'did Israel not *know*?' After *v.* 15, S. Paul objects to himself in *v.* 16 that these cannot be *all* the requisites for faith, since all would in consequence have believed, which is obviously not the case, as Isaiah declares. And this difficulty enables the Apostle to shew that, besides listening to a preacher, there is a still further requisite, namely *that Christ should speak to their hearts and call them.* 'No man can come to Me, except the Father which sent Me, draw him'; and again, 'He that is of God heareth the words (*ρήματα*) of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God.'

And this, it seems, is the second requisite insisted on again in *v.* 19 *a*, 'did Israel not *know*?'

Is there any ground for such a view? In other words, are we justified in rendering *v.* 17, 'So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing has its effect, viz.: acception of the preacher's message, i. e. faith, *through the word or calling of Christ in the hearer's heart*'?

In the first place, as we have seen, the explanation hitherto current seems to be lame, it makes the argument end in a parenthesis; it itself requires some forcing of the text by the introduction of a long suppressed clause in *v.* 16; and, what is more important than all, it makes the Apostle come to a full stop in the middle of his proof. If *v.* 17 is a parenthesis, it is very hard to see how it is a connective link between *vv.* 14-16 and *vv.* 18-21, and it is impossible in this view to explain the question in *v.* 19, 'Did not Israel *know*?'

But in the view now put forward, *v.* 18 is a question arising from the requisite laid down in *v.* 17 *a*, 'So belief cometh of hearing'; and *v.* 19 similarly is a question arising from the further requisite demanded in *v.* 17 *b*, 'And hearing by the word of Christ'—that is, *by Christ's voice in their heart.*

We would first of all draw attention to the prepositions used:—“Ἄρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς, ἢ δὲ ἀκοὴ διὰ ῥήματος θεοῦ.” ‘Faith arises indeed *from* the preaching, but the preaching reaches us (our hearts) *through* the instrumentality of God’s life-giving voice.’ ‘For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, . . . quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.’

If, in the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews, the ‘word’ were the equivalent of ῥῆμα, we might claim a very high probability for our view. As a fact, the word used is λόγος.

But does ῥῆμα never mean this hidden voice of God to the soul? We might refer to the strikingly parallel passage quoted above from S. John:—‘He that is of God heareth the words (ῥήματα) of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God.’ In this passage it would be difficult indeed to say that any external preaching was necessarily meant.

Compare too such passages as S. Matthew iv 4, S. Luke i 37, S. John vi 69, xvii 8, and Ephes. v 26. But in S. Luke ii 29, ‘Now lettest Thou Thy sērvant depart, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace,’ we feel that the probability is in favour of an internal message; similarly in iii 2, ‘the word of God came unto John.’ This probability becomes almost a certainty in S. John xv 7, ‘If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you.’ Compare 2 Cor. xii 4, ‘He was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.’ And Heb. i 3, ‘Upholding all things by the word of His power.’ And vi 5, ‘Those . . . who have tasted the good word of God.’ In all these passages ‘word’ is the equivalent of ῥῆμα, which in consequence must be accepted as frequently signifying God’s hidden, secret, but none the less real message, of which David spoke when he said:—

‘The spirit of the Lord spake by me,

And His word was upon my tongue.’ 2 Sam. xxiii 2.

Note also such passages as S. John iii 34, and vi 69.

And lastly we feel that the view which makes *v.* 17 parenthetical does not do justice to the illative force of the particle ἄρα. It is true that when S. Paul is expressly drawing conclusions, he generally uses the strongly illative expression ἄρα οὖν as in v 18, vii 3, 25, ix 16, 18; but in viii 1, which opens up the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the natural climax of the freedom from the Law and from sin treated of in chaps. vi and vii, the illative force of the particle ἄρα is noticeable ‘Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.’

So here in x 17 the Greek implies necessarily two things, a conclusion which is a *concession*, ‘ἄρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς.’

‘Faith *then* is from hearing,’ but also, and this is important, a *reservation*; ‘ἢ δὲ ἀκοὴ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ.’

Now if we were to see in this verse nothing beyond a resumption of *vv.* 14-15, it would be difficult to explain the illative particle *ἀρα* which affects the whole sentence, and still more difficult to explain the adverbative *ἢ δὲ ἀκοή*, which marks a new departure, precisely something *not* enumerated amongst previous requisites for faith.

There are three points in the Apostle's argument, namely, the requisites for faith, the question as to their fulfilment, and finally the answer.

There must then be a connexion between the requisite insisted on in *v.* 17 *b*, 'and hearing by the word of Christ'; the question asked in *v.* 19 *a*, 'but I say, Did Israel not know?'; and lastly, the answer given in *vv.* 19 *b*-21.

It is to be noted too that the Apostle is silent about that alone which could establish such a connexion, namely patent proof by miracles of such authorization. The connexion which he does establish is to be found in *vv.* 19 *b*-21, and must determine for us the precise meaning of the two terms thus connected, namely 'the word of Christ' in *v.* 17 *b*, and the 'knowledge' of Israel in *v.* 19 *a*.

To establish this connexion S. Paul appeals to something affecting their own intimate individual convictions; first of all, to a prophecy which said that their *hearts* should be moved to jealousy; secondly, to one which amplified this, and insisted that it was not to those who sought Him by outward works that the Messiah would appeal; and lastly, he quotes the prophet's words expressly directed to Israel:—'But as to Israel He (Messiah) saith, All the day long did I spread out My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.' This shews us that the knowledge of which the Apostle speaks was that of an intimate conviction due to an appeal to the *hearts* of each one, a conviction which many must have had, and which *all could* have had if they had 'searched the Scriptures' in the true spirit, and had been willing to be 'taught of God.'

To sum up then, in *vv.* 14-15, the necessity of a preacher is shewn; and at the same time, by means of a familiar quotation from Isaiah and from Nahum, it is skilfully implied that such preachers have been afforded in plenty.

In *v.* 16 the objection is raised that a preacher is not sufficient, as is evident from Isaiah the great preacher, who himself complains that none have believed upon his preaching. In *v.* 17 this objection is met by a concession that, besides the preacher, something more is needed, not merely his authorization or Divine commission (for that, of course, is presupposed, as is evident from the example chosen, namely Isaiah) but further the word of Christ to the hearer 'searching the hearts and reins' is required.

*Vv. 18-19* at once take up these two conditions, 'But I say, Did they not *hear*?' yes, they have had the opportunity, for the Apostles have preached far and wide; 'But I say, Did Israel not *know*?' This must correspond to *v. 17 b*, and should therefore mean: 'Have they further experienced the *voice of Christ speaking within them*, and admonishing them to accept the Apostles' preaching?'

That is, in addition to the mere sound of the speaking voice, have they had that opportunity of true *knowledge* which arises from an interior admonition? And the answer follows at once in *vv. 19 b-21*, yes, most assuredly they must have had the prick of conscience, for all their prophets had warned them; first they had seen Moses' prophecy fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles whom they despised; cf. Acts xiii 46. Secondly, Isaiah had foretold that the Messiah would come, even for those who sought Him not. And, lastly, the Messiah Himself had declared by His prophet that all the day long He had spoken to their heart. They have *heard* then and they have *known*, they have had *all* the requisites for faith, it is their own fault if they have not believed. Compare this with xi 7-10.

This may be rendered clearer thus :—

TEXT.	PARAPHRASE.
14. How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? and how shall they	14. They need a preacher.
15. hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!	15. And the preacher must be authorized.
16. But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?	16. An objection—the requisites you propose cannot be sufficient, for Isaiah was a preacher, and authorized, yet they did not believe him.
17. So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.	17. Yes, quite so, and that shews that we need another requisite; faith cometh indeed by hearing as we have said, but the acceptance of that very hearing is caused by Christ's word in our hearts.

## TEXT.

18. But I say, Did they not hear?  
Yea, verily, Their sound went  
out into all the earth, and their  
words unto the ends of the  
world.
19. But I say, Did Israel not know?  
First Moses saith, I will provoke  
you to jealousy with that which  
is no nation, With a nation void  
of understanding will I anger,  
you.
20. And Isaiah is very bold, and  
saith, I was found of them that  
sought me not; I became mani-  
fest unto them that asked not  
of me.
21. But as to Israel he saith, All the  
day long did I spread out my  
hands unto a disobedient and  
gainsaying people.

## PARAPHRASE.

18. And did they not hear, i. e.  
have authorized preachers?  
Yes, the Apostles preached  
far and wide.
19. And did they not have the  
further requisite, namely  
Christ's word, knocking at  
their hearts? Yes, they have  
been warned that they were  
not the exclusively chosen  
people.
20. And Isaiah's words must  
have pricked their con-  
science.
21. And Messiah expressly says  
that He has appealed to their  
hearts.

After perusing the above, there may arise in many minds the feeling that this view supposes too stilted, too artificial, too nicely antithetical a style in this chapter.

This is not the place for examining the difficulty, but I feel assured that none who have been at the pains carefully to analyse the Epistle and trace out the Apostle's line of argument will give one moment's thought to such an objection.

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## NOTES ON THE BIBLICAL USE OF THE PRESENT AND AORIST IMPERATIVE.

It is necessary to state the distinctions of use, which are assumed in the third of the following notes.

The present is used for (1) present time (i. e. immediate future), (2) continued action, (3) general commands, (4) such as call up a less definite picture, especially those enjoining a mental state or activity.

The aorist for commands intended as definite; e. g. special commands (though not confined to them) more particularly those which have a material side.