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## Doctrinal Theology.

### COSMOLOGY.

(Continued.)

#### ANTHROPOLOGY.

God created man in his own image.<sup>1)</sup> The creation of man was a part, the closing part, of the six days' work of creation. On the day of which the inspired record says, "And the evening and the morning was the sixth day,"<sup>2)</sup> God, according to the same account, created man.<sup>3)</sup> Man is not a product of spontaneous generation, not a result of a long continued process of evolution, but a distinct work of God, made at a definite period of time, and not a rudimentary work, but a complete and finished work.<sup>4)</sup> This work of God was from that first day of its existence *man*, not a cell, a microbe, a saurian, an ape, but man, created according to the will and counsel of God. It was the triune God who said, "*Let us make MAN*,"<sup>5)</sup> and God created *MAN*.<sup>6)</sup> As the human individual, even in its embryonic state is at all times essentially human, so the human race never passed through a state of brute existence or through

1) Gen. 1, 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

2) Gen. 1, 31.

3) Gen. 1, 27.

4) Gen. 2, 1. 2.

5) Gen. 1, 26.

6) Gen. 1, 27.

## Exegetical Theology.

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### THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM

WITH A

### PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

(Continued.)

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#### THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Gen. 9, 6: "*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*"

The fifth commandment is a sacred enclosure drawn about human life for its protection and defense. In the words preceding our text God says, "Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." Here God threatens to visit his vindictive justice upon all who shall violate the sacredness of human life. In our text he makes provision for the execution of this threat by ordaining that the murderer's temporal punishment shall be a violent death inflicted by human hands. To impose capital punishment on the murderer is thus seen to be so far from being contrary to the will of God that it is rather expressly demanded by the positive law here enacted by the supreme Lawgiver and Judge himself, and the refusal to mete out justice according to this ordinance is disobedience to the will of God. Even Cain's conscience told him that by slaying his brother he had forfeited his life, Gen. 4, 14, and it was by a special provision of God and by a mark set on him that the first murderer's life was shielded from the avenging hand of man, Gen. 4, 15. By this special dispensation God, who is the lord of human life as of all other created things, would not,

however, establish a rule for all times. The rule is established in our text, which states also a reason for this rule; *for in the image of God made he man*. Human life is not of the same kind with the life of brutes. Man does not differ from brutes as brutes differ among themselves, but is a being of a higher order, distinct from all brutes, the only visible creature originally made in the image of God. And while it is not contrary to the will of God that man should kill fowl, fishes or beasts of the forest and domestic animals for food, Gen. 9, 2. 3, the human life shall be held sacred, and the shedding of human blood shall be avenged by man. By whom among men, the subsequent texts will specify.

Matt. 26, 52: "*All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.*"

Peter, the apostle of Christ, had drawn the sword in resentment of an act of violence committed against his Master. But Jesus, far from approving of Peter's intervention, has only words of rebuke for his disciple, not only because it was the will of God that Jesus should be led captive, to suffer and die, and Peter's interference was, for this reason, out of time and place; but because in using the sword Peter had arrogated to himself what was not his proper right and duty. Peter had *taken* the sword. It was not given him by authority. He was not a minister of God with power of the sword to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil, Rom. 13, 4, but a minister of the word with power to forgive and retain sins. Matt. 16, 19. And hence, instead of administering justice and punishing a crime, he was violating justice and committing a crime, exposing himself to punishment. Thus to-day, to avenge wrong without proper authority, as, f. ex., to lynch a criminal, is *taking* the sword and deserving to perish with the sword, not only a crime against human law, but a sin against the divine commandment, "*Thou shalt not kill.*" On the other hand, this text also shows that it is not incumbent upon a Chris-

tian to deliver up for punishment a fellow Christian, who has, by offending the secular law, become liable to punishment, though it is a brother's duty to admonish the offending brother and lead him to repentance, as Christ admonished Peter but did not turn him over to the secular arm that he might perish with the sword. To punish crime is under God the province of civil government, as to remit or retain sins is under God a right and duty of the church.

Rom. 13, 4: "*He beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*"

The subject is ἡ ἐξουσία, the civil power, of whom it is said θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστι σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, *he is the minister of God to thee for good.* The noun θεοῦ is here in emphasis, which is not reproduced in the English version. It is from *God*, not originally or primarily from the people, that civil governments derive their authority and power, and God has made them what they officially are. In such office the civil ruler is a minister of God, of whom the apostle here says, οὐ γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ, *for not in vain doth he bear the sword.* Γὰρ here refers to the preceding context: "*But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid.*" Fear, φόβος, is the expectation of future or impending loss or pain. The right to inflict loss or pain, even the loss of life and pain of death, upon the malefactor rests with the civil government, the minister of God. God alone primarily is the lord of life and death. But he has appointed his minister, the civil power, and has given him τὴν μάχαιραν, not simply *a sword* but *the sword* of his office. And this instrument of death the minister of God is not to take but to *carry*,<sup>1)</sup> and not εἰκὴ, *not in vain*, but to use it for what it is made and given him. He is not to use it indiscriminately or arbitrarily, for private revenge or

1) Φορεῖν *verbum est continuativum*, φέρειν *inceptivum*. Hermann ad Soph. El. v. 715.

other unlawful purposes. He is not to put to the sword such as have not done evil to merit the sword. All this would not be use but abuse of the sword, and worse than carrying it in vain. But he is to use it as *a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*. The punishment of crime is not a reformatory measure, but a vindication of the majesty of the law. Hence capital punishment is not incompatible with the true end and aim of punishment, but most appropriate where the severest penalty which can be inflicted by man is called for. Nor is it an unjust usurpation of divine authority, but the execution of justice under divine authority when inflicted on the criminal by civil government as the minister of God.

Rom. 12, 19: "*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*"

Vengeance, retribution for evil, is properly an execution of divine justice: for it is written, Deut. 32, 35:  $\text{לִי יְקַח אֱלֹהִים}$ , or as our text gives it,  $\text{ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω}$ . The pronouns  $\text{ἐμοὶ}$  and  $\text{ἐγὼ}$  are in emphasis, to indicate the more forcibly that he who takes vengeance in his own hand usurps that which is not his but God's. Hence we should, when we are offended or injured by our fellowmen, beware of avenging ourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. The Greek text has  $\text{τῇ ὀργῇ}$ , *THE wrath*. What wrath is meant appears from the subsequent context, the quotation from Deut. 32, which is annexed by  $\text{γάρ}$ . The wrath of God is the assertion and exertion of his holiness in opposition to sin. To this we should *give place*, allow it to have its way in carrying out its designs.<sup>1)</sup> And the ways of God to work retribution are manifold, direct and indirect. He may punish through his minister, who carries the sword as a revenger

1) Cf.  $\text{Μὴτε δίδετε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ}$ , Eph. 4, 27, do not give the devil opportunity to carry out his designs. Sir. 38, 12:  $\text{ἰατρῷ δὲς τόπον}$ , let the physician have his way.

to execute wrath, Rom. 13, 4. He may inflict punishment in a thousand other ways and *will repay* according as he will dispose. But he will also bring retribution on those who violate his majesty by avenging themselves, hurting or harming their neighbor for harm he may have inflicted upon them.

Matt. 5, 21, 22: "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hellfire.*"

This text, as the entire Sermon on the Mount, has often been grossly misconstrued, especially by such as would make a new lawgiver of Christ and find in this discourse a supplement to the law, and not what it truly is, an exposition and application of the law. In the words, *Ye have heard that it was said by, or better to, them of old time*, he refers to the reading and expounding of the Mosaic law in the synagogues, where the teachers of the people in those days were chiefly of the Pharisees. We know what the doctrine and life of the Pharisees was. Their righteousness was an outward observance of what they considered the precepts of the law; they considered only the gross violations of those precepts sinful in the meaning of the law and deserving of punishment. In this sense they would expound the old commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, taking the word, *kill*, to mean the violent destruction of human life, and declaring him, and him only, who had committed such crime as liable to trial, sentence and punishment in the proper tribunals, the courts of the place, which according to Deut. 16, 18 were to "judge the people with just judgment." Such was the exposition of the fifth commandment as given by the Phari-

sees and heard in the synagogues. In opposition to this inadequate exhibition and inculcation of the law, and not as going beyond the law itself, Christ says, "*But I say unto you,*" not what you hear from the Pharisees but what I am about to tell you is the true meaning of that old commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill. Sin is committed and judgment is merited and incurred not only by violently taking another's life, not only by the outward act, but even by the affections of the heart, anger rising within the soul against a brother. Such inward sin is as truly an offense against the commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill, as the outward act would be, and as truly deserving of punishment in the sight of God. Thus also bitter words employed against a brother, such as *raca*, Aramaic רָקָא, *empty*, *vain*, and מוֹרֵא, *fool*, are really and truly sins against that old commandment, bringing upon the offender the danger of council and of hellfire, which is, in fact, the punishment merited by all who transgress a law of God. The various efforts to establish a climax from "whosoever is angry" to "whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,'" as from a lesser to a greater and still greater offense, are hardly to the point, since in that case bitterness and anger directed against a brother would appear to make the sinner liable to judgment in an inferior court, but not to hellfire, which it certainly does. What Christ would say is, that every evil thought or affection or word or deed consisting in, or flowing from, hatred against a fellowman is really and truly sin, worthy of punishment, even to eternal damnation.

1 John 3, 15: "*Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*"

In the preceding context the apostle had referred to Cain, who slew his brother because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous, and to the world, which, being evil, hates the children of God, vv. 12 and 13. In the

14. verse he contrasts those who have passed from death into life, which appears from their love of the brethren, and him that abideth in death, since he loveth not his brother, and now he closes the argument, saying, Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. The word here employed is not *φονεῦς*, murderer, but *ἀνθρωποκτόνος*, literally *manslayer*, the more graphic term of the two. Cain, who slew his brother, is evidently still in the apostle's mind, and what he would lead us to understand is that the commandment against which Cain sinned is not only transgressed by the actual violent destruction of human life, but also by hatred conceived or entertained in the heart. And hence as the murderer in deed has according to the law forfeited his own life, so the murderer in heart excludes himself from eternal life. And this is a truth which the apostle considers familiar to every Christian. Yet he does not deem it superfluous to remind them of what they already know. And thus to-day we are ever in need of being reminded of the true meaning of the law, also of the fifth commandment, lest, being unmindful of its import, we permit hatred and enmity to take root in our hearts and endanger the salvation of our souls, and in order that by the law properly understood there may be in us the knowledge of sin.

Matt. 15, 19: "*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*"

The first man who was born on earth was a murderer, shedding his own brother's blood. Being the first murderer among men he was certainly not misled to the perpetration of his crime by evil example. Neither was he persuaded by any man's words, prompting him to slay his brother. How, then, came he to be a murderer? We have the answer in these words of Christ: "*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, MURDERS,*" etc. Cain's heart was evil, his



nature was wholly depraved, flesh born of the flesh. And from that evil heart proceeded evil thoughts, murderous thoughts, and finally atrocious murder itself. Thus there is a murderous root in every man's heart, which may at any time sprout forth, and when it bears its natural fruit that fruit is a murderous deed. In fact, every emotion of anger or hatred would naturally result in bloodshed, were it not held down by circumstances and conflicting interests under the providence of God. This is also indicated by the plural, *φόνοι*, murders, employed in the text, which stands for various acts of the same kind as proceeding from one and the same heart. And though human justice may take cognizance only of the outward act, murder in the heart is just as truly sin before God, and the wages of sin is death.

Is. 58, 7: *“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?”*

This text is taken from a longer passage in which God censures his people for priding themselves on their righteousness in works of their own choice, while they had neglected to do works according to the will and commandment of God. Having especially repudiated their fasts and other measures of self-imposed penitence, the Lord continues, “Is not this the fast that I have chosen?” etc., v. 6, and to the commendable works mentioned in the verse preceding our text he adds others, saying: “Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,” etc. All these are works according to the fifth commandment, which enjoins upon us the duty of helping and befriending our neighbor in every bodily need. We should not look upon bread as being given us only to appease our own hunger, nor upon our house as only to shelter ourselves, nor upon the raiment we possess as intended to cover our own bodies only, but

on the contrary, that others beside us are hungry, and that there are poor without shelter and without clothing, should be so many opportunities for us to do unto them as we would that others should do to us. It is worthy of note that the needy here recommended to our care are not described as the deserving poor or those who suffer innocently, but the motive given in our text for these works of charity is that the poor and needy are of our own flesh, human as we are. To point out the need of our fellowmen as being brought upon them by their own neglect and lack of foresight or economy is very often merely a pretext, behind which a heart void of mercy, and hands unwilling to part with what they hold, endeavor to hide themselves; thus, also, certain so-called benevolent societies, which are, in fact, based upon and determined by selfishness, are but hiding places and disguises for unwillingness to exercise true charity in works as those enjoined in this text.

Rom. 12, 20: "*Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heep coals of fire on his head.*"

In the preceding verse the apostle has enjoined upon his readers to avenge not themselves, but rather to give place to the wrath of God who says, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay*. And now he continues, *Therefore*, since God has reserved wrath unto himself, love only remains for us, love also toward the enemy, and hence, *if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*. Not to take but to preserve life, even the life of an enemy, behooves those who would live in obedience to the will of God. Hunger and thirst, as every other bodily need in a fellowman, should be an occasion for us to help and befriend him, not because we expect to be again befriended by him, or because we have experienced the same at his hands, but even though he be an enemy who has done us harm and may do us harm again. Yet, while punishment is not

properly a reformatory measure, kindness bestowed upon an enemy may be, inasmuch as it may lead him more forcibly than revenge might have done to understand his wickedness and the wrong he has inflicted upon his benefactor. This conviction may be like coals of fire on his head, a painful consciousness of his evil deeds as they appear in sharp contrast with the acts of benevolence experienced in return at the hands of him whom he has wronged.

Matt. 5, 5. 7. 9: "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*"

The law, as has been shown, is transgressed not only by the outward act of shedding blood, but also by the sinful disposition of the heart, by unkind affections, anger and hatred, and by bitter words. Thus on the other hand conformity with the law may consist not only in the performance of outward acts of kindness, as feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, but also in a friendly disposition and kind affections, thoughts, and words, toward others. Three virtues pertaining to the fifth commandment are commended in these verses from the Sermon on the Mount. The first is meekness. *Πραεῖς, the meek*, are those in whom cheerful kindness and mildness shuts out bitterness and selfish resentment. *Ἐλεήμονες, the merciful*, are those who have compassion with another's misery. *Εἰρηνοποιοί, the peacemakers*, are those who, being opposed to sinful strife, not only as between themselves and others but also among their fellowmen, are bent upon establishing peace and good will wherever their influence goes. And as the penalty of sin is merited not only by the gross violation of the law but also by sins of the heart and in thoughts and words (see above, Matt. 5, 21. 22. 1 John 3, 15), so the divine promises of grace and every blessing to all that keep his commandments apply not only to outward acts of obedience but also to con-

formity with the will of God in thoughts and words. Thus here blessings are pronounced over the meek, the merciful and the peacemakers. But again it should be noted that while punishment is merited by the sinner and the *wages* of sin is death, the blessings bestowed upon them who keep the commandments are free gifts of divine goodness. This appears very clearly from the promises of this text. The meek shall *inherit* the earth, not obtain it as their merited remuneration. The time shall come when the meek shall hear the greeting, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Matt. 25, 34, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, They shall inherit the land forever, Is. 16, 21, when God shall create new heavens and a new earth, Is. 65, 17; 66, 22. 2 Pet. 3, 13. Rev. 21, 1. Again the merciful will obtain *mercy*, they shall experience the goodness of God in their own afflictions, temporal and spiritual. And the peacemakers shall be called the children of God. Things are known by their names and should be named what they are known to be. Thus the peacemakers by their endeavors to allay strife and establish peace shall appear and be known and acknowledged as children of God, bearing the likeness of their Father, who is the God of peace. And thus again this virtue is not here described as meritorious but as blessed by the goodness of God, whose children we are for Christ's sake, by faith.

Matt. 5, 25: "*Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.*"

The imagery which underlies this text is taken from the relation of a debtor and his creditor, who in default of payment might take the debtor into court and have him sentenced and condemned to imprisonment for debt. This appears more clearly from the subsequent context, which

speaks of payment to the uttermost farthing, v. 26. The adversary, then, with whom we should make haste to be reconciled, is not in this case, as some have assumed, one who has offended us—for that would make us the creditor—but one who has been offended by us and who therefore has an account against us which we are bound to satisfy. Thus the case is not the reverse of that described in verse 23, but the same, and the admonition is simply continued, inculcating the duty of being reconciled to those whom we have offended, to seek forgiveness of those whom we have wronged; and the special admonition here added is not to defer but to be prompt in our settlement with our adversary. For procrastination is also in such matters a very dangerous thing and may lodge him who refuses to be reconciled in the prison house of hell, where the last farthing shall never be paid. And here it should be noted that the sin against which this warning goes is not the original offence whereby the neighbor has been wronged, but the unwillingness to be reconciled, which is here pictured as a damnable sin.

#### SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Eph. 5, 3. 4: "*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*"

The conjunction *but* refers to the previous context, "*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor.*" vv. 1 and 2. As altogether incompatible with the imitation of God and Christ in holy love the apostle mentions the things named or intimated in our text. *Πορνεία* is a gross form of what is named with the general term of *πᾶσα ἀκαθαρσία*. All sin is uncleanness.

Thus the Psalmist prays, *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin;*<sup>1)</sup> and again, *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*<sup>2)</sup> And Christ speaks of sin which dwells in and proceeds from the heart as that which defiles a man.<sup>3)</sup> But there is one class of sins which are of such a nature that, as the apostle indicates in our text, the mere naming of them is embarrassing to Christians; for we are *saints*, and holiness is purity, which would not even get near that which defiles. These sins are in a peculiar sense sins of uncleanness, the sins of unchastity, the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment. It is this class of sins which more than any other underlie the sense of shame, and the suggestion or consciousness of which drives or ought to drive the blush of shame to cheeks which, on the other hand, would be blanched by the pallor of fear caused by sins of a different type. Hence also the term of *αἰσχρότης*, for which the English Bible has *filthiness*, but which is more exactly rendered by *shameful conduct*. It is this peculiar nature of these sins which causes them to be chiefly committed in secret. Where they are openly committed it is because the sense of shame is, in the individual or in a community, blunted in such a degree as to react no longer as it should against these works of the flesh. Thus the modern theatre, the dance of to-day, and many society games, are abominations to which no decent person should in any way become a party and which could not serve as amusements for decent people but for a prevailing obtuseness of the sense of shame. The terms *μωρολογία* and *εὐτραπελία* are connected by *ἢ, or*, which after the *καί* preceding both indicates that the two terms are descriptive of the same thing under different aspects. *Μωρολογία* is foolish frivolity in words, *εὐτραπελία* is vain frivolity in demeanor, *leichtfertiges Geschwätz und Gebahren*, things which are *μὴ ἀνήκοντα*, *improper* for

1) Ps. 51, 2.

2) Ps. 51, 7.

3) Matt. 15, 18—20.

an earnest Christian, and of which one who would walk in Christ's footsteps should be ashamed. Of such improprieties a certain class of jokes and anecdotes and the immodest laughter they elicit, as well as certain inmodesties in dress and deportment, may be especially mentioned. Such manner of merriment is unbecoming to a Christian, who should manifest the gladness of his heart in other ways, one of which is named here by the apostle, the *giving of thanks*.

Eph. 5, 12: "*For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*"

In the previous context we are admonished to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them*, v. 11. The apostle has described the works of the heathen world of his day as works of darkness, thereby indicating that they are largely performed as secret sins, which even more than certain other sins shun the light of day and the eyes of witnesses not occupied with the same sins. Of this description are the sins of unchastity, and among them, again, certain sins of uncleanness before others. These secret sins were extensively practiced in the time of St. Paul and are widely practiced in our day, sins against nature so repulsive that the apostle only points toward them as from a distance and forbears to mention them more definitely, stating his reason in our text. He would not defile his mouth or the ears of his hearers by even speaking of them more particularly in an epistle intended for all classes of readers. This is a very emphatic way of impressing his readers with the shameful and repulsiveness of the sins here intimated, and with the abhorrence wherewith those should be viewed who not only speak of but practice such abominations.

Matt. 19, 6: "*What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*"

The first married couple, Adam and Eve, were in a peculiar sense joined together in wedlock by God himself,

as we read in Gen. 2, 22. In a different sense, however, all those who entered into valid marriage have been joined together by God. For matrimony is of divine institution, and as such it is what God has made it, a union of a man and a woman for life. Thus married people are not bound together merely by a contract entered into by themselves as by their mutual consent, so that they might again by mutual consent revoke their agreement and dissolve their bond of marriage; but being united in a divine ordinance, the bond which unites them is of God's own making and must not be dissolved but by God alone or under the conditions determined by his will. This is true also where the state of marriage has been entered with some violation of the law of God in points not essential to valid marriage; for in such cases the sin or sins committed were not according to the will of God and least of all caused by God and should be duly repented of by those who sinned; but that the marriage bond thus assumed should be indissoluble is according to the will of God, and hence those whom God has joined together no man shall put asunder.

Matt. 19, 9: "*Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.*"

In these words Christ deals with those who, like the Pharisees of his day, looked upon marriage as being dissoluble by mutual consent or by the observation of a certain provision made by Moses for those who, in the hardness of their hearts, insisted upon severing before men the marriage bond by which they were bound before God. Such separations were looked upon as being legitimate dissolutions of marriage, whereby both parties were free to remarry with whom they might choose, provided that the proper form of divorcement had been observed, whatever the cause of such divorcement might have been, vv. 7 and 8. There is but one cause which justifies divorce before God, and that is



fornication, whereby the innocent party is entitled to consider the bond of marriage dissolved, though he or she may also condone the offence and continue the union with the offending party. But for no other cause may a man put away his wife without offending against the word that what God has joined together no man should put asunder; and if, having put away his wife without sufficient cause, he should marry another, he would thereby commit adultery in becoming one flesh with a person not his wife.

2 Pet. 2, 14: "*Having eyes full of adultery, and that can not cease from sin.*"

In the chapter from which this text is taken the apostle describes certain impious deceivers of the latter days, who by doctrine and practice mislead many into their evil ways. The apostle's prediction has been fulfilled in every point chiefly in popery and the various institutions peculiar to the synagogue of antichrist. One of the abominations which have rendered the Roman see and many other purported seats of exquisite holiness repulsive even in the eyes of Romanists themselves is that of all varieties of carnal licentiousness. Our text mentions one form of voluptuousness in describing those men as *having eyes full of adultery*. A more precise translation of the original would be *having eyes full of an adulteress*, that is, looking with intense pleasure upon an unchaste woman as a hungry man looks with gloating eyes upon an article of food, or as one who is parched with thirst looks at a cup of water as if he would drink it with his eyes. Thus unchastity has driven out modesty so that, instead of looking down abashed or turning away his eyes when immodest persons or things intrude themselves upon his gaze, a man will rather indulge in his evil lusts and derive pleasure from intently gazing upon what may inflame his licentious desires. This is the sin of those who seek and find enjoyment in witnessing unchaste performances on the theatrical stage, immodest paintings

and statuary and other objects which must offend a modest eye and heart. Of course, if such abuse of the eyes is sinful it is no less sinful to provide for voluptuous eyes the objects whereon they would feast, to pander to licentiousness by immodest exposure, by the production or exhibition of immodest pictures or statues under the pretext or with the boast of dramatic or plastic or pictorial art.

Matt. 5, 27. 28: "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*"

Here again Christ rebukes the conception and exposition of the law as it was prevalent among the Pharisees of his day, who looked upon the omission of gross offences against the law or the performance of outward works demanded by the law as adequate fulfillment of the divine commandments. What he inculcates is that not only the consummation of the sin of adultery is a transgression of the sixth commandment, but that the unclean desire of the heart directed upon a woman is before God adultery committed with that woman. Adultery, as every other work of the flesh, originates in the heart, and every unclean desire would terminate in a gross work of the flesh if it were not prevented by circumstances under the control of divine government. Besides, God demands not only outward but also inward conformity with his holy will, and as in his omniscience he sees the thoughts of men and their desires and affections afar off, he is thereby offended just as truly and consistently as by the outward acts which are performed in the sight of men. This should be all the more assiduously inculcated and remembered as concerning the sins of unchastity, since these sins are more extensively practiced and indulged in by evil thoughts and imaginations than many sins against other commandments of God.

Hebr. 13, 4: "*Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*"

All the words of this statement are in the original by their arrangement placed in emphasis: *Πόρνους δὲ καὶ μοιχοὺς κρινεῖ ὁ θεός*, while the regular order would be *ὁ θεός κρινεῖ πορνούς καὶ μοιχούς*. The secular courts deal much more largely with open transgressors of the laws against the security of person and property corresponding to the fifth and seventh commandments, while fornication and adultery, being naturally practiced in secret and under cover of darkness more generally than other sins, are in comparison less frequently prosecuted and punished by the secular arm. But be they ever so carefully guarded and so secretly performed, these sins will not go unpunished. God sees and records them all and will judge those against whom they stand recorded in his book. And for still another reason God threatens to punish these sins of unchastity. They are very often made light of among men. Profligate seducers and defilers of women, and women who by voluptuous arts entice men from the path of virtue, even pride themselves with their so-called victories and conquests and are looked upon by others as heroes and heroines in their way, by whose example others are incited to like practices. But God puts a different estimate upon these things. He will judge them not according to the perverse codes of corrupt society, but according to the norm of his holy law. Hence the emphasis on *κρινεῖ*. God will not condone and make light of sins as these; much less will he justify and even extol them; but he will *judge* them and bring condemnation upon those also who escape temporal punishment.

Rom. 13, 13: "*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*"

*Κῶμοι*, which the English Bible renders *rioting*, is the word for *banquets*, which, among the heathen of those days, were generally occasions for immoderate eating, the

guests being gorged with food and entertained with music, song, and dances. King Herod celebrated his birthday with a *κῶμος*, Mark 14, 6 ff. On other occasions indulgence in excessive drinking, even to intoxication, was more prominent, and to this the apostle refers by *μέθαι*, *drunken revelries*. These sins are in very extensive practice to-day in club houses and saloons, at weddings and anniversaries and other occasions, and are as little befitting a Christian to-day as they were in the apostle's day. They are in themselves gross works of the flesh and often lead to other works of the flesh. Of such also the apostle speaks as he continues, *μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελείαις*, *not in illicit carnal intercourse and lewd excesses*. These sins are often the outcome of those named before, and they, too, have their occasions and localities. Many a man and woman would not have fallen into these gross abominations if they had kept away from places and occasions where no Christian should be found. That even Christians are in danger of gross sins of unchastity appears from the divine admonition laid down in this text for Christians, who are here, on the other hand, called upon to walk *εὐσχημόνως*, *decently, as in the day*. Sins of uncleanness are preeminently works of darkness, shunning the light of day; but a Christian should so conduct himself in all things that he may have no cause of fleeing the light. A Christian should "lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed." This should be his *walk*, as with a steady step, moving forward in the way of the commandments of God, Ps. 119, 32, and with God's word as a lamp unto his feet, Ps. 119, 105, he walks through an evil world to his eternal home. Thus will he avoid the ways of sin.

Eph. 4, 29: "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*"

Πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω. Σαπρὸς, from the root *σαπ*, from which we have the words

*σῆπω*, to rot, or make rotten, *σῆψις*, rottenness, means rotten, foul, nasty. Every child knows or feels what is meant by *nasty words*. These should not come out of a Christian's mouth, not any of them. How unbecoming to a Christian such words are is all the more clear from the contrast in which they stand to such words as befit a Christian. St. James shows how improper cursing is to a Christian by saying: *Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.* James 3, 10. Thus St. Paul here leads us to comprehend that indecent words are ill agreed with Christian decency in words. A Christian should speak that which is *ἀγαθὸν πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας*. The genitive, *τῆς χρείας*, is gen. relationis, and the whole phrase is, *That which is good, useful, for edification as the occasion may require, ἵνα δῶ ἡμῶν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν, that he may render a welcome service to those who hear him.* All this is the very reverse of indecent words, which can not edify but only demoralize. Hence, the more a Christian endeavors to make the right use of his mouth according to the apostle's direction, the less will he be in danger of abusing and defiling it by unsavory speech, lewd songs, unclean anecdotes and puns, and the like. In the subsequent context the apostle gives two more reasons for abstaining from filthy words; they grieve the Holy Spirit and are altogether unworthy of the future state of glory and perfect holiness for which we are already sealed, v. 30.

1 Cor. 6, 19: "*Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*"

In the previous context, v. 18, the apostle had said, "*He that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body,*" and had given this as a reason for his admonition, "*Flee from fornication.*" And to render the weight of this argument all the more clear to his readers, and especially to such as might not at once grasp the significance of the

nature of these sins of unchastity, he proceeds to point out two reasons why a Christian should not defile his body. In the first place he reminds the Christian that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in him and which he has of God. To defile a temple was even among the heathen nations looked upon as a heinous sin, a sacrilegious crime, and that while the temples dedicated to the worship of pagan idols were the very reverse of dwellings of God, but, like the heathen sacrifices, devoted to devils, 1 Cor. 10, 20. But a Christian's body is truly a temple of God wherein the Holy Spirit dwells, sanctifying his abode by his divine presence. In view of this it must appear a most awful sacrilege to defile the body of a Christian man or woman, especially when that sin is committed by the Christian himself, who has within him the testimony of the Holy Spirit whereby He makes known His presence in various ways, as the Spirit of power, of hope, and of sanctification. — The second reason why a Christian should beware of polluting his body with the filth of carnal sin is stated in the words, "*And ye are not your own,*" which are further explained in the next verse, where the apostle continues, "*For ye are bought with a price.*" We have the same words again 1 Cor. 7, 23, and St. Peter is more explicit, saying, "*Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without a blemish and without spot.*" 1 Pet. 1, 18. 19. The same apostle also speaks of those who "*deny the Lord who bought them.*" 2 Pet. 2, 1. And in Rev. 5, 9 the saints say in their new song, "*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*" Thus are we bought with a price, not only our souls but also our bodies. Thus are we not ours but Christ's, who has purchased us to himself with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death, that we should be his own, body and soul. And hence we should

beware of defiling that body which is Christ's by rightful acquisition, and instead of polluting it we should rather "*glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's,*" v. 20.

Ps. 51, 10: "*Create in me a clean heart, o God; and renew a right spirit within me.*"

That all manner of sin springs from man's evil heart has already appeared in the text quoted under the fifth commandment, Matt. 15, 19: "*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,*" etc. Hence a thorough reform whereby we may be cured from this leprosy also of unchastity must consist in a renewal of our hearts. But this is not within our power but a work of God. David had by sad experience learned that from his evil heart even the grossest sins, adultery and murder, might spring; and though he was truly penitent of what he had done, he knew that he was not secure from the recurrence of such atrocious sins while his heart was evil and unclean. Hence the psalmist's petition, "*Create in me a clean heart, o God.*"

Prov. 23, 31—33: "*Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*"

This is a warning to those who are in danger of being enticed to excessive drink and its consequences. The *color of the wine* and its *sparkling and glittering in the cup* are apt to entice the man whose eyes are not guarded, and when the cup has gone to the lips the taste of the wine may add to the charm under which many have succumbed. The words rendered, *When it moveth itself aright*, in the English Bible, are in the Hebrew יִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּמִישְׁרָיִם. The word, *when*, has no equivalent in the text, and Luther's version, "*Er gehet glatt ein,*" is an exquisite idiomatic expression for the more literal: *He walks complacently on level ways.*

The wine is here compared with a portly man who walks down the drinker's throat. But the wine, when taken in excess, will change its character and *bite like a serpent and sting like an adder*. What these words say in figurative speech, the following words state in proper terms: "*Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*" In the original the word "women" is not found, but has been supplied by many interpreters. But *נָרִית* certainly includes *strange women*, and the state of intoxication which is here described certainly does not exclude what the English words say, as voluptuousness is often kindled and fanned into flame by the influences of strong drink.

Prov. 1, 10: "*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*"

The word here rendered *sinner*, *חַטָּאִים*, stands for those who have by continued practice become accustomed to, or adepts in, sin, in whom sin has grown into a vice, *Lasterknechte*, and the wise man warns his son not to have intercourse with such. This warning is all the more appropriate, as those who are given to any vice are generally very prone to enticing others to become their associates, and especially such as are yet uninitiated into the ways of sin with which their seducers are familiar. Very often those whom they have singled out for their victims are very little aware of the danger which threatens them; and this is vividly pictured in the form, *אַל-תִּבָּא*, which, like the Latin *noli!* is in the manner of an outcry directed to one who stands on the verge of a precipice with but another step between him and a fearful descent into a yawning gulf. Thus should parents and others who may be aware of the dangers to which the young are exposed by intercourse with evil men and women raise their warning voices, and those who hear such warning should *speedily* heed it, lest they be precipitated into an abyss of sin and shame and even everlasting perdition.

A. G.