

Version, especially in a single Book, and have also endeavoured to indicate, without expanding, their main significance. I have fulfilled my object if I have succeeded in shewing the young theological student how numerous and how interesting are the Biblical questions, in the solution of which we must be guided, in part, by the renderings of those Alexandrian scholars who translated the Old Testament into Greek, for the use of their countrymen, more than two thousand years ago. F. W. FARRAR.

---

THE FIRST CHAPTER  
OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

VERSES 3 AND 4.

THE inspired writer proceeds as follows, with his delineation of our Saviour:—

Ver. 3. —*who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;—*

It is a brilliant picture, and not to be too metaphysically analysed. Yet the pencil that painted it was dipped, reverently, in metaphysics.

Our Lord is *the brightness of 'God's glory,'* that is, *the brightness of the glory of 'the divine Father.'* A distinction of personalities is assumed. And it is further assumed that, in the divine arrangements in reference to creation in general, and human redemption in particular, the Father represents the Godhead, and may therefore be emphatically desig-

rated 'God.' By the '*glory*' of the Father, Schöttgen would understand the 'Shekinah,' or cloud-enveloped pillar of light; a notion too artificial and narrow. We naturally expect a broader and grander idea, such as *the sum of the divine perfections*, and thus *the essential glory of deity*. That is a 'glory' which has 'glowed' from everlasting, and which will 'glow' on for ever, indiminishable. It is ineffable, and absolute. Words break down in the attempt to describe it; thoughts, in the effort to conceive it. The radical idea would doubtless be derived from a sensuous source,—light. The glory of the Lord 'shines' wherever it is revealed. (Luke ii. 9; Rev. xviii. 1; xxi. 23.) At every rift or outlet there is the radiation of that light within, which is inaccessible. "God is Light." We must hand over the sensuous notion to the 'pure reason,' to be translated into a purer and loftier conception.

Our Saviour is *the brightness* of the divine light or glory. The light shines forth *in him*, and then *through him* upon creation. "The words," says Dr Owen, "denote the divine nature of Christ; yet not absolutely, but as God the Father in him doth manifest himself unto us." (*Expos. in loc.*) The word *brightness* is given in all the old English versions, from Wycliffe's downward. It is the reproduction of the Latin *splendor*, the Vulgate Version. It is thus a venerable, yet a rather feeble rendering. The idea of *eradiation* is inherent in the original term (*ἀπαύρασμα*). Our Lord is the *manifestative eradiation* of the divine glory. *The divine glory 'shines forth' in him and through him.* Wells' translation of the word is 'the shining-forth.'

Jesus is the 'effulgence' of the Father's glory; 'effulgence' rather than 'refulgence,' though Erasmus and Calvin give the latter. Our Saviour, indeed, is the image and reflection of the Father; but that is not the representation before us. *Effluence* is denoted. Rilliet's rendering is *rayonnement*. 'Effulgence' is Wynne's word, and is given by Macknight, Rodolphus Dickinson, Penn, and many other translators. Milton happily reproduced the idea in the line, "Bright effluence of bright essence, increate." (*Par. Lost*, iii. 6.)

-and the express image of his person (*καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*). The word *person*, theologically considered, is an admissible and even an admirable substitute for the term employed by the inspired writer. But philologically viewed, it is no translation at all. It is no more a translation than the term *bishop* is a translation of *presbyter*. For, as the two terms *bishop* and *presbyter* represent two distinct aspects of one reality, so do the two terms *hypostasis* and *person*. The Greek Fathers distinguished between the divine *hypostasis* and the divine *essence* (*οὐσία*). The *essence* they interpreted generically as common to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But the *hypostasis* of the Father was, according to their theology, distinct from the *hypostases* of the Son and of the Spirit. Hence they use the word *hypostasis* as equivalent to the word *person*, which marked a differentiation within the divine *essence*. The Latin Fathers did not draw the same distinction between *hypostasis* and *essence*. And hence, in the Vulgate Version it is not *person* that is used in the passage before us, but *substance*,

a literal translation. Luther has the synonymous word *essence* (*Wesen*),—synonymous so far as Latinized phraseology is concerned. All the old English versions have *substance*, with the exception of the Geneva, which, under the influence of Beza, made use of the term *person*. Calvin retained the Vulgate word, but interpreted it as meaning not *essence* but *person*. Beza dropped the Vulgate term altogether, and introduced *person* in its place, objecting on theological grounds to *essence*. In the French Geneva version of 1555, *substance* is used. But in the edition of 1562, *person* replaces it; and this free rendering holds its ground thenceforward in the subsequent editions. '*Substance*' is undoubtedly the exact translation. But not only has it the misfortune of being a metaphysical term, its metaphysical use varies in different metaphysical schools. In our modern and Western metaphysics, as well as in the metaphysics of Philo, and of the inspired letter-writer, *substance* and *person* are by no means convertible terms or equivalents. And yet the Father's '*person*' is referred to; though not as '*person*' but as '*substance*,' that is, as that which '*stands under*' his glorious attributes and accounts for his glorious acts. It is his *inner being* or *unseen selfhood*, that is referred to. The word is, by a kind of rhetorical parallelism, equivalent to *glory* in the preceding clause; only it is metaphysically pictorial and abstruse, whereas *glory* is sensuously pictorial and popular.

Our Lord is the *express image* of the Father's inner being. The original word thus translated is *character* (*χαρακτήρ*), which properly means a *graver*,

then an *engraving*, and thence came to denote the *impression* which was made by an engraved stamp or seal. It was like *hypostasis* and *effulgence*, a favourite word with Philo, through whose influence, probably, it lay, in the current Hellenistic phraseology, ready to the hand of the inspired writer. The Saviour in his relation to the universe as Maker, and to men as Redeemer, affords an exact representation, delineation, or impression of the essential glory of the Father. The reality of the Father's invisible being and glory stamps itself visibly or apprehensibly in the Son, so that "he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father." (John xiv. 9.) Instead of *express image*, a more literal representation would be *impressed image*, or simply *impress*. Tyndale has *very image*, a far finer translation than that of the Geneva, *ingraved form*. Calvin wisely says, in reference both to *the effulgence* and to *the impress*,—"When thou hearest "that the Son is *the brightness of the Father's glory*, "thus think with thyself, that the glory of the "Father is invisible to thee, until it become re- "fulgent in Christ, who also is called *the impress of "the Father's substance*, because the majesty of the "Father is hidden until it shew itself, as it were "impressed, in the image of the Son. They who "overlook this reference of the expressions, and go "higher in their philosophising, fail to apprehend "the design of the apostle, and therefore fatigue "themselves in vain."

—*upholding too all things by the word of his power.*  
The two preceding clauses delineate to some extent what our Lord divinely is. This represents some-

thing of what He divinely does. He *upholds all things*, that is, *the universe*. No partial universality can be referred to. It is utterly arbitrary, and entirely inconsistent with the whole scope of the paragraph, to interpret, as is done in the (Unitarian) Improved Version,—“all things in the new dispensation.”

—*upholding*:—literally *bearing* (Wycliffe’s version), or *carrying* (the Rheims Version), that is, *sustaining*. Tyndale renders it *bearing up*. Our Lord is the Atlas not of the heavens only, but also of the earth. The Greek expositors, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, interpret the word as meaning *governing*. But that is rather a theological implication, than a faithful representation of the fine pictorial idea of the original.

—*by the word of his power*. The expression might, with Böhme, Kuinöl, and others, be rendered thus,—*by his word of power*. Luther gives it freely “by his powerful word.” It is better, however, to take the rendering of our Authorised Version, which is the rendering likewise of Bleek. The idea is graphic. There is a semi-personification of our Lord’s inherent power. It utters its fiat, and the universe is sustained. Our Lord does not need to bear the burden on his shoulders. He does not even need to stretch forth his hand to hold it up. His power is mightier still. It but speaks the word, and it is done. The word being spoken, the heavens and the earth “consist” and continue. Grotius gave the expression a most unnatural twinge, when he referred the pronoun to the Father, and interpreted thus, *by the command of the Father*

*-when he had by himself purged our sins.* In the two preceding clauses an indefinite continuity of time, unbounded either in the direction of the past, or of the future, is expressed. In this, something that is now past and finished is brought forward to view,—*having by himself purged our sins.* The expression *by himself* is wanting in the oldest manuscripts, and also in the Vulgate Version. It was doubtless a marginal note, theologically correct and precious, and therefore readily incorporated in the text,—the more especially as it educed, though somewhat too obtrusively, the real import of ‘the middle voice’ of the verb. It had been a very early annotation, for it is found in the Syriac Versions. The pronoun *our*, as connected self-appropriatingly with *sins*, is likewise marginal. It is wanting in the oldest manuscripts—ⲢⲀⲖⲔⲎ—and in the Syriac Peshito-version, as well as in the Vulgate. The entire clause, as it originally stood, runs thus, *when he made purification of sins* (*καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος*). The expression is ‘free and easy,’ and popular. Strictly speaking, sins cannot be purified, though sinners may. Yet who would part with Isaiah’s grand poetic presentation of the gospel,—“Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Our Lord provided for this blanching of sins, when He provided, by means of expiation or atonement, for the purification of sinners.

*-took his seat at the right hand of the majesty on high.* It was in accordance with the prophetic representation in Psalm cx. 1, that our Saviour, in the possession of human nature, took his seat in the

place of highest dignity and authority. It was a fact of immense significance in relation to Judaism. He who occupies such a seat must be, on the one hand, glorious above all other dignitaries, and all-powerful, on the other, to make whatever modifications may be his pleasure in the ceremonials of dispensations, new or old. *The Majesty on high,—the Majesty in the heights, the heavens, the ‘heaved’ places,*—is, as distinguished from all other royalties, *the divine Majesty.* It is an abstract mode of representation, like our common court-phrases, *Your Royal Highness, Your Imperial Highness.* A respectful distance is maintained when sovereigns are thus circuitously addressed. This respectful distance is increased when, as with the Germans and Italians, the address is rendered still more oblique by the use of the third possessive pronoun. In the original, the phrase *at the right hand* is *in (the) right (hnad).* It is a compressed idiom, easily explicable,—*in the place which is close to the right hand* of the Father. The whole representation is a topical symbolism for the highest honour and glory.

Ver. 4.—*being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.* This is the conclusion of the first grand sentence of the epistle. But, strange to say, Griesbach closes the sentence with verse 3, and begins a new paragraph with verse 4. He must, for the moment, have transferred his standpoint in thought from the free unembarrassed letter that was lying before him, to the conception of a rigidly logical treatise. Verse 4 is the logical theme or thesis of the remainder of the chapter.



*-being made.* Not simply *being* (ὄν). Literally, *having become* (γενόμενος). In the act of taking his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, our Lord, in the full possession of our human nature, *became* something different from what He had been during his career of humiliation.

*-better than the angels,* that is, better in position, in rank, and in relation to the honours of the universal divine empire. For a season He had been, in a certain relationship, inferior to the angels,—“a little lower.” But now He *became better*, higher, far more exalted and glorious,—*so much better, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.* To wit, ‘Son.’ See next verse. But the word is used in its highest and most emphatic acceptation, its strictly archetypal and normal application, as denoting *the begotten one, who is of the same nature as the Father.*

When viewed less strictly, the designation has been freely given to beings not so high as angels. Israel was ‘God’s son’ (Exod. iv. 22). Adam was ‘God’s son’ (Luke iii. 38). All mankind are ‘his offspring’ (Acts xvii. 28). All believers of the Gospel are peculiarly ‘God’s sons’ (Rom. viii. 16; 1 John iii. 1). But sonship in all these cases is realized in lower planes of being than identity of nature or ‘substance.’ Israel was a national ‘son,’ in respect of superiority in privilege, and because the true Son and Lord was nationally enclosed. Adam was a ‘son,’ because, unlike his descendants, he had no earthly progenitor. He came direct from God. All mankind are ‘sons’ in the elements of their moral constitution. Believers are ‘sons’ in

the element of their moral character, and, in particular, because of their high privileges 'in Christ.' It is not unlikely, moreover, that the angels themselves might be, and are, legitimately called 'sons.' (See, in particular, Job xxxviii. 7.) And hence some expositors are perplexed. Lawson and Storr are driven to maintain that the word 'name' does not refer to 'Son,' but simply means "dignity and power." Delitzsch takes refuge in the idea that the 'name' really meant must be that "which no one knoweth but he himself" (Rev. xix. 12). Bleek again, seeing clearly that the 'name' must be 'Son,' is constrained to suppose that the writer of the epistle either forgot, for the moment, the passages referred to, or did not acquiesce in the interpretation that postulates their reference to angels. But there is no need for such turnings and twistings. There is no real difficulty. Unlike all others, who are, for partial reasons, denominated *sons of God*, Christ is 'Son,' most strictly so called, and therefore emphatically and transcendently. He 'inherits' the name in virtue of identity of nature. All others obtain it by a kind of divine courtesy or grace.

J. MORISON.

---

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

ST. MATTHEW V.—VII.

II. The Style of the Sermon.

WITH the great masters, whether they display their genius in painting, in music, in song, or in less impassioned and rhythmical modes of speech, form and substance are, if not wholly one, yet so closely