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the greatness of Ephraim and the deliverance from Egypt as things seen and present, because God had so spoken. The parents of Moses, and then Moses himself in his strange life of disappointments and wonders, deal likewise with the future, the unseen, the seemingly impossible, on the warrant of a promise. Figures as little heroic in natural character as Sarah, as little noble in life as Rahab, take place in the long procession, as those who treat the invisible as visible by faith. And so do the thronging "elders" of ver. 32—a group singularly diverse in everything but this victory over the seen and present by faith in a promise. And so do the unnamed confessors and martyrs of the closing paragraph, the heartbroken, the tortured, the wanderers of the dens and caves, who all alike, amidst ten thousand differences of condition and of character, "obtained a good report through faith"; and all won through faith that victory, so great when we reflect upon it, that they died "not having received the promise." They trusted *to the very end*. When they fell in their shadowy path of pilgrimage, "the promise," the promised Christ, had not yet come. Nevertheless, they treated the hope of Him as fact, and they won their victory by faith.

And now they are parts and members of the "great cloud" who watch us in our turn—us, with things unseen and hoped-for still in front, but with JESUS at our side.



A Layman's Thoughts on Old Testament Criticism.

By P. J. HEAWOOD, M.A.

I.

SOME time ago a friend lent me Professor G. A. Smith's "Lectures on Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament." As a layman interested in Theology, whose University work lies in other directions, I wanted a general reasoned statement of the "critical" position which did not

(like so much that is written in this wide field) beg the fundamental questions at issue. A few casual notes made at first led, as I had time, to a fuller examination, and the results were both interesting and surprising. The book is not now new, but it is still recommended by critical authorities, and may at least serve as a text for the general consideration of what is commonly said and thought on the subject. Space will here allow of only a brief résumé, leaving out of account the excellent practical advice on the value of the Old Testament to the preacher.

In Professor Smith's book we notice the familiar tendency to begin with an assumption. Long before any reasoned view has been put forward, we find the question-begging statement with respect to the Jewish Canon—that "virtually it began in the reign of King Josiah." But we soon reach the first point which deserves examination—that of the attitude towards the Old Testament shown by New Testament writers and by Christ Himself.

It is claimed that they enforce "the duty of Old Testament criticism," which is exemplified in the first instance by our Lord's treatment of the provisions of the Law of Moses in the Sermon on the Mount. Beginning with statements all might admit, the language used gathers force as it proceeds, until we are told that He "rejected some parts of the Law itself," and, later, that "He came . . . to judge the Law"; and that, "while there are parts of it which He renounced by simply leaving them silently behind Him, there are other parts upon which He turned with spoken condemnation." Before examining this we must see where the issue really lies. All agree that the old code of civil and criminal administration was not intended to continue such for the Jews, still less for Gentile Christians. That the Gospel was an "advance" upon the Law, doing what it could not do, is reiterated by St. Paul. Christ "brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10). The question is whether, in turning men's eyes from the bondage of the letter to the freedom of the spirit, He enlarged the scope

of the old Commandments, or (as our author would have it) contradicted them; and, further, whether He treated them as having a true Divine sanction, as being (for their intended purpose) a true expression of the will of God, and, as such, of permanent significance for us; or whether, though based on right principles, their details are to be approved or condemned on their merits, according to the judgment of an enlightened conscience. Now, in the striking contrasts which Christ makes between the sayings of old and His own precepts, many of the latter are plainly extensions rather than contradictions of the Law of Moses, as where He puts lust and anger on the same footing with adultery and murder. The command which said, "Love thy neighbour," did not add, "Hate thine enemy," but, indeed, implied the contrary in personal differences (Lev. xix. 16-18); so *it* again does not stand condemned. Nor, indeed, can this be fairly said even of the law of divorce. As far as it went it put a check on the Eastern tendency to treat divorce as quite an easy matter, by the formality which it prescribed *if* a wife was to be put away (Deut. xxiv. 1). The ordinance, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Exod. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21), is the one instance where contradiction may be plausibly represented. Yet even here the legal enactment is not exactly in the same plane with that which Christ is urging. It is the *sufferer* to whom He points a more excellent way than that of seeking legal redress at all. It does not follow that the law is condemned as a principle of strict justice, or in its application to some conditions of society. Compare the parable of the Unforgiving Servant and Christ's comment upon it (Matt. xviii. 23-35).

Now, turning to His statements about the Law generally, we find a sanctity attached to its commandments quite inconsistent with criticism of the kind supposed: "Think not that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all things be accomplished." These words form the

preface to those very comments we have been considering, as though to guard against a misapprehension of their tendency. They are very hard to explain away. It is supposed indeed that they only refer to "the ideal or essential part of the Law." This, it is said, Christ on more than one occasion "extracted . . . and defined it as the whole." In support of this the words are quoted, "Whatsoever ye wish that men should do to you, so also do ye to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. vii. 12); and "On these two commandments hangeth all the Law" (Matt. xxii. 40). But it can hardly be said that in these two passages the Law is *set aside* in favour of its essential principles; and the metaphor of the jot and the tittle is quite unmeaning as applied to such an ideal substratum, referring naturally to the smaller details. This appears plainly from what follows: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 19). So, later on, Christ opposes the traditions of men to the "commandment of God," as embodied in specific provisions of the Law—one an instance of its severity towards heinous offenders: "He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Matt. xv. 3, 4; Mark vii. 9, 10). To the Law He directs inquirers (Luke x. 26; Matt. xix. 17, etc.). And the words (Matt. xi. 13; Luke xvi. 16), "the Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached," hastily taken as ascribing "the character of transitoriness to the whole of the Old Testament," are followed in St. Luke by the statement that "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fall."

In view of such words it is astonishing to hear (as quoted from Professor Denney) that Christ's ideas are "indifferent" to the Law, "either as a historic document or as a national institution"; and when we come to points in which He is said to have neglected the Law in practice, we find only what is doubtful or irrelevant. It is not at all clear that "He broke away from the literal observance of the Sabbath Law," or that *in practice* "He reckoned all foods as lawful." When He pointed out that

taking food has not in itself power to defile a man, the immediate reference was not to forbidden meats, but to eating with unwashed hands (Matt. xv. 2, 20, etc.). To say that "He touched the leper and did not feel Himself unclean" (when the leper was healed with the touch!) is a piece of perversity showing the hollowness of the case. It seems almost superfluous to quote any of the familiar passages in which He speaks as if His own work and destiny were rigidly determined by the language of the Law and the Prophets (*e.g.*, Matt. xxvi. 54; Mark xiv. 49; Luke xxiv. 44; John xiii. 18).

The attitude of the Apostles must be referred to very briefly. Their view of the abiding value of the Old Testament is so fully recognized that here all might seem to be conceded; but much is made of difficulties raised by some looseness of quotation, the use of the LXX as well as the Hebrew, and by some Apocryphal references (though the extreme rarity of these in the case of books included in the LXX—which are not cited as Scripture—is a striking testimony to the distinctness of the Jewish Canon). Two instances are given which deserve examination. It is said that in 1 Cor. xv. 55 "the Greek enables" St. Paul "to quote some words of Hosea" (xiii. 14) "in an opposite sense from that in which the prophet employed them." To begin with, the words are not strictly "quoted." If, after quoting Isa. xxv. 8 (Hebrew), the Apostle goes on to adopt Hosea's words as his own, it is not to make any use of the fact that they had been written by the prophet. Then, it seems that both the LXX and St. Paul do (probably) correctly represent the actual Hebrew. If so, Hosea's¹ words would naturally mean what St. Paul seems to mean. The rhetorical question, "Where are thy plagues?" should, by all analogy, be intended to minimize their power. (Compare Hos. xiii. 10; Isa. xxxvi. 19; Jer. xxxvii. 19; Mic. vii. 10.) It is only because of the sudden transition in what follows (almost paralleled in other parts of the book) that some great authorities

¹ If we render, with R.V. margin, "I will be," the turn of expression is different, but the words still express triumph over death.

suppose that death is thus summoned to destroy. But, further, it is only the inherent force of the words which settles *St. Paul's* meaning. If they could be understood to magnify the power of death, that would suit *his* purpose equally well. The words which follow "The sting of death is sin . . ." would then be an explanation of this admitted power, answered by the final words of triumph. In any case the dogmatic assertion of opposition depends upon a mere assumption. Perhaps *St. Paul* knew as well as we do what *Hosea* meant.

The next instance is even more astonishing. It is argued that when *St. Paul* says (1 Cor. ix. 9), "Doth God take care for oxen? or doth He say it altogether for our sakes?"—hardly an adequate translation—"he calls the literal meaning of the passage impossible, and substitutes for it a metaphorical application of his own." Can it be thought that his statement of the *purpose* of the command denies its literal *application*? As well might he be taken to deny the events in the history of *Israel*, of which he says that they "happened unto them τυπικῶς," for examples to us. These attempts to make capital out of *St. Paul's* Old Testament quotations do not seem very happy ones.

We must hardly follow our author in detail when he proceeds on his own account to criticize what he calls the "cruel tempers of the old dispensation" in language which demands a strong word of protest. To his argument, that much of the harsh and intolerant spirit of Christian times is due to a misuse of the Old Testament, it might suffice to say that the principle is entirely false which would condemn what has been abused. That would often condemn what is best; in fact, the words of our Lord Himself have been perverted. But there has been no excuse, with the New Testament before us, for such misapplications of the Jewish Law. Further, if it had been really followed, there would have been little to complain of. How can the assignment of the death penalty to those worst foes of society, who terrorized over their neighbours by pretended dealings with the unseen, be made an excuse for the barbarous treatment of persons who claimed no such powers, merely because cruelty, bigotry, and superstition dared to shelter themselves under such a plea?

But we must pass on from what is thus generally put forward as justifying a free treatment of the Old Testament to the beginnings of criticism itself, based, as we are reminded, on indications of composite structure in the narrative. This in some shape no one is concerned to deny. It is only so far as real discrepancies and incongruities are brought to light that other questions arise, though even these carry us a very little way in the direction which we are finally asked to take. We must briefly examine some actual instances, beginning with cases of "doublets"—a term which, by the way, seems to be applied to very different things: (1) Double accounts of the same event; (2) accounts of two similar events, which may or may not be identical; (3) a single account, supposed to be a combination of two different accounts on the ground of some apparent inconsistencies. First comes the so-called "double account of creation" in Gen. i., ii., which involves many questions too difficult to deal with incidentally, though we may notice that it is hardly accurate to speak of this as of alternative accounts of the same thing, whereas the second is mainly confined to the immediate surroundings of man. What we are asked to notice is differences of phraseology pointing to difference of origin. Besides the striking difference in the Divine names, there is the use of "create" in chaps. i.-ii. 4, and of "make" or "form" in chap. ii. 4, etc.; while "beasts of the earth" in the former is replaced by "beasts of the field" in the latter. If we trace the usage of these phrases, we find them sometimes quite near together (*e.g.*, in Ezekiel), while in Job they occur in adjoining verses. And their use suggests a certain difference of idea: "beasts of the earth" (which is less frequent) seems to be the wider term, while "beasts of the field" are usually wild beasts viewed in connexion with man or living in his neighbourhood. Thus, in Job v. 22, 23, "Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth," gives the general negation; "The beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee"—*i.e.*, wild animals within range, to which alone could the statement apply. So far as it goes, this exactly corresponds to

the distinction between the generality of Gen. i. and the limitation of Gen. ii. to the domain of man. So between the words for "form" and "create," which stand side by side in Amos iv. 13 ("He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind . . ."), a certain distinction appears, the latter being more distinctly appropriate to Divine origination, while the former (used specifically of the potter) suggests the bringing of a thing to a definite material shape or condition. These chapters present a remarkable problem; but such instances at least suggest how easy it is to mistake for signs of different authorship differences due to a nice adjustment of words to the ideas to be expressed.

The difference in the Divine names here and elsewhere is certainly noteworthy. The idea that it might be made the basis for a division of the Pentateuch into its component parts had at least the merit of simplicity; but we learn that this taken by itself "would have led to nothing but confusion." It has, in fact, been superseded by more intricate theories.

As to the "double account" of the naming of Bethel, we only stop to notice that Jacob's second visit is but the complement of the first, *fulfilling its conditions* (Gen. xxviii. 22). Then, of Israel, it is not at all clear that in Gen. xxxv. 9, 10, "the origin of the name Israel is dated at Bethel," since the resumptive clause referring to Padan Aram seems to dissociate these verses from the rest.

A doublet of the third kind is found in Josh. vi., where in the single account of the taking of Jericho it is said that "two stories have been interwoven, but are still distinguishable"! One, it is supposed, represented Israel as marching round six days in silence, while on the seventh day they shouted at the word of Joshua; in the other, a portion of the armed men marched round seven times in one day, and at the seventh the people shouted at the signal of the trumpets. But it is not shown that there is any inconsistency in the narrative as we have it, in which the city is compassed once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh. The *silence of voice* on the six days is not inconsistent with the *blowing of trumpets*; and the

distinction between shouting *at the word of Joshua* and *at a special signal of the trumpets* seems quite trivial, if we reflect that his word could hardly be conveyed to the whole host except by some such signal. It is gravely asserted that in ver. 20 "the people shout both before and after the trumpets," as though the order of verbs were necessarily that of actions! The exuberance of the repetitions is what seems to give force to the argument, but we find many examples of this characteristic of Hebrew style. Take, *e.g.*, a non-narrative chapter like Ezek. xviii., or the repetitions in Exod. xxv.-xxxi., xxxv.-xl.

We must just allude here to the case of Chronicles and Samuel-Kings, which form a veritable doublet on the largest scale, though very summarily treated by Professor Smith. A point he insists on is that, "when the parallel narratives . . . are compared, it is found that the chronicler has increased the numbers of the troops engaged in the campaigns described, of the men slain, and of the slaves, the cattle and the objects of value taken captive or brought as tribute to the victors." It would hardly be imagined from this how comparatively few the cases are where direct comparison is possible, *still less that the excess in numbers is by no means all on one side*. But want of space precludes a sufficiently detailed analysis to be useful. Some general considerations with respect to the character of the divergencies will be given in the sequel.



Fasting.¹

BY THE REV. T. S. TREANOR, M.A.

"WHY do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?" (Matt. ix. 14). This question was put to our Lord either at or in close connexion with the feast in "the house," probably that of Matthew the Publican.

¹ Suggested by an article on this subject by the Rev. C. Rumfitt, LL.D., CHURCHMAN, March, 1906.