

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

the *terminus ad quem* 200 B.C. With canonical acceptance, "the Prophets" attained also to liturgical use, the *Haphtarah* or Lesson from the Prophets being now added to the *Parashah* or Lesson from the Law. Thus was concluded the second stage whereby the canon now contained "the Law and the Prophets."

The Prologue to Ecclesiasticus (132 B.C.) refers to other writings besides the Law and the Prophets, but not in terms that justify us in concluding that its author knew the third group, the *K^e thubhim* or "Writings" in a completed form. The collecting of the works that form the third canon was probably begun during the Maccabean period. Of the writings that had escaped destruction by Antiochus, those would be selected which had exerted the greatest influence on the spirit of devout Jews during the national rising and the humiliations that preceded it. *The Psalter* was the first to attain to canonical recognition. In part, at least, this had been long in use as the service-book of the Temple singers, but now it was finally revised and invested with canonical authority as the hymn-book of Israel (160 B.C.). At or about the same time were added Proverbs, Job, Ruth, Lamentations, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and very possibly Daniel. The "Antilegomena" (Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Esther) and Chronicles obtained far more tardy admission. Professor Ryle, as the result of a searching investigation, concludes that the third canon was *practically* closed, with its present contents, about 105 B.C., although its contents were not *officially* determined till the Synod of Jamnia, about 100 A.D. Since the beginning of the second century the only modifications that have taken place have been in the order of the books of the Hagiographa (the present order is due to mediæval Jews), and the subdivision as late as the sixteenth

century of the Books of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. Professor Ryle contends strongly that no apocryphal works ever found a place in the Hebrew canon; Ecclesiasticus and 1st Maccabees alone enjoying such favour as perhaps to lead to an attempt in some quarters to gain for them a place in the canon, an attempt, however, which was quite without success. The handling of this question and of the relation of the Septuagint to the Hebrew canon furnish almost the only instances in the book where we should venture to question some of Professor Ryle's conclusions, and to suggest that he is unduly conservative. Few additional materials for the history of the canon are supplied by the Talmud and by early Christian writers. The position of one book, Esther, long remained doubtful. It is even omitted in the list of canonical Scriptures given by Melito of Sardis so late as 170 A.D. The closing chapter on "The Arrangement of the Books" finds confirmation of the results that have been reached, in the tripartite division "The Law," "the Prophets," and "the Writings," and in the fact that the arrangement of the "Prophets" and the "Writings" is neither chronological nor according to subject matter, a fact which is explained only when we recognise the *gradual expansion* of the canon.

Such are the main positions of this work, whose appearance is so opportune. Finally, we may remark that the style and tone of Professor Ryle leave nothing to be desired. The reader's interest is never allowed to flag, and we feel that we are in the hands of one whose scholarship it would be presumption to praise, whose critical research is conducted in a reverent and cautious spirit, and whose conclusions give us a higher conception of the wisdom of Him who spake to the fathers "by divers portions and in divers manners."

Our Debt to German Theology.

BY REV. PROFESSOR J. S. BANKS, HEADINGLEY COLLEGE.

III.

WE have spoken of the favourable change which has come over German theology; and something should be said of the leader in a religious revival, which was as wonderful in its kind as the one under the Wesleys in England. Schleiermacher,

who died in 1834, gave the deathblow to the dreary, sapless Rationalism which was almost universal in Germany before his day. He did this, not by any direct refutation, not by systematic teaching or vindication of orthodox doctrine, for

he was not a systematic thinker, and he was himself far enough from orthodoxy, but by showing in effect that there are more things in religion than Rationalism dreams of. His genius runs over with new ideas and new points of view, which others have turned to account. In some respects, he was not unlike our Coleridge; in others, Maurice. Every theologian since has shown signs of his influence. Orthodox writers, like Dorner and Martensen, are constantly referring to him, and are deeply imbued with his spirit. He showed others the way which he failed to follow up. Like another Moses, he led the hosts of God to the border of the Promised Land without entering it himself. In truth, his teaching is full of conflicting elements. If now he speaks like a pantheist or Arian or Sabellian, at another time he uses language about Christ as the Ideal Man and the Redeemer of men, which involves much more than he himself held, and which leads directly to the immemorial faith of the Church. One of his earliest works, *Discourses on Religion*, contains, in outline, the whole of his teaching. Here appears his peculiar theory that feeling is the central element in religion, intellect being quite subordinate. He would thus attach little importance to definite creeds and uniform belief. All that reason has to do is to evolve the utterances of the Christian consciousness or Christian experience. The question naturally arises, Who is to represent this consciousness, and to speak for it? His early Moravian training makes itself felt here as well as in his glowing language about the life and character of Christ. "Religion is primarily a feeling, a sentiment, an intuition; it is the sense of the Infinite. To seek and find the Infinite in all that lives and moves, in all that becomes and changes: this is to be religious."¹ While denying the miraculous conception and the personal pre-existence of Christ, he asserts, strenuously, that His moral and religious elevation above all other men was a miracle. "He is the ideal type of man. What exists in each man, only in the state of idea, was realised by Him in His person. Schleiermacher cannot give a direct proof of this fact, but he shows that the contrary hypothesis is inadmissible. The life and even the existence of the Christian Church would otherwise remain an enigma."²

¹ Lichtenberger, *German Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 67.

² *Ibid.* p. 153.

And as Redeemer, He imparts the same moral character to us. So he calls Christ "Divine." No less term will suffice to describe His unique person and work. No wonder that some think that Schleiermacher was more orthodox in heart than head. We are reminded of the dying words of De Wette, another leader of a very free school of thought: "This I know, that there is salvation in no other name than that of Jesus Christ the crucified, and that mankind has nothing more precious than the Divine Humanity realised in Him and the kingdom of God planted by Him." To name the disciples of Schleiermacher would be to name many leaders of different and even opposing schools during the last fifty years.

But if Schleiermacher gave the signal for the battle against Christian unbelief, those who fought the battle to a victorious issue were men of a far more positive faith, men like Hengstenberg, Neander, Ullmann, Tholuck, Harless, Müller, Ebrard, and a host besides. Hengstenberg, who may almost be called a German Pusey, was a great leader, and his voluminous works, the chief of which have appeared in English, are not altogether obsolete. Tholuck, Ullmann, Dorner, Olshausen, Keil, Philippi are also known in English. Olshausen's volumes on the New Testament are still of considerable value, combining both scholarship and devoutness. The Keil and Delitzsch series on the Old Testament is not yet superseded as a whole. It is no slight merit of such works that they deal with the original text. Too many of our best English commentaries take the Authorised Version as their guide, which they then proceed to correct at every step, a troublesome and irritating course. Philippi's *Commentary on the Romans* deserves, I venture to think, greater favour than it has received in this country. Intensely theological, as every great commentary on that epistle must be, it discusses the line of apostolic teaching with marvellous patience and thoroughness. The Reformation theology is ever kept in view. To those to whom Greek and Latin references are no difficulty, the work will never cease to be a treasure. Dorner has been singularly fortunate in the favour he enjoys with British students. His great works have all been translated,—his work on *Christology, System of Christian Doctrine, History of Protestant Theology, and Christian Ethics*, each one an *opus magnum*. For originality and massive strength, Dorner is

unsurpassed. His discussions of each topic in the *System*—the Trinity, Creation, Revelation, Sin, Christology, Atonement—are exhaustive treatises. Each doctrine is viewed under three aspects—Biblical, which is treated briefly, Ecclesiastical, and then Dogmatic, where the author reasons out his own position in masterly style. If Dorner is not easy to read, the translators must bear part of the blame.

It may be alleged that the influence of the negative school of criticism is a heavy set-off to the gain of our intercourse with Germany. I am too

little acquainted with the works of this school in detail to be able to pronounce an opinion on them; but it may be safely said that the last word will not belong to those who take extreme positions. No one questions the great ability and learning of scholars like Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Weizsäcker, Lipsius, Schürer, etc. On the other hand, orthodox scholars are not slow to recognise the rights of criticism, or to accept established conclusions. Witness Delitzsch, Riehm, Von Orelli, Strack, Kostermann, Weiss, perhaps even Dillmann.

The Old Testament in the Light of the Literature of Assyria and Babylonia.

BY THEO. G. PINCHES, BRITISH MUSEUM.

GENESIS ii. 4, 5.

*These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth . . . And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up.*¹

The negative clauses of the non-Semitic account of the creation may be regarded as corresponding roughly with the above. They are as follows:—

1. The glorious house, the house of the gods, in a glorious place had not been made;
2. A plant had not been brought forth, a tree had not been created;
3. A brick had not been laid, a beam had not been shaped;
4. A house had not been built, a city had not been constructed;
5. A city had not been made, a foundation² had not been made glorious;
6. Niffer had not been built, Ê-kura had not been constructed;
7. Erech had not been built, Ê-ana had not been constructed;
8. The Abyss had not been made, Êridu had not been constructed;
9. (As for) the glorious house, the house of the gods, its seat had not been made—
10. The whole of the lands were sea.

¹ So the R.V.

² Or, "habitation" (*nammaššû*). See vol. iii. p. 410.

The "positive clauses" corresponding with the above, which describe the creation of the things mentioned, is mutilated. The text runs, however, as follows:—

31. Lord Merodach on the sea-shore raised a bank.
32. . . . at first he made not;
33. . . . he caused to be.
34. [He caused the plant to be brought forth], he made the tree;
35. . . . he made in its place.
36. [He laid the brick], he made the beams;
37. [He constructed the house], he built the city;
38. [He built the city], he made the foundation glorious;
39. [He built the city Niffer], he built Ê-kura the temple;
40. [He built the city Erech, he built Ê-a]na the temple.

The text is here broken away, but it probably went on to describe the creation of the other great cities of Babylonia, with special reference, probably, to Borsippa and its renowned temple-tower called Ê-zida, to which the incantation on the reverse of the tablet refers.

In the first of the two extracts given above, the "glorious house of the gods," in lines 1 and 9, may be regarded as corresponding with the heavens, where most of the gods of the Babylonians were