

to rank under such titles as lordships, principalities, powers, or thrones.¹ St. Paul does not press the classification of angels according to character. When he thinks of an angel as belonging to one class or other, he speaks of him either as 'an angel of light' or 'an angel of Satan.' Neither does he show any interest in the question which so fascinated some of the Apocalyptic writers, concerning the 'fallen angels' and the manner of their fall. To put it very briefly, the apostle seems to regard the spirit world as morally very much in the same condition as the world of men; but most of his references are to angels regarded as spiritual forces not on the side of God.

1. If we collect the more significant passages, we find that the intervention of angels even in a good work, reduces its value. This appears to be the idea lying at the back of the sentence in Galatians (2¹⁰) as to the giving of the Law. It was *διαταγὰς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου*, and that marked its inferior or transitory character. St. Paul is comparing the promise given to Abraham with the Law ordained through Moses, with the purpose of showing the sufficiency and superiority of the former. And the Jewish legend of the presence and intervention of angels at Sinai, to which Stephen appeals in Ac 7⁵⁸ in order to enhance the dignity of the Law, is applied by Paul to illustrate its inferiority. The promise came direct; the Law only mediately, and that by a double mediation, passing first through the hands of the angels, and then through those of Moses. The

¹ E.g., *Slavonic Secrets of Enoch*, xx. 20: 'And these men took me thence and brought me to the seventh heaven, and I saw there a very great light and all the fiery hosts of great archangels and incorporeal powers and lordships and principalities and powers; cherubim and seraphim, thrones.'

mediation of angels therefore tended rather to depreciate the Law in comparison with the promise, just as in He 2² it is suggested as depreciating the Law in comparison with the gospel.

2. This is consistent with the fact specially emphasized in the Epistles of the Captivity, that the angels themselves were created beings. Paul here only goes beyond the current belief of Judaism in assigning their creation to Christ.²

3. The knowledge of the angels is limited. This again is common to Jewish and to New Testament thought. In the *Slavonic Enoch* (24⁸) we read: 'Not even to my angels have I told my secrets, nor have I informed them of their origin, nor have they understood my infinite creation which I tell thee of this day.' And so, according to St. Paul, it is actually one of the privileges of the Church to make known the manifold wisdom of God unto the principalities and the powers in heavenly places (Eph 3¹⁰).³

4. The angels require redemption, or at least reconciliation to God, and it was part of the work of Christ to effect this reconciliation. The idea that angels, unless specified as 'evil' or 'fallen,' are sinless is not supported by the Old Testament. There are not wanting passages which indicate the opposite, as, for example, Job 4¹⁸, 'He putteth no trust in his servants, and his angels he chargeth with folly.'⁴ And so the Apostle includes them in the sweep of the Atonement.

² Col 1¹⁶; on the Jewish view, see St. John Thackeray, *Relation of St. Paul to Contemp. Jewish Thought*, p. 150.

³ Cf. 1 P 1¹², *eis ἃ ἐπιθνημοῦσαν ἄγγελοι παράκληται*.

⁴ Cf. also 21²², Ps 82¹, Is 24²¹; and see Thackeray, *ut sup.* p. 155.

(To be concluded.)

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF CHRONICLES.

He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.—2 CHRON. XXV. 2.

He did it with all his heart, and prospered.—2 CHRON. XXXI. 21.

1. THE first of these passages refers to Amaziah, the second to Hezekiah. Both were kings of Judah, and both were good men. Of Amaziah it

is said, 'he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord'; and of Hezekiah it is said, 'He wrought that which was good and right and faithful before the Lord his God.' Yet the one failed, and the other succeeded. What was the cause of Amaziah's failure? It was half-heartedness. 'He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord,

but not with a perfect heart.' The secret of Hezekiah's success, on the other hand, was his whole-heartedness. 'In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.'

2. Let us look at the life and character of these two kings.

(1) *Amaziah*.—Amaziah was twenty-five years of age when he succeeded to the throne. As a boy he had been conscientious and well-behaved. Josephus says, He was exceeding careful of doing what was right, and this when he was very young.

The first thing that he did when he was settled on the throne was to avenge the murder of his father, Joash. A cruel conspiracy had been framed by the servants of the palace, and they had slain the king upon his bed. His son could not rest until these miscreants had been brought to justice. If he had carried out the vindictive practices of his own time, he would have destroyed their families too; but he called to mind an enactment in the law of Moses, to the effect that children should not be made to suffer for the sins of their fathers, and he spared them alive.

The great exploit of his reign was a military campaign against the Edomites. The country of Edom bordered on Palestine, and in the days of king Jehoshaphat it was subject to Judah; but for some time the people had successfully revolted, and Amaziah was seized with the ambition to reduce them to obedience again, and so to extend the glory of his kingdom. Amaziah led forth his army against the Edomites, gaining a signal victory over them in the valley of Salt, where ten thousand were left dead upon the field. Other ten thousand he took as prisoners, and, bringing them to the top of the steep cliffs of that rocky region, threw them over headlong, so that they were dashed in pieces.

His very success, however, proved in the long run to be his ruin. Elated with the splendid victory he had achieved, he forsook the God of his fathers. He was foolish enough to take back into his own country some of the idol gods of Edom, and wicked enough to set them up as objects of worship. Yielding himself to degrading superstition, he actually bowed himself down before these heathen deities, and burned incense to them. On this, a prophet came to him, and rebuked him for his gross idolatry; but this only

provoked the king to rage, and he bade the prophet hold his peace, and threatened to smite him if he interfered. The man of God replied that he would indeed hold his peace, but warned the king that he had incurred the wrath of the Most High, and that his destruction was not far off.

The prediction was fulfilled, and that in a remarkable and tragic manner. Amaziah, puffed up with pride, seems to have fairly lost his head. His great victory over the Edomites gave him a thirst for further conquest. So, in a vein of insolence, he sent a challenge to the king of Israel to come and try their strength in battle.

Amaziah hastened to bring his army to the field; but as soon as his men were drawn up in battle array, a strange, unaccountable panic seized them, so that they fled in every direction, and left their king alone, who was immediately taken prisoner by the enemy. Moreover, to add to his humiliation, Joash threatened to kill him, unless he would persuade the people of Jerusalem, his own capital, to open their gates to the conqueror. This Amaziah did; but, not content therewith, Joash broke down a part of the ancient wall, and drove his chariot through the breach, leading his royal prisoner captive behind him; and not till he had rifled the king's palace, and taken away all the costly treasures of the temple, did he set him at liberty and return to Samaria. The end of Amaziah was a sad one. Betrayed by his own friends, who made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, he fled to the city of Lachish, but they sent after him, and slew him there.

(2) *Hezekiah*.—There is reason to believe that Amaziah had a pious upbringing, whereas Hezekiah, as the son of Ahaz, is more likely to have been brought up in familiarity with apostasy and evil.

Yet, as soon as he came to the throne, Hezekiah set about reforming the national religion. He abolished idolatry, and restored the worship of Jehovah; he reopened the temple, reinstated the priests and Levites, recommenced the daily service, restored the Passover, and raised so high the religious tone of his country that it was said of him 'there was none like him among all the kings of Judah.'

That he was not deficient in military qualities is shown by his successes against the Philistines, seemingly in the latter part of his reign after the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 K. 18⁸), and by the

efficient measures taken by him for the defence of Jerusalem against the Assyrians. But he assiduously cultivated the arts of peace, and by wise management of finance, and the attention which, after the example of David and Uzziah, he paid to agriculture and the increase of flocks and herds, he became possessed, even in troubled times, of an ample exchequer and treasures of wealth (2 Ch 32²⁷⁻²⁹, 2 K 20¹³, Is 39²). Himself a sacred poet, and probably the author of other psalms besides that in Is 38, he seems to have collected the psalms of David and Asaph for the temple-worship, and certainly employed competent scribes to complete the collection of Proverbs.

The great event of his reign was the campaign of Sennacherib against Judah, which ended with the complete discomfiture of the Assyrian king and his mysterious but ignominious return to his own land. This event is celebrated in Byron's famous hymn :

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold.

Then we have an account of his sickness and miraculous recovery, upon which he received congratulations from Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon. After this embassy we have only a general account of the peace and prosperity in which Hezekiah closed his days. In later times, he was held in honour as the king who had 'after him none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him' (2 K 18⁵); in Jer 26¹⁷st, the elders of the land cite him as an example of pious submission to the word of the Lord spoken by Micah; and the son of Sirach closes his recital of the kings with this judgment—that of all the kings of Judah, 'David, Hezekiah, and Josiah alone transgressed not, nor forsook the law of the Most High.'

It is a striking fact that in his early youth Amaziah was in all probability carefully instructed in the knowledge and worship of the Lord. From the express mention of his mother's name, both here and in the Book of Kings, I fancy she was a good and pious woman; and that her faithful training had much to do with the early promise he gave of a useful and honourable career. Many a time, I dare say, Jehoaddan (for such was her name) would take her son aside, and in fervent prayer commend him to the God of his fathers, and tell him of the heroic deeds of some of his saintly ancestors, and point out to him the responsibilities which, in future years, would devolve upon him.¹

Hezekiah, on the other hand, spent his youth in an atmosphere of irreligion and loose living. He was the son of one of the most impious monarchs that ever sat on the throne of Israel. Bad blood was in his veins. His youth was cursed by a most polluted parental example. The abominations of Oriental idolatry were the atmosphere of his childhood. Not in the retirement of a private home, surrounded by better homes, did he live, but among the splendid corruptions of a court which set the current of popular opinion, and defiled the whole kingdom.²

3. Now, when we compare the histories of these two kings, we notice that—

(1) Hezekiah did work that he was called to do, while Amaziah entered upon undertakings solely out of personal ambition.

(2) Amaziah trusted in God for the success of his undertakings, but not whole-heartedly, as Hezekiah did. He gave some of his interest and affections to the gods of Edom. And in those days a divided heart in religion was sure to be followed by failure in life. Is it not so still? Hezekiah made a covenant with Jehovah and stood loyally by it. 'It is in mine heart,' he says, 'to make a covenant with the Lord.' And, strengthened thus, he was able to initiate and carry out a great reform in Israel. Nobody seems to have suggested it to him. No prophet came to warn or to stimulate him. The movement grew up silently in his own heart. God and he planned it alone. Probably he had been brooding over it and praying over it for years. Men do not spring into such honour at a bound. At last he was the soul of the reform. The idea was his; the measures were his; the execution was his. So it often is in other great works of God. Some one man heads it; puts his soul into it; gives his life to it; rouses other men, and energizes them in it. There is almost no limit to the power of a live man called of God to a great life's work. Other men fall back to the right and to the left, and let such a man go up the highway of the King, while they fall in at the rear, and acknowledge his lead.

4. Whole-heartedness is necessary to success in every kind of enterprise or work.

(1) Look around you in business. Who are the young men that rise in the establishment? Not the men who sleep behind the counter, who are glad to avoid a customer. Employers soon discover those who throw energy into their work, and they like a young man who has 'push' in him;

¹ J. Thain Davidson, *Forewarned—Forearmed*, 220.

² Austin Phelps, *The Old Testament*, 111.

he is sure to be promoted, and in time will become a trader on his own account. Who are the merchants that succeed in this busy time of competition? The lazy sluggards? No; the men who are diligent in business, who do what they do with both their hands, who breast the current with all their strength, scorning to be carried down the stream to the cataract of bankruptcy. Who are the men that rise to eminence? Men do not go to bed and wake up in the morning to find themselves famous, at least not until they have encountered many stern labours; for God does not at this day give harvests to idle men except harvests of thistles; nor is He pleased to send wealth to the man who will not dig in the field to find its treasure. It is universally confessed that if a man would prosper, he must be diligent in business; for at this day, beyond every preceding age, is it true, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.'

'Whatever I have tried to do in my life,' said Charles Dickens, 'I have tried with all my heart to do well. What I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely. Never to put one hand to anything on which I could throw my whole self, and never to affect depreciation of my work, whatever it was, I find now to have been golden rules.'¹

O to be up and doing, O
 Unfearing and unshamed to go
 In all the uproar and the press
 About my human business!
 My undissuaded heart I hear
 Whisper courage in my ear.
 With voiceless calls, the ancient earth
 Summons me to a daily birth.²

(2) The same thing is true if we leave mercantile pursuits, and survey any other of the walks of life. If a man would make discoveries in science, he does not hit upon them by accident; but, he being in the way, science meets him. If a man would become eminent as a physician, he must walk the hospitals. If he would attain position at the bar, he must give days and nights to the folios of law. There is no hope for a man in anything in these times unless he proceeds to it with all his heart.

When *ten* men are so earnest on one side that they will sooner be killed than give way, and *twenty* are earnest enough on the other to cast their votes for it, but will not risk their skins, *the ten will give the law to the twenty*, in

¹ S. L. Wilson, *Helpful Words for Daily Life*, 175.

² R. L. Stevenson, *Songs of Travel*.

virtue of the robuster faith, and of the strength which goes along with it.³

One of the most disappointing and dangerous people in society is the man or woman who is agreeable, and plausible, and sparkling, and amusing, but insincere, changeable, and unprincipled and facile. There is no disloyalty, no baseness, such a person may not be capable of, not so much because he is immoral, but because he is slack. You must not count him a friend, since he may cast you off to-morrow; you must not assume he will stand temptation, since his character is weak at the foundation.⁴

(3) It is the same in religion as it is in other things. Do not treat religion as though it were a business; but put as much force, and power, and energy, and heartiness, and earnestness into religion as ever you do into business. Under God the Holy Spirit our only hope lies in the development of energy within us, in the bringing out of earnestness in Christian souls.

Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, had the portrait of Henry Martyn, the tireless missionary, hung on the wall of his study. Whenever he entered his room, the eyes looked upon him, and the lips seemed to say, 'Be earnest; don't trifle.' Simeon was in the habit of bowing to the portrait and saying, 'I will be in earnest; I will not trifle; for souls are perishing, and Jesus is to be glorified.'⁵

5. If we are whole-hearted for Christ, there are three ways in which we will show it:

(1) Our thoughts will be constantly turned to Him and the progress of His kingdom.

The hidden source of the beauty and power of John Wesley's life is to be found in an incident in his College life. He read Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and it worked on him like a revelation. 'Instantly,' he says, 'I resolved to devote all my life to God, being thoroughly convinced that every part of my life must either be a sacrifice to God or myself—that is, in effect, to the devil.' The life that followed (1735–1791) is the greatest life of the eighteenth century. The measure of his worth was the worth of his aim. He aimed at God.⁶

In the diary of Jonathan Edwards, we find the following account of his feelings towards the Lord's work: 'I had great longing for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; my secret prayer used to be in great part taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of anything that had happened in any part of the world, which appeared to me in some respect or other to have favourable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it, and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be earnest to read public news letters, mainly to that end, to see if I

³ J. A. Froude.

⁴ J. Watson, *The Homely Virtues*, 59.

⁵ J. A. Clapperton.

⁶ *Ibid.*

could not find some news favourable to the interest of religion in the world.²

(2) When we resolve to do something for Him and His kingdom we will carry our resolutions into action,

For still the Lord is Lord of might ;
In deeds, in deeds, he takes delight ;
The plough, the spear, the laden barks,
The field, the founded city, marks ;
He marks the smiler of the streets,
The singer upon garden seats ;
He sees the climber in the rocks :
To him, the shepherd folds his flocks.
For those he loves that underprop
With daily virtues Heaven's top,
And bear the falling sky with ease,
Unfrowning caryatides.
Those he approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song and shout,
Spin the great wheel of earth about.¹

When a man's heart is right with God, what he has resolved to do he will do. I can speak for one, when I say I know a man who, when he feels that God has given him a work to do, and he has once resolved it shall be done, would move heaven and earth to accomplish it ; and he would sooner break his heart or destroy his health than fail in it ; for he feels that if it is God's work, it must be done. Man's work may stop, but God's work cannot ; and when any get in his way, or seem to thwart his purpose, that man feels his zeal so boiling over that for God's sake he forgets everything else ; and even dear friendships snap when it appears as if Christ's cause were imperilled. When a man becomes thoroughly alive for God, he cannot put up with those lazy sluggards who will neither work themselves nor permit others to work.²

(3) And our earnestness will show itself in perseverance. A man falls the first time : 'Never mind,' says he, 'it is God's work ; we will try again.' He breaks down again ; but he falls to rise. There he sees the mountain-summit glittering in the sunlight ; and though he has a burden on his back, he vows, 'I will climb there.' He has fallen down that crag, and he lies there black with bruises, groaning and moaning. The first thing he does when he wipes his eyes of the dust, is to look up, and say, 'I will mount there yet.' He climbs anon, but an antagonist pushes him down. He has not time to stop and examine who it is and resent the insult, but he recommences the ascent. Now and then he runs ; when he cannot run he

¹ R. L. Stevenson, *Underwoods*.

² C. H. Spurgeon.

walks ; and when he cannot walk he creeps ; and when it seems impossible to go on hands and knees, he is content to pull himself up by his hands alone, oftentimes even grasping a briar and sending a thorn into his flesh, but still saying, 'It is God's place, and He has bid me climb, and in His Divine strength I will do it. I cannot rest, I cannot be quiet till the deed be done.' Perseverance is the sure effect of whole-heartedness for God.

At a time when society was corrupt and hollow to sit heart's core, there was one—his name was Armand de Rancé—who lived in that glittering world with immense applause. Rich, noble, eloquent, handsome, he drank the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and by God's grace, while yet young, found it unutterably bitter. For a time he fell into despair ; everything seemed to fall to dust in his hand, to slip into ashes at his touch. But he was not one who, as it were, longed only to purchase a cheap forgiveness, and then still to clutch at every not absolutely forbidden comfort. No ; having sinned and suffered, and been forgiven, he felt that henceforth his life was consecrated, not to easy pietisms, but to heroic endeavours. He shook off everything—wealth, love, home, fame—and retired to a monastery deep among the gloomy mountain woods, where, as you approach, you pass by three pillars of Iron, on the first of which is engraved the word *Charity*, on the second *Brotherly Union*, and on the third *Silence*. To this monastery he retired, and found it in a condition truly frightful. The few monks left in it were corrupt, degraded, and ignorant to the last degree. Among these he went alone, but with the avowed hope, the avowed purpose, of reforming them ; unarmed save by the force of God, and that strong-sided champion, Conscience. Many attempts were made to waylay and murder him ; one monk tried to shoot him in open day. But De Rancé never flinched. He worked with his might, and, God helping him, he prospered. His most violent persecutors became his most steadfast friends. The monk who shot at him became a most humble and holy penitent. And thus, in the irresistible might of a firm purpose and a holy courage, did one man triumph over his own enemies and the enemies of God. He came to a den of robbers and left it a house of prayer.³

Edison, the inventor of the phonograph, is a man of genius certainly, but he is also a tremendous plodder. Witness his difficulty with the single letter S. He could not get the phonograph to reproduce it. From eighteen to twenty hours a day for seven months he worked on the single word 'specia.' He said into the phonograph 'specia, specia, specia,' but the instrument responded 'pecia, pecia, pecia.' It was enough to drive one mad, but he held firm and succeeded at last. Just think of it ! From eighteen to twenty hours a day for seven months devoted to one letter.⁴

In Mackay's very last letter to me, his strong, brave heart seemed oppressed with yet another disappointment, and he wrote : 'I feel strongly inclined to throw up the

³ F. W. Farrar.

⁴ D. Watson.

whole matter, on the present footing, and try a radically new plan.' Fourteen years of toil, and fever, and contradiction, and sorrow, and repeated disappointment! And he is strongly inclined, not to shake off the dust from his feet, not to return to England, but to try a radically new plan.¹

What if wise men had, as far back as Ptolemy,
Judged that the earth like an orange was round,

¹ R. P. Ashe, in *Mackay of Uganda*, 444.

None of them ever said, Come along, follow me,
Sail to the West, and the East will be found.
Many a day before
Ever they'd come ashore
Sadder and wiser men,
They'd have turned back again ;
And that *he* did not, but did cross the sea,
Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me.²

² Clough, *Poems*, 78.

Positive Theological Research in Germany.

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II.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IN regard to New Testament study, the greatest commentaries which appeared in the nineteenth century were those of H. A. W. Meyer and J. Chr. Hofmann, the former of moderate conservative tendencies, the latter the representative of the Erlangen Neo-Lutheran theology. Meyer followed the glossator's method. Hofmann began from the general, utilized the particular for the benefit of the general, and always tried to reconstruct the statements of the Biblical writer in their inner form and coherence. It was not his aim to make the text comprehensible by comparing its different parts, but to understand it as an organic whole. He therefore studied carefully the progress of ideas. He did this, however, by entering into detailed discussion of exegetical views differing from his own. His commentary acquired in this way a certain heaviness and obscureness, while Meyer, who also followed out the history of exegesis, especially at important passages, was far more readable.

Nevertheless Hofmann's Commentary has had much greater influence on scientific exegesis than Meyer's. His influence is still at the present day clearly recognizable on some who have followed absolutely different lines of theological study. Even some parts of Meyer's Commentary, as the Prison Epistles, have lately been re-edited by E. Haupt in line with Hofmann's exegesis. On the whole, however, the latest issues of Meyer's Commentary are the work of the critical theologian.

The exegesis of Hofmann suffers, apart from its

heaviness, from several faults which cannot be treated in detail here. Now Th. Zahn in Erlangen, who in theology is a close follower of Hofmann, has undertaken the editing of a Commentary on the New Testament which avoids, at least in great measure, these faults, and at the same time endeavours, in conformity with the resources of present-day science, to utilize the excellences of Hofmann's exegesis. For example, Zahn's commentary follows on the lines laid down by Hofmann in this respect, that it subjects to close examination the inner chain of ideas in the text and so facilitates the understanding of the Biblical writer. A continuous analysis of the ideas of others no longer has a place in the book; instead, Zahn has himself brought his immense knowledge in the sphere of patristic study to bear on the exegesis, so that the expert will find there a rich fund of information. The most important parts of this commentary are those treated by Zahn himself: Matthew, John, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Epistle to the Galatians. His commentary on Matthew, to select one example, has had a phenomenal sale. But the commentaries of his collaborators: Mark, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, the Pastoral Epistles, treated by G. Wohlenberg, Zahn's successor in the professorial chair in Erlangen; 1 and 2 Corinthians, treated by Ph. Bachmann; and the Prison Epistles by P. Ewald, are also excellent pieces of exegetical work.

By the side of this great commentary, a smaller work, destined chiefly for the use of students, is about to be undertaken, under the editorship of B. Bess, with the general title *Evangelisch-theologische Bibliothek*. Just as H. Lietzmann on the critical