BIBLICAL EXPRESSIONS IN MODERN ENGLISH

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This is an attempt just to examine the signification and use of a few words or phrases of Modern English that have either been originated or suffered modification by the translations of the Bible, represented by the King James's version, thereby to cast a glance at their contributions to the expressions of present day English.

Notwithstanding that "Unrivalled in so many other ways, Shakespeare has no equal with regard to the extent and profundity of his influence on the English language" (Bradley, M.E. 229), it is quite surprising to learn how much his thought and vocabulary are indebted to the Scripture he used, which is now identified with the Genevan Bible of 1560 (see Carter, Shk. Holy Scrip. i-iv; S. Lee, Life of Shk. 23).

There are many passages from the poet that are counted among familiar quotations; yet we have in them not a few instances which in turn are based on Scriptural idea or phrascology. The same is sometimes true with other authors. When we meet with e.g. "Happily the dead past bury its dead" (Wells, Mod. U. 61), our appreciation is not sufficient if we associate only Mat. 8. 22, for there is a probable link between the two, namely "Let the dead past bury its dead" (Longf. Ps. of Life), though such a second-hand expression, let us say, is often difficult to distinguish.

Then to disguised expressions we should take good heed. Of a worn-out camel, killed and abandoned in the desert, Doughty puts: "The hyena, the wolf, the fox which follow the camp, finding this meat [the camel], the carcase is rent and the bones will be scattered" (Ara. D. I. 57). Nothing strange,
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prima facie. But 'to be rent' or 'to be scattered' are both ideas rich in Biblical associations, often symbolizing God's wrath and punishment (cf. III. p. 34, IV. pp. 41, 2). Moreover we have such passages as 'God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee' (Ps. 53. 5; cf. Ps. 141. 7) or 'And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth' (Deut. 28. 26, Jere. 7. 33, 16. 4, etc.; cf. Is. 5. 25, Judges, 14. 6, etc.). From these we suspect if the author's imagination was promoted by certain Scriptural recollections.

A more obvious case is Thackeray's "lucky is the man whose servants speak well of him" (Nvee. 205), which can be analysed into two. "Lucky is the man" is parallel to 'happy is the man,' frequent in Proverbs (e.g. 3. 13, 28. 14), etc., associated with the Beatitude phrases (e.g. Mat. 5. 11); and the whole sentence is again a variant of the famous passage 'woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you' (Luke, 6. 26).

That a Biblical passage or phrase is often subject to 'ignoble' or playful use is a fact that can not now be helped, though we hear of Ælfric having once expressed his "unwillingness to continue with his work of translation (scil. of the Bible) for fear that the English version of the text might be put to improper uses by the ignorant of both clergy and laity" (Krapp, R.K.P. 221). And certain authors employ such a questionable trick usque ad nauseam.

Even the household words 'wife of one's bosom' is originally a Hebraism adopted in the version of 1611, Deut. 13. 6 (in earlier versions 'wife . . . in thy bosom'). But its English use is, to follow the N.E.D., influenced by such senses of 'bosom' as the repository of secret thoughts or the seat of emotions, desires, etc. Side by side with this we have also in Deut. 28. 56 'husband of one's bosom,' which, however, has not as yet been received as a current expression.

The phrase 'heart melt,' to faint, etc. we have in 2 Sam.
17. 10, Josh. 2. 11; ib. 7. 5 'the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.' Nevertheless, the N.E.D. (s.v. melt 3) mentions that "the idiom is apparently native, though the examples in the versions of the Bible are literal translations from the Hebrew"; so that we may give this as an example of the coincidence of idioms. Yet it may be that its present use, though modified, as in Kingsley, Hebrew. "And the hearts of all the French were turned to water" (N. E. D. s. v.) is after Bible use.

In the next place Biblical archaism calls for special notice, of which a few examples are mentioned in Jesp. Gr. S. § 205 & 231. To give one or two not in them. In Bunyan and others we sometimes meet with 'to me-ward,' 'to you-ward', etc. This is probably because we have such in 2 Cor. 13. 3, or Ps. 40. 5, etc. Then the present use of 'quick' for 'the living,' especially in the combination 'quick and dead,' is chiefly an echo of Acts, 10. 42 or the Apostle's Creed, viz. 'it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead,' which is fully alluded to in Mil. P.L. XII. 460 "and thence [He] shall come... with glory and power, to judge both quick and dead."

There are some expressions which are now obsolete, whereas they had been in use for a time. For instance, the first possession of the Genevan Bible, Amos, 4. 6 'cleanness of teeth' (1382 eggyng of t.; Cov. ydle teth), implying 'scarcity of food,' is used e.g. in 1642, but in our own days it is current no more.

Misunderstandings or misquotations too play a part in the making of novelties of expression (for which see Brad. M.E. 225; Fowler, M.E.U. s.v. 'Misquotation'). Curiously enough, even what seems to be a misprint of the A.V. has left an indelible mark upon recent English, that is in Mat. 23, 24 'which strain at a gnat' (1526, 1535, 1560, 1881, strain out), where 'at' is said to have been a blunder for 'out' (see further Stoffel, S.E. 151 f.; cf. Dr. Ichikawa, S.E.Gr. on 'Such
In addition to these, what we might take as mistranslations from the original have sometimes turned out literary commonplace, the remarkable phrases being 'to smite under the fifth rib' (1611 2 Sam. 2. 23); 'iron entered into his soul' (Pr. 105. 18 of 1539 Great B., Pr. Bk., etc., not of A. & R.V.), hence Lamb's "wood had entered into my soul" (Super. Man); 'scattered and peeled' (1611 Is. 18. 2; see N.E.D. s.v. peeled 5).

So far I have tried to shadow forth what sort of Biblical expressions occur in Modern English. In the ensuing papers I shall deal with individual words or phrases chiefly on a historical principle within my accessible material, in which some of what I have mentioned above will occasionally be seen again with a certain degree of overlappings. Also I have sometimes referred to the Book of Common Prayer, which too has been of great account in the making of the language, but my regret is that I could not often afford to compare the differences between the present one revised in 1662 and those of earlier publication.

I

English of to-day is provided with several expressions combined with 'face' insinuated through Biblical versions, though some of them sound quite natural to our ears. Above all, the type 'the face of the earth, sea, etc.,' is too common to draw attention, still more to be called Biblical, for instance: Tha. Nuc. 2 "I wish they would exterminate every cur of them [dogs] off the face of the earth." Yet I am tempted to compare e.g. Gen. 7. 4 'every living substance ... will I destroy from off the face of the earth.' Similar wordings can be found passim in the A.V., which, along with its marginal notes on 2 Sam. 14. 7, Ezek. 29. 5, etc. or Hos. 10. 7 'Heb. the face of the water' for 'the water,' abundantly reveals the style being a genius of the Scriptural language due to the original tongue.
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Nor is it confined within the four corners of the A.V., but is seen in Biblical versions since Wycliffe's. (The *N.E.D.* s.v. *face* sb. 11 too admits its English use being originally Hebraistic.) Accordingly, we may give the following sentences as examples of this Biblical use of 'face,' i.e. for 'surface':

Hooker, *Ecc. Pol.* Pref. iv. 1 "We require you to find out but one Church upon the face of the whole earth that ..." (q. in Davies, *B.E.* 147); Eliot; *Mill F.* 736 "The desolation ... had left little visible trace on the face of the earth"; Wells, *Mod. U.* 81 "Why should we men play the part of bacteria upon the face of our Mother?"; De Quincy, *Mail C.* 120 "The mail-coach it was that distributed over the face of the land... the heart-shaking news of Trafalgar..."; R. Montgo. *Omnipr. Deity*, i "And thou, vast ocean! on whose awful face time's iron feet can print no ruin-trace" (Bart.).

In most of these cases, the omission of 'face' will cause no difference of meaning to speak of; yet it must be acknowledged that the word gives the fullness of the rhythm and enhances the beauty of the sentence.

It will be rather surprising to learn that even 'before the face of' (since 1300 *Cursor M.*), for 'in front of' or contextually 'in the presence (or sight) of,' etc., also belongs originally to Biblical Hebraism,3 now being seen in verses like *Num.* 19. 3, *Hos.* 7. 2, or in Pr. Bk. *Morning Pr.* (42) 'we should not ... cloke them before the face of Almighty God' (see *N.E.D.* s.v. *face* sb. 2. g), where 'face' is almost redundant, though in cases it may give concreteness to the expression. A doubtless echo of this style is in Swinb. *Laus V.* 410-3 "To have

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1. In Hebrew the use of 'face' (*pānim*) is very extensive, and at times we can better understand without it.

2. In such a case the usual word would be 'bosom' instead of 'face.'

3. In many cases where the A.V. has simply 'before' the Hebrew has 'face' with divers prepositions corresponding to 'in,' 'to,' 'upon,' 'with,' etc., even when it is related to time, e.g. in *Amos* 1.1. In *Mk.* 1.2 we read 'I send my messenger before thy face,' i.e. 'in advance of thee,' so in *Lk.* 1. 76, 9. 52, etc. And 'presence' of our version answers almost always to the original 'face.' Cf. the m. of 2 *Sam.* 17. 11.
known love, how bitter a thing it is, and afterward be cast out of God's sight; Yea, these that know not, shall they have such bliss High up in barren heaven before his face (i.e. before God, etc.) . . .?" (Cf. IV. pp. 38, 9).

One of its kindred expressions 'in the face of' also deserves a word or two in this connection. Seeing that no instances of it are known before 1398 Trevisa, Barth. De. P.R. "Angels . . . ben stable in the face of god" (N.E.D.), and that this example itself is of a Scriptural conception, it will be permissible to suppose if it has developed after 'before the face of' on the analogy of 'in the sight (or presence) of' which is seen some time before it, though I have no other material that would warrant the assertion. Yet one thing can be stated that its use has sometimes a reminiscence of a Pr. Bk. passage, i.e. 'Dearly beloved, we are gathered . . . in the sight of God, and in the face of this congregation, to join etc.' (Solemn. Mat. 352), as in Addison, Spect. "Pray for him in the Face of the whole congregation" (N.E.D.). (Cf. further N.E.D. s.v. ear 4.)

Other phrases that have place here consist of 'to set one's face . . .' (s. 1388), such as 'to set one's face against (or from), to,1 towards,' for which we have authority in Lev. 17. 10 (cf. 1 K. 2. 15 'all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign,' where good-will is meant), 2 K. 12. 17, Gen. 31. 21 and in many others. These are obviously followed e.g. in Lamb, Grace M. 100 "I quarrel with no man's taste, nor would set my face against those excellent things"; Brontë, W.H. 50 "Heathcliff held both bridles as they rode on, and they set their faces from the village"; Dean Inge, St. Paul (Modern Prose, P. 55, King's Treasuries) "[Paul] has set his face to achieve . . . the conquest of the Roman Empire"; Lowell, Biglow P. Poems "It's high time . . . to be settin' our faces towards

1. Of this phrase Gesenius says (Heb. Eng. Lex. p. 852) "to intend, to purpose doing anything, but still with special reference to going or departing." Cf. Lk. 9. 53 'And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.'
reconstructin' the national basis" (N.E.D). And the memory of Isaiah's dauntless face is embalmed in English by the figure 'to set one's face like (or as) a flint,' after Is. 50. 7 of the Genevan Bible (same in 1611), for example: Kipl. Kim, 208 "... and the lama set his face as a flint against it, averring that the time had not yet come."

I have also met with E. B. Brown. The Look, 12-3 "[Peter] turned free And went out speechless from the face of all,' where the last words would be of the same use as in e.g. Gen. 35. 1 "... when thou fleddest from the face of Esau" (cf. the m. of e.g. 1 Sam. 17. 24 'Heb. from his face' for 'from him').

As I have suggested occasionally, the translators of the A.V. often avoided reproducing original 'face,' perhaps because many of its uses are superfluous to English speech feeling; and in only a few cases or special combinations they retained it, which, however, proved a favourable incentive to many modern authors imitating the style, for, though in part it may appear to be pleonastic, its value must not be denied on the other hand. But still there seems to be a tendency to drop the word from certain phrases in their application. This is particularly observable in the case of 'to grind the face of the poor, etc.', based on Is. 3. 15 (s. 1388), which has called forth in literary English a stock phrase 'to grind the poor' and its variants with no 'face' (see Stoff. S.E. 132 ff.). Cf. Scott, Kenil. 123 "... men fear almost to mention his name, much more to set themselves against his practices", where 'themselves' takes the place of the Hebraistic 'their faces'.

Yet those preceding examples will be suggestive of the weighty bearing Hebraistic 'face' of the Bible has upon the common expressions of to-day. It will be more realized if we come to think of such combinations as 'respect of persons' or 'acceptation of persons' (aft. Acts, 10. 34; Gal. 2. 6, etc., s. 1382), in which 'person' represents "L. personam of the Vulgate...", the Gr. being πρόσωπον 'face, countenance, person', usually in the comb. προσωπολή-πτευ 'to accept the face of,' rendering Heb.
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nāsā' pānim 'to lift up or accept the face' (prob. orig. to lift up the face of one prostrated in humility or supplication)" (N.E.D. s.v. person 13; see ib. s.v. accept 2, acceptance 2).

With these words as a clue I proceed to 'countenance fall,' to lose one's courage or show disappointment. In spite of the fact that it is such a felicitous and indispensable phraseology in daily speech, very few who use it would ever think of associating the primal eldest murderer whose countenance fell because the Lord had no respect to him as is given in Gen. 4. 5 (1560 c. fell downe; 1635 c. changed; 1382 felle his chere). By analogy we say 'fallen face,' etc. But in the original it is just an opposite expression of 'to lift up one's countenance,' "spoken of one conscious of rectitude & therefore full of confidence" (H. E. Lex. p. 695), as in Job, 11. 15 'For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.' Therefore, it is probably derived from a physical meaning 'to cast one's face down' (cf. Q. Troy Town "Caleb's face fell a full inch"—N.E.D.). Even so far as the English Bible goes, this is perceivable in Gen. 4. 6, 7 'why is thy face fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?' where the margin of the R.V. observes 'Or, shalt it not be lifted up?' (cf. 'person,' supra). (See further cognate expressions in Job, 29. 24 and Ps. 4. 6, etc.)

Speeches using 'to fall before (a person), at one's feet, on one's face or knees' with reference to voluntary prostration, etc. (often fig.), are so common that we scarcely ever have the idea of doubting their origin. Yet the fact is, to follow the N.E.D. (s.v. fall v. 20), that they are used after Hebrew idiom preserved in the Vulgate. In English some of them are already seen in 1000, our version holding them in e.g. Lev. 26. 7, Judg. 5. 27, 1 Sam. 20. 41, Ezra, 9. 5. Forasmuch as they are

1. Of this place which is an elliptical expression Gesenius interprets: "lifting up of the countenance will be to thee, i.e. thou wilt wear a cheerful countenance" H.E.Lex. pp. 695, 6).
almost of daily appearance, examples seem to be unnecessary, but a few memorable ones may be permitted here. With Quia M.A. 35-7 "(And the surf . . . She saw far off divide . . .)
And the kingdoms and kings . . . That fell before her face.
Yea, great was the fall of them, all that rose against her," it is worth while to examine how much Swinburne reflects Biblical wordings by comparing Ps. 72. 11, Mat. 7. 27, or Ps. 18. 39 (cf. 'before one's face,' supra). Again in his Laus V. 353 "But when I came I fell down at his feet, Saying, 'Father . . .'
we see a striking resemblance with John, 11. 32 'Then when Mary was come where Jesus was . . . she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord . . .' Bunyan's "Mercy fell to the ground on her face, before him, worshipped and said . . ." (Pil. P. 203) leaves no word that is not due to the Scripture (see e.g. Ruth, 2. 10), the word 'worship' often occurring inseparably from these idioms in the Holy Writ (see e.g. Mat. 18.26, Acts, 10. 25). Thackeray too affords a typical case of its echo in Nuc. 55 "There are people upon whom rank and worldly goods make such an impression that they naturally fall down on their knees and worship the owners."

Going a step further, the pictorial phrase 'to lick\(^1\) the dust' (s. 1382) would, I fancy, be one expressing the final fall of 'to fall on one's face,' etc. It is observable, for instance, in Is. 49. 23 (1560) 'They shall worship thee with their faces toward the earth, and lick up the *dust of thy feet,' where the margin has 'they shall humble themselves to Christ their head, and give him all honour.' At all events, however, it will be an image originally implying utter prostration or defeat as in Ps. 72. 9 'They . . . shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust,' with which has a resemblance Blake, Ever. Gos. 54 "You shall bow before her feet; You shall lick the dust for meat." This singularly felicitous figure of the intended

\(^1\) The *N.E.D.* (s.v. *lick* v. 3) mentions that 'to lick up (an enemy's forces),' to 'annihilate,' is after *Num.* 22. 4 (since Cov.).
meaning seems to have proved a valuable addition to the language giving rise in popular parlance to many expressions of the similar import. To give some:

Shk. Temp. III. ii. 27 "How does your honour? Let me lick thy shoe. I'll not serve him"; J. Whitaker, Uzziah "Have you not known some in a low condition, to bow and scrape, lick the spittle on the ground" (N.E.D.); Mil. P.L. IX. 526 "Oft he [the Enemy of Mankind] bowed ... and licked the ground wherein she trod"; Lane, Arab. Nts. "He went again to the king, and kissed the ground before him" (ib.); J. Taylor, Spir. Despot. "To kiss the dust before monstrous superstitions" (ib.).

In most of these, it is noticeable the mixture of the elements of 'to bow before,' which itself is chiefly of a Biblical origination in sense of submission and the like. The idea 'to bow before one' is indeed a spirit pervading throughout the Bible, representing itself in various turns of expression, of which there remains one more worth mentioning here, namely 'to bow the knee,'1 seen in most versions since Wycliffe's. Our version involves the idiom in several passages, e.g. Is. 45. 23, Philip. 2. 10, or Rom. 11. 4 (sim. in 1560). Especially Byron, C.H. 1. 338 "men forget the blood which she [the Babylonian whore] hath spilt, And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to garnish guilt" is to be compared with the last reference (cf. 1 K. 19. 18). In the next famous passage, perhaps it means 'to humble': "Help, angels! Make assay! Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel, Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!" (Ham. III. iii. 69-71; cf. "supple knee," R. 2, I. iv. 33, Mil. P.L. V. 788).

II

Among familiar expressions which the grammarians term 'cognate objects' we have 'to die the death,' appearing in

1. In the original there are several synonyms of the verb 'to kneel, or bend the knee,' and in partly English renderings are not literal (see e.g. the m. of Gen. 41. 43 of the R.V.). But this English phrase would ultimately be a Hebrew echo, for in e.g. Is. 45. 23 we have a parallel. Cf. 2 Chr. 6. 13, Judges, 7. 5, 6, etc.
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1535 for the first time. While the A.V. has it rather sparingly, it is terribly persistent in Coverdale’s or the Geneva Bible. In these versions it answers mostly to the peculiar mode of Hebrew expression ‘dying (one) shall die’ or literally ‘to die (one) shall die,’ for which the Vulgate has morte mori, and hence Wycliffe ‘by or with death (one) shall die.’ In our version, the same, which puzzled Luther so much to his so-called mistranslation ‘des Todes sterben,’ is represented by ‘surely die.’ Take, for instance, Gen. 2. 17 ‘In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,’ where Cov. has ‘thou shalt dye the death’ (sim. in 1560), 1382 ‘with death thou shalt die,’ Vulg. ‘morte morieris,’ Heb. ‘mōth tāmūth,’ i.e. ‘to die thou shalt die,’ or one may put ‘dying thou shalt die,’ in which ‘mōth’ is the ‘Infinitive Absolute’ of the verb ‘mūth,’ to die, which gives, by reason of the sonorous vowel ō, the feature of that verb-form in general, a kind of gravity to the combination. Taking this into consideration, Dr. Johnson’s remark in his Shakespeare “‘die the death’ seems to be a solemn phrase for death inflicted by law” (q. in N.E.D. s.v. die 1. c) sounds like appropriate words of homage to the translator’s skill. Our greatest poet employs the solemn phrase which Schmidt explains “to perish by the sword of justice” several times; for instance, in Cymb. IV. ii. 97 Cloten says to Guiderius “Die the death: When I have slain thee with my proper hand.” A like use is in Bun. Holy IV. 33 “Then as one man with one mouth, they cried out together, Let him die the death that will not” (cf. Mat. 15. 4, Mk. 7. 10). The famous passage of our version of this phrase,

1. I followed the wordings of H.E.Lex. & the margin of A.V. Gen. 2. 17.
2. Frequently, in the Mosaic law especially, we have also ‘surely be put to death.’ This is a rendering of the cognate expression belonging to the species called Hophal ‘to be caused to die,’ being slightly different from the above. But in most cases of this expression Cov. and Gen. Bible equally put ‘dye the death’ and Luther ‘des Todes sterben.’ Qv.: was Coverdale’s rendering suggested from Luther’s?
3. The Greek T. has ἰβίδων θαυμάω σέλευσα, by death let him die.
though with no imposing meaning at all, is *Num. 23. 10* 'Let me die the death of the righteous' (sim. in the original), with which may be compared Cowper, *Letters* "he lived the life, and died the death of a Christian" (*Jesp. N.E.G.* III. 225 q.v.; cf. *Gal. 2. 20*).

As regards 'to die a (specified) death' a historical account is given in the *N.E.D.* (s.v. *die 2*, q. v.) in relation to its supposed original *morte mori*.

Historically speaking, in earlier English, even in Chaucer' the verb 'dream' took as a rule a dative case. But the present syntax is already seen in *1300 Cursor Mundi* 'Yur suns and yur doghteres fre, and yur yongmen sightes se. Yur eldrin men sal *dreames dreme* ' (Cott. 18984-6), which corresponds to the famous passage of *Joel, 2. 28* 'and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall *dream dreams* (so in 1388; sim. in Heb.), your young men shall see visions.' This is obviously echoed in e.g. Kipl. *Kim*, 43 "Do ye both *dream dreams*? A Red Bull on a green field, that shall carry thee to the Heavens—or what? Was it a *vision*? Did one make a *prophecy*?" In such a sentence readers not acquainted with the Scripture might be tempted to take exception to the object of the verb 'dream,' because it appears to be superfluous adding nothing to the verbal notion. But its *raison d'être* can be understood only by a reference to that prophetic passage.

The extensive use of what we might call 'cognate objects' is one of the features of Hebrew, which is suggested in the A.V. by the marginal notes on e.g. *2 Chr. 2. 7*, *Ps. 64. 6*, *Ezek. 29. 19*, or *Ps. 106. 14* 'Heb. lusted a lust' for 'lusted exceedingly', or *ib. 126. 1* 'Heb. returned the returning' for 'turned again.' Similar phenomenon can frequently be seen in the Greek Testament, of which ἔγνωκα τὸν καλὸν ἔγνωκα has given since Tindale's version the often quoted 'fight the good fight' (*1 Tim. 6. 12*; cf. *2 Tim. 4.7*). (See further *N.E.D.* s.v.
Furthermore, the record of the *N.E.D.* clearly reveals the common phrase 'to vow a vow' having been inherited from the Scriptural language, the first illustration being 1340 Hampole, *Psalter*, 131.2 "Vow he vowed til god of iacob"; and among nearly a score of distinguishable 'cognate objects' in the A.V., it outdoes all the rest in its frequency, being literally translated from the original.

Nor is the type "to sleep a sleep" known before 1382 (e.g. *Jere.* 51.39; sim. in Heb.). The third verse of the thirteenth Psalm of our version has 'lighten mine eyes, lest I *sleep the sleep of death*." The italicized words are perhaps quoted in or at least are worth comparing with Blake's "England! awake! . . . Why wilt thou *sleep the sleep of death*, And close her [Jerusalem] from thy ancient walls?" (*Jerusalem*, Oxf. p. 406) or "Ah! gentle may I lay me down . . . And gentle *sleep the sleep of death*, and gentle hear the voice of Him that walketh in the garden in the evening time" (*The Bk. of Thel*, 16-8; cf. *Gen.* 3. 8).

Now, the use of such a periphrasis in common English is generally speaking a modern tendency. So that the circumstance that the Biblical versions take the lead of many of the commonest ones, and that certain of them are sometimes used with more or less direct reference to Scriptural passages, favours the supposition if Biblical texts have had most to do with familiarising and preparing the way for the wider application of the style.

No less noteworthy in the Scripture is the frequent occurrence of 'cognate datives' like 'to strengthen with strength' (*Ps.* 138.3) or 'to lament with lamentation' (*2 Sam.* 1. 17, *Mic.* 2. 4) amounting again to nearly a score of different kinds. It is also Hebraistic as hinted in the margins of e.g. *2 Sam.* 13. 15, *Is.* 38. 3; *Gen.* 27. 33 'Heb. trembled with a great trembling greatly,' being perhaps a device to emphasize the
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verbal notion (sim. in Greek Test.'). The imitation of the structure² is especially marked in Swinburne, e.g. Laus V. 59 "would God...That sleep were sealed upon me with a seal" (cf. 1 K. 21. 8); Hymn to Prov. 66 "Will ye take her to chain her with chains?"; Super F. B. 25 "And with harrows men harrowed us." Brontë, W. H. 168 "I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall" (esp. cf. the m. of 2 Sam. 13. 15); Blake. Song of Los, Africa, 21 "Orc on Mount Atlas howl'd, chain'd down with the chain of Jealousy" might also be echoes of the same (cf. Jesp. Philo. Gr. 138).

III

The combination 'the four (or all the) corners (of the earth),' 'corner' implying extremity of the earth, etc., is known since Coverdale's version, and has sometimes been followed in common language as in Shk. Merch. II. vii. 39 "all the world desires her; From the four corners of the earth they come"; Cayton, Pleas. Notes "Physicians from the four corners are called" (N.E.D.); Dryden, Ode to the Pious Memory of... Mrs. A.K. 124 "When rattling bones together fly From the four corners of the sky." Apparently these are after e.g. Is. 11. 12 'he shall...gather...the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth' (1560 'worlde' for 'earth'). (See further N.E.D. s.v. corner I. d, 2, 6.)

Allied in structure with the above is 'the four (or all the) winds (of heaven),' now fairly frequent in the Prophetic Books. But the use of 'winds' for 'directions' is probably native, because we have 'seower windas,' etc. for 'four directions,' etc. in the Old English period, and it is perhaps since 1382 that

1. In Greek such a mode of expression is not necessarily due to Hebrew, though "die grosse Verbreitung der Ausdrucksweise im Neuen Testament ist semitisierend" (L. Radermacher, Handbuch zum Neuen T. 128, q. v.; for the loan of which my best thanks are due to Prof. Kure).

2. For other echoes of Biblical repetition in Swinburne see the note of Swinb.'s Poems by Dr. Saito, 182 (Kenkyusha Series).
Biblical versions have come to embrace the expression. None the less, its modern use seems to be mostly due to Biblical texts. The grand passage of Milton's *P.L.* II. 516 "Then of their session ended they bid cry With *trumpet's regal sound* the great result: *Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,*" might possibly have been inspired by such an apocalyptic image as in *Mat.* 24. 31. Not only that this passage always puts me in mind of *Rev.* 7. 1 'And after these things I saw *four angels* standing on the four corners of the earth, holding *the four winds of the earth.*' A more apparent example is given in the *N.E.D.*, i.e. Dickens, *Bleak H.* XXVIII "The cousins *disperse to the four winds of heaven.*" Obviously this is of the same image as in *Dan.* 11. 4 'his kingdom ... shall be *divided toward the four winds of heaven* (cf. *Zech.* 2. 6, *Ezek.* 17. 21, etc.). Near the end of this chapter of the novel we read "and all the cousins are *scattered* before dinner." A similar interchange of *scatter* and *disperse* is also seen in *Ezek.* 12. 14, 5 'I will *scatter toward every wind* all that are about him ... I shall ... *disperse* them in the countries,' with which are comparable De Quincey, *Opium E.* 49 "blind indeed, and *scattered to the winds of late ..."; Tenn. *Two Voices,* xi "‘Tho’ thou wert scatter'd to the wind, yet is there plenty of the kind.’" Further, there is an inseparable connection between *Ezek.* 37. 9 'Come from the four winds, O breath' and Carlyle, *S.R.* 88 "Here assembling from all the four winds, came the elements of an unspeakable hurlyburly," or Gregory, *McDonough's Wife,* 228 "But the servant I myself command is the pipes that *draws its breath from the four winds,* and from a wind is beyond them again, and at the back of the *winds of the air.*"

Wordings like 'the winds of heaven' or 'the dew of heaven' (e.g. *Gen.* 27. 28, s. 1000 *Ælfric's*) have directly or indirectly been the cause of analogous expressions being seen in the later language, such as Shk. *Ham.* I. ii. 141 "he might not betwixt the *winds of heaven* Visit her face too roughly"; J. Hogg, *Kilmeny,
"But it seem'd as the harp of the sky had rung, And the airs of heaven play'd round her tongue"; E. Brontë, The Prisoner, 6 “He comes . . . with evening's wandering airs, With that clear dusk of heaven that brings the thickest stars”; and “the winds of the air” which I have given from Gregory at the end of the preceding paragraph would be an analogy of ‘the birds of the air’ (e.g. Mat. 8. 20) or ‘all fowls of the air’ (e.g. Deut. 28. 26).

Although the plural ‘heavens’ is now the ordinary prose form for the visible sky, it was originally a translation of Heb. plural shāmāyim, used in Biblical language in the same sense as the singular (see N.E.D. s.v. heaven 1. c, 5. c, 7).

In Ezek. 36. 26 a noteworthy contrast of two hearts is seen, namely of the stony heart and the heart of flesh. The latter denotes a ‘tender, tractable temper and disposition’ (Cruden), and the verse just mentioned is more or less alluded to in Mil. P.L. XI. 2-5 “from the mercy-seat above Prevenient grace . . . had removed The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh Regenerate grow instead”; Cowper, Task “There is no flesh in man’s obdurate heart” (N.E.D.).

Much of the same sense as ‘heart of stone’ is ‘hardness of heart,’ for instances: Bun. Grace A. 136 “my soul was perplexed with unbelief, blasphemy, hardness of heart, questions . . .”; Tha. Nwv. 79 “[the Colonel] was quite angry and hurt at what seemed to him Sir Brian’s hardness of heart.” Originally it appears in Mark, 16. 14, etc. (s. 1382; see the m. of Ps. 81. 12; cf. Ex. 9. 34), and the Pr. Bk. too has it about five times. To give one: ‘Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word’ (Good Friday, 165). We perceive, moreover, a close relation between this and Tha. Nwv. 20 “to awaken the benighted Hottentot to a sense of truth; to convert Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Papists.”

I suspect that the collocation of Jew and Turk in Blake's Divine I. 18 “And all must love the human form, In heathen,
Turk, or Jew,” would also be due to the same (cf. "the poor 
Turks of the Prayer Book talk exactly in their own fashion 

Visiting the ancient strongholds in the desert, Doughty justly 
remarks: “The tower was always the hope of this insecure 
Semitic world, so that Jehovah is lauded as ‘a Tower of 
Salvation, a strong tower from the enemy, a strong tower is 
His name.’” (Ara. D. I. 13). Now, when we read such passages 
as But. Way F. 83 “what a tower of strength to him was 
her exactness in money matters”; Mered. Egoist, 573 “Mr. 
Whitford, . . . you have a tower of strength in the lady’s 
father”; Tenn. Ode on the Death of W. 4 “That tower of 
strength Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew” 
(Bart.), we are apt to take the italicized phrase as a variant 
of ‘strong tower’, sometimes met with in the O.T. (Ps. 61. 3, 
etc.). But the fact is not so simple. To follow Brad. M.E. 
230 it has an allusion to Shakespeare, i.e. R. 3, V. iii. 12 
“the king’s name is a tower of strength”. Yet I can not but 
take this as a reminiscence, as Carter also points out, of Pro. 
18. 10 (1560) ‘The Name of the Lorde is a strong towre’ (so 
1611). What is more, the Pr. Bk. too has it once in Solem. of 
Matrimony (358): (Minister.) ‘Be unto them a tower of strength,’ 
(Answer.) ‘From the face of their enemy.’ Such being the 
circumstance, we can not determine the exact reference of this 
phrase, provided no other indications are given, though its 
being of a Biblical image remains all the same. Moreover in 
1382 Ps. 60. 4 (mod. 61. 3) we have already the parallel of 
the Pr. Bk. passage, namely ‘the tour of strengthe fro the face 
of the enemy’ (Vulg. turris fortitudinis a facie inimici—Ps. 61. 3).

Hitherto I have occasionally referred to the importance of 
the marginal readings of the Bible. Before proceeding to 
‘wheels within wheels,’ I will give an instance or two of what 
seem to be their direct echoes.

‘Nameless’ in sense ‘too bad to be named,’ might probably 
have been initiated by the margin of Wisd. 14. 27 of 1611:
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Worshipping of idoles not to be named (marg. namelesse), is the beginning, the cause, and the end of all euill' (N.E.D. s.v. 8), with which we may compare T. Brown, Satire Woman "Of impotent, still varying desires; And of ten thousand nameless vices more Is this vile idol made" (ib.).

Then obsolete though it is now, examples of 'a word on its (upon the) wheels' are found in the middle of the seventeenth century. This is doubtless an echo of the marginal 'Heb. spoken upon his wheels' of Prov. 25. 11 'A word fitly spoken' (1611) (see N.E.D. s.v. wheel 12. c).

It is a common way, that of expressing any intricate designs, plots, etc. of things by the image 'wheel(s) within wheel(s)' as in Wilde, Ideal H. 159 "Truth is a very complex thing, and politics is a very complex business. They are wheels within wheels"; Carlyle, S.R. 185 "It is a suspicion . . . confirmed . . . by the . . . tendency of Teufelsdröch, in whom underground humours and intricate sardonic rogueries, wheel within wheel, defy all reckoning." Yet originally it is based on Ezek. 1. 16 'and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel' (so 1382 with be before in), which turned out, so to speak, a primum mobile of so many similar expressions. The N.E.D. (s.v. wheel 13. b) quotes from L. Murray, Engl. Gram.: "They are wheels within wheels; sentences in the midst of sentences", or 'H.S. Merriman', Isle of Unrest, vi: "There are wheels within wheels . . . in the social world of Paris". Here I am reminded of a line at the beginning of Hardy, The Son's Veto: "There are worlds within worlds in the great city" (i.e. London), which again associates me De Quincey's Opium E. 25 "I saw many scenes of London intrigues and complex chicanery, 'cycle and epicycle, orb in orb'", where he cites from Mil. P.L. VIII. 82-4:

"how gird the Sphere
With Centric and Eccentric scribbled o'er
Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb".

No doubt, the imagery of this extract is the same as those
of the examples given above, but I conjecture that the poet’s ingenious art had at last won him these lofty lines which surpass _par excellence_ the words of Ezekiel now before us, from which he seems to have been suggested. It is also instructive to compare Masson’s exposition concerning them: “(By a complicated use of these two devices . . .) the Ptolemic astronomers had ‘contrived to save appearance’, but only by such a dizzy intricacy of _wheels within wheels and wheels on wheels_ as Milton describes” (q. from the note of Kenkyusha _P.L._ 619).

IV

In concluding this little theme, I propose to give two passages Biblically coloured, one from verse, the other from prose, in order to show how much the actual texture of the language is imbued with Scriptural allusions or phraseologies, discussing at the same time about a few words or phrases more with which we come in contact.

The first nine lines of Swinburne’s _Hendecasyllabics_ being particularly rich in Biblical atmosphere, let me quote them whole:

1 In the month of the long decline of roses
2 I, beholding the summer _dead before me_,
3 _Set my face to_ the sea and journeyed silent,
4 Gazing eagerly where above the sea-mark
5 Flame as fierce as the serv'id eyes of lions
6 Half divided the _eyelids of the sunset_;
7 Till _I heard as it were a noise of waters_
8 Moving tremulous under feet of angels
9 _Multitudinous_, out of all the _heavens_.

The preposition ‘before’ has various peculiar applications and meanings in the Bible (cf. ‘to fall before one’, etc., _supra_). Seen as a whole, the profuse use of ‘before one’, e.g. in ‘Thou shalt have no other gods _before me_’ (_Ex._ 20. 3; literally, ‘over & above my face’), or ‘ _Keep silence before me, O islands_’ ( _Is._ 41. 1; cf. Swinb. _Mater Tri._ 7 “ _The sea is dumb before thy face_”), or ‘ _All nations before him are as nothing_’, where
common speech would have ‘to him’ or ‘in his sight’, not to speak of such as in Gen. 20. 15 ‘my land is before thee’, i.e. free to thee, is one of the characteristics of the Scriptural language. And Swinburne’s ‘before me’ of the second line would be a reflection, if unconscious, of certain of the Biblical use, with a slight meaning perhaps like ‘as I thought’, etc. (1, supra.)

One of the beauties of the Hebrew literature that commands every reader’s admiration can be found in Job, 41. 18 ‘his [leviathan’s] eyes are like the eyelids of the morning’ (1382 eeyeslids of the morntid). Of a certainty Milton’s celebrated “ere the high lawns appeared Under the opening eyelids of the Morn” (Lycidas, 25) has its source in this verse. In the sixth line of the above extract Swinburne seems to have replaced ‘morning’ of the same with ‘sunset’.

‘Noise of waters (or waves, seas)’ is also a Biblical expression frequently met with e.g. in Ps. 65. 7; ib. 93. 4 ‘The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters’ (so 1560). We have it used by Shakespeare in the famous passage of R. 3, I. iv. 21-2:

“Lord, Lord! methought, what pain it was to drown!
What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!”

In addition to this, ‘waters’ or ‘sea’ sometimes denote, as is mentioned in Cruden’s gloss, a great multitude of people, particularly in the Prophetic Books (e.g. Is. 8. 7, Jer. 51. 42), so that ‘multitudinous’ of the ninth line is quite in keeping with the last words a couple of lines above. (Cf. Shk. Mac. II. ii. 62 “The multitudinous seas incarnadine”). Finally, note a striking resemblance between the seventh line and Rev. 6. 1 ‘and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder’ (also see Rev. 19. 6).

For want of a better place let me add here a few words more about another signification of ‘water’. Often in Psalms and elsewhere, it is put for troubles or afflictions, hence the phrase in Mat. 20. 22 ‘Are ye able... to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’ i.e. “to be dipped and
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plunged in afflictions as he was?" (Cruden). In Stevenson, 
N.A. 172 "I find myself in strange waters; I must have counsel 
and support", it implies the Biblical meaning seen e.g. in Ps. 
69. 1, 2 'Save me, O God; for the waters are come unto my 
soul. I sink in deep mire . . . I am come into deep waters'
(so v. 14 & Cov. ib.; cf. Pr. Bk. Forms of Pr. at Sea, 616),
which last words are used again by Stevenson in his Catriona,
iii "These are deep waters . . . Be cautious and think twice"
(N.E.D.). When Christian cries out to his good friend Hopeful
and says "I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head,
all his waves go over me" (Pil. P.), the allusion is to the
verse above or Ps. 42. 7, etc. And the meaning in question
is well represented in the latter's encouraging answer "These
troubles and distresses, that you go through in these waters,
are no sign that God hath forsaken you" (ib. 168). (Cf. further
N.E.D. s.v. troubled a. i.)

My next illustration is from E. Brontë's Wuthering Heights, 26:

"Seventy times seven times¹ have you preposterously forced me to
resume my seat. The four hundred and ninety-first is too much. Fellow-
martyrs², have at him! Drag him down, and crush him to atoms³, that
the place which knew him may know him no more⁴.

"Thou art the man!"⁵ cried Jabes, after a solemn pause, leaning
over his cushion. "Seventy times seven times¹ didst thou gaping-
ly contort thy visage—seventy times seven times¹ did I take counsel
with my soul⁶... The first of the Seventy-First is come. Brethren,
execute upon him the judgement written. Such honour have all His
saints⁷".

There are at least four conscious quotations from or allusions
to the Scripture, to wit Mat. 18. 21, 22 (1); Job, 7. 9, 10, Ps.
103. 16 (4); 2 Sam. 12. 7 (5); Ps. 149. 9 (7).

It will, to some of us, be a surprise to hear that no instances

¹ As to the further study of this meaning see Inter. Crit. Com. on St. John, Vol. I.
xliv, in which is given: "βάπτισμα βαπτίσκωμαι is a literal Greek rendering of an
Aramaic expression meaning 'I am being overwhelmed,' i.e. by the deep waters of
God's appointment (cf. Lk. 12. 50)."
of the type 'fellow + substantive' are found in the material of the *N.E.D.* earlier than Tindale and Coverdale (1534–5) (see further *N.E.D.* s.v. *fellow* 11). Then, there is much ground to take this as having been popularized by Scriptural passages like, for instance, *Rom.* 16. 7 (1535) 'Salute Andronicus Iunia my cosens, felowe presoners'.

So far as my research is concerned, the phrase 'to take counsel', to consult, etc., appears since 1382 *Mat.* 27. 7 'Sothly counsel taken, thei bouȝten . . . the feeld of a potter', though its earliest date of the *N.E.D.* is 1539 (Gr. Bible) *John*, 11. 53 (sim. in 1535 *ib.*). At any rate, when we read (6) or Rossetti's "Yet only this . . . remains; save what in mournful guise *Takes counsel with my soul alone*" (*The Portrait*, 14–6), we associate *Ps.* 13. 2 'How long shall I *take counsel in my soul*, having sorrow in my heart daily?' (in 2 *K.* 6. 8, etc., 't. c. with').

In this almost out-and-out Biblical passage from Brontë, what I think is incongruous with other expressions is the third, for which, however, we have synonymous dictions constituting the important stock phrases of the Bible (perhaps chiefly since 1535) such as 'to break, rend, tear, in (or to) pieces or in sunder', etc. Yet to the best of my knowledge, in the original no words equivalent to 'in pieces' or 'in sunder' are seen where English has them, but in many cases it has verbs belonging to the species called *Piel* or its passive *Pielal* which are both emphatic forms of the standard verbs called *Kal*. Therefore, the adoption of 'in pieces', 'in sunder', etc. is, generally speaking, a device of the translators to reproduce the intensives of the original. And so often are these idioms employed in the People's Book that they seem to have obtained a wider scope of application and new significance, often implying utter defeat, death, or punishment (even fig. and hyper.; esp. cf. the m. of *Jere.* 1. 7), and are sometimes used with appreciable Biblical touch. To give a few: Bun. *Grace A.* 136 "The glory of the holiness of God did at this time *break me to pieces*" (cf. e.g. *Job*, 19. 2; esp. *Ps.* 50. 22); Swinb. *Mater Tri.* 5 "Thy face is as a sword
smiting in sunder Shadows and chains . . .” (cf. e.g. Psalter, 110. 6 ‘He shall . . . smite in sunder the heads over divers countries’). Particularly in Tha. Nivc. 56 “Had they been going to tear him to pieces with wild beasts next day . . .” there is another Biblical indication, because ‘wild beast’ and ‘to tear one’ are often part and parcel of each other in the O.T. as in Hosea, 13. 8 ‘there will I devour them like a lion: he wild beast shall tear them’ (cf. Gen. 31. 39, etc., or Job, 39. 15). Moreover, a thoroughly Biblical use, though playful, is provided in Butler’s Way E. 148 “Obey me (orig. italic), your true self, and things will go . . . well with you, but only listen to . . . your father, and I will rend you in pieces even unto the third and fourth generation as one who has hated God” (cf. Ex. 20. 5).

Now the parable of Nathan the prophet in reproof of David’s deadly sin pertaining to Uriah and his little ewe lamb, finally burst itself into ‘Thou art the man’, whereupon the Psalmist king, recognizing his having erred and strayed, offered that penitent prayer which is known as the fifty-first Psalm. When Claudius writhes for his rank offence saying “What if this cursed hand Were thicker than itself with brother’s blood (cf. Gen. 4. 10), Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens To wash it white as snow?” (Ham. III. iii. 43-6), perhaps he is remembering the seventh verse of this Psalm: ‘Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow’ (so in 1560).

I am of opinion that the popular simile ‘white as snow (or wool)’ would chiefly be of Scriptural origination, and ‘to wash white’ is almost exclusively Biblical, because instances involved in the Scripture are often followed more or less literally. To give some more. Blake’s “The moon, that glow’d remote below, Became leprous and white as snow” (To Thomas B. 73-4, Oxf. p. 189), is most certainly an echo of e.g. Num. 12. 10 ‘Miriam became leprous, white as snow (see further Ex. 4. 6 & 2 K. 5. 27). And Butler’s “you must please to take my
word for it that at the Day of Judgement your *sins* shall be all *washed white in the blood of the Lamb*... Yea, though they be as *scarlet*, yet shall they be as *white as wool*" *(Way F. 79)*, is comparable with both Rev. 1. 5 and Is. 1. 18 (sim. in 1560 & Pr. Bk. *A Commination*, 394). Further let me quote from G. Offor's memoir of W. Tindale, who died a martyr in 1536 after his invaluable life which he offered for the "laye people . . . to haue goddes worde in their natyfe langage": "He [Tindale] was then strangled; and long ere his body was reduced to ashes, his soul had commenced the glorious anthems of the redeemed of God, who had *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*" *(Tindale's N.T. p. 82, 1856)*. This is a quotation from Rev. 7. 14 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have *washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*'.

Again in the passage of *Isaiah* last referred to, modern 'scarlet sin', 'scarlet letter,' etc. are supposed to have authority.

* * *

"England became the people of a book, and that book was the *Bible*".¹ It has indeed been the basis of English feeling and sympathy; and its language has wrought such far-reaching echoes in the phraseologies of the people that even in the most spontaneous flow of speech do we often discern scattered fragments of Biblical wordings creeping in, half hidden from the eye. And though the contributions of Shakespeare's works to the language of literature are said to be almost on a par with those of the Bible, the extent of the latter's influence to the speech of common life can hardly be rivalled by any single author's.

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¹ Tyndale's *Compendious Olde Treatise*, quoted in G. Offor's *Memoir of W. Tindale*, p. 3.