

A MODERN DEVELOPMENT IN THE STUDY OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT.

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[Concluded from THE CHURCHMAN for June, p. 336.]

PART II.

DIRECT AID FROM THE PAPYRI.

I TURN now to indicate some of the direct additions to our knowledge of the Greek Testament which have accrued from the papyri. I remarked previously that no MSS. of portions of Scripture had been discovered which proved to be of any great importance.

Probably the most valuable is the *Washington Codex*, which was discovered close to Cairo, in 1906, by Mr. C. L. Freer of Detroit. This MS. has been published (1918) with critical notes by Professor Sanders of Michigan University. It dates from the fourth or early fifth century. The MS. consists of 374 parchment pages, and contains, with trifling omissions, the four Gospels. In connection with this MS. there was found with it another sixth century MS. containing nearly all the Pauline Epistles. It and the *Washington Codex* between them must have formed a complete New Testament, which did not include the Revelation. "This is not particularly strange, for it is well known that the Revelation of John was popular in the West much earlier than in the East, and in Egypt particularly it had a competitor in the spurious Revelation of Peter, a large fragment of which was discovered at Akhmîm in 1886" (*New Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection*, 1918, Sanders. Part II., page 252). The Akhmîm fragment was discovered by the French Archaeological Mission, and was published by M. Bouriant in 1892. It was a product of a sect of Docetae of the second century; it is valuable chiefly for its side-lights on Gnostic beliefs.

The Fayûm Gospel Fragment was discovered by Dr. Bickell of Innsbrück among some papyri which had been brought from

Fayûm to Vienna. It was published in 1885. The fragment is brief and unimportant. It deals with the foretelling of the denial by Peter. The text is uncertain owing to the mutilated condition of the papyrus. Bickell maintained that it was part of a Gospel of great antiquity, but Zahn (N.T. Kan. ii. 788) practically establishes it as an extract from a Patristic writing, a free quotation from the Second Gospel. The forthcoming Part XIII. of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* will contain some interesting papyri of parts of the Apocrypha. In the New Testament the most interesting will be a third century fragment of Chapter xxvi. of the Acts. It may be noted in passing that Part XIII. will also contain part of the "Shepherd of Hermas," an early Christian work, in a text which Dr. Grenfell says shows several improvements on that of the Mount Athos Codex.

Another fragment is worthy of notice. If it may not claim to be of any importance from the point of view of the textual critic, it is, nevertheless, of considerable interest. It was discovered at Oxyrhynchus in 1896 by Grenfell and Hunt, who say that it may "claim to be a fragment of the oldest known manuscript of any part of the New Testament." It dates from the third century. The original is now in the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania; but there is an excellent facsimile in Grenfell and Hunt's *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, i., page 4, No. 2. It contains Matthew i. 1-9, 12, 14-20. The text is very similar to **NB**. In Matthew i. 18 the old papyrus reads τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ with **NC** against **B**. Some Latin Versions, the Sinaitic Syriac and the Curetonian Syriac follow the reading Χριστοῦ. In spite of the testimony of this ancient MS., there is every reason to believe that **B** has preserved the correct reading, for nowhere in the New Testament do we find the article used before, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

Another fragment from Oxyrhynchus, dating from the fourth century, contains Romans i. 1-7. Deissmann suggests that this fragment was a sort of amulet or charm, belonging to a certain Aurelius Paulus, whose name is written on it in a cursive hand (the text itself is in uncials). See *Light from the Ancient East*, Deissmann, page 232. The original is now in the Library of Harvard University. The text is published in *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ii., page 8, No. 209, and there is also a facsimile. In verse 1 the fragment impinges on a controversy as to variant readings which is rather

more important than it appears when looked at superficially. It reads *Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, "Christ Jesus," against *ΝΑΔ*. It is supported by B and the Latin Vulgate. In the opening verses of the Pauline Epistles (except 1 Thessalonians and Galatians, where the reading *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* or *Χριστοῦ*, "Jesus Christ," is not disputed), the MSS. vary between *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* or *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, "Jesus Christ," and *Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, "Christ Jesus." But, broadly speaking, it is the earlier Epistles which read *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* or *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, "Jesus Christ," while the later Epistles read *Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, "Christ Jesus." Of course variants exist in all cases apart from the two exceptions mentioned, and I only make a rough comparison following the preponderance of MS. evidence. The change of phrase marks a transition stage between *Χριστός*, "Christ" of the Gospels as a title (cf. Matthew i. 16, xxvii. 17, 22, and perhaps Luke ii. 26 *τὸν Χριστὸν Κυρίου*, "the Lord's Christ"—the familiar Septuagint translation of *יהוה משיח*, "the Lord's anointed," the title of the Hebrew kings) and *Χριστός Ἰησοῦς*, "Christ Jesus" simply as a proper name, with no idea at all of a title in *Χριστός*. We may say that in the Gospels *Χριστός*, "Christ," is distinctively a title; in the earlier Pauline Epistles it retains some of its significance as a title, but it has also taken on some of the sense of a proper name, and in the later Epistles it is purely a proper name. The line marking St. Paul's transition from the one phrase to the other might be drawn somewhere about the period 1 Corinthians–2 Corinthians–Romans, as there is a greater conflict of evidence as to the reading in these three Epistles than in any other group.

I wish to notice two more of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, one in detail, the other with just a passing reference. Having done so, I think I shall have given a fair idea of the type and value of the species of MSS. with which this portion of my essay is concerned.

The first is No. 657 in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, iv., page 36. It contains the following portions of the Epistle to the Hebrews: ii. 14–v. 5, x. 8–xi. 13, xi. 28–xii. Some critics, notably Blass, declare that many of the Epistles were written in a species of metrical cadence, or, at least, that their language is couched in a harmonious and artistic symmetry. We get very clear instances of this in the Greek of 1 Corinthians xv. 42, 43, 1 Timothy iii. 16, 2 Timothy ii. 11, 12, and in 1 Corinthians xiii. Of this latter Norden says, "Since the hymn of Cleanthes nothing at once so

heartfelt and magnificent had been written in Greek as St. Paul's hymn to love." Now the text of Papyrus No. 657 is divided, more or less metrically, by the insertion of double dots. The Greek text of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows evident care by the writer (whoever he was) in composition, choice of words and phrases, balance of periods, and no little pains to produce a work of a high literary standing. Probably, without actually writing verse, he had in mind a conformity to poetic canons, so that his work would gain in solemnity and effectiveness when read aloud. It is not unlikely that a similar motive inspired the moulding and phraseology of some of the Pauline Epistles. The chief value of this papyrus lies in the fact that its text is almost identical with B in Hebrews ii. 14-v. 5. Now B is not quite complete; it lacks Genesis i.-xlvi., Psalms cv.-cxxxvii., and in the New Testament it breaks off at Hebrews ix. 14, the remainder being lost. Now, from its virtual coincidence with B in ii. 14-v. 5, it is apparent that for the portions x. 8-xi. 13 and xi. 28-xii. 17 this papyrus is almost as valuable as B itself.

The other papyrus to which I wish to refer briefly is No. 1078 in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, viii., page 11. It also dates from the fourth century, and contains Hebrews ix. 12-19. In this papyrus also the text is divided in the same way as No. 657 by the insertion of double dots.

With these examples I conclude my sketch of the purely Biblical papyri. There are numerous others of which complete lists are given by Professor Gregory, Von Soden, and Kenyon. Most of them are small fragments containing only a few lines, and none of them is of much importance or interest. I should serve no useful purpose by discussing them, for such a discussion could only take the form of tabulating them and mentioning the contents.

It will be observed that I have not said anything as to the use of tachygraphic symbols in the papyri. That is partly because it is somewhat outside the scope of my present subject, and partly because, so far as I am aware, not many papyri have come to hand which afford examples. In a future work I shall have more to say on this subject, and especially with reference to the hitherto undeciphered third century set of waxen tablets (British Museum Add. MS. 33270). My researches in connection with these are, at present, incomplete.

I point out now that the papyri have not afforded us any MSS. of the Greek Testament of primary importance. They have given us nothing approaching in value, say, the Lewis-Gibson Syriac palimpsest, which is of the greatest possible value in constructing a text of the Gospels, inasmuch as it probably reproduces, with a few corruptions, the second century Antiochian Greek text.

Our next consideration will be a type of papyrus which may be regarded as forming a link between the purely profane and the purely Biblical papyri. This type is illustrated by the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* fragments containing what are, or claim to be, "Sayings of Jesus." In 1897 a single papyrus leaf was discovered at Oxyrhynchus by Grenfell and Hunt. It contains eight "Sayings of Jesus." Three of them afford close parallels to sayings recorded in the Gospels. Two of these I regard as important; the third is rather a matter of interest. I deal with the important ones first.

Oxyrhynchus Fragment iv., when reconstructed, reads—*λέγει Ἰησοῦς*. "Ὅπου ἐὰν ᾧσιν [δύο οὐκ] ἐ[ἰσ]ὶν ἄθροισι, καὶ [ὁ]που ἐ[ἰ]ς ἐστὶν μόνος [λέ]γω Ἐγὼ εἶμι μετ' αὐτ[οῦ], "Jesus saith, wherever two are, they are not without God, and where one is alone, I say, I am with him." Compare this with Matthew xviii. 20, *οὐ γὰρ εἰσιν δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἶμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν*. "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." From the comparison a point of textual interest arises. In reconstructing the text of the Oxyrhynchus Saying, the negative *οὐκ*, "not," must be inserted. It is practically certain that it, or some form of a negative, existed in the original of this first clause; so much is clear from the context. If the passage Matthew xviii. 20 be inspected in D, and in the Sinaitic Syriac Version, it will be noticed that the sentence is cast in a negative form: "For there are not two or three gathered together in My Name that I am not in the midst of them." Thus the third century papyrus, in a minor way, vouches for the accuracy of these two fifth century MSS. The passage in the Oxyrhynchus Fragment and in the Matthean version seems to be a subtle identification of Jesus with the Rabbinical Shekinah (שְׁכִינָה), the bright cloud by which God made His Presence known on earth (cf. Exodus xvi. 10). For the identification of the Shekinah with the Incarnate Christ in the New Testament see such passages as Ephesians i. 17, Luke ii. 32, John xiv. 23, Colossians ii. 9, and perhaps there is a

hint of it in Acts vii. 2, ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης, "the God of Glory," since δόξα, "glory," is the usual Septuagint translation of כְּבוֹד, "splendour" or "brightness."

Oxyrhynchus Fragment v. contains a saying of which the three Synoptists give us versions. I place all four in parallel columns for purposes of comparison.

<i>Matthew</i> xiii. 57.	<i>Mark</i> vi. 4.	<i>Luke</i> iv. 24.	<i>Oxyrhynchus</i> <i>Saying.</i>
ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς	καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι	εἶπεν δὲ 'Αμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς	λέγει Ἰησοῦς
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι.	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ	προφήτης δεκτός ἔστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ.	οὐκ ἔστιν δεκτός προφήτης ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ.
Jesus said to them	And Jesus said to them	He said	Jesus saith
A prophet is not without honour except in his native land.	A prophet is not without honour except in his own native land	Verily I say unto you No prophet is accepted in his own native land	A prophet is not accepted in his own native land

It is easy to see that the Lucan version is the one which approximates most nearly to the Oxyrhynchus text. In investigating the Synoptic Problem I do not think that any hypothesis covers the facts so satisfactorily as what is known as the "Two-document hypothesis." Granted, as supplementary to it, a special Lucan source for the "Great Interpolation" (Luke ix. 51-xviii. 14), I am satisfied to accept this theory, and to believe that Matthew and Luke compiled their Gospels from two main sources. I might remark here that it is a tendency of modern critics to postulate additional sources, in spite of the fact that it is an excellent canon of literary criticism not to multiply sources beyond what is absolutely necessary. The two main sources of the First and Third Gospels may be said to be: 1. A Gospel almost, but not exactly, identical with our St. Mark; 2. A collection (now lost) sometimes incorrectly referred to as the "Logia," but usually connoted by the symbol Q. This collection consisted mainly of sayings and discourses, and included, perhaps, a certain amount of narrative matter. Now, I believe that the Oxyrhynchus papyrus leaf referred to above is a leaf from Q, the lost non-Markan source. I have always held that Luke reproduces Q in his Gospel with much closer verbal accuracy than does the author of the First Gospel in

his work. And if my supposition about the papyrus leaf is correct it seems to bear out such a theory.

There is yet one more Oxyrhynchus Saying which deserves mention, because there is a parallel to it in the First Gospel ; otherwise it is not of much importance. Fragment vii. is almost identical with " a city set on a hill cannot be hid " (St. Matt. v. 14).

Five other " Sayings " were discovered at Oxyrhynchus in 1903. To enter upon a detailed discussion of them would be productive of no good result. They have been edited and published. In spite of many ingenuities of reconstruction, I am not satisfied that the true text has yet been obtained. To fill in the lacunae is a most difficult task, and here, too, I deem discretion to be the better part of valour, and I reserve comment, at any rate for the present.

CONCLUSION.

I venture to hope that this little compilation of mine will be of use to others who, like myself, are endeavouring in a humble way to cast some light on the problems and exegesis of the New Testament. I have sought to marshal facts and results in an interesting way in the hope that others may be inspired to pursue researches further. A study of contemporary literature and thought is one of the best guides which we can have to a right understanding and a deep appreciation of the Inspired Word. It is the message of God to us men, a divine treasure in an earthen vessel. And I plead that in our studies and researches we shall not so concentrate all our powers of intellect upon the earthen vessel as to lose sight of or neglect the treasure in it. Rather let us pause sometimes so that the Divine rays which emanate from the Mind of the God of love and mercy may fall, as it were, across the written page, bathing it in a golden sunlight. Biblical criticism is not an end in itself. If it is indulged in merely as a species of mental and intellectual gymnastics, it will be of very little real value ; but if it be pursued as a means whereby we may come to a profounder knowledge of the Eternal, and if, as we discover new depths of meaning underlying the old familiar words, it makes our thoughts and beliefs, our hopes and our aspirations, less " of the earth, earthy," then it is indeed a study full of blessing, a pearl of great price.

As we press on the horizons of our knowledge will ever widen.

That, indeed, must be so from the very nature of our study. We ought to approach our Bibles and study them as a means whereby we may, by coming to a greater knowledge of God, receive blessing to our souls. We must make that our primary objective, and we can work up to it in no better way than by careful, deliberate, thoughtful study, critical and exegetical, of the language and text. Many auxiliary sciences afford great assistance, and it behoves the student to make himself acquainted with them, such as Philology, History Archaeology. It is the business of the student "to trace back the steps by which any ancient book has been transmitted to us, to find where it came from and who wrote it, to examine the occasion of its composition, and search out every link that connects it with the history of the ancient world and with the personal life of its author" (*The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, Lecture I., Robertson Smith).

From all such research and study two very real values accrue. I call the one spiritual and the other intellectual. Study of, and research work in connection with the Bible, done in the right spirit, should have the effect of widening the outlook of the student and increasing the sum total of his intellectual equipment, in proportion as it broadens and deepens his spiritual life. We need to take care that in our studies we do not, on the one hand, seek solely the intellectual benefit to the entire exclusion of the spiritual, and give to our own souls but a stone when they cry aloud for the bread of life. But we shall err also if, on the other hand, we seek solely the spiritual benefit, without allowing full scope to the intellect and judgment. We shall win but half the truth if we allow the God-given powers of intellect to become atrophied by disuse. To travel on a "via media" between the two extremes, or rather, to unite, the two impelling forces into one resultant should be the aim of every diligent student of the Holy Scriptures.

The value and usefulness of studying the Scriptures in the original cannot be over-estimated. Our translations rise in many places to heights of exquisite beauty, in others they have failed lamentably to catch the thoughts which were glowing in the minds of the inspired writers. Sometimes they reflect a sparkle of the original splendour, anon they miss a gleam from the jewel of many facets.

Our Authorised Version is monumental, its majestic and sonorous

English is beyond all praise. Its beautiful and stately measures have permeated the whole of our religious and devotional literature through and through, in every branch of literature its influence pulses and vibrates. Its familiar words are laden with the fragrance of sacred and tender memories. But we are compelled to admit that, as a translation, its defects are manifold and serious. The Revised Version has gained somewhat in accuracy, but at the expense of all those splendid qualities which have endeared the Authorised Version to the whole English-speaking world. And we may say that the gain has by no means compensated for the loss.

What a relief it is to turn to the originals. If there is a beauty or a gleam of glory in the translations, it is a hundred-fold greater in the original, where the pages are rippling and sparkling with undreamed-of loveliness and magnificence. Some passages ring out with the trumpet note of the warrior, inspiring by the very lilt of the words, the soldiers of Jesus Christ to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. Other passages come to the sad, the weary, and the sin-stained souls of the children of men, like balmy breezes across a summer sea to a parched and dry land where no water is; and here, again, the very harmonies of the words tell of pardon and of peace. When "these hearts of ours are hot and restless," when our lives are brimming over with cares, and when sore anxiety respecting some of the "changes and chances of this mortal life" presses heavily, the innate sturdiness of some of the Hebrew writers, or the gently sympathetic delicacy of some of the Greek phrases are a very inspiration of hope and courage, of peace and rest. They are the lights of home shining out clear and strong over the storm-tossed waves of this troublesome world.

But if such study be to the laity a matter of choice, often governed by circumstances; to the priesthood of the Church it is a sacred duty. Every priest, at his ordination, has a charge laid upon him to wax riper and stronger in his ministry by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures. And at that ordination he makes a solemn vow and promise that, by God's help, he will endeavour to be diligent in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same. But how many are there who are not thus diligent, who seldom or never study any part at all of the originals from the day of their ordination to the priest-

hood to the end of their lives, and who are thus false to their ordination vows! Not all are acquainted with the Hebrew tongue, but all have, or are presumed to have, some knowledge of the Greek; and it is the sacred duty of every priest of God's Church to devote, at the minimum, a brief time every day to a critical and exegetical study of some portion of the Greek Testament. Not all have the special bent of intellect which makes research work a pure joy to many, and a fascinating pursuit, but it is within the power of all to read and digest what other men have written as a result of their investigations and researches.

I commend to my readers the words of the good Bishop Jewel about the Bible: "The Word of God is the water of life. The more ye lave it forth, the fresher it runneth. It is the fire of God's glory; the more ye blow it, the clearer it burneth. It is the corn of the Lord's field; the better you grind it, the more it yieldeth. It is the bread of heaven; the more it is broken and given forth, the more it remaineth. It is the sword of the Spirit; the more it is scoured, the brighter it shineth."

And, in conclusion, I commend also the words of Archbishop Sandys on the same subject: "This most precious jewel is to be preferred before all treasure. If thou be hungry, it is meat to satisfy thee. If thou be thirsty, it is drink to refresh thee. If thou be sick, it is a present remedy. If thou be weak, it is a staff to lean upon. If thine enemy assault thee, it is a sword to fight withal. If thou be in darkness, it is a lantern to guide thy feet. If thou be doubtful of the way, it is a bright, shining star to direct thee. If thou be in displeasure with God, it is a message of reconciliation. If thou study to save thy soul, have the Word ingrafted, for that is able to do it. It is the Word of life. Whoso loveth salvation, will love this Word—love to read it, love to hear it; and such as will neither read nor hear it, Christ saith plainly, 'they are not of God.' For the spouse gladly heareth the voice of the bridegroom. 'My sheep hear My voice,' saith the Prince of Pastors."

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