
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.

We are about to hear of the Hittites again. It is just ten years since Dr. William Wright, giving an account of the Hittites in Hilprecht's *Recent Research in Bible Lands*,—the last and best account he ever gave,—wrote: 'We are on the eve of great discoveries in the early history of the world, which only await the enterprise of the spade, and the spade only awaits the enterprise of wealth intelligent enough to set it at work.' Ten years is a long time to wait. But the promise is about to be fulfilled. And it has come about, in accordance with Dr. Wright's forecast, through the enterprise of the spade and the intelligent enterprise of wealth.

Sir William Ramsay has sent a short article to *The British Weekly* on 'The Hittites in Asia Minor.' It appears in the issue for the 27th of December. It is an article with a sting. And the sting is in its tail, where it ought to be. Professor Ramsay has had to wait like the rest of us. He has had to wait upon the intelligence of wealth. Unlike the most of us, however, he has been working while he waited, using the spade so far as the slender means at his service made it possible. And he has felt, as few of us have done, how slow the wealth of this country is to awaken to intelligence. 'For discovery in history,' he says, 'there are needed, not merely learning, brains, and courage, but also money. The minimum on which systematic work could be planned for the future was £500 a year for, say, five years.'

But £500 was not forthcoming for even one year. When Dr. William Wright finished his article, and died, he was not sure where the spade should be driven in. Senjerli, perhaps, he said. 'If not there, then in Kadesh, or Carchemish, or in Boghaz-Keui.' Sir William Ramsay has known for nearly all the time that Boghaz-Keui was the place. He was waiting upon wealth.

In the meantime he has had the scholar's joy of learning that what Britain would not do Germany has done, that Professor Winckler had begun to dig at Boghaz-Keui last May, and that he has now come home with more than two thousand cuneiform inscriptions, many of them belonging to the Tel el-Amarna period, and many of them in a language which must be Hittite.

It is an article with a sting. But the sting is taken out of it before the end comes. For when Professor Ramsay went to the Chancellor of his own University with his story, the £500 a year for, say, five years, was granted immediately. 'I went to him hoping to get a beginning, which might encourage us to appeal to others to help: half an hour later I was writing to Constantinople to request permission from the Imperial Govern-

ment to make excavations on an important Hittite site.'

Lord Strathcona, having furnished the intelligent wealth, Professor Ramsay will do the digging. Not at Boghaz-Keui, however. The ancient capital of the empire of the Hittites is occupied by the Germans. But 'there are several other important cities, on one of which we hope soon to begin.'

In his study of Nicodemus and the New Birth, entitled *Jesus and Nicodemus* (T. & T. Clark; 4s. 6d. net), the Rev. John Reid, M.A., has the opportunity of explaining the puzzling reply which the Pharisees made to Nicodemus when he cautioned them against condemning Jesus unheard. 'Art thou also of Galilee?' they answered, 'Search and see; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.'

The answer is puzzling for two reasons. It seems to have nothing to do with what Nicodemus had said; and it is untrue. Nicodemus had warned them against condemning a man unheard, which would be contrary to the law. What had 'out of Galilee ariseth no prophet' got to do with that? And it was glaringly untrue. For the Pharisees knew that out of Galilee had arisen the prophets Jonah, Hosea, and Nahum, perhaps also Elijah, Elisha, and Amos.

No doubt it may be said that the Pharisees simply told a lie. It has been said. It is what the commentators say with one accord. But is this the way with Pharisees? It may be the way with sinners. Sinners may tell lies wantonly. But Pharisees never tell a lie except when it suits their purpose.

Now it did not suit the Pharisees' purpose to tell a lie like this. Whether prophets came out of Galilee or not was a matter of no concern to them. It was one particular prophet that they were concerned about—the prophet whom they called the Christ. And we must look at our passage again and see if what they really said to Nicodemus was not this—'Search and see, for out of Galilee *the Prophet* ariseth not.'

That answer would be to the point. It would not be an answer to the words of Nicodemus, but it would be an answer to his thought. The common people had already been suggesting that Jesus was the Christ. The Pharisees felt that Nicodemus was going over to their side. They asked, 'Art thou also one of those that favour Galilee?' The answer to the people had been that the Christ was to come out of Bethlehem, where David dwelt; not out of Galilee, where Jesus had been born. And this is their answer now to Nicodemus.

Only they say 'the Prophet,' not 'the Christ.' Mr. Reid believes that the titles are synonymous. He refers us to an article by the Rev. Arthur Carr, M.A., in the *Expositor* (6th ser. viii. 219), afterwards printed in *Horæ Biblicæ* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1903), in which the question is discussed. He agrees with Mr. Carr that the two titles, 'the Christ' and 'the Prophet,' are, here at least, synonymous. He knows that the word 'Prophet' has not the article before it in the Greek. But he holds that it may be used without the article, just as 'Christ' and 'the Christ' are used.

The Biblical World has reached its semi-jubilee, and celebrates it, practically if not poetically, by the issue of an Index. The Index covers the last twenty-eight volumes; that is to say, the fourteen years during which the magazine has gone under its present title. But the magazine was founded five-and-twenty years ago. It was founded by the late Principal Harper, of Chicago University. Its title at first was *The Hebrew Student*, which after a year was changed into *The Old Testament Student*. Then at the end of the eighth volume this title was altered to *The Old and New Testament Student*. And fourteen years ago, as we

have said, it was made more popular in style, much more attractive in appearance, and its title became *The Biblical World.*

The Biblical World has done heroic work for the study of the Bible throughout these years. We are accustomed in this country to say that in the scientific study of the Bible, America, so far in advance in other things, such as the work of the Sunday school, lags lamentably behind. Perhaps we are accustomed to overstate the facts. But however that may be, it is certain that the study of the Bible in America would have been further behind than it now is if it had not been for *The Biblical World.*

In the issue for December, which closes the twenty-fifth year, there is a short article under the title of 'A Quarter Century of Old Testament Study.' A quarter century—it is scarcely a generation, and yet how great is the change that this article has to record. 'A quarter of a century ago,' say the editors of *The Biblical World*, 'when men now in the midst of their lifework as teachers and preachers were students at school, the idea that the Pentateuch—the Hexateuch we had not yet heard of—was not written by Moses, was viewed from afar as one of those dangerous German heresies, the importation of which into America would be the beginning of disaster to religion.'

In the year 1888–89 a famous duel took place in the pages of *Hebraica* between Professor Green of Princeton and Professor Harper over the composition of the Pentateuch. Professor Harper was handicapped. The time had not come for an open advocacy of the critical analysis of the Pentateuch; it was still too generally distasteful to American Biblical scholarship. And more than that, Professor Harper himself had not yet reached a final judgment on the subject. The editors do not say how the duel ended, but we think there can be no doubt that Dr. Green was generally held to have had the best of it. Certainly Professor Green's friends had no hesitation in placing the crown of victory on his head.

In the *New York Evangelist* for May 23rd, 1889, there appeared an article by Dr. Howard Crosby, in which he said: 'Professor Green of Princeton has an article in the *Hebraica* of January which ought to be put into a separate pamphlet form, and a copy be placed in the hands of every minister in the land. It meets the Higher Critics from Reuss to Wellhausen, not in a general way, but by a careful examination of every detailed statement they make, and shows the utter unreasonableness of their wild work with Genesis. Dr. Green exposes the sophistry by which these men start with their destructive hypothesis, and deliberately make the text bend to it, creating diversities and discrepancies where there are none, and assuming principles of style in imaginary authors, which they have to establish by recklessly striking out certain passages as spurious. He holds up the absurdity of making R (the Redactor) put together a mass of incoherent matter, which the wise heads of this nineteenth century are first to discover and to tear into their original fragments, and he conclusively exhibits the oneness of the Genesis narrative.'

For whom did Dr. Howard Crosby speak so triumphantly? There is no doubt that he spoke for almost the whole theology of America. The editors admit as much. For they say 'there existed at that time no commentary by English or American authors based on the documentary theory; and it is safe to say that no Sunday-school publisher would have undertaken the issue of lessons which advocated that view.' And what was true of the Pentateuch, was true of the Old Testament generally. 'They who divided Isaiah's prophecies, assigning the later chapters to a post-exilic writer, were criminals fit to be classed with those who, as tradition affirms, sawed his body asunder.'

With the beginning of the present year the International Lessons enter anew upon the study

of the Old Testament. Throughout thousands of Sunday schools in America (and, we doubt not, at least hundreds in this country), teachers and scholars are already giving themselves to the study of the Book of Genesis. What are they making of it? 'We venture no predictions,' say the editors of *The Biblical World*, 'as to the proportion of cases in which the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the historicity of the stories of the Creation, Fall, and Flood will be defended in printed comment and oral teaching. But we run no risk in saying that the more modern theory, that the books were based on older documents and assumed their present form centuries after the time of Moses, with its corollary that much of the material is in no strict sense historical, but ancient legends shot through with the religious purpose of the prophet who gave it shape, will be by a large number of the more intelligent writers, pastors, and teachers either openly advocated or simply taken for granted, and that in very few instances will it require any special heroism to take this stand.'

But what will the result be? The editors of *The Biblical World* no longer ask that question. They ask what the result has been. What will the result be? was the question of twenty-five years ago. But now what they ask is, 'Has this change of view been marked by that decline of religion, and that loss of influence of the Bible which twenty-five years ago were honestly feared by many of those who to-day hold these views?' And they answer, 'On the contrary, the change has been in every way to the advantage of religion and the Bible.'

It has been to the advantage of religion and the Bible, they say, because it has brought us back to the view of the Old Testament which our Lord held. This is a very bold claim to make. Is it not the teaching of our Lord concerning the Old Testament that has been the stronghold of the traditionalist from the beginning of this controversy? The editors are aware of it. 'Twenty-five years ago,' they say, 'Professor Osgood at Rochester, and Professor Green at Princeton, were interpreting the teaching of Jesus as settling once and for all the historicity and authority of the Old Testament books and their authorship.' And the followers of Dr. Osgood and Dr. Green are doing the same to-day. Yet the editors of *The Biblical World* affirm that the view of the critic, and not of the traditionalist, was the view of the Old Testament held by Christ. To be sure, they admit that our Lord showed no special interest in questions of authorship and date. They acknowledge that He expressed His conviction of the high value and essential soundness of the moral teachings of the Old Testament. But they hold that just as clearly did He criticize its ethics and religion in matters of detail, and by so doing denied to it as a whole that Divine authority which it was sought to defend by appeal to His words. In short, they claim that Christ's attitude to the Old Testament was distinctly critical and eclectic alike in approval and in disapproval.

And it has brought us other gains besides that. They claim that it has stilled for ever the ancient battle between science and religion. Who would endeavour now to reconcile the statements of Genesis with the evidences of geology, or philology, or history? Genesis is no longer looked upon as a text-book of science, whether physical or philological. It is a book of religion. Science is on our side. 'Our windows are open to all the winds of heaven and all the light of the sun.'

Again, the editors claim that our change of attitude to the Old Testament has enabled us to discover what the books of the Old Testament really teach, and what has been the real history of the Old Testament religion. For while we read the earliest books of the old Testament as if they contained a scientific record of how the world came to be, and how the ancient nations arose, we missed the great ethical and religious ideas of which the prophets, to whom we owe them, made

them the medium of expression. And we have discovered the history of the religion. For while we assumed that the first books were also the oldest, we read the history of Israel's religion in no small degree, say the editors, 'wrong end to.' The analysis of sources and the dating of documents has been tedious enough, but it is issuing at last in a reconstructed history of the origin and growth of Semitic and Hebrew religion in the light of which the significance of this unique Divine revelation appears as never before.

Once more, the new attitude of the Old Testament has broken down the barrier between the creed of the Church and the intelligence of the community. There is to-day, say the editors, as never before, a passion for reality, above all in matters of religion. Men no longer ask, what does the Church teach, or what does the Bible teach, but what is the truth? It is a fair demand, and modern scholarship meets it.

Last of all, there has been a great and welcome displacement of emphasis. First things come first. It is now seen that the historicity of the Book of Jonah and the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch are not really matters of religion at all. These things, once felt to be vital, are now seen to be of little importance. The attention is turned to the great central truths of Religion and Ethics which are essential to the highest living.

One of the arguments against the historicity of the Virgin Birth is the absence of all reference to it by St. John. It is perhaps the strongest of all the arguments, the force of it being so easily felt, and the fact of it being so difficult to explain. For of all the Evangelists, St. John ought to have known about the Virgin Birth best, and it lay most directly in his way to record it.

Mr. Ernest F. Scott touches the point in his new book on *The Fourth Gospel, its Purpose and Theology* (T. & T. Clark; 6s. net). Mr. Scott does not accept the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel, so he does not say that if the Virgin Birth were a fact St. John must have known of it. But he says that whoever was the author of the Fourth Gospel, he could not possibly have been ignorant of the tradition of the Virgin Birth, and that therefore he passed it by deliberately.

Now Mr. Scott holds that of all the things which distinguish the Fourth Gospel from the previous three, the most emphatic is the Sonship of Jesus. The special name of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, the name which determines the whole Johannine conception of His nature and work, is the Son of God. That name is further defined by the epithet Only-begotten. It seemed, therefore, to be directly in the author's way to refer to the Virgin Birth and build a strong argument upon it for the uniqueness of Christ's Divine Sonship.

Why does he not do so? Mr. Scott has no interest in defending the Virgin Birth of our Lord. We do not know if he believes in it. But he is quite sure that the Fourth Evangelist passed it over, not because he did not know of it, but just because it did *not* suit his purpose to refer to it. For he thought of Jesus as the Divine Logos, the Word of God who had been with God from the beginning, who had been loved by the Father, and had Himself loved the Father before the foundation of the world. There was no moment in his thought when the Word was passive, unable to love, unable to work. 'My Father worketh hitherto,' without a break up till now, 'and I work.' So he represents the Son of God as entering into the world not by birth of a virgin, not by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, but by His own free and deliberate act. 'The Evangelist,' says Mr. Scott, 'shrank from any theory of His origin that might impair the central idea of full activity, from the beginning of His work to the end.'

There was also another reason, and it weighed with the Evangelist yet more decisively. The current tradition of the birth of Christ seemed to

cast a doubt on His pre-existent Sonship. (We are quoting Mr. Scott's very words now.) It might appear as if He came into being as Son of God at a given moment of time by an act of the Divine will; and thus the hypothesis of a miraculous birth, so far from supporting, might be so construed as to deny the doctrine of His essential Divinity. It is therefore replaced by the theory set forth in the Prologue, that the early life of Jesus was only the continuance of a Sonship which had subsisted from all eternity.

There is an article in *The Guardian* for November 21st on the 'Servant of the Lord.' Recent literature, and especially Professor Peake's book on the *Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, and Professor Addis's on *Hebrew Religion*, have taken this long-debated subject out of the hand of the mere expert. The varying interpretations that are given to the title, and to the prophecies which contain it, can no longer be ignored even by the unlearned and ignorant. Nor is it necessary any longer to ignore them. For, with all diversity of interpretation, recent writers on the subject are almost unanimous in the conclusion that whatever the prophets understood or expected, the Suffering Servant of the Lord was never actually found among men until Christ came.

The writer of the article in *The Guardian* is Mr. G. A. Cooke, sometime fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and the author of certain articles in the *Dictionary of the Bible*. In this, as in all his work, there appears considerable independence of opinion, with an occasional indication that the criticism of the text has a special fascination for him. But everything rests upon a foundation of matured scholarship.

Now, in seeking to determine the meaning of the Servant of the Lord, we have chiefly to do with the second Isaiah. It is true that the title is not original to him. It is used both by Jeremiah and by Ezekiel. But its use by the second Isaiah is the most frequent and the most arresting. There are four passages in particular in which it occurs. They are Is 42^{1-4} 49^{1-6} 50^{4-9} and 52^{13}–53^{12}. These passages stand out by themselves in the most marked and significant manner. They have no direct connexion with their context. The Servant of the Lord is introduced without preparation or announcement. Their very style is their own. 'Even in our English translation,' says Mr. Cooke, 'we feel that we have passed from the glowing periods of rhetoric to the balanced rhythm of poetry.' He calls them, therefore, the 'Songs of the Servant.' But it is not necessary for us to examine even all the Songs. We are most familiar with the last, and it is sufficient.

Mr. Cooke believes that the Servant of the Lord in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah is the Nation of Israel. And more than that, he believes that the servant is the Nation of Israel just as it was known to the prophets—'not an individual such as Jeremiah or Jehoiachin or Zerubbabel, not the pious kernel of the nation, not the ideal as distinguished from the actual Israel—Israel itself, the historical nation.'

The problem which the author of this prophecy had to face was the meaning of the misfortunes which had fallen upon Israel. These misfortunes had long been predicted; they were now an accomplished and awful fact. The Exile had taken place. And if the sufferings which attended it were hard to bear, infinitely harder was the thought of the Exile itself, the thought that the theocratic nation was now actually scattered among the Gentiles. The problem of suffering was not new to the Israelites, but they never had to face it on this gigantic scale before. What was the meaning of it?

Jeremiah and Ezekiel found the meaning of it in the nation's sins. Israel had suffered, because Israel had sinned. Isaiah acknowledged the sin, but in all that the nation was passing through he saw something more than simply punishment for

her sins. He had no light estimate of sin, but he had also a strong feeling for what the Exile meant to Israel. The punishment which she had received of the Lord's hand was double for all her sins. There must be another great purpose behind it. That purpose was the salvation of the Gentiles.

Thus Isaiah took a darker view of the sufferings of the Exile than Jeremiah or Ezekiel did. Grievously as Israel had sinned, these sufferings were more than enough to atone for all her sins. But out of the dark heart of the problem came the light of hope. Her sufferings were not merely punishment for her sins, they were partly vicarious. He saw afar off the great fact of life which our Lord expressed in the words, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,'—the fact which brought our Lord Himself to the cross. He came before Israel with a word not of despair, but of consolation: 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God . . . for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.'

How did Isaiah attain to this conception of vicarious suffering? He began with God. He realized as it had never been realized before, or at least as it had never been stated, the uniqueness and supremacy of Israel's God. The nations put forward the claims of their deities. They put them forward only to have the fatuity of them exposed. The conclusion of Isaiah's argument was irresistible, 'I, Jahweh, am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.' The passages are Is 40^{12-26} $41^{1-4.\ 21-29}$ 43^{8-13} 44^{6-20}.

But if there is only one God upon the earth, and He is the God of Israel, then there lies upon the nation of Israel, whose God He is, a new obligation. If the God of Israel is the God of the Gentiles, Israel must see to it that the name of God is glorified amongst them. All this was mere matter of argument. Then came the great revelation. Israel must fulfil her responsibility to the Gentiles by dying for them.

Isaiah had grasped the clue to Israel's future. The Exile was not the end. Abasement and defeat were to be the starting-point for fresh spiritual conquests. Israel was to emerge from captivity to become one of the moving forces in the world's history. Isaiah embodied his high hopes and convictions in his conception of the Servant of the Lord.

Now, if the Servant of the Lord of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah is the nation of Israel, an important question arises. Who are the speakers? 'Surely,' they say, 'surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' Who are they that say this? They are, says Mr. Cooke, the nations of the world. 'Startled and amazed by the extent of Israel's sufferings and by a recovery not less wonderful,—a resurrection, as it seemed, from a dishonoured death,—the heathen, with this unique career enacted before their eyes, at last perceive the unimagined and far-reaching truth. "Who can believe that which we have heard?" They admit that they had been wholly in the wrong; they plead that there was nothing outwardly that promised such an issue, everything rather to encourage their indifference and contempt. In the light of Israel's restoration they can now see a purpose in those sufferings. Compared with themselves, Israel was innocent; yet the extremity, the excess of suffering, was borne by Israel. Only one explanation was possible—the innocent had suffered that the guilty might escape; Israel had suffered vicariously for the heathen. "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; on him fell the chastisement that brought us peace, and by his wound our healing came. Jahweh has caused to light upon him the iniquity of us all."'

There are difficulties in this interpretation. Mr. Cooke knows it. He knows that the chief difficulty will be in persuading us to believe that the Suffering Servant of Isaiah is a nation and not a single person. For he knows that

the whole description 'brings vividly before the mind an actual person, a martyr, speaking, stricken, bending beneath the violence of the storm.' He claims the prophet's right to personify the nation at his will, but he makes another claim besides that.

Mr. Cooke claims that the prophecy was never fulfilled by the nation of Israel. 'The qualities,' he says, 'which existed in Israel were never really adequate to the accomplishment of its lofty mission.' It was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. No nation can ever reveal God adequately. No nation can be said to suffer vicariously in actual fact for the sins of the world. God alone can adequately reveal God. But the Revealer came through Israel. Those qualities which were imperfectly realized in the nation were perfectly embodied in Him. 'The greatest of the prophecies has been fulfilled, and in a manner beyond the poet's dream, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

John Alexander Selbie.

By the Rev. R. Bruce Taylor, M.A.

Considering the small extent to which the Northern Universities have been able to foster research, the number of Scotsmen who are in the very van of Old Testament scholarship is remarkable. In quiet country manses and in busy city pulpits there are those whose work upon the sources is the work of explorers. And if the most advanced scholarship in Scotland has not lost touch with evangelical thought, this union, which England scarcely knows and Germany cannot credit, is due to the fact that study has never been allowed to become an end in itself, but has always had a definite bearing upon preaching. G. A. Smith's volumes on Isaiah were written amid the myriad cares of a pastorate, and if the scholar is abundantly manifest in them, they owe their place not to this scholarship alone. They have been obviously written with a congregation in view, and it is this that gives point and urgency and modernity to the interpretation of the prophet.

The dictionaries which are appearing under the joint editorship of Dr. Hastings and Dr. Selbie are perhaps the most remarkable testimony to the thoroughness of the Biblical scholarship in the North, unfostered as it has been by any endowments for research. 'Who are Hastings and Selbie?' must have been a question frequently on the lips of those who had found in the *Dictionary of the Bible* exactly what they had been looking for, and who yet had the misfortune to be only English, or American! And their surprise must have been great when they discovered that the editors were not scholars who lived in the retirement of college cloisters, but busy ministers with heavy congregational duties devolving on them. Of Dr. Hastings I may not speak. An editor is a literary policeman, with a blue pencil for a truncheon. But Dr. Hastings himself tells a story concerning his co-editor, which is more significant than chapters of biography and pages of scholarship records. On one occasion he sent a large Dutch book to Dr. Selbie for review, and as Dr. Selbie did not know Dutch, a Dutch grammar and dictionary were included in the parcel. In a week such a review came back as showed that the book had been read from cover to cover.

The Free Church Manse of Maryculter, in which John Alexander Selbie was born in 1856, lies some eight miles from Aberdeen, in the middle of a moor high up upon the southern spur of the Grampians. At the Disruption the church was placed in this lonely spot that it might serve, in that day when enthusiasm scorned distance and inconvenience, the Free Church section of a very wide area. The view from the manse windows stretches away across the valley of the Dee to the hills of Buchan, but in winter the snow lies deep and long. Children brought up there require to have well-knit frames if they are to force their way to school through the drifts. But those northern manses are famous rather for the intellectual than the physical qualifications of the sons they produce.