

desires that he had one that would answer him, meaning that God would appear to justify or explain his afflictions; to his own protestation of innocence he appends his signature and waits for the Almighty's reply in opposition to it; the indictment or charge of God his opponent is what he longs to possess, for then the riddle of his sorrows would be solved.

It is unnecessary and would be tedious to adduce further instances. Enough has been noticed to indicate the kind of changes that have been introduced, and the bearing which many of them have upon the general scope and leading conceptions of the book, and also perhaps to commend to the reader's attention the margin in many places where A.V. has still been retained or only slightly modified.

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THE PROPHECIES OF ST. PAUL.

III.—THE LATER EPISTLES.

THE distribution of predictive passages through the letters written by St. Paul during his first imprisonment,—Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians (A.D. 62 and 63),—is analogous to what we have observed in the preceding group. In the more theological and polemical letters, as there, so here, such passages are few, while in the more practical and personal letters they are comparatively numerous. The Second Advent is not directly mentioned at all in Ephesians, and only once, and then very incidentally, in Colossians; while, although the brief and purely occasional letter to Philemon naturally enough contains no allusions to the future, the Epistle to the Philippians, which resembles in general manner and contents the letters

to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, like them too is full of them. The nature of the eschatological matter which is found in each epistle is in striking harmony with its purpose and general character: in Ephesians and Colossians it is confined to allusions, sometimes somewhat obscure, to eschatological facts which are introduced usually with a theological or polemic object; in Philippians, where Paul pours out his heart, it is free and rich, and usually has a direct personal design of encouragement or consolation. In all these epistles alike, however, it is introduced only incidentally—no section has it as its chief end to record the future; but in Philippians it is more fully and lovingly dwelt upon, in Ephesians and Colossians more allusively touched. It is not surprising, under such circumstances, that very little is revealed to us concerning the future in these epistles beyond what was already contained in the earlier letters, the teaching of which most commonly furnishes the full statement of the facts here briefly referred to. Now and then, however, they cast a ray of light on points or sides of the truth which were not before fully illuminated, and thus enable us to count distinct gains from their possession. Nowhere are they out of harmony with what the earlier epistles have revealed.

The eschatological contents of the twin letters, Ephesians and Colossians, will illustrate all this very sharply. Much is made in them of an inheritance of hope laid up in heaven for the saints in light (Eph. i. 14, cf. ii. 7; Col. i. 12, i. 5: cf. iii. 24). The time of its realization is when Christ our life shall be manifested, at which time we also shall be manifested with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4). It is clearly pre-supposed that the reception of the inheritance is conditioned on a previous judgment. We must be made meet for it by the Father, by a deliverance from the power of darkness and translation into the kingdom of Him by whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins (Col. i. 12).

Whatsoever good thing each one does, the same he shall certainly receive from the Lord (Eph. vi. 8). The inheritance itself is thus a recompence for our service here (Col. iii. 24). Judgment again is implied in the constant undertone of allusion to a presentation of us by God or Christ, pure and blameless and unaccusable at once before Christ and in Christ (Eph. i. 22; Col. i. 22, 28). But if Christ is thus the judge, we naturally enough are to live our life here in His fear (Eph. v. 21). The resurrection of the saints is implied now and then (Col. ii. 12, 13; cf. Eph. v. 23), and once asserted in the declaration that Christ has become "the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Col. i. 18). The nature of this inter-adventual period is explained with apparent reference to some such teaching as is given in 1 Cor. xv. 25, to be a period of conflict (Eph. vi. 12), and its opening days are hence said to be evil (Eph. v. 16), though, no doubt, the evil will decrease as conflict passes into victory. The enemies of the Lord are named as principalities and powers, and their subjugation was potentially completed at His death and resurrection (Col. ii. 15). The actual completion of the victory and subjection of all things to the Son is briefly re-stated in each epistle. In the one it is declared that God has purposed with reference to the dispensation of the fulness of the times (*i.e.* this present dispensation of the ends of the ages, 1 Cor. x. 11) to gather again all things as under one head in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon earth (Eph. i. 10). In the other it is said that it was the Father's good pleasure that all the fulness should dwell in the Son, and that through Him all things should be reconciled to Him, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens, and that this reconciliation should be wrought by His blood out-poured on the cross (Col. i. 19). The only difference between such statements and such a one as 2 Cor. v. 19 is

that these deal with the universe, while that treats only of man, and hence these presuppose the full teaching implied in 1 Cor. xv. 20-28 and Rom. viii. 18-25, and sum up in a single pregnant sentence the full effects of the Saviour's work. The method of Christ's attack on the principalities and powers and world-rulers of this darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness, and the means by which He will work His victory, are declared at Eph. vi. 12; from which we learn—as we might have guessed from Rom. xi. 25, *sq.*—that Christians are His soldiers in this holy war, and it is through our victory that His victory is known. It is easy to see that there is nothing new in all this, and yet there is much that has the appearance of being new. We see everything from a different angle; the light drops upon it from a new point, and the effect is to bring out new relations in the old truths and give us a feeling of its substantialness. We become more conscious that we are looking at solid facts, with fronts and backs and sides, standing each in due and fixed relations to all.

The Epistle to the Philippians differs from the others of its group only in dwelling more lingeringly on the matters it mentions, and thus transporting us back into the full atmosphere of Corinthians and Thessalonians. Here, too, Paul thinks of the advent chiefly in the aspect of the judgment at which we are to receive our eternal approval and reward or disapproval and rejection. He is sure that He who began a good work in His readers will perfect it, until the day of Jesus Christ (i. 6); he prays that they may be pure and void of offence against the day of Christ (i. 10); he desires them to complete their Christian life that he may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ that he did not run in vain, neither labour in vain (ii. 16). These sentences might have come from any of the earlier epistles. The events of the day of the Lord are detailed quite in the spirit of the earlier epistles in iii. 20, 21. Our

real home, the commonwealth in which is our citizenship, is heaven, from whence we patiently await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation so that it shall be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. These two verses compress within their narrow compass most of the essential features of Paul's eschatology: Christ's present enthronement as King of the state in which our citizenship is, in heaven, from whence we are to expect Him to return in due time; our resurrection and the nature of our new bodies on the one side as no longer bodies of humiliation, on the other as like Christ's resurrection body, and hence glorious; Christ's conquest of all things to Himself, and last of all of death, in our resurrection, of which, therefore, all His other conquests are a guerdon.

The description of our resurrection bodies as conformed to Christ's glorified body is important in itself, and all the more so as it helps us to catch the meaning of the almost immediately preceding statement (iii. 10 *sq.*) of Paul's deep desire "to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering, becoming conformed unto His death, if by any means he may attain to the resurrection of the dead." It has become somewhat common to see in this passage a hint that Paul knew only of a resurrection of the redeemed, and himself expected to rise only in case he was savingly united to Christ. This exposition receives, no doubt, some colour from the phraseology used; but when we observe the intensely moral nature of the longing, as expressed in the immediately subsequent context, we cannot help limiting the term "resurrection from the dead" here, by the added idea of resurrection to glory, and the full statement of verse 21 inevitably throws back its light upon it. It is not mere resurrection that Paul longs for; he gladly becomes con-

formed to Christ in His death that he may be conformed to Him in His resurrection also, and the gist of the whole passage is bound up in this idea of conformity to Christ, with which it opens (verse 10) and with which it closes (verse 21). To think of two separate resurrections here—of the just and the unjust—in the former of which Paul desires to rise, is to cut the knot, not untie it. Nothing in the language suggests it—the “resurrection from the dead” is as unlimited¹ as the “death” that precedes it. Nothing in the context demands or even allows it. Nothing anywhere in Paul’s writings justifies it. It is inconsistent with what we have found Paul saying about the second Advent and its relation to the end, at 1 Cor. xv. 20–28. And finally it is contradicted by his explicit statements concerning the general resurrection, in the discourses in Acts which are closest in time to the date of these letters, and which ought to be considered along with them, especially Acts xxiv. 15, where in so many words the resurrection is made to include both the just and unjust (cf. xxiii. 6; xxvi. 8; xxvi. 23; xxviii. 20). The limitation which the context supplies in our present passage is not that of class, much less that of time, but that of result; Paul longs to be conformed to Christ in resurrection as in death—he is glad to suffer with Him that he may be also glorified together with Him. Yea, he counts his sufferings but refuse, if he may gain Christ and *be found in Him*, clothed in the righteousness which is by faith. This is the ruling thought which conditions the statements of verse 11, and is openly returned to at verse 21.

The mention of the subjection of all things to Christ in verse 21, which recalls the teaching of 1 Cor. xv. 20–28 again, was already prepared for by the account of the glory which God gave the Son as a reward for His work of suffering, in ii. 9–11. There His supreme exaltation

¹ On ἐξανάστασις, see Meyer *in loc.*

is stated to have been given Him of God for a purpose—that all creation should be subjected to Him, should bow the knee to His Name and confess Him to be Lord to the glory of God the Father. The completion of this purpose Paul here (iii. 21) asserts Christ to have the power to bring about, but nothing is implied in either passage as to the rapidity of its actual realization.

Some have thought, however, that in this epistle also Paul expresses his confidence that all should be fulfilled in his own time. Plainly, however, the reference of the completion of our moral probation, or of our victory over the present humiliation, to the Second Advent goes no further than to leave the possibility of its coming in our generation open (i. 6; iii. 21), and the latter at least is conditioned by the desire for a good resurrection, which is earnestly expressed immediately before. "The Lord is at hand" (iv. 5) would be more to the point, if its reference to time and the Second Advent were plainer. But although it was early so understood (*e.g.* by Barnabas), it can hardly be properly so taken. It is, indeed, scarcely congruous to speak of a person as near in time; we speak of events or actions, times or seasons as near, meaning it temporally; but when we say a person is near, we mean it inevitably of a space-relation. And the connexion of the present verse points even more strongly in the same direction. Whether we construe it with what goes before, or with what comes after—whether we read "Let your gentleness be known to all men, [for] the Lord is near," or "The Lord is near, [therefore] be anxious for nothing, but in everything . . . let your requests be made known unto God,"—the reference to God's continual nearness to the soul for help is preferable to that to the Second Advent. And if, as seems likely, the latter connexion be the intended one, the contextual argument is pressing. The fact that the same

phrase occurs in the Psalter in the space-sense, and must have been therefore in familiar use in this sense by Paul and his readers alike, while the asyndetic, proverbial way in which it is introduced here gives it the appearance of a quotation, adds all that was needed to render this interpretation of it here certain.

The Apostle's real feelings towards the future life are clearly exposed to us in the touching words of i. 21 *sq.*, the close resemblance of which to 2 Cor. v. 1-10 is patent. Here he does not refer in the remotest way to a hope of living to see the advent, but begins where he ended in 2 Corinthians, with the assertion of his personal preference for death rather than life, because death brought the gain of being with Christ, "which is far better." Even the "naked" intermediate state of the soul, between death and resurrection, is thus in Paul's view to be chosen rather than a life at home in the body but abroad from the Lord. Yet he does not therefore choose to die: "but what if to live in the flesh—this means fruit of my work?" he pauses to ask himself, and can but answer that he is in a strait betwixt the two, and finally that since to die is advantageous to himself alone, while to live is more needful for his converts, he knows he shall abide still a while in this world. To him, too, man here is but

"A hasty traveller
Posting between the present and the future,
That baits awhile in this dull fleshly tavern;"

and yet, though this tent-dwelling is seen by him in all its insufficiency and inefficiency, like the good Samaritan he is willing to prolong his stay in even so humble a caravanserai (iii. 21) for the succouring of his fellows—nay, like the Lord Himself, he counts the glory of the heavenly life not a thing to be graspingly seized, so long as by humbling himself to the form of a tenant here he

may save the more. The spirit that was in Christ dwelt within him.

The eschatology of the Pastoral Epistles—1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy (A.D. 67, 68)—the richest depository of which is the Second Epistle to Timothy, is indistinguishable from that of the other Pauline letters. In these letters again the Second Advent is primarily and most prominently conceived as the closing act of the world, the final judgment of men, and therefore the goal of all their moral endeavours. Timothy is strenuously exhorted “to keep the commandment,” that is, the evangelical rule of life, “spotless and irreproachable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. vi. 14). All of Paul’s confidence is based on his persuasion that Jesus Christ, the abolisher of death and bringer of life and incorruption to light through the Gospel, is able to guard his deposit¹ against that day” (2 Tim. ii. 12), and that there is laid up for him the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day (2 Tim. iv. 8). “And not to me only,” he adds, as if to guard against his confidence seeming one personal to himself, “but also to all them that have loved His appearing.” Though at that day the Lord will render to Alexander according to his works (2 Tim. iv. 14), he will grant mercy to Onesiphorus (2 Tim. i. 6); and in general he will attach to godliness the promise both of the life that now is and that which is to come (1 Tim. iv. 8).

It follows, therefore, that for all those in Christ the Second Advent is a blessed hope to be waited for with patience, but also with loving desire and longing. Christians are described as those that love Christ’s appearing (2 Tim. iv. 8), and the hope of it is blessed (Titus ii. 13) because it is the epiphany of the glory of our great God

¹ τὴν παραθήκην μου = “what I have entrusted to him.”

and Saviour Jesus Christ, even as the former coming was the epiphany of His grace (Titus ii. 13, cf. 11). It is implied that as the grace so the glory is for Christ's children. What this glory consists in is not, however, very sharply defined. It is the deposit of life and incorruption that the Saviour holds in trust for His children (2 Tim. x. 12). It is the crown of righteousness which the righteous Judge will bestow upon them (2 Tim. iv. 8). It is freedom from all iniquity (Titus ii. 14). It is the actual inheritance of the eternal life now hoped for (Titus iii. 7). But all this is description rather than definition. Nothing is said of resurrection except that they gravely err who think it already past (2 Tim. ii. 18). Nothing of the new bodies to be given to the saints, or of any of the glories that accompany the final triumph. What is said describes only the full realization of what is already enjoyed in its first fruits here or what comes in some abundance in the imperfect intermediate state.

For the glories of the advent do not blind Paul to the bliss of a Christian's hope in "this world," whether in the body or out of the body. In the fervid music of a Christian hymn the Apostle assures his son Timothy of his own steadfast faith in the faithful saying (2 Tim. ii. 11-13):—

"If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him;
 If we endure we shall also reign with Him;
 If we shall deny Him, He will also deny us;
 If we are faithless—He abideth faithful,
 For He cannot deny Himself."

And death itself, he says, can but "save him into Christ's heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 18). The partaking in Christ's death and life in this passage seems to be meant ethically; and the co-regnancy with the Lord that is promised to the suffering believer apparently concerns the being with Christ in the heavenly kingdom,—whether in the body or abroad from the body. Thus the Apostle is

not here contemplating the glories of the advent, but comforting and strengthening himself with the profitableness of godliness in its promise of the life that now is, under the epiphany of God's grace, when we can be but looking for the epiphany of His glory. That he expects death (for now he was sure of death, 2 Tim. iv. 6) to introduce him into Christ's heavenly kingdom advertises to us that that kingdom is now in progress, and 2 Tim. iv. 1 is in harmony with this just because it tells us nothing at all of the time of the kingdom.¹

About Christ's reign and work as king—in other words, concerning the nature of this period in which we live—these epistles are somewhat rich in teaching. These “latter times” or “last days”²—for these are, according to the fixed usage of the times, the designations under which the Apostle speaks of the dispensation of the Spirit,—are not to be an age of idleness or of sloth among Christians; but, in harmony with the statements of the earlier letters, which represented it as a time of conflict with and conquest of evil, it is here pictured as a time in which apostasies shall occur (1 Tim. iv. 1), and false doctrines flourish along with evil practices (2 Tim. iii. 1, *sq.*), when the just shall suffer persecution, and evil men and impostors wax worse and worse (2 Tim. iii. 13), and, even in the Church, men shall not endure sound doctrine, but shall introduce teachers after their own lusts (2 Tim. iv. 3 *sq.*). It would be manifestly illegitimate to understand these descriptions as necessarily covering the life of the whole dispensation on the earliest verge of which the prophet was standing. Some of these evils had already

¹ Notice that the correct translation is: “I charge thee before God and Christ Jesus who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by His appearing and by His kingdom.” Each item is adduced entirely separately; the Apostle is accumulating the incitements to action, not giving a chronological list, which, in any case, the passage does not furnish.

² ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς, 1 Tim. iv. 1; ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, 2 Tim. iii. 1.

broken out in his own times, others were pushing up the ground preparatory to appearing above it themselves. It is historically plain to us, no doubt, that they suitably describe the state of affairs up to at least our own day. But we must remember that all the indications are that Paul had the first stages of "the latter times" in mind, and actually says nothing to imply either that the evil should long predominate over the good, or that the whole period should be marked by such disorders.

When the Lord should come, he indeed keeps as uncertain in these epistles as in all his former ones. In 2 Timothy he expects his own death immediately, and he contemplates it with patience and even joy, no longer with the shrinking expressed in 2 Corinthians. It is all the more gratuitous to insist here that the natural reference of Timothy's keeping the faith to the advent as the judgment (1 Tim. vi. 14), implies that he confidently expected that great closing event at once or very soon. On the contrary it is reiterated in the same context that God alone knows the times and seasons, in the assertion that God would show the epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ "in His own times." Beyond this the Apostle never goes; and it is appropriate that in his earliest and latest epistles especially he should categorically assert the absolute uncertainty of the time of the consummation (1 Thess. v. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 15). Surely an intense personal conviction that the times and seasons were entirely out of his knowledge can alone account for so consistent an attitude of complete uncertainty.

It appears to be legitimate to affirm in the light of the preceding pages that it is clear that there is such a thing as a Pauline eschatology; a consistent teaching on the last things which runs through the whole mass of his writings, not filling them, indeed, as some would have us

believe, but appearing on their surface like daisies in a meadow—here in tolerable profusion, there in quite a mass, there scattered one by one at intervals of some distance—everywhere woven into it as constituent parts of the turf carpeting. The main outlines of this eschatology are repeated over and over again, and exhibited from many separate points of view, until we know them from every side and are confident of their contour and exact nature. Details are added to the general picture by nearly every letter; and each detail falls so readily into its place in the outline as to prove both that the Apostle held a developed scheme of truth on this subject, and that we are correctly understanding it. A general recapitulation of the broadest features of his doctrine will alone be necessary in closing.

Paul, then, teaches that as Jesus has once come in humiliation, bringing grace into the world, and God has raised Him to high exaltation and universal dominion in reward for His sufferings and in order to the completion of His work of redemption; so when He shall have put all His enemies under His feet, He shall come again to judgment in an epiphany of glory, to close the dispensation of grace and usher in the heavenly blessedness. The enemies to be conquered are principalities and powers and world-rulers of this darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness; this whole period is the period of advancing conquest and will end with the victory over the last enemy, death, and the consequent resurrection of the dead. In this advancing conquest Christ's elect are His soldiers, and the conversion of the world—first of the Gentiles, then of the Jews—marks the culminating victory over the powers of evil. How long this conflict continues before it is crowned with complete victory, how long the supreme and sole kingship of Christ endures before He restores the restored realm to His father, the Apostle leaves in complete uncertainty. He predicts the evil days

of the opening battle, the glad days of the victory; and leaves all questions of times and seasons to Him whose own times they are. At the end, however, are the general resurrection and the general judgment, when the eternal rewards and punishments are awarded by Christ as judge, and then, all things having been duly gathered together thus again under one head by Him, he subjects them all to God that He may once more become "all relations among all creations." That the blessed dead may be fitted to remain for ever with the Lord, He gives them each his own body, glorified and purified and rendered the willing organ of the Holy Ghost. Christ's living, though they die not, are "changed" to a like glory. Not only man, but all creation feels the renovation and shares in the revelation of the sons of God, and there is a new heaven and a new earth. And thus the work of the Redeemer is completed, the end has come, and it is visible to men and angels that through Him in whom it was His pleasure that all the fulness should dwell, God has at length reconciled all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross—through Him, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens—yea, even us, who were in times past alienated and enemies, hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy and without blemish and unapproachable before Him.

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