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sexual intercourse with (a woman)?<sup>1</sup> Thus the renderings of the Versions (Syr. ܠܚܒܐ; LXX ἀπόλεσε and Vulg. *interfecit*) do not necessarily imply a different reading from that of the Massoretic text.

G. R. DRIVER.

## CHRIST AS THE APXH OF CREATION.

(Prov. viii 22, Col. i 15-18, Rev. iii 14.)

THE main object of this paper is to point out the fact—hitherto, I believe, unnoticed—that in Col. i 16-18 St Paul is giving an elaborate exposition of the first word in Genesis, בְּרֵאשִׁית *Berēshīth*, and interpreting *rēshīth* as referring to Christ. This interpretation depends, as we shall see, upon an inferred connexion between *rēshīth* of Gen. i 1 and the same term applied to Wisdom personified in Prov. viii 22, יְהוָה קָנָנִי רֵאשִׁית דְּרַבּוֹ *Adōnāi kāmānī rēshīth dārō*—a passage to which there is obvious reference in *πρωτόκοκος πάσης κτίσεως* in Col. i 15. Since the interpretation of Prov. viii 22 has raised greater controversy than that of almost any other passage in the O. T., and is still in some degree unsettled, we shall do well to begin with a discussion of it.

### *Interpretation of Prov. viii 22.*

The renderings of A.V. and R.V. are identical:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way,  
Before his works of old.

R.V., however, adds the marginal alternatives 'formed' for 'possessed', 'as' (the beginning) for 'in' (the beginning), 'The first of' for 'Before'.

### *Meaning of קָנָנִי.*

In the first place, the fact needs emphasis that the verb קָנָנִי *kāmā* always seems to possess the sense 'get, acquire', never the sense 'possess, own' simply, apart from the idea of possessing something which *has been acquired* in one way or another. This clearly appears from examination of the usages of the verb in Hebrew, and through comparison of the cognate languages.

There are (if my computation is correct) 88 occurrences of the verb in the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew text of Ecclesiasticus. The various shades of meaning which it has may be classified as follows:—

I. 'Buy', Gen. xxv 10, xxxiii 19, xxxix 1, xlvii 19, 20, 22, 23, xlix 30,

<sup>1</sup> Dalman *Aramäisch-Neuhebräisches Handwörterbuch* 90 b.

1 13; Ex. xxi 2; Lev. xxii 11, xxv 14, 15, 28, 30, 44, 45, 50, xxvii 24; Deut. xxviii 68; Josh. xxiv 32; 2 Sam. xii 3, xxiv 21, 24 *ter*; 1 Kings xvi 24; 2 Kings xii 13, xxii 6; Isa. xxiv 2, xliii 24; Jer. xliii 1, 2, 4, xix 1, xxxii 7 *bis*, 9, 15, 25, 43, 44; Ezek. vii 12; Am. viii 6; Zech. xi 5, xiii 5 (s.v.); Prov. xx 14; Ru. iv 4, 5 *bis*, 8, 9, 10; Eccles. ii 7; Neh. v 8, 16; 1 Chron. xxi 24 *bis*; 2 Chron. xxxiv 11; Ecclus. xxxvii 11. Total 60.

2. 'Own' (by right of purchase), Isa. i 3 ('The ox knoweth its owner'). Gesenius (*Thesaurus*, s.v.) also includes under this head Lev. xxv 30; Zech. xi 5; but seeing that in both these passages there is an antithesis between קנה and מכר 'sell', it is clear that the sense 'buy' is intended, and that they belong to the first category, where we have included them. Total 1.

3. 'Acquire' (otherwise than by purchase). 'Get' wisdom, &c., by application of the mind and will, Prov. i 5, iv 5 *bis*, 7 *bis*, xv 32, xvi 16 *bis*, xvii 16, xviii 15, xix 8, xxiii 23; Ecclus. li 20, 21, 25, 28. Of these passages Prov. xxiii 23 ('Get truth, and sell it not') shews that the metaphor of *buying* is in the writer's mind. 'Get' a wife, Ecclus. xxxvi 29. Of Yahweh's *acquiring* Israel, Ex. xv 16; Isa. xi 11, Ps. lxxiv 2; obj. 'the hill' of Zion, Ps. lxxviii 54. Total 21.

4. (a) 'Beget', Deut. xxxii 6 ('Is He not thy Father that begat thee? He made thee and established thee'). (b) 'Get' (by bearing), Gen. iv 1 ('I have gotten a man with [the help of] Yahweh'). The verb is here chosen to explain the name קַיִן *Káyin*. Total 2.

5. 'Create', Gen. xiv 19, 22 ('Creator of heaven and earth'), Ps. cxxxix 13 ('For thou hast formed my reins'). Total 3.

These, with Prov. viii 22 (where the meaning of the verb must for the present be considered ambiguous), make up the sum total of 88.

To make this evidence complete we must briefly notice the usages of substantives derived from the root. These are—

קִינְיָן *kinyān*. 1. 'Acquisition' (by purchase), Lev. xxii 11. 2. 'Property' (as *acquired*), Gen. xxxiv 23, xxxvi 6; Josh. xiv 4; Ezek. xxxviii 12, 13; Ps. cv 21.

3. 'Act of *acquiring*', Gen. xxxi 18; Prov. iv 7. 4. 'Creation', i. e. collectively 'creatures' (parallel to מַעֲשֵׂי יְיָ 'Thy works'), Ps. civ 24.

מִקְנָה *miknā*. 1. 'Object *purchased*', Gen. xvii 12, 13, 23, 27, xxiii 18. 2. 'Act of *purchase*', Lev. xxvii 22; Jer. xxxii 11, 12 *bis*, 14, 16.

3. 'Purchase-price', Lev. xxv 16 *bis*, 51.

מִקְנֵה *mikné*. 'Property', more especially such as consists in *cattle*. This is very frequent. That the underlying conception is that of something *acquired* (cf. κτήνος from κτάομαι) is clear from Gen. xlix 32, 'The *purchase* of the field (i. e. the purchased field) and the cave that is in it from the sons of Heth' (to secure a good sequence in English R.V.

transposes, 'The field, &c., that was purchased from the children of Heth'.

To this evidence for the Hebrew usage of the verb קנן it is important for our purpose to add the proper name קנָנָא *Elkânā*, which can hardly mean anything else than '(He whom) God has begotten or created'. Whether *kānā* here has the sense 'beget' or 'create' is ambiguous. If the former, the name is analogous to the frequent proper names compounded with קָנָא 'āb 'father' in reference to the Deity, e.g. Abiel 'My Father is God', Abijah 'My Father is Yah' (cf. in Babylonian such names as Šamaš-abum 'The Sun-god is father', Sin-abušu 'The Moon-god is his father'); if the latter, we may compare El'āsā, 'Asāhēl 'God-made' (sc. the bearer of the name), 'Asaiah 'Yah made', Ya'asiel 'Yah maker' (cf. in Babylonian the frequent names compounded with *bāni* 'creator', e.g. Anum-bāni, Sin-bāni, Šamaš-bāni 'The god Anu or Sin or Šamaš is creator', Ilušu-bāni 'His god is creator', Ilušu-ibni 'His god created', Ilušu-ibnišu 'His god created him'.<sup>1</sup>) *Elkânā* in O.T. is the name of several persons, being borne by the father of Samuel (1 Sam. i f), one of David's warriors (1 Chr. xii 6), a high official in the time of Ahaz (2 Chr. xxviii 7), a son of Korah (Exod. vi 24), and several Levites (1 Chr. vi 8, 10, 11, 20, 21, ix 16, xv 23). The repeated occurrence of the name over a widespread period is important as proving that the verb קנן in the sense 'beget' or 'create' was well known in popular usage, and not an uncommon usage as might be inferred from the few cases which we are able to cite (*kānā* verb 4 and 5, and *kinyān* subst. 4).

In face of this evidence we must surely conclude that the ground-meaning of *kānā* is that of *acquiring* something not previously possessed, which may be done by *buying* or *making* it, in the case of a child by *begetting* it, in the case of wisdom by *accumulating* it through mental application. The single instance of the verb in the sense 'own' (Isa. i 3), in which there seems to be no perceptible stress upon the act of *acquiring*, is no evidence in proof that *kānā* ever means to *possess* in a sense which excludes the idea of previous acquisition. The ox of the passage in question is far from being inseparable from the man who owns it. There was a time when it did not belong to him; therefore, when Hebrew speaks of *its owner*, it uses a term which properly means 'he who has acquired it' (קָנָה). This is also true of the substantival forms derived from *kānā* which bear the sense of *property* or *possessions*. The underlying idea is always that of *acquired* property. The Hebrew *kānā*, in fact, in so far as it contains the idea of *possessing*, is exactly like the Greek κτάομαι (in the perfect), and the substantives derived from it like κτήμα. A man's money, furniture, children, knowledge, are

<sup>1</sup> Cf. instances of these names cited in Thureau-Dangin *Lettres et Contrats de l'Époque de la Première Dynastie babylonienne*.

*kinyānīm* or κτήματα because he *has come to possess* them; his legs and arms, for example, are not *kinyānīm* or κτήματα because they are inseparable from our idea of him as a complete man—there never was a time when he did not possess them. Of course if we shifted our point of view, and regarded the man as a pre-existing spiritual entity subsequently endowed with a body, we might think of his body as a *kinyān* or κτήμα, since thus the body and its members would be pictured as *acquired* property.

*Evidence from the cognate languages as to the meaning of קנה.*

This conclusion as to the ground-conception of the verb קנה in Biblical Hebrew is borne out by the usage of the same root in the cognate languages.

In New Hebrew the meaning of קני, קנה is 'acquire, buy', and also 'create'. Cf. *Rosh ha-shana* 31 a, על הארץ לה' הארץ על, 'On the first day what (Psalm) do they recite? "The earth is the Lord's" (Ps. xxiv); because He created His world and gave it in possession, and is ruler over it.' Here קנה והקנה means literally 'acquired (by creation) and caused (men) to acquire (it)'. Cf. other instances of the use of the verb in Levy *Neuheb. u. chald. Wörterbuch*, s.v.

Aramaic קנא, Syriac ܩܢܐ *kēnā* corresponds in usage precisely with Hebrew. The O.T. occurrences of Hebrew *kānā* are regularly reproduced by *kēnā* in the Targums and the Peshîttā,<sup>1</sup> and in addition Heb. רכש *rākash* 'gather property' is rendered by *kēnā* in the Aramaic versions (Gen. xii 5, xxxi 18, xxxvi 6, xlvi 6), and רכיש '(gathered) property' normally by *kinyānā* (*nīksīn* 'riches', *ṣegullā* 'treasure' also occur as renderings). The N.T. and patristic occurrences of ܩܢܐ exhibit the same usage (cf. Payne Smith *Thesaurus*, s.v.).

Arabic ڪان *kanā* means 'to acquire' (e.g. sheep or goats) for a permanent possession, not for sale (Lane, Supplement to *Dict.*), and in conjugation VIII 'to possess' property so acquired. The verb may also have the sense 'create' (Kamus, p. 1937, ڪَانَ اللهُ خَلْقَهُ).

In Sabaean votive inscriptions the causative ܩܢܐ *haknī* is the regular term for 'dedicate', i.e. 'cause to acquire'; cf. *CIS.* iv nos. 2<sup>2</sup>, 3<sup>3</sup>, 30<sup>2</sup>, 37<sup>1</sup>, 75<sup>2</sup>, 77-91, &c. In *ib.* no. 37<sup>5</sup> we find the simple stem, . . . ܩܢܐ ܘܥܫܐ, 'and his riparian property . . . which he acquired and made'. The subst. קני means 'property'; *ib.* nos. 3<sup>3</sup>, 29<sup>5</sup>, 37<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions are Prov. viii 22, where both Targ. and Pesh. use the verb ברא *brā* 'created' (see below on the Versions), and Deut. xxxii 6 where Targ. Onkelos paraphrases קנה *qānā* 'who begat thee' by ܩܢܐ ܕܝܗܝܐ *qānā dīyahīā* 'and thou art His', doubtless in order to obviate the anthropomorphism of the original.

Ethiopic  $\Phi R$ : *kanaya*. Dillmann (*Lex.*, cols. 44-78) gives as meanings (1) 'Acquire, purchase', citing Am. viii 6, 'To buy the poor for silver'; (2) 'Subject to one's power, reduce to servitude'; (3) 'Impose labour, drive to work'. He makes no mention of a sense 'possess' in Ethiopic.

In Babylonian the verb *kanû* seems to be infrequent. Meissner, however, quotes two instances of it (*Supplement*, p. 85); *amar ša abûa [ina] šilli šarri ik-nu-u-ni intaš*, 'All that my father acquired under the protection of the king he has taken away' (K. 1101, 16; Harper *Letters* no. 152); *eklé kiré nišé ša ina šilli'a ik-nu-u*, 'The fields, gardens, (and) slaves which under my protection they acquired' (BA. 2, 566, 24). Here we might perhaps render 'owned' in place of 'acquired'; yet still the reference would be to the *owning* of wealth *acquired* during a period of prosperity.

*Importance of recognizing that the sense 'acquire' is inseparable from*  $\text{קָנָה}$ .

The evidence adduced above as to the meaning of *kānā* is familiar to competent Hebrew scholars, and the conclusion which we have drawn as to its invariable ground-conception would hardly be called in question by them. The reason why it has seemed desirable to marshal the facts in such fullness is that, in the controversy which has raged round  $\text{קָנָה}$  in Prov. viii 22, they have not been rightly apprehended by theologians, either in the past or in modern times. Thus, for example, Dr Liddon in his *Bampton Lectures* (Lect. ii, 13th ed. pp. 61 f.) states that 'modern critics know that if we are to be guided by the clear certain sense of the Hebrew root, we shall read "possessed", and not "created", and they admit without difficulty that the Wisdom is uncreated by and co-eternal with the Lord Jehovah'.<sup>1</sup> He adds in a foot-note that 'the current meaning of the word is "to acquire" or "possess", as is proved by its certain sense in the great majority of cases where it is used'. Here it is clear that he fails to recognize the sharp distinction which exists between the meaning 'acquire' and the meaning 'possess' with the force in which he postulates it, viz. 'possess' in a sense which not only ignores the idea of preliminary acquisition, but is actually to be understood as excluding such an idea. But, if our argument has been sound, this distinction forms the *crux* of the question. The idea of *creation* is closely connected with the idea of *acquisition* as being one form of it; whereas the idea of *possession without acquisition* stands sharply apart,

<sup>1</sup> Similar statements as to the incorrectness of the rendering 'created', and the correctness of 'possessed', are made by Newman *Select Treatises of St Athanasius* ii p. 270; Otley *Incarnation* i p. 305.

and cannot, as we have seen, be substantiated for a single occurrence of the verb.

We are justified, therefore, in concluding that נָנִי cannot rightly be rendered 'possessed me', but must have the meaning 'gat me' in some sense still to be determined. Now the idea of *buying* or *acquiring from an outside source* may clearly be excluded without argument, since Wisdom is certainly not pictured as something originally external to God. We thus have to choose between the two meanings 'created' or 'begat'.

*Does נָנִי mean 'created me' or 'begat me'?*

*Meaning of נִסְכָּתִי, הוֹלַלְתִּי in following verses.*

Our decision must be guided by the meaning which we attach to the verbs descriptive of the production of Wisdom in the immediate sequel, Prov. viii 23-25. These are נִסְכָּתִי *nissakti* in v. 23, הוֹלַלְתִּי *hólalti* twice in v. 24, 25. There is no variation between the renderings of A.V. and R.V. in these verses.

23. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,  
Or ever the earth was.
24. When there were no depths, I was brought forth ;  
When there were no fountains abounding with water.
25. Before the mountains were settled,  
Before the hills was I brought forth.

Now we observe that, while there is no doubt at all as to the meaning of הוֹלַלְתִּי—'I was brought to the birth' or 'was travailed with', there is more than a doubt whether נִסְכָּתִי is correctly rendered 'I was set up'. Though this meaning may be supported by the single occurrence of the verb in Ps. ii 6, נִסְכָּתִי טַלְכִּי 'I have installed my king' (cf. Babylonian *nasáku* 'appoint'), and by the subst. נָסִיק נָסִיק 'prince' (Babylonian *nasíku*), Josh. xiii 21, Mic. v 4, Ezek. xxxii 30, Ps. lxxxiii 12, we cannot fail to observe that the interpretation of נִסְכָּתִי in our passage as the Niph'al of this verb involves an unnatural hysteron-proteron, the official installation of Wisdom being mentioned prior to the repeated figure of the birth-pangs which produced it. We notice further that נִסְכָּתִי might be the Niph'al of another root נָסַךְ 'to weave' (Arabic نَسَجَ *nasaġa*), which occurs in Isa. xxv 7, xxx 1 (probably), and in the subst. מַסְסָה *masséka*, מַסְסֶת *masséketh*, 'web, piece of woven stuff'; or, it might be Niph'al of the related סָכַךְ *sákhak*, 'interweave' (whence New Heb. הִסִּיךְ 'weave'), of the form which is illustrated by Gesenius-Kautzsch *Heb. Gram.* § 67 u (חָלַל from חָלַל, Ezek. xxii 16, xxv 3; נָתַר from חָרַר, Ps. lxix 4, cii 4, &c.).

Now there are two O.T. passages in which this verb סָכַךְ (שָׁכַךְ) is applied to the *weaving* of the embryonic body in the womb, the thought being of the mysterious interlacing (as it were) of bones, sinews, and veins, as appears from the passage Job x 11.

עוֹר וּבָשָׂר הִלְבִּישָׁנִי  
וּבְעֵצְמוֹת וְגִידִים הִשְׁכָּכָנִי :

With skin and flesh didst Thou clothe me ;  
With bones and sinews didst Thou weave me.

(So R.V. rightly, 'knit me together'. A.V. wrongly, 'fenced me', *marg.* 'hedged').

The other passage is Ps. cxxxix 13.

כִּי־אֵתָהּ קָנִיתָ בְלִיָּתִי  
תִּסְכָּכֵנִי בְּבֶטֶן אִמִּי :

For *Thou* didst form my reins ;  
Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.

(A.V., R.V. *text* wrongly 'didst cover me' ; R.V. *marg.* rightly, 'didst knit me together').

The meaning of תִּסְכָּכֵנִי 'didst weave me' is further illustrated by *v.* 15 רֻקְּמָתִי *rukḳamtī*, 'I was skilfully wrought' or 'embroidered', the figure being that of the working of a piece of tapestry (רֻקְּמָה *rukḳmā*, Judg. v 30, &c.).

*Conclusion that קָנִי means 'begat me'.*

If, then, in Prov. viii 23 (stage 2) נִסְכַּחְתִּי means 'I was woven' (prenatal growth of the embryo),<sup>1</sup> and in *vs.* 24, 25 (stage 3) הוֹלֵלָתִי means 'I was brought forth with travail' (birth), the inference is obvious that the figure described in *v.* 22 by (stage 1) קָנִי is 'beget me' (act of procreation). We notice that Job x 10—the verse which immediately precedes the passage which we have discussed as referring to embryonic growth—runs,

Hast Thou not poured me out like milk,  
And curdled me like cheese ?

Here, without a doubt, the figure is that of (a) procreation, and (b) conception (cf. Gray and Ball *ad loc.*, and for the idea underlying (b) Wisd. vii 2 *παγείς ἐν αἵματι* with Goodrick's note).

Thus this long discussion brings us, with close approximation to certainty, to the conclusion that יהוה קנני means 'The Lord *begat* me'.

<sup>1</sup> This is the view of Hitzig, Ewald, Zöckler, Frankenberg, Toy.

*Interpretation of ראשית דרכו קדם מפעליו*

Passing on to consider the rival interpretations of ראשית דרכו 'the beginning of His way' as (1) an adverbial accusative 'in the beginning of His way' (A.V., R.V. *text*), or (2) a direct accusative in apposition to the object of קנני, 'as the beginning of His way' (R.V. *margin*), we note that an adverbial usage of ראשית is never elsewhere found in O.T.,<sup>1</sup> 'in the beginning' being regularly expressed by prefix of the preposition ב (Gen. i 1; Jer. xxvi 1, xxvii 1, xxviii 1, xlix 34). The absence of a parallel for such a usage cannot, however, be greatly pressed; since the adverbial usage is well illustrated with other substantives,<sup>2</sup> and is thus theoretically possible. In particular, we may notice two passages in which the synonymous substantive תחלה 'beginning' seems to be used as an accusative of time: Hos. i 2 תחלת דבר יהוה בהושע ויאמר יהוה (= then) Yahweh said', lit. 'Beginning of Yahweh spake by Hosea, and (= then) Yahweh said', i. e. 'In the beginning of Yahweh's speaking by Hosea, Yahweh said' (the construction is, however, undoubtedly harsh, and some uncertainty attaches to text and interpretation); 2 Sam. xxi 9 תחלת קציר שעורים קדם יהוה 'in the beginning of barley-harvest' (here, however, there exists a Massoretic correction embodied in the *keré* which inserts the preposition ב 'in' before תחלת).

Jerome (*Ep. cxl ad Cyprianum*) cites the Hebrew of our passage in transliteration with the preposition ב before ראשית, *Adonai canani bresith dercho*. Since, however, we have no trace of this reading elsewhere, it seems likely that, having decided that the use of ראשית was adverbial, he instinctively substituted בראשית with preposition in citing the passage from memory, because the prepositional usage was natural in this sense to a scholar with a feeling for the language. Such inadvertency would of course have been impossible had it appeared to him that a question of importance turned upon the interpretation of the phrase. This, however, does not seem to have been the case, since his whole interest in the exegesis of the passage centres in postulating for קנני the meaning 'possedit' rather than 'creavit'.

In favour of the interpretation of ראשית דרכו as a direct accusative in apposition to the object of קנני, we may cite the parallel of Job xl 19, where it is said of Behemoth, הוא ראשית דרכי אל 'He is the first of God's ways', i. e. the prime fruit of His creative activity.

Interpretation of the corresponding phrase in the parallel line, קדם קנני, to some extent hangs together with that of ראשית דרכו; and thus

<sup>1</sup> The statement of Cornelius à Lapide that ראשית is often used for בראשית has no foundation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch *Grammar* § 118 *z*.

A.V., R.V. *text*, having rendered ראשית דרכו 'in the beginning of His way', gives to the corresponding expression the meaning 'before His works', intending doubtless to obviate the inference that Wisdom is described as one of the created works of God. R.V. *margin*, on the other hand, parallels the direct accusative 'as the beginning of His way' in stichos 1 by a second direct accusative in stichos 2, likewise governed by בני—'the first of His works'.

קדם is regularly a substantive denoting *that which is in front* or *foremost*, whether in place or time. Its interpretation in a prepositional sense, 'before', is unparalleled in Hebrew, and this rendering may be definitely excluded, unless we are prepared to revocalize the word as the Aramaic קדמ, an expedient which can hardly be contemplated seriously. The natural interpretation of קדם קמעי'ו is 'the foremost (in time) of His works', Wisdom being regarded as one of the works of God, though indefinitely anterior to all other works which she was instrumental in calling into being. It would, however, be legitimate to render, 'the antecedent of His works'—a rendering which serves merely to state the priority of Wisdom to the works of God, without necessarily placing her in the same category with them. This rendering appears to be preferable, as preserving a measure of ambiguity which is inherent in the original.

Lastly, זקני, rendered by A.V., R.V. 'of old', and referring, like the expressions which follow in *vs.* 23-25, to remotest antiquity, is intended to qualify בני ('begat me of old'), and should therefore be preceded by a comma in the English renderings in order to obviate connexion with 'His works' (as though, 'His works which were of old').

We arrive, then, at the following rendering for the verse as a whole:—

The Lord begat me as the beginning of His way,  
The antecedent of His works, of old.

### *The Versions.*

The renderings of Prov. viii 22 in the principal ancient Versions are as follows:—

LXX. Κύριος ἐκτίσεν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ. κτίζειν is also found as the rendering of קדם in Gen. xiv 19, 22, and Jer. xxxix (xxxii) 15 (where, however, κτισθήσονται is probably an error for κτηθήσονται). We find ἀγοράζειν in Ecclus. xxxvii 11 and γεννᾶν in Zech. xiii 5 (Hiph'il). Elsewhere, κτᾶσθαι is the regular equivalent, and this verb is employed in our passage by the later Greek translators Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.



Ecclus. xxiv 8, 9 (Wisdom speaks)

8 τότε ἐνετείλατό με ὁ κτίστης ἀπάντων,  
καὶ ὁ κτίσας με κατέπαυσεν τὴν σκηνὴν μου.  
9 πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐκτίσέν με,  
καὶ ἕως αἰῶνος οὐ μὴ ἐκλίπω.

None of these passages is included among the extant fragments of the Hebrew text.

Philo *De Ebrietate* § 8

ὁ θεὸς ἐκτίσαστό με πρωτίστην τῶν ἑαυτοῦ ἔργων,  
καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέ με.

Here we notice that, while the first line varies from LXX and is obviously based on an independent knowledge of the Hebrew, whether direct or indirect, the second line is drawn directly from the LXX rendering of *v.* 23*a*. The rendering 'the very first of His works' seems to combine the parallel phrases רִאשִׁית דְּרַבּוֹ and קָדָם מִפְּעֻלָּיו. ἐθεμελίωσέ με, the LXX rendering of נִסְכְּתִי in *v.* 23, which A.V., R.V. render 'I was set up', but for which we have postulated the meaning 'I was woven', may imply connexion with a verb נָסַךְ which is used of *casting* or *founding* an article of metal, such as a molten image; unless, as is possible, LXX read נִסְכְּרִיתִי 'my foundations were laid' in place of נִסְכְּתִי.

Ibn Ezra interprets קָדָם in accordance with the use of the verb in Gen. iv 19, 22 ('create', which is the explanation given by Rashi in Gen.). He explains רִאשִׁית דְּרַבּוֹ as meaning first in order among created things, as in the passage in Job xl 19, 'He is the first of God's ways'; and states that קָדָם מִפְּעֻלָּיו is the equivalent of רִאשִׁית דְּרַבּוֹ, רִאשִׁית being synonymous with רִאשִׁית.

R Levi. ben-Gershom interprets קָדָם 'created me', and explains the passage as meaning that Wisdom was created prior to the other works of God.

### *The Fathers.*

The interpretations of Prov. viii 22 offered by the Fathers depend, with but few exceptions, on the LXX rendering Κύριος ἐκτίσέν με ἀρχὴν ὀδῶν αὐτοῦ, not attempting to go behind and challenge it. The Arians used the passage as one of their principal proofs that the Second Person of the holy Trinity is a created Being. The orthodox replied that His Divine Sonship is fully proved by the whole tenor of Scripture; therefore the Arian interpretation of this obscure passage

is certainly wrong. For things created and made are external to the maker; whereas the Son exists not external to, but of, the Father who begat Him.<sup>1</sup> In regard to the meaning of *ἐκτίσεν* different views are found. It is argued that the verb does not necessarily mean 'created out of nothing', and therefore affords no argument against the eternal generation of the Son of the substance of the Father.<sup>2</sup> Taken absolutely, it may be referred to the mode of generation without change or passion in the Divine Generator<sup>3</sup>; or, regarded as limited by its close connexion with *ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ*, it refers, not to the eternal generation of the Son, but to His position in regard to creation, in a sense which practically amounts to 'constituted Me head of creation'.<sup>4</sup> A very general tendency, however, is to accept the rendering 'created' in its ordinary sense, and interpret the passage as prophetic of the Incarnation.<sup>5</sup>

We find that some few of the Fathers go behind and challenge the LXX rendering of *בְּרָא*. First we may notice a group who, though not themselves authorities as to the meaning of the Hebrew, are yet aware of other Greek translations offering a different rendering, viz. *ἐκτίσατο*. Such are Eusebius,<sup>6</sup> who refers to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; St Epiphanius,<sup>7</sup> who mentions the rendering of Aquila; and St Basil<sup>8</sup> and St Gregory of Nyssa,<sup>9</sup> who speak without specification of 'other

<sup>1</sup> Cf. St Athanasius *de Decretis Nicaenae Synodi* 13.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. St Athanasius *Orat. c. Arianos* ii 44 *εἰ μὲν οὖν περὶ ἀγγέλου ἢ ἐτέρου τινὸς τῶν γενητῶν ἔστι τὸ γεγραμμένον, ὡς περὶ ἑνὸς ἡμῶν τῶν ποιημάτων ἔστω λεγόμενον τὸ "ἐκτίσέ με"· εἰ δὲ ἡ Σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔστιν, ἐν ἧ πάτα τὰ γενητὰ δεδημούρηται, ἢ περὶ ἑαυτῆς λέγουσα, τί δεῖ νοεῖν ἢ ὅτι τὸ "ἐκτίσέ" φάσκουσα, οὐκ ἐναντίον τῷ "ἐγέννησε" λέγει;*

<sup>3</sup> So St Hilary *de Synodis* 16, 17. The same idea, though less clearly expressed, seems to underlie his *de Trin.* i 35, xii 1, 35. It is also found in the statement of the semi-Arian party drawn up under the leadership of Basil of Ancyra: cf. St Epiphanius *Haer.* lxxiii 20.

<sup>4</sup> Athenagoras *Supplic.* x 2, 3 argues that the Son was *γέννημα* to the Father for the work of creation, and then supports his position by quotation of Prov. viii 22. Tertullian *c. Hermog.* 18 explains, 'Sophia scilicet ipsius exinde nata et condita, ex quo in sensu Dei ad opera mundi disponenda coepit agitari'; Didymus *fragm. in Prov.* (P. G. xxxix 1629 D-1632 D) distinguishes the reference of *ἐκτίσεν* in Prov. viii 22 from the eternal being of *ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ Σοφία* and associates it not with *οὐσίωσις* but with *σχέσις πρὸς τὰ κτίσματα*, and then goes on to interpret of the Incarnation; cf. his *frag. in 1 Cor. v 17* (P. G. xxxix 1705 D-1708 A). Dionysius of Rome (*apud Athan. de Decretis* 26) explains *ἐκτίσεν* as 'He set over the works made by Him through the Son Himself'.

<sup>5</sup> So St Athanasius *de Decretis* 14; *Orat. c. Arianos* ii 1; St Gregory of Nazianzus *Orat.* xxx 2; St Augustine *de Trin.* i 12 (24). A long list (yet not professing completeness) of writers taking this view is given by Petavius *Theol. dogm.* ii 1 § 3.

<sup>6</sup> *De Ecclesiastica Theologia* iii 2, 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Contra Haereses* II lxix 25.

<sup>8</sup> *Adv. Eunomium* ii 20.

<sup>9</sup> *Contra Eunomium* i.

Greek translators'. St Basil may be cited as making perhaps the most acute comment on the meaning of the passage which is to be found in the Fathers. 'We must not', he remarks, 'ignore the fact that other interpreters, who have reached the meaning of the Hebrew more aptly, render *ἐκτῆσατό με* instead of *ἔκτισεν*. This will offer them [the Arians] the greatest obstacle against the blasphemy of their creaturely interpretation. For he who said, "I have gotten a man through God", manifestly used the expression not as the creator of Cain, but as his generator.'<sup>1</sup> St Epiphanius similarly cites the parallel usage of *ἐκτῆσάμην* = *יָלַדָּנִי* in Gen. iv 1; but then somewhat strangely rejects the explanation on the ground that *ἐκτῆσάμην υἷόν* describes an event which is recent, whereas in God nothing is recent.<sup>2</sup> By this objection he presumably means that *יָלַדָּנִי* = 'beget' properly implies, as in its ordinary sense 'get', the obtaining of something which at one period was unpossessed—and this, if we press the force of the expression, is of course true. The answer is to be found in the consideration that human terminology, framed to describe events happening in time, is inadequate to the description of eternal facts. But objection to the use of *יָלַדָּנִי* in the sense 'begat' might equally be aimed against the use of the terms 'Father' and 'Son' in view of their human implications, as in the Arian logic. Epiphanius proceeds to express his preference for the strange view that *יָלַדָּנִי* is a denominative from the Hebrew *יָלַד* 'nest', and give it the meaning *ἐνόσσευσέ με*, 'hatched me like a nestling'. Such a denominative would take the form *יָלַדָּנִי* from *יָלַד*, and not *יָלַדָּנִי* from *יָלַדָּנִי*; and the verb, which occurs but five times in the Hebrew Bible, means 'to nest', and not 'to hatch'. Epiphanius must presumably have obtained this suggestion from a Jewish source; for we find it appearing in later ages, together with other explanations, in Rashi's commentary on Deut. xxxvi 6 *יָלַדָּנִי הֲבֵנִי אִתִּי* 'Is not He thy Father that begat thee?'

We come now to St Jerome, who was the first of the Fathers to apply an original knowledge of Hebrew to the elucidation of the passage. In his commentary on Ephesians ii 10 (dated by Vallarsi A. D. 388) he is still dependent on the LXX, and applies the rendering *ἔκτισέν με* to our Lord's Incarnation, arguing that in this respect He

<sup>1</sup> *Τέως γε μὴν μηδὲ ἐκεῖνο ἀπαρσῆμαντον καταλίπομεν, ὅτι ἄλλοι τῶν ἐρμηνεῶν, οἱ καιριώτερον τῆς σημασίας τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν καθικόμενοι, ἐκτῆσατό με ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔκτισεν ἐκεδῶκασιν. ὅπερ μέγιστον αὐτοῖς ἐμπόδιον ἔσται πρὸς τὴν βλασφημίαν τοῦ κτίσματος. ὁ γὰρ εἰπὼν, ἐκτῆσάμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐχὶ κτίσας τὸν Καῖν, ἀλλὰ γεννήσας, ταύτη φαίνεται χρησάμενος τῆ φωνῆ. The words 'he who said' imply a mistaken reference of *καὶ εἶπεν* to Adam, whereas it is clear from the Hebrew fem. *יָלַדָּנִי* that Eve is the speaker.*

<sup>2</sup> 'Ἄλλ' οὕτε Ἀκύλας τὴν δύναμιν ἡρμήνευσε. Καὶ γὰρ τό, Ἐκτῆσάμην υἷόν, ὡς πρόσφατόν ἐστιν, ἐν Θεῷ δὲ οὐδὲν ἐνὶ πρόσφατον.

may legitimately be called a creature. 'Since Wisdom in the Proverbs of Solomon speaks of herself as created a beginning of the ways of God, and many, through fear lest they should be obliged to call Christ a creature, deny the whole mystery of Christ, and say that not Christ, but the world's wisdom, is meant by this wisdom, we freely declare that there is no hazard in calling Him creature Whom we confess with all confidence of our hope to be "worm", and "man", and "crucified", and "curse".'

In his commentary on Micah iv 8, 9, however (assigned to A. D. 392), he has reached another view through study of the Hebrew text: 'et qui ex persona assumpti hominis ait in Proverbiis: Dominus creavit me in principio viarum suarum in opera sua, sive ut in Hebraeo scribitur: Dominus possedit me: *canani* enim non creavit me sed possedit me habuitque significat'. Similarly in his commentary on Isaiah xxvi 13 (assigned to c. A. D. 410) he says, 'Quod quidem et de Sapientia legimus, quae iuxta Hebraicum loquitur in Proverbiis: Deus possedit me initium viarum suarum, licet quaedam exemplaria male pro possessione habeant creaturam'. His strongest expression of opinion as to the interpretation of the verb is found in *Ep. cxl ad Cyprianum*, where he argues against the meaning 'create' for קָנָה on the ground that this meaning is expressed by the verb בָּרָא, while קָנָה properly means 'possess'. 'Inter possessionem autem et creationem multa diversitas est. Possessio significat, quod semper Filius in Patre et Pater in Filio fuerit. Creatio autem eius, qui prius non erat, conditionis exordium'.

This is a meaning for the verb קָנָה—*possession*, not merely ignoring the conception of preliminary acquisition inherent in the verb, but actually to be understood as excluding it—which, if our argument as to the usage of the verb has been sound, can by no means be substantiated; yet St Jerome's verdict has satisfied subsequent theological thought, and is generally accepted by theologians at the present day.

Col. i 15 *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, a direct allusion to*  
 יְהוָה קָנָה רֵאשִׁית דְּרָבּוֹ.

I turn, now, back to St Paul, whose authority I claim in support of my interpretation of Prov. viii 22. No one can contemplate the rendering which I have, as I hope, substantiated for יְהוָה קָנָה רֵאשִׁית דְּרָבּוֹ 'The Lord begat me as the beginning of His way' (i. e. His creative activity) without perceiving that *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* 'the first-begotten of all creation' can hardly be other than a direct reference to the O. T. passage. This conclusion, which at first I supposed to have been unnoticed (it is not found, for example, in Lightfoot's commentary), I have since discovered to have been anticipated by St

Epiphanius (*c. Haer. II lxxiii 7*). His words are, 'In place of ἀρχὴν the Apostle used πρῶτος, in place of γεννᾶ με (i. e. the LXX rendering of אָנֹכִי 'I was brought forth' in *v. 25*) the term τόκος, for the whole statement Ἐκτίσέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ and Γεννᾶ με the expression Πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, instead of ἐθεμελίωσέν με (*v. 23*) the statement Ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, instead of Δι' ἐμοῦ<sup>1</sup> the statement Ἄπ' αἰῶνος, εἴτε θρόνοι, εἴτε κυριότητες, εἴτε ἀρχαί, εἴτε ἐξουσίαι, τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτισται.'

Here Epiphanius, having elsewhere, as we have noticed, rejected the meaning 'begat me' for אָנֹכִי, does not recognize that this verb corresponds to the second portion of the term πρωτότοκος, but finds a correspondence less naturally in γεννᾶ με three verses later. The verses which follow in Col. i 16-18 as a development of πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως are not simply, as St Epiphanius supposes, reminiscent of Prov. viii 22 and its context, but are based upon another O. T. passage, immediately suggested to the Apostle by the allusion in Proverbs. Without a doubt he is passing from the use of אֲרֵץ 'beginning' in Prov. viii 22 as applicable to Christ, to the use of the same term in the creation-narrative of Genesis, where it occurs as the first word of the Hebrew Bible, בְּרֵאשִׁית *Bērēshith* 'In the beginning'. That this is so I hope to prove presently through examination of St Paul's words. As a preliminary, however, we may notice that the tracing of a connexion between the Proverbs-passage and the Genesis-passage would be obvious to a Rabbinic scholar, and has in fact been made elsewhere in Rabbinic literature.

In *Bereshith Rabba*, the great Midrashic commentary on Genesis, Rabbi Hoshaiah (*c. third century A.D.*) opens with a discussion of Prov. viii 30, where Wisdom states, 'Then I was with Him as *'āmōn*' ('master-workman'). After mentioning various proposed explanations of *'āmōn*, he continues as follows. 'Another explanation of *'āmōn* is *'ōmēn* "workman". The Law says, "I was the working instrument of the Holy One, blessed be He". In worldly affairs a human king who is building a palace does not build it by his own skill, but he has parchment plans (*διφθέραι*) and drawing tablets (*πίνακες*), that he may know how to make the rooms and doors. In the same way the Holy One, blessed be He, was looking at the Law when He created the world. Now the Law says, 'By *rēshith* God created'; and there is no *rēshith* except the Law; compare the passage, 'The Lord gat me as *rēshith* of His way'.

This connexion between the two O. T. passages, which R. Hoshaiah

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to *v. 16*:

δι' ἐμοῦ μεγιστάνες μεγαλύνονται,  
καὶ τύρανοι δι' ἐμοῦ κρατοῦσι γῆς.

makes and interprets with reference to the function of the Law as *rêshîth* in Creation, is made by St Paul in Col. i 15-18, and interpreted as referring to Christ: ὅς ἐστιν . . . πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως' ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα, εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι' τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτίσται' καὶ αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων, καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκε. καὶ αὐτός ἐστι ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος, τῆς ἐκκλησίας' ὅς ἐστιν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, ἵνα γένηται ἐν πάσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων.

Here we have an elaborate exposition of *Bêrêshîth* in Gen. i 1 in the Rabbinic manner. Three explanations are given of the preposition *bê*; then four explanations of the substantive *rêshîth*: and the conclusion is that, in every possible sense of the expression, Christ is its Fulfiller.

Let me give a running paraphrase of St Paul's words, in order to illustrate how, as I conceive, the argument developed itself in his mind.

'Christ is *the First-begotten of all creation*, for it is written (Prov. viii 22 ff), "The Lord begat me as *rêshîth* of His way, the antecedent of His works, from of old. From eternity was I wrought . . . when there were no deeps was I brought forth". This passage has obvious connexion with Gen. i 1, where it is written "*Bêrêshîth* God created the heavens and the earth". Now the force of the preposition *bê* attached to *rêshîth* may be interpreted as "IN" ("IN *rêshîth* God created"); hence IN HIM *were created all things in the heavens and upon the earth, seen and unseen, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers*. But again, the preposition may bear the sense "BY" ("BY the agency of *rêshîth*"); hence *all things were created THROUGH HIM*. Yet again it may be interpreted "INTO" ("INTO *rêshîth*"); from which it follows that creation tends INTO HIM as its goal. Passing on to the substantive *rêshîth*, we note that it ordinarily bears the sense "BEGINNING"; hence Christ is *BEFORE all things*. It may also have the meaning "SUM-TOTAL"; so that *all things ARE SUMMED UP IN HIM*. Yet another meaning is "HEAD", i. e. *He is the HEAD of the body, namely, the Church*. Lastly, it means "FIRST-FRUITS"; *He is FIRST-FRUITS, first-begotten of the dead*. Hence it follows that *in all senses He is the Fulfiller of the meaning of rêshîth* (πρωτεύων)'.<sup>2</sup>

Putting the argument in tabular form for the sake of lucidity, it appears as follows.

Prov. viii 22 ff, where Wisdom (i. e. Christ) is called *rêshîth*, gives the key to Gen. i 1, '*Bêrêshîth* God created the heavens and the earth'.

*Bērēshīth* = 'in *rēshīth*'—ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτισθη τὰ πάντα, κτλ.

*Bērēshīth* = 'by *rēshīth*'—πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐκτισται.

*Bērēshīth* = 'into *rēshīth*'—πάντα εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτισται.

*Rēshīth* = 'Beginning'—αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων.

*Rēshīth* = 'Sum-total'—τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκε.

*Rēshīth* = 'Head'—αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος, κτλ.

*Rēshīth* = 'First-fruits'—ὅς ἐστιν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν.

CONCLUSION. Christ fulfils every meaning which may be extracted from *Rēshīth*—ἵνα γένηται ἐν πάσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων

If this interpretation is correct, we can trace phrase by phrase the lines along which St Paul's thoughts were running. It is true that, if we look up *rēshīth* in a Hebrew Lexicon, while we shall find the meanings *Beginning* and *First-fruits*, we shall not find the meanings *Head* and *Sum-total*; but since the substantive *rēshīth* is derived from *rōsh*, which means *Head*, and which is also used with considerable frequency in the sense *Sum-total*,<sup>1</sup> these two additional meanings would easily be referable to it. The Aramaic *rēsh* stands for both Hebrew *rōsh* and *rēshīth*, and is susceptible of all the meanings postulated.

We have reference to the line of thought here based on the two Old Testament passages elsewhere in St Paul's Epistles. Christ as the goal of creation is referred to in Ephes. i 10 ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, 'to bring all things under *rēshīth* in Christ', who is the *Head* and *Sum-total* of creation. The reversion of humanity to its Source, which is the aim of Christianity, is the *καινὴ κτίσις* to which the Apostle refers in 2 Cor. v 17, Gal. vi 15; cf. also Ephes. ii 10, αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἔσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. When this has been accomplished in the world, creation will have reached its goal.<sup>2</sup>

We may notice that several of the Fathers adopt the interpretation of *bērēshīth* in Gen. i 1 as referring to Christ. We find it in Origen, *Homily I on the Pentateuch*, the opening of which runs thus in the translation of Rufinus: "In principio creavit Deus coelum et terram." Quod est omnium principium nisi Dominus noster et Saluator omnium Christus Jesus, "primogenitus omnis creaturae"? In hoc ergo principio, hoc est in Verbo suo, "Deus coelum et terram fecit", sicut et Evangelista Ioannes in initio Euangelii sui ait, dicens: "In principio erat verbum" &c. Non ergo hic temporale aliquod principium dicit, sed "in principio", id est in Salvatore, factum esse dicit coelum et terram et omnia quae facta sunt'. St Ambrose (*Hexae-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Exod. xxx 12 יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי מִשְׁפָּחָה אֲנִי 'When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel' (i. e. their census); Lev. v 24; Num. i 2, 49, iv 2, 22, v 7, xxvi 2, xxxi 26, 49; Ps. cxix 160, cxxxix 17.

<sup>2</sup> The thought underlying ὅς ἐστιν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν is brought out again in 1 Cor. xv 20 ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων (cf. also v. 23).

meron I iv 15) and St Augustine (*De Genesi ad litteram* I 2) also give the same interpretation.

Another New Testament allusion to Prov. viii 22 in reference to Christ is found in Rev. iii 14 ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, a title of the risen Christ which Dr Swete and Dr Charles have not a shadow of authority for limiting in meaning to 'the Source of God's creation'. There is every reason to suppose that ἀρχή is here used with all the fullness of meaning which St Paul extracts from *rēshith*—Beginning, Sum-total, Head, First-fruits. This at any rate fits in with the statement of xxi 6, ἐγὼ τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος, where τὸ τέλος embodies the interpretation of *bērēshith* 'into Him' as the goal.

C. F. BURNEY.

TWO NOTES ON THE *BAZAAR OF HERACLIDES*.

I.

IN § 72 of the first part of Nestorius's Apology, known as 'the Bazaar of Heraclides', there is a passage represented by dots only in Dr Bethune-Baker's *Nestorius and his teaching* p. 127, and very obscurely rendered in the Oxford translation, p. 65. It will be convenient to give the Syriac and a suggested translation at once.

ܩܝܠܦܝܢ ܡܘܨܝܢ ܕܥܡ ܝܫܘܥ ܩܪܘܢ ܝܫܘܥܝܢ ܕܡܘܨܝܢ  
 ܩܝܠܦܝܢ ܡܘܨܝܢ ܕܥܡ ܝܫܘܥ ܩܪܘܢ ܝܫܘܥܝܢ ܕܡܘܨܝܢ

'And because He was accounted to be a more eminent observer of the Law than any on account of His behaviour towards all men,—but while He was spending time among many things it was easy,—contrariwise where there was nothing from which He might be helped He went forth into the wilderness by Himself, to be tempted by the Devil when He was more in need than anything in the world; and out of what is