Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews

HOMILIES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE

HEBREWS

THE THIRTY-FOUR HOMILIES
preached by
SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

translated from the Greek by
T. KEBLE

with notes by
FREDERIC GARDINER

from Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series I, Vol. 14,
edited by
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ABOUT THIS SERIES

Saint John Chrysostom: Homilies on Holy Scripture presents the Golden-Mouthed preacher's complete homilies on the New Testament — Matthew, John, Acts, and the Epistles of Paul — newly typeset from the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers translations, with a scripture index prepared for this edition.

The text is set in Perpetua, designed by Eric Gill for the Monotype Corporation. It is named after St Perpetua, who was martyred at Carthage in 203 with St Felicity. It was first used in 1929, to print an English translation of the account of their martyrdom, and its italic was first called Felicity. The Greek and the Hebrew are set in Cardo.

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PREFACE

This volume completes the series of St. Chrysostom's Homilies on the New Testament. Translated a quarter of a century ago by the Rev. T. Keble, Vicar of Bisley, and revised with great labor in the use of the then existing editions by his brother, the Vicar of Hursley, it was thought best to delay the publication until Dr. Field had completed the long-delayed publication of the Greek Text. This appeared in 1862.

The editing of the text of St. Chrysostom's Homilies is attended with peculiar difficulties. Written sermons,[1] if ever preached in those days, were the exception. Those which have been preserved to us have been generally taken down by some hearer. St. Augustine afterwards revised his, when brought to him for the purpose. In the case of St. Chrysostom's Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles, as well as of the present volume, there are two distinct texts still extant: that originally taken down by the short-hand writer, and another, when this had been polished and made neat at a subsequent time. Dr. Field's great labor then in the Greek Text of the present volume had been to restore the older form of these Homilies. He had ample material, both in Greek MSS., in a Catena published not many years ago by our Dr. Cramer, Principal of New Inn Hall, which exhibit the older text (the former half of a second Catena, compiled by

[1] See an animadversion of St. Cyril Alex. on those who committed to writing other people's sermons and thus preserved what might have been less deliberately uttered as though it had been thoroughly well weighed. *De Ador.* viii. t. i. 267. See also the constantly occurring expressions in St. Augustine, which belong to the natural extemporaneous delivery, but which would be untrue in the delivery of written sermons. The Preface to the first volume of St. Augustine on St. John, in this Library, written by the Rev. H. Browne, contains interesting details of St. Augustine's preaching. Fleury remarks of Atticus, Archbishop of Constantinople, in the beginning of the fifth century, just after St. Chrysostom's decease, "His sermons were indifferent, so that no one took the trouble to take them down in writing." Fleury, *Eccles. Hist.* xxii. 9, p. 133, Oxford translation. The extract, however, which St. Cyril has preserved of Atticus (*de recta fide ad Arcadiam Marinamque*, repeated in his *Apol. adv. Episcopos Orientales*, cap. 4) is eloquent and pious.

Niketas,[2] Archbishop of Heraclea in Thrace in the eleventh century, and published by the same Dr. Cramer, appears to use both); and, of yet more importance, in Latin versions.

Cassiodorus, an Italian, who lived about 150 years after St. Chrysostom, in the earlier part of his treatise, *de Institutione Divinarum Litterarum*, cap. 8. (opp. t. ii. p. 543, ed. Rotom. 1679) in describing a volume of St. Paul's Epistles, in which 13 of the Epistles had a good commentary, goes on, "But in regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews which St. John Bishop of Constantinople treated of in Greek in 34 homilies, we have caused Mutianus, a most eloquent man, to translate them into Latin, that the order of the Epistles might not be unduly broken off."

To Cassiodorus then we owe the Latin version of Mutianus which has come down to us, and which, translated from the older form of text, has been a great assistance in the editing. It is often quoted in the footnotes. There is also given an extract from the 13th Homily by Facundus, an African Bishop, who lived about the same time with Mutianus, but who apparently translated the passage into Latin for himself.

The short-hand writer, who took down these Homilies and thus preserved them to us, is not unknown to us. It is St. Chrysostom's dearly-loved friend the Priest Constantine or Constantius.[3] For the title is, "Homilies of St. John Chrysostom Archbishop of Constantinople on the Epistle to the Hebrews, published after his decease, from notes by Constantine, Presbyter of Antioch."

At the beginning of St. Chrysostom's exile in 404, when he was in Nicæa, in a Letter which he wrote to Constantius about a mission which he had set on foot at Phœnicia (Ep. 121 t. iii. pp. 721, 722, ed. Montf.), he begs him "not to cease having a care for the Churches of Phœnicia and Arabia and the east, and to write to" St. Chrysostom "quite often, and tell him how many Churches had been built in a year and what holy men had gone into Phœnicia." Soon after, Constantius seems to have asked leave of St. Chrysostom to join him; for in his 13th letter to Olympias on arriving at Cocussus or Cucusus in Cappadocia, now Goksyn, his bitter place of exile, St. Chrysostom says (ib. p. 594), "My Lord, the most pious priest Constantius, would fain have been here long ago, for he wrote to

[2] Dr. Cramer had published this from the Paris MS. Cod. Reg. 238, which contains the first half only: but the whole catena is extant in the Library of St. Ambrose at Milan (E. 63 part inf.).

[3] Montfaucon observes that the Manuscripts frequently interchange the name.

me begging that I would let him come." About this time, perhaps while Constantius was on his actual journey to Cucusus, St. Chrysostom writes to him (Ep. 225, p. 724), grieved at not having heard from him, and speaks of their great love for each other and of Constantius' goodness to the poor, the fatherless and widows: soon after he writes from Cucusus to Elpidius bishop of Laodicea (Ep. 114, p. 656), "the most reverend priests Constantius and Euethius are here with us." There are extant two Letters of Constantius, one of them to his mother, written while he was companion of St. Chrysostom there (pp. 731 and 734). In the course of this banishment St. Chrysostom writes (Ep. 123, pp. 663, 664) about this Phœnician mission to "the priests and monks in Phœnicia, who were instructing the Gentiles there," encouraging them in their work, and saying that he had given orders that all their expenses "in clothing, shoes, and support of the brethren should be bountifully supplied," and adds that they will know about his affairs from Constantius' letter. In a letter to Gerontius (Ep. 54, p. 623) written during this exile about the mission in Phœnicia, St. Chrysostom says that he had intrusted Constantius to give Gerontius all he needed whether "for building or for the needs of the brethren."

To Constantius' piety we owe the preservation of these Homilies. One very special value of them lies in the pious fervent exhortation at the end of each, on Penitence, Almsgiving, or whatever St. Chrysostom had at the time chiefly in mind, breathing forth words from a heart, filled with the love of God and that longed for his flock to partake it.

Hom.	I	On Sin and Almsgiving
	II	On High Thoughts and on Poverty and Wealth
	III	On God's Gifts to Each
	IV	On Heathen Practices at Funerals
	V	On Temptation
	VI	On Heaven
	VII	On Old Age
	VIII	On Study of Scriptures
	IX	On Penitence and Confession of Our Sins
	X	On Relieving Distress
	XI	On Almsgiving and Giving to Beggars
	XII	On Free-Will and Penitence
	XIII	On Not Postponing Baptism and on a Right Life
	XIV	On Thought of God and Earnest Prayer
	XV	On Sin-Enslavement and on Untimely Laughter

XVI On Dwelling in Heaven
XVII On Worthily Receiving Holy Communion
XVIII On the Might of Poverty
XIX On the Great Gain of Loving One's Neighbor
XX On Slavery to Possessions and on Thankfulness
XXI On Gossip
XXII On Seeking God, on His Protection and Enduring Temptation
XXIII On the Loss of God
XXIV On the Acquirement of Virtue
XXV On Not Caring for Things of the World nor Partaking with the Covetous
XXVI On Loyalty to God
XXVII On the Might of Prayer and on Minding Us That We Are Sinners
XXVIII Value of Affliction and on Simplicity of Life and Adornment of the Soul
XXIX On the Peril of Luxury
XXX On Helping Each Other in Way of Salvation
XXXI On Penitence and Keeping in Mind Our Sins
XXXII On the Might of Mercifulness to Others
XXXIII On the Value of Affliction, Trial, Poverty, and on Thankfulness
XXXIV On Using with Intensity of Mind and Purpose, the Grace of the Spirit

After the publication of Dr. Field's text (*Bibliotheca Patrum Ecclesiae Catholicae Qui ante Orientis et Occidentis schisma floruerunt*, tom. vii. Oxonii 1862) the translation was again very carefully revised by that text by the Rev. Dr. Barrow, Principal of St. Edmund Hall: he also wrote heads for the present Preface. The headings were given (as far as could be done) in the MS. and many of them have been retained; others, fitting in less well with the printed page, seemed to need a little modification. For an occasional note enclosed in brackets, the son of the one remaining Editor of the Library is responsible.

Oxford, May, 1877. P. E. Pusey.

[It has seemed better in this edition to conform the translation of the

Scripture texts to some one standard. St. Chrysostom used the current text of his day, which, on the whole, was more like the *Textus Receptus*, the basis of the A. V., than the more critical text followed by the R. V. It has therefore seemed best to take the A. V. as the standard (except where St. Chrysostom has followed a different text), but note has been made of any variations of the R. V. materially affecting the sense. There remain a number of loose quotations and combinations of different texts, and in these the English translation is retained.

Effort has been made to simplify the language and remove involved constructions in the translation of the Homilies. The English translation was originally made from the Benedictine, and afterwards revised from Field's more accurate text, and the differences between these have sometimes been overlooked. Besides this, it has often been possible to give St. Chrysostom's meaning more accurately,—sometimes even reversing the sense. There are, however, many very felicitous translations in the English edition which have been retained. It is a revision, and not a new translation.

All the notes in the English edition have been scrupulously retained, additions being enclosed in square brackets, with the initials of the reviser.—F. G.]

[Published after his decease.—F. G., jr.]

ARGUMENT, AND SUMMARY OF THE EPISTLE

[1.] The blessed Paul, writing to the Romans, says, "Inasmuch then as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them that are my flesh":[4] and again, in another place, "For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles."[5] If therefore he were the Apostle of the Gentiles, (for also in the Acts, God said to him, "Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles,"[6]) what had he to do with the Hebrews? and why did he also write an Epistle to them?

And especially as besides, they were ill-disposed towards him, and this is to be seen from many places. For hear what James says to him, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe. . .and these all have been informed of thee that thou teachest men to forsake the law."[7] And oftentimes he had many disputings concerning this.

Why therefore, one might ask, as he was so learned in the law (for he was instructed in the law at the feet of Gamaliel,[8] and had great zeal in the matter, and was especially able to confound them in this respect)—why did not God send him to the Jews? Because on this very account they were more vehement in their enmity against him. "For they will not endure thee,"[9] God says unto him; "But depart far hence to the Gentiles, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me."[10] Whereupon he says, "Yea, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee; and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen

[4] Rom. xi. 13, 14.

[5] Gal. ii. 8.

[6] Acts xxii. 21.

[7] Acts xxi. 20, 21.

[8] Acts xxii. 3.

[9] "Wherefore God foreseeing this, that they would not receive Him," Ben. K. Sav.

[10] Acts xxii. 21, 18.

was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."[11]

And this he says[12] is a sign and proof of their not believing him. For thus it is: when a man goes away from any people,[13] if he be one of the least and of those who are nothing worth, he does not much vex those from whom he went; but if he be among the distinguished and earnest partisans and those who care for these things, he exceedingly grieves and vexes them beyond measure, in that[14] he especially overthrows their system with the multitude.

And besides this, there was something else.[15] What now might this be? That they who were about Peter were also with Christ, and saw signs and wonders; but he [Paul] having had the benefit of none of these, but being with Jews, suddenly deserted and became one of them. This especially promoted our cause. For while they indeed, seemed to testify even from gratitude, and one might have said that they bore witness to those things in love for their Master; he, on the other hand, who testifies to the resurrection, this man was rather one who heard a voice only. For this cause thou seest them waging war passionately with him, and doing all things for this purpose, that they might slay him, and raising seditions.[16]

The unbelievers, then, were hostile to him for this reason; but why were the believers? Because in preaching to the Gentiles he was constrained to preach Christianity purely; and if haply even in Judæa he were found [doing so], he cared not. For Peter and they that were with him, because they preached in Jerusalem, when there was great fierceness, of necessity enjoined the observance of the law; but this man was quite at liberty. The [converts] too from the Gentiles were more than the Jews because they were without.[17] And this[18] enfeebled the law, and they had no such great reverence for it, although[19] he preached all things purely. Doubtless in this matter they think to shame him by numbers, saying,

[11] Acts xxii. 19, 20.

[12] "they show," K. Ben.

[13] ἔθνους.

[14] "Departing from them, going to others," K. Ben. Sav.

[15] Add: "Which should make them incredulous," Bened. K. Sav.

[16] "For this purpose, and raising seditions that they might slay him," Bened. A. K.

[17] "The chosen people being *fewer than all people*, encircled on all sides by the heathen"; see Mic. v. 7, 8.

[18] "By this he enfeebled," Ben.

[19] "Because," Ben. Sav. K. Q. R.