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1907-08

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THE
Union Seminary Magazine

VOL. XIX OCTOBER—NOVEMBER, 1907 No. 1

***CAN COSMO-THEISTIC EVOLUTION ACCOUNT
FOR CHRISTIANITY?**

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The object of this lecture is to discuss the question whether the philosophy of cosmo-theistic evolution can account for Christ and Christianity and at the same time reject the traditional or supernatural explanation. It is proposed to give some reasons why this question cannot be answered in the affirmative. I recognize that this is only a piece of negative criticism. It makes no effort to prove the traditional view. But it is hoped that the development of the argument may show some reasons why the supernatural conception is still the most satisfactory explanation of our historic religion.

It is not required in your presence to say that the hypothesis of evolution has been an important and fruitful conception of modern thought. Your familiarity with the subject makes it unnecessary to enter in detail into its various relations to the problem of supernatural religion. It is proper, however, to observe that the application of evolution to theological questions has usually resulted in the denial of the supernatural basis of Christianity; and this makes it important to consider the phases through which this mode of denial has passed, in order to appreciate precisely the form of philosophy, described as cosmo-theistic, with which we have to deal.

*A lecture delivered before the students of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., January 8, 1907.

THE PERMANENT VALUE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

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The permanent value of the Old Testament for the Christian Church is abundantly attested by Christ himself, not merely by positive statement, but even more by the use he made of it.

Positive statements there are almost without number. "Think not," he said, as he set forth the laws of his kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, "that I came to destroy the law or the prophets, I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." Some who heard him in this sermon may have thought that he who came from God with a new message would begin his work by abrogating the laws of the old order. Christ assures them that this he would not do. The Old Testament was not simply the scaffolding necessary for the erection of the Christian Church, needing to be taken down that the full symmetry of the building may be seen. It is a part of the structure itself. The Christian Church is built upon the foundation of the prophets no less than the apostles.

But Christ bears more emphatic witness by his large and constant use of the Old Testament that he regarded it as having an abiding value and authority for the Christian Church, and as containing a depth and fulness of meaning that could be understood only gradually in the light of his life and work. Christ used the Old Testament as the inspired, infallible word of God, as possessing unique and inviolable authority. He appealed to it as a sufficient proof of his statements, and this he did as if he thought better proof could not be found. He constantly used it as the rule of his life. He nourished his own soul upon it, and

*This article is an abridgment of Prof. Caldwell's inaugural address, prepared by special request for the readers of the Magazine.

in the great trials of his life he gathered strength from its teachings. This is the highest proof of the permanent value of the Old Testament in the life and doctrine of the Christian Church. As has been finely said: "What was indispensable to the Redeemer must always be indispensable to the redeemed."

And this brings us to the subject, which has been chosen for discussion: *The Use of the Old Testament in the Christian Church*. Let us endeavor to suggest some of the ways in which the Old Testament may be studied, some of the uses of it which can never become obsolete in Christ's Church. In dealing with this subject, so comprehensive, possessing endless ramifications, it will be possible to direct attention only to a few main points, and even these can be considered only in a suggestive way.

I. The Old Testament is to be studied, in the first place, as giving us that revelation of God which justifies and interprets to us our faith in Jesus Christ. This is to be inferred from the teaching of Christ himself. To the Jews he said: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." Here Christ explicitly says that Moses wrote of him. Again, he says: "Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Now the question arises: In what precise way did Moses write of Christ? Just how do the Old Testament Scriptures testify of Christ? It may be answered that the Old Testament Scriptures testify of Christ in that they train and develop certain preconceptions and anticipations of the Divine Life and character that are fitted to recognize and welcome the transcendent disclosure of that life and character in the person and life of Jesus Christ. That is, the diligent study of the Old Testament will form and develop such ideas and conceptions of God as will prepare one to recognize in Jesus of Nazareth God Himself incarnate. He who studies the Old Testament aright is thereby trained and fitted to recognize God in the character and life of Jesus Christ. And the grand design, the ultimate purpose of the progressive unfolding of the Divine character in the pages of the Old Testament is to enable us to say with firm assurance, beholding Jesus Christ: "We know that this is the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Let us notice some of these preconceptions and anticipations of God that are trained and developed by a diligent study of the Old Testament.

1. The Old Testament reveals the character of God. The character of their God is the grandest possession of the Hebrews. Into this unique and glorious possession they did not enter all at once, but only by degrees as God communicated Himself to them in love as they were able to bear it. God began revealing Himself to them at the very beginning of their national life. The Exodus, that signal deliverance that laid the foundation of Israel's national life, was itself a supreme display of character. It manifested not merely the incomparable glory and irresistible might, but also and chiefly the infinite grace, of Israel's God. Thus at the very beginning, there emerged the ideas of the Divine Unity, the Divine Power, the Divine Patience, the Divine Holiness, the Divine Grace. We can not say that the Exodus did more than to *suggest* these ideas; but these ideas, thus suggested at the threshold of Israel's life as a nation, were continuously enlarged, enriched, and confirmed by the whole subsequent history, until Israel was prepared to recognize God's glory, that is, his essential character, his eternal attributes, in the face of Jesus Christ. To the Old Testament student there is no more inspiring study than to trace through these marvellous pages this continuous unveiling of the Divine Glory.

2. The Old Testament reveals the great aim of God for His children. It exhibits the one supreme aim which God sets before Him—that of bringing His chosen to the highest degree of perfection of which their nature is capable. On the forehead of the Jewish high priest, the most sacred spot of the most sacred person in Israel, there was a golden plate with the inscription: "Holiness unto Jehovah." In this simple, yet most impressive manner, Israel was taught that the highest crown, and the truest excellence upon which the God of Israel had set His heart was the holiness of His people. The central truth of the entire Levitical system is comprehended in the words: "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord, your God, am holy." Thus in the garments of the high priest, in the vestments of the tabernacle, in the ritual of the temple, one can read one continuous lesson: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Now, when Jesus appeared in

the world with the amazing claim that he was the Christ of God, we find that he likewise ever held this supreme aim before him as the one thing upon which he had fixed his heart, as the ultimate thing for which he suffered and died. Christ "loved the Church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it; that he might present it to himself as a glorious Church; not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

3. The Old Testament exhibits the variety of means by which the divine aim is ultimately accomplished, and among these means it puts a tremendous emphasis upon the discipline of suffering. Lord Bacon said: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity, of the new." But Lord Bacon was vastly mistaken. For in the Old Testament from the first the place and meaning of suffering had been suggested by the experience of righteous men. Abel had been slain by Cain; Isaac had been laid on the altar of sacrifice; Jacob had been a wanderer ready to perish; Joseph had been rejected by his brethren; Moses had been an exile; David had been a persecuted outlaw. And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of other Old Testament saints who had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. They wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth. The blessedness and fruitfulness of suffering was a difficult lesson for God's ancient people to learn. But they learned it at last after an age-long discipline, after bitter tears. By degrees they got possession of the idea that suffering is a necessary element in the discipline of character; that pain is an indispensable factor in the progress of the kingdom in the human heart. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction," said God. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," replied his people. Thus Israel was being prepared through every period of his history for the appearance of Messiah, who was to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, who was to purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.

The enduring value of the Old Testament for the Christian

Church consists largely in that it gradually expands and enriches our whole conception of God—His character, His aim, the means He uses in the accomplishment of His aim—until we are prepared to recognize God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus it justifies and interprets to us our faith in Jesus Christ.

Of the Old Testament it may be said in a most real sense,

It is the chart and compass
That o'er life's surging sea,
'Mid mists and rocks and quicksands
Still guides, O Christ, to thee.

II. The Old Testament is to be used by the Christian Church in tracing the course of a divine movement for us men and our salvation, culminating in the advent of Jesus Christ. In other words, as a *History of Redemption*. Jesus himself used the Old Testament in this way, when on the way to Emmaus, "*beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself,*" The Apostle Paul also employs the Old Testament in this same way. To the chief men of the Jewish colony at Rome, "he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening." Thus both Christ and His greatest apostle used the Old Testament, not as a history of the Jewish people, not even as a history of the Jewish religion, but as a record of the "redeeming activity of God culminating in the life and work of the Redeemer." On this point, to us, the example and the teaching of Jesus Christ are final and absolute. It is inconceivable that He who was one of the parties to the Covenant of Redemption formed in eternity before the foundation of the world should not recognize the unfolding of that Covenant in the pages of the Old Testament.

Christ takes the Old Testament and puts it into the hands of his Church, and bids her interpret it as fulfilled in him. The truth is familiar, and yet it is worth while to insist upon it. For this is the only scientific way of studying the Old Testament. To study the Old Testament by itself without regard to Him to whom it points, and in whom it culminates, is to attempt to know the significance of a process apart from the result which alone ex-

plains it. The result explains the process. The Redeemer interprets the Redemption. Christ then in all the aspects of his person and work is the final cause and ultimate explanation of the Old Testament, and only by keeping every part in vital relation to him can this vast and wonderful product be understood.

This conception of the Old Testament is fundamental; for it is the key and the only key that fits all the wards of the lock. When we regard the Old Testament as a record of a Divine Redemptive movement having its goal in Jesus Christ, we are at once in possession of a point of view which explains most satisfactorily many striking features.

1. This view explains the omissions in the Old Testament. These omissions are found both in the history of the Jews and in the history of their religion. The centuries of sojourn in Egypt are compressed into a dozen verses; the thirty-eight years of wilderness life it has been said, fall between verses thirteen and fourteen of the twentieth chapter of Numbers; the book of Judges gives us only a glimpse here and there of those stirring times; even to Solomon's reign, when Israel reached his highest material glory, only a few short chapters are given; and the seventy years of exile are passed over almost in silence. Clearly the Old Testament is not a history of the Jews themselves. But these omissions are found in the history of the Jewish religion and institutions. The books of Samuel and of Kings are strikingly silent in regard to some of the most prominent provisions of the Mosaic law. Many have found this silence so difficult to explain that they have been driven to the belief that the provisions of the Mosaic law, or at least certain parts of that law known as the Priests' Code, were unknown at that time, and hence they were not in existence. Is it right to argue from the silence of Samuel and of Kings to the non-existence of these institutions and provisions? Is this a sound argument? It is sound only on the supposition that the Old Testament is a history of Jewish institutions and religion. But this the Old Testament is not. It is primarily a history of Redemption, and these Mosaic institutions are mentioned only as they bear on some stage in the history of Redemption.

That is, if we regard the Old Testament as a history of the Jews, there are great gaps in the narrative, which we cannot explain. If we regard it as a history of the Jewish religion even, there are gaps still. But if we regard it as a history of Redemption, there are no gaps anywhere. We have a steady, progressive unfolding of a redemptive movement, culminating in Jesus Christ.

2. This view of the Old Testament explains the occurrence of the miraculous. Old Testament miracles are confined to three periods separated from each other by centuries: the beginning of the nation, the life and death struggle of the true religion in the time of Elijah and Elisha, and the Exile. It can be conclusively shown that each of these periods was a crisis in the history of Redemption.

3. This view of the Old Testament gives a satisfactory solution of the exterminating wars which the Israelites were divinely commanded to wage against the surrounding peoples. It was God who commanded these people to be destroyed utterly, root and branch, men, women and innocent children. How can such a command be reconciled with the character of God as revealed in the Old Testament? The question has sorely perplexed many. It has long been a standing argument with the superficial against the morality of the Old Testament and of its God. We believe the answer lies in this direction. The key is found in Exodus, where God ordered Amalek to be destroyed. "And Jehovah said unto Moses: 'Write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, because a hand is lifted up against the throne of Jah.'" (Ex. 17: 14-15.) Amalek had laid his violent hands on the throne of Jehovah. He was fighting against God. He would block God's redemptive movement for the world. Had he had his way at Rephidim, the great plan of human redemption would have been rolled backward, and God's purpose for the salvation of the nations of the earth would have been defeated. "The Redemptive Purpose," says John Von Müller, summoning up the results of his life-long studies in history and philosophy, "is the fulfilment of all hopes, the perfection of all philosophy, the interpreter of all

revelations, the key of all seeming contradiction in the physical and moral worlds."

4. This view of the Old Testament accounts for the impressive unity which pervades and animates the whole. "There is no other literature linked into one whole like this, instinct with one spirit and one purpose, moving forward to an unseen yet certain goal." Whence comes this living unity? What is the bond which ties these books together? What is the element which unites them into one whole? There are vast differences between these writings in date, authorship, subject, style, country, and circumstances. Evidently there must be some common bond strong enough to overcome these vast differences. There is only one thing powerful enough to do this, and that is, God's purpose of Redemption. The unity of the Old Testament is to be found in the unity of God's purpose.

5. This view of the Old Testament explains what we may call its Universalism.

The Old Testament opens significantly. It opens with an account of the creation of the world, and thus suggests at the very beginning the far-reaching purpose and world-wide significance of the history and the religion of Israel. Thus the note of universality is struck in the very beginning, and is kept ringing all the way through. In Abraham all the nations of the world are to be blessed. It was difficult for Israel to apprehend this idea of the universality of God's kingdom. The idea was gradually expanded until the later prophets rose to the sublime thought of a world-wide kingdom of God, into which all the nations shall flow and bring their glory, in which a Prince shall reign in peace and righteousness. Would this unique conception ever have had any place in the history of the Jews or of their religion? A Jewish history would be the last book in the world in which we would look for such an idea. But the Old Testament is not primarily a history of the Jews or of their religion. It is a record of the rise and progress of a divine movement of redemption, which ultimately is to embrace all the nations of the earth. In such a record we would naturally expect to find this idea; and there we find it, and only there.

There are many other striking features of the Old Testament which are explained in a most satisfying and convincing way,

when we regard it as a history of Redemption; but enough has been said to show that when we bring every part of the Old Testament into vital relation with God's purpose of Redemption culminating in Jesus Christ, we have in our hands a key that fits all the wards of the lock.

III. We may use the Old Testament as a guide-book for the Christian life. It was of the Old Testament that Paul wrote to young Timothy: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." In what finer, clearer words could Paul endorse the Old Testament as a complete, practical, all-sufficient manual of the Christian life? Here Paul declares the Old Testament to be a perfect guide-book for the Christian, fitted to meet every need and condition, and he exhorts his son in the faith to use the Old Testament in this practical way.

As a guide-book, the Old Testament may be employed in many ways. Let us notice one or two of these ways:

1. It may be used in the supremely important work of forming and training character. There is no better book in the world for training character than the Old Testament. And this is true, because the essential elements of a strong religious character are nowhere so vividly portrayed as in the living and breathing pictures of the Old Testament. The Old Testament easily surpasses all other books in the skillful, powerful portraiture. Truth and faith and hope and love are made most attractive when they are embodied in concrete forms. The Word must be made flesh and dwell among men. "Nothing," said Luther, "is more beautiful than Genesis, nothing more useful." Genesis is an unsurpassed gallery of portraits. Let me quote what an eminent student of character has said: "The characters of the Old Testament are a literary marvel. It is very hard to write characters in one country to be popular in every land and age, especially hard in narrative. Hardest of all to create such world-wide and everlasting characters in few words. What the whole world outside Palestine could not do, this petty province did on a large scale. Its writers all achieved a wonder. They sat down to record great deeds done and great words spoken, and they

told them wondrous briefly, yet so that immortal and world-wide characters arise like exhalations from the narrative. Written in the East, these characters live forever in the West; written in one province, they pervade the world; penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilization advances; product of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women and children of modern times."

2. Another use of the Old Testament as a guide-book is suggested by a passage of the Apostle Paul in which he says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The Old Testament is pre-eminently a book of hope, teaching in every part of it the faithfulness of God, and the meaning and wisdom of those trials by which promised blessings are delayed or postponed. It is the history of a promise, the fulfilment of which was often despaired of by those who were its heirs, yet a promise accomplished in days when its essential nature was well-nigh forgotten. It is a book of comfort, teaching the blessedness and fruitfulness of suffering, and, as has been finely said, showing "how the path of lonely men, if they walk with God, their wells and sheep and feasts and wars are all His interests; that not a marriage, or birth, or death, not the weaning of a child or the dismissal of a maid, not the bargain for a grave, nor the wish respecting the place of burial, but He watches and directs it." We are reminded here of a well-known saying of the late Bishop Lightfoot, of Durham: "The best cordial for drooping spirits is the study of history." Another great scholar, commenting on this saying, says: "The most accessible form of this cordial for most of us is the study of history as it is recorded in the pages of the Old Testament." The comment is true. For in the Old Testament we can read in simple language the story of the great purpose of God gradually being wrought in spite of human weakness and human perversity. Everywhere we mark the un baffled patience of God, bringing about His purpose; and as we read and ponder, we are strengthened to believe in the ultimate consummation of that purpose—that in spite of the luke-warmness and indifference of His Church, in spite of spiritual wickedness in high places, in spite of

the world-rulers of this darkness, the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul,
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the health of my countenance and my God."

IV. The Old Testament may be used as an "instructor in social righteousness."

Socialism is in the air, all about us. It is interesting to note that a recent Bampton lecturer chose as his subject: "Christian Theology and Social Progress;" and that the last course of lectures on preaching on the Beecher foundation, Yale University discussed, "The social Message of the Modern Pulpit." It is significant of the trend of affairs that the two most famous lecture foundations in the world on religious subjects should be discussing some aspects of the social problem. We are face to face with the question: Is it not at least possible that there are some general principles exhibited in the commonwealth of ancient Israel and the social teachings of the prophets that would throw some light on the complex conditions of our social problems? We believe there are these general principles, and we would call attention to two points in the social doctrine of the Old Testament.

1. The family is the social unity under the constitution of God. It is the natural, divinely-ordained unit of society. It is the germ out of which grows the great tree of organized society. The whole social structure of the Hebrews was built up from the family as the foundation. Their laws, social customs and institutions were ordered so as to preserve the integrity and sacredness of the family. Here is a warning for us. For we are rapidly allowing customs to enter our social life which are fast overturning the family as the basis of society. We are suffering the integrity of the family to be broken down. There are many things in our modern life that are making the home less sacred and inviolate.

2. Society can be lastingly purified only by carrying the life and Spirit of God Himself into individual souls.

It has been truly said that the prophets of Israel in spite of their ardent zeal for social reform do not as a rule take part in

political life or demand political reforms. They taught that the great need of society is not better institutions so much as better men. They taught that no material forces could help the fortunes of Israel. They taught that there were forces at work in the world more effective and enduring than the highest product of human ambition and energy; that the only enduring kingdom must be based not upon forces of this world, but upon the foundation of justice, righteousness, and truth. And certainly one chief office of the Old Testament is to teach social reforms of modern times how to read history aright by showing that the true factors which mould, sustain and perfect human society are not material, but moral and spiritual.

V. We may use the Old Testament to help us in the right interpretation of the New.

While the language of the New Testament is Greek, we must remember that it is the Greek which is intimately connected with Hebrew life and thought in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament. The Greek of the New Testament can be rightly understood only by constant reference to that version and to the Hebrew which lies back of it.

The Old Testament is indispensable in determining the meaning of particular words in the New. "Blessedness," "Righteousness," "Holiness," "Propitiation," "Atonement," "Justify," "Saint," "Sin," "Grace," "Jesus," "Christ," "Lord," "Kingdom of God," "Kingdom of the heavens," "Redemption," "Poor in spirit," "Church," "Son of Man," &c.—these great words which play so large a part in the New Testament theology are charged with the memories and associations of a long religious past, apart from which their meaning can be only imperfectly understood. The Greek theological terms are almost without exception taken from the Septuagint, which is a translation made from the Hebrew. Thus the great theological ideas have their roots in the Old Testament. Principal Fairbairn says there is only one original idea in the New Testament, and that is the Fatherhood of God. But we cannot concede even this one idea to be original with the New Testament, for the germs at least of this conception of God are found at the beginning of Israel's national history. God said to Moses: "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even

my firstborn." (Exodus 4: 22). Thus we are left without one original idea or conception in the New Testament; and we heartily subscribe to the sweeping, yet deliberate, statement of Hermann Schultz in his *Old Testament Theology*, page 52: "*There is positively not one New Testament idea that cannot be conclusively shown to be a healthy and natural product of some Old Testament germ.*"

Moreover, whole tracts of the New Testament are based on Old Testament teaching. For example, the great scheme elaborated by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans rests upon the teaching concerning the early history of our race as recorded in Genesis, which he enforces by quotations from Prophecy and Psalm.

Furthermore, the parables of the gospel, simple and natural as they are, come home to the heart with greatly increased clearness and power, when we know something of Hebrew thought and life from which they sprang. The matchless power and beauty and sting of the parable of the Good Samaritan can not be felt by those who are unacquainted with the relations of the Jews and Samaritans running back several centuries.

And the same holds true of our Saviour's teaching in general. His promise of rest to the heavy-laden, of living water to the thirsty soul, of life to the dead, of dominion to the meek, imply wants and experiences in the spiritual life of his bearers which need to be patiently studied, before the true significance of his words, "who spake as never as man spake," can be understood.

We have endeavored to suggest some of the uses of the Old Testament that can never become obsolete in the life and doctrine of Christ's Church. As a Church, as disciples of the Lord Jesus, and as ministers of the New Covenant, we must not, we dare not relegate the Old Testament into the back-ground. It is not a dead, but a living book. It has a message for the "business and bosoms of men, women and children in modern times," It is a living thing, as Luther says, with eyes, and hands and feet. It has perennial youth. It possesses a "springing and germinant vitality." It has permanent and inextinguishable life:

**"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
But the word of our God shall stand forever."**