

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:



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



<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for the *Journal of Theological Studies* (old series) can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jts-os_01.php

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

it from the Gospel. If these writers did not draw it from copies of the Diatessaron, then we must suppose that traditional interpretation among the Syrians had so canonized the negative Golden Rule that it could be quoted as virtually a saying of Our Lord, being an accepted paraphrase of the commandment 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'¹

It is to be mentioned that St Ephraim's commentary on the Diatessaron throws no light on the text at the point we are concerned with, since in his comments on the story of the rich man he does not cite the commandments quoted by our Lord, 'Thou shalt not kill', &c. Nor does the Arabic Diatessaron exclude the possibility that the negative Golden Rule found a place here in the original; for the copy from which the translation was made was one in which the text had been assimilated in the main to that of the Peshita or Syriac Vulgate.

R. H. CONNOLLY.

POLOTSKY'S MANICHAEAN HOMILIES²

THIS very important publication belongs to the great find made in 1930 of a Manichaean Library in Egypt, of which the major part went to Berlin, but some portions were secured by Mr A. Chester Beatty.³ Through Sir Herbert Thompson's generosity and public spirit this volume, containing the Coptic text of a small volume, with a line for line German translation, has seen the light: I am sure Mr Chester Beatty will never regret its opportune appearance. As for Dr Hugo Ibscher, one has only to look at the formless bundle photographed on p. ix to realize that without his patience and skill the remains of the papyrus leaves would never have been brought into a state in which they could be read at all. Dr Ibscher's has been a wonderful achievement: I can only compare it to the refining work of the Elect Manichee, who separates the mixed and befouled portions of the Light from their hateful environment and brings them safely into the pure luminous region to which they originally belonged.

¹ Dr C. Taylor in the second edition of his *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers* (pp. 142-143: no. 11 of the Additional Notes) quotes from the Targum of pseudo-Jonathan on Lev. xix 18 the comment: 'for what thou hatest for thyself, thou shalt not do to him', i e. to thy 'comrade' or neighbour. But this Targum is said to be as late as the seventh century A.D., and therefore can hardly be cited as providing a background of Jewish interpretation to account for earlier Syriac commentary.

² *Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung A. Chester Beatty. Band I. Manichäische Homilien* herausgegeben von H. J. POLOTSKY, mit einem Beitrag von H. IBSCHER, Stuttgart, 1934.

³ See *J.T.S.* xxxiv 266 f.

The book opens with an invocation of Mani (pp. 1-7): I have the impression that it is intended as a sort of Introduction to what follows, called *The Discourse* (λόγος) of the Great War (pp. 7-42). This is the great calamity that, as Mani had told his disciples, would come upon the world in general and upon the Manichaean Church (ἐκκλησία) in particular (pp. 12-21). Then peace will come: many of the faithful Manichees will have survived after all and will rejoin their companions. The Books of Mani will come again into the hands of the 'righteous' (i.e. the *zindiks*) and the pious. The 'Gospel', the 'Treasure of Life', the 'Pragmateia', the 'Book of the Mysteries', the 'Giants', the 'Letters', and the 'Psalms' are all named on p. 25—the *κεφάλαια* had been named already on p. 18—and also the mysterious *Εικόν*. For though thousands of books will have been lost, thousands will be found again, and the Manichees will kiss them and exclaim 'O wisdom of greatness, O breastplate of the Apostle of Light, how hast thou come here, in what place wast thou found?' In those days the light-particles which are in transmigration (*μεταγγισμός*, see Epiphanius, *Haer.* lvi 55) will come down from the stars or up from the earth or wherever they are and will become fruits on trees to be picked and eaten and so enter into the organisms of the Elect and the Hearers: thus they will attain to conception and birth—and in the end will enter the region of light, away from the miseries of this sinful, dirty world (p. 27, ll. 6-14).

That is what this curious passage says, but the philosophy of it is nearer the system of Bardaisan than that of Mani. Escape from this world, according to Bardaisan, only was achieved by the good soul at death: it was not 'hindered at the crossing' and escaped being born again.¹ Conception and birth, therefore, were not evil, for they led to the only path along which it was possible to escape from the world. But this is hardly the usual Manichaean doctrine. According to Mani, as represented by Ephraim,² by a very few Initiates, and that in their lifetime, 'that which thousands and myriads do not suffice for can be separated and refined'. It is easy to make fun of this doctrine, as Ephraim does, but it is only just to recognize that it is an attempt to avoid the non-ascetic conclusion of Bardaisan.³

Some survivors into the happy days after the persecution will be able to say that they had seen and heard Mani himself (p. 32, l. 21 f). We

¹ Mitchell's *Refutations of Ephraim* ii pp. cxliii, cxlv. ² Mitchell ii 205 f.

³ I wonder if it be possible to emend the text and read ΔΧΠ for ΔΤΠ, so as to mean 'the fruits will be eaten by good Manichees and so be 'refined' without going through the process of human generation'? Compare, for the doctrine, the well-known passage about the '*patibilis* Jesus, banging on every tree' in Augustine (c. *Faust.* xx 2).

may gather from this that the date of our Tract cannot be later than A.D. 340/50, for Mani was martyred under Varanes I, about 275. 'How the faithful (says our Tract) will kiss the eyes, the ears, the hands of such a one! We shall reverence him as we reverence the Apostle himself!' (p. 33). And then at last, Jesus, 'the True Judge, the King of the Virgins, will appear and will separate the Sheep from the Goats' (p. 35: cf. Matt. xxv 31-46). As is told us in the Gospel, He will set them on His right and His left. Then will come the destruction of the world. The 'Splenditenens' (Φεγγοκάτοχος) and his four companions (all five are enumerated on p. 40) will leave the 'sphere', and it will sink by its own weight, but those who keep their appointed times of mourning and their fasts will sit with their Father for ever (p. 42).

So ends the Manichaean discourse about the 'Great War'. As appears even from this summary, it rests, like the apocalyptic fragment of the *Shābūhragān* from Turfan, upon Matt. xxiv and xxv.¹ Indeed, it follows the Gospel even more closely, for the *Shābūhragān* leaves out the 'sheep' and the 'goats', which are mentioned here in their place (p. 38, ll. 16, 19). The whole Discourse shews, more clearly than ever, that Alexander of Lycopolis, when he spoke of Manichaeism as 'the New Christianity', was better informed than the Kesslers and the Reitzensteins of yesterday. Mani, who began his letters with 'Mani, the apostle of Jesus Christ' was according to his lights a Christian, heretical, no doubt, but yet essentially Christian in his scheme of things, as were Marcion and Bardaisan.

This has to be remembered when we try to bring in sense and system into the remains of Chinese and even Turkish Manichaeism, now being explored by Professors Waldschmidt and Lentz. On this, Dr Polotsky's article *Manichäische Studien* in *LE MUSÉON* should be read. He points out (p. 248) the difference between dogmas and the formulation or the teaching of dogmas: it is the difference, as he says, between doctrines and catechizing. If I may say so, it seems to me that some even of the newly discovered *Kephalaia* is rather more like catechizing than the expression of vital beliefs. But just this tone of concern and emotion, which pervades the discourse on the 'Great War', tells us that in it we are dealing with the religious hopes and fears of believers rather than with the instruction of converts. That is the importance of this book.

The second tract in the book of Homilies (pp. 42-85) gives an account of the 'crucifixion' (i.e. the martyrdom) of Mani by Varahan I (Varanes, Bahram), grandson of Shāpūr, Mani's patron. It is unfortunately in a rather poor state of preservation, but from what is

¹ See my *Religion of the Manichees*, pp. 89-90.

said in the description of the Mani-Fund at Berlin (SCHMIDT and POLOTSKY, *Sitzungsberichten* of the Prussian Academy, Phil.-Hist. Kl., 1933, commonly quoted as *Mani-Fund*), this *λόγος* is very closely akin to the *third* Berlin Papyrus-book, described by Schmidt on pp. 26-28.¹ In both we have stories about Mani's death, including his discourse in prison (*H* 50, 52-4; *MF* 27). His disciples call themselves 'fatherless' (*H* 56 f, *MF* 27). Mani was imprisoned on a Saturday (*H* 60; *MF* 27). It was the *Μαγουσαῖοι* who accused Mani, and said he had persuaded his votaries to leave their *νόμος* (*H* 45, 46; *MF* 27). From a later period we ought not to make too much of the occurrence of *κρηλ* (*H* 61; *MF* 27), because the context in *H* is obscure, but the 'Land of *οζεος*' (= Khuzistān) occurs in both (*H* 44, 76; *MF* 27). What is even more striking is the naming in both documents of one 'Ivvaios' (*H* 83; *MF* 28), who became the 'Ἀρχηγός of the Manichees after the successive martyrdoms of Mani and Mani's successor Sisinnios. Innaios, according to *H*, pleased King Varanes II, and the Manichees enjoyed some peace from persecution during his lifetime. In any case the simultaneous study of the two documents cannot fail to give us a better idea of Mani and Sisinnios, and of their tragic ends.

In one point I venture to suggest a different reconstruction from Dr Polotsky's. It only involves the change of a single letter (η for τ), but it has a bearing on the social organization of the Manichees. We read often of 'virgins' (*παρθενος*) and of 'continent ones'. Generally they are mentioned together in the plural. But on p. 22, where the happy meetings of survivors after the persecution are described, we read 'One *εγκρατικς* will ask an *εγκρατικς* "where hast thou flown to?" An uncorrupted one will stay by his fellow (*πενθηκραφορος*) and tell him his sufferings. A virgin will consort with her fellow-virgin (*τεσθηρηπαρθενος*) and relate her anguish. A continent one (fem.) will tell her fellow-continent one all her sufferings.' Here the Coptic word is [*τεσθηρετ*]κρατικς, the margin being torn away. I venture to suggest the first letter to be supplied is η not τ, i.e. that her 'fellow-*εγκρατήσ*' is masc., and that the Manichaean *εγκρατεῖς* were couples who were living together, but without sexual intercourse—like the *subintroducta* and her mate. At least, this gives a precision of meaning to the term, which doubtless will be proved or disproved when further parts of this great find of Manichee documents are published.

What do we learn new from the new *λόγοι*? The answer to this question depends on what we mean by knowledge of a religion or of a sect. If we mean a knowledge of the systematized doctrines of a religion, of the formulated articles of faith, or of the details of its

¹ In the following I quote the *Sitzungsberichten* as *MF*, the Homilies as *H*.

cultus, then the answer must be 'very little'. It has been, I may say, a satisfaction to me personally that the appearance of these Manichæan Homilies will cause so little change in future editions of my book on the *Religion of the Manichees*. But if by knowing a religion we mean getting into its atmosphere, feeling the hopes and fears, the troubles and the expectations of the faithful, and finding also that they are not utterly different from the hopes and fears of Christians, then these new Homilies are notably informing. The Manichees had many peculiar beliefs, but this book, like many of the Turfan fragments, shews us also the many Christian elements in their view of the world and its history. They believed in judgement to come, when all the world would stand at the Judgement-seat of Jesus, who would divide mankind into the sheep and the goats. Like the Christians, their contemporaries, they thought that monks and nuns had chosen the better part, although an honourable place was reserved for adherents who had not entirely forsaken the world. They cherished the memory of their Martyrs, as did the Catholic Christians, and wrote in detail the account of their sufferings. All this is pressed upon us by these tattered pages, which help to make the Manichæan Faith live before our eyes, while the published fragments of the *Kephalaia* help us very little in these respects.

It would be unfitting to end this brief account of the new 'Homilies' without once again expressing the admiration of all students of ancient religious thought and opinion to Dr Polotsky and Dr Ibscher for their learning and skill, and to Sir Herbert Thompson for making this relic of a forgotten faith available to scholars. F. C. BURKITT.

JULIUS AFRICANUS AND THE WESTERN TEXT

I

THE history of the sacred text has hitherto been studied mainly with reference to individual manuscripts and their scribes. But labourers in this field have been preparing the ground for a new structure. The history of books and their transmission is for the most part a history of libraries.¹ The catalogues which we owe to Dr M. R. James, to take

¹ The grouping of MSS in the Ferrar series is typical. They seem to represent a local text (Calabria or Sicily). May we enquire what library was concerned? So also with the similar groups which are being slowly disentangled. While the Ferrar series was mostly written under the Norman domination of Sicily and Calabria, Byzantine history must follow up most of the clues to Greek MSS elsewhere. For the catalogues of Byzantine libraries see Krumbacher *Bys. Lit.*² 509 f.