

◀THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT▶

VOL. IV.

MAY, 1885.

No. 9.

THE STORY OF BALAAM.

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The story of Balaam, as told in Numbers, ch. XXII-XXIV., has furnished an abundance of merriment to scoffers and bushels of hard nuts for commentators of the old school. As common sense was allowed but very little place in the interpretation of the Bible but very little sense is found in the interpretation of this passage. It is not my purpose to give a history of the crude, wild and incredible interpretations which have been given of this story by both learned and ignorant men in all the centuries. Such a work would be as tasteless to me as it would be useless to the reader. Perhaps no passage of equal length so fully illustrates the vagaries in which commentators indulge, as this one. Had this story been found in any other ancient book there would have been no difficulty in understanding it, and no folly in interpreting it. Indeed, had it been read in the same spirit in which probably it was first committed to writing, or in which it is most certainly to be understood, a world of nonsense would have been escaped, and admiration would have taken the place of scoffing.

Let us then look at this marvelous story in the light of common sense, which is none other than the light of sound criticism.

First, then, who was this Balaam? He was an eminent soothsayer, the most eminent apparently in all the eastern country. As it was supposed that a soothsayer could both foretell and control events, kings were accustomed to consult him, and to seek his advice in times of difficulty or when reduced to extremities. Great sums were offered, in great emergencies, to induce him to act at all, and much more to induce him to favor the interceding party. As in modern times enormous fees are paid to eminent lawyers, even to retain them from being employed by the other party, so in these ancient times diviners or soothsayers were retained by large gifts from aiding the other

party, or induced to use their own preternatural power, or persuade the gods to use theirs, to dash down their enemies, and secure themselves from defeat or destruction.

This Balaam was also a thoroughly bad, and a supremely cunning man. He is referred to in Josh. XXIV., 9, Neh. XIII., 2, Micah VI., 5, 2 Pet. II, 15, Jude II, Rev. II., 14; and in Num. XXXI., 16, he is said to have counseled the Moabites "to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." The terribleness of this plague and its punishment are described in Num. XXV., 1-9, "Those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand," as a punishment for "committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab," as this wicked soothsayer, Balaam, had advised the Moabites to do, as the only thing he could do to favor the king, Balak, and his subjects. And Moses was commanded to "take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the sun."

That Balaam was a wicked man does not admit of question, and that he was as shrewd and cunning as he was wicked is equally clear. He understood his business and how to make it profitable.

The circumstances under which Balaam was called to act challenged all his cunning and hypocrisy. The advancing Israelites had conquered nation after nation. Sihon, king of the powerful Amorites, had fallen by the edge of the sword, and his great and populous cities had been taken; and the mighty Og, King of Bashan "was smitten and his sons and all his people, until there was none left alive." The fame of the invincibleness of this conquering host filled all the nations with terror and trembling from hut to palace. Moab and Midian were "sore afraid," were panic stricken. It was vain for them to put their trust in horses and chariots, in spearmen and bowmen. Only one resource seemed left to the terror stricken kings and peoples. The supernal or infernal powers, or both, must be invoked, and, if possible, at whatever cost enlisted in their behalf. The most prevailing of the diviners must be obtained to bring down calamity and ruin on the victorious host. The great soothsayer, Balaam, the son of Beor, who dwelt in the far East, by the river Pethor, must be called to curse the invaders. Messengers were sent, "the elders of Moab and Midian, with the reward of divination in their hands." The trepidation of these kings and their subjects is made evident by the message which they were to deliver. Say to Balaam, "Behold there is a people come out of Egypt: behold they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me; peradventure I shall prevail

that we may smite them and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

In this panic stricken condition the elder-messengers left the kings and their subjects, utterly dejected and covered with pallor. A man must be a fool who could believe that they would conquer. When they came to Balaam, they "spoke unto him the words of Balak." Balaam was shrewd enough to take in the whole case in a moment. He had heard of this conquering people and the panic stricken kings and subjects. He must manage the case as well as he could not to forfeit his name as a soothsayer and lose his reward of taking the case. Watchful of his fame and greedy of his fees, he must profess great difficulty in learning what was in the future, and cover himself with mystery to sustain his profession and ability, and hesitate and decline and reconsider to increase the compensation for his power over future events. All this, indeed, marks his shrewdness. He asks the embassy to "lodge over the night," and says, "I will bring you word again as the Lord shall speak unto me."

Now for the story which the cunning soothsayer tells the messenger in the morning, as reported by the writer of it, "God came to me in the night and said, 'What men are these with thee?' And I said unto God, Balak, the son of Zippor, King of Moab, hath sent unto me saying, 'Behold a people is come out of Egypt which covereth the face of the earth; come now, curse them'. And God said unto me 'Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse this people: for they are blessed.'" This is a fine story for Balaam to tell as an excuse for not attempting the impossible, and thus losing his credit as an all-powerful controller of the destinies of battles and nations; and also for wringing, if possible, from the affrighted king greater reward for his services.

In the morning Balaam tells the events of the night, and says to the messengers, "Get you into your land: for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you." These princes of Moab return and report unto Balak the failure of their mission. Balak cannot accept the refusal and sends princes again, not only more in number but more honorable than the former ones. And when they come to Balaam they deliver their message from the king, "Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, 'Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming to me: for I will promote thee unto very great honor, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore I pray thee, curse this people.'"

Balaam understands his business. He finds that he has a good

customer in his net. He manages most adroitly. "O," says he, "if Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do less or more." But I am willing to try again, and see what further interviews with the higher powers will reveal respecting my duty in this matter. "Now, therefore, I pray you tarry ye also here this night that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more." Night comes, "And God came unto Balaam," according to his own story, "and said unto him, 'If the men come to call thee rise up, and go with them; but yet the words which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.'" Cunning enough; he has not the slightest intention of cursing Israel. It is as clear as day that Balak and his people are doomed, and Balaam will not forfeit his reputation as a soothsayer by cursing Israel. But he must so manage as to get the princely reward for his services.

In the morning the cunning Balaam rose up and saddled his ass and went with the princes of Moab. Now mark the amazing difficulty which overtook him on his journey, indicating the necessity which was laid upon him to do only what the Supreme Powers permitted, and whose will was only Balaam's own knowledge of what it was politic for him to do, for Balaam only knew what transpired in the night, and he told just such a story as suited his purpose, which was to retain both the rewards of his profession and his reputation as a soothsayer and yet not curse Israel, for by cursing only could he command the admiration of his people, since as sure as the sun would continue to rise so sure was it that the Israelites would subdue Balak.

Now for the story which he tells respecting what happened to him on the way. He says God was angry with him because he started on such an expedition, "and the angel of the Lord stood in the way" and frightened his ass, for the ass saw the angel flourishing a drawn sword and dared not go forward, and turned out into the field; and he smote the beast to turn him into the way, but the angel headed him off again in a narrow way between two walls, and she leaped aside and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall, and he smote her again. And the angel of the Lord went a little further on and stood in a passage so narrow that there was no way for the ass to get past either on the right hand or on the left; and the beast fell down, and Balaam's anger was kindled and he smote the ass with a staff. Now the ass began to talk and complain of being smitten three times; and Balaam said, "Thou hast mocked me; if I had a sword I would kill thee." The poor ass protests that she has always been a good ass, and never before had done any such thing, and Balaam confesses that she has been so. At this critical instant in the conversation, Balaam says he

saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with a drawn sword in his hand, and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. He is rebuked for his treatment of the ass, and his fortunate escape from the edge of the angel's sword by the turning aside of the ass, for his mission was not approved by the Higher Powers. Balaam says that he confessed that he had sinned, and declared that he would get back if his mission was displeasing. The angel tells him to go with the men: "but only the word which I shall speak unto thee, that shalt thou speak," said the angel. So Balaam went on his journey.

Now let it be most distinctly borne in mind that all this marvelous, not to say incredible, affair is Balaam's own story, for there is no evidence that the embassy or his two servants heard this colloquy, or were with him when he says it took place. Nor is there any evidence that they heard Balaam tell this story to Balak about the desperate opposition he met with on the way. He knew how to magnify his office and make his mission one of the most momentous importance, showing that all that he did and said was by the direct permission and guidance of the supernal or infernal powers.

Balak hastens out to meet Balaam when he hears of his approach on the borders of his kingdom. "Why did you not come at once, when I sent most earnest word for thee? Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honor?" Balaam very warily replies that he has no power to say anything, "the word that God putteth in my mouth that shall I speak," and he knew now just as well what that word would be as he did after all the following ceremonious incantations. These, as we shall see, were only empty performances to deceive Balak, and secure, by apparent endeavors to curse, the promised treasures.

Let us see how the cunning soothsayer carries on the deception, concealing his final purpose, and escaping the sword of the king for his weird perfidy. In the eyes of Balaam the farce, in the eyes of Balak the solemn incantations, begin. A farce, I say, to Balaam, for there can be no reasonable doubt but that he felt assured of the conquest of Moab by the advancing hosts of Israel before the messengers of Balak arrived to summon him to go and curse the conquerors. The Moabites were panic stricken. Balak was frightened out of his wits, and the terror of the king of Midian only increased the panic which seized on all the people. Timidity had taken the place of courage and terror of defiance; and Balaam knew it all, and up to this point all which he had done had been done as a mask to cover up his own opinion, and secure the reward of divination even though it should be adverse to the kings. The king treated Balaam and his attendants and the princes with a feast from the choicest of his flocks and herds. Then,

on the morrow, he took the soothsayer to the high places of Baal that he might have a good view of the encampment of Israel, which was spread out in the plain below. Balaam ordered seven altars to be built and seven oxen and seven rams for an offering. "Stand by thy burnt offerings," said Balaam to Balak, "and I will go: perhaps the Lord will come to meet me, and whatsoever he showeth me I will tell thee." And he went away alone. Balaam returns in due time, having prepared his reply, and tells this story, that God had met him, and he told Him that he had prepared seven altars, and that he had sacrificed seven bullocks and seven rams, and that the Lord had directed him to speak as follows:—*

" From Aram Balak, King of Moab, bringeth me,
From the mountains of the East, (saying)
Come, curse for me Jacob,
And come, execrate Israel.
How am I to curse whom God hath not cursed?
And how can I execrate whom God hath not execrated?
For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I perceive him,
Behold a people which dwell alone,
And is not reckoned among the nations.
Who has reckoned the host of Jacob?
And who has counted the fourth part of Israel?
Let my soul die the death of the upright,
And let my end be like his."

No wonder that Balak was not only terribly disappointed, but deeply indignant at this response, and exclaimed, "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse, and thou hast blessed them wholly." Balaam understands his business perfectly. He meekly asks, "Must I not be careful to speak what Jehovah hath put into my mouth?" I must be true to the higher power or he will not reveal your destiny to me.

Balak is now reminded of what he thinks was a mistake in the position of Balaam when he first saw the people. He could see the whole camp, the tens of hundreds of thousands of the hosts of Israel, and would naturally be impressed with their invincibleness. The king, therefore, chose a new position where Balaam can see but "the utmost part," only the outskirts of the camp; and says to him, "Thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and thou shalt not see all of them; and curse me them from this spot." So Balaam had seven

* I am indebted to the kindness of Prof. Brown of Newton Theological Institution for the following translations.

altars built there, to make the gods propitious, if possible, and made the same offerings as before, now on the top of Pisgah.

Again he says to Balak, "Stand by the burnt-offering while I meet Jehovah yonder." Thus throwing over himself the mystery of privacy and secrecy while he consulted with the higher powers. When he returns to Balak he tells the expectant, anxious king that Jehovah met and told him what to say in the presence of the king and the princes of Moab. The message is as follows:—

"Come Balak and hear:
 Hearken to me, son of Zippor.
 Not a man is God that he should lie,
 Nor a son of man that he should repent.
 Has he said, and will he not do?
 And has he spoken, and will he not establish it?
 Behold blessings have I received,
 And if he blesses I cannot reverse it.
 He has not beholden iniquity in Jacob,
 And has not seen wrong in Israel.
 Jehovah, his God, is with him,
 And king's worth is in him?
 God brought them from Egypt;
 As the swiftness of the wild ox is his;
 So that there is no enchantment in Jacob,
 Nor divination in Israel.
 When it is time it will be told to Jacob,
 And to Israel what God does.
 Behold the people arise like a lioness,
 And lifts itself up like a lion!
 He does not lie down till he devour the prey
 And drinks of the blood of the slain."

Cunningly said. This people, which you would have me curse, have done no wrong. Jehovah has seen no iniquity in them. How can I curse them? I can speak only what God directs me to speak. However much I may regret it, so it is. I must obey the higher powers. If I am commanded to bless, I must bless. No enchantment can prevail against this people, saith my God.

But Balak is roused or crushed, and cries, "Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all. Say nothing. I pray you if you cannot curse them." Be silent or curse. With the humility of Uriah Heep, Balaam excuses his course by reminding Balak that he is nothing, but God is everything, and that he had told him from the first, "all that Jehovah speaketh that I must do."

In despair, almost, Balak beseeches Balaam to try another place for his incantations; "peradventure it will please God that thou

mayest curse me them from thence." And he took Balaam to the top of Peor. And there he built seven altars, and offered the same sacrifices as before. Balaam sees that this farce may be kept up indefinitely unless he brings it to an end by some very decided action. He, therefore, does not go away as before to consult with the higher powers, whose agent he claimed to be. As he looks upon the vast camp of Israel extending as far as the eye can reach, he assumes the posture and acts the part of one possessed with a spirit, and in loftiest strains of improvised poetry he exclaims—

“The oracle of Balaam, the son of Beor
 And the oracle of the man with closed eyes,
 The oracle of the one blessing the words of God,
 Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
 Falling [prostrating] and opened in eyes.
 How beautiful are thy tents, Jacob!
 Thy dwellings, Israel!
 As valleys bare, they stretched out,
 As gardens upon a river,
 As aloes which Jehovah has planted,
 As cedars upon the waters.
 Water flows from his buckets,
 And his seed is in many waters,
 And let his king be higher than Agag,
 And his kingdom exalts itself.
 God brought him forth out of Egypt;
 As the swiftness of the wild ox is his.
 He devours nations, his oppressors,
 And craunches their bones,
 And crushes them with his arrows.
 He bowed himself, he lay down
 As a lion and a lioness.
 Who can disturb him?
 Blessed be those blessing thee,
 And cursed, those cursing thee!”

Balak can endure no longer this blessing of his foes by the man he had so lavishly rewarded to curse them. His wrath is kindled. He is maddened by this crushing disappointment. He smites his hands together in desperation. He reproaches Balaam for his bad faith, for blessing three times instead of cursing at all. He commands him to flee into his own country, and tells him that he has forfeited the promised honors. Balaam is as calm as December, as calm as a June morning, and tells Balak that from the very first he had said that he had no power over what he should say. “If Balak should give me his house full of gold and silver I cannot go beyond

the commandment of Jehovah to do either good or bad," that is what I said. Why are you so enraged at me therefore? But since you order me to leave your presence I will say a word more concerning this victorious people, and speak it more plainly. Listen to what I say. Now, with all the fervor of the greatest soothsayers he proclaims the conquests of the hosts of Israel :—

“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor,
And the oracle of the man with closed eyes.
The oracle of one hearing the word of God,
And knowing the knowledge of the Most High,
Who sees the vision of the Almighty,
Falling and opened in eyes :—
I see him, but not now ;
I behold him, but not near.
Has come forth a star from Jacob,
And a sceptre will arise from Israel,
And will crush the two sides of Moab,
And the crown of the son of tumult ;
And his enemies will be a possession
And Seir a possession ;
And Israel is about to do valiantly.
And let Jacob rule them,
And destroy the survivors from their cities.”

Balaam is then described as turning his attention to Amalek :

“A first of nations is Amalek,
But his latter end is destruction.”

He now speaks of the Kenites :—

“Perpetual is thy dwelling,
And is laid upon a rock.
But Cain is to be consumed
Until Assur carry thee away captive.”

And again he said :—

“Alas ! who lives after God has established him !
But ships come from the coast of Cyprus
And afflict Assur and afflict Eber,
And also he is for destruction.”

“Balaam rose up and went and returned to his place, and Balak also went his way.”

But he did not go away till he had advised the Moabites to tempt the Israelites to idolatry and licentiousness, which brought on a terrible plague, more destructive than battle. Nor did the deceiver go directly home, but went to the King of Midian, who had joined

with Balak in sending for him. What he did here we know not, for the story of his incantations is not told. He undoubtedly hoped to add to the gifts promised and already received. But venturing too near the contending armies or falling a prisoner, "Balaam was slain with the sword" (Num. xxxi., 8).

Such is the history of this cunning, accomplished soothsayer. He does nothing and says nothing which we should not expect from such a professional. His predictions simply relate to the certain conquest of the nations, living near, by this triumphant host of Israel. Nothing can stand before them. They will have leaders who will win victory after victory. These panic stricken nations will be subdued, and distant Assur, and more distant Cyprus will be subdued also if they interfere with this triumphant people. The "star" of their power will be in the ascendant, the "sceptre" of their leader will rule the nations.

Some interpreters think it necessary to find in history an exact fulfillment of the predictions of this cunning and renowned soothsayer because they think he was thwarted in his purpose by Jehovah, and made to predict what Jehovah compelled him to predict, contrary to his own purposes. But there is not a shadow of proof that this cunning soothsayer ever had a thought from the very first of cursing Israel. Every observing man knew that these panic stricken nations were doomed to fall before these triumphant hosts. Whatever else Balaam may have been, he was no fool. He told his own story as he pleased; he had no witnesses. He made out the best case he could to excuse his blessing instead of cursing. That he improved the soothsayer's privilege of unlimited lying when he told the absurd story of talking with his ass, and seeing an angel, and communing with the higher powers in the night, and when he went away alone from the altars, is no doubt true.

How the Israelites heard of this visit of Balaam we do not know, nor do we know how correctly the story was reported. We take it as it is.

When the Israelites heard of it, they were overjoyed. The hand of Jehovah was in it. He guides, he teaches, he corrects, he thwarts Balaam's purpose of cursing. In a word, the Hebrew historian relates this transaction in the *language of piety, of religion*; and attributes everything done to the direct agency of Jehovah. The Most High had interfered in behalf of his people. It did not occur probably to the devout historian, that Jehovah also as probably suggested to Balaam the advice to worship the most licentious idols and indulge in the most abominable rites, for which his chosen people suffered a malignant

plague from the hand of Jehovah, which swept away "twenty-four thousand people!"

The story, as told to Israel, must have inspired them with new courage, and insured new and more decisive victories. *Jehovah had compelled the most renowned soothsayer to bless them!*

There is nothing supernatural in the addresses of Balaam. Moab was conquered before the battle. This leader of Israel would trample on the nations. To find any prophecy of Christ in this base soothsayer's improvisations is to degrade prophecy and contradict facts, for the "star" which is to arise out of Jacob is to be a conquering warrior, and was to smite this very Moab and the neighboring nations *then*, not more than tens of centuries afterward.

The above view of the account makes it both intelligible and reasonable, and satisfies both the critical and moral judgment. To maintain the literal truth and divine inspiration of this monstrous story of this unprincipled soothsayer is a flagrant breach of all just rules of interpretation, an insult to common sense, and furnishes most luscious pabulum for the whole tribe of Ingersolls. We should not believe a word of the story from the lips of any other fortune-teller, much less should we believe that God had revealed to such a fellow his purposes, even by the mouth of an ass, an instrument fit enough indeed for communicating with such a trafficker in credulity, but hardly suitable for a divine messenger.

Balaam was no messenger from Jehovah. His improvisations were no inspired predictions. We know not, indeed, that we have an accurate report of what transpired, or of what Balaam said. We know he was a cunning, base soothsayer, and to introduce his utterances among the prophecies of the Messiah, is to degrade the mission of subsequent prophets, and bring reproach upon the truth and cause of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF RABBINICAL JUDAISM.

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I I.

3. The grand problem of salvation in all ages was provisionally or symbolically solved from the beginning by substitutionary sacrifice, the type of the coming atonement or self-sacrifice of the Christ, misunderstood by carnal minds but realized by true spiritual believers. Men have been saved since time began in the same way in point of fact if not of form, either by faith in a coming Redeemer or in a Savior already come. The existence since the Fall—or rather the first promise—of sacrifice as a human custom or invention is admitted by rationalists, but the divine designation or appointment of it as a method of salvation has been relegated to the period of the return from Babylon together with the whole Levitical ritual, to be a means of conserving the true spiritual religion of Israel and of symbolising better things to come, specially the sacrifice of Christ. This position is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture and to the institutions and beliefs of the spiritual Israel, but we certainly find a tendency in all ages to regard sacrifice as self-atonement and not as merely a symbol of real atonement. This fact explains the frequent and strong condemnation of such sacrifice by the prophets. This idea grew with the decline of the true faith till it became the current and settled creed or conviction of teachers and taught, priests and people. Sacrifice, like the Romish sacraments, the offspring of the same carnal mind, came to be regarded as self-sufficient, or as effectual for pardon in themselves or as *spera operata*. Christ was expected not as a Savior to redeem by blood, but as a sovereign to redeem by righteousness. Next in order and as a necessary consequence, repentance, which according to rationalists was the prime element of the religion of Israel, and the only condition of forgiveness prior to the restoration, was regarded as the medium of pardon during the long and lamentable epoch of fossilized Judaism. We find in full operation a religious principle, which the exigencies of rationalism must postulate or presuppose as the essence of the religion of Israel prior to the Exile. And yet, between the critics and the Rabbins there is a point of difference. According to the former the divine method of forgiveness was by penitence and faith in God's covenant love or promise without sacrifice or reconciliation, while the way of life according to the latter was by repentance

and belief in the covenant mercy of God through self-atoning and self-sufficient sacrifice. Both methods teach reconciliation and righteousness by means of subjective feelings and objective acts, and not according to the scheme of grace through faith in the redemption and righteousness of Messiah as mediator between God and Israel. This belief culminated in a fully developed scheme of salvation by inward feelings and formal acts. The way of reconciliation, the highway of life, according to the traditional law, and the teaching of the Pirke Aboth, Mishna and Talmud, is by the assiduous study, clear knowledge and rigorous practice of the whole law, canonical and traditional. Both laws were so closely associated, both in creed and conduct, that the Massorah was declared by the Rabbins to be not only the index or exponent, but the *fence* of the canon law. Moreover, some time after the return from the Exile and the readjustment of the Jewish Church, two rival sects arose called the Z-adakim and Chasidim, to the former of which afterward belonged the Sadducees, and ultimately the Karaites, both of whom rejected tradition and clung to the letter of the Torah; and to the latter the Pharisees and Essenes, who held fast tradition and the allegorical interpretation of the law. But all the sects and schools of Judaism agreed in holding what the Gospel calls salvation by the works of the law in religious ritual and practical life, so that our Lord and his Apostles charged both priests and people with having made the word and covenant of grace of God in vain or void by their traditions. There were doubtless some living and enlightened believers during the dark and dreary night of Judaism, who sighed for the redemption of Israel, and who saw the day of Messiah afar and were glad, who had taken like Zechariah and others the Redeemer into their hearts, and were ready like the aged Simeon even to take him into their open arms. There were true believers then as there were in the days of Elijah, hidden thousands who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and long afterwards during the like dark night of Christianity secret saints here and there, and even whole communities, who worshipped God alone and trusted only in Jesus, still salvation by works and not by faith in the "Lord our Righteousness" was the essential principle of the religion of Judaism. The sect and several schools of the Pharisees continued to hold fast the Old Testament truths of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, taught not only by figures but by prospective facts according to the progressive development of the divine revelation, but the Sadducees and even the Essenes, who did not come into contact with Christ, following the philosophy of the Stoics and Epicureans denied the doctrines of resurrection and eternal life.

4. The ethics of rabbinical Judaism are so closely connected with its philosophy, theology and religious dogma, that it is difficult to discriminate between them and to define the special characteristics of their moral system. There is a specially close and even causal connection between ethics and theology, both natural and revealed, which we must keep in view in any analysis of the moral code of Judaism. It is, therefore, evident that the ethics of Judaism could not rise higher than the level of their fountain head in theology and religious dogma. We must read their morals not only in the light of what they regarded as the natural principles of Judaism but also of the three rival theories of virtue of the schools of Greece. Plato, the disciple of Socrates, taught that the essence of virtue lay in obedience to the will of God, expressed in the divine ideas and operations of the universe. The Epicureans went to the opposite extreme, and held that the chief good consisted in the pleasures both of the senses and the soul. The Aristotelians placed virtue in a certain mean between opposite passions according to the dictates of logic or reason. The Stoics contended that all morality lay in doing what was seen and felt to be right. It is, therefore, evident that the chief good of Aristotle was a mere abstract rule in accordance with the logical character of his whole philosophy—that Stoicism in respect of morals was intermediate between Platonism and Epicureanism, and that true virtue may be said to consist in obedience to the will of God as expressed in man's consciousness of right. The Sadducees and Essenes accepted the ethical principle of the Stoics, and taught that virtue is to be pursued for its own sake, and that it is its own and the only reward of human conduct, whilst the Pharisees followed Plato and held that morality lay in the imitation of God. And yet the moral code of their Rabbins generally laid more stress on mere outward obedience to the letter of the law than upon that spirit of love to God and man which is the principle of all morality, the fulfilling of the law, and more than all burnt-offerings and services. Judaism had sunk morally so low that its votaries looked more to the letter than to the spirit of the law, to appearance than to reality. Ethics signally followed the law of that decline or deterioration to which we have already referred. The Church of God had sunk to the lowest grade of degradation, and needed not only a reformer but a maker of new morals to mankind. The world must be taught that the grand morality is the love of God in Christ and of all humanity.

Accordingly the great Teacher of morals, who came not to destroy but to fulfil the law, contrasted the traditional doctrine of the scribes not only with his own teaching but also with that of the Old

Testament. He began by declaring in his sermon on the Mount that the righteousness which he required excelled in moral quality the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. It must be inward, vital and spiritual in contrast with the outward, legal and formal righteousness of the schools and sects. Then he went on to adduce special instances of their negative, naked and evasive doctrine of righteousness or obedience to the moral law. Some individuals, such as the scribe who was not far from the kingdom of God, might rise through the Scripture and the grace of God above the current creed or code, and teach fragments of true morality, but the great Master did not speak of persons but of the principles which they represented.

The scribes taught that the violation of the 6th commandment or murder lay merely in the actual fact of imbruing one's hands in his brother's blood, and made men amenable mainly to the criminal courts of the country, but the Lord declared that hatred is the spirit of murder and exposes men to the judgment of heaven. The 7th commandment also was interpreted or perverted as forbidding merely overt acts of criminal intercourse between the sexes, but Christ declared that all wanton sexual lust or concupiscence is adultery, that he who looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. The Mosaic law of divorce, which allowed a man to divorce his wife for "some uncleanness," was interpreted by the schools of Hillel, the rival of that of Shammai, to mean anything in a wife that might be offensive to a capricious or lascivious husband, but the great Master inculcated the primary law of marriage, and that the only valid ground of its dissolution is conjugal infidelity.

Even the law of rigid justice or retaliation, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, designed to place retribution in the hands of the public magistrate, was misinterpreted by some of the teachers of the law to justify personal and private vengeance. The natural instinct of retaliation was allowed thereby to overbear the rights of individuals to trial, the claims of public justice and the best interests of society, as well as the province of the courts of justice.

Even the primary and most sacred duty of loving and providing for parents according to the moral law, was recklessly set aside or suspended by the vicious doctrine of *Corban*, which was both a legal fiction and a lie, whereby a person could evade his obligation by simply saying that his spare money was all dedicated to the Lord as a gift for the service of the Temple.

We need not, therefore, wonder that the law, which requires the love of our neighbor, should have been perverted by a wicked gloss to imply and justify the hatred of enemies. The bigotry and bitterness

of the later Jews made them so odious to the Gentiles that they charged them with hatred of the human race. But the Lord drew out in contrast the full meaning of this moral precept of the law, and taught that the true morality is the love of God and man, and especially the love of enemies, a truth which neither the Jews nor Gentiles knew nor practised. We must add that the Massorah, or fence around the law, by which it was to be both expounded and defended, not only erected a new standard of doctrine, but a new code of merely ceremonial and conventional morality, directly antagonistic to the moral law founded on the nature and moral relations of the Creator and creature. It is clear, therefore, that the Jewish schools dealt with the mere letter of the law and not with the spirit of it, that they made its authority void by factitious fences, and taught for doctrines commandments of men.

We conclude these articles by drawing the following inferences from the subject discussed.

1. The rabbinical writings generally are a grotesque and motley mixture of fact and fiction, truth and error, wheat and chaff. Rationalists affirm that even the Canonical writings are imperfect in their form or phraseology, that the word of God lies in them, but that they are not the Word of God, that a considerable amount of chaff is mixed with the pure wheat of truth, which must be sifted and separated by the reason of the critic or of the common reader. They generally admit, however, that the chaff is nothing to the wheat, that there are but a few handfuls of the one to many bushels of the other, but in the Jewish writers generally from the close of the Canon downwards we find on the contrary merely a few grains of wheat to one bushel of chaff. The pure ore of the divine word is so covered and concealed by the *debris* of tradition, mystic allegory and vain philosophy as to be almost wholly hidden from view. We feel that we have come down from the rare air and bright sunshine of the hills of Lebanon and Zion to the dark caves and murky dales and marshes of the plains. We have descended from the sublime heights of divine wisdom to the low and loud-resounding caverns of human folly. It is like the downfall of Lucifer, son of the morning, the arch-angel fallen.

2. This marked inferiority of the rabbinical writings to the Canon of Scripture morally demonstrates the divine inspiration of the Old Testament in the same way as the writings of the apostolic and other Christian fathers prove the inspiration of the New. The descent in either case is so swift and sudden, and the gulf between them so wide and patent, that nothing can account for it but the divine authorship and authority of the Scriptures or God himself

speaking there, according to their own claims and the creed of all evangelical churches. The inspiration of the Scriptures may be proved in several ways, such as the testimony of the Church in all ages, the historical credibility of the Book itself, embracing all its ordinary and extraordinary facts or phenomena, the philosophical law or principle of causation that a perfect cause is necessary to a perfect effect, or that there can be nothing in the effect which is not in the cause, and above all, by the experimental evidence or witness of the Holy Spirit in the human heart, but these are not the evidences which we urge here. We point merely to the moral proof of inspiration as set forth in the Westminster Confession, "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, which is to give glory to God, the full discovery which it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof," arguments by which it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God.

3. The decline of the Jewish church doctrinally, morally and civilly, arose mainly from the decay of spiritual life, which led to a lamentable departure from the faith and worship of the Scripture, and to the adoption of a co-ordinate standard of truth, which practically made the Word of God subordinate to the law of tradition, and thereby set an example which the declining Church of Christ was not slow to imitate in another form, by subjecting the interpretation of the Bible to ecclesiastical authority. The grand cause of the declension and downfall of the Church of God in all ages, whereby history constantly repeats itself, has been the decay of spiritual life, the loss of first love, the evil heart of unbelief, leading away from the living God to seek satisfaction in senseless superstition and ritual observance, in sordid worldliness and sensual lusts.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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II. THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION.

The evidence of corruption so far considered gives very little help in the endeavor to remove corruption. Conjectural emendation is so uncertain, and is so purely subjective that it ought to be only a last resort. External evidence will be the main dependence of the critic. In regard to external evidence, however, we must notice that it should come through different lines of transmission in order to have the highest value. A thousand copies of the Hebrew Bible, if made to-day, will only enable us to restore their immediate progenitor. The fact, therefore, that the Hebrew MSS. are all of a single type, makes them of no value at all beyond the point at which they originated. For the restoration of the earlier text we must look to other sources. The most prominent among these is the Alexandrian translation commonly known as the Septuagint (or the LXX).

The importance of the LXX arises from the fact that it is older than the Massoretic recension—or at least, (lest we seem to prejudge the case) it is earlier than the point to which we can clearly trace the Massoretic method. To judge from the prologue to Ecclesiasticus, the translation was substantially completed before 131 B. C. It is then older by three centuries than any other source of knowledge concerning the Old Testament text. The first thing we discover about it is that it is different in many passages from the Hebrew. It therefore confirms what we have already suspected from indications in the Massora itself—that the text was corrupt before the Massoretic system was put in force.

As this is doubted by some—as there is reluctance to admit that the LXX translators could have had a different text from ours—it may be well to look at the sort of testimony given by a version. A version of course cannot restore the exact wording of its original.* Such cases as that cited in the foot-note are not uncommon, but a far larger number are of a different kind. The question we really have before us in the use of a version is—could the translation be got from the text before us or not? If not, then we have a various reading

* If the Greek has *καὶ εἶπε* for example, it would not determine whether the Hebrew had *וַיֹּאמֶר* or *וַיִּבְרַר*.

the model for the future. Three such recensions were made as we have good reason to believe, not far apart in point of time. One of these was by Lucian who performed a similar office for the New Testament. Another was by Hesychius, of which we know little. The third was the celebrated Hexapla of Origen. These differing recensions, while useful for the times in which they were made, only brought increased confusion in the long run. The LXX has thus become itself an intricate problem for textual criticism.

For this new problem we have considerable material at hand. Lagarde enumerates some thirty (fragmentary) uncials, and the number of cursives is, of course, much larger. Among the cursives this author* has separated a single group which he supposes to represent the text of Lucian. He has, at any rate, restored for us the uncial MS. from which this group is derived† A few examples of the way in which even the oldest MSS. differ may not be out of place. These oldest MSS. are, of course, the Alexandrinus (A) the Vaticanus (B) and the Sinaiticus (S) along side of which I will put Lagarde's restored uncial, calling it L.

1 Sam. i., 3. All the Greek copies before us agree in reading "and there were Eli and his two sons," while the Massoretic Text (MT) has "and there were the two sons of Eli." The Greek seems the more natural.

1 Sam. i., 6. [*And her rival provoked her even with provocation in order to set her at naught*] for the Lord had not given her a son according to her affliction and according to the distress of her soul, and she was grieved [on account of this and wept] *because the Lord had shut her womb* in not giving her a son."

This is all contained in L. AB omit the words in brackets. MT has only the words in italics. The verse seems not to have been understood by the original translators, whose work was supplemented by the insertion of the first clause. We may see rhetorical expansion perhaps in the phrase "according to her affliction and according to the distress of her soul." I suspect, however, that there was some basis for it in the shape of a *K'tsarathah* (=like her rival?) which was misunderstood.

1 Sam. i., 9. LA agree with MT in inserting "after drinking," which is not in B. The rule for such cases is that the insertion is more likely to have taken place than the omission and the shorter text is right. All the Greek copies have "and stood before Jehovah"

* Lagarde, *Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canoniorum pars prior Græce*, Gottingae, 1883.

† I may perhaps be allowed to refer to my own notices of Lagarde's LXX. in the OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT for September, and in the *Presbyterian Review* for April, 1884.

not in MT which would fall under the same rule, unless we suppose a motive (religious scruple) sufficient for the omission.

1 Sam. I., 11. LA with MT have "and do not forsake thy servant" not found in B. The rule just given favors the shorter text. The clause not being in the original LXX it was inserted in A and B from the Hebrew. In this same verse the Greek has "until the day of his death" instead of "all the days of his life" of MT. It is impossible to decide between the two—which is practically of little moment. In the last part of the verse the Greek (or its original) has inserted "and wine and strong drink he shall not drink"—a case where similar passages which speak of the Nazarite's vow influenced the scribe.

1 Sam. I., 13. L inserts "but the Lord heard her" after "but her voice was not heard"—rhetorical expansion.

1 Sam. I., 14. Greek has "the *servant* of Eli" instead of Eli—an insertion designed to save the reputation of the venerable priest from the charge of harshness. In the same verse B has "put away thy wine," LA have "put away the wine from thee." and MT has "put away thy wine from thee." The first has probability in its favor. All Greek copies have "and depart from the presence of the Lord," omitted in MT (from religious scruple?)

1 Sam. I., 19, 20. L has *orthrisantes de* where the others have *kai orthrizousi*—a case of change of wording to make better Greek. LB insert Elkana in one place, MT has it in another, and A in both. The Hebrew so often leaves the subject to be understood that we are tempted to think it was originally found in neither place. The same is true of the *wattahar* which is almost certainly wrong as it stands in MT with A, but which LB put at the end of verse 19 or beginning of verse 20.

1 Sam. I., 22. L has "And Hannah did not go up *with him*, for she said to her husband [*I will not go up*] *till the boy go up* [*with me*] when I have weaned him, and he shall appear before the Lord and shall dwell there forever." The words in brackets are omitted by AB, those in italics are omitted by MT, which reads "until the boy be weaned and I bring him." If MT be original the insertions were of course made to clear up the obscurities. Even then it is difficult to account for the omission of *and I bring him*.*

1 Chron. x., 1. "And Philistines fought against Israel and *the men of Israel* fled before the Philistines." L and MT agree in this reading. ABS omit the words in italics (probably rightly).

* I have relied upon Tischendorf with Nestle's collation of the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. The latter, by the way, is defective in 1 Sam.

1 Chron. x., 2. "And Philistines pursued after Saul and after his sons"—so SL with MT. The others omit *and after his sons*.

1 Chron. x., 3. All the Greek MSS. insert *ponois*, not found in MT. Possibly the word *baqqesheth* [with the bow] was read *baqqashoth*.

1 Chron. x., 5. LA with MT add "and he died" at the end of the verse. Duplication is especially easy here, for the next verse begins with the same word in the Hebrew.

1 Chron. x., 7. AB have "and all Israel in the valley saw that Israel fled." L has "and all the men in the valley saw that Israel fled." MT = "and *all the men of Israel* in the valley saw that *they* fled." I suspect L to be the original.

1 Chron. x., 11. ABS "all the inhabitants of Gilead." MT "all Jabesh Gilead." L "all the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead." The original translators evidently mistook *yabhesk* for *yashabh*.

These variations which are only a part of those which occur in two chapters are sufficient to show the nature of the problem before us. They illustrate also the method of solving the problem. In each case we inquire what is the transcriptional probability, *i. e.* which of the readings is most likely to have given rise to the others? To answer this we have to consider two things—which would be most likely to be altered either (first) in order to make better Greek, or (secondly) to bring the Greek into greater conformity to the Hebrew (as we now have it). We discover that both classes of alterations are found. Having picked out the Greek reading which was earlier than the others, we again compare it with the Hebrew to see if it gives us a more probable text. I think careful consideration of the examples given will enable us to say:

(a) Of the Greek texts that of the Vatican MS. is nearest the original LXX because furthest from the MT.*

(b) L and A both show considerable alteration in the direction of the MT. L, however, oftener combines the new reading with the old, and it has oftener changed the Greek wording for the sake of elegance.

(c) While in the majority of cases our present Hebrew text approves itself as compared with that before the authors of the LXX, yet *jn* a considerable minority the latter seems to bear the marks of originality.†

* It is much to be desired that we should have this text in some available form. The *Editio Romana* departs from it considerably, and the great work of Vereczone and Cossa is said not to be accurate—aside from its great expense.

† These conclusions are only stated tentatively, as based on a narrow induction. It must be

THE OTHER SOURCES.

No one of these is as important as the Septuagint, and the most of them have been studied very little as aids in textual criticism. They may be conveniently grouped under three heads.

1. *Jewish Sources.* The *Talmud* is the principal one among these, and it has sometimes been supposed to give various readings as in its citation of a verse it will often change one or more words saying "read not thus, but thus." On a closer inspection, however, these cases are seen to contribute nothing to the text. They are simply examples of the fanciful or strained exegesis of the Rabbis in their endeavor to base every doctrine or precept on some Scripture word. The *Midrash* is in the same strain, except that its aim is homiletical rather than legal. The *Targums* finally, while they show the results of Jewish exegesis, do not give any material for criticism. Targum, Midrash and Talmud are based on the Massoretic text, and testify to its existence as far back as they can be traced. This may be partly because in the general Massoretic tendency of Jewish study these productions were studiously conformed to the Hebrew as we know it.

2. *Ancient Versions.* Aside from the LXX the oldest of these is believed to be the Peshito, made directly from the Hebrew text. The Hexaplar Syriac is useful in restoring the text of Origen. The Old Latin made from the LXX was succeeded by the Vulgate of Jerome made from the Hebrew. The Peshito and the Vulgate, if we had them in their original form, would help us to the Hebrew text from which they were made. Unfortunately the Vulgate has been much corrupted by the influence of the Old Latin. The Peshito has very likely been revised into greater conformity with the *textus receptus* of the Old Testament as well as of the New. We possess a really critical edition of neither. The Hexaplar Syriac, the Old Latin, the Coptic with other secondary translations are to be used in the restoration of the LXX.

remembered, further, that the character of the Greek version differs very much in different books.

Lucian's text of the New Testament is said by Westcott and Hort to have been conflated, i. e. made up largely by combining two different readings in one, smoothing the language as might best be done. If what has been said above of Lagarde's text be true, it presents very similar phenomena—which confirms his conjecture that he has restored Lucian's recension.

The remains of Origen's Hexapla may be made to confirm the conclusions stated above. As is known, Origen distinguished by *asterisks* the portions which he inserted from the Hebrew, and by *obelisks* the phrases which were in the current Greek, but not in his Hebrew text. Such slight observation as I have been able to make shows that B is comparatively free from the corrections both of insertion and omission; A has nearly all the insertions, but retains a good proportion of what ought (according to O.) to be omitted; L retains all of the omissions, but has a large share of the insertions as well.

3. *Quotations.* Quotations by the Fathers play an important part in the criticism of the New Testament. Their use in regard to the Old Testament is limited, because scarcely any ecclesiastical writer of early times was acquainted with Hebrew. The two notable exceptions are Origen and Jerome, and from these we may doubtless yet learn much concerning the Hebrew text of their day. Two Jewish writers whose works have come down to us come within the same category—Philo and Josephus. Considerable difficulties are found, however, in making use of their works—difficulties that need not be dwelt upon here.

The object of this discussion is to give an idea of the kind and amount of work that still needs to be done before we can be sure of a thoroughly critical text of the Old Testament. This work would seem for the present to be of the first importance. Criticism of the New Testament text has made remarkable progress during this century. Let us hope that the Old Testament science is not to lag far behind.

SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO BIBLE INTERPRETATION.

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The Bible occupies a place in the literature of the world distinct from that held by any other volume. It contains the bulk of the literary productions of one race—the Hebrew; it lies at the foundation, permeates all the materials, forms the very cap-stone itself of the splendid literary structure reared by another race—the Anglo-Saxon; while other peoples the globe over acknowledge its surpassing merit.

The Bible holds a like position in religion. Among religious writings, this book stands preeminent; its morals are purer, its teachings nobler, its influence more notable than all other so-called sacred books. Where its precepts are honored, there progress in all that concerns man's betterment is found. Its followers are earnest and aggressive; and as the Book is known, men acknowledge its truth and become its devoted adherents.

The Bible claims supreme authority over men. It enters into the State, comes into the social circle, opens the door of the family, and penetrates the soul of each individual; everywhere declaring the true principles whereby all the relations of this life should be governed. This authority is demanded as a right, for the Book claims divine origin. It is a revelation, disclosing the One God, man's distance from him, and the bridge that spans the distance.

In view of the Bible's position and claims, the question of its interpretation is a most serious one. There is danger on each side. In our anxiety to find the true spirit that lies within, our dissecting knife may slip and sever the vital chord; the soul vanishing, the lifeless body only will remain. Or, on the other hand, in our excessive care not to impair the vitality of the Book, we may so bandage and incase it that no eye can penetrate the folds or recognize what is really within. We appreciate the difficulties that attend the subject, yet we would make some suggestions which, if carried out, we believe will lead to the truer understanding of God's Word.

I. SOME ERRORS TO BE SHUNNED.

1. The Bible should not be interpreted as a *mere record instructing men in history*. This is the rationalistic position. The Bible is merely a human production, the wonderful and miraculous must be eliminated, the divine element ignored, what remains interpreted by the ordinary laws of language. The naturalness of the Psalter, the rhetoric of Isaiah, the logic of Paul call forth the admiration of the followers of this school; the literary merits of the various books are recognized, but there is nothing beyond this. The book is interesting and instructive to such men solely as exhibiting the high development of the Jewish people in literature. The feeling with which these men regard the Book is similar to that of the scholar, who studies the classics of Greece and Rome, or of the antiquarian, who explores the monuments of Egypt and Akkad.

We leave, without argument, this method of interpretation, that is more defective in its omissions than in its contents; for the Bible does contain history,

but its real meaning cannot be ascertained when it is viewed from so low a plane.

2. The Bible should not be interpreted as *a compendium instructing men in science*. Often in years gone by, good men through mistaken ideas of God's Word have opposed real advance in knowledge. The Bible never has stood, and never will stand in the way of truth, man's interpretation may do so again, even as it has done in the past. Is evolution in its extreme positions true? We do not know. If, however, the scientist proves it, does that compel us to discard the Bible? It may necessitate change in interpretation, that is all; but let us hesitate to change, until we are assured of the necessity.

God has spoken to man in nature and in His Book. These do not, cannot contradict each other in the last analysis. They occupy distinct spheres, and are given to teach mankind different subjects. "The Hebrew people [were] of old divinely chosen to hold and teach the principles of true religion." Nature has other important truths for man, but they are not in the religious realm. Man by searching is to discover the principles concealed in nature and in the Book; but he must search in each for such as it contains, else his labor will be worse than useless. The Bible does not teach geology, chemistry, nor any of the sciences, and hence we should not expect to find in it instruction in those departments, nor should we interpret it as containing them.

3. The Bible should not be interpreted as *a text-book instructing men in theology*. Theology is a glorious science, the queen of all sciences, as it has been styled. It deserves the most careful study man can render; it calls forth all his power and demands all his energy. We revere the mighty list of holy men who have toiled in its service. Theological systems, however, are the work of men. Man takes the truths found in the Bible and arranges them in systematic form. We must not hold the *system* of divine origin, even though all its truths are. Sometimes, the thinker obtains an idea that apparently fills a gap in the system—and then the Bible is searched for confirmatory evidence. Passages from Exodus, Daniel, Mark are seized with eager hand, made to yield the same meaning—and thus, the doctrine is established! This is not the way to interpret God's truth. There is a growth in doctrine visible throughout the Word of God. Moses did not have so full an idea of God's purpose as did James. As Bernard well says in *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, "In the Old Testament the progress is protracted, interrupted, often languid, sometimes so dubious as to seem like retrogression. . . . Yet through it all the doctrine grows, and the revelation draws nearer the great disclosure. Then there is entire suspension. We turn the vacant page which represents the silence of 400 years,—and we are in the New Testament. Now again there is progress, but rapid and unbroken. Our steps before were centuries, now they are but years."

We welcome biblical theology, which considers the truths of the Word of God in the light of their historical development; we urge their systemization. But we deplore that exegesis which ignores the real meaning of the text, and looks upon the Book as given to prove pre-conceived doctrines rather than as the source from which every doctrine must flow.

4. The Bible should not be interpreted as *an oracle instructing men in conduct*. The Bible is given to guide men in conduct. The method, however, by which its help is to be obtained, is not like that of the Greeks, when they consulted the Delphic oracle. The Bible contains the words of good men and bad men; the words of God, and the words of Satan, much is recorded by way of warning. The

interpretation of the Book as an oracle ignores these facts. All is alike authoritative and must be implicitly followed. Am I in doubt? Open the Bible, and let the passage upon which my eye first lights, guide me. This is an easy method—but no good thing can be thus easily obtained. This is not using truth; it is perverting it. Every principle of common sense, every law of language, every thought of the words may be violated by such interpretation. This is bibliolatry in its worst form, it professes to honor, it really dishonors God. Man's fancy rules, imagination runs wild; theory flourishes while fact disappears. The principles beneath the words are what should guide men in their conduct; the words are but vehicles for conveying thought. We wish to know the mind of the Spirit. Not worshipping the words but applying ourselves to them that we may truly appreciate and understand the lessons they bring to us.

Have these negations taken the life from the Book? Not so. The Bible is more real, more living than before. We indicate now some of the considerations that must guide in the interpretation of God's Word.

II. SOME PRINCIPLES TO BE FOLLOWED.

1. In our interpretation of the Scriptures we should recognize its *human authorship*. The rationalist is right when he says the Bible is a product of man's genius; he is wrong when he stops there. The Christian is right when he says that the Bible has God for its author; he is wrong when he stops with that statement. The personal traits of the writers are seen ever and anon throughout the Book. Jeremiah and Ezekiel live on different thought-levels; Matthew and Luke do not regard our Lord from the same standpoint; Daniel and John each have glimpses of the world beyond, but how diverse their visions. To ignore the human element in the Bible is to lose much of its force, beauty and grandeur; to recognize it is to apprehend more fully the mind of its writers, and to find new wealth of meaning in its teachings. The Bible is God's book, expand that thought; the Bible is man's book, unfold that conception—then your grasp on the volume will be tightened, your appreciation of its meaning heightened.

2. While the human authorship is thus acknowledged, the *literary structure* of the Bible must also be recognized in our interpretation.

The poetic language of Jacob's blessing, the hymn of Deborah's triumph, the songs of David are not to be bound by those laws that regulate the interpretation of more sober prose. The extravagant fancy of the Eastern mind, to which truth is not truth unless magnified, must be recognized and flights of the imagination must not be taken for historic verities. The compact logic of Paul differs widely from the fervid rhapsody of John; to hold each by the same iron chain is to lose in large measure the force and spirit of both. Words change in meaning with revolving years, the same word as used by Micah may have an entirely different concept from that given to it by Nathan. The subject presented, the object in view, the whole drift of the poem, narrative or argument, all must be considered. God's Book is a composite volume, a great object-lesson put of record that we, as children, may learn our Father's will. We seek the root not the flower, which may be bright but will perish with the first frost.

3. From literary structure, we advance to the next principle, viz.: that the *historical setting* of each book must be recognized in its interpretation.

The political relations of Judah, Assyria and Egypt in the days of Isaiah, the disturbing elements in the early churches, to which Paul wrote his letters,

throw light on many a chapter of prophet and apostle, that otherwise would appear as a dark enigma. Without their historical setting, the prophetic books oft times appear as vapid dreamings; while considered as sermons preached with immediate purpose, and in knowledge of the needs of the people—they become words eloquent with power of rebuke or comfort. The Bible may be compared to a picture; without the background the picture is crude and unreal, that is needed to give relief and force to the whole; so, too, the historical setting is the background that imparts vividness and reality to the Word of God. Now the past is present and all gains in freshness and interest.

4. Last, but most important of all, the peculiar feature of the Book, its *spiritual aim* must be recognized.

Herein the Bible differs from other books. "Instruction in righteousness" is its aim. All that pertains to the spiritual welfare of man is its object. It reveals God as one regarding justice and loving mercy, it pictures man as guilty and condemned, it displays God's great purpose of redemption in Christ Jesus. This purpose seen in dimmest outline in Eden as the triumph of the good over the evil, reflected in shadowy form through patriarch, priest and prophet ever develops—its shadows ever lessening, its outline ever filling until it bursts in the grand full splendor of the Cross and the Resurrection.

We, looking backward, see God's purpose thus accomplished, and in this light much of the mystery is dissolved. What to Hebrew sage and people appeared as a flickering rushlight, to us blazes as the full-orbed sun at noonday. Here then is seen the aim of the Book in the Divine Man, the Lord Christ. This aim must guide our interpretation, forgetting it we are wanderers on the desert and all around is strange and dreary. The Bible is one, yet many; giving each book its value as an unit, they combine in one grand integer. "It is," to use the words of Dr. Briggs, "the unity of the ocean, where every wave has its individuality of life and movement. It is the unity of the continent in which mountains and rivers, valleys and uplands, flowers and trees, birds and insects, animal and human life combine to distinguish it as a magnificent whole from other continents. It is the unity of the heaven, where star differs from star in form, color, order, movement, size and importance. but all declare the glory of God."

By following these principles and avoiding these errors, God's Book will more readily yield its secrets, many of its mysteries will disappear—and its teachings will come to men with greater force. While He, who is its author, will be honored the more, as His Word is interpreted aright.

THE PREACHER A PROPHET.

BY REV. L. D. TEMPLE, B. D.,

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The idea that prophecy is essentially predictive is widespread and popular. Every student of Old Testament prophecy will speedily learn that the prevalent view is a misconception. It may be said with a good degree of certainty that the chief functions of the prophet were to develop the germinal principles of the Mosaic law and to preach righteousness of life. Prophets were concerned with the past and present even more than with the future. Their work was of an ethical nature. Herein they differed from priests. Priests approach God on behalf of men, but prophets approach men on behalf of God. Even in prediction, for this is not to be excluded from the prophetic functions, their ultimate purpose was to denounce the evil and exalt the good.

Certain qualifications were essential to the making of a prophet. Not least among them was a proper temper of soul. This is a constitutional qualification. The prophet must have a spirit so attuned as to be able to receive revelations from God and to enter into God's thought, for prophecy is an organic not a mechanical process. As this is an inward preparation, so there must also be one pre-eminent outward qualification,—the prophet's call. Like Amos he must hear a voice bidding him go and prophesy.

The beneficial results of the prophetic activity are, as J. S. Mill has shown,* not easily overestimated. In fact prophecy was the one living and progressive element in the Jewish church. By it the national conscience was often reawakened from its apathy, and the theocratic life maintained. Prophets also kept pointing with ever increasing distinctness to the Messianic-time, and prepared the people in some measure to enter upon it. As pastors and ministerial monitors they guided many Old Testament saints to heaven.

In important respects the functions of the Christian minister correspond to those of the prophet of Jehovah. In certain points the preacher is under obligation and in some he is privileged to be a prophet.

The preacher *must be a prophet* in point of receptivity. Just as common sense knows no automaton orators and Scripture no automaton prophets, so there can be no mechanical preacher. He must be genial to his message. The poet is born and not made. He possesses by nature a temper of soul suited to deal with poetical truth; and in like manner the preacher, being born from above, must have by a spiritual process a suitable temper of soul.

As a prophet the preacher must also attain to spiritual insight. It will be remembered that prophets were once called "seers." It is probably not presuming too much to say that this title refers not merely to foresight of coming things, but also to the power of discovering principles of truth and methods of Providence hidden from ordinary mortals. The world has its seers. They are the gifted few who discover profound secrets in nature, poetry or philosophy and,

* OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, Vol. IV., p. 375.

with a tongue to speak them forth, make epochs in human progress. The prophets of the Hebrews had insight into wide-reaching truths, thereby entering into the needs and wants of men far beyond their own age. They also saw from their lofty height of spiritual imagination that the old East was built upon false principles and dead already in fact. In a similar manner the preacher should be a prophet that is a "seer" who sees into the inmost heart of things. By this power of spiritual insight he should grasp deep principles and distinguish between the essential and the transitory. This ability is to be gained primarily through the manifestation of the ineffable spirit when "sons and daughters shall prophesy;" but partly also through faith, meditation and prayer, the soul ascending to view the eternal.

The preacher must also be a prophet in the emphasis of what is fundamental. Against evil tendencies of every kind prophets emphasize fundamental truths. There were two danger-currents in Jewish life. The first was the tendency of the religious motive to lead to religious ruin. It was the impulse to rely upon forms, forgetting the moral in devotion to the ceremonial. Thus it may be that many a Pharisee may have lost his soul by the excess of his religionism alone. Forms were not then, and are not now, fundamental, but provisional. Except for the moral element, the truth, that was underneath the rite, the ceremony was valueless. The priests' function was the performance of rites, but the prophets' duty was to teach their meaning. By emphasizing the principle wherein lay the only value of the form the evil tendency was checked. There was a second danger-current in a popular inclination toward luxurious and selfish living. There are two methods now, and there were the same number then, by which it is sought to correct this evil. The one is the method of naturalism,—the teaching of a Chesterfield morality. The other is the prophetic method. To stem this tide prophets interpreted the character of God. They set forth his holiness, wrath and love, out of which come rebuke of sin most startling and motives to virtue most effective. The prophetic mantle places the preacher under obligation to make diligent investigation of divine things whether easy or hard to master, and to declare the truth in its wholeness whether pleasing or distasteful to hear. True prophets will never employ the methods of fashionable dilettanteism, but will be instant in the heralding of earnest doctrines big with reproof and instruction. Except from Christ, and he was a prophet, there has never been such faithful dealing with men's consciences as by the prophets of the Hebrews. When Samuel reproves the disobedient King Saul, or Nathan probes the conscience of a guilty David, they are not pursuing the methods of worldly wisdom or of Lord Chesterfield's ethics, but are performing the faithful offices of true prophets of God in every age.

While it is true of the prophets that they manifest simple adherence to a few great moral and religious principles, it should never be forgotten that they were keenly alive to the movements of their own day. Their principal labor was to influence the men of their own time—to awaken in them a spirit loyal to Jahveh. Hence the local coloring of their addresses. In the manner of the vigilant press of modern times they were always awake to the events of the hour, and were never slow to speak their mind on the religious bearing of daily occurrences. Like faithful watchdogs they kept eye on all surrounding nations, and often opposed with extreme boldness popular movements religious and political. Reasoning from the prophet to the preacher, we come to this homiletical rule—a

conclusion which common sense and ordinary observation might also suggest, that the preacher who exercises the largest influence for good is that man who, while holding fast to essential truths and giving them large place in his preaching, nevertheless as a wise tactician catching the spirit of John the Baptizer, adapts his efforts with a view to present needs and immediate results.

Prophecy, and all true preaching is prophecy, is essentially polemic, for prophecy deals with truth only. Truth in this world of error has no right to be at peace,—let it never hope to be! The prophets of God in every land awaken antagonism. With genuine prophetic imagination *Jesus set forth this truth* (John VII., 7), and by the uniqueness of his personality, put upon it the seal of authority forever. The Hebrew prophets possessed an elevation of soul which tended to and measurably did, hold them unmoved in the face of clamor,—an independence ideally striven for by them all, but perfectly realized by the Nazarene last and best of the line. It has fallen to the lot of many Christian preachers and may fall to the lot of many more, prophet-like to array themselves against wrong in high place and low, manifesting the duty and privilege of their independence by standing firmly to conviction, unyielding to solicitation and unabashed by violence. In the light of the prophet's life, we have not far to seek for the preacher's guarantee of ability to do this. It is a prophet's grasp of truth yielding confidence; a prophet's rest in God ministering peace; a prophet's expectation of ultimate triumph crystallizing in hope.

Just here there is a danger as recent occurrences in certain American churches have shown, of mistaking sheer wilfulness for Godly independence. Prophetic independence was not altogether self-directing. In the presence of God the prophet was humble; in the presence of his fellowmen his independence and conviction were both tempered by and maintained in the atmosphere of love. From denunciation Isaiah passes to encouragement. There is an enchantment about the independence of the prophet which awakens a spirit of emulation in the preacher, for independence is a high privilege. The aspiration needs to be cautious. He who while a preacher will yet be a prophet in this regard must first of all make sure that he possesses a prophet's temper of soul, spiritual insight and grasp of fundamental truths; and that his firmness is in the defense of essentials only. If he should fail in the attainment of these qualifications it would very likely prove that his resolute immobility was not the independence of a prophet but inexcusable selfwill.

The preacher is likewise privileged to be a prophet in authority. The age in which we live is one of drifting, for men are professing uncertainty about cardinal principles. The preeminent need of the times is positive and dogmatic teaching. Prophets are authoritative teachers in the name of God. In the *Ne'um yehovah* there was no uncertain ring. The preacher may speak as one having authority. Let him be conscious of God's call. The divine commission gives a foundation upon which he may build by the study of an infallible word. He systematizes intelligently for himself, discovers the pervasive harmony of the lively oracles, and lets the word take form within his soul. Like a mystic he meditates and prays. Then while his personal character continues to develop and his ministerial usefulness to extend, he is able to speak with a measure of authority continually increasing.

Through prediction the Christian preacher is privileged to minister hope. Hope is the soul's inspiration. But hope that is seen is not hope, and prediction

is needed to engender it. The necessity and advantage of this appears in the fact that pessimism is a widespread evil of our time. None of the prophets were pessimists. When they speak of the degeneracy of the present they turn at once to the golden age of virtue and peace to come. In an important sense they all have their backs to the present, their faces toward the latter days while they utter words of hope. They make the future a ground of consolation to the righteous. Prophecy is therefore a remedy for pessimism. To the preacher as a prophet the future wellbeing of the Church and of the individual believer as well, is matter of certainty, for the whole creation moves toward one *divine* event, be it far or near.

In an important respect the Christian preacher has better ground for predicting the future than the Old Testament prophet, for he inherits the triumphant experience of two thousand years.

If in his qualifications he is fitted for the office, and prophet-like performs his duties, the preacher will also be a prophet in his influence. If he succeeds in maintaining the prophetic elevation; if the prophet of Jehovah is in fact in the respects already indicated reproduced in the Christian preacher; if the professional spirit, the *esprit de corps*, of the latter recognizes and in that recognition actualizes its identity with the animating spirit of the former the preacher will then prove to be a central power for moral upbuilding and religious advance.

THE LAND OF UZ.

BY PROFESSOR FRIEDRICH DELITZSCH.

Translated and abridged¹ from Note in *Zeitschr. f. Keilschriftforschung u. Verwandte Gebiete*; Band II., Heft 1. By Rev. O. O. Fletcher, Ottawa, Ill.

Of the geographical site of the land of Uz, the scene of the poem Job, a three-fold description was for a long time under consideration. First of all, some of the declarations respecting the land of Uz found in the Book of Job itself. It says of Job (i., 3) that he had become great "before all the sons of the East," he and his countrymen belonged, therefore, to the Arabico-Aramaic tribes in the east and north-east of Palestine, to the races of the Syro-Arabian desert. And since it is related (i., 15) that the Sabæans had invaded Job's plough and pasture land, and (i., 17) that the Chaldæans had formed into three bands and fallen upon Job's camels, the land of Uz must have lain open to such predatory surprises, as well from the side of the Chaldæans as from that of the Sabæans (dwelling or thought to dwell in North Arabia). It was, consequently, on the edge of the great desert; and the statement (i., 19), "there came a great wind from the desert," agrees with this. This desert is the eastern portion of the Syro-Arabian desert which extends quite to the Persian gulf.

The approximate situation of the land of Uz was further to be determined with the aid of the other places in the Old Testament in which Uz is mentioned, especially the ethnological table which names Uz [Heb. 'ûç] as one of the sons of Aram (Gen. x., 23), as also Gen. xxii., 21, where Uz ['ûç] appears as the first-born of the sons of Nahor by Milcah, together with Buz and Kemuel, "the father of Aram." That the land of Uz was, according to this, a province standing in some sort of relation to Aram, may now be termed a universal assumption. The older view, which sees in Uz a Seirito-Edomite province, cannot be supported either by Gen. xxxvi., 28., where it would seem that another² but unisonant ('ûç) family name is given, or by Lam., iv., 21, where Uz or a part (?) of Uz appears in the mere temporary possession of Edom. Moreover, the land of Uz must have been rather extensive—note Jer. xxv., 20, "all the kings of the land of Uz." It must upon the whole have lain northwards from Idumæa, in the direction of the districts occupied by the Aramæans (and Arabians), north and north-east from the Sea of Gennesaret. Josephus also evidently held (Ant., i., 6, 4) to those determinations of the place which are given in the Old Testament, since he gives Οὐζος as the founder of the people of the Trachonitis and of Damascus; likewise the "tradition" which may be traced back to Eusebius, and according to which Job was a native of Trachonitis, more particularly of the land of Sihon. Although the residence of Job in Batanæa was then pointed out, or even now the residence and tomb of Job are there shown in the most fruitful part of the Haurân Plain, the so-called Nuqra, and a little farther south the ruins of a monastery of Job, yet the tradition is not in itself so incredible as similar so-called "traditions." But

¹ [Some of the argument from the cuneiform texts is technical and not wholly within the province of THE STUDENT; hence much that is in itself interesting must be omitted. The translator's abridgement of passages is enclosed in brackets.]

² Such is the opinion also of Merz, for example; Article Uz in *Schenkel's Biblalexikon*.

despite the fact that it has been treated by Wetzstein in an exceedingly attractive and instructive manner,¹ it does not present security for absolute certainty: all it can claim is "preponderating probability." (Franz Delitzsch.)

In determining the situation of the land of Uz, the lands from which the friends of Job came, were at last brought into account. For so much might be assumed, as that the countries, if not immediately contiguous to Job's place of residence, were nevertheless not separated from it by boundless tracts, but were rather joined to it by a comparatively easy and tolerably regular intercourse. In sooth these designations of nationality lead only to the result obtained through the other instances: viz. that the land of Uz was to be found outside Edom, and likewise without the provinces which lay farther to the north, that it was situated therefore somewhat between the two. Job's friend Eliphaz came from Teman (II., 11), doubtless an Edomite district, as Jer. XLIX., 20, most plainly teaches, where the name Teman interchanges with Edom. This likewise follows from Gen. XXXVI., 11, where Teman is named as a grandchild of Esau and, indeed over and above this, as a son of Eliphaz (verse 10)—the last name is according to this pure Idumæan. Job's second friend comes from Shuah [Heb. Šû*ḥ] (II., 11). The name Shuah does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament except among the sons of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv., 2); all these are names of representatives of Eastern (not merely East-Jordanic) peoples and tribes, down to those from Midian. Job's third friend Tophar is from Naamah, the situation of which is undetermined up to the present. And lastly Elihu is a Buzite (XXXII., 2); but the land Bûz appears closely connected with Huz [Uz Heb. 'ûç] in Gen. XXII., 21. Buz and Huz are, as we remarked above, sons of Nahor, according to this passage. In Jer. xxv., 23, it is intimately joined with the genuine Arabian dialects; nevertheless there is given us therein as little aid in the way of determining the more precise locality of Buz, as that of Uz.

This is the aspect of the question upon the ground of the Old Testament statements. We would now bring forward some new material from the cuneiform literature and submit the examination, material indeed not drawn from Assyrian texts unpublished or but recently published, but proffered by cuneiform monuments long known, especially the inscriptions of king Shalmaneser II. (860-824). As the later Assyrian kings, Sargon, Sennacherib, Asarhaddon, Asurbanipal, carried their expeditions and conquests into the distant territories between the Euphrates and North Arabia, so likewise had the kings Asurnasirpal and his son Shalmaneser long before crossed the Euphrates in the neighborhood of Carchemish, and borne the glory of the Assyrian arms even to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Orontes southward as far as Hamâth and the Lebanon, arousing the peoples dwelling near and far from their sense of security. Perhaps statements are to be found in the annals of these kings, which are capable of casting a little more light into that wide region that extends from the right bank of the Euphrates south-east to the Haurân, and beyond to the Dead Sea.

In our work, *Wo lag das Paradies?* (p. 297 sq.), it has been already shown that the cuneiform literature knows of a land Šûḥu on the banks of the Euphrates, somewhere in the neighborhood of the city Rešeph the present Rušâfa, the famil-

¹ In his excursus, "The Monastery of Job in Hauran and the land of Uz," in *Delitzsch's Commentary on Job*; II., 395 sq. [Clark, Edin.]

iar desert station of the great Palmyra route. This word coincides with the Old Testament Shuah, Šû^h, in sound and possibly also in fact. This land Sûhu extended from above the mouth of the Belich to somewhere about the mouth of Châbûr; it lay, therefore, down the river from Carchemish and its region. Now what I stated in my *Paradies* merely as possible, I am at present in a position to establish as actual; namely, that the cuneiform land Sûhu is the same with the Old Testament Shuah (Gen. xxv., 2), and therewith also with the native land of Bildad the friend of Job.

[On the great monolith of Shalmaneser is found an account of an expedition in which the Assyrian king overcame the kings of Carchemish, Sam'al and Patin, crossing the Orontes and capturing a stronghold of the latter.] The king of Patin had summoned the princes of the contiguous countries to an alliance. The land Sûhu, which belonged to these neighboring districts, is wanting in this account; either because, as it seems it had lost its independency with respect to Assyria so early as Asurnasirpal's time, or it was named in the much-injured first line of the obverse. On the contrary, what is to me of high interest is that that land is named which also appears most closely joined to Shuah, in Gen. xxv., 2; namely, the land and people Ishbak, [Heb. Yîšbâq], Assyrian Yasbâq. But if this identification is correct—and who would wish to controvert it?—then is the Hebrew Šû^h [Shuah] shown to be the cuneiform Sûhu, which was contiguous to Carchemish, Sam'al and Patin. The home of Job's friend Bildad was, therefore, that Euphrates district into which the great caravan road from Damascus past Tadmor to the Euphrates, led,—a little south-east of Balaam's home, Pethor.

The cuneiform texts are, however, not so definite respecting the land Bûz, whence Elihu came, as in the matter of the land Shuah. Still at the very outset so much as this is assured, the cuneatic literature makes mention of it. It has already been shown (*Wo lag das Paradies?* p. 306 sq.) that Hazo [Heb. H^zô] and Bûz are set in near relation to one another in the Old Testament (Gen. xxii., 21 sq.): together with Huz [Heb. 'Uç the same with Uz] as first-born, there appear Buz as second son and Hazo as fifth. So likewise does the cylinder of Asarhaddon name the lands Hazû and Bazû in the closest connection with each other. The coincidence of these two countries with the biblical Buz and Hazo seems to me not merely to have "great probability," but to be as certain and incontrovertible as any other such geographical combination. For in addition to their agreement as to sound there is the further circumstance that Hazû and Bâzu lie in the same region where we have been accustomed to seek not only Uz [Huz] but Buz. [This Asarhaddon inscription relates that the king—in an expedition which took him to Bâzu, marched about 600 miles over a desert country to the land Hazû, and about 75 miles farther to the land Bâzu, the distance being reckoned from Nineveh. This account does not, however, enable us to locate these lands with exactness]; because we do not know what course the Assyrian army took through Mesopotamia and afterward on the other side of the Euphrates. Despite this, two things are assured; (1) that the land Hazû and the somewhat more distant Bâzu must have lain beside or in the great Syro-Arabian desert; and (2) that they are to be sought in the direction of the Haurân. The latter may be concluded, indeed, from the statements which the cylinder of Asurbanipal, the son of Asarhaddon, makes in respect of the distance traveled by the army of Asurbanipal in the Arabian expedition. [A careful examination of this inscription] gives us about 637½ miles for the length of the march from Nineveh to Damascus.

This reckoning is merely approximate. And if we may now assume somewhat more or less, we have for the lands *Hazû* and *Bâzu*, the region east and south-east of Damascus, where it was long since concluded¹ that the land *Buz*, the home of *Elihu*, Job's friend, lay.

But what is to me of greatest moment is that I believe that the name and the land *Uz* itself can be shown to lie in the cuneatic literature. Upon the black obelisk of *Shalmaneser* [we read that on the occasion of an insurrection in the kingdom of *Patin*, the Assyrian king, having overthrown the usurper, set *Sâsi*, the son of an *Ušsite* or *Ušite* upon the throne]. Who is this *Sâsi*, the son of an *Ušsite* or *Ušite*, who is placed upon the throne of the land of *Patin*, he having of his own free will professed fealty to the king of Assyria? What sort of a land may this *Ušsu* or *Ušu* be, to which *Sâsi* belonged? Certainly a land which lay not too far from *Patin*, to the west and north-west of *Aleppo*,² a land therefore that similar to *Sâhu* and *Yasburq* [*Shuah* and *Ishbak*] had alliance and intercourse with *Patin*, that lay as did these beyond the Syro-Arabian Desert, since it is not otherwise referred to in the above-mentioned accounts of the Assyrian expeditions to *Hamâth* and *Damascus*. Does not the land of *Uz* very evidently suggest itself?³ If in the great battle near *Quaqar*, a town of the *Hamâth* district, in the sixth year of *Shalmaneser*, Egyptians, Arabians and Ammonites appear as allies of *Damascus* and *Hamâth* it cannot surprise us that one from the land of *Uz*, even though this lay in the *Haurân*, should hear of the victories of the Assyrian arms and offer voluntary homage, partly in order to protect his own land from an Assyrian invasion, partly to win for himself the vacant throne of another State.

According to this, the Assyrian cuneiform literature thoroughly corroborates, upon the whole, the most prevalent view as to the situation of the land *Uz*. Nevertheless it would appear to me worthy reflection, whether a somewhat more northern situation for this land, somewhere in the vicinity of *Tadmor-Palmyra*, might not fit the Old Testament statement⁴ quite as well at least as the *Haurân* region, and the results of the cuneiform investigation far better. A *Ušite* dwelling in the direction of *Tadmor* would seem to me a more fitting occupant of the throne of *Patin* than one from the region of *Haurân*. And also as concerns the countries of Job's friends, the *Haurân* appears to me too distant and too difficult of access from the land *Shuah*; while on the other hand the *Nabatæans* and *Kedarites* so early as *Asurbanipal's* time, carried their expeditions far to the north-east of *Damascus*, a land *Uz* in the hands of the *Edomites* about the time of the fall of *Jerusalem*, an *Idumæan* as the friend of the *Uzite* *Job* is not at all strange, even though this *Uz* had lain north or north-east of the *Haurân*.

¹ Chiefly because of *Uz*. In *Job xxxii.*, 2, the *LXX* has the expressive addition to "*Elihu the Buzite*;" τῆς Ἀνσίτιδος Χώρας.

² The city *'Azaz*, Assyrian *Hazaz*, belonged among other to *Patin*.

³ The connection would be put beyond doubt if unhappily it were not possible to read *Uz-za-a* instead of *Uš-sa-a*.

⁴ For according to *Jer. xxv.*, 20, *Uz* was a great land; according to the genealogical table [*Gen. x.*, 23,] the first among the sons of *Aram*.

JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY.¹

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I will not attempt a *Præparatio Evangelica* on a large scale, and will leave on one side the claimants of Messiahship, whose history would form an interesting chapter in a Christian apologia. Far be it from me to judge them, or to pretend to have sounded a deep psychological problem. Nor will I do more than indicate the deep and prophetic dissatisfaction with Judaism expressed in the Cabbalistic movement. The points of contact with Christianity in the Cabbala are undeniable; the movement itself is natural, and deserves sad, respectful sympathy, but it stands apart from the regular development of Jewish thought. The same remark applies to the Jewish movement in Persia towards Bábism, the most modern outburst of nominally Mohammedan mysticism and, as you probably know, not without Christian affinities. And I must not attempt on this occasion to estimate the results of the preaching of Christian missionaries, and of the circulation of the New Testament, in various parts of the Jewish world. I will only quote two significant sayings, the one from an English, the other from a Russian Jew. The former, an intelligent inquirer, has reached this point, that "Christ may, indeed must, have been more than human; but between this concession and Deity (he says) there is an infinite gulf." The other, a devout man, well read in the Old and New Testaments, said, "although I am still far from believing Jesus to be the Son of God, yet I consider him my mediator with God," and I often say in my prayers, "This for the sake of Jesus of Nazareth," (that is, not for the sake of the inferior merits of the Jewish "fathers"). Such persons seem on the point of reviving a primitive Judæo-Christianity: dare we hinder them? Are we sure that the Hellenized theology of the Church of the Councils is not partly responsible for Jewish unbelief? I do not wish to see the Christian religion de-Hellenized; even for the Jews themselves a Hebraizing Christianity could perhaps only be a halting-point. The doctrine of the Logos, in its essence, is the postulate, not only of a deep historical philosophy, but of a complete Christian experience. It has yet to be proved that this conception is inconsistent with the Theism of the Hebrew prophets. But there is no doubt that the mental habits of a Jew almost compel him to think that it is. He interprets the prophets by the light of the Sh'mâ, forgetting that the great prophets were not preoccupied with the *monotheistic* idea of Deuteronomy, forgetting the *El-gibbor* of the first Messianic prophecy. While the prejudices of Judaism are what they are, is not a Judæo-Christian church a necessity? In the earliest times the Gentile Christians received their directions from Jerusalem; must the Jewish Christians in our time be dictated to by Leipzig or Canterbury? Such is the question which, during the past year, has been practically answered in the negative in the South Russian province of Bessarabia. I should have no excuse for not devoting a few moments to this

¹ From the University Sermon preached at St. Mary's, March 15, 1885.

remarkable because spontaneous Judæo-Christian movement, the official papers of which supply us with material as important as any of the rabbinical commentaries. Its object is the formation of Christian communities of Jewish nationality, repudiating the dogmatic forms of the Gentile churches, and retaining so much of the Law and of the national customs of the Jews as is not inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel. Its leader, Joseph Rabinowitz, is not a Reform-Jew; he clings to the idea of a personal Messiah, not merely on biblical grounds, but because "the moral and spiritual wounds" of the Jews require a physician, and this physician, this national leader or Messiah, can, historically, be no other than Jesus of Nazareth. "Therefore," says the twelfth thesis of the programme, "our strong love to our Israelitish brethren obliges us to sanctify and reverence the name of Jesus our brother, devoutly learning his holy words, and taking the books of the New Testament into our houses for a blessing, and uniting them with all the sacred writings which our true wise men in all generations have left us for a blessing." The words "Jesus our brother" sound the keynote of this confession of faith, and contain the secret of the attractiveness of the movement. But another sentence of its leader, not included in the programme, is equally significant, "I first of all honored Jesus as the great man with a compassionate heart, afterwards as him who sought the good of my people, last of all, as him who has borne my sins."

The oldest church history tells us how on hearing certain things, the chief priests "were much perplexed concerning them, whereunto this would grow." (Acts v., 24, R. V.). But to Jews and Christians alike we may quote the saying, "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it." (Isa. LXV., 8.) Yes, even to Jews. For all friends of Israel should hail with joy every spontaneous moral effort on the part of Jews. I for my part can greet with almost equal sympathy that phase of progressive Judaism which a young and fervent Israelite has so attractively pictured in the *Contemporary Review*. Those who think with him may surely in a very true sense be called disciples of Jesus; for they not only honor our Master, but have been morally influenced by his life. I claim them as prophetic heralds of a fuller discipleship, when "all Israel," in St. Paul's words—that is, all Israel worthy of the name, the "servant of Jehovah" in one of the two higher senses—shall be "saved." I know full well that this liberal or progressive Judaism has its own interpretation of the great Messianic prophecy of the Deutero-Isaiah. To it "the hope of Israel" is not the Messiah, but the realization on Israel's part of its own quasi-Messianic calling. The prophecy of a Messiah (that is, of a king Messiah, and to the Jews there is no other sense of the word) is regarded as only the temporary investiture of the belief in progress.¹ But the prophecy of a servant of Jehovah, who shall make known the truth to the Gentiles, is permanently and literally true of the people of Israel. For this beneficent object, and not to bear an imaginary punishment, the Jewish people has been so wonderfully preserved. The Talmud has had its day; its ordinances maintained its national peculiarities; but all that was good in it has passed into the life-blood of its people. Reformed-Judaism desires no return to Palestine, no exchange of prayer for sacrifice, no Messiah; it claims, indeed, a primacy, but only that claimed already for England by Milton, of "teaching the nations how to live." The theory of the Reform-Jews, both in its negative and in its affirmative aspects, is not so bold as it may seem. It is but the combination and development of teachings of emi-

¹ "Croyance au Progrès" (M. J. Darmesteter).

ment rabbis, from Johanan ben-Sakkai to Maimonides and Joseph Albo: it does but represent the point at which the entire Judaism of the West is bound logically to arrive. The same right by which the Talmudic doctors adapted the Scriptures to *their* age appertains to the wise men of our own totally different age. The question is that of the legitimacy of doctrinal and ritual developments. We have long ago settled this for ourselves in the affirmative; can we quarrel with the Jews for taking a similar course? I criticise the development of Reform-Judaism, not as in principle unjustified, but as inadequate to the wants of the Jews. Take for instance its assertion of the Messianic functions of the Jewish people. I heartily concur with Jewish writers in opposing the theory that the Jews are under a curse for having rejected the true Messiah. Doubtless every nation must suffer the consequences of its own misdeeds, and, speaking historically, it was the rejection of that new creation of Judaism, called the Gospel, which involved the Jewish people in a complication of calamities. But must we not admit, that, upon the whole, the dispersion of the Jews has produced beneficial results both for themselves and for the world?

I will only now allude to the preciousness for the balance of truth of the vigorous Jewish protest against polytheism. Was not this a result which deserves to be called providential? And must we not sympathise with the heart-felt rhetoric of Jewish preachers, when they declare that the flames which reduced the temple to ashes were not less the ministers of God's will and the prophets of his wisdom than the men who once erected that holy house.¹ Truly, if "Messianic" be only another word for "beneficent in the moral and religious sphere," the Jewish people has often exercised Messianic functions. But how can we accept this for the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Deutero-Isaiah? For what is there upon such a hypothesis to justify the enthusiasm of the writer? and if a high ecclesiastical authority (Archbishop Benson) is right, and there are truths from the far East waiting to be worked into our view of the Gospel, why may not other Eastern races besides the Jewish be called Messianic? But if the term "Messianic" implies a commission to propagate the fullest and truest religion, can it be said that the Jews have taken up their privilege? Do they indeed even desire to do so? Here are two striking sentences which I myself heard fall from the lips of a learned Rabbi, "Of a truth! Jesus is a Savior of the Gentile world, seeing that ye, Gentile Christians, are the seal of his Saviorship in God! May then Christianity yet bring many thousands and millions of men to Christian worship, to the worship of the God first recognized and taught by Israel to mankind."² But if Israel claims the privilege, can it disembarrass itself from the responsibilities? The prophecy, "He shall bring forth judgment to the nations," is not exhausted by the most decided passive protest against heathen religions. I think that the most candid Jews would not deny the soundness of this objection. I think that they would be the foremost to reprove the spiritual pride which seems to lurk in so many Jewish utterances. Israel is not yet a Messianic people, but it may, and, if the visions of the prophets are to be realized, it must, become a Messianic people. Not that other nations are excluded; it is true in more than one sense, that—

"all men to be
Will make one people ere man's race be run."

¹ S. Holdheim, *Predigten*, i., 102, referring to Maimonides.

² Dr. Schiller-Szinessy, *Exposition of Isa. lli., 13—liii., 12*, p. 31.

The true Israel is a spiritual one, and embraces all, whether Jews or Greeks, who wrestle with God and for God. Christians of all nations are called upon to do Messianic work, but none have such gifts for this high calling as the Jews. Each nation has its own strength and its own weakness, and the strength of the Jews lies in their intensity and persistent energy. They are a born missionary nation; though as yet the best part of their mission has been obscured by their protest. But now, alas! the eye of the great protester is become dim, and his natural force abated; and before the Jewish nation can become the "lamp" to which an ancient doctor, or the "fountain" to which the great Berlin preacher, Solomon Holdheim, has compared it, it must gain a deeper intuition and a more abounding moral energy. Is it not this which the Deutero-Isaiah saw in vision, when he promised in the name of Jehovah, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground"? (Isa. XLIV., 3.) Christendom needs this, too, I am sure; but Israel as a nation, unlike Christendom, still needs to feel her need. Not a mere Reform-Judaism, drawing part of its vitality from the Gospel; not a mere orthodox Western Christianity, but a moral and spiritual new birth through Jesus, can be the climax of her history. "The sons of Judah have to choose that God may again choose them." (Mordecai.) But will God again choose them? Surely; "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." (Rom. XI., 2.) As the old Hebrew sages have said, "a divine word, even though conditional is never recalled." "I am Jehovah, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." When Jacob's name was changed to Israel, he was a prophetic type of his descendants. In his people he will yet again wrestle with God, and at midnight he will prevail. The past and present sufferings of his race will be forgotten in the great, the second redemption. He will recognize in "Jesus our Brother" the true Savior and reconciler of Jew and Gentile; not the destroyer of his nationality, but its glorifier; the personal revelation of Him whose name is love. There are signs that Jacob's wrestling is soon to begin; can we, members of a Messianic Church, be unconcerned spectators? Can we, and dare we? For there is another strife beginning, and we need Israel's—that is, God's champion's help. As a progressive Jewish writer (J. Singer) has lately said, "the next generation will see one of the most serious crises of history—serious above all for the still undecided religious question." I join him in his recommendation of the study of the *origines* of Judaism and Christianity. God grant that, before the conflict rages fiercely, the Christian may learn to read the New Testament more in the light of the Old, and the Israelite the Old Testament more in that of the New. Then shall we become fellow-champions of a religion, the same in its essence, though not in all its forms—the same, that is, in the heart-worship of a self-revealing God, who has brought us near both to each other, and to himself by the sacrifice of his Son.

↳ EDITORIAL NOTES. ◀

Dr. Stebbins' Interpretation of the Balaam Narrative.—Our readers will be interested in the attempt of Dr. Stebbins to interpret the narrative of Balaam from a naturalistic standpoint. He has undoubtedly succeeded in presenting, most vividly, the times and surroundings of the story. After a study of this article one will be better prepared to form an opinion concerning the narrative; for the first and most important step in all interpretation is to acquaint one's self with the historical setting of the passage to be studied. The question arises, however, whether Dr. Stebbins has not gone too far. His estimate of Balaam's character may be correct, his portrayal of the relations existing between Israel and Moab may be historically accurate; but is there not one element which he has entirely failed to consider in his treatment of the subject? Does he not seem to have left entirely out of the account the fact, for it is a fact, and, indeed, an indisputable one, that in everything pertaining to Israel's career, there was manifested a special divine interposition? It is well, we believe, to emphasize the human element in Scripture; this element has been, and is, lost sight of by too many interpreters. And in just so far as it is lost sight of, there is a failure to grasp the true force and meaning of the Sacred narrative. But while giving due consideration to this element, we must not forget the other, the divine element. Not to appreciate this is attended with many serious consequences.

Dr. Stebbins is known, the world over, for his able defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. His ability as a critic and as an interpreter is conceded by all. His views, therefore, upon the subject under consideration, while as a whole they are not likely to be accepted by many who hold to a strict theory of inspiration, are nevertheless entitled to a respectful and thoughtful consideration.

Rev. Dr. Cheyne and the "Hittites."—We print with pleasure the following letter, received just too late for the April number. The warning which it contains is one to which we may well give heed. In his recent book, *Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse in Old Testament Study*, Prof. Francis Brown considers, none too strongly, the same danger. He says: "First results are provisional. Early translations are approximate only. Some detail, at first unperceived or misunderstood, may change the scope of a whole inscription. And, more than this, to see the newly discovered facts in their right relations—to perceive their meaning when combined with other facts, and to work them all together into one compact, enduring structure, is not a matter for the first day, or first week." What is true of Assyriology, is pre-eminently true of "Hittology."

TENDRING RECTORY, COLCHESTER, March 21, 1885.
To the Editor of THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT.

Pray allow me to correct an inadvertence of your contributor "J. A. S." on p. 159 of the OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, Dec., 1884. He apparently supposes that I regard the Old Testament references to the Hittites as all unhistorical, whereas it is only *certain references* which I have, in the article "Hittites" in the

Encyclopædia Britannica, described as to all appearances not historically accurate. Is the Old Testament everywhere contemporary with the events?

Pardon me for also correcting a reference to *The Empire of the Hittites* at p. 228, Jan. 1885. My friend, Prof. Sayce, is far too unaggressive, far too conscientious, to have indulged in such arrogant and offensive language towards me as that which Mr. Wright has fallen into in your extract. My article *Hittites* is trustworthy up to its date, and not diametrically opposed to Mr. Wright's views on the subject of the Hittites, though speculations on the reading of the Hittite inscriptions were not as yet in existence. On the subject of Old Testament criticism, my ideas differ, no doubt, from those of Mr. Wright, but have at least a right to be respectfully treated. This is not the first unprovoked aggression Mr. Wright has made upon me. I beg, sir, that you will not identify yourself with his reactionary principles. Scholars ought by this time to have learned mutual respect.

Yours truly,

T. K. CHEYNE, D. D.

P. S.—It seems at present more likely that Mr. Wright will have to recall some of *his* hypotheses than that I shall have to change *my* view of the "Hittites" of Genesis. May I reiterate a warning (see OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, 1884, p. 76) against accepting too hastily the apologetico-historical conclusions of writers of the school of Mr. Wright? It is too common to suppose that the bearings of archaeological discovery are *altogether* favorable to the minute accuracy of every one of the numerous historical passages in the Old Testament. This is surely not the case. Recent cuneiform and recent Egyptian discoveries alike have results as curious as they are interesting, and which only inveterate conservatives can regard as favorable to the old traditionalism.

The Fulfillment of Prediction.—Little is made of the prophetic element in Scripture by many, because for so large a portion of it definite fulfillment cannot be satisfactorily asserted. On the other hand by those who make much of the prophetic element, even the smallest details of a given prophecy are found to have been fulfilled. Here are two classes of Bible-interpreters. The one class examine a prophecy, find no clear fulfillment of it in history, regard the whole subject as vague and unsatisfactory, and consequently drop it, preferring to give attention to those portions of Scripture which may be studied, as it would seem, to greater profit. The other class examine the same prophecy, find (or fancy that they find) the most remarkable fulfillment even to minute details, regard the prophetic portions as, in fact, the most important in the Bible, and drop all else. The great majority of Bible students belong to one or the other of these classes. Where is the mistake?

The examination in both cases is an examination of the surface. They look merely at the outside. The first class make up their minds, from a superficial study, that certain things must have taken place in order to satisfy the words of the prediction. They cannot discover that exactly *these* things have happened. Then uneasiness follows, and interest in the subject is lost. The second class scour through history, find, here and there, events which answer the conditions, and regard *these* as a fulfillment of the prediction; or, in much the same fashion, they interpret those applications made in the New Testament, as fulfilling, for the first time and the last, the passages in the Old Testament to which they correspond. Both of these classes may be termed *literalists*. They are both wrong. They both do great damage to the cause they would serve, the former by their seeming lack of faith, the latter by their actual lack of common sense.

Bible-students must learn to recognize the fact, that, however far-seeing, the prophetic fore-sight was comparative blindness; that, however clear, the inspired

thought was necessarily clothed in language which even the divinely illuminated prophet himself often failed to comprehend; that, however specific, the prophetic word took on the coloring of the times in which it was uttered. We must not be literalists. Let us in every case ascertain the fundamental meaning intended to be conveyed, the underlying principle, which, for the sake often of obscurity, the divine purpose permitted to lie concealed. This being found, let it be compared with the principle underlying those events which are claimed to be fulfillments of prophecy. *E. g.*, the prophet Zechariah (1X., 9) calls upon the daughter of Jerusalem to rejoice, for "beloved, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation (*better*, saved); lowly (*better*, afflicted), and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." The literalist reads Matt. XXI., 1-10, and exclaims, What a remarkable fulfillment;—a fulfillment to the *letter*. He means by this that the specific event narrated by Matthew is that which the prophet had in mind. But how narrow is such a view. A closer study of the passage would have shown him that the prophet was describing, by a suggestive picture, the peaceful character of the Messiah's advent. He is to come without pomp, without ostentation; "he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street;" or as the context itself explains it (verse 10), "he shall speak peace to the heathen." What a characteristic prophecy,—fulfilled in the life of the Savior, viewed as a whole. Without doubt, the event narrated in Matt. XXI., 1-10, is a part of the fulfillment, for in a peculiar sense the peaceful reign of the Messiah is here illustrated; but let us not belittle prophecy by supposing that the prophet referred exclusively to this. If this specific event had never happened, the prophecy would have been as truly fulfilled.

This is but a single example, and not by any means the best that might have been selected. Our thought is simply this: It is wrong, and injurious to the interests of Bible study, on the one hand to look for a *literal* fulfillment of every prophecy; on the other hand to find in what is mere coincidence, a fulfillment, or in what is but, at best, a partial fulfillment the entire fulfillment. Let us not look for fulfillment in the letter, but in the spirit. The latter is higher, nobler, more convincing. The adoption of this canon of interpretation would solve many scriptural difficulties, otherwise insoluble.

▷BOOK ❖ NOTICES.◀

[Any publication noticed in these pages may be obtained of the AMERICAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY OF HEBREW, Morgan Park, Ill.]

EDERSHEIM'S MESSIANIC PROPHECY AND HISTORY.*

Dr. Edersheim has given us a book which treats a subject at once difficult and important. His treatment is necessarily a condensed one; it covers a long period and, for the most part, discusses principles. The standpoint of the writer is the conservative one. His work is in many respects eminently satisfactory. Touching the relation of Christianity to the Messianic idea in the Old Testament, he says: "Christianity in its origin appealed to a great Messianic expectancy, the source and spring of which must be sought not in the post-exilic period, but is found in the Old Testament itself. The whole Old Testament is prophetic. Its special predictions form only a part, although an organic part of the prophetic Scriptures; and all prophecy points to the Kingdom of God and to the Messiah as its King. The narrow boundaries of Judah and Israel were to be enlarged so as to embrace all men, and one King would reign in righteousness over a ransomed world that would offer to Him its homage of praise and service. All that had marred the moral harmony of earth would be removed; the universal Fatherhood of God would become the birthright of redeemed, pardoned, regenerated humanity; and all this blessing would center in, and flow from, the Person of the Messiah." Our author accepts the following principles: that prophecy always starts from the times of the prophet; that the fulfillment is wider than either hearers or speakers had perceived; that it had always a meaning and a lesson to those who heard it; that the prophets were not merely foretellers of future events, but the reprovers, reformers and instructors of their times. In explaining this twofold activity he says: "When the prophet foretells, he presents the future in the light of the present: and when he admonishes or reproves, he presents the present in the light of that future which he sees to be surely coming."

Notwithstanding the explanation given in the preface, we fail to see that the order of the book is a logical one. He takes up in one lecture, for example, (1) the Kingdom of God the leading idea in the Old Testament; (2) the form in which prophecy was presented to successive generations; (3) the relation between prophecy and fulfillment; (4) the character of prophetism; (5) the development of heathenism by the side of Israel. Another lecture discusses (1) some principles in regard to prophecy and fulfillment; (2) certain special prophecies; (3) the biblical terms applied to prophets; (4) the functions of the "Sons of the prophets"; (5) some prophecies in the New Testament.

* PROPHECY AND HISTORY IN RELATION TO THE MESSIAH; the Warburton Lectures for 1880-1884, with two appendices on the arrangement, analysis, and recent criticism of the Pentateuch, by Alfred Edersheim, M. A., Oxon., D. D., Ph. D. New York: A. D. F. Randolph & Co., 1885. Pp. xxi., 389. Price, \$2.50.

The same topic comes up repeatedly in different lectures, being discussed partly in one place and partly in another. As an apology for the many repetitions it is said that the lectures extended over four years. But why did not the author revise his lectures and thus make them more valuable?

The old view as to the etymology of the word *nabhi* (prophet) is adopted, viz., that the prophet was so filled with Divine Inspiration that it "bubbles up" out of his speech. That view, however, which makes the word mean "speaker," is certainly preferable, and is better in accordance with a true idea of prophecy.

The writer appreciates the relation sustained by questions of "criticism" to the subject under discussion. He gives two entire lectures, and two appendices to the composition and date of the Pentateuch.

The last three lectures, in which the Messianic idea as indicated in the Apocrypha, the different movements of national life in Palestine in their bearing on the Messianic idea, the teachings of the Pseudepigraphic writings concerning the Messiah, and the last stages of Messianic prophecy are treated, are especially interesting and valuable.

Why will publishers issue a book without a single index?

USE AND ABUSE OF ASSYRIOLOGY.*

This volume gives us in printed form the annual discourse delivered by Dr. Brown before the students and faculty of Union Theological Seminary, September 18, 1884. Assyriology has been more or less misused in defending the Old Testament: (1) There has been *overhaste in its employment*. Scholars have, in many cases, been too eager to announce what seemed to be discoveries; writers have accepted and used these announcements before they have been shown to be true. Theories and suggestions have been allowed too much influence. (2) There has been, on the other hand, a disposition to *refuse to accept the clear facts* brought to light by this study. An Assyrian statement is discovered which does not accord as fully as one would have it, with a corresponding biblical statement. For the sake of harmonizing the two statements, a meaning is forced upon the former which is by no manner of means warranted. It is wrong to "hail with eagerness well-attested historical documents when they say what you want them to say, but to discredit them with all your might when their utterances are troublesome to you." Dr. Brown speaks words deeply significant when he says "It is a pity to be afraid of facts." (3) It is also an abuse of Assyriology to *ignore the new problems* which it raises. Without a doubt it smooths over many old difficulties, but it gives rise to many new ones. These must be recognized by the Bible-student; they must be discussed from an unprejudiced standpoint. The discoveries of Assyriology, for example, must lead to a renewed discussion of the early narratives in Genesis. Were these narratives revealed directly to their human author? Were they handed down from antiquity under miraculous supervision? Do they belong to the common stock of popular Semitic tradition, cleansed

* ASSYRIOLOGY, ITS USE AND ABUSE IN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY; by Francis Brown, Associate Professor of Biblical Philology in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885. Pp. 96. Price, \$1.00.

under the special influence of God? Or, how shall we explain their present appearance and form? To ignore these questions is an abuse of Assyriology.

But the *uses* of Assyriology in the study of the Old Testament are numerous and important: (1) It gives the Old Testament literature a *new* setting by teaching us the racial connections of the nation whose literature it was. (2) It shows the *essential differences* between the Hebrew and other nations of antiquity. The student of Assyriology soon discovers the absence of that spirit which characterizes Hebrew literature. "There is a truth of spiritual conception, a loftiness of spiritual tone, a conviction of unseen realities, a confident reliance upon an invisible but all-controlling power, a humble worship in the presence of the Supreme Majesty, a peace in union and communion with the one and only God, and the vigorous germs of an ethics reflecting his will, which makes an infinite gap between the Hebrew and his Semitic brother "beyond the river," that all likeness of literary form does not begin to span." (3) Assyriology furnishes many positive historical confirmations of Hebrew history. It stamps the Hebrew annals as honest and accurate, and to this topic the writer devotes nearly one-half of the discourse.

In this notice, we have aimed merely to sketch the outline of the book, using often the writer's own language, hoping that those under whose eye the notice may fall, will be led to read the book itself. Many essays and papers have been published on this, now fruitful, theme. But for the general reader, who desires to know something concerning the relation of this new science to the Word of God, there is no treatment, so far as we know, which presents the subject so clearly and forcibly, so critically and satisfactorily. For one who desires to read more widely, the Bibliography with which the volume closes, is worth far more than the price of the book.

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