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### EDITORIAL

HUMAN nature is not lacking in the heroic. In time of disaster those who have a mind to help seem actuated by the common impulse to rush to the center of danger. We have many illustrations now. But, though men are needed in France, there are thousands eager to "go across" who are really able to perform more valuable service here in America. This is peculiarly true of the ministry. While chaplains and other Christian workers who may be drawn from the ministry are urgently needed with our growing army abroad, their sum total amounts to but a small portion of those of their calling. Then too, the feeling deepens that perhaps the most stupendous problem precipitated by the war will be that of the spiritual and social questions it is to leave behind it. To their right solution, as well as to the immediate but more transitory tasks the conflict imposes at home and abroad, the ministry of the church will most wisely address itself. Bishop McDowell's paper, *The Ministry To-day*, is a calm review of the place and opportunities of the ministry at this crucial time, and a

# EXEGETICAL OUTLINES

## 'EMUNAH IN HABAKKUK 2:4

By PROFESSOR WILLIAM M. MCPHEETERS, Department of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis, Theological Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina

DR. DRIVER very truly says that "The central and distinctive teaching of the" Book of Habakkuk "lies in the declaration of 2:4" (New Century Bible, Minor Prophets, vol. ii, p. 61). This verse he renders: "Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not even in him; but the just (or the righteous) will live by his faithfulness." And the true sense of these words he affirms to be, "that, while the wild excesses of the tyrant carry in them the germs of ruin, the faithfulness of the righteous—*i. e.* his honesty, integrity, trustworthiness—will be to him a principle of life" (*ibid.*, p. 62, top).

Dr. Driver, of course, is not unaware that the LXX renders these words of Habakkuk, ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται. Whatever difficulties this rendering might be supposed to present to his own view, Dr. Driver obviates simply by translating the LXX itself, "but the righteous shall live through (lit., from) my faithfulness" (*ibid.*, p. 68). For he holds that, like *'emunah* in the Hebrew, πίστις, in the LXX, means not "faith," but "faithfulness." Further, the fact

that Paul, in Romans 1:17, and again in Galatians 3:11, attaches to the word *'emunah* if he is rendering from the Hebrew, or to the word πίστις if he is citing the LXX, the meaning of "faith," serves only to elicit from Dr. Driver this comment: "St. Paul, familiar with verse as it read in the LXX version, amplifies and spiritualizes the words of Habakkuk—as he does sometimes with other passages quoted by him from the Old Testament—interpreting them in a sense which does not properly belong to them, but which, as it was permitted, or suggested, by the Greek, fitted them in that form for use in his argument" (*ibid.*, p. 64).

Surely, in any other than our modern atmosphere such a statement from a Christian exegete would be as startling as it is painful. It need not, however, too greatly disturb us. Indeed, that the sword of our "modern scientific exegesis" should know neither prophet nor apostle is a thing not to be regretted. This cannot be otherwise. It should not be otherwise.

That this sword sometimes plays havoc with the ethics and even with the common sense of those who wield it is, of course, another and a graver matter. But this is not the fault of the sword. In this case, for instance, "sainting" Paul, even when done with the utmost sincerity, is obviously a salve totally inadequate to healing the wound that Dr. Driver has quite unintentionally, and, singularly enough, apparently quite unconsciously, inflicted upon the intelligence, the integrity, and the authority of the Apostle. It would be an interesting situation if examination should prove that it is Dr. Driver, and not Paul, who has amplified the words of Habakkuk, and interpreted

“them in a sense which does not properly belong to them.” Let us see.

Transliterating the prophet's words, then, and taking account of the fact that we have in them an instance of antithetic parallelism, Habakkuk 2:4 runs thus:

*Hinneh! upp'la, lo-yash'ra naphsho bo;  
Utzaddiq b'emunatho yiyeh.*

The first line, in addition to the exclamatory particle with which it opens, consists of two distinct predications. Apparently the *naphsho bo* is the subject of both. This, however, may be due merely to the fact that the syntax of the Hebrew language did not furnish the prophet with the rhetorical machinery requisite for an exact expression of his thought. Be that as it may, the emotional energy with which the line is charged is evident from its asyndetic structure and its exclamatory character. That the prophet designed the main emphasis to rest upon *upp'la* appears not only from its position, but from the fact that the predication made by it grounds the second predication, that is, the one made by *lo-yash'ra*. It is quite certain that it was for the purpose of giving additional force to *naphsho*, “his soul,” that the prophet added *bo*, “in him.” “His very soul” would perhaps give the force of this phrase as a whole.

In the second line the emphasis, as indicated by the order of the words, is distributed between the adjective, *tzaddiq*, here used as a noun, and the phrase *b'emunatho*; the major portion, however, falls upon the phrase. There is nothing, either in its position or in its relation to the thought expressed by the first

line, to indicate that any emphasis whatever attaches to the verb *yiyeh*.

To sum up: As any translation, including that of Dr. Driver, will show, that which is signalized in the first line is neither conduct nor destiny, but character. The character there sketched has two distinguishing traits. Of these the second springs out of the first. The second is a total lack of uprightness, or righteousness. How complete and thoroughgoing this moral depravity is, is indicated by the phrase *naphsho-bo*, his *very soul*. This phrase in connection with *lo-yash'ra* marks out the person whom it designates as the very embodiment of that moral depravity that evokes the displeasure and judgments of God. The other trait mentioned in this brief character sketch is arrogant self-confidence. This trait is signalized first as being at once the evidence and the cause of the thoroughgoing moral depravity designated by the second. The first line of this parallelism, then, brings before us a character portrayed as the very embodiment of moral depravity, because the very embodiment of arrogant self-confidence. Such being the case, it is clear that the parallelism requires that the second line should also signalize character, and neither conduct nor destiny. This of course is not to say that destiny may not be implicated, but simply that it must not be the central idea expressed in the second member of the parallelism. If the parallel is to be complete, the distinguishing traits of the character presented in the second member of the parallelism must be the contradictory opposites of those of the character portrayed in the first. As to one of these traits there is no dispute. Righteousness is obviously the contradictory opposite of unrighteous-

ness. It is equally obvious that humble dependence upon God would be the contradictory opposite to arrogant self-confidence.

With the foregoing facts in mind, let us now turn to Dr. Driver's translation and interpretation of this important passage. It would be rash to say that Dr. Driver, if he had tried, could not more effectually have obscured the meaning of the prophet's words, and stripped them of their force; but one must regretfully recognize the fact that he has accomplished wonders in both these directions. To say that Dr. Driver's translation is essentially tame and feeble might be to inject a subjective tinge into a discussion that ought to be as objective as the case permits. But to say that there is nothing in Dr. Driver's translation to indicate the gnomic character of Habakkuk 2:4, nothing to suggest its antithetic, parallelistic structure, nothing to disclose the distribution of the emphasis, is simply to direct attention to facts patent to the observation of everybody. How completely Dr. Driver has succeeded in wrecking the parallelism, and with it the sense of the verse, is partially hidden from the reader's eyes by the use of the word "faithfulness" in the second member. For it is almost inevitable, unless one is on his guard, that, while he reads "faithfulness," he will think "faithfulness" to God, or to Jehovah. It is only when for "faithfulness" one substitutes honesty, or integrity, or trustworthiness that he feels fully the jar of the wreck. Further, on comparing Dr. Driver's translation with his interpretation, one finds to his surprise that the ideas brought to his attention in the former are conspicuous by their absence from the latter, and that the dominant ideas of the latter are conspicuous by

their absence from the former. The translation knows nothing of conduct and destiny; the interpretation knows almost nothing of traits of character, and what it does know of them is mainly inferential.

It is, however, when we discover the method to which Dr. Driver has had to resort, and the obstacles that he has had to overcome in order to reach these unhappy results, that our surprise becomes greatest. How, then, does Dr. Driver convince himself, and seek to convince his readers, that "‘faith’ is not the sense belonging to *’emunah*" in Habakkuk 2:4? He is content to cite some twelve passages in which "faithfulness," in the sense of honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, is obviously, and admittedly, the intended meaning of *’emunah*. Astonishing as it is, that is absolutely all that Dr. Driver has thought it necessary to do. Surely, never was exegesis "easier," or more inconsequent. The sufficient answer to such reasoning is: Well, what of it? For what phenomenon is more common than to find a word, familiar to us from many occurrences in a given sense, suddenly emerging in a new sense, because in a new context? So true is this that a really careful and faithful exegesis, at every recurrence of a word, will interrogate the new context in which it appears for its meaning *in that context*. This procedure is all the more incumbent upon the exegete because equally familiar is the fact that a word of frequent occurrence will sometimes in *one single particular context* have a meaning that it has nowhere else.

And this leads me to notice, in a word, the difficulties which in this instance Dr. Driver had to put aside in order to hold on to the position that *’emunah* in this passage connotes "honesty," or rather that it

is unthinkable that in this passage it should connote "faith"—*i. e.*, "trustful reliance upon God." He was aware, then, that scholars so competent, and so "independent" as Wellhausen and Nowack, not to mention others, hold that *'emunah* here means "faithful allegiance to God," or loyalty to God. Not only so, but Dr. Driver himself admits that the idea of steadfastness, the primary idea of *'emunah*, might pass into that of loyalty; and if so, it is obvious that it might equally as naturally and easily pass into that of "trustful reliance" upon God, or "faith." But, having made this admission, Dr. Driver thinks it enough simply to say, "the Old Testament furnishes no evidence that *'emunah* ever acquired this meaning." "No evidence"? Why, manifestly the very question raised by Wellhausen's and Nowack's translation is: Does not Habakkuk 2:4 itself furnish evidence that here at least *'emunah* has acquired a new meaning? But, even after having thus been put on notice, Dr. Driver persists in refusing to face, if not the only, certainly the most important, exegetical problem with which as an exegete he was called to deal.

And here, without additional comments, or farther explanation than that I am transcending the limits of space assigned this paper, I must be permitted abruptly to close.

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#### ΔΩΠΕΑΝ

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'Η δωπεά and τὸ δῶρον are an interesting and usually quite distinguishable pair of synonyms. Thayer