

REMARKABLE READINGS IN THE EPISTLES
FOUND IN THE
PALESTINIAN SYRIAC LECTIONARY.

IN 1897, Mrs. Lewis published the above Lectionary, with 'critical notes' by Dr. Nestle, and a Glossary by Mrs. Gibson. It contains lessons from the Pentateuch, Job, Proverbs, Prophets, Acts and Epistles. As to its dialect, it belongs to what Nöldeke, Dalman and others have called Christian-Palestinian Aramaic; and it is indicated in critical editions of the New Testament as Syr-jer or Syr^{hr}, i. e. Jerusalem Syriac. This dialect is represented in the following works, in addition to the Lectionary now before us:—(1) *Fragments* edited in Land's *Anecdota Syriaca*, vol. iv. (2) *The Lectionary of the Gospels*, first edited by Count Miniscalchi-Erizzo in 1861 and then by Lagarde in 1892 from a unique imperfect MS. In 1899 it was re-edited by Mrs. Lewis, together with two other MSS, which she had had the good fortune to discover, and which were rather more complete—the text of the three MSS being exhibited in parallel columns. (3) *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, edited by Gwilliam, Burkitt, and Stenning. (4) *The Liturgy of the Nile*, edited by the Rev. George Margoliouth. For a complete Bibliography, the reader is referred to a paper by Mr. F. C. Burkitt in the *JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* vol. ii 174 ff. In that paper Mr. Burkitt contends that the designation *Jerusalem Lectionary*, as applied to the Lectionary of the Gospels, is a misnomer, inasmuch as notes at the end of the MS indicate, according to his interpretation of them, that the MS was written in or near Antioch. It was eventually carried off to Egypt by Bibars the Mamluk Sultan, in the thirteenth century (*J. T. S.* ii 183).

There is no clue in the *Lectionary of the Prophets and Epistles* as to the locality in which it was written or used; but there are one or two indications which rather incline us to look to Egypt as the birthplace of the work. The first is, that the 'Lesson' containing Genesis ii agrees almost verbatim with that found in the *Liturgy of the Nile*, as published by Margoliouth: and the other is, that there are numerous coincidences between the Lectionary and the Bohairic version. This version was used in Lower Egypt, where the religious services to pray for the rising of the Nile were also held. I have computed that in the case of disputed readings, such as are quoted in critical editions of the N. T., the Lectionary agrees with the Bohairic four times as often as it disagrees; and far more frequently than it agrees with any other MS or Version. The Lectionary agrees with the Bohairic both when it is in harmony with the first-class Greek MSS, and when it dissents from them. I venture

to think that the evidence which will be here adduced demonstrates a historical connexion between the Lectionary and the Version.

What is chiefly remarkable, however, in this Lectionary is that it contains scores of readings not found anywhere else. It has a closer resemblance to a Targum than any other N. T. MS has. The translator often felt called upon to assume the function of exegete, and not only so, he often deliberately alters the text, so as to make it express his own theological views. Everywhere, there are abundant indications of strong theological bias, so that the chief interest of the Lectionary is as a study in Historical Theology.

A. *Disputed readings in which the Lectionary agrees with the Bohairic, and also with the best Greek MSS.*

- Rom. iii 22 'Unto all . . . those who believe [omitting "and upon all"].'
 v 1 'Let us have peace from with God.'
 v 2 'In whom we have an entrance *by faith*.'
 ix 32 'They stumbled [om. "for"].'
 ix 33 'He that believeth on Him [om. $\pi\alpha\varsigma$].'
 x 1 'My wish . . . is *on their behalf*.'
 1 Cor. i 23 'Jews ask for *signs*.'
 xi 24 'This is my body [om. "Take, eat"].'
 2 Cor. v 17 'Behold now *they* have become new.'
 Gal. vi 15 'For neither *is* circumcision anything.'
 Eph. iii 14 'I bow my knees unto *the Father*.'
 iii 21 'Glory in the Church *and* in Christ Jesus.'
 Col. i 12 'Giving thanks to the Father [om. "God and"].'
 ii 11 'In stripping off . . . the flesh in the body [om. "sins"].'
 Heb. ii 14 'Partakers of blood and flesh (order).'
 ix 13 'The blood of goats and bulls (order).'
 1 Tim. iii 16 '*He who* was manifested in flesh.'

B. *Readings in which the Lectionary agrees with the Bohairic, in cases where it is not generally supported by the best Greek MSS.*

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| Rom. v 6 | 'For if Christ when we were weak, <i>still</i> &c.' | Boh. only |
| vi 5 | 'In the likeness of <i>His</i> resurrection.' | F Syr. Boh. |
| vi 11 | 'Alive unto God in <i>the Lord</i> Jesus Christ.' | κ C " |
| viii 2 | 'Hath made <i>us</i> free.' | Aeth. Arab. " |
| viii 11 | 'Raised up <i>Jesus</i> Christ.' | C Vg " |
| x 5 | 'The man that doeth <i>it</i> shall live by it.' | D ⁹ lat " |
| x 8 | 'But what doth <i>the Scripture</i> say.' | D F G Vg " |
| x 9 | 'Confess that Jesus <i>is</i> Lord.' | Hil Aug. " |
| Eph. i 11 | 'By the appointment of <i>God</i> who works.' | D F " |
| i 20 | 'And made <i>Him</i> ($\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\nu$) sit down.' | κ A " |

Col. ii 13 'Who forgave us all <i>our</i> trespasses.'	D Syr. Boh.
Heb. ix 14 'Who by the <i>Holy</i> Spirit offered Himself.'	D ¹ N „
x 32 'Remember <i>your</i> former days.'	N ¹ 17 „

I wish now to bring forward from our Lectionary, certain readings of a *theological* character, which are either unique, or are very rare indeed, in extant MSS and Versions. Some are intentional alterations: others may yet be found in MSS or Versions not yet collated or imperfectly reported in critical editions of the Greek Testament.

C. *Unique or rare readings as to God the Father.*

There is an evident tendency in the Lectionary to emphasize the distinction between the relation which God, as Father, sustains to the believer, and that which He sustains to Jesus Christ: after the manner of John xx 17 'I ascend unto *My* Father, and *your* Father'. This is strongly marked in Heb. ii 11 'He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all as *it were* from One'. The translator, or editor, here evidently demurs to a statement which might seem to make Christ's *descent from* the Father the same as that of believers. The following passages are in the same direction:—

Rom. vi 4 'Raised . . . by the glory of *His* Father.'

Phil. ii 11 'To the glory of God *His* Father.'

Gal. iv 6 'Crying, Abba, *our* Father.'

Heb. i 2 'Hath spoken to us in *His* Son.'

These four are also found in the Peshitta, but that does not account for their occurrence here. There is a connexion between the Lectionary and the Peshitta, but it is one of antipathy. We are disposed to believe that the translator was familiar with the Peshitta, because we think that otherwise he could scarcely have so systematically evaded its readings.

Other theological readings are:—

Gal. iv 7 'If a son, then an heir [om. *θεοῦ*] through *Christ*.'

1 Cor. i 24 'Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom *of the Father*.'

Heb. i 3 'The effulgence of the glory *of the Father*.'

D. *Christological readings.*

Even a cursory glance at the contents of the Lectionary shews that whoever selected the Lessons was anxious that the congregation should be familiar with the most important theological passages in the Bible. All the great Christological passages in the N. T. are here—four of them twice over; and the choice of readings from the O. T. is evidently guided by a desire to give prominence to Messianic prophecies. The O. T. passages are a translation from the LXX, but it is interesting to note that in Micah v 2 the reading is:—'And thou Bethlehem, house of

Ephratah, and *not* little among the leaders of Judah, for from thee shall go forth for me a *leader*, who shall be archon also in Israel'—thus assimilating the passage to Matt. ii 6.

The Christological passages of the N. T. contain so many points of interest that it may be well to give them entire.

Phil. ii 6-11 'He who was also [om. "in"] the likeness of God, and did not think it robbery *for Him* that he was equal to God : but emptied Himself and took the likeness of a slave, and in the likeness of men *was also found* : and in form He was found as a man, and He humbled Himself, and was made obedient as far as to death ; the death, moreover, of the cross' [θάνατον δὲ τοῦ σταυροῦ = κ].

Col. i 12-20 'Giving thanks unto *the Father*, who made *you* meet for the portion, which is the allotment of the saints in Light. Who delivered *you* from the domination of darkness, and led (you) through into the kingdom of the Son, Who is *in* His love. In whom we have Redemption *and* the forgiveness of our sins. Who is the image of God who is not seen : the firstborn of every creature. In whom the whole was created : what is in heaven and what is on earth : what is seen and what is not seen ; whether thrones or lordships or headships or dominions, all was created by-virtue-of Him [om. "and for Him"]. And He is first, in comparison with all, and in Him the whole stands. And He is the head of *all* the Church [om. "his body"]. He who is the beginning, the firstborn from among (רִבּוֹן) the dead, in order that He may be first in everything, *in whom* all the fullness dwells [om. εὐδόκησεν]. And by-virtue-of Him(self), He made-acceptable all things unto Him, and made peace through the blood of His cross [om. the second δι' αὐτοῦ] : whether what is on earth or what is in the heavens.'

Heb. i 1-4 'In the last of these days (God) hath spoken to us in *His* Son [=Pesh] whom He appointed heir over all things, by-virtue-of whom also He made the world ; who was the effulgence of the glory of *the Father*, who is *at the right hand of God* [a bold paraphrase for "the impress of His substance"] and providing-for all things by the word of His power. And He made [om. "through Himself"] the purification of *our* [=Pesh] sins, and He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the Heights.'

Other interesting readings as to the Person of Christ are :—

Heb. ii 13 The omission of the words : 'I will put my trust in Him'. This, if intentional, implies an ultra-orthodox conception of the Deity of Christ.

Heb. i 8 'Thy throne (is) the God of the ages. Amen.' This was very like the rendering of Grotius (see Alford *in loco*) and was adopted by some Socinians, quite in ignorance of our Lectionary. By the

author of the Lectionary it was doubtless interpreted in the sense of John i 18 'the Son who is *in the bosom* of the Father'.

Rom. iii 25 'Whom God pre-appointed, a-means-of-acceptance, by faith in the blood of *himself*.' This has the support of B, who gives *ἐαυτοῦ* for *αὐτοῦ*; and of Origen, who gives 'in sanguine ipsius'. The preference for this reading in our Lexicon possibly indicates a Monophysite tendency. Men of these views would be very likely to catch at the expression 'the blood of God'.

Heb. ii 18 'He suffered *and* was tempted.'

Heb. ii 14 'Because the children participated in blood and flesh: He also thus participated with them *in sufferings*.' The Greek MSS have '*in the same*'; except D¹, which reads '*in the same sufferings*'. It is interesting to note that D¹ gives a conflate reading of Greek MSS + Lectionary. This reading is anti-docetic.

Acts ii 36 'God hath appointed to be Lord and *Apostle* this Jesus whom ye crucified.' A probable reference to Heb. iii 1. The Greek reading is 'Lord *and Christ*' but the keen theological translator seems to have raised the objection that Jesus was 'Christ' *before* His ascension; and therefore judged 'Apostle' to be a more suitable reading.

E. Readings as to the Holy Spirit.

Rom. viii 11 'He that raised up Jesus Christ from among the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies *because of* the Spirit of God which dwelleth in you.' There is a well-known disputed reading in this verse between *διὰ τοῦ* and *διὰ τοῦ*, 'Because of His Spirit', or 'By means of His Spirit'. The Lectionary favours the former, which is found in BDFKL but is not adopted by the English Revisers. In dealing with the Macedonian heresy, which denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, the orthodox attached great value to *διὰ τοῦ* as expressing the agency of the Spirit. The Lectionary gives the reading which was the favourite of the Macedonians and still somewhat nullifies that by the addition of *καὶ ἁγίου*, 'because of the Spirit of God'. There is not a trace of heresy on *this* subject in the Lectionary but rather the opposite, and we can only conclude that at the time it was written the controversy as to *διὰ τοῦ* and *διὰ τοῦ* was forgotten. Our paraphrast has rather a habit of adding the word 'God' where the pronoun 'His' occurs in Greek, in order to remove all possible ambiguity.

Rom. xii 3 'Through the grace of God that was given me.'

Eph. i 11 'By the appointment of God who worketh, &c.'

Rom. i 4 'Who was made known as Son of God, *by* the power of the Spirit of holiness.'

Rom. v 5 'Because the love of God is poured into our hearts *by* the Holy Spirit.'

Heb. ix 14 'Christ who by the *Holy* Spirit offered Himself to God.'
So $\aleph D$. Other MSS reading 'the *eternal* Spirit'.

F. *Miscellaneous readings.*

- Rom. vi 8 'If we *are dying* with Christ we believe we *are living* with Him.'
- x 4 'God's end of the Law is Christ.'
- Eph. iii 20 'According to the power of *Him* that worketh in us.'
- Jas. i 5 'Let him ask of God who giveth everything to him *little by-little* and does not put to shame.'
- Tit. ii 12 'That in *fear* and righteousness and the love-of-God we may live in this world.'
- 1 Th. iv 14 'So also those who sleep (?) in Jesus Christ God will *raise and* bring them with Him.'
- iv 16 'With the *sound of the horn* of God.'
- 2 Tim. ii 10 'That they may receive salvation in Jesus Christ with His glory *which is from Heaven*.' R. V. 'with *eternal* glory', so all MSS and Versions. Ambrosiaster, however, has 'cum gloria caelesti'. We may here note that the text which stands at the head of Ambrosiaster's expositions agrees with our text more frequently than that of any other Church Father. I find no one else but Ambrosiaster, who, with the Lectionary, omits the second $\delta\iota'$ $\alpha\iota\rho\omega\upsilon$ in Col. i 20.

We will conclude this section by giving the account of the Lord's Supper as it is given in

1 Cor. xi 23 'For I received from the Lord what also I delivered to you, that our Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and He gave thanks, and brake it off, and said: This is My body [om. "Take, eat"] *which is for you* [om. "broken"]: this do ye for My memorial. And so likewise [om. "the cup"] after He had dined He said: This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do ye, whenever ye drink (it), for My memorial. Whenever ye eat *from* this bread *and* drink *from this* cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death until He come. Every one who eateth this bread or drinketh the cup of the Lord, when there is no meetness in him, he shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself and thus from the bread let him eat, and from the cup let him drink. For he who eats and drinks, and has no meetness, is eating and drinking a judgement to himself, for he does not appreciate ($\Delta\aleph\psi$) *His* body. Because of this, many among you are sickly and afflicted, and many sleep. For if we judged ourselves, *if it were not so* (i. e. if after self-

examination we found ourselves innocent) we should not be judged (by God's visitations). But being judged by the Lord, we are chastised, that we may not be condemned with the world.'

We come now to what is in some respects the most interesting part of our task. If the dialect is correctly designated Palestinian Syriac, we may infer that the Lectionary was meant for Jewish Christians. We know well that many of the Palestinian churches were soundly orthodox; and we have abundant indications of Nicene Christology in the paraphrastic modifications of the text of the Lectionary. But there are two points which stand out conspicuously in some phases of Judaistic Christianity in contrast with Paulinism. One is a disposition to absorb more or less of the tenets of Gnosticism, and the other is an antipathy to the Pauline doctrine of Justification by Faith only. Indications of both these tendencies reveal themselves in the work before us.

G. *Readings which imply a leaning to Gnosticism.*

The indications of sympathy with Gnosticism are not strong or numerous; and are found only in the undue *importance attached to knowledge*. The fundamental feature of Gnosticism was that it aspired to possess knowledge; and whatever value it attached to Christianity, over against Judaism, or Heathendom, was that it enabled men to *know* more of God. Christianity, to the Gnostic, is a system of knowledge, as well as a plan of salvation. We now adduce four readings which look in this direction:—

Rom. iii 23 'All have sinned and lack *the knowledge* of the glory of God.'

Heb. ii 16 'For not upon angels did he take hold, *that He might declare God*; but upon the seed of Abraham He took hold, *that He might declare (Him)*.' This verse seems to teach that the great purpose of the Incarnation was to make God known.

Eph. iii 19 'That ye may know *the knowledge* of the love of Christ.' (This is not a Hebraism. We have two distinct words for 'know'.)

Eph. iii 18 'What is the breadth and length and depth [om. "and height"].' (We include this, because Hippolytus records that the Valentinians omitted τὸ ὕψος in this verse.)

H. *Readings which attach great importance to Works, as the ground of Salvation.*

Our first passage is a remarkable one. It omits altogether the word '*not*,' and thus, of course, entirely alters the meaning of the text. We might regard this as a clerical error, if it were not that the paraphrast invariably shews himself restive, whenever faith is said to justify, and frequently inserts the word '*also*' when the doctrine of Justification by Faith is mentioned.

Rom. iv 4 'To him that worketh [om. "not "] believing on Him that justifieth the unrighteous, faith is reckoned to him for righteousness.' (The cursive 17 also omits $\mu\eta$ in this verse, but this is apparently the only MS or Version which does so, besides our Lectionary.)

Rom. iii 21 'Testimony was given concerning it by the Law and by the Prophets, the righteousness of God, which is *also* by faith on Jesus Christ, to all those who believe on Him.'

Rom. iii 26 'In order that He may be just and may justify *also* by faith on Jesus Christ.'

Rom. iii 28 'For we reckon that by faith a man is *also* justified apart from (his) deeds of law.'

Rom. iv 3 'Abraham believed God, it was *also* reckoned to him for righteousness.'

Rom. iv 9 'For we say that to Abraham, his faith *also* was reckoned for righteousness.'

Rom. iv 11 'He received the sign, circumcision, the seal of righteousness, *also* his faith, which he had in uncircumcision.'

Eph. ii 8 'By grace are ye saved, by-virtue-of faith: and this not from yourselves, *but from* the gift of God: not from *our* work lest man should boast: for we are His work, &c.'

Col. ii 12 'Ye were buried with Him *also* in Baptism, in which also ye rose with Him, by-the-influence-of Faith *and* of the operation of God.' The Greek gives 'faith *in* the operation of God'. There is the same objection shewn by the translator here, as in Romans, to ascribe saving efficacy to Faith only.

We will conclude by adducing a few passages which are not of special theological value, but are of interest in the indications they seem to give that the paraphrast or redactor was a Jew.

Heb. ix 12 'Entered into the house [so Pesh] of the Holy of Holies', R. V. 'the holy place'. The paraphrast wishes to be quite exact.

Rom. i 3 'Born of the seed *of the house* of David.'

Heb. i 12 'But Thou art *He*, and Thy years end not.'

Rom. xii 1 'Present your bodies a sacrifice, living and holy, acceptable to God, a service which is *orderly*.' We are reminded of the second Palestinian Targum to Gen. iv 8 where Abel says to Cain: 'Because my *service* was more *orderly* than thine, my offering was acceptable.'

Rom. xii 18 'If it be possible . . . be ye *sons of peace* towards all.'

James i 1 'To the twelve tribes *of Israel*.'

Acts i 12 'Which is a journey *of the caravans* on a Sabbath.'

The above lists by no means exhaust the changes introduced into the text of our Lectionary, but they give the most important. The

theological oddity of the readings would seem to have escaped the notice of the Editors, and the readings are given now to stimulate further research. We have not before us a work which, like the Sinaitic Syriac, can shed any light on the *origines* of the New Testament. The work is late, and is of interest to the student of Historical Theology more than to one of Textual Criticism. Can we locate it? Can we shew from other evidence the existence of a community holding the views here set forth? The evidence is slender, but provisionally we suggest that the version was made for the use of a settlement of Palestinian Christians in the Delta, from an ancient Greek text, which bore strong affinity to the neighbouring Bohairic Version, and that the community who used the Lectionary were Jews, who still retained some of the Theology of their fathers along with their Christianity.

J. T. MARSHALL.

THE SCRIBE OF THE LEICESTER CODEx.

WHILE examining some manuscripts at the University Library of Leiden in September last, I was fortunate enough to stumble upon one which reveals beyond a doubt, as I think, the identity of the scribe of the well-known *Codex Leicestrensis* (69 of the Gospels). Readers of this JOURNAL will hardly need to be reminded of the fact that Dr. J. Rendel Harris in his two books, *The Origin of the Leicester Codex* (1887), and *Further Researches into the History of the Ferrar-Group* (1900), has brought together, and given facsimiles of, a not inconsiderable group of books written by the scribe of the Leicester Codex. They are:—

1. A Psalter at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, no. 348 in Smith's Catalogue.
2. A Psalter at Trinity College, Cambridge, O. 3. 14.
3. An Aristotle in the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, C. I. 15.
4. A Plato in the same Library, C. IV. 2.

The Leiden MS which throws light on the writer of these is marked Voss. Graec. 56. It is a paper book with two leaves of vellum at the beginning. The verso of the second serves as a title-page, and of it a facsimile is given here. It offers a rough table of contents and a donatory inscription. I subjoin a copy in ordinary type:—