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THE GREEK SOURCES OF THE NEW CONSECRATION PRAYER.

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IS the Consecration prayer in the New Prayer Book sound in scholarship? Considering that Cranmer (1549) was the authority followed in the passage in question:—

“Wherefore . . . we . . . having in remembrance the precious death and passion of Thy dear Son . . . according to His holy institution do celebrate and set forth before Thy Divine Majesty with these Thy holy gifts *the memorial which He hath willed us to make*—”

it would seem presumptuous to answer in the negative had not Cranmer himself seen fit to erase this passage (1552). Now our Lord when instituting the Holy Communion said, as it is reported by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 24 f.) and St. Luke (xxii. 19), “Do this in remembrance of Me,” *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν (touto poieite eis teen emeen anamnesin)*.

In the first place, what is the meaning of *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε*? It always means “do this (action).” That is its meaning in classical Greek, in the Septuagint, in the Greek Testament. It cannot mean “offer this.” And the words quoted, “the memorial which He hath willed us to make,” taken in conjunction with the preceding words, “set forth before Thy Divine Majesty the memorial which He hath willed us to make,” distinctly imply “offer.” In fact it would serve as a good definition of the verb to offer. We shall return to this point later on.

Again, from a grammatical point of view, these words of our Lord cannot be rendered “make this memorial of Me,” as this would be on a par with saying that “keep this out of gratitude” means “keep this gratitude.” Or, as the learned Dr. T. K. Abbott in his brochure *Do this in remembrance of Me* ¹ (p. 28) said: “As well might we consider that because a scholarship in college is said to be ‘in memoriam’ therefore ‘memoria’ means scholarship.” To render these words as “make this memorial of Me” in the sense of “offer” is to employ the verb (*ποιεῖτε, ποιεῖτε*) and the substantive (*ἀνάμνησις, anamnesis*), which is not the direct object, but the purpose of the object, which is *τοῦτο (touto)*, in a manner unjustified by the context and the use of these words in the classics and in the Old and New Testaments, and is contrary to grammar.

I. First of all take the word *anamnesis (ἀνάμνησις)*. What is its meaning? Plato used it in the sense of remembering. *Philebus* (34) describes it as the act of recovering a past experience. *Phaedo* (72) says “learning is remembering,” both active substantives, *mathesis anamnesis*. Aristotle wrote an essay on the difference

¹ Longmans, 1898, p. 28.

between "memory" (*mneme*) and recollection (*anamnesis*). Polybius the Greek historian (167 B.C.) used the word *anamnesis* frequently of "recording" facts, e.g., 4, 66, 10, "for the sake of recording it"; but he never used with it the active verb *poiein* (*ποιεῖν*) which is used here, but according to the Greek idiom, the middle voice *poieisthai* (*ποιεῖσθαι*), in his phrase "to make a record of" an event, e.g., 2, 37, 6; 1, 5, 4. According to the Greek idiom one could not say *poiein anamnesin* (*ποιεῖν ἀνάμνησιν*). It would be a solecism. In Lysias (404 B.C.) the word *anamnesis* is indeed used in connection with sacrifices, but it is the *recollection of vows to pay sacrifices*, *ἀνάμνησεις θυσιῶν* (194, 22).

In Wisdom xvi. 6 the word is used with commandment: "They were troubled for a short time, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of Thy law" (*εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἐντολῆς, eis anamnesin entolees*). Here the active meaning of the verb is correctly given. Hebrews x. 3, "In them (the sacrifices) there is a calling to mind of sins (*anamnesis hamartion*) or a remembrance of sins every year." Here we have a close parallel to the Holy Communion. It is not a sacrifice like the Jewish sacrifices, but it is a service in which there is a *calling to mind*, a remembrance of the Atonement for sins—being done in remembrance of Christ, *εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*. Substitute "memorial" for "remembrance" in the above passages in the classics and the Scriptures and the sense will be made nonsense because *anamnesis* means action, whereas *memorial* is a thing. The word *anamnesis* occurs in the LXX of the Old Testament four times, twice in Psalm titles 38 and 70. But these titles are so erratic that no argument can be based upon them. The Hebrew verb which those in question represent is the *hifil* (*hazkir*) of *Zakar*, to remember, and means to *record*, and even if one connects it, which one has absolutely no right to do seeing that the Greek of 38 adds "concerning the Sabbath" and that of 70 "to the Lord to save me" (bad Greek), with the *azkarah* of Leviticus ii. 2, one gains nothing, for there it is the incense portion of the *minchah* and it was burnt. And if the meaning was applied to the New Testament expression *eis teen emeen anamnesin*, it would only mean "for the incense portion of me." To pass on to Numbers x. 10, there the word refers to the blowing of the trumpets, as v. 9 shows: "You shall blow with the trumpets and you shall be remembered before the Lord your God." The Greek also, being in the singular, cannot refer to the sacrifices.

Now we come to the last passage where the word appears in the Old Testament, Leviticus xxiv. 7. The R.V., following the Hebrew, renders it, "Thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row (of the shewbread) that it may be to the bread for a *memorial* (*azkarah*), even an offering made by fire (*ishsheh*) unto the Lord." The offering in connection with the shewbread was that of the frankincense. Like the handful of the meal offering in Leviticus ii. 2 it was a memorial, an *azkarah*, and was burnt. It was that portion of the meal-offering that was never eaten. And so in connection with the shewbread which was not to be offered or burned but simply "set

forth" and eaten at the end of the week by the priests, there was an offering of frankincense which was to be burned. And this was the *azkarah* or memorial. The shewbread is not the *azkarah* but the frankincense is. But the LXX has possibly caused the confusion by its rendering, "They (the loaves) shall be for loaves for a remembrance, εἰς ἀνάμνησιν, set forth, προκειμένα, before the Lord." Here the loaves are said to be for a remembrance, *anamnesis*, the Hebrew word being *azkarah*, used of a memorial or fire portion. And so the loaves which were kept for a week, and then eaten by the priests, were identified with a portion consumed by fire (Hebrew *ishsheh*)! This was due to confusing the shewbread with the *azkarah*, memorial or incense-portion, that was placed upon the shewbread and burnt. And owing to this confusion in the course of time the loaves of the shewbread came to be regarded by the Greek Churches, which used the LXX version, as a memorial, *azkarah*, set forth before the Lord (προκειμένα). This was really a contradiction in terms, for the shewbread in Hebrew, "bread of the presence" (*panim*), 1 Samuel xxi. 6; "holy bread" (*ibid.*), "the pile-bread" Nehemiah x. 33; in Greek "the loaves set forth" (προκειμενοι, Exod. xxxix. 18), or "the loaves of the setting forth" (πρόθεσις), as they were generally called, were kept from Sabbath to Sabbath and were only for the priests.

From the Greek liturgies, ancient and modern, it is evident that the shewbread influenced their conception of the Lord's Supper; and especially its description in Leviticus xxiv. 7, εἰς ἀνάμνησιν προκειμένα τῷ κυρίῳ.

In the Liturgy of St. James we read: "Send Thy all-holy Spirit upon us and upon these holy gifts set forth (προκειμένα) that He may make this loaf the sacred body of Thy Christ, and this cup the precious blood of Thy Christ." In the Liturgy of St. Clement we have: "Look upon these gifts, set forth (προκειμένα) in Thy presence ἐνώπιόν σου (another remembrance of the shewbread, ἄρτοι ἐνώπιον, Exod. xxv. 30), and send down Thy Holy Spirit upon this sacrifice (θυσία) that He may show this bread to be the body of Thy Christ, etc." In the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, "send Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts set forth (προκειμένα) and make this bread the precious body of Thy Christ, etc." St. Basil's liturgy is even more reminiscent of the shewbread: "Presenting (προσθέτης) the antitypes of the holy body and blood of Thy Christ, we implore Thee that Thy Holy Spirit may come upon us and upon these gifts set forth" (πρόκειμένα).

The verb for "presenting" is the same as that used in Exodus xl. 23 of the shewbread (προσέθηκαν). St. Mark's liturgy has: "Send Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these loaves (ἄρτοι) and upon these cups that He may sanctify and consecrate them and make the loaf the body and the cup the blood of the New Testament." Here the plural is evidently suggested by the loaves, ἄρτοι, of the "setting forth" (πρόθεσις). By the way, it should be pointed out here that the Greek verb to lie (κείσθαι) is used as the passive of the verb to "place" or "set" (τιθέναι); e.g., "the law lies"

(*κείται*), in 1 Timothy i. 9, is the passive of to make (*τιθέναι*) a law. And so here *προκειμένα*, used of the gifts set forth, is the idiomatic passive of *προτιθέναι*, the word used of setting forth the loaves. This makes the connection of the shewbread, the loaves of the *prothesis*, or setting forth, with the gifts set forth, *προκειμένα*, in the liturgies quite clear. It is also to be observed that in the Greek liturgies followed by the compilers of the new Prayer Book these gifts set forth are regarded as an oblation or sacrifice, *θυσία*, and that the Holy Spirit is invoked to come upon them and transubstantiate them into the body and blood of Christ.

Now what did Cranmer do in 1552? Let Dr. Burkitt answer: "He did not turn the Eucharist into a real but pagan sacrifice of bread and wine. He was too sound a Western Divine to fall into the error of the Greeks. In this he differed from the Non-jurors and their modern imitators."¹ But Cranmer in 1549 had fallen into the very error of the Greeks. It was from them and their obviously erroneous connection of the Holy Communion with the shewbread, the loaves set forth, *προκειμένα*, for a remembrance, *εις ανάμνησιν*, where the Hebrew word *azkarah* means a memorial, that he composed his great, although erroneous, sentence, "We . . . do celebrate and make here before Thy divine majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance His blessed passion, mighty resurrection and glorious ascension." (Cf. the Greek liturgies, "remembering His saving sufferings, His resurrection, His ascension.")

It was consequently from the Greek liturgies and their erroneous connecting of the Holy Communion with the shewbread, and through Cranmer, that the Revising Committee of 1927 took the equally grand and equally erroneous sentence of their canon with the change of order and the alteration "set forth" for "make," an alteration suggested by the comment of St. Paul, "you do show" (A.V.), more correctly "proclaim" (R.V.) (for *καταγγέλλετε* is used in every other place in the New Testament of preaching) "the Lord's death till He come" (1 Corinthians xi. 26), and by the name of the shewbread, "the loaves of the setting-forth" (*πρόθεσις*). The passage reads, "We . . . do celebrate and set forth before Thy Divine Majesty with these Thy holy gifts the memorial which He hath willed us to make."

II. We have shown that it is through an erroneous rendering of the Hebrew that the word "memorial" in Leviticus xxiv. 7 was brought into Cranmer's first Prayer Book. We have now to consider the meaning of the expression *τοῦτο ποιῆτε* (*touto poieite*). Can it mean "make this memorial"? Such a phrase in connection with the bread and wine, and with the expression "celebrate and set forth before Thy Divine Majesty," distinctly implies an offering. So we have to ask, Does *τοῦτο ποιῆτε* mean "offer this" or "do this action"? Some argue that because *facio*² is used a few times in a sacrificial sense, once or twice with an ablative, e.g. "facere

¹ *Eucharist and Sacrifice*, p. 28.

² Also *operari*, Tac. A., 2, 14; and *δέξω*, Homer.

vitulâm," to sacrifice a calf (Virg. *Ec.* 3, 77) and also "Junoni . . . facere" (Cic. *pro Mur.*, 41, 90), that *poiein* (*ποιεῖν*) must be taken here in the sacrificial sense of "offer this."

In the LXX there are some 2,500 instances of *poiein*: in some 50 of these the rendering "offer" is possible owing to the presence of some sacrificial term in the context, in the shape of a verb, adverb or noun. But it is a remarkable fact that the Latin translators of the LXX avoided rendering *poiein* in such sacrificial passages by their word "facere," except in such cases as "to make an holocaust." And it is also to be noted that the regular Hebrew word for offering a sacrifice, *hiqrîb*, is not rendered by *poiein* but by *propherein* (*προσφέρειν*).

The fact is that *poiein*, like the English "do," is used in a hundred different idioms and phrases. It is an indefinite verb, meaning many things, and its definition must be supplied by something else in the context. Now in the institution of the Holy Communion there is no sacrificial term. "Body," "Cup,"—these are not sacrificial words. And so we argue that even admitting that *poiein*, when the context demands, can bear a sacrificial meaning, this context does not demand it, and therefore it is not to be rendered here as "make" this memorial (in the context of the canon meaning "offer").

But there may be no reason even for such an admission, as a further examination of the use of *poiein* in the LXX shows. In the first place, if *poiein* is a sacrificial word—which, by the way, is far different from a word that is used in connection with a sacrifice—why is *poiein thusian* (*ποιεῖν θυσίαν*) not found in either LXX or New Testament? On a few occasions, in rendering the Hebrew parallel passage, it is used like Hebrew 'âsâh to save repetition (Ps. lxxv. 13). But the sacrificial word "offer" was employed in the first of the double clauses. When used with an animal suitable for sacrifice it can always mean "prepare," e.g., 2 Samuel xii. 4, "prepare (*ποιῆσαι*) the lamb for the stranger." Genesis xviii. 7, "he hastened to prepare (*ποιῆσαι*) the calf" (for eating). This is the verb used of the preparing of the bullocks in 1 Kings xviii. 23 ff. It is used several times in Exodus xxix. 35, 36, 38, 39. And if we are to render it "sacrifice" in one place we must render it so in all, that is, if we are to be logical and consistent. And so we shall have to read in v. 35, "You shall sacrifice (*ποιήσεις*) to Aaron and his sons." Whereas, the simple words "do for" and "do" are adequate and consistent renderings all through this passage.

And again Exodus xxii. 30, "So shalt thou do with (*ποιήσεις*) thine oxen"; Exodus xxiii. 11, "So shalt thou do with thy vineyard"; Deuteronomy xxii. 3, "So shalt thou do with his ass," are passages which militate against the sacrificial meaning. The same verb is used of the prince and his offerings in Ezekiel xlv. 22 ff.; but it was not the prince but the high priest who offered them. The prince had them prepared. Leviticus ii. 11, "No meal offering (*θυσία*) which you shall offer (*προσφέρειν*) to the Lord shall be made or prepared of leaven (*ποιηθήσεται*)," and many other passages

prove that the verb *poiein* can be used in a sacrificial connexion and yet not mean "offer."

And the Greek translator of 2 Kings xvii. 32 was unaware of this meaning of *poiein*, for he renders the Hebrew: "they made for themselves (*ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς*) priests of the high places; and made (them) for themselves in the house of the high places." If "made" in the second clause is to be rendered "sacrifice" we shall have, "they sacrificed to themselves"!

In the New Testament, the verb *poiein* is used with the passover, but never in the sense of sacrificing the paschal lamb but of keeping the passover. In the former case *thuein*, *θύειν*, was used, Mark xiv. 12, Luke xxii. 7, 1 Corinthians v. 7. Contrast "I will keep *poio* (*ποιῶ*) the passover at thy house," Matthew xxvi. 18.

In Luke ii. 27, "*το δο* (*ποιῆσαι*) for him according to the law" cannot mean "offer," for it refers to the Presentation of Christ. The offering was not for Him but for the purification of the mother. St. Luke ii. 25 used "give" (*δοῦναι*) an offering, not "make." In Hebrews xi. 28, "he made (*πεποίηκεν*) the passover and the sprinkling (*πρόσχυσις*) of blood." It is of the Mosaic institutions that the writer is speaking, and the word cannot be rendered "offer" in either case. In 1 Timothy ii. 1, "I order you to make prayers and thanksgivings," *ποιεῖσθαι προσευχάς*, not "that prayers be made." The middle, not the active, is used with such verbs, e.g. to "make a journey" requires the middle (Luke xiii. 22); and in Luke v. 33 they make (*ποιῶνται*) supplications. The active (*poiein*) could mean *compose*, not "offer," and so the rendering "that eucharists be offered" is ruled out by the Greek idiom.

A study of the use of *anamnesis* and *poiein* has thus proved that they cannot mean, when conjoined, offer or make a memorial; and still less so when the former is not the direct object of the latter.

We have now to see what commentators say. Justin Martyr (Trypho) 345 has an instructive passage. Arguing with a Jew who said that only the prayers of the Diaspora were acceptable to God, and that "he called their prayers sacrifices," *θυσίαι*, Justin says: "Prayers and thanksgivings made by worthy people are the only sacrifices (*θυσίαι*) perfect and pleasing to God. I myself assert. These are the only things Christians have been taught to do even at the COMMEMORATION (*ἀνάμνησις*) of their food both dry and liquid, *in which* they also remember the passion suffered by the Son of God for them."¹ The whole service is thus an *anamnesis* or act of commemoration of God's natural gifts and of the passion of the Son of God: and the sacrifices offered (*θυσίαι*) are the prayers and thanksgivings of the faithful. This passage is therefore very strong against the rendering "offer or make this memorial of Me." Furthermore the Vulgate "*hoc facite in meam commemorationem*" cannot be rendered either as "make or offer this memorial."

It is distinctly an action that is the object of both *ποιεῖτε* and *facite*, an action that cannot be described as a memorial, for that

¹ καὶ ἐπ' ἀνάμνησει δὲ τῆς τροφῆς αὐτῶν ξηραῖς τε καὶ ὑγρῶς ἐν ἧ . . . μέμνηται. Cf. Apol. i. 66.

is a thing, but as a commemorative act. Bellarmine the Roman theologian ridiculed the idea that "facite hoc" could mean "make this sacrifice." He called that idea "impostura adversariorum," says it was a fiction of Calvin and that Catholics do not argue so stupidly. He analyses our Lord's words thus: "that which (id quod) we are now doing, I consecrating and delivering and you receiving and eating, continue to do until the end of the world." Estius, another Roman commentator, took the words as "do this," saying that to render "do" (facite) as make a sacrifice (sacrificate), as some here interpreted it, is contrary to the mind of Scripture. He said that the words of the Canon "haec quotiescumque feceritis in mei memoriam facietis" cannot, except in a forced sense, mean "make a sacrifice," and the word "facite" gives the power of doing those things which Christ did. With regard to "hoc facite" of the cup, he says "it is restricted to the one action (actionem) of drinking." Of *anamnesis* (ἀνάμνησις) he says: "in meam commemorationem" is *recordationem*, which means "recollection" not a memorial. What (quod) I now do and (quod) what you do at My command, that is to be done by you and your successors and in commemoration of Me, recollecting My passion and death for you. Maldonatus, the erudite Jesuit, explained the words as "Do this which I have done, that is, consecrate for that end for which I consecrated, that is, for remembrance of Me." This excludes the rendering, "make this memorial of Me."

Accordingly, we are logically entitled to say that our studies of the Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and of the greatest commentators, have led us to the same conclusion—that the Consecration prayer in the new Prayer Book is unsound from the standpoint of scholarship; and that the rendering of our Lord's words, which are correctly translated, "Do this in remembrance of Me," as "Make or offer this memorial of Me," is bad scholarship, as such a rendering would require the middle voice (ποιεῖσθαι) with a verbal noun, converts a noun of action into a thing and a purpose into a direct object!

¹ *Opera*, iii, p. 362 b. E.