

**NOTES AND DISSERTATIONS  
PRINCIPALLY ON DIFFICULTIES  
IN THE SCRIPTURES OF THE  
NEW COVENANT**

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Notes and Dissertations Principally on Difficulties in the Scriptures of the New Covenant by A. H. Wratlaw

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**A. H. WRATISLAW**

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# NOTES AND DISSERTATIONS

PRINCIPALLY ON

## DIFFICULTIES IN THE SCRIPTURES OF THE NEW COVENANT

BY

A. H. WRATISLAW, M.A.

HEAD MASTER OF KING EDWARD THE SIXTH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL,  
BURY ST EDMUND'S, FORMERLY FELLOW AND TUTOR  
OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

"Every scribe, which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things NEW and OLD." Matt. xiii. 52.

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## NOTES AND DISSERTATIONS.

### I.

#### ST MATTHEW III. 15.

*"For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."*

*Why was our Lord baptized?* The reason is contained in the words upon which I am about to comment; yet it has not proved easy to find a satisfactory explanation of them, simple and straightforward as they appear. Neither Dean Alford nor Canon Wordsworth make the slightest attempt at interpreting them, and Messrs Webster and Wilkinson rather obscurely hint at than develope what has long seemed to me the real explanation.

It is commonly said that *δικαιοσύνη* or "righteousness" here signifies the *δικαιώματα* or requirements of the Mosaic law. But baptism was in no sense a requirement of the law, though it is said, that proselytes were baptized by the Jewish authorities. Neither had the baptism of John been announced and accredited as a divine institution, although John had received a divine commission (John i. 33) unaccompanied by any superhuman credentials. Thus the meaning of the term *δικαιοσύνη*, if considered to refer to the performance of God's requirements, must have been a kind of secret between John and our Lord, and not have referred to any well-known legal obligation.

I think that the real interpretation is, to consider that "it became" our Lord to fulfil all *δικαιώματα*, or methods of more



or less obtaining forensic or symbolical *δικαιοσύνη*, which an ordinary person of that age and nation would have done, whether they were of human or divine institution. As the representative of our race, like us in all respects, sin only excepted, "it became" Him to do all that such a person would have done, just as He was willing to pay tribute to Cæsar. And as regards the nature of the particular dominant usage, to which he submitted in being baptized by John, though he had no need of repentance himself, yet, as the representative of sinful man, it was necessary for him to go through a symbolical purification.

It is argued in Heb. ix. 9, that the Levitical ceremonies could not make the worshipper perfect *κατὰ συνείδησιν*, in point of conscience. This feeling of the deficiency of the Mosaic law, which is again insisted upon in Heb. x. 1—4, was expressed by the baptism of John, and its justice acknowledged by our Lord, in that he took advantage of that *extra-legal* mode of obtaining *δικαιοσύνη*.

The above is not intended to deny the divine institution of baptism as a Christian, but to draw attention to its very inferior position as a Jewish rite, and to explain the words of our Lord in a manner consistent with the real facts of the case.

## II.

### ST MATTHEW VI. 11.

*"Give us this day our daily bread."*

### ST LUKE XI. 3.

*"Give us day by day our daily bread."*

Derivation of *ἐπιούσιος*, "daily."

Assuming the derivation of *ἐπιούσιος* from *ἐπι* and *εἶμι* to be correct, and rejecting the instances cited to justify its derivation from *ἐπι* and *εἶμι*, as either containing relics of the digamma, taken from epic Greek, or belonging to an older

state of the language, I think the commentators have not as yet succeeded in analyzing the word satisfactorily. Surely we must not with Winer attempt to derive it from *ἐπιών*, or rather from *ἡ ἐπιούσα ἡμέρα*, which, as the upholders of *ἐπὶ* and *εἰμὶ* rightly observe, gives a false sense and makes us pray for the "succeeding" day, the morrow, for the things of which we are shortly afterwards, in St Matthew,—indeed, at the conclusion of the same chapter,—bidden not to care. Let us rather take as our guide the words, *ἐφόδιος* = *ἐπὶ τὴν ὁδόν*, "lasting for the journey," *ἐφημέριος*, "lasting for a day," and *ἐπετήσιος* in Hom. *Od.* VII. 118:

Τάων οὔποτε καρπὸς ἀπόλλυται οὐδ' ἀπολείπει  
Χείματος οὐδὲ θέρους, ἐπετήσιος·

which, begging pardon of Liddell and Scott in their last edition, is manifestly correctly explained by Damm and Rost as meaning "lasting the whole year," *ἐπὶ τὸ ἔτος*, in contradistinction to *ἐπέτειος*, which indicates annual change or recurrence. Such is also probably the origin of *ἐπηρετανός*, although the sense "sufficient" is said to be always satisfactory without any allusion to *ἔτος*. Hence we shall come in the case of *ἐπιούσιος* to *ἐπὶ τὴν ἸΟΥΣΑΝ ἡμέραν*, "sufficient for the going or current day," a sense and derivation which appear to satisfy all the conditions of both the word and its context. We must remember too that *λοῦσα* is a participle used as a substantive in the present case, so that the analogy of *ἐφόδιος* and the other words is not so distant as might be imagined, and that, after all, that analogy is rather cited for the signification of *ἐπὶ* than for the formation of the word *ἐπιούσιος*.

I must not, however, attempt to ignore the difficulty presented by Euripides, *Phœn.* 1637:—

Καὶ παρθενεύου τὴν λοῦσαν ἡμέραν  
Μένουσι, ἐν ᾗ σε λέκτρον Αἴμονος μένει.

"And remain a virgin, awaiting the coming day, in which the bed of Hæmon awaits you."

Here, however, *λοῦσαν* is the reading of only one manuscript,

most of the others giving *εἰσιῦσαν* or *ἐπιῦσαν*, thus indicating that *ἰούσαν* is here used in an unusual sense, and one in which the example of Euripides was not followed by his countrymen generally. I do not think that *ἰούσαν* in the sense of "coming" would have been at all familiar or even intelligible to the writers or readers of the gospels, who would respectively have used and expected *ἐρχομένην*. Strange to say *εἰμι* appears only to be used once in the LXX., in Prov. vi. 6, *ἴθι πρὸς τὸν μύρμηκα*, and then in the sense of *going*, "Go to the ant."

Paley, in remarking on the above passage of Euripides, says:—"It seems doubtful if *ἰούσα ἡμέρα* could signify a *coming* day. It should rather mean, 'a day now partly spent,' which is exactly the meaning for which I am contending with regard to the compound *ἐπιούσιος*."

I must now leave the passage of Euripides with the alternatives of taking *ἰούσαν* in a very strange sense, or of considering that Creon is represented as brutal enough to order Antigone to prepare for marriage on the night of the very day on which she has lost her two brothers by mutual slaughter. But I offer my explanation of the derivation of *ἐπιούσιος* with considerable confidence.

### III.

#### ST MATTHEW VIII. 9.

"For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

#### ST LUKE VII. 8.

"For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

It is commonly said that the inference from the words of the centurion's message, "For I also am a man under au-