

refers to things yet to be done. This interpretation is proved correct by the fact that in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 Paul quotes one of its phrases, "with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked," as something which in his day was still future.

Paul Interprets Isaiah

This prediction which Paul quotes from Isaiah 11:4 requires further consideration. The word "wicked" is used in the singular. In Hebrew, Greek, and most other languages, it is common to use an adjective as a substantive to indicate either singular or plural. English has gone its own way in this regard; its use of an adjective as a substantive usually implies that it is plural. Thus when we speak of "the quick and the dead," we mean living individuals and dead individuals. We would not use the phrase to indicate just one of each type, as most other languages could readily do. In Paul's quotation of this verse, he also used the Greek word "wicked" in the singular. Pointing the Thessalonians to something which, he says, is yet to occur, he declares in 2 Thessalonians 2:8: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." In the American Standard Version, the phrase which the Authorized translates "that Wicked" is rendered as "the lawless one." The Greek clearly indicates that Paul referred to an individual as the one whom the Lord would destroy with the spirit of His mouth.

Here there is another very interesting variation between the King James Version and the American Standard Version, which says "the breath of his mouth." The Hebrew word used in Isaiah 11:4 and the Greek word in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 are both sometimes rendered "spirit" and sometimes rendered "breath" or "wind." It would seem that the American Standard Version is right in using the same translation in both instances, since they so clearly refer to the same event, and because the context makes it clear that "breath" is what is meant.

We might note that this wonderful action of destroying a great prince of wickedness simply with the breath of His lips