

TWO NOTES ON ENOCH IN SIR. xliv 16.

I.

THE Greek of Sir. xliv 16 (ed. Swete) is—

Ἐν ὧκ εὐηρέστησεν Κυρίῳ καὶ μετετέθη,
ὑπόδειγμα μετανοίας ταῖς γενεαῖς.

[*μετανοίας*] Edersheim in the *Speaker's Commentary* gives 'of wisdom' as the Coptic, with the suggestion *διανοίας* (?); and quotes the Syro-hex. and MS 253 for the rendering 'an everlasting example to the generations,' the one reading לילעלם and the other *alōnos*, cf. verse 17 διαθήκαι (Heb. באור) *alōnos*.

In the Cairene Hebrew the verse runs thus—

Enoch was found perfect and walked with יהוה ;

And he was taken, a sign of knowledge to generation and generation.

M. Israel Lévi in *L'Écclesiastique* suggests *ἐπινοίας* for *μετανοίας*, and notes that Nöldeke proposes *ἐννοίας*.

It has been pointed out that נמצא תמים, *he was found perfect*, is a repetition from the next verse, on Noah; and Dr. Petets well remarks that this assimilation of the two verses accounts for the omission of verse 16 in the Syriac.

Looking at אור דעת, *a sign of knowledge*, in its context I find it strange, and think that it may be corrupt. Omitting דעת we get the clear sense, 'he was taken away, a sign to successive generations,' with a natural construction for אור, which usually stands without epithet or complement. The addition עולם, *alōnos*, as in Isa. lv 13 and Sir. xliii 6, is not wanted in Sir. xliv 16 (cf. li 30) before לדור ודור.

The next verse ends—

לעת (ב' marg.) בלה היה תחליף ;

If לעת or בעת, like נמצא תמים, was brought into verse 16 from verse 17, it may have been corrupted (1) into דעת, and (2) into עולם. Compare Sir. iv 23 Heb. בעולם, Syr. בערו, Gr. בעת שלום.

In the Greek of verse 16 suppose a rendering—

ὑπόδειγμα γενεαῖς καὶ γενεαῖς.

Then, repeating the *μα*, read

ΜΑΓΕΝΕΑΙC,

and change *γ* and an *ε* into *τ* and *ο*. Thus we get all the letters of

ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑC,

and then *μετανοίας ταῖς γενεαῖς*, cf. Matt. xii 39 f., Luke xi 29 f. σημεῖον . . . μετενόησαν. In the received Greek text *μετανοίας* seems to correspond to

μετερέθη in the previous hemistich. But, according to the Hebrew, this should end at Κυρίφ, and the second (without μετανοίας) would be

καὶ μετερέθη ὑπόδειγμα ταῖς γενεαῖς.

Although in the 'Henochsage,' on which see Hamburger's *Real-Encyc.*, Enoch 'kennt alle Geheimnisse,' it may be doubted whether Ben Sira himself wrote אָוֹת דַּעַת. Rashi (cf. Gen. Rab. 25. 1) describes Enoch as *righteous but quick in his mind* (דַּעַת) *to repent and do wickedly* (לְשׁוֹב לְהַרְשִׁיעַ). If μετανοίας in its ordinary sense is to be retained as a rendering of דַּעַת, compare the sayings that repentance is תְּכִלִּית חַבְמָה (*Jewish Fathers*, p. 70) and σύνεσις μεγάλη (Herm. *Mand.* iv 2. 2).

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II.

It is, I venture to think, possible to explain and justify the reading both of the Hebrew 'sign of knowledge' and of the Greek 'sign (or 'pattern') of repentance' by means of the early Jewish exegesis of the story of Enoch contained in Gen. v 21-24. His repentance is indeed easily inferred from v. 22 'Enoch walked with God after that he begat Methuselah,' although the context seems to show that the writer thought only of the continuance of a consistently good life. But once the principle of interpreting the Old Testament characters as types of human nature was applied to the text, it is obvious that the translation of Enoch (inferred by LXX from the Hebrew 'he was not for God took him') must become a change of mind or repentance. Accordingly we read in Philo (*de Abrahamo*: ed. Mangey, ii 4) 'Now after Hope *Repentance for sins and Amendment* holds the second place; and therefore the record follows of him *who changed from the worse mode of life to the better*, who is called among the Hebrews "Enoch," or as the Greeks might say "the highly favoured." Now of him it is said "Enoch pleased God and he was not found for God translated him." For translation implies a turning and change, and the change is for the better, because it comes about by the providence of God.' And so, as we might expect, Noah who is 'Rest' or 'the Just' follows '*him that repented*.' The same generalization of the story is expounded in *de Praemiis* (ed. Mangey, ii 410).

So also Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* ii ed. Potter, p. 466): 'Moreover does not God, next after the pardon bestowed upon Cain, not much later introduce Enoch *who repented*, showing plainly that repentance is wont to produce pardon?'

It is then natural that a translator acquainted with the Alexandrian methods of exegesis followed by Philo and Clement, should transform 'sign of knowledge' to 'sign of repentance,' in order to expound the significance of the life of Enoch and that his unknown successor should