

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

occupy the ground which they may be said to cover. As Professor Ward ¹ says, "The notion of building up a metaphysic without presuppositions, one that shall start from nothing and explain all, is futile." It may be argued without much fear of contradiction that our knowledge of the finite as finite involves presuppositions which lead us up from Nature to God. But this is only one way by which we can reach the goal, and it is not always the first or the best. Feeling and experience as well as cognition have their part to play, and by the due balance and co-operation of them all do we attain the desired end. In the universality, persistence and progress of religion on the one hand, and in the spiritual interpretation of man and of the Universe on the other, do we find our justification of the faith that is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

W. B. SELBIE.

NOTE ON THE ELEPHANTINÉ PAPYRI.

I HAVE to thank both Mrs. Lewis and Mr. Cook for the courteous tone of their contributions to this discussion. The suggestion that the Elephantinê papyri are forgeries is scarcely paradoxical, since Mr. Belleli impugned the authenticity of the Sayce-Cowley documents shortly after their appearance, and was encouragingly reviewed in the *Literarisches Zentralblatt*.

My objection to Papyrus 8 is not that its language is mixed, but that it is mixed with modern languages, chiefly *modern Persian*, a dialect the beginnings of which come well within the Christian era. I will justify this statement, since Mr. Cook appears to have misunderstood its bearing.

1. In line 17 occur the words *hinduwānah zarnikh*

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 225.

(להנרונה זרניך), meaning "a pumpkin" or "hard round lump" of "arsenic." The word *hinduwānah* bears no mark of antiquity. But *zarnīkh* is also highly suspicious. I may refer to the *Grundriss der eranischen Philologie*, I. ii. 53. A very good authority, G. Meyer, maintains the old view that *zarnīkh* is borrowed from the Greek ἀρσενικόν, first found in Aristotle; and the fact that with the alchemists arsenic (in accordance with its Greek name) means the male element opposed to the female, mercury, seems to make this certain (cf. Duval, *La Chimie au Moyen Age*, II. p. v.). And indeed the chemical value of "male," i.e. *fiery*, was known to Hippocrates, who did not yet know the substance. The view that the genuine Persian forms are *zarnī* and *zarneh* is against the tradition, which makes *zarnīkh* earlier; and since both these words mean "not gold," whereas *zar-nīk* sounded like "good gold," they are evidence that *zarnīkh* was felt to be a foreign word. Since then *arsenic* acquired its association with a particular substance in the fourth century B.C. in Greece, the Greek name cannot have been borrowed before that date. Nor is there any evidence of the existence of a Persian word of this form for this substance before Moslem times.

2. In line 10 there occurs the phrase עקי ארו ואר. *Vār* is a modern Persian termination corresponding with the English "ful" or "like." So *umed-vār* "hopeful," *dharra-vār* "atomlike," etc. The phrase ארו ואר, then, means either "cedarlike," if it be hybrid, or "valuable" or "pine-like," if both elements be Persian. The construction whereby the substantive is annexed to the adjective is that of modern Persian also. But whereas *arz-vār* or *erez-vār* would occasion no surprise in the Persian of to-day, it is unthinkable in the Persian of the fifth century B.C.

3. In line 6 occurs the phrase ולעבק אופשרה יתעבר, meaning "and let a fair copy be made." The word used for "copy"

is the modern Persian *afshurah* (with Judæo-Persian spelling), meaning literally "a squeeze." The word preceding it is the Greek *λευκ*, employed in modern Persian in the form *luqs*, faintly disguised. But the phrase "a white squeeze" for a fair copy implies *acquaintance with the art of printing*; and the spelling of *levq* follows Judæo-German orthography.

4. In line 12 occurs the phrase פחטמוני לפערער חד לאמין תרין, meaning "supports for the side, one at every two cubits." Here *pakhtmōnī* is the Persian *pushīmān*, "prop, support," faintly disguised; whereas the wholly impossible פערער appears to be the Persian *parrah*, "side," following a Judæo-German spelling.

It is by no means necessary to follow the ingenious authors of this document into all their devices; it is apparently due to the co-operation of two gentlemen, one of them educated in Germany, who has attended Oriental courses, the other a native of Persia, and a calligrapher by profession.

Mrs. Lewis has furnished a valuable piece of information by her assertion that ancient papyrus of Egyptian fabrication is still to be had. Doubtless the skilful forger would prefer this to the Syracusan product.

The papyrus wherein these phrases occur is (to my mind) so clearly a fabrication of the last few years that its society is highly compromising for documents which are less obviously faked. For any one who had genuine Aramaic papyri at his disposal would have no reason for putting such a document among them; whereas one who was producing a set of fabrications might well indulge in a *mauvaise plaisanterie* of the kind.

Mr. Belleli is pursuing his investigations independently of mine, and, I understand, has arrived at the same conclusion on quite different grounds. I am prepared to rest my case on the words collected in this note, and doubt whether

accumulation of evidence in such a matter strengthens the argument. In the classical exposure of a fabrication, Bentley's *Dissertation on the Letters of Phalaris*, the first observation clenches the matter ; Phalaris is shown to refer to *Phintia*, which was founded long after his time, and further evidence is not required ; Bentley, however, accumulates so much, and falls into so many errors during the process, that his reader is less convinced at the end than at the beginning. There is a saying of Bentley's well worth remembering in connexion with such investigations, viz. that to refute an error is a much lengthier and more serious operation than to commit one. The amount of acquaintance with Aramaic, Persian and Armenian necessary for the composition of papyrus 8 is not very considerable ; but when one wishes to demonstrate that the phrase *hinduwānah zarnākh* must belong to a post-Christian century, as has been seen, Eranian philology and the history of alchemy are indispensable, and even after their employment the adversary has merely to say that he does not understand Persian, and one's labour is rendered futile.

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.

THE TEACHING OF PAUL IN TERMS OF THE PRESENT DAY.

XII. IS THERE A LIMIT TO SALVATION ?

Now why are some called and not others ? Is this just or right ? And what has Paul to say about those who are not foreordained and called ? They are many. What is their fate ? What is their place and part in the purpose of God ?

The Apostle's purpose does not lead him to answer this question, although it is one which must justifiably and