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## The Book of Exodus.

By HAROLD M. WIENER, M.A., LL.B.

A GOOD modern English commentary on Exodus has long been a desideratum ; and there are probably many who have anxiously waited for the appearance of such a volume. The first of the various works which have been understood to be in preparation has now appeared, but those who have waited will, I fear, have to wait yet longer, for much that we have needed will not be found in the volume<sup>1</sup> which Mr. McNeile has contributed to the Westminster Commentaries.

As the book calls for serious, and perhaps severe, treatment on its critical, historical, legal, and exegetical sides, I wish to begin by calling attention to the main purpose of Mr. McNeile's book. His interest, evidently, is in the main theological and homiletical. He is a theologian first and other things afterwards, and it must always be remembered that in any complete estimate of the book account must be taken of that wherein lies its writer's chief strength. Moreover, the nature of his devotion to theology and homiletics tends to warp Mr. McNeile's capacity to handle other topics. There is a time for everything, and the ascertainment of historical or literary facts should not be made subservient to the desire to point morals. An illustration will make my meaning clear. Exod. vi. 3—the revelation of the Tetragrammaton to Moses—is a verse of supreme critical importance ; but it is textually doubtful. For נִוְדַעְתִּי (“I was known”) the Septuagint appears to have read הוֹדַעְתִּי (“I made known”). Mr. McNeile notes this fact (though he appears to be ignorant of the support given to the Septuagint by other versions,<sup>2</sup> and a tenth-century Karaite MS., which originally had this text, but has been brought into conformity with the Massoretic tradition<sup>3</sup>), and apparently

<sup>1</sup> “The Book of Exodus,” with Introduction and Notes by A. H. McNeile, B.D. Methuen and Co.

<sup>2</sup> See Kittel, “Biblia Hebraica,” *ad loc.*

<sup>3</sup> R. Hoernig, Karaite MSS., in the British Museum, p. 17.

prefers this reading to that of the Massoretic text ; but he does not go further into the matter. Instead, he writes : " A signal instance of the gradual way in which God leads His people into a fuller understanding of His word is afforded by the fact that it is only in the last 150 years that the attention of students has been arrested by these verses," and proceeds to speak of the documentary theory. It would have been more to the point if he had proceeded to add that the readings of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Samaritan, in the earlier portions of the Pentateuch, by no means agree with those of the Massoretic text as regards the appellations of the Deity, so that if the principle of textual criticism be once conceded, the ground is largely cut away from under the feet of the documentary theorists. There is, of course, nothing more praiseworthy than a proper homiletical treatment of the Bible ; but in this, as in other fields, so much depends on the method adopted. It is conceived that the homiletical interest is likely to prove a snare where it leads a man to preach on the basis of incomplete or insufficiently ascertained facts.

A second extenuating circumstance may be found in the enormous range of topics embraced in Exodus. There is much to be said for the view that the next large commentary on the book ought to be the work, not of an individual, but of a syndicate of scholars. It would be unreasonable to expect any man to deal adequately with all the varying interests that claim consideration in a commentary on the Pentateuch. To some extent Mr. McNeile has recognized this fact. Thus, in his discussion of the relation of Hammurabi and the laws of Exodus, he makes no attempt to deal with the literature or to express any independent views. He simply summarizes the article by Mr. C. H. W. Johns in the extra volume of Hastings' " Dictionary of the Bible." If it be asked what independent acquaintance Mr. McNeile has with the Hammurabi literature, what his qualifications are for dealing with the subject, or what work he has devoted to it, the answer must in each case be " None." But he is perfectly honest about the matter, and the

course he has adopted is the second best that was open to him. A wiser alternative would have been to seek the aid of some lawyer in dealing with the question. Among the members of the Cambridge law faculty he could have found jurists whose learning and ability fit them for handling the topic, if only their interest could be attracted to it.

Yet, even when allowances have been made, the fact remains that the book is not merely unsatisfactory, but unnecessarily and gratuitously so, and for several different reasons.

Almost at the very beginning Mr. McNeile prints a list of "books useful for the study of Exodus." Some interesting information can be gleaned from its perusal. First, I note that while Dr. Kent's egregious volume on "Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents" finds a place in the list, Dr. Orr's "Problem of the Old Testament" and Van Hoonacker's important monographs are not noticed. In reading the introduction and commentary I failed to observe any references to either of these authors, so that it may perhaps be inferred that their work has not been utilized. Again, that Mr. McNeile, whose preface is dated Lent, 1908, should be unacquainted with the second edition of Benzinger's "Hebrew Archæology," which appeared before the end of 1907, is certainly unfortunate; but I should not have been prepared to attach much weight to this were it the only indication that he is not up to date. Unhappily, even when allowance is made for his unwillingness to read modern work on Pentateuchal criticism by those who do not accept the main Wellhausen theories, we are still left with evidence that our author is not fully abreast of the times. Thus Kittel's "Biblia Hebraica" is never mentioned, and from the notes on some of the passages where it might reasonably have been consulted, it is clear that Mr. McNeile has either not used the book, or else has not used it properly. I have already drawn attention to one point on Exod. vi. 3. Here is another on the same verse. On p. 40 Mr. McNeile is desirous of eliminating the word *Shaddai* (rendered "Almighty" in the Revised Version) from the text of Gen. xliii. 14, and points out that

the Septuagint has ὁ θεός μου. This shows that he does not know that in this very verse the Septuagint has θεὸς ὧν αὐτῶν, and that it uniformly follows this method of treating the word in Genesis and Exodus. Again, it is probable that we should have been spared the note on Exod. iii. 1, explaining that "the mountain of God" "denotes a mountain which was conceived to be God's habitual dwelling-place," and the assertion on p. cxiii of the Introduction that "the God of the Israelites had, before Moses' time, been conceived of as dwelling on the sacred mountain," if Mr. McNeile had noted that Codices A and B (*i.e.*, the Alexandrian and the Vatican),<sup>1</sup> omit the word "God."

The archæology, too, is not up to date. The higher critics are fond of protesting that archæology has not established anything which they were not prepared to concede, so that this is of some importance. In his note on "four hundred and thirty years," in Exod. xii. 40, Mr. McNeile argues, on the basis of Dr. Driver's remarks (Gen. xxviii. *et seq.*), that if Hammurabi is the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. 1, and if, further, the rôle assigned to Abraham in that chapter is, at least substantially, historical, Abraham's date is fixed at *circa* 2250 B.C.

"It is impossible, therefore, to uphold both the Biblical chronology and the identity of Amraphel and Hammurabi. Many scholars, however, doubt this identity. But although there are no exact data by which to fix the time when Abraham came to Canaan, P's chronology is discredited partly by the great length of life which he ascribes to the patriarchs, and partly by the fact that his dates appear to be arrived at by an artificial system of computation."

It will be observed that Mr. McNeile, without consulting the most recent authority on the subject, commits himself to the statement that it is impossible to uphold both the Biblical chronology and the identity of Amraphel and Hammurabi, and speaks of "P's" chronology as discredited. Had he studied Mr. King's recent book, which was published some months before the date of his own preface, he might have discovered that the discredit had been shifted from "P" to the higher critics, as will be seen from the following extracts :

<sup>1</sup> Also Codex F, but this does not appear from Kittel.

"Our new information enables us to accept unconditionally the identification of Amraphel with Hammurabi, and at the same time it shows that the chronological system of the Priestly Writer, however artificial, was calculated from data more accurate than has hitherto been supposed" (L. W. King, "Chronicles concerning Early Babylonian Kings," vol. i., p. 22).

"Upon grounds of general probability the Pharaoh of the oppression has been identified with Ramses II. . . . His successor, Merenptah, is thus generally held to have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus. . . . But our new estimate of Hammurabi's date would separate him from Merenptah by little more than 700 years. It will be noted that there is no great discrepancy between this period and the 645 years, which, in the Hebrew text, separated the Exodus from the call of Abraham" (*op. cit.*, pp. 24 *et seq.*).

In this connection, some sentences may be quoted from the *Expository Times* :

"Now, Mr. King is no apologist for the Old Testament. If he fixes the date of Abraham, and finds the chronology of the Priestly Writer reliable, it will be safe for us to follow him, though it may not always be pleasant. . . . Mr. King is evidently astonished that he can take any date from the Hebrew Text at all" (October, 1907, pp. 6, 7).

It would be difficult for anybody to reveal bias more clearly than Dr. Hastings does in these sentences. I draw special attention to this because the higher critics always wish it to be believed that they are impartial scholars. We now know from their most prominent English organ that it is not pleasant for them to find that a Biblical statement is accurate.

In respect of bias, Mr. McNeile's standpoint is exactly the same. Thus, in his note on Exod. viii. 19 (pp. 47 *et seq.*), he writes: "Earthenware vessels are not mentioned; and several writers note that it is only in earthenware that the discoloured Nile waters can be made and kept clear. But it is improbable that this intentional accuracy is to be ascribed to P," etc. This bias should be carefully noted by all who read higher critical books. If they think a Biblical author is inaccurate, the critics carefully dwell on the supposed fact; if they find him accurate, they deem it matter for regret, and do their best to explain it away.

But there is worse to follow. Since reading Dr. C. F. Kent's "Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents," I by no means assume that writers of this school have necessarily themselves

given careful study to the books which they recommend to other people. In this instance I was desirous of testing Mr. McNeile's work. Now, in his list of books "useful for the study of Exodus" there are, excluding the Expositor's Bible, the names of eight (or seven) commentaries on the book. In xxxiii. 7 the Revised Version has a mistranslation which is extraordinarily important for the purposes of Wellhausenism. The Hebrew has, "And Moses used to take the (*or a*) tent and pitch (it) לְ for himself." The Revised Version quietly omits the לְ, and Mr. McNeile offers no comment. Looking at the books in question, I find that Kalisch and Strack translate the לְ correctly; Baentsch not merely renders it by "sich," but draws attention to it in his note; Holzinger (whose volume contains no translation) discusses the word, though he obviously cannot understand its force; Dillmann is in the same position; while Keil and the Speaker's commentary do not notice it.<sup>1</sup> It thus appears that in this instance Mr. McNeile has not consulted a single commentary that has appeared within the last thirty years, and has not looked at five at least of his selected commentaries and editions. (Moreover, Strack in this passage renders "*a* tent," not "*the* tent," and writes a note, a perusal of which must have prevented Mr. McNeile from writing as he has done of the Hebrew article, not merely in the present passage, but also on xvi. 13, p. 97.) The eighth commentary is entered as follows: "Lange, J. P. Engl. transl., Edinburgh, 1868." It occurs under the heading "Commentaries on the Pentateuch." No English translation of J. P. Lange's commentary on Exodus, which "was not published till 1874,"<sup>2</sup> appeared in the year 1868. But in that year an English translation of his commentary on Genesis (not Exodus or the Pentateuch) was

<sup>1</sup> I have explained the bearing of this mistranslation on the Wellhausen position in a paper which appeared in the October number of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, to which reference may be made for a refutation of the Wellhausen position as to the tent of meeting.

<sup>2</sup> See preface to "A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures . . ." by John Peter Lange, D.D. . . . translated, enlarged and edited by Philip Schaff, D.D. Vol. II. . . . of the Old Testament, Exodus and Leviticus. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark (no date on title-page; preface dated April 28, 1876).

published. Whether Mr. McNeile means to include Exodus, or whether his intention is to refer only to that volume which is indicated by his date, is not clear. It is remarkable that in other cases, where he has gone far enough into a commentary to be acquainted with the authorship, he carefully explains what writers are responsible for each book of the Pentateuch; while in this instance he does not notice that the commentary on Deuteronomy is by W. J. Schröder, not J. P. Lange. Combined with the strangeness of the title, the date given, and the fact that he has not used at least five of his authorities on Exod. xxxiii. 7, this makes it doubtful whether he, as the compiler of this list of "books useful for the study of Exodus," has himself made use of the work in question.

Another interesting illustration of Mr. McNeile's methods is afforded by his argument respecting Sinai and Horeb. On p. cii he writes: "The statement of Dillmann has been generally accepted, that 'there is no distinction in the Bible between Sinai and Horeb; they are different names for the same locality,'" etc. And then he proceeds to argue that they are in fact different places, some eleven days distant from each other. I subjoin some remarks on the merit of this theory.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. McNeile locates Sinai near Kadesh-barnea, while Horeb is placed in Arabia, south of the Gulf of Akaba. A few of the more patent absurdities of this scheme may be pointed out:

1. As the testimony of the post-exilic P is invoked, it follows that the localities must have been clearly known down to his time. Therefore the redactor of J and E must be supposed to have taken two narratives dealing with places eleven days' journey apart—for that is Mr. McNeile's theory—torn them into shreds, and combined these shreds, or some of them, in such a way as to make obvious nonsense. Thus, in xxxiii. 6 the Israelites are in Horeb; but a few verses later (xxxiv. 2) Moses is commanded to come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai—on this theory eleven days' journey off—and duly does so. It takes a higher critic to believe that any sane human being ever composed a narrative on these principles, or that his readers would have accepted it if he had done so.

2. The next point requires us to glance at one of the arguments for the documentary theory. It is urged that duplicate narratives imply diversity of authorship. Now, there is a Meribah-Massah incident related in Exod. xvii., and a Meribah incident in Num. xx. Therefore the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses, but a compilation from documents. If, now, we provisionally accept this reasoning, and turn to the documentary theorists for the remedy, we obtain some amusing results. Moses may not tell two stories of the production of water from rocks, but there is obviously nothing to prevent J or E from doing so. Accordingly, the result of the higher critical



Here I desire to point to the fact that on pp. 61 and 64 of Professor H. P. Smith's "Old Testament History" (included in Mr. McNeile's bibliography) it is urged that the two names refer to different places. One would have expected Mr. McNeile to mention this fact had he been aware of it.

Mr. McNeile's book contains no statement that he has read the works in his bibliography (or, at any rate, those portions of them which bear on Exodus), and it is of course quite open to any writer to print a list of books which he has not studied as

endeavours to halve the two Meribah narratives is to give us either five, or perhaps six, such stories. J and E had two each. "J's traditions," writes Mr. Carpenter on Exod. xvii. 1b, "attached parallel incidents to two names, Massah and Meribah. E appears also to have contained explanations of both designations." The only question is what number P may be supposed to have had. He tells a story in Num. xx. which is located at Kadesh; but as in Num. xxxiii. 14 he speaks of "Rephidim, where was no water for the people to drink," it seems probable that he also recognized two incidents. But I do not like to make the statement positively, because, so far as I know, the higher critics have never considered the point, and it is by no means certain that they would let P enjoy the same licence in this matter as J or E. Be that as it may, it is perfectly certain that the early sources recognize two incidents in which water is obtained from the rock. Now, Mr. McNeile has never realized this. Possibly he is under the influence of some antiquated, pre-critical, arithmetical superstition which made the half of two, not five or six, or even two, but one. If so, he should learn that there is no place for such absurd views in the Wellhausen theory. Anyhow, though he prints the divisions of the text in Exodus which necessitate the attribution of two stories each to E and J, he speaks of "*the place where Moses brought water from the rock*" (p. cii, my italics), and throughout argues on the basis that there is only one such place, and his inferences inevitably fall with his premiss.

3. On p. ciii he writes: "P appears to identify Zin and Paran . . . Paran is closely associated with Sinai. In Num. x. 12 (P) it is the first stopping-place after the wilderness of Sinai." Mr. McNeile has surely omitted to take dates into consideration. In P the Israelites leave Sinai "in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month" (Num. x. 11). If Paran is identical with Zin, and was also the next stopping-place, they must have marched without a halt for over ten months, for they arrived in Zin in the first month (Num. xx. 1—P). The year is not given, but it may be assumed in Mr. McNeile's favour that it was the very next year. If it was any subsequent year, then the length of their "non-stop" march must be correspondingly increased.

4. It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that if, as Mr. McNeile believes, El-Paran is equivalent to Elath (p. ciii), the desert of Paran must have stretched such a distance as to make it impossible to argue that places that were in or near this wilderness must *ipso facto* have been near to one another. Moreover, the borders of Edom were a line, not a point, so that the argument, "Sinai is very closely associated with Zin, Kadesh, and Paran, and all are at the borders of Edom," seems a trifle inconclusive.

giving materials for further work by anybody who may desire them; but it will be felt that the facts set out above are far from satisfactory. It is not too much to ask that a man who undertakes to produce a bulky edition of a canonical book should himself study that book seriously with the aid of the best works on the subject; and it ought to be the recognized duty of every commentator to go through the book he is editing verse by verse and word by word with a reasonably representative selection of the best preceding commentaries. A man who pursues the line of conduct adopted by Mr. McNeile inevitably lays himself open to the question, Why did you not study Exodus with the help of the books which you have publicly declared to be useful for that purpose before publishing a commentary on it? It is difficult to conceive what satisfactory answer he could possibly give.

Reference has already been made to Mr. McNeile's treatment of modern conservative work. A natural and inevitable result is that he repeats a large number of statements which he would have seen to be false if he had taken the trouble to study the publications of those who are not followers of Wellhausen. It will not be expected that I should once more expose the old familiar higher critical blunders, of which my readers are probably as weary as I am. Suffice it to say that Mr. McNeile does not fail to bore the slave's ear (Exod. xxi. 2 *et seq.*) to the door or doorpost of an altar called a sanctuary and mistaken for a house (pp. lxxv and 127); to allege in the teeth of Gen. xviii. 7, xxvii. 9-14, xliii. 16, Exod. xxi. 37 (xxii. 1), 1 Sam. xxv. 11, xxviii. 24, etc., that in early times (*i.e.*, before the date to which Mr. McNeile assigns Deuteronomy) all slaughter was for the purpose of sacrifice (p. 70); to assert in the face of such passages as 1 Sam. vii. 17, xx. 6 (David's clan sacrifice, which must have been performed at an altar), 1 Kings i. 9, 2 Kings v. 17, that Exod. xx. 24 applies to every place where God caused His Name to be remembered "by some visitation or token" (p. 125); and to repeat other statements that have been demonstrated to be untrue. It should further be remarked in passing that the explanation of such an

assertion as that of p. 107, "The elaborate organization suggested by Jethro is an ideal never reached in any nation," must be sought in its author's curious forgetfulness of history. There is apparently also something to seek in regard to Mr. McNeile's arithmetic. He alleges (p. 126) that the judgments in Exod. xxi. *et seq.* "fall into pentades, or groups of five." His third pentade is only obtained by arbitrarily expelling xxi. 17 from the text (p. 128). His fourth pentade (xxi. 18-27, p. 129), when counted on the same principle as his first two, contains seven members. A subsequent pentade (xxi. 33 *et seq.*, 35, 36, xxii. 1, 3<sup>b</sup>, 4, p. 131; vers. 2, 3<sup>a</sup>, being removed, partly because they interrupt the pentadic arrangement, partly because Mr. McNeile apparently cannot understand them) contains six members. Next come two verses (xxi. 5, 6, p. 132) which admittedly do not constitute a "pentade," though our author says they are "perhaps fragments of an original pentade." But if his arithmetic is faulty, it must not be supposed that he attaches any definite meaning to the English legal and vernacular terms he uses in connection with his pentades. Thus, xxii. 14-17 is called a pentade on loans, though two of its members deal with seduction; and when Mr. McNeile speaks of 7-13 as a "pentade on trusts," it is difficult to see what conception he has of the word "trust." The truth is that the alleged pentadic arrangement is not merely arithmetically and textually erroneous; it has pernicious effects in another direction by obscuring the order of thought. Exod. xxii. 7-15 deal with kindred topics—deposit, gratuitous loan, loan for hire—which are naturally treated together, as in many other ancient and modern systems; but Mr. McNeile's imaginary pentades effectually destroy the relation between them, just as they make seduction a "loan." Before passing away from this portion of his work I may also draw attention to another feature. In his preface Mr. McNeile writes: "The time has gone by when an apology would have been needed for showing that the origin of laws, customs, and religious ceremonies can often be detected in primitive ideas of a remote past"; and on p. ii of his introduction he prints some beautiful sentiments on

the aim of history in the case of an ancient nation. It is a pity that he has made no attempt to realize these ideals in commenting on the judgments.

In other directions, too, Mr. McNeile's want of consistency is striking. Thus, on pp. 62-64 he puts forward a wonderful theory of the history of the Passover—too long to be discussed here in detail—and argues (p. 64) that "in P (Exod. xii. 1-13, 43-49) is reached the final stage in the elaboration of the festival, where it again becomes a home celebration." Yet on p. 77, in commenting on "Let him come near" (xii. 48), he writes: "The priestly writer here betrays himself. The expression must mean that the worshipper is to come near to the Temple at Jerusalem," etc. But then, what becomes of the "home celebration" of p. 64? And why, in discussing "the final stage in the elaboration of the festival," does Mr. McNeile forget that in Num. ix. 7, 13, the "priestly writer" again uses language which proves that after the Passover in Egypt the festival was intended to be celebrated, and was in fact celebrated at the religious capital?

It is not possible, in the available space, to attempt anything like an answer to this book, and this is the less to be regretted because I am dealing with very many of the points raised in a series of "Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism," which are at present passing through the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Many of these points carry with them most elaborate superstructures. For example, Mr. McNeile's elaborate discussions of the priesthood, the Levites, and Aaron fall to the ground when examined in the light of passages he has forgotten, such as Deut. xxxiii. 8-10 (from a poem, said to be older than "E," and inserted in it), and the portions of "J" and "E" contained in Joshua. I therefore conclude with an instance of the way in which the usual higher critical theories affect geography.

The critics allege that in "P" the cloud<sup>1</sup> does not appear before Sinai. That is refuted by Exod. xvi. Therefore they

<sup>1</sup> The supposed discrepancies in the narratives relating to the cloud are examined at length in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* paper, to which reference has already been made.

have to alter ver. 10, which represents the Israelites as looking toward the wilderness (the proper position for the cloud in pre-Sinaitic days—Exod. xiii.), and seeing the glory of the Lord appear in the pillar. Accordingly, Mr. McNeile wishes to substitute “dwelling” for “wilderness,” charging a redactor or a scribe with having made the alteration because the dwelling did not exist in pre-Sinaitic days. Then he writes of the manna incident on p. xcix, that “P, who states that it was in the ‘Wilderness of Sin’ (Exod. xvi. 1), clearly places the incident after the stay at Sinai.” With my present knowledge of the higher critical methods, I never regard a reference to a verse as raising any presumption that the higher critic who refers to it has examined that verse. In this instance xvi. 1 gives a date—“on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.” According to the same source—“P”—the Israelites did not reach the wilderness of Sinai till the third month (xix. 1). It is therefore obvious that he does not place the incident in question after the stay at Sinai, and Mr. McNeile’s geographical theory on the point falls to the ground.



## St. Paul and Christianity.

BY THE REV. I. GREGORY SMITH, M.A., (HON.) LL.D.

IT has been said that St. Paul invented Christianity ; or, at least, that he remoulded it. In the case of philosophies and institutions, when once the first impulse has been given, someone often arises to guide the movement into new channels. So, it is alleged, Paul of Tarsus, by his world-wide influence, transformed the Gospel from its first shape into something else. The Apostle himself would have recoiled from such a thought. “Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?” And it is con-  
futed by the remarkable coincidences in substance, between the