

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 EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

PROFESSOR RAMSAY has contributed a short article to the *Sunday School Times* of America on 'The Turning-Point in Paul's Life.'

The turning-point in Paul's life was the vision of the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus. Professor Ramsay is not afraid to call it his conversion. And he says that whatever we make of it, Paul himself made everything of it. It was the culmination of his past and the inauguration of his future life. From it as starting-point he reckons the chronology of his later life (according to the proper interpretation of Gal 1¹⁵⁻²¹). The instinct of the early Church recognized the saints' and martyrs' *day of death* as the beginning of their true life. Paul's birthday was his *conversion*.

What was the cause of his conversion? It was the belief that he had seen Jesus after His resurrection from the dead. That belief transformed him, and the transformation was ever new evidence of the validity of the belief. But Paul never doubted its validity. That his companions did not see what he saw, was nothing to him. He saw. He never doubted that.

But the important question which Professor Ramsay raises here is, How did he know that the person whom he saw was that Jesus whose

followers he was persecuting? He had Jesus' own word for it: 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.' No doubt. But Professor Ramsay finds more in it than that. In writing to the Corinthians Paul mentions his witness as of the same kind with that of Cephas and the rest of the apostles. Now they had seen Jesus after He rose from the dead, and recognized Him as the very person whom they had known in life. Well, Paul had been living and studying in Jerusalem for many years. It is hardly possible to suppose that he had not seen the person with whose fame and words all Judæa and Jerusalem were ringing. So when he heard the words, 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest,' he looked up and recognized Him, just as the disciples had done.

Some reference has already been made to Deissmann's *Bible Studies* and to the fresh contributions which that book makes to the interpretation of the New Testament. These contributions are chiefly from the papyri and inscriptions, but it is not everyone that can read the papyri and inscriptions to such effect. Nor is it the New Testament alone that is interpreted. Fresh light is thrown on many a passage in the Greek Old Testament also, of which one example may now be given.

The word is ἀφεσις. Coming from ἀφίημι, 'to send away,' it is the word used so frequently in Leviticus for the 'jubile' or 'release' of the fiftieth year, whence it came to express the 'forgiveness' of sins. But in J1 1²⁰ and La 3⁴⁸ we find the strange expression ἀφέσεις ὑδάτων, the Hebrew in the former passage meaning 'water-brooks,' and in the latter 'rivers of water.' Again in 2 S 22¹⁶ the Hebrew, which means 'channels of the sea,' is translated by ἀφέσεις θαλάσσης. How is it that ἀφεσις could be used for a brook or a river?

Sometimes, when the Greek translators of the Old Testament did not understand the Hebrew word before them, they 'showed tact,' as Deissmann expresses it, by simply transcribing it. And Deissmann himself has been tempted to look upon ἀφεσις as an instance. But the evidence of the papyri has made that and all other suppositions superfluous.

In the Flinders Petrie Papyri, edited by Professor Mahaffy, there occur official reports concerning the irrigation of Egypt. In these reports the technical expression for the *releasing* of the waters is ἀφίημι τὸ ὕδωρ. The substantival phrase is also found, ἀφεσις τοῦ ὕδατος. And not only so, but the word ἀφεσις is used alone with this meaning. For when one thinks of the importance to the Egyptians of the irrigation, one has little difficulty in seeing how inevitably and immediately the words which expressed its various incidents would be understood by the people in their technical sense.

Now the Greek translation of the Old Testament was made for Egyptian readers. Its translators already recognized the important principle that a translation should make the same impression on its readers as did the original. If that cannot be done by a word-for-word rendering, some paraphrase or equivalent must be chosen. Canals were to the Egyptians what brooks were to the Palestinians. The bursting forth of the

Nile waters from the opened sluices would make the same impression upon the former as the roar of the first winter-brook made upon the latter. So when Joel says, 'Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of my people,' the Septuagint translators convey the force of his words to their own readers by speaking of the outrush of the pent-up water in the canals.

'And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel' (Ac 1¹⁰). Who were these two men? The Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, is much interested in them, and in his new book, *The Risen Master*, has a definite opinion about them.

The common opinion is that they were angels. Mr. Latham does not think that they were angels. Not that he denies the existence of 'intermediary intelligences.' In his previous book, *A Service of Angels*, he leaves us in no doubt about that. Nor is he prepared to deny 'that such an intelligence might possibly be embodied and appear upon earth.' But it is a law, he says, that superhuman intervention does not take place until it is required in order to accomplish something which could not be accomplished without it. He thinks that all that these 'men in white apparel' did could have been done without supernatural agency. Therefore he does not believe that they were angels. He believes that they were men.

There was a body of Judæan believers, he conceives, who 'followed not' with the Galilæan disciples. They did not lack courage. One of them is the 'young man' of Mk 14⁵¹, who in a moment of danger ventured so far that he only escaped with the loss of his clothing. Some of them may have been priests, for 'a great company of the priests were obedient unto the faith' (Ac 6⁷). Some of them may have been Essenes, who were distinguished by their wearing of 'white

apparel.' They did not lack courage. But they shrank from attaching themselves to a company of Galilæans who spoke a provincial dialect. 'Ye men of Galilee' would be their natural address to the actual followers of Jesus.

It may be, then, that two of these Judæan believers, who were more cultivated and socially superior to the Galilæans, and therefore grasped more easily the meaning of the deeper words of Christ, especially the words about a Messiah who had to suffer, it may be that two of them followed the apostolic party on the way up the Mount of Olives, keeping a little behind. The disciples, who had no eyes but for the Master, observed them not. And they did not come forward till they saw the Lord ascending into the cloud. Then they stepped to the front, and told the disciples that which they themselves, by a better trained intelligence, already understood about His coming again.

Professor Foster of the Pacific Theological Seminary of America has contributed an article to the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for April on 'The Limits of Theological Freedom.' In outward appearance the article is a review of two recent American books. But the title is a frank admission that there is a deeper purpose in it than that. For Professor Foster is a Congregationalist, and the authors of both the books are Congregationalists; and when Professor Foster wrote his article the Congregationalists of America were face to face with the question whether they should allow their professors to say anything they pleased regarding the Person of Christ.

What have their professors said? The first book reviewed is by Professor Gilbert of the Chicago Theological Seminary. Its title is *The Revelation of Jesus*. Professor Gilbert is a thoroughly competent scholar, and a writer of considerable literary power. What he says he says wittingly, and he says what he means to say.

His deliberate desire is to stand beside the men who stood beside Jesus when He was on earth. He seeks to hear with their ears, to see with their eyes. He takes the Gospels, including the Fourth, as sufficiently trustworthy evidence of what they saw and heard. And he asks, Reading these Gospels as faithfully as we can, what do we find in them about the Person of Jesus of Nazareth?

We find, he answers, that He was merely a man. Nowhere does he answer so in those words, but Professor Foster believes that all he answers comes to that. He says that 'Jesus claims and manifests a truly human consciousness'; He says He has 'the consciousness of perfect moral union with the Father'; he says that this union is 'a union of character, ethical, and not metaphysical'; and he says that 'there is nowhere a suggestion that the Father is with Him, or that He abides in the Father, because He is of the same nature or substance as the Father.'

Professor Gilbert, however, makes a distinction between the conclusions which the writers of the Four Gospels drew regarding Christ and the words which they gave as spoken by Christ about Himself. They may have come to conceive Him as something more than man; He Himself never claims to be more than man. This distinction, Professor Foster thinks, he has no right to draw. If St. John cannot be trusted in his understanding of Jesus' words, how can he be trusted in his report of them? But Professor Gilbert may for a moment be allowed to choose his own method.

How, then, does he deal with such a passage as Jn 17⁵, 'And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was'? Professor Gilbert examines other passages in which the words *glory* and *glorify* occur. He comes to the conclusion that they express reward for work that has been done. The work which Jesus had done was the work of the Messiah. The glory was

therefore the glory of doing the Messianic work and of being recognized as the Messiah. And when it is said that Jesus had this glory with the Father before the world was, the meaning is that He had it *'in the purpose and decree of God.'*

The second book is by Professor Paine of the Bangor Theological Seminary. Its title is *The Evolution of Trinitarianism*. It follows the course of history from the Gospels to the present day, taking Athanasius, Augustine, and innumerable others on the way. At the end it states what has to be rejected and what retained. From first to last it is what Professor Foster calls 'clear, incisive, epigrammatic, and alert.' Like Professor Gilbert, Professor Paine knows what he means to say and says it. He is less merciful than Professor Gilbert. 'He spares no antagonist, and, unfortunately, nearly every living author and most of the dead must be reckoned in this category.' He is less merciful, and he receives less mercy.

Professor Paine finds no trace of a trinity in the Old Testament. He finds no trace in the teaching of Jesus. Jesus 'was a Jew, trained by Jewish parents in the Old Testament Scriptures,' and His teaching was 'Jewish to the core.' 'In all Christ's declarations concerning Himself, as given in the Synoptic Gospels, there is no hint anywhere of a pre-incarnate life, or of a supernatural birth, or of a divine incarnation. There is no evidence that the idea of a peculiar metaphysical union with God ever entered His mind.'

'In the Synoptic Gospels,' he says. For Professor Paine does not believe in St. John. Professor Gilbert took the Fourth Gospel with him; Professor Paine rejects it with emphasis. It is 'undoubtedly a writing of about the middle of the second century, and the author is entirely unknown.' That, 'undoubtedly,' is not too courteous to men like Harnack, but it is characteristic of Professor Paine. It is not the only case of opposition to Harnack. Regarding Athanasius, for example, Harnack says, 'If one

asks the question whether Athanasius viewed the Deity as a numerical unity or as a numerical duality, we are to answer as a numerical unity.' Professor Paine says bluntly that Athanasius believes in three distinct beings, who are of the same generic nature, but not numerically one.

For Professor Paine has no respect of person. He salutes no man by the way. His purpose is to show the steps by which the dogma of Trinitarianism rose and flourished and fell. And if Harnack is in the way of his progress it is the worse for Harnack. But we need not follow his steps. Let us come to his conclusions.

His conclusions are expressed in two momentous paragraphs. The first names the 'traditional presuppositions and prepossessions and assumptions' that 'stand squarely' in the way of the theology of the future. The second tells us what the theology of the future is to be.

First, then, as to the things that stand in the way. 'Such for example are the assumptions concerning the supernatural world and its relations to this world; concerning miracles as suspensions, if not violations, of the ordinary laws of nature; concerning a supernatural or miraculous revelation of God to man through specially inspired men; concerning the Bible as a book of divine authorship, and hence perfect and infallible in its religious teachings, and even in its history and science; concerning the historicity of the traditional dates and authors of the books of Scripture; concerning the metaphysical being and character of God, and concerning the account in Genesis of the origin and fall of man. These,' Professor Paine concludes, 'are a few of the most striking presuppositions of orthodoxy, and it can be seen at a glance that they are utterly inconsistent with all the discoveries of science and all the latest results of historical scholarship.'

And now, what is the theology of the future to be? It will consist of the following 'truths,'

properly arranged in a proper system,—‘the truths of man’s free moral nature and responsibility, of sin and sinfulness and its moral effects, of man’s capacity for repentance and a new spiritual life, of the religious sense of God and of his moral supremacy, of man’s instinctive hope of immortality, of conscience that commands to duty and stirs the conviction of moral reward and punishment, and of the revelations of God’s goodness and love in nature and providence, and especially in the gospel of Christ.’

Professor Gilbert and Professor Paine are teachers of candidates for the ministry in theological colleges of the Congregationalists of America. What are the Congregationalists of America to do with them? Professor Foster says that they should be asked to withdraw from their fellowship. They should be told, he says, that their true fellowship is elsewhere. ‘It is not creditable,’ he says, ‘for a man who has in fact abandoned every distinctive element of Christianity to call himself a Christian and claim fellowship with Congregationalists who stand firmly by the Christianity of the Gospels, which is the only Christianity that has any right to the name.’

Well, since Professor Foster wrote his article, Professor Gilbert has been told, and he has withdrawn. He has been told that ‘the good of the Seminary and of Dr. Gilbert’ requires his resignation, and he has resigned. What Professor Paine will be told or what he will do, we cannot tell.

‘It was my experience once upon a time in the early days of summer to be in the terrestrial Jerusalem; the city was in a state of aroused interest or of suppressed excitement, in which every man was passing the word to his neighbour on some matter of importance, but the excitement was not due to political rumours nor to intrigues of or against the Government, there was no threatened invasion of Franks from the West, or arrival of fresh batches of Persian Jews from the

East; it was simply due to the fact that *the first ripe figs were in the market.*’

Thus begins an article in the May number of *Present Day Papers* by Professor Rendel Harris. The article is called ‘The Elements of a Progressive Church.’ And in that introduction Dr. Rendel Harris at once strikes the keynote of the article. The matter of the newsmongering in Jerusalem that early summer day may seem trifling, but it helped him to understand some expressions in the Old and New Testaments, in particular the words of the apostles who speak of redeemed humanity in earth and in heaven as ‘the first fruits of God’s creatures,’ ‘the first fruits to God and the Lamb.’ That is a definition of the Church. And when the Church is defined as ‘the first fruits,’ the meaning is that it is in advance of other men and other societies. When other men and other societies come to their ripeness, they may be indistinguishable in sweetness and fulness from the Church. ‘It is even conceded that the later fruits may be larger, rounder, ruddier or deeper-purpled, sweeter and juicier.’ But the distinction lies in this that the Church, as *first* fruits, is ahead of them. It has a chronological advantage. It sees what should be done first and does it first. And this is not a trifling matter. ‘When one’s soul desires the vintage or the fruitage of the returning summer, chronological advantage is everything. The trees that are a fortnight to the fore are the talk and the delight of the town.’

This is the idea of the Church which was entertained by the apostles. It is the view which commended itself to St. Paul and to St. John and to St. James—this view which wrote the early believers down as being in advance of the general mass of humanity, and constituted them the Church by the mere fact of that advance. ‘Even St. James,’ says Professor Rendel Harris, ‘even St. James, who is the least progressive of the early band, is clear on this point, for it is he who says that God produced us by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.’

St. James just missed being a fossil, for which Nature seemed to have designed him, but Grace came and made him a saint, with the root and seed of progress in him.'

So the Christian Church is called 'the first fruits,' because it is early. It has the advantage chronologically. It is the first, it was meant to be the first, to see what has to be done, the first to do it. The Christian Church is called 'the first fruits to God and the Lamb,' because it was to contain, and be made up of, *the spiritual, social, and intellectual leaders of mankind.*

Spiritual, social, and intellectual—is it a bold claim? It is no claim at all. It is a possession, it is a gift. 'That seeing ye might see.' 'Blessed are the eyes that see the things which ye see.' The spiritual, social, and intellectual leaders—He who placed the responsibility added the endowment, for He sends no man a warring at his own charges. 'He who had made the stars to be looked at, had found lenses and optic glasses for the children to look through, and this world would have been a redeemed world long ago if they had gone on looking as they were first instructed to do.'

'We need not,' says Professor Rendel Harris, 'spend our time in pointing out how great has been the failure of this progressive idea which we call the Church. Viewed as an outward organization there are few social movements which it has not repressed, few steps of intellectual progress which it has not denounced; it harked back to paganism, and stayed there, merely changing the names of the deities, and putting new revels in place of ancient feasts; it suppressed philosophy, it delayed philanthropy, it imprisoned Galileo, it denounced Darwin, it burnt witches, it patronized the slave trade; and to this day its opposition may be safely counted on if any attempt should be made to turn into actual practice the ideals of the prophets or of the Master of the prophets in any region of human life.'

Nevertheless there has always been a remnant, and Professor Rendel Harris has hope for the future. He has hope that the Church, getting rid of the three grand hindrances to progress,—PRIDE, PASSION, PREJUDICE,—may find her Leader again, even as a Church, and take the front in all social and in all intellectual movements. For there are virtues yet to be discovered, and how will the discovery be made if the Christian Church does not turn her telescope towards the place where they lie? The virtue of *pity* was her discovery, and it is of quite recent origin. The schoolboy slowly reaches it and sometimes never gets there. In China and other lands it is hardly yet in existence—though that, says Dr. Rendel Harris in a parenthesis, may be due to the air of China, since foreigners who visit that land appear to be affected by their environment and become almost immediately assimilated to natives. If pity is of such late origin, why may it not be that there are other virtues which have not yet been discovered, unresolved nebulae in the moral heaven, toward which our attention should be telescopically directed?

But at present there seems to be more need for the Church's telescope in the intellectual than in the ethical world. The early disciples were leaders in intellect. It was their rightful place, and it belongs to the disciples of Christ still. But the Church has lost her leadership there. Where do you find Catholicity to-day? It has become the property of scientific men. Mathematicians and chemists are brothers in all lands. If they have no speech nor language except the diagrams and symbols of their investigations, they have enough in common to know and respect one another. Of the followers of Christ it is only a remnant who with Whittier can say—

Ne'er to me, howe'er disguised,
Comes a saint unrecognized.

The Church must recover her Catholicity.

And in things that are more purely intellectual than Catholicity the Church must regain her

leadership. We need not waste time, says Professor Rendel Harris, in scolding the Roman pontiff for persecuting Galileo, at least until we have quite ceased to build Galileo's tomb. But still, it should have been the pope and not Galileo that said, 'And yet it moves.'

There was a man whose name was Thomas Story, 'whose life in a folio volume is one of the historical treasures of a society which more than any other has suspected that biography is the right way to make history.' One day Thomas Story went to Scarborough, to attend the Quaker meetings 'and see the high cliffs and the great variety of strata therein, and their present positions.' And he wrote a letter to his friend to tell him what were the conclusions he had come to on observing these cliffs and their strata. 'I further learned,' he wrote, 'and was confirmed in some things, as that the earth is of older date as to the beginning of it than the time assigned in the Holy Scriptures, as commonly understood, which is suited to the

common capacities of human kind, as to six days' progressive work, by which I understand certain long and competent periods of time, and not natural days, the time of the commencement and finishing of all these great works being undiscoverable by the mind of man, and hid in that short period, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'

When did Thomas Story write that letter? Its date, in Quaker wise, is 12th month 8th, 1738. He thus anticipated Hugh Miller and the *Vestiges of Creation* by one hundred years.

Now this was a saint's discovery, and it was made in the region of the intellect. For it was geology and not guesswork that gave Thomas Story this knowledge of the antiquity of the earth. It was the result of the observation of the strata in the cliffs at Scarborough, their thickness, and their position. Did he reach this knowledge because he was a saint? Yes, because he was a saint.

Ignatius Loyola.

BY PROFESSOR GEORG GRÜTZMACHER, PH.D., HEIDELBERG.

DURING the war of Charles v. with Francis I. of France, a small Spanish garrison had to hold the fortress of Pampeluna against the overwhelming numbers of a French army. All the officers were in favour of surrender except the youngest, who by his vehement words succeeded in determining them to a hopeless resistance. This was Don Inigo Lopez de Recalde, of the house of Loyola, then 29 years of age, the future founder of the order of the Jesuits. With unquailing courage he stood in the breach until a cannon-ball shattered his right leg. Conveyed to the castle of his brother, he bore with admirable fortitude the pains of his situation. The wound healed slowly, and it became evident that the leg would remain stiff and shorter than the other. With unflinching soldierly spirit he allowed the bones to be broken

twice over, that the limb might be better set, and the muscles to be stretched, that they might attain the proper length; all this without a single cry of pain being suffered to pass his lips. He afterwards jestingly declared that he bore all this with the hope of being able once more to wear tight boots. It was his intention not to abandon his military career.

Don Inigo, the scion of a Basque noble family, was born in 1491, and was thus only eight years younger than Luther. He belonged to that unique mountain people which is hard as steel, full of energy, and at the same time fantastic, spiteful, and cunning, and which still supplies to Spain the most ingenious smugglers and the best officers. Brought up as a page at the court of Ferdinand the Catholic, he displayed a *penchant*