

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

was double, and the traces of an inscription show that it had been erected by Amonhotep II. This is the first city gate that has been found in Egypt, and its discovery is due to the acuteness of the French *savan* in following up clues which had escaped his predecessors.

A. H. SAYCE.

Egypt.

Yahweh in Early Babylonia: A Supplementary Note.¹

SINCE the Hammurabi contracts made us acquainted with names of such interest, from the point of view of the history of religion, as Professor Sayce's *Ya-ti-um-ilu* (i.e. *Ya'u-ilu*), and the name *Kha-li-ya-um* (i.e. *Khâli-Ya'u*), of which I myself gave an account, the materials have undergone a further increase by the publication of Part viii. of *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets*. If anyone may have been still inclined to doubt my *Khâli-Ya'u* because of its being written *Kha-*

¹ Cf. THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, x. (October 1898), pp. 42, 48.

li-pi-um (although *pi* had at that time also the phonetic values *wi* and *ya*), these doubts will now be removed by the form *Kha-li-ya-um*, which is found in Bu. 91-5-9, 2499, lines 7 and 12, with the usual sign for *ya*.

Specially noteworthy is the name *Ya-akh-pi-ilu* (Bu. 91-5-9, 314, line 3), in the first place, on account of the Western Semitic Imperfect form (cf., in addition to the names already known, *Yarshi-ilu*, *Yakhmar-ilu*); and, secondly, because the form *Yahveh-el*, postulated by Mr. G. H. Skipwith (THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, ix. p. 531), could hardly be represented in the Old Babylonian form of writing except as *Ya-akh-pi-ilu* (pronounce *Ya'wi-ilu*), especially as there are known as yet no analogies in the formation of Western Semitic proper names for such a form as *Yakhpi-ilu* (from פִּיחַ, or perchance פִּיחַ). I might further compare, from the New Babylonian period, the names *Khabi-rabi* (written *Kha-bi-GAL*) and *Ya-kha-bi* (son of an *Abi-nadib*, and thus of a Western Semite), and might discover in these two names an original *Hawi-rabi* and *Ya-hawi* in Babylonian disguise.

FRITZ HOMMEL.

Munich.

Professor Deissmann on Jesus at Prayer.

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

IN the *Christliche Welt* for 27th July Professor Deissmann speaks of religion as inner life, and prayer as its truest expression. We know a religion or a good man when we know their prayers. The history of religion might be written as a history of prayer. The most important parts of the gospel for giving us insight into the inner life of Jesus are His prayers, or His teachings about prayer. Explanations of ideas like 'the Kingdom of God,' 'Son of Man,' etc., are valuable. But whoever ignores or lightly regards Christ's prayers, stands outside before the veil instead of entering the Holy Place. The Synoptic Gospels give us these prayers. Professor Deissmann then continues—

1. Jesus had a rich prayer-life. The Son of Israel grew up in the air of the Psalter, the confession, 'Hear, O Israel,' and the deeply felt,

hallowed petitions and thanksgivings contained in the older parts of the eighteen-membered prayer.¹ No piece of bread was broken, no wine partaken of, without thanksgiving. That prayer had sunk in the Judaism of the time of Jesus into mere lip-work, can be asserted only by advocates of Christianity who think to honour the Master by dishonouring His ancestral house. Despite all externalizing of the practice, and despite all casuistry of theologians, devout suppliants were as little wanting in the days of Jesus as among Catholics in the days of the Reformation. Alongside the praying Pharisee stands the praying publican; Jesus Himself has suggested this situation in His story. He is the child of a praying house and a praying nation. And so He

¹ The Shemoneh Esreh, the daily prayer of the Jews; see Schürer.

devoutly observes the custom of prayer at meals (Mt 14¹⁹ 15³⁶ 26²⁶), nay, He lives so much in the Psalter that, when the death-agony stifles His own words, He cries to His God in words of a psalm; He described what stands at the beginning of the 'Hear, O Israel' as the first and chief commandment (Mk 12^{29f.}), as He also bore on His garment the symbolic signs prescribed there (Lk 8⁴⁴).

But He not only prayed out of religious sentiment; He spoke with His God not only in the old dear formulas repeated by mothers from generation to generation. The Gospels are filled with intimations of an independent prayer-life of Jesus (Mk 1³⁵ 6⁴⁶, Lk 6¹² 9¹⁸⁻²⁸ 11¹). Whoever gives these wonderful brief sentences but a moment's attention will see that here lie the roots of the inner life of Jesus. Of course they do not lie bare, they are not visible. In the saying to the disciples in Mt 6⁶ Jesus the suppliant pictured Himself; looking through this saying we see Jesus Himself on His kness at night in these lonely spots; He is alone with His God, and what He said to God has been preserved by no human pen. The roots of the cedar are buried in sacred soil.

2. And yet a few inches of some of the strongest roots lie exposed to the day. That only few prayers of Jesus are handed down to us, lies in the nature of the case, and speaks for the genuineness of the tradition. The extraordinary brevity of the prayers is another mark of genuineness. There can only have been a few isolated cases in which the disciples were permitted to listen to Jesus at prayer. But what they breathlessly listened to in such moments they saved from oblivion. Nay, when the words of Jesus were translated for Greek disciples, even the original Semitic wording is here and there not kept back from the Greeks, and the Abba of the suppliant Jesus sounded to Galatia and Rome (Gal 4⁶, Ro 8¹⁵), and stands to-day in the Bible of every tongue. Jesus Himself once stated the contents of one of His prayers (Lk 22^{31f.}). This is the intercession of Jesus, intercession for His disciples, for an immortal soul that had to be saved from the cunning attacks of Satan. Jesus knows His disciples; a Peter may be a confessor and a Satan (Mk 8^{29. 33}), and woe to him if the tempter stretches his hand to the circle of disciples! The same experience that once led the Master to say to Peter, 'Get thee behind Me, Satan,' leads Him now to pray for the disciple. Face to face with

Peter, holy indignation and burning menace; face to face with the Father, interceding mercy!

Still deeper go the prayers whose wording is preserved, especially two prayers which may be described as the extreme poles of Christ's prayers—the prayer of thanksgiving, and the prayer of Gethsemane.

The prayer of thanksgiving is preserved by Matthew and Luke: Luke indicates the situation out of which it arose. It came from the lips of the Master, when the disciples sent forth by Him returned with joy, exulting in their victories over the demons. Then Jesus said to them, 'In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven' (Lk 10²⁰). In that hour, Luke continues, He rejoiced in spirit and said, 'I thank Thee, O Father,' etc. (10²¹). The fact that Luke has preserved the occasion of the praise is one of the many pearls of his narrative. By this means only the praise becomes intelligible. It is a cry of exultation. Jesus stands on a Tabor of His inner life: to His disciples, these despised babes, these petty, unlearned men, such unspeakably great things are granted. No intellect of the wise and prudent possesses what is revealed to them. Blessed are they, the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But this is not *His* triumph, it is the Father's work, nay, the Father's good pleasure. The Lord of heaven and earth has condescended to babes. This is the certainty swelling in the breast of Jesus and calling forth the cry of triumph. The Son stands before the Father, the humble servant before the Lord, filled with unspeakable joy, his whole soul a thankoffering to the living God.

The prayer of Gethsemane leads us down from this height to the darkest depths. Mark has perhaps preserved it most exactly: 'Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; remove this cup from Me: howbeit not what I will, but what Thou wilt' (Mk 14³⁶). Thrice Jesus prayed so; in what state of feeling He Himself told the disciples: 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.' Accordingly the evangelist relates, Jesus began to shudder and fear (Mk 14³⁸). Luke says, His sweat was like drops of blood; and an early Christian historian of the Passion was deeply moved by the loud cry and the tears of the suppliant (He 5⁷). Jesus sees Himself in the hands of His deadly foes, He foresees His terrible

martyr-death; His soul shakes with genuine feeling. With the full death-horror of the healthy man He sinks on His knees before the Father, and a cry for help goes up, once and again and a third time, so ardent and yet so humble, at once a wrestling and a submission. No sign of defiance or of selfishness. The 'I' is lost in the 'Thou': 'Not what I will, but what Thou wilt.'

Of almost measureless importance are the three prayers of the Crucified on Golgotha—an intercession, a cry of anguish, and a sigh of consummation.

During the crucifixion, or soon after its accomplishment, Jesus prayed, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Lk 23³⁴). This act of intercession shows that Christ's command to love enemies and pray for them (Lk 6²⁸, Mt 5⁴⁴) is among the sayings which cannot be severed from His personality without robbing them of their chief meaning. It is uncritical to doubt the genuineness of the prayer on the cross, because it might be put into Christ's mouth as an illustration of that command. As if it were child's play to give such a command, and as if Jesus could give the command to pray for enemies without Himself practising it. The intercession on the cross is merely one among many; we may assume that in His nightly prayers Jesus was not seldom occupied with those on whom the prophetic indignation of the day had fallen. The command was not the basis of the intercessions, but their fruit. There is no sufficient reason for doubting the tradition of Luke. What deep glances into the soul of Jesus this prayer for His murderers gives us! What confidence the crucified Son of Israel has in His God! Where is the God of the Psalms of revenge? Where is the God of the Maccabean martyrs, whose strength was two things at once—faith and hate?

Still less can there be any question as to the genuineness of the cry of anguish on the cross. It fits in with no dogmatic conception of Jesus. What reason, therefore, could there be to put it into His lips? It suits only the actual cross. 'With loud voice' it was thrown out by the dying One, and through eighteen centuries its original Aramaic wording sounds: 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? a saying not first used by Jesus, and yet His own property, bought with His heart's blood.¹ Thus,

¹ Mk 15³⁴, Mt 27⁴⁶. The only doubt is whether Jesus said 'Eli, Eli' or 'Eloi, Eloi.' Dalman—an authority on the point—holds the first to be original.

long before, a human soul in deep distress thirsted for the living God in Ps 22. Now the saying lies on the parching lips of Jesus. It cannot be brought under the usual categories of prayer; it is not even petition, it is the sigh of a tortured sufferer, and yet a prayer genuine beyond any other. This prayer impresses with its elemental force more than a hundred complacent arguments against the reasonableness of prayer. This prayer teaches to pray; and it teaches every one, to whom prayer is a secure heritage beyond danger of disturbance, that intercourse with God means a contention for God, a wrestling of His presence with His absence.

Jesus remained victor. His cry of triumph, again thrown out 'with loud voice,' is an old prayer; with the exception of the first word it springs from the 31st Psalm, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit' (Lk 23⁴⁶). But again it is the altogether peculiar possession of the suppliant on the cross; Jesus added a single word to the saying of the psalm, a word only understood in all its fulness of meaning when viewed as a prayer-word—the word 'Father.' Abba—with this sound on His lips Jesus breathed forth His spirit.

3. In His own prayers we see the suppliant face to face. In His sayings to the disciples about prayer we see Him again as in a glass. We remarked before that the command to intercede for enemies indicated the contents of His own intercessions. It is the same with the exhortation to pray for labourers in God's harvest (Mt 9³⁵⁻³⁸). But, above all, we see Jesus the suppliant in the Lord's Prayer. True, it is a prayer for the use of the disciples; but in it also Jesus has given His best, the ripe fruit of His own prayer-experience. It is a common course to take away from the Lord's Prayer all personal connexion with the Lord, as it is also a dogmatic expedient to make a deep gulf between 'My Father' and 'your Father' in the words of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer was not given by Jesus as the first basis of an impersonal liturgy for a new cultus; rather Jesus as suppliant by this example taught His people to pray. In this prayer we obtain an idea of the simple earnestness and humble energy of His own prayers.²

² It will be seen that these sentences are cautiously framed. The ground is most delicate, and error is only too easy. In realising the humanity of Jesus we must go as far as Scripture does.

Even where Jesus criticizes the prayers of hypocrites and the heathen (Mt 6^{ff.}), He gives glimpses into the nature of His own prayer. The hypocrites pray at street corners; He prays in the chamber. The heathen and the Pharisees babble out wordy liturgies (Mt 23¹⁴); His prayers are brief, for the Son prays to the Father, and the Father knows what His child needs before it asks. This last thought is altogether peculiar and significant: God does not need our prayers. This is a warning, not against prayers of petition, but against unfilial, arrogant petitions,—petitions viewed as magical in effect. How earnestly Jesus used genuine petition, needs no lengthened proof. The wonderful parables of the petitioning friend (Lk 11⁵⁻⁸), the petitioning child (11¹¹⁻¹³, cf. Mt 7⁹⁻¹¹), and the petitioning widow (Lk 18¹⁻⁸), were spoken out of the secrets of His own petitions and supplications. The simplicity of His supplications was disturbed by no shadow of doctrinaire reflec-

tion. Faith that removes mountains made Him pray. Hence he can testify, 'Have faith in God' (Mk 11²²⁻²⁴; cf. Mt 17²⁰). This is one of Christ's most undoubted sayings;¹ in magnificent paradox it declares the transcendent power of prayer. Just so the similar saying² in Lk 17⁶. This is not to be diluted, although the paradox in form should not be grossly materialized. The believing suppliant, Jesus would say, has miraculous force at command; and that He asserts nothing but His own experience may be inferred from the previous narrative of the healing of the deaf and dumb:³ the mighty Ephphatha is preceded by a glance up to heaven and a sigh of prayer.

¹ Paul alludes to it in I Co 13².

² To this saying also Jesus perhaps alludes in Mt 21²¹. Matthew certainly refers it to the preceding narrative of the withered fig-tree.

³ Mk 7³¹; cf. also Mk 6⁴¹ 9²⁹, Mt 26⁵³.

At the Literary Table.

THE BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

In the Textual Criticism of the New Testament the great controversy is between quantity and quality. Get manuscripts enough, said the late Dean Burgon, follow the reading that has most support. Get the right manuscripts, said Westcott and Hort, follow the reading that has best support. Westcott and Hort are winning; but Dean Burgon has a successor in Prebendary Miller who will not let them win easily. He has just published through Messrs. Bell & Sons the first part of *A Textual Commentary upon the Holy Gospels* (8vo, pp. xxiv, 118). This first part covers Matt. i.—xiv. It is a good idea, worked out conscientiously by a capable scholar. And whether we follow 'quantity' or 'quality' it is useful; for here are *all* the MSS., and we can make our own choice and our own decision.

The two books that literary people find most useful are *Who's Who* (crown 8vo, 3s. 6d. net) and *The Englishwoman's Year-Book* (2s. 6d. net). Even to poets and poetesses they are more useful

than the Rhyming Dictionary. They grow with the growth of the British Constitution. This year's volumes are fat and full of sap. They are miracles of accurate editing. Both volumes are published by Messrs. A. & C. Black.

We often hear of a 'breezy' biography. The biography of Dr. Charles Berry of Wolverhampton is breezy. Breezy means brief and lively. There are good stories; there is also a good man—the kind of good man boys love. The book should have been received earlier. It is now into its second edition (Cassell & Co., crown 8vo), and does not need reviewing, but we congratulate Mr. Drummond, who wrote it.

Ad Rem is the emphatic title of a new volume of sermons by the Rev. H. Hensley Henson, B.D., published by Messrs. Wells Gardner (crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.). It handles nearly all the burning questions of the day. And that alone would make the book entertaining; but Mr. Henson would be entertaining in discussing philosophic deism.