

The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

The Bible Student and Religious Outlook.

Vol. II., New Series.

AUGUST, 1900.

Number 2.

Two schools of theology have been for some years contending for the supremacy, variously styled, the Old and the New, the Traditional and the Modern, the Conservative and the Progressive. The contest is in some important respects different from any which the history of doctrine records. The student of ecclesiastical history is familiar with the doctrinal controversies which form the staple of its contents; he is struck with their sharply defined statements so precise and distinct, he is impressed with their narrow limitations, each emphasizing in most instances a single issue, and that issue defined with the microscopic clearness of a minute cameo. In this latest controversy there is nothing whatever of that distinctness which makes the old controversies so clear and simple, and which renders alignment *pro* or *con* as easy as the discrimination of day from night; on the contrary, there has been a vagueness and indefiniteness which has been at times oppressive, and which for a long period was as helpful to the advocates of the New as it was embarrassing to the defenders of the Old. The

programme of the former seemed for the most part to be a wholesale fault-finding with past and present doctrinal systems, lightened with large promises and vague prophecies of much improvement; its dominant note was discontent, and every dissatisfied soul by virtue of simple unrest felt drawn to a party whose voice was protest, whose mission was reform, and whose weapon was criticism. As the discontented and the dissatisfied are ever a great multitude, this new school speedily secured a large following; its discussions found ready readers, its periodicals enlisted at once strong support, and writers sprang up on every hand with objections to formulate and theories to advance. Every such writer, whatever his views, was enrolled as a member of the school, and his voice swelled the chorus of criticism, while his influence added to the prevalent unrest which it emphasized and illustrated. This feeling of unrest was aggravated and an impression of great strength enhanced by the fact that the new party found its recruits and representatives in all churches, and sometimes among men not marked by extreme reserve nor restrained by excessive

THE POOL OF SILOAM.

PROFESSOR R. L. STEWART, D. D., LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, PA.

One of the most interesting monuments of the past in or about Jerusalem is the Pool of Siloam. The name by which it was known in the time of Christ has come down to us unchanged, in the language of the country, and the genuineness of the site has been established beyond question by several converging lines of evidence. It is mentioned by Josephus, Eusebius, Jerome and a host of travellers who have visited Jerusalem in the centuries following. Some of the most notable witnesses in this line of succession are—the Bordeaux Pilgrim (A. D. 333), Antoninus Martyr (560-570), Arculfus (670), Bernard the Monk (865), Saewulf (1102), Benjamin of Tudela (1163), Fabri (1483), Tsudi (1519), and Maundrell (1697). Nearly all of these travellers since the date of Antoninus make mention of a church which was built over the pool.

The Pool of Siloam is situated in a slight depression on the west side of Ophel—the southern extension of Mount Moriah—near the mouth of the Tyropœon Valley.

The village of Siloam (Silwan), the modern representative of the town mentioned by our Lord, in connection with the fall of its tower, extends along the summit of a low ridge almost directly opposite on the eastern side of the Kedron.

The pool is an artificial receptacle or reservoir, partly hewn out of the rock and partly built up with masonry. It is wholly dependent for its supply of water upon the overflow from the basin of the so-called Fountain of the Virgin on the other side of the ridge of Ophel. This fountain has been identified with En Rogel, the Spring of the Fuller, mentioned several times in the Old Testament. The suggestion that this fountain is also identical with the upper pool, or Spring of Gihon ("the spring head"), and that the Pool of Siloam represents the lower Gihon, has met with favor and bids fair to solve some difficulties in connection with the history of these sources of water supply. The visible source of En Rogel is a cave, artificially enlarged, which lies twenty-five feet below the surface of the ground. It is probable that the stream from this source originally ran out at the foot of

the hill, and that the excavation was afterward made at a higher level for the purpose of diverting it in another direction. The bottom of the cave, in which the water rises at irregular intervals, is reached by two flights of stone steps, numbering thirty in all. The connection between this spring, the only fountain of flowing water in or about modern Jerusalem, and the pool of Siloam, is a winding, subterranean conduit, cut through the intervening spur of Ophel, some twenty-six centuries ago. This conduit or tunnel has been explored from end to end by Dr. Robinson, Colonel Warren and others, and its actual measurement in length is seventeen hundred feet. Its height above the floor of the passage varies from a maximum of sixteen feet to a minimum of less than two feet.

The famous inscription, accidentally discovered near the western mouth of the tunnel by an Arab boy in 1890, gives the clue to the date as well as the circumstances of its construction. According to this record, which covers the face of a carefully smoothed tablet, twenty-seven inches square,—the excavators began to work simultaneously at both ends of the conduit with the intention of meeting at some point near the middle. They did not meet on a direct line, but when one party had worked a little space beyond the proper meeting place, the voice of a man belonging to the other part was heard. Guided by the sounds which were then made on either side the workmen were soon “striking pick against pick, one against the other, and the waters flowed from the spring to the pool.” It is a notable fact that there are two ‘*culs de sac*’ near the middle of the tunnel, the origin of which can only be explained on the assumption that the excavators worked from different sides toward a meeting point, as indicated in the inscription. The Siloam inscription is justly regarded as one of the most important monumental records of Old Testament times. The characters closely resemble the Phœnician in form, and it is conceded by the leading authorities that this fragment, so long hidden from sight, represents the oldest specimen of the Hebrew language that has come down to us, except the Moabite stone. “This tunnel,” says Dr. Ward, “was not made later than the time of King Hezekiah, and the inscription must be of that date or earlier; and it is the only purely Jewish Palestine inscription of any length known, there being nothing

else but small seals" (N. Y. *Independent*, '94, p. 553). This discovery certainly confirms, if it does not make certain, the supposition that the conduit and pool were both made by Hezekiah, as recorded in the book of Kings, for the purpose of conducting the water from this outside spring to a convenient spot within the city walls. "The very *raison d'être* of the Siloam tunnel—as Dr. Bliss puts it—seems to have been to bring water within the limits of the city. It is worthy of note that while we devoted immense labor to testing the contrary theory, yet all our discoveries have tended to support this view." "The Siloam tunnel is ascribed to Hezekiah, says Conder, not solely because in II. Kings xx. 20, he is said to have made a conduit, but because in II. Chron. xxii. 30, the tunnel is described as leading from Gihon in the *Nakhal*, or Kedron ravine. It has never been proved that there was a second tunnel to Gihon; and the levels of the aqueduct found by Mr. Schick do not agree with such a supposition."

A short distance southeast of the Pool of Siloam is a large reservoir, constructed by building a dam across the valley. It is known as the "Old Pool," and is connected with the upper basin by a broad channel cut in the rock. It seems to have been constructed mainly with a view to conducting the overflow of Siloam to the gardens in the valley below. The waters which glided down this rock-hewn channel, and were parted hither and thither to gladden and refresh the King's Garden at its foot, might well be described as "the waters of Siloah that go softly" (Isa. ix. 6). "It seems probable," says Col. Wilson, "that the lower pool of Siloam is the mikvah (ditch, R. V. reservoir) which Hezekiah made between the two walls for the water of the old pool (Isa. xxii. 11). Thus the construction of the Siloam tunnel, and of the great dam examined by Dr. Bliss would be due to Hezekiah."

Recent excavations (1896-1897) under the direction of the Palestine Exploration Survey Fund have furnished much valuable information with respect to the situation and environment of this sacred pool.

One of the most important results of this work is the discovery that an ancient city wall, clearly distinguishable from a wall of later construction alongside, attributed to the Empress Eudisia, crossed the mouth of the Tyropœon Valley below the Old Pool. In his official report, Dr. Bliss states that this wall, which was

buttressed and built without lines, was traced with more or less interruption—but always the same wall—from the Protestant Cemetery on Mount Zion down to a point southwest of the Pool of Siloam, and thence in a northeasterly direction to a point nearly in the centre of the Tyropœon Valley, including within the city of that period the lower as well as the upper pool. There are evidences of frequent reparations along the line of the wall, but it has the same general characteristics throughout and is evidently of a piece with the old wall on Ophel, traced by Warren, which runs toward it from the southeast corner of the Temple area. A gateway, which corresponds in position and surroundings to the Fountain Gate of Scripture, was found in this wall almost directly south of the Siloam pool. Excavations were made at several points north of the pool with the expectation of finding a city wall running across the valley, as indicated apparently by Josephus, but no trace of any wall in this position could be found. At the southwest corner of the Old Pool, however, a wall was found, diverging from the main line, which ran in a northwesterly direction up the west bank of the Tyropœon Valley. This was traced to a point some distance beyond the upper pool, and thence all traces of it were lost. The probability is that the material used in its construction had been carried away to rebuild other structures. Dr. Bliss offers the following as a possible explanation of the passages in which Josephus seems to exclude the Pool from the wall he describes:

“First comes the statement in Wars v. 4, 2, where Josephus speaks of the bending of the wall above the Fountain of Siloam. This is taken by some to mean a curve to the north of the pool which it excludes from the city. But our plan—in the April *Quarterly*—shows how, after crossing the Tyropœon outside the Old Pool, the wall turns at Ophel, where it overlooks the pool in a way that might well be called ‘a bend above Siloam.’ ”

“In regard to the other question, as to whether the Pool was outside the city at the time of Josephus, note that he says ‘The *Fountain* of Siloam.’ It is quite possible that the term Siloam might be applied equally to the Virgin’s Fountain as the source of the waters which fed the Pool of Siloam. That spring was, according to any theory or discovery, outside the city at the time of Josephus, and at every time.”

While excavating in the immediate vicinity of the Pool of Siloam the discovery was made that the modern pool—53 feet long by 18 feet wide—was a contraction within the area of the original basin, which was almost square. As restored it measures seventy-five feet on its north side and seventy-one on the west. Near the northwest corner of the enclosing wall a pier was found at the height of twelve feet nine inches from the pavement with the springer of an arch, which indicated the existence of an arcade at one time on that side of the pool. From this and other indications Dr. Bliss assumes that the arcade ran around the four sides of the pool and represented the “quadriporticum,” or four-sided arcade of the Bordeaux Pilgrim.

Directly north of the present pool the remains of an ancient church were found. This building with its appendages was found to be 115 feet in length and 100 feet in breadth. It belongs without doubt to the Byzantine period and was probably built by the Empress Eudisia. This church is mentioned for the first time by Antoninus Martyr (560-570 A. D.). In its present form there are evidences of changes in outline and proportions which indicate one or more restorations. By driving a series of tunnels the general features of the plan were recovered, but the superincumbent mass of earth and debris resting upon the building to the depth of twelve to thirty feet was not removed.

The most interesting discovery, however, in connection with this series of excavations was a grand flight of stone steps on the west side of the old wall leading from the Pool of Siloam up toward the city. The main part of this stairway, as seen by Dr. Bliss, consisted of steps built of hard, well-jointed stones, laid on a bed of chips and mortar. It was evident also that the builders of this stairway had made use of a system of rock-hewn steps of an earlier date. “Though well polished by foot-wear,” says Dr. Bliss, “they are very rudely cut, in great contrast to the well-squared stone steps, and the two cannot be ascribed to the same constructors.” “On the west the steps butt up against the scarp, and on the east against the west wall of the original pool, which also served as their parapet. As the scarp and wall are not parallel, the breadth of the steps varies from 27 feet at the top to 22 feet at the bottom. The number of steps is 34. They vary in height from 6 to 9 1-2 inches, and are arranged in a system of

wide and narrow treads alternately, the wide treads from 4 feet 3 inches to 4 feet 11 1-2 inches, and the narrow ones from 11 inches to 17."

At some points on the eastern edge of the stairway, it was found that the steps had been broken off to make room for the wall of the church, while at other places they were buried beneath the level of the flooring. These indications furnish indisputable evidence that the stairway was older than the church.

Above the flight of steps a large mass of blockage was found, and beyond this a paved road was traced for a considerable distance. The paved road and the steps were of the same class of work and the general direction pointed toward the entrance in the south wall of the Temple area, known as the Double Gate. A slight divergence to the left would connect it also with the entrance at Robinson's Arch. Dr. Bliss found that the mass of blockage between the steps and the paved road had no connection with any part of the city wall, and hence he concludes that it represents the ruins of some structure which belongs to a period following the disuse of the steps. It is evident, as he expresses it, "that so magnificent a stairway must have had a clear space in front of it."

On the south side of the old wall of the Pool a paved court was uncovered. To this court, or entrance-way, steps led down from an extensive pavement at the foot of the great stairway.

The enlarged basin which Dr. Bliss and his associates have thus recovered, piece by piece, is without doubt the Biblical Pool of Siloam; and it is safe to say that no other site in or near the Holy City has furnished so many interesting mementos of the hoary past. Most of the wall and buildings and other monuments of solid construction to which reference has been made, have been covered up again and are now resting beneath barley fields and cauliflower beds; but the secret of their story and environment has been disclosed and now it is possible to reproduce the prominent features of this sacred site, with its approaches and surroundings as it appeared in the time of Christ.

We can hardly be far wrong in saying, in this connection, that we have along the line of the ancient thoroughfare, extending from the Temple hill to Siloam, and thence to the passage way southward between the walls,—the identical sites of the long lost

"Gate of the Fountain," the "wall of the Pool of Siloah by the King's garden," and possibly the very "stairs that go down from the city of David" (Neh. iii. 15).

Down this roadway to Gihon—if we are right in assuming that Gihon was identical with Siloam—a silent procession came more than a thousand years before the time of our Lord, with the three worthies, Zadok, Nathan and Benaiah at their head, to anoint Solomon as King in the room of his father, David. Here, as the holy oil was poured upon his head, the blare of trumpets rang out and reverberated among the rocks, and the shout of the rejoicing multitude arose to the heights above, and was heard by Adonijah and his band of conspirators at En Rogel, on the other side of the ridge of Ophel.

In later times Siloam and the gardens below it became a favorite resort of the pilgrim hosts, which thronged the Holy City at the feasts, and especially at the Feast of Tabernacles—the great harvest festival of the nation—when booths of green branches were erected on the house tops, and in every open space within and about Jerusalem. From Siloam, whose source, like the sacred stream of Ezekiel's vision, was hidden in the very heart of the Temple hill, the water was brought in a golden pitcher at the head of a grand procession, and with great ceremony, for the symbolic libation at the Altar of Sacrifice, on the last great day of the feast. Here, while trumpets sounded and the temple courts rang with shouts of joy and psalms of praise, the water was poured out by the Priest in commemoration of the waters which flowed out for the thirsty multitude in the wilderness, from the rock of Rephidim. It was doubtless in connection with this service, the most joyous of all the ceremonies of the day, that our Lord stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

That which makes this place forever memorable and sacred, however, is the story of the healing of the man, blind from his birth, who came hither to wash his clay covered eyes, in obedience to the command of Jesus. The paved street and the majestic flight of stone steps suggest the route by which the blind man reached the healing waters of the pool. To Siloam, which by its very name was a symbol of Him who was *sent* to be the Light of the world, he groped his way with clouded eyes and hesitating

step; but in an instant, as he washed the cloudy film came off with the grimy covering of clay; and lo! a new world burst upon his astonished gaze. The first glimpse of this new world centered in the sacred pool and its surroundings. There was a glory on rock and water, on field and hillside and over-arching sky, such as he had never even conceived of before, but as he ran up the mountain "like a pleased child," a wider outlook came within the range of vision, and crowning all on the heights above was the Holy City with its gleaming pile of marble and gold. All this and more than words can express, is implied in the brief sentence of the Evangelist: "He came seeing."

THE NESCIENCE OF JESUS.

A STUDY OF MARK XIII. 32.

REV. MEADE C. WILLIAMS, D. D., ST. LOUIS, MO.

The Rationalistic Criticism, in its present trend finds it necessary to its assumptions to predicate limitations in the realm of our Lord's knowledge during his manifestation on earth. This opinion has special value for that school in the ground it affords for modifying any of Christ's sayings which militate against their views of the Old Testament, or against other departures in religious belief which they may feel inclined to make. Because once in a certain particular, *viz.* as to the day and the hour when the end cometh, our Lord declared that not even the Son knew—these men, with a theory to maintain, boldly infer that there are whole departments of truth in which He was such an one as ourselves, and subject to human ignorance and mistake.

This affirmation by the Divine Saviour connects in their minds with the whole modern theory of Kenoticism—a doctrine in contrast with, or in opposition to, the fullness of the Godhead in the Incarnate Son. We do not, however, propose an examination of the Kenosis, but only the submission of a few general observations concerning this passage.

I. It is a single and isolated statement. In its full form it is given by Mark alone. The margin of our English Bible refers to nothing similar in the other discourses of Christ. This is by