

*DR. MARTINEAU AND THE GOSPELS.*

IN an address recently delivered at University Hall, Dr. Martineau (according to a newspaper report) selected Matthew xxiii. 35 (with its reference to Zacharias the son of Barachias) as a passage helping to demonstrate the comparatively late date and the untrustworthiness of the Gospels. The report runs as follows :

“ Christ inveighs against the Scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites, and charges them with the guilt of all the blood shed from Abel down to Zacharias the son of Barachias, ‘ whom *ye* slew between the temple and the altar.’ This last event must have been fresh in recollection ; it was the latest crime, the lecturer argued, committed by those who were addressed. Now Josephus gives an account of this crime in his histories. In the end of the Jewish war, which finished with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70, Zacharias the son of Baruch—that is, Barachias—was slain in the temple by a tumultuous mob, because he was a moderate man, and was disposed to make terms with the Romans. Yet—here was Dr. Martineau’s startling conclusion—this very crime is mentioned by Jesus, who died in the year 30, thirty-eight years before, as having been committed by those whom He was denouncing.”

This report is obviously a mere abstract, and cannot be taken to represent the close historical criticism which, I have reason to believe, Dr. Martineau laid before his audience. But I can hardly be wrong in assuming that he offered the identity of the Zacharias of Matthew and the Zacharias of Josephus as a premiss of conspicuous force. Whether therefore the report, as a whole, does justice to Dr. Martineau or not, those who were “ startled ” by his conclusion may be interested to see what there is to be said on the other side.

I have no right, on the authority of an abstract, to conclude that the lecturer propounded his parenthesis—“ that is, Barachias ”—as a universally acknowledged fact, or as a fact which at least deserves universal acknowledgment ;

such however is the practical effect produced by the newspaper report upon its readers. But the evidence that Zacharias the son of Baruch was the same as Zacharias the son of Barachias is not by any means solid enough to sustain the edifice Dr. Martineau erects upon it. First of all, there is no proof whatever that Baruch and Barachias were convertible names. John Lightfoot, it is true, accepts their equivalence, but he accepts it without any attempt at justification; his manner of speaking is as curt as Dr. Martineau's seems to have been, for in his *Exercitations on St. Matthew*, vol. xi. p. 289 (English translation), we find a similarly insinuated parenthesis: "Zacharias the son of Baruch (*which is the same thing with Barachias*)."

But all the evidence that we have is against this somewhat hasty identification. In the Septuagint Version the Hebrew *Baruch* is always transliterated into *Βαρούχ*, while *Βαραχίας* (once, apparently, *Βαραχία*, 1 Chron. xv. 23) is the invariable reproduction of the Hebrew *Berechiah* (cf. 1 Chron. vi. 39, 2 Chron. xxviii. 12, Zech. i. 1). In the book of Nehemiah the two names *Βαρούχ* and *Βαραχίας* stand several times for different persons; the former for *Baruch* the son of Zabbai (iii. 20, x. 6) and *Baruch* the son of Colhozeh (xi. 5); and the latter for *Berechiah*, the father of Meshullam (iii. 30), who helped in rebuilding the walls of the holy city. These names are never known to be confused. In Josephus also they are quite distinct, though he is not content with the transliteration of *Baruch*, but Grecises it into *Βαρουῦχος*; and in the passage to which Dr. Martineau refers, found in the *Wars of the Jews* iv. 5. 4, the expression is *Ζαχαρίας υἱὸς Βαρουῦχου*. Dr. Neubauer tells me that in rabbinical literature, from 1000 to 1500 A.D., the names were not considered identical, neither are they now convertible among the Jews. That the names differ in signification may not go for much; but *Baruch* is Latinised by Gesenius into *Benedictus* (blessed),

while he translates Berechiah by *Cui benedicet vel benedixit Jehova*, "He whom Jehovah will bless, or has blessed." We may fairly therefore refuse to admit the vitally important parenthesis of Lightfoot and Dr. Martineau, and affirm that Baruch is not the same as Barachias; whereupon Dr. Martineau's appeal to Josephus becomes, for us at least, very questionable, and his reliance upon it as an ancillary proof of the late date and untrustworthiness of our Matthew correspondingly unjustifiable.

But this is not the whole of the case for the defendant. According to Matthew's account, Jesus painted the enormity with heightened colour by reminding the Jews how they had slain Zacharias "between the sanctuary (*vaós*) and the altar"; or, as Luke phrases it, "between the altar and the house (of God)." Now the space here referred to was in the court reserved exclusively for the priests, and was specially sacred, this court being the inmost court of all the temple precinct, and reaching up to the steps of the sanctuary itself. But Zacharias the son of *Baruch* was, according to Josephus, murdered by two Zealots "in the midst of the temple" (*ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ ἱερῶ*). The spot Josephus indicates was, in all probability, the "court of the Israelites," separated by a barrier from the "court of the priests." Josephus has left us a minute account of the temple and its various divisions, and may be relied upon to remember the differences between one part and another. Whiston (who knew his Josephus), in his note upon this passage, declines to "believe that our Josephus, who always persists on the peculiar sacredness of the inmost court, and of the holy house that was in it, would have omitted so material an aggravation of this barbarous murder, as perpetrated in a place so very holy, had that been the true place of it." And Whiston's view is supported by the fact that Zacharias the son of Baruch, not being a priest, but only a citizen, would naturally have been found, not in the court

of the priests, but in that of the Israelites. Further, Josephus gives no hint that the Zealots had as yet profaned the inmost court; and when they do profane it several months later, he takes care to record the profanity (see *Wars of the Jews* v. 1. 2). All that he says on this occasion is that "two of the most audacious (Zealots) fell upon and murdered Zacharias in the midst of the temple." And from the rest of the account, before and after, we are led to think of some part of the temple near to the place where Zacharias had just been tried and acquitted by an improvised court of seventy of the principal citizens; and judicial assemblies sat in one of the outer courts of the temple. The very fact moreover that this murder was altogether against the will of these citizen judges, who acquitted Zacharias, "as choosing rather to die themselves with him than to have his death laid at their doors,"—would somewhat blunt the edge of Christ's general accusation against the Jewish nation.

But if Zacharias the son of Baruch is for such reasons unsuitable to our passage, who was the Zacharias son of Barachias therein mentioned?

The common explanation is that he was the same as the Zacharias son of Jehoiada whose murder is recorded in 2 Chronicles xxiv. 20. It is an explanation accepted not only by the orthodox apologist, but also by critics like Schürer and Holtzmann, who may be regarded as indifferent to apology. Holtzmann, it is true, mentions the hypothesis adopted by Dr. Martineau, but introduces it with a depreciatory "wofern nicht," as a hypothesis of inferior probability. (See *Hand Commentar*, i. 255; also Schürer, *Jewish People*, English translation, ii. i. 309.) I cannot see why, in spite of certain difficulties, this explanation should not be considered rational and credible. It was most natural for Christ to have taken, as examples of the righteous blood shed upon the earth, the first and last

murders recorded within the compass of the Jewish canon, according to the conventional order of the books. In the strict order of chronology the death of Urijah, recounted in Jeremiah xxvi. 20-23, came later; but in the canon the book of Jeremiah stood eleventh and the books of Chronicles twentieth, according to the enumeration of Jerome "as that customary among the Jews." And, in the words of Schürer, "According to the order of the canon, the assassination related in 2 Chronicles is certainly the last." This assassination was viewed in rabbinical literature with special abhorrence. The Talmuds both of Jerusalem and of Babylon (see Lightfoot xi. 288) declare that the blood continued to bubble till Nebuzaradan had slain 94,000 priests, old and young, to appease it." "They committed seven wickednesses in that day [of the murder]. They killed a priest, a prophet, a judge; they shed the blood of an innocent man; they polluted the court [of the priests]; and that day was the sabbath day and the day of expiation." In regard to this murder and that of Abel, and these alone, there is in the Old Testament the same cry for vengeance. "Behold," says God in Genesis iv. 10, "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth out to Me." "And when [Zechariah] died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it" (2 Chron. xxiv. 22). Furthermore it is noticeable, though not of course convincing, that when our Lord in Matthew xxiii. 37 (two verses later) laments over Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that *killest* the prophets, and *stonest* them which are sent unto thee," the *stonest*, the word of specialization, suits the case of Zacharias the son of Jehoiada, and not that of Zacharias the son of Baruch, who was slain with the sword (see Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, l.c.; and as to Zacharias son of Jehoiada, *Antiqq.* ix. 8, 3).

The following points moreover make in favour of the common explanation. (1) Christ says (ver. 34), "Behold,

I send unto you *prophets*." In 2 Chronicles xxiv. 19 we read: "Yet He sent *prophets* to them: . . . but they would not give ear. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest." And in Josephus *Antiqq.* ix. 8, 3 we are told that "God had appointed him to *prophesy*." But Josephus in no way suggests that Zacharias the son of Baruch was anything more than one of the most eminent of the citizens of Jerusalem, who hated wickedness and loved liberty; who "was also a rich man, so that by taking him off they (the Zealots) did not only hope to seize his effects, but also to get rid of a man that had great power to destroy them." (2) Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, being a priest, was naturally to be found in the court of the priests; the son of Baruch would never have set foot in it. (3) Rabbinical literature, so horrified at the murder of the son of Jehoiada, has not a word to say about the murder of the son of Baruch.

But how can we account for Berechiah (Barachias) supplanting Jehoiada? Two solutions of the difficulty are offered, neither of them, I venture to think, in the least degree unreasonable. The one is suggested by the fact that sometimes in the Old Testament a man is spoken of as the son of his grandfather. This is the case with another Zechariah, namely, the minor prophet. At the beginning of his prophecy he is called "Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo," but twice in Ezra (v. 1, vi. 14) he is called "Zechariah the son of Iddo." We are told that Jehoiada was 130 years old when he died; he might have had a son Berechiah (a name apparently common in the Zechariah families of the Old Testament; there is another Zechariah, the son of Je-Berechiah,—LXX., *Βαπαχίου*; Babylonian Talmud, *Berechiah*,—Isaiah viii. 2); and as Jehoiada lived to so great an age, his son Berechiah might have died before him, leaving

Zechariah to be popularly, though not invariably, known as the son of the surviving head of the family, and to be immediately, though not invariably, connected by subsequent tradition with a name so famous in Israelitish history, Jehoiada, the great high priest and king-maker. Surely this solution cannot be scouted as a thing incredible. The other solution (which seems to me on the whole more probable) is suggested by the paternity of the same minor prophet. He was the best known Zechariah, and tradition might easily have attached the name of his father Berechiah to his less famous namesake, especially as *Zechariah* and *Berechiah* were names, it would appear, not unfrequently associated. And our Lord or his reporter might, just as easily and naturally, have followed the traditional nomenclature. We are not without evidence that, in some quarters, at a very early date, Zechariah the son of Jehoiada was believed to have been intended. This was the reading, according to Jerome, found in the *Gospel of the Nazarenes*; the Codex Sinaiticus, and at least four cursives (three of them lectionaries) omit the words *υιου Βαπαχίου*, and there is no doubt whatever that the true reading of the parallel passage in Luke (xi. 51) is simply *Zacharias*.

But Dr. Martineau lays great stress on *ἐφρονέσατε*, “*ye slew*”: “it was the latest crime,” he adds, “committed by those who were addressed.” I do not see why this point should be made so much of. There is no emphatic *ye* in the Greek, and the second person is the natural expression of solidarity. “Ye have been (says Christ) a murderous nation. Your history, from first to last, is a history of murders of righteous men and of prophets. And such, in the future, will be the climax of your wickedness, that ye will constitute yourselves the rightful heirs to all the vengeance called for by the righteous blood whose shedding your Scriptures have recorded.” The “*ye*” in regard to

the blood of Zacharias involves nothing like so great a strain upon the idea of solidarity as does Christ's idea of heirship to the blood of Abel; and the "ye" is, after all, less appropriate to the murder of Baruch's son by two Zealots against the will of priests and people, than to the murder of Jehoiada's son by king and princes and multitude.

I shall be reminded, of course, that the proffered solutions are conjectural. But so also are the placid affirmations that Baruch is the same as Berechiah, and that the murder spoken of was committed thirty-eight years after the words are said to have been uttered, and that consequently Matthew's Gospel, as we have it, is a late and untrustworthy composition. As a matter of fact, there are conjectures on both sides, and we have to choose between them. And while, as I believe, the Zacharias of the Chronicles seems to satisfy best the more vital requirements of the case, the conjectures incidental to the establishment of this belief are, at least, as reasonable as those favoured by Dr. Martineau.

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### BREVIA.

**Psalms of Solomon.**—It is well known that two of the psalms in our Psalter have the heading "To Solomon." These are not the only psalms however which have been ascribed to the wise king. Not to mention the collection of psalms of Pharisean origin, which in the Greek version bears the title *Ψαλμοὶ* (or *Ψαλτήριον*) *Σολομῶντος*—a title for which the psalmists themselves can hardly be held responsible—there appears to be a fragment of an early psalm ascribed to Solomon in the First Book of Kings. It was Wellhausen who first pointed this out (see Bleek's *Einleitung*, ed. 4, p. 236), but his restoration may be compared with Klostermann's, in his work on Samuel and Kings in Strack's series of commentaries. The passage may have run thus,