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JESUS' MISSION, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN TESTIMONY

(SYNOPTICS)

Under the title of "*I came': the express self-testimony of Jesus to the purpose of His sending and His coming,*" Adolf Harnack has published a study of the sayings of Jesus reported in the Synoptic Gospels, which are introduced by the words "I came" or, exceptionally, "I was sent", or their equivalents.¹ These, says he, are "programmatic" sayings, and deserve as such a separate and comprehensive study, such as has not heretofore been given to them. In his examination of them, he pursues the method of, first, gathering the relevant sayings together and subjecting them severally to a critical and exegetical scrutiny; and, then, drawing out from the whole body of them in combination Jesus' own testimony to His mission.

It goes without saying that, in his critical scrutiny of the passages, Harnack proceeds on the same presuppositions which govern his dealing with the Synoptic tradition in general; that is to say, on the presuppositions of the "Liberal" criticism, which he applies, however, here as elsewhere, with a certain independence. It goes without saying also, therefore, that the passages emerge from his hands in a very mauled condition; brought as far as it is possible to bring them, even with violence, into line with the "Liberal" view of what the mission of Jesus ought to have been. It is reassuring, however, to observe that, even so, they cannot be despoiled of their central testimony. That Jesus proclaimed Himself to have come—to have been

¹ *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1912, xxii, pp. 1-30.

tute for the old factor of revelation, the writer at the outset surrenders the possibility of historically explaining the unique prophetic consciousness either from national factors or otherwise.

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GEERHARDUS VOS.

Das Antisemitische Hauptdogma, beleuchtet von EDUARD KÖNIG, Dr. Phil. et Theol., Ord. Professor und Geheimrath in Bonn. Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber's Verlag. 1914. Pp. 64.

The doughty Bonn Professor, who has fought for the good rights of the Old Testament on so many fronts, in this brochure takes up its defense, and incidentally also the defense of Old Testament science, against the attacks of a certain type of Antisemitism. There is one extreme wing of the Antisemitic propaganda which does not hesitate to decry and reject the biblical religion, including Jesus and Christianity, in toto, on the plea of its being so typically Semitic as to be irreconcilable with and injurious to the national Germanic aspirations. Others however go less far in their condemnation of the biblical teaching. Loath to cut themselves loose from the Bible and Christianity after so radical a fashion, and yet desiring to put the social, political and economic objections raised to the influence of the Hebrew element in modern civilization on a broad basis, they distinguish between two strands in the biblical development, one of which they attack as the root of all that appears to them at the present day offensive and dangerous in the activity of the Jews, whilst from the other they derive all that is good and noble in the Old Testament religion and in Christianity. In part the distinction is drawn between Judaeic and Israelitish elements, in which case the northern tribes are idealized at the expense of Judah; in other cases, and alongside of this, however, the claim is made that Aryan elements were present and influential among ancient Israel, and that to them is due the production of what it is still possible to cherish as a valuable inheritance from that ancient source. Dr. König is, as usual, very methodical in his presentation of the polemic material that has been advanced along both lines and in the reply to its main arguments. It is amazing to learn what shallowness of biblical scholarship, what cheap, journalistic credulousness in regard to the wildest and most baseless speculations, the rabid Antisemites display in their writings. One cannot help suspecting that to a considerable extent it is not with them a case of honest conviction but of unscrupulous use, regardless of historical support, made of any material that may suit the purpose of their propaganda. An amazing feature of the situation is that the anti-Semitic writers do not hesitate on their part to accuse Old Testament scholars of incapacity in understanding the true trend of the biblical development and introduce themselves as discoverers and liberators in a field enslaved to blind traditionalism. In exposing the fatuousness of all this the author renders a valuable service. At the same time his work, although of small compass, gives a good summary of what has been written of recent years in support

of the theory of non-Hebrew or non-Semitic influence in the development of the biblical ideas, from a more reputable quarter, though in most instances with little more historical foundation. Especially the sketch of the modern controversy, if it may be dignified by that name, about the Aryan or semi-Aryan descent of Jesus is helpful. Not only those who are interested in the question of Anti-Semitism, but also the general theological student will find Dr. König's pamphlet well worth careful perusal.

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GEERHARDUS VOS.

New Testament History: A Study of the Beginnings of Christianity. By HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL, Ph.D., President and Professor of Systematic Theology: The Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado. New York; Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press. (Copyright, 1914.) Pp. 314. \$1.50 net.

"The Abingdon Press", we are informed, is a trade name adopted by the Methodist Book Concern, and Dr. Rall is president of a divinity school of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The *New Testament History* is one of a "Bible Study Text-book" series, prepared to meet the needs of college students, and projected, as the publisher's announcement says, "by a joint committee representing the Eastern and Western sections of the Associations of College Instructors in the Bible, the departments of colleges and universities and of teacher training of the Religious Education Association, the Student Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., and Sunday School Council." The present volume, the author tells us in his advertisement on the cover, is written "frankly from the modern point of view and assured results of critical study are used", but it "does not deal primarily with critical questions nor obtrude critical processes. It aims to set forth positively and reverently the great facts of these writings." The final aim is said in the introduction to be "to secure the study of the Bible itself".

It is a pleasure to note that the material which the author uses has been studied with thoroughness and care, that it is well organized and presented in a clear and interesting style. Following the suggestion of the sub-title, Dr. Rall gives a brief but admirable summary of conditions prevailing in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman worlds at the time of the Advent, and traces the rise of Christianity from its beginning as a Jewish sect to its establishment as a universal religion. Some of his generalizations are striking and illuminating. Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews and a Roman citizen, carried through the empire in the Greek language the message of a Jewish Messiah. The story of the life of Jesus was used to make converts, while the words of Jesus were used in the teaching of disciples thus won. In Stephen's speech the attack upon the temple stirred the Sadducees and what he said about the law aroused the Pharisees. Luke tells us how the churches were founded; Paul's letters tell us how they grew and what was their life. The result of Paul's work was "a Christianity made conscious of its