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“GOD OUR FATHER AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST”

In the opening sentence of the very first of Paul's letters which have come down to us—and that is as much as to say, in the very first sentence which, so far as we know, he ever wrote,—he makes use of a phrase in speaking of the Christians' God, which at once attracts our interested attention. According to the generous way he had of thinking and speaking of his readers at the height of their professions, he describes the church at Thessalonica as living and moving and having its being in God. But, as it was a Christian church which he was addressing, he does not content himself, in this description, with the simple term “God”. He uses the compound phrase, “God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” The Thessalonians, he says, because they were Christians, lived and moved and had their being “in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is quite clear that this compound phrase was not new on Paul's lips, coined for this occasion. It bears on its face the evidence of a long and familiar use, by which it had been worn down to its bare bones. All the articles have been rubbed off, and with them all other accessories; and it stands out in its baldest elements as just “God Father and Lord Jesus Christ.” Plainly we have here a mode of speaking of the Christians' God which was customary with Paul.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find this phrase repeated in precisely the same connection in the opening verses of the next letter which Paul wrote—2 Thessalonians—with only the slight variation that an “our” is inserted with “God the Father”,—“in God our Father and the Lord

Jesus Christ." The significance of this variation is, probably, that, although it is a customary formula which is being employed, it has not hardened into a mechanically repeated series of mere words. It is used with lively consciousness of its full meaning, and with such slight variations of wording from time to time as the circumstances of each case, or perhaps the mere emotional movement of the moment, suggested.

This free handling of what is, nevertheless, clearly in essence a fixed formula, is sharply illustrated by a third instance of its occurrence. Paul uses it again in the opening sentence of the third letter which he wrote,—that to the Galatians. Here it is turned, however, end to end, while yet preserving all its essential elements; and is set in such a context as to throw its fundamental meaning into very strong emphasis. Paul was called upon to defend to the Galatians the validity of his apostleship, and he characteristically takes occasion to assert, in the very first words which he wrote to them, that he received it from no human source,—no, nor even through any human intermediation,—but directly from God. The way he does this is to announce himself as "an apostle not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father"—"who", he adds, "raised Him from the dead". The effect of the addition of these last words is to throw the whole emphasis of the clause on "Jesus Christ"; even "God the Father" is defined in relation to Him. Yet the whole purpose of the sentence is to assert the divine origin of Paul's apostleship in strong contrast with any possible human derivation of it. Clearly, the phrase "Jesus Christ and God the Father" denotes something purely Divine. It is in effect a Christian periphrasis for "God". And in this Christian periphrasis for "God" the name of Jesus Christ takes no subordinate place.

It will conduce to our better apprehension of the nature and implications of this Christian periphrasis for "God" which Paul employs in the opening words of each of the

first three of his epistles, if we will set side by side the actual words in which it is phrased in these three instances.

1 Thess. i.1: *ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ.*

2 Thess. i.1: *ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ.*

Gal. i.1: *διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν.*

It is not, however, merely or chiefly in these three instances that Paul uses this Christian periphrasis for God. It is the apostle's custom to bring the address which he prefixes to each of his letters to a close in a formal prayer that the fundamental Christian blessings of grace and peace (or, in the letters to Timothy, grace, mercy and peace) may be granted to his readers. In this prayer he regularly employs this periphrasis to designate the Divine Being to whom the prayer is offered. It fails to appear in this opening prayer in two only of his thirteen letters; and its failure to appear in these two is useful in fixing its meaning in the other eleven. It is quite clear that Paul intends to say the same thing in all thirteen instances: they differ only in the fulness with which he expresses his identical meaning. When he says in 1 Thess. i.2 only "Grace to you and peace", he is not expressing a mere wish; he is invoking the Divine Being in prayer; and his mind is as fully on Him as if he had formally named Him. And when he names this Divine Being whom he is invoking in this prayer, in Col. i.2, "God our Father",—"Grace to you and peace from God our Father"—his meaning is precisely the same as when he names Him in the companion letter, Eph. i.2, "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—or in a similar prayer at the end of the same letter, Eph. vi.23, "God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—"Peace to the brethren and love along with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". In every instance Paul is invoking the Divine Being and only the Divine Being. Once he leaves that to be understood from the nature of the case. Once

he names this Being simply "God the Father". In the other eleven instances he gives Him the conjunct name, which ordinarily takes the form of "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ",—obviously employing a formula which had become habitual with him in such formal prayers.

That we may see at a glance how clear it is that Paul is making use here of a fixed formula in his designation of the Christians' God, and may observe at the same time the amount of freedom which he allows himself in repeating it in these very formal prayers, we bring together the series of these opening prayers, in the chronological order of the epistles in which they occur.

1 Thess. i.1: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη.*

2 Thess. i.2: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

Gal. i.3: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

1 Cor. i.3: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

2 Cor. i.2: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

Rom. i.7: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

Eph. i.2: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

[Eph. vi.23: *εἰρήνη τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καὶ ἀγάπη μετὰ πίστεως ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*].

Col. i.2: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν.*

Phile. 3: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

Phil. i.2: *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

1 Tim. i.2: *χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.*

Tit. i.4: *χάρις καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν.*

2 Tim. i.2: *χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.*

Alfred Seeberg, seeking evidence of the survival of old Christian formulas in the literature of the New Testament, very naturally fixes on these passages, and argues that we have here a combination of the names of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer which Paul found already in use in the Christian community when he attached himself to it, and which he took over from it. It is a hard saying when Ernst von Dobschütz professes himself ready to concede that Paul received this combination of names from his predecessors, but sharply denies that he received it as a "fixed formula". One would have supposed it to lie on the face of Paul's use of it that he was repeating a formula; while it might be disputed whether it was a formula of his own making or he had adopted it from others. It goes to show that it was not invented by Paul, that it is found not only in other connections in Paul's writings, as we have seen, but also in other New Testament books besides his.

Jas. i.1: *θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος.*

2 Pet. i.2: *ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.*

2 Jno. 3: *ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς.*

In the presence of these passages it is difficult to deny that we have in the closely knit conjunction of these two Divine names part of the established phraseology of primitive Christian religious speech.

It would not be easy to exaggerate the closeness with which the two names are knit together in this formula. The two persons brought together are not, to be sure, absolutely identified. They remain two persons, to each of whom severally there may be ascribed activities in which the other does not share. In Gal. i.1 we read of "Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead." In Gal. i.3, we read of "God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself for our sins." The epithets by which they are described, moreover, are distinctive,—the Father, our Father, the Lord, our Lord, our Saviour.

There is no obscuration, then, of the peculiarities of the personalities brought together. But their equalization is absolute. And short of thoroughgoing identification of persons the unity expressed by their conjunction seems to be complete.

How complete this unity is may be illustrated by another series of passages. J. B. Lightfoot has called attention to the symmetrical structure of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. Each is divided into two parts ("the first part being chiefly narrative and explanatory, and the second hortatory"), and each of these parts closes with a prayer introduced by *αὐτὸς δέ* followed by the Divine name,—a construction not found elsewhere in these epistles. Clearly there is formal art at work here; and it will repay us to bring together the opening words of the four prayers, including the designations by which God is invoked in each.

1 Thess. iii.11: *αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς.*

1 Thess. v.23: *αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης.*

2 Thess. ii.16: *αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν ὁ ἀγαπήσας ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς παράκλησιν αἰωνίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα ἀγαθὴν ἐν χάριτι.*

2 Thess. iii.16: *αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης.*

It is remarkable how illuminating the mere conjunction of these passages is. Taking 1 Thess. iii.11 in isolation, we might wonder whether we ought to read it, "God Himself, even our Father and our Lord Jesus", or "Our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus", or "Our God and Father and our Lord Jesus, Himself." So, taking it in isolation, we might hesitate whether we should construe 2 Thess. ii.16, "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father," or "Our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father, Himself". The commentators accordingly divide themselves among these views, each urging reasons which scarcely seem convincing for his choice. But so soon as we bring the passages together it becomes clear that the *αὐτὸς* is to be construed with the whole subject fol-

lowing it in every case, and thus a solid foundation is put beneath the opinion arrived at on other grounds by Martin Dibelius, Ernst von Dobschütz and J. A. Frame, that in 1 Thess. iii.11 and 2 Thess. ii.16, the *αὐτός* binds together the two subjects, God and the Lord, as the conjunct object of Paul's prayer.

The four prayers are in every sense of the word parallel. The petition is substantially the same in all. It cannot be imagined that the Being to whom the several prayers are addressed was consciously envisaged as different. Paul is in every case simply bringing his heart's desire for his converts before his God. Yet, in describing the God before whom he lays his petition, he fairly exhausts the possibilities of variety of designation which the case affords. As a result, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ could not be more indissolubly knit together as essentially one. Both are mentioned in two of the addresses, but the order in which they are mentioned is reversed from one to the other, and all the predicates in both instances are cast in the singular number. In the other two addresses only one is named, but it is a different one in each case, although an identical epithet is attributed to them both. We learn thus not only that Paul prays indifferently to God and to the Lord—in precisely the same way, for precisely the same things, and with precisely the same attitude of mind and heart, expressed in identical epithets,—but also that he prays thus indifferently to God or the Lord separately and to God and the Lord together. And when he prays to the two together, he does all that it is humanly possible to do to make it clear that he is thinking of them not as two but as one. Interchanging the names, so that they stand indifferently in the order "God and the Lord," or "the Lord and God," he binds them together in a single "self"; and then, proceeding with his prayer, he construes this double subject, thus bound together in a single "self", in both cases alike with a singular verb,—“Now our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father who loved us . . . Himself,”

he prays, "may He comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." "Now our God and Father and our Lord Jesus, Himself," he prays again, "may He direct our way unto you": and then he proceeds immediately, continuing the prayer, but now with only one name, though obviously with no change in the Being addressed,—“and may the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another and toward all men”. If it was with any difference of consciousness that Paul addressed God or the Lord, or God and the Lord together, in his prayers, he certainly has taken great pains to obscure that fact. If he had intended to show plainly that to him God and the Lord were so one that God and the Lord conjoined were still one to his consciousness, he could scarcely have found more effective means of doing so. There is probably no instance in all Paul's epistles where God and the Lord are mentioned together, that they are construed with a plural adjective or verb.

We should not pass without notice that it is in the passages from 2 Thessalonians that *ὁ κύριος* is given relative prominence. In the two passages from 1 Thessalonians *ὁ θεός* comes forward, while in those from 2 Thessalonians it is *ὁ κύριος*. That is in accordance with the general character of 2 Thessalonians, which is distinctively a *κύριος* epistle. Proportionately to the lengths of the two epistles, while *θεός* occurs about equally often in each, *κύριος* occurs about twice as often in the second as in the first. We do not pause to inquire into the causes of this superior prominence of *κύριος* in 2 Thessalonians, although it may be worth remarking in passing that in both epistles it is relatively prominent in the hortatory portions. Whatever, however, may have been the particular causes which brought about the result in this case, the result is in itself one which could not have been brought about if *θεός* and *κύριος* had not stood in the consciousness of Paul in virtual equality as designations of Deity. For the phenomenon amounts at its apex,—as we see in the four passages more

particularly before us—to the simple replacement of *θεός* by *κύριος* as the designation of Deity. And that means at bottom that Paul knows no difference between *θεός* and *κύριος* in point of rank; they are both to him designations of Deity and the discrimination by which the one is applied to the Father and the other to Christ is (so far) merely a convention by which two that are God are supplied with differentiating appellations by means of which they may be intelligibly spoken of severally. With respect to the substance of the matter there seems no reason why the Father might not just as well be called *κύριος* and Christ *θεός*.

Whether the convention by which the two appellations are assigned respectively to the Father as *θεός* and to Christ as *κύριος* is ever broken by Paul, is a question of little intrinsic importance, but nevertheless of some natural interest. It is probable that Paul never,—not only in these epistles to the Thessalonians, but throughout his epistles,—employs *κύριος* of the Father. The term seems to appear uniformly in his writings, except in a few (not all) quotations from the Old Testament, as a designation of Christ. Thus the Old Testament divine name *κύριος* (Jehovah) is appropriated exclusively to Christ; and that in repeated instances even when the language of the Old Testament is adduced,—which Paul carries over to and applies to Christ as the Lord there spoken of. The question whether Paul ever applies the term *θεός* to Christ is brought sharply before us by the form in which the formula, the use of which we are particularly investigating, occurs in 2 Thess. 1.12. There we read of Paul's constant prayer that "our God" should count his readers worthy of their calling and fulfil with reference to them every good pleasure of goodness and work of faith with power, to the end that "the name of our Lord Jesus" might be glorified in them, and they in Him, *κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*.

It will probably be allowed that in strictness of gram-

matical rule, rigidly applied, this should mean, "according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ", or, if we choose so to phrase it, "according to the grace of our God, even the Lord Jesus Christ." All sorts of reasons are advanced, however, why the strict grammatical rule should not be rigidly applied here. Most of them are ineffective enough and testify only to the reluctance of expositors to acknowledge that Paul can speak of Christ as "God". This reluctance is ordinarily given expression either in the simple empirical remark that it is not in accordance with the usage of Paul to call Christ God, or in the more far-reaching assertion that it is contrary to Paul's doctrinal system to represent Christ as God. Thus, for example, W. Bornemann comments briefly: "In themselves, these words might be so taken as to call Jesus here both God and Lord. That is, however, improbable, according to the Pauline usage elsewhere." This mild statement is particularly interesting as a recession from the strong ground taken by G. Lünemann, whose commentary on the Thessalonian epistles in the Meyer series Bornemann's superceded. Lünemann argues the question at some length and one might almost say with some heat. "According to Hofmann and Riggenbach," he writes, "Christ is here named both our God and our Lord,—an interpretation which, indeed, grammatically is no less allowable than the interpretation of the *doloxogy* ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός ἐυλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, Rom. ix. 5, as an apposition to Χριστός; but is equally inadmissible as it would contain an un-Pauline thought: on account of which also Hilgenfeld, *Zeitschr.f.d. wiss. Theol.* Halle, 1862, p. 264, in the interest of the supposed spuriousness of the Epistle, has forthwith appropriated to himself this discovery of Hofmann." Ernst von Dobschütz, who has superceded Bornemann as Bornemann superceded Lünemann, is as sure as Lünemann that it is un-Pauline to call Christ God; but as he is equally sure that this passage does call Christ God, he has no alternative but to deny the passage to Paul,—though he

prefers to deny to him only this passage and not, like Hilgenfeld, the whole Epistle. "But an entirely un-Pauline trait meets us here," he writes, "that to τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν there is added καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Not that the combination, God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, is not original-Pauline (see on 1 Thess. i.1), but that what stands here must be translated, 'Of our God and Lord Jesus Christ' as Hofmann and Wohlenberg rightly maintain. This, however, is in very fact in the highest degree un-Pauline (Lünemann) in spite of Rom. ix.5, and has its parallel only in Tit. ii.13, "Of our Great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus,' or 2 Pet. i.1, 11, 'Of our God (Lord) and Saviour, Jesus Christ' ". H. J. Holtzmann, as in his wont, sums up the whole contention crisply: "In the entire compass of the Pauline literature, only 2 Thess i.12 and Tit. ii.13 supply two equally exegetically uncertain parallels" to Rom. ix.5 "while, in Eph. iv.6, God the Father is ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων."

It is manifest that reasoning of this sort runs great risk of merely begging the question. The precise point under discussion is whether Paul does ever, or could ever, speak of Christ as God. This passage is offered in evidence that he both can and does. It is admitted that there are other passages which may be adduced in the same sense. There is Rom. ix.5 which everybody allows to be Paul's own. There is Tit. ii.13 which occurs in confessedly distinctively "Pauline literature." There is Acts xx.28, credibly attributed to Paul by one of his pupils. There is 2 Pet. i.1 to show that the usage was not unknown to other of the New Testament letter-writers. It is scarcely satisfactory to say that all these passages are as "exegetically uncertain" as 2 Thess. i.12 itself. This "exegetical uncertainty" is in each case imposed upon the passage by reluctance to take it in the sense which it most naturally bears, and which is exegetically immediately given. It is as exegetically certain, for example, as any thing can be purely exegetically certain, that in Rom. ix.5 Paul calls

Christ roundly "God over all". It is scarcely to be doubted that this would be universally recognized if Romans could with any plausibility be denied to Paul, or even could be assigned to a date subsequent to that of, say, Colossians. The equivalent may be said of each of the other passages *mutatis mutandis*. The reasoning is distinctly circular which denies to each of these passages in turn its natural meaning on the ground of lack of supporting usage, when this lack of supporting usage is created by a similar denial on the same ground of its natural meaning to each of the other passages. The ground of the denial in each case is merely the denial in the other cases. Meanwhile the usage is there, and is not thus to be denied away. If it may be, any usage whatever may be destroyed in the same manner.

In these circumstances there seems no reason why the ordinary laws of grammar should not determine our understanding of 2 Thess. i.12. We may set it down here, therefore, with its parallels in Tit. ii.13 and 2 Pet. i.1 in which the same general phrasing even more clearly carries this sense.

2 Thess. i.12: τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Tit. ii.13: καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

2 Pet. i.1: πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

In these passages the conjunction, in which God and Christ are brought together in the general formula which we are investigating, reaches its culmination in an express identification of them. We have seen that the two are not only united in this formula on terms of complete equality, but are treated as in some sense one. Grammatically at least, they constitute one "self" (ἑαυτός); and they are presented in nearly every phraseology possible as the common source of Christian blessing and the unitary object of Christian prayer. Their formal identification

would seem after this to be a matter of course, and we may be a little surprised that the recognition of it should be so strenuously resisted. The explanation is no doubt to be sought in the consideration that so long as this formal identification is not acknowledged to be expressly made, those who find difficulty in believing that Christ is included by Paul in the actual Godhead may feel the way more or less open to explain away by one expedient or another the identity of the two, manifoldly implied in the general representation indeed, but not formally announced.

Expositor after expositor, at any rate, may be observed introducing into his reproduction of Paul's simple equalization, or rather, unification, of God and the Lord, qualifying phrases of his own which tend to adjust them to his personal way of thinking of the relations subsisting between the two. C. J. Ellicott already found occasion to rebuke this practice in G. Lünemann and A. Koch. The former explains that Paul conjoins Christ with God in his prayers, because, according, to Paul's conception—"see Usteri, *Lehrb.* ii, 2.4, p. 315"—Christ, as sitting at the right hand of God, has a part in the government of the world. The latter, going further, asserts that Paul brings the two together only because he regards Christ "as the wisdom and power of God." Few expositors entirely escape the temptation to go thus beyond what is written. It is most common, perhaps, to follow the path in which Lünemann walks, and to declare that Paul unites the two persons because Christ by His exaltation has been made for the time co-regnant with God over the universe, or perhaps only over the Church. Quite frequently, however, it is asserted, more like Koch, that the unity instituted between them amounts merely to a unity of will, or even only to a harmony of operation. At the best it is explained that our Lord is placed by the side of God only because it is through Him as intermediary that the blessings which have their source in God are received or are to be sought. An especially flagrant example of the substitution of quite

alien phraseology for Paul's, in a professed restatement of his conception, is afforded by David Somerville in his Cunningham Lectures on *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*. He tells us that Paul's "conjunction of God and Christ in his stated greetings to the churches indicated his belief that a co-partnership of Divine power and honor was included in the exaltation of Christ to be Lord." It obviously smacks, however, less of Paul than of Socinus to speak of the relation of Christ to God as a "co-partnership of Divine power and honor," and of this co-partnership of Divine power and honor between them as resulting from Christ becoming Lord by His exaltation.

Benjamin Jowett, with that fine condescension frequently exhibited by the "emancipated", remarks on Chrysostom's comment on Gal. i.3: "This is the mind not of the Apostolic but of the Nicene age." He does not stay to consider that the mind of his own age and coterie may in such a matter be as much further removed than that of the Nicene age from the mind of the Apostolic age in substance as it is in time. Nevertheless it may be admitted that even the Nicene commentators were prone to read their own conceptions of the relations of Christ to God explanatorily into Paul's simple equalization of them. Athanasius appeals,—as he was thoroughly entitled* to do,—to Paul's conjunction of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as the common source of grace and the common object of prayer, against the Arian contention that the Father and the Son are concordant, indeed, in will but not one in being. In the eleventh section of the third of his Orations against the Arians he gives expression to this appeal thus: "Therefore also, as we said just now, when the Father gives grace and peace, the Son also gives it, as Paul signifies in every epistle, writing, 'Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' For one and the same grace is from the Father in the Son, as the light of the sun and of the radiance is one, and as the sun's illumination is effective through the radiance; and

so, when he prays for the Thessalonians, in saying, 'Now God even the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, may He direct our way unto you,' he has guarded the unity of the Father and of the Son. For he has not said, 'May they direct,' as of a double grace given from two, from This and That, but, 'May he direct,' to show that the Father gives it through the Son." This is not to emphasize the unity of the Father and the Son more strongly than Paul does: it is only to repeat Paul's testimony to their unity. But Athanasius cannot repeat Paul's testimony to their unity without interpolating his own conception of the manner in which this unity is to be conceived. One and the same grace comes to us from the Father and the Son, he gives us to understand, because the grace of the Father comes to us in the Son; one and the same prayer is addressed to the Father and the Son, because whatever the Father gives He gives through the Son. This explanation is interpolated into Paul's language. Paul places God and the Lord absolutely side by side, as joint source of the blessings he seeks for his readers; addresses his prayers for benefits he desires for his readers to them in common; treats them, in a word, as one. Athanasius' explanations are, of course, not as gross interpolations into the text as Arius'; but they are no less real interpolations. The outstanding fact governing Paul's collocation of God and the Lord, is that he makes no discrimination between them whatever, but treats them as a unity.

This is well brought out in the remarks of Chrysostom on which Jowett had his eye when he accused him of intruding a Nicene meaning on the text. These remarks are on the prepositions in Gal. i.1 and Rom. i.7. Had Paul written in the former of these passages, says Chrysostom, either "through Jesus Christ", or "through God the Father", alone, the Arians would have had their explanation of his having done so, in the interests of some essential distinction between the Father and the Son. But Paul "leaves no opening for such a cavil, by mentioning

at once both the Son and the Father, and making the language apply to both." "This he does", he adds, "not as referring the acts of the Son to the Father, but to show that the expression implies no distinction of essence". On Rom. i.7 he remarks similarly on the use of "from" with both the Father and the Son. "For he did not say, 'Grace be unto you and peace, from God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ,' but 'from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.'" There is no imposing of a Nicene sense on Paul's language here. There is a simple reflection, as in a clear mirror, of the exact sense of the texts in hand, with an emphasis on their underlying implication of oneness between God and our Lord.

We are constantly pointed to 1 Cor. viii 6, to be sure, as in some way supplying a warrant for supposing an unexpressed subordinationism to be hidden beneath the surface of all of Paul's equalizations of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is exceedingly difficult, however, to see how this passage can be made to supply such a warrant. It lies open to the sight of all, of course, that in it the one God the Father and the one Lord Jesus Christ,—who are included in the one only God that, it is understood by all, alone exists,—are differentiated by the particular relations in which the first and the second creations alike are said to stand to them severally. All things are said to be "of" God the Father and "through" the Lord Jesus Christ; Christians are said to be "unto" the one and "by means of" the other. These characterizations are, of course, not made at random; and it is right to seek diligently for their significance. It would doubtless be easy, however, to press such prepositional distinctions too far, as such passages as Rom. xi.36 and Col. i.16 may advise us. Perhaps it would not be wrong to say that they are to be taken rather eminently than exclusively. What it is at the moment especially important that we observe, however, is that they concern the relations of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ *ad extra* and

say nothing whatever of their relations to one another. With respect to their relations to one another, what the passage tells us is that they are both embraced in that one God which, it is declared with great emphasis, alone exists. We must not permit to fall out of sight that the whole passage is dominated by the clear-cut assertion that "there is no God but one" (verse 4, at the end). Of this assertion the words now particularly before us (verse 6b) are the positive side of an explication and proof (verse 5, *γάρ*). And the thing for us distinctly to note is that Paul explicates the assertion that there is no God but one by declaring, as if that was quite *ad rem*, that Christians know but one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ. There meets us here again, we perceive,—as underlying and giving its force to this assertion,—the precise formula we have been having under consideration. And it meets us after a fashion which brings very strikingly to our attention once more that, when Paul says "God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ", he has in mind not two Gods, much less two beings of unequal dignity, a God and a Demi-god, or a God and a mere creature,—but just one God. Though Christians have one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ, they know but one only God.

The essential meaning of the passage is wholly unaffected by the question whether in the words, "There is no God but one" at the end of verse 4, we have Paul's own language or that of his Corinthian correspondents repeated by him. We may read the verse, if we choose,—perhaps we ought to,—"Concerning the meats offered to idols, then, we are perfectly well aware that, as you say, there is no idol in the world, and there is no God but one." Still, the assertion that there is no God but one rules the succeeding verses, which, introduced as its justification, become in effect a reiteration of it. "There is no God but one, *for*—for, although there are indeed so-called Gods, whether in heaven or on earth,—as there are Gods a-plenty and Lords a-plenty!—yet for us there is one God the

Father . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ. . . .” Obviously this can mean nothing else than that the “one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ” of the Christians is just the one only God which exists. To attempt to make it mean anything else is to stultify the whole argument. You cannot prove that only one God exists by pointing out that you yourself have two.

We are referred, it is true, to the declaration that the heathen have not only many Gods, but also many Lords, and we are bidden to see in their one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ a parallel among the Christians to this state of affairs among the heathen. And then we are further instructed that it is only fair to suppose that Paul felt some difference in grade between the Gods and the Lords of the heathen and, in paralleling the two objects of Christian worship with them respectively, intended to intimate a discrimination in rank between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. On this ground, we are then asked to conclude that Paul does not range the Lord Jesus Christ here along with God the Father within the Godhead, but adjoins Him to God the Father as an additional and inferior object of reverence, placed distinctly as “Lord” outside the category of “God”. This whole construction, however, is purely artificial and has no standing ground in the world of realities. There is no evidence that the heathen discriminated between the designations “God” and “Lord” in point of dignity to the disadvantage of the latter; this, at the end of the day, has to be admitted by both Johannes Weiss and W. Bousset, who yet urge that Paul must be supposed to presuppose such a distinction here. Paul, however, intimates in no way at all that he felt any such distinction on his part; on the contrary he includes the “Gods many” and “Lords many” of the heathen without question in their “so-called Gods” on equal terms. Least of all is it possible to separate off “one God the Father” from its fellow “one Lord Jesus Christ”, linked to it immediately by the simple

“and”, and make the former alone refer back to the “There is no God but one”. Paul obviously includes both “God the Father” and “the Lord Jesus Christ” within this one only God whom alone he and his readers alike recognize as existing. It would void his whole argument if Jesus Christ were conceived of as a second and inferior object of worship outside the limits of the one only God. The thing which above all others the passage says plainly, is that the acknowledgment by Christians of “one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ” accords with the fundamental postulate that “there is no God but one.” And that can mean nothing else than that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ together make but one God. So far from this passage throwing itself athwart the implications of the repeated employment by Paul, as by others of the writers of the New Testament, of the formula in which God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are conjoined as the one object of Christian prayer and source of Christian blessings, it brings a notable support to them. It supplies what is in effect an explicit assertion of the fact on which this formula implicitly proceeds. It declares that the one God of the Christians includes in His Being both “God the Father” and “the Lord Jesus Christ”. Christians acknowledge but one God; and these are the one God which Christians acknowledge.

Something of the same thing that Paul expresses by this conjunction of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, John expresses in his own phraseology by the conjunction of the Father and the Son,—as in 1 Jno. ii.24: “If what you heard from the beginning abide in you, you also shall abide in the Son and the Father”; or 2 Jno. 9, in the reverse order: “He that abideth in the teaching, the same hath the Father and the Son;” as well as in 2 Jno. 3, already quoted: “Grace, mercy, peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father.” It is true, but not adequate, to say that John never thinks of Christ apart from God and never

thinks of God apart from Christ. With him, to have the Son is to have the Father also, and to have the Father is to have the Son also. The two are as inseparable in fact as in thought. The terminology is different, but the idea is the same as that which underlies Paul's unification of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Clearly the suggestions of this formula carry us into the midst not only of Paul's Christology but of his conception of God—which obviously is not simple. Short of this, they bring us face to face with two matters of great preliminary importance to the correct apprehension of Paul's doctrines of Christ and of God, which have been much discussed of late, not always very illuminatingly. We mean the matters of the significance of the title "Lord" which is so richly applied to Christ in the New Testament writings, and of the meaning of the adoration of Christ which is everywhere reflected in these writings. We must deny ourselves the pleasure of following out these suggestions here. It must content us for the moment to have pointed out a line of approach to the correct understanding of these great matters which, surely, cannot be neglected in any earnest attempt to reach the truth concerning them, and which, if not neglected, will certainly conduct us to very high conclusions in regard to them.

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