

torical fact. Whatever may be the processes that have moulded our Gospels, oral tradition, oral catechisings, written documents, compilation, or alterations of copyists—and probably they are all true theories—yet, after all, no one of the Gospels is the mosaic of a book-maker: each is the loving record of a living master, whose own spirit is felt in every chapter.

And we see a Church, so confident of the Living Personality of its Founder, so sure of the historic background of His life, that it can pick and choose among many records and authoritatively decide that a certain four are the truest representation of it, and yet it can rise even above the text of these as they first were published and boldly incorporate with them sayings and historic fragments like the end of St. Mark or the Pericope Adulteræ, of which other writers or merely oral tradition were at first the authority, and decide that they too are true, and worthy to be read in its services “to the end of time.”

WALTER LOCK.

*PHYSICAL AND HISTORICAL PROBABILITIES
RESPECTING THE AUTHORSHIP AND AU-
THORITY OF THE MOSAIC BOOKS.*

II. THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

REFERENCE has been made in the preceding article to the following points:

1. That no Hebrew writer down to the time of Solomon, or perhaps even to that of the introduction of Greek literature into the East, could have had so ample means for writing the early history of the world as those possessed by Moses, when regarded as a Hebrew imbued with the culture of the great civilised Egypt of the nineteenth dynasty.

2. That at this period the Egyptians were most zealous in the preservation of historical facts, and were in possession of vast stores of information available for historical literature.

3. That it is in every way probable that there existed, up to the time of Moses, ancient documents of Hebrew history, extending from the time when Abraham departed from the, at that time, learned and literary region of Chaldea, and that such documents were probably more accessible in the time of Moses than at any later period.

4. That the crisis of the affairs of Israel in the time of Moses demanded just such a compendium of the history of the race as is found in Genesis; and that such a book was a necessary factor in the history of the Exodus and the subsequent events.

5. That the personality of Moses, as developed in the following history, testifies to a truthful portraiture, which could not have been produced by obscure writers living at a later date.

6. That Genesis thus stands appropriately at the birth of the Israelitish nation, and is related to it in the manner of cause and effect, while there is no other period in the history of the chosen people to which it would have been so suitable.

Centering these considerations in the personality of Moses, we have found a natural adaptation to time and place, and a congruity of the literature with the actual history which afford strong evidence of contemporaneity and truthfulness. We may now proceed to consider the materials of Genesis, and the manner in which they were used on the supposition that Moses was the author or editor of the book.

The book of Genesis relates altogether to time anterior to that of Moses. This lapse of time may be divided into three periods of very unequal length, which are treated in

somewhat different ways, though these are subordinate to the continuous and homogeneous character of the history, which, beginning with matters relating to mankind in general, gradually and by successive stages concentrates itself on the interests of Israel alone.

The first portion relates to the Creation, the antediluvian world, and the deluge. It has no connection with Egypt or Palestine, and, in so far as it has any local colouring, this belongs to that Euphratean region from which the father of the faithful is alleged to have emigrated.

The second part extends from the call of Abraham to the time of Joseph, and is early Palestinean in its geographical and historical relations. In these respects it is even more primitive than the time of Moses, and if not based on contemporary documents must have been written by some one having a rare gift of throwing his vision back into times anterior to his own. In so far as Moses is concerned, it is not likely that he had previous knowledge of Palestine, but he must have been familiar with Egyptian literature relating to it, and he must often have met with people of Canaan, and with Egyptian officers who had travelled in the country. He must, therefore, have possessed sufficient knowledge to edit documents relating to Palestine, and to understand the geographical and tribal relations with which such historical documents were concerned.

The third portion of the book, relating to Jacob and Joseph, is almost wholly Egyptian in its scenery and colouring, and its conditions must have been perfectly familiar to Moses, even if, as supposed by many, the administration of Joseph was under one of the foreign kings of the Hyksos race. The treatment of this part of Genesis bespeaks a writer thoroughly acquainted with the Egypt of the 18th and 19th dynasties.

The first of these three sections covers a vast lapse of time—three thousand years, or probably more, of human history,

besides the unmeasured geological periods before man appeared. The second and third extend over only the 430 years which, according to the Hebrew chronology, intervened between the entry of Abraham into Canaan and the Exodus.

If these three portions of Genesis were compiled by Moses from documents of various dates, the greater part of this material must have been obtained from Hebrew rather than from Egyptian sources. No doubt the Heptarchy of the Great Gods of Egypt is analogous to the seven creative days, and may have been so understood in the esoteric learning of the Egyptian priests. There can be little doubt also that the Hershesu, or mythical children of Horus, represent the antediluvian patriarchs of Moses and the Chaldean legends. Not improbably, also, there may have been Egyptian narratives of the visit of Abraham and his tribe, of the immigration of Jacob, and of the rule of Joseph. There must, however, have been records of the Abrahamidæ themselves; and Egyptian precedents would authorise us to believe that such documents would be scrupulously cared for, and would, probably, be deposited with the mummy of Joseph, either in some tribal tomb or sanctuary, or in the house of his descendants.

Supposing such materials to be accessible to Moses, and that it was part of his Divine mission to use them for the instruction and deliverance of his people, we should suppose that his treatment of the different documents might be somewhat varied.

In the case of the first and second sections, the material might consist in part of definite and specially arranged statements of great antiquity, like these of the creation and the deluge, in part of toledoth, or genealogical lists, and in part of biographical and historical annals.

The two former classes of material a conscientious editor would leave untouched, except perhaps to add a few ex-

planatory notes or to modernise archaic expressions. The third or narrative material he might treat with a freer hand, and might even re-write in the style of his own time. We should thus have, in the earlier parts of Genesis, a two-fold structure, consisting, in the first place, of ancient documents, written, perhaps, by different hands, at widely different times, and, secondly, the modernised and freer biographical and historical sketches interwoven with the older material, though perhaps occasionally including sections of older documents unchanged. It is thus quite unnecessary to imagine any later editor than Moses, in order to account for those diversities of style and treatment which have caused critics to postulate several authors and redactors.

Since writing the above, I have found this aspect of the case very clearly stated by Prof. Green, of Princeton.

He says :

“The difference of diction in different sections of the Pentateuch is largely to be accounted for by the diversity of theme or of the character of the composition. The critics claim that what they call the document P is clearly distinguishable from J E in point of language. Now, to P they assign genealogies, dates, legal sections, and such grand, world-wide events as the creation and the deluge; but, as a rule, all narratives in the sphere of individual life are given to J E, only mere snatches from them, such as a few disjointed sentences or summary paragraphs, being allowed to P. It is obvious that a division of this sort must necessarily result in a diversity of diction. Words are signs of thought, and where the lines of thought are distinct so must the diction be. Words and phrases in constant use in ordinary narrative have no place in genealogies and ritual laws; and, *vice versa*, the peculiarity of the diction of the former is not to be expected in the latter.”

This is simply common sense and natural probability, and it goes farther than the contention above, since it shows that even if there were no previous documents, differences might be expected between technical lists and detailed biographies. I quote it also to show that some writers on

these subjects think it worth while to descend from the pinnacle of the higher criticism and to inquire as to those probabilities which arise from the constitution of mind and its implements.

The latter part of Genesis, relating to the closing years of the life of Jacob and to that of Joseph, we may suppose to be wholly of Mosaic authorship, and in the best style of the Hebrew prophet, unless indeed he found ready to his hand a version of this beautiful story written by Joseph himself, or by some pious and able scribe under his direction. Either view would suffice to account for the minute acquaintance with Egyptian manners and customs at the date referred to, and the literary similarity of the style to that of Egyptian writers of the period; and which, by a far-fetched and most improbable conjecture, have been supposed to have furnished later writers with the materials of this marvellous history.

This later portion of the book is separated from the earlier by the introduction of the Edomites in chapter xxxvi., which forms a sort of appendix to the previous history, and may have been brought on partly because the Edomites were the most closely related of the other Hebrew races to the Israelites, because they had at this time very intimate relations with Egypt, and because they had already definitely separated themselves from Israel and had become a part of the heathen world. We shall see in the sequel that the neglect of this genealogy, and the failure to recognise the fact that the Edomites and other nations descended from Abraham and Lot were Hebrews as well as the Israelites, has led some Egyptologists into amusing errors. All those tribes which sprang from "Abraham the Hebrew" were Hebrews or "Aperiu" in the classification of the Egyptians, who well knew their kinship in features, language, and customs, as a part of the multitudinous Asiatic races known as "Amu" in their ethnology.

These preliminaries having been settled, we are now in a position to glance at some of the physical and archæological characteristics of the earlier part of Genesis. Some of the peculiarities of the earliest Mosaic document, that of the seven creative days, I have already discussed in an article in this journal,¹ to which I may refer, but our present inquiry leads us to consider certain of its other features.

The theological purpose of the first chapter of Genesis is too obvious to require any remark, except to note the thorough manner in which it relegates to the creative power of the one true God all the natural powers and objects which entered into the complicated polytheism of Egypt and other ancient nations, and the skill with which it founds this on the unanswerable proposition that the universe is not eternal or fortuitous or self-made, but a product of a divine First Cause. To secure fully, however, this theological end, it was necessary to deal with physical facts and laws, and with an order of development of the cosmos, which is here divided into seven stages, the last of these being used as the foundation of the Sabbath. So exactly does this arrangement fit in with the requirements of that fourth commandment which lies at the foundation of the whole religion of Israel, as based on the hope of a Redeemer, and which consequently figures as the sole ritual observance included in the moral law, that it is not wonderful that some have alleged that the seven creative days are an after-thought intended to support the observance of the Sabbath. Fortunately for the credit of Moses, we now know that the story of creation and the week of seven days, and the pre-eminence of the seventh day, existed long before his time. It is not Egypt but Chaldea, the native country of Abraham, that has furnished this evidence in the now well-known creation tablets disinterred from the ruins of the royal library of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria. They show that

¹ EXPOSITOR, vol. iii., April, 1886, p. 284.

in the most primitive times a story of creation similar to that in Genesis, but more diffuse and polytheistic in its theology, existed in Chaldea. It is thus rendered in the highest degree probable that this legend in some form was a part of the mental furniture of Abraham and his tribe, before they left their primitive home. Assurbanipal, the royal collector of these records, it is true, lived about 673 B.C., but the scribe who edited them informs us that they are of much earlier date, and not so much Assyrian as early Chaldean, or Akkadian, being probably as old as 1,600 years before the time of the Assyrian collector.

A remarkable confirmation of their antiquity also reaches us from the West. The sacred book of the Quiche Indians of Central America, originally translated by Brasseur de Bourbourg, and more recently referred to by Bancroft in his *Native Races of the Pacific Coast*,¹ contains a creation legend in many respects similar to that of Chaldea. It would thus seem that in the early dawn of human history before the people of Asia and those of America had separated, the history of creation was known.

In face of such facts, it is idle to suppose that the knowledge of the creative week came to the Jews from late intercourse with Assyria. In that case it would have appeared in a different form, even if purified of its polytheism; for the later Assyrians, though they had a week of seven days, and regarded the seventh day as sacred in the sense of being an unlucky day for secular work, do not seem to have connected this with the creation, so much as with the sun and moon and the five planets known to them, as our own Saxon forefathers also did.

If, again, we compare the simple and sublime form in which the creative days appear in Genesis, with the more turgid and diffuse guise in which they are embodied in the Chaldean or Akkadian tablets, we need not doubt as to the

¹ Vol. iii.

relative antiquity of their sources. We can imagine a simple, concise, monotheistic account to have been the nucleus of the padded out polytheistic story like that of the Chaldean priests. We can also imagine a terse rhythmical version easily committed to memory to have appertained to simple primitive folk, while an enlarged and ornate form may have been better suited to a temple liturgy in honour of a pantheon of deities. We can also suppose a simple record of creation to have been communicated perhaps in a vision of six days to some inspired seer of early times, but cannot suppose this in the case of a complicated and idolatrous version.

Further, the Chaldean tablets bear witness to their own secondary character, for while they take us back to a time when Tiamat, the abyss or "deep," alone existed, they admit that at this time "the gods had not sprung up any one of them," and "the great gods also were made." These gods also are elemental beings, corresponding to the firmament, the stars and other things which appear merely as physical objects in Genesis. Bel or Belus seems to be the only exception, and to be a sort of demiurgus, the medium between the Creator and His work, and corresponding to the Almighty Word in Genesis.

Thus we have as the result of this comparison, that while we must recognise the Hebrew account as the more primitive of the two, we must also recognise it as the better and more scientific. On arriving at such a conclusion we can scarcely avoid a feeling of awe and reverence for this early monument at once of human reason and Divine revelation.

I do not think it necessary to discuss the question whether or not the days of creation represent long periods of time, since it is only on that supposition that they admit of any comparison with natural facts, or would even in any natural sense be comprehensible in themselves. Further,

these are obviously days not of man, nor even astronomical days, but days of God, and the last, or seventh day, is allowed to run on indefinitely without any termination. This view is also held by Jesus in the Gospels, when in arguing with the Jews about the Sabbath He says, "My Father worketh until now." It is also the view of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when He speaks of man's failure to enter into God's Sabbath, of Christ's entering into His sabbatism, and of that sabbatism which "remaineth for the people of God." It is thus evident that Jesus, the Jews of His time, and the early Christians had no difficulty in believing that the creative days represent æons or days of God, and this, of course, without any idea of reconciliation with modern science.

We have now to look at this old record from the purely physical standpoint, and to inquire as to its representation of the actual development of the earth and its inhabitants. This may be best done by translating its terms into those now in use, and regarding it as a series of word-pictures, not so much of successive stages of the earth, as of successive introduction of new features, the old arrangements still continuing except as modified by the new.

Its initial statement that in the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth requires no formal proof. The universe cannot have been eternal or self-created. It must have proceeded from a self-existent First Cause. But in the beginning the earth was formless and void, enveloped in a dense vaporous mass and in thick darkness. It contains the resulting cosmos only potentially not actually. This must be developed in the work of the creative week.

1. Light is introduced either from a photosphere surrounding the earth itself, or from diffused luminous matter filling the space within the earth's orbit—possibly from both.

2. The laws regulating the suspension of clouds in the

atmosphere, and the preservation of a clear aerial film between the waters above and those below, are established.

3. The earth's crust is ridged up to form embryo continents. This earliest dry land becomes clothed with the first vegetation.

4. The heavenly bodies become distinct by the concentration of light around the sun. These bodies are not gods, but (relatively to man) merely time-measurers.

5. The waters are stocked with the lower forms of animal life, and this is succeeded by the dominance of reptiles and birds in the air and on the waters.

6. The mammals became dominant, more especially on the land, and finally man is introduced.

We have here a consistent scheme of the development of the solar system, and especially of the earth, agreeing in the main with the results of modern astronomy and geology. It would not be easy even now to construct a statement of the development of the world in popular terms so concise and so accurate.

It has been objected that light is introduced before the sun; but on any of the hypotheses of the origin of the solar system this is probable. It has been objected that land plants are introduced before animals, yet this is in itself likely; and I have elsewhere shown that there are geological evidences of an earthly archean vegetation yet unknown in its details.¹ The translation of the word Tannim as "whales" or "monsters" has obscured a distinct reference to the reign of reptiles, by the use of a word which elsewhere in the Bible is applied only to the crocodile and the larger serpents. Objection has even been made to the omission to mention the earliest marsupial mammals, which appeared in the reign of reptiles; but we are to look here for great leading features, not for special mention of creatures in their time insignificant. We might as well object

¹ *Geological History of Plants.*

to there being no special notice of batrachians, or of wingless as distinguished from winged birds. Besides, it has been remarked that in Leviticus small mammals are included with reptiles in the same general terms. These and similar objections proceed from trusting to merely negative evidence or misinterpreting words. When rightly understood they leave our early seer, and the Egyptian graduate who edits his words, on a much higher mental plane than that of their modern critics.

Over against these objections we may place certain grand dominant principles and facts, in which this early record is in harmony with all the true science and philosophy that the world has ever known.

We have here a grand conception of the unity of nature, and of the interdependence of all its parts as a continuous work of an Almighty Power. In the physical world the light, the ocean, the atmosphere, the dry land, even the distant luminaries of heaven are all parts of one system. In the world of life the plant and the animal are linked together, and all the forms of animal life, from the lowest to the highest, constitute one series, including predaceous and carnivorous beasts as well as those that are harmless; and finally man crowns the series, with full recognition on the one hand of his affinity with the animal world, and on the other of the national mind, which enables him to understand and rule nature, and hold communion with God Himself. With all this there is no myth or superstition connected with any natural object, no sign of fetichism or idolatry, or of any merely astrological use of the heavenly bodies, such as we might have expected in the later and more corrupt times of the Eastern world.

Our old record also anticipates in some of its aspects the Nebular Theory. It recognises the distinction of light from luminaries, even from the great sun himself, who thus ceases to be a deity and becomes a mere work of the

Creator. It knows the constitution of the atmosphere, and that balancing of the clouds over a clear stratum of air which involves so many complex arrangements. It knows that the land arose out of the primeval ocean; that plant life on the land must precede that of the animal, even by a long time; that the lower animals of the waters antedate those of the land—the mammals and man closing the list. It thus informs us of successive reigns of invertebrates of reptiles, of mammals, and of man; and in the whole appear design and development combined.

There is, further, in the Genesis record an entire absence of any local colouring—nothing to connect it with the features or population of any special region. In this wholly cosmical and general style it differs from the Chaldean Genesis, and from anything in later Hebrew literature, even from the poetical version of the same history which appears in the 104th Psalm.

No distinction appears here of any varieties or races of men, of any grades of higher and lower tribes, of any autochthones as distinguished from strangers. In this the record is not in the tone either of Chaldea or of Egypt, and is also eminently diverse from later Jewish habits of thought. This unity and equality of man stamps the document as a Divine revelation, or at least as pertaining to a time antecedent to such distinctions, which even in the days of Moses, and indeed long before, were engraved on the mind of every nation, and against which Paul had long afterwards to argue before the cultivated Athenians, to whom the unity of man seemed a strange novelty. Considered even as a mere editor, it would require a man of the breadth of culture and strong moral sense of Moses not to be tempted to tamper with such a document, and to adapt it to the notions of his own and succeeding times.

Lastly, in the wonderful development of the cosmos there is no distinction of good and evil powers in nature, of things

clean and unclean, noxious or healthful. All things are parts of the system of the All-wise, and all are in their places very good. But beyond this it has one great practical and humanly theological conception, and this is the idea of rest. God finished His work and entered into His rest, and invites man to enter into it with Him. This idea is not so much that of a mere weekly Sabbath as that of a perennial rest, into which man enters as the possessor of a complete and finished world in which everything is good. This is no doubt the foundation on which the obligation of the weekly Sabbath ultimately rests; but here it appears in its broadest and grandest form as a cosmic day of rest in which man is to enjoy all that in previous æons has been prepared for him. It is the true and perfect picture of the primitive golden age, which has imprinted itself on the imagination of every generation of man. The special human history which begins in the second chapter of Genesis, and which has so absurdly been supposed to be a duplicate and even contradictory version of this, starts from the same point, though with a local aspect, but soon introduces us to that tragedy which for a time deprived man of this primitive rest, which, however, "still remaineth" for the people of God.

All these peculiarities of the introduction to Genesis, while they tend to throw its composition back into the dim antiquity of our race, and to separate it from all special religions, even from that of the Israelites themselves in later times, fit it to be the foundation of all religion, and the companion of all science, and endear it to every mind instinct with the love of nature. We are never weary of it. Like the songs of childhood, it is ever fresh, and we return to it with joy as an oasis of peace into which the turmoil of human passion can never enter—the very garden of the Lord.

May we not believe that we owe this precious document to the hand of the great Hebrew sage and prophet, and that

it was the foundation of the teaching whereby, under God, he changed a nation of slaves, deeply sunk in degradation and idolatry, into a free, independent, and God-fearing people?

J. WILLIAM DAWSON.

“HE CALLED” OR “SHE CALLED”?

MATT. I. 25.

THE EXPOSITOR published lately a learned discussion “On the Proper Rendering of *ἐκάθισεν* of John xix. 13.” While almost all commentators had taken it in the intransitive sense, “*he sat himself*,” and did not even think of the possibility of taking it transitive, “and sat Him,” or, when it was brought to their consideration by the new evidence brought forward for it, they declined it, and will, no doubt, for the most part do so, even after Prof. A. Roberts’ defence of it; so it is, perhaps, the case with the similar question: whether *καὶ ἐκάλεσεν*, Matt. i. 25, must be rendered “and *he* called,” or “and *she* called.” I may be permitted to lay it before the readers of the EXPOSITOR, the more so as it is a contribution to the most important question of the Aramaic Gospel lately ventilated in these pages.

While reading, the other day, in the *Syriac* New Testament, I was struck, for the first time for myself, by the observation, that this version reads: *וְקָרָתָּ—סִמְיָא יֵשׁוּעַ—וְשָׁמָּה יֵשׁוּעַ*—*i.e.*, “and *she* called His name Jesus.” I have no sufficient private or public library at my disposal to ascertain, when and where this was noticed for the first time, and how many or how few have taken notice of it in recent times. In Tischendorf’s *editio octava*, it is passed over, as also in James Murdock’s *literal translation* from the Syriac Peshitto Version (sixth edition, Boston [1893]), where the verse is given: “And he knew her not, until she had borne her first-born son, and called His name Jesus.”