

An accomplished scholar has been defined as "one who knows a little of everything, and everything of something." We Baptist tutors are, at all events, mercifully preserved from being lacking in the former qualification. Thanks to our system we are compelled to take a fairly wide survey of the field of human knowledge, and are thus preserved from the danger of burrowing so deeply in any one subject as to lose our eyesight for everything else. And yet, in order to come within sight of the possibility of attaining to the second of the above-named qualifications,—to know everything about some one subject,—there is not one of us who would not gladly hail some approach to the American subdivision of labour.

A sevenfold division of a purely theological curriculum is such an immense contrast to our present system as almost to dazzle the vision of the tutor of a British Baptist College. The American colleges, however, are on a scale so vastly larger than ours, that comparisons are perhaps a little misleading. And yet there is a widespread conviction amongst us that no college is efficiently manned which has less than *three* tutors, who devote all their time to the work sketched so admirably in the conspectus given by Principal Davies at the opening of his paper. This is a *reasonable* object of endeavour, and nothing less ought to satisfy the friends of education in the Baptist Churches of Great Britain.

## How Paul Preached the Gospel in Corinth.

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THE introduction of the gospel into Corinth is somewhat minutely described both in the "Acts" and in St. Paul's Epistles. It is singular, therefore, that the exact course of events has not been traced, though a careful examination of the accounts will reveal some points of interest, including "undesigned coincidences," which even Paley passed over without mention.

We are told that when Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica they visited the synagogue: "As his custom was, he went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer."<sup>1</sup> Then it is added, "that this Jesus, whom," said he, "I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." Here are two distinct propositions: first, that the Christ should suffer; second, that Jesus is the Christ.

The first proposition would come upon his Jewish hearers as a startling novelty. All were expecting a Messiah, but not one who should "suffer."<sup>2</sup> They looked for a great King, a "Mighty Conqueror," who should rule the nations with a rod of iron; and not for a "Man of Sorrows." Yet the prophets had spoken of "the

servant of Jehovah," who should be "wounded for our transgressions;" and Paul's hearers were not unwilling to listen to a discourse on a theme so novel, since it threw light on these dark sayings. Three Sabbaths were not too many for the discussion of an interpretation which, though strange, was not without some justification. So far the apostle could discourse without opposition.

But when he came to declare "this Jesus" of Nazareth,—a place of which no prophet had spoken,—who had been crucified under Pontius Pilate, the representative of Roman oppression, few could receive the saying. "Some of them believed;" but, as in other cases, the faith spread more rapidly among the Hellenists than among the pure Jews, and "of the chief women not a few." To the latter the story of the Divine Sufferer did not appeal in vain. But most of "the Jews believed not." The Cross was an insuperable stumbling-block: they "set all the city on an uproar," and banished the apostles.

At Berea the members of the synagogue proved to be of a better class. They appear to have been persons of higher education. Among them, also, were Hellenistic women "of honourable estate." These, probably, had given a tone of cultivation to the whole community; and they candidly searched the Scriptures to discover what foundation the new doctrine had. In consequence,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Stanton (*Jewish and Christian Messiah*, p. 122) and Bishop Westcott (*Gosp. of John*) hold that the Jews A.C. did not expect a suffering Messiah.

"many believed;" but the angry Jews from Thessalonica came thither, and Paul was forced to depart.

We pass over the memorable visit to Athens, whither Paul was next conducted. His course was being directed to Corinth, the largest city of Greece. Within its precincts people of all religions freely worshipped. The Jewish community included both rich and poor, educated and illiterate. It was not likely that many "noble" or "wise after the flesh" would accept Paul's theory. His work was to prosper most among the inferior class, although we find that Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and Erastus, the steward of the city, and Gaius, in whose house the disciples of Paul met ("the host of one and of the whole church"), became converts.

On his arrival (A.D. 52) he met with Aquila the Jew, and his wife Priscilla, lately come from Rome. It is not certain that they were already Christians; but as Paul had come to Corinth without companions, and, most likely, with slender funds, he found it necessary to join himself to them, for they, being tent-makers, were of his trade. Silas and Timothy had been left at Berea. Later, Timothy had gone back to Thessalonica to comfort the newborn church there; for it had been under persecution as well as the apostles. In Corinth there was, as yet, no Agape to welcome the messenger of Christ, and Paul entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day a lowly and unrecognised worshipper.

His mission, however, was not to be concealed. The synagogue contained men of scholarly repute, and eloquent speakers, with whose command of polished Greek he could not hope to vie. His ruder speech, stamped in the mint of a distant province in Asia, would soon betray itself. But there was a "woe unto" him if he did not preach the gospel. With many fears he had to begin, and "was reasoning (*διελέγετο*; as at Thessalonica) in the synagogue every Sabbath day, and was persuading Jews and Greeks."

The work was begun. As at Thessalonica, it seems to be clear, he was content at first to state the general propositions that the Christ should come, and that He should suffer for men. To these declarations his Corinthian audience would attend with critical earnestness. The first of them was allowed by Jews everywhere. The second involved a speculation which was, at least, highly curious and interesting. But he had not come with the "excellency of speech or of wisdom, pro-

claiming the mystery of God." He had no ambition to furnish the Rabbis with a novel interpretation, the philosopher with a new intellectual system, or the multitude with a fresh type of rhetoric. Yet he was comparatively safe so long as he confined himself to generalities, and the synagogue was filled with growing congregations to listen to his zealous arguments.

The position was full of critical peril. He was alone,—his brethren still absent,—before one of the most influential Jewish communities on earth; and he knew that the testimony of the Crucified would be no sooner heard than rejected with derision and cursing. Hitherto, as it seems to us, he had not mentioned the name of Jesus: he did not yet add that "this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the Christ."<sup>1</sup> He told the church afterwards, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." There would be the strongest temptation to walk in craftiness, and to handle the word of God deceitfully, rather than "by the manifestation of the truth," to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God (2 Cor. iv. 3). So far, however, it was but common prudence to introduce his doctrine gradually to unprepared minds. Scripture argument was the best *pædagogic* which he could employ to insinuate the new ideas among those who were full of prejudice against them. But how long was this state of things to continue? Before coming to Corinth he had not made any fixed resolution about anything, except that he would make known Jesus as the Christ, and Him crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2).

The crisis was brought about by the apparition of Silas and Timothy. When they "came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is Christ."<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> A reading of the Western type (D. and Vulg.: *interponens nomen Domine Jesu*) shows how Paul's method has been misunderstood.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xviii. 5. The various readings and the contradictory comments on this passage show that it has not been understood. Rec. and A.V. accepted—to relieve the difficulty—"pressed in spirit." The Rev. Vers. and best MSS. have "constrained by the word." Either reading will suit our interpretation. Ewald, Reuss, Conybeare and Howson, and Farrar, with most interpreters, hold that the expression means that Paul now laboured with increased zeal. Reuss and Wordsworth suggest that his two companions brought him financial help, and relieved him from the need of labour. Meyer at first held for "increased activity," but found reason to doubt if this was the meaning. He does not, however, advance the explanation now given.

great message could be no longer withheld. To discourse like a Rabbi, full of patristic lore, or, like a follower of John the Baptist, to preach alone "repentance toward God," would never do now that his subordinates, Silas and Timothy, had arrived. If he attempted to temporise, his fellow-evangelists would be the first to detect it. They would best know what he kept back, and his reasons for silence. They would never face persecution again if his courage or fidelity failed him now.

The results justified his former reticence. It is evident that the crowning topic of his gospel was only now disclosed, for, when he openly testified that "this Jesus" was the Christ whom the prophets foretold should suffer, the members of the synagogue "opposed themselves and blasphemed." The very men who had respectfully listened while he discoursed about the coming Messiah, who should bear the sin of His people, were now furious against him. It would be a mistake to suppose that these pious Jews would "blaspheme," in the ordinary sense of that word; or that it means merely "to revile," or to use abusive language. Theirs was the "blasphemy against the Son of Man."<sup>1</sup> They said, "Jesus—Anathema."<sup>2</sup> Paul himself, even when living after the strictest sect of his religion, was guilty of this sin.<sup>3</sup> He called Jesus an impostor, and denied the Holy One of Israel. Now, by a striking retribution, he becomes "accursed" from his brethren, and is compelled to leave the synagogue. He "shook out his raiment, and said unto them, 'Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.'"

There is evidence that the synagogues were, at the time of our Lord and the apostles, frequently occupied with speculations and discussions respecting the expected Messiah. The New Testament cannot be understood if it is not remembered that some divided between Jesus and Christ. They allowed, like Nicodemus, that Jesus was "a teacher come from God," and that He had an *anointing* or Christ-power upon Him, but refused to regard Him as the very Christ of God. "These things are written," says the Fourth Gospel, "that ye may believe that Jesus *is* the Christ." We have an example of that lower view of the Saviour in Apollos, who came to Corinth after Paul. He

had shared in the general religious awakening of the time. Vibrations from the ministry of the Baptist, and of our Lord and His apostles, had reached many lands. Some had received the baptism of repentance like Apollos, and "certain disciples" at Ephesus mentioned in Acts xix. 1. Apollos seems to have learned portions of the oral gospel, which had been rehearsed far and wide, for he was able to "teach carefully the things concerning Jesus," though as yet he was "knowing only the baptism of John." We may suppose that so far he had only been able to speak of Jesus as a man endowed with the Holy Spirit, "who went about doing good." By Aquila and Priscilla he was taught "the way of God more perfectly." He learned that Jesus was the Son of God, who was "born of a woman, born under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." With this illumination he went from Ephesus to Corinth, where he "mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." His learning and eloquence gave wonderful effect to his exhibition of the gospel; and where Paul had "planted," he "watered" the fresh growth of Christian faith and love.

There is a subsequent reference to the circumstances of the introduction of the gospel into Corinth, which must not be overlooked, viz. that in 2 Cor. i. 17-22. As it stands, the allusion to Silvanus and Timothy has been somewhat perplexing to commentators, but the solution now given will, we think, help us to understand it.

Paul says (ver. 17) of his intended journey by Macedonia: "When I therefore was thus minded, did I show levity (fickleness, R.V.)?" This leads to the question, Did he ever show uncertainty or indecision? The answer seems to be given in what follows: "Our word toward you is not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea." Some would be ready with the reproach that before the arrival of his fellow-evangelists he had preached one gospel, and when they came he advanced another. But his reply is that his gospel was that which he and Silvanus and Timothy proclaimed, and that became (*γέγονεν*) the word which "in him is yea." If this is the right interpretation of this passage, it presents a very striking coincidence with the narrative in the "Acts."

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 31, 32; cf. James ii. 7; 1 Tim. i. 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 11.

We do not suppose that Paul afterwards found any occasion, even for a time, to veil his gospel, as he had prudently done at Corinth at first. The "vail was now taken away" for ever, and, wherever he went, every one knew what his real doctrine was. It was from Corinth that he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, in which he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, unto every one that believeth." But his fidelity to his great charge involved him

in the loss of all things earthly. The Jew could believe that the Christ should be called to suffer, but not that He should descend to a death on the Cross. He would admit that Jesus was a prophet or teacher sent from God, but not that the "Son of God" had been the victim of crucifixion. But this was the "gospel" which Paul preached at Corinth, and Ephesus, and Rome, until, like his Lord, he bowed his head in a malefactor's death.

## The Old Testament in the light of the Literature of Assyria and Babylonia.

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### GENESIS i. 24.

AND God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creatures, etc.

A fragment, supposed to belong to the Semitic account of the creation, tells of this in the following way:—

1. "When the gods in their assembly made [living things?],
2. They made . . . powerful creatures,
3. They caused the living creation to go forth . . .
4. The beast of the plain, the animal of the plain, and the communities [of the plain?] . . .
5. . . for the living creation . . .
6. . . they [gave] the (beast of the plain) and the communities of the town,
7. . . living things, the whole of creation."

(Portions of seven more lines follow this.)

The corresponding part of the *non-Semitic* version of the creation story differs from the above:—

22. "He made the beasts of the field and the living creatures of the desert . . .
28. Oxen, the young of the steer, the humped cow and her calf, the sheep of the fold,
29. Meadows and forests also,
30. The goat and the gazelle brought forth to him (?)."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hommel translates "were produced (?) with" (sich ein (?) mit ihm).—(*Deutsche Ra*  
The text here, however, is probably

Of these two texts, that in Semitic Babylonian (which is, unfortunately, much mutilated) was probably the nearer to the biblical account. The non-Semitic version mixes up the creation of plants with that of the animals, which latter are mentioned in a special, and not in a general way (like the Semitic version and that of Genesis). They nevertheless have some points in common, such as the phrase *bul sêri*, "beast of the plain," or "field," *šiknat napīšti* and *šikin napīšti*, "living creation" (lit.: "institution of life")—the former corresponding with the "cattle" (בְּהֵמָה) and the latter with the "living creature" (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה) of the Bible. The very interesting word *nammaššū*, which I have translated as "community," and which occurs in lines 4 and 6 of the Semitic version, and in line 5 of the non-Semitic one, will be considered when treating of the creation of man (Gen. i. 26, etc.).

### GENESIS i. 25.

And God saw that it was good.

A phrase corresponding to a certain extent with this occurs in the non-Semitic story of the creation, in line 24, where, after describing the creation of mankind, the animals, and the Tigris and Euphrates, the text has the words: *Mu-neneā namdu*—*inā*, which is translated in Assyrian

"and it came well he  
f. also Gen.