

by Professor W. B. Greene, Jr., D. D.

THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS IN THEIR LITERARY SETTING—III.,

by Professor Willis J. Beecher, D. D.

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Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Editors:

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The Bible Student and Religious Outlook.

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The Genesis Narratives— Points of General Agreement.

That upon many questions raised by the Genesis narratives there is at present great diversity of opinion, cannot be denied. Happily, despite this fact, there are certain points in reference to these narratives upon which there is practical unanimity. This latter fact is one of which we ought by no means to permit ourselves to lose sight. These points of general agreement ought, indeed, to give us our point of departure for all further study. Let us then briefly note them.

1st. It is agreed that *the controlling purpose of the writer of these Genesis narratives was religious*. His aim was not to give us detailed, much less scientific, information in regard to God's works. Just as little was he concerned to write a detailed narrative, and still less what would now be called a scientific history, of the race. His primary interests were strictly religious. He sought to teach men about God, to exhibit God's relations to His works and to His creature man, and to bring man into a right attitude of mind and heart towards God.

Those who lose sight of this fact

will hardly escape doing an injustice to the writer, as well as involving themselves in difficulties.

2d. Another point upon which there is, perhaps, equal unanimity is that *the writer's effort to minister to the religious enlightenment and betterment of his readers has been attended with marked success*. This is a proposition upon which, for lack of space, we cannot cite testimonies *in extenso*. Fortunately, it is not necessary. A single testimony from Dr. W. R. HARPER will answer every purpose. It is the more significant, coming as it does from one occupying Dr. HARPER's well known critical position. While freely questioning the historicity of the matter employed in the Genesis narratives, this distinguished scholar is unstinted in his praise of their moral and spiritual worth. Speaking specifically of the narratives in Genesis i.-ii., he says:

"Either of them has influenced human life more than all the historical records ever penned * * * As to their value as the medium for the conveyance of religious truth, let history speak. The statement made above is not an exaggeration. These stories have directly and indirectly influenced human life more than all the historic records ever penned."*

**The Biblical World*, February, 1894, p. 108.

Fundamental Misconception. Of the two facts regarded by JANNARIS as surprising in this narrative,—one is much less striking than the other. That the woman should not have resented at once the slur upon her nation in ver. 22, is in fact no matter for surprise at all. She had perceived in Jesus a prophet; and, whether in captiousness or with docility, had submitted to him the uppermost ecclesiastical question within her mental horizon. What she thought of his reply to her question is not stated; she either expressed no acquiescence or dissent, or else her opinions on the subject were not worth recording. Only her question, that served as the text for one of Christ's profoundest discourses, was of consequence enough to live on. But that Jesus made an impression on her which nothing that he said, however unpalatable (*cf.* ver. 18), could prejudice, is certain from the whole narrative.

But the other fact to which exception is taken by Prof. JANNARIS, is much more striking. How can Jesus commend Judaism, allowing to it while he denies to Samaritanism the true object of worship, and particularly, declaring it to be the source of "the" salvation? Throughout John's Gospel, are not "the Jews" the enemies of Jesus and his Gospel?

Yet is the difficulty so great as to be without solution? "The various 'explanations' given in the numerous commentaries have served rather to intensify than to remove my doubts," writes JANNARIS. But has it been clearly enough presented in the commentaries, that here we have to do with Judaism in a two-fold sense? Israel was the bearer of the revelation of God under the Old Covenant. The *Samaritans* had made themselves the heirs of a part of that revelation (the Pentateuch, which alone of all the Old Testament they ac-

cepted), and claimed, certainly with a measure of truth, to be descended from the same ancient stock as the Jews. What now was the function of the *Jewish* people from the days of the Samaritan schism onward? For answer we want facts, not theories.

Their function was, to be the custodians of the sacred "oracles" of God's revelation,—not the Law alone, but prophecy too; and from them sprang the Messiah, the bringer of "salvation." These are historical facts. The Jews, and not the Samaritans, possessed the holy scriptures; Jesus Christ was a Jew, not a Samaritan. What more does Jesus affirm than these facts? "We (Jews) know whom we worship (the God of prophet and psalmist, revealed in His scriptures). The evidence of this true knowledge of God is the issuance of the expected salvation (the Messiah) from our midst." John may indeed call the enemies of Jesus by the term of opprobrium (as no doubt it had already become in his day), "the Jews." But he, no less than Paul, understood the line of divine purpose in God's gracious preparation for His salvation,—a line which held to the tribe of Judah and the house of David. For the Jews were to him, as to Paul, "brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh," "whose are the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and out of whom is the christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever" (Rom. ix. 3-5).

JAMES OSCAR BOYD.

The True
Text of Mark
viii., 32.

Most readers of the
BIBLE STUDENT for
January must have
been deeply inter-
ested in the note of Dr. WARFIELD
on the turn which Mr. F. C. BURKITT

gives to Mark viii. 32, by adducing a various reading from the *Codex Bobiensis*, with which the *Sinaitic Palimpsest* of the Gospels, discovered by Mrs. LEWIS, and *The Diatessaron of Tatian*, are said to agree. The words referred to are, in the authorized version, "And He spake that saying openly." Mr. BURKITT tells us that these words are connected with the preceding verse so as to read, in the texts referred to, "And He began to say to them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be killed, and after the third day rise again, and speak the word with boldness."

The translation of the passage in *The Diatessaron* given in the lx. volume of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, by Rev. HOPE W. HOGG, is, "And He was speaking plainly;" but in a note the translator says: "The Arabic might perhaps be construed *and to speak*, depending on *began* in §23, 40: but the clause agrees with the Sinaitic of Mark, as does the following."

In Mrs. LEWIS' own translation of the passage in the *Sinaitic Palimpsest* she has, "And He was speaking the saying openly." In an article in the December (1900) number of the *Expository Times*, however, on "What have we gained in the Sinaitic Palimpsest?" she implies the correctness of Mr. BURKITT's translation—while she decidedly rejects his conclusion as to the correctness of the

text. She, moreover, shows how the mistake, as she considers it, might have occurred. She says: "With all my partiality for the Sinai palimpsest, I feel strongly that the reading of the Greek Manuscripts—'And He spake the saying openly'—is a much better one. The imperfect tense of the verb *ἐλάλει*, which is here used signifies that our Lord spoke publicly of His crucifixion and resurrection, not once, but several times; and it is very satisfactory to us to know that the evangelist was able to record this as an unchallenged fact. The variant might easily arise from a mistake on the part of some Syriac or Latin translator, who finding no punctuation, no accents, nor even a separation of words, in an uncial Greek manuscript, divided the sentence wrongly, and wishing to make sense, added one letter, or even two, to *ἐλάλει*; so as to make it into the infinitive *ἐκλάλειν*, which Mr. BURKITT has suggested as being the original form."

The matter is important not only because the reading proposed by Mr. BURKITT is unnatural and untrue to the facts, so far as we know them, but because it takes away the emphasis which is laid on our Saviour's prediction of His sufferings, death and resurrection—of which He now, according to the true reading, spoke in plain language, without metaphor or parable.

P. P. FLOURNOY.