

critical investigation one never knows what a day may bring forth. Not once but often has it happened that some discovery, some simple observation, has let in a flood of light, accrediting what had seemed incredible and putting to shame what had been most surely believed.

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THE CHRISTIAN PROPHETS AT PHILIPPI.

PROFESSOR RAMSAY, who has done so much in recent years to elucidate the Acts of the Apostles, especially upon the geographical and political sides of that unique history, has recently enforced his remarks on *The Church in the Roman Empire* by a paper in the *Contemporary Review* on "St. Paul the Statesman." I propose in the following pages to carry still further his main idea, clear and suggestive and convincing as it is, and to show that while St. Paul was a statesman and a patriot he was first of all a Prophet, and that his prophetic office had made him both statesman and patriot. Perhaps I may say that several of the following contentions require, and I trust will shortly receive, a fuller exposition than the limits of the present paper permit.

In the course of his "Second Missionary Journey" St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. i. 5) that his gospel came unto them not in word only but in power and in the Holy Spirit and *in much fulfilment*. This last is a unique expression, and the occasion of it was unique. The function of the Prophets was, in the words of 1 Peter i. 10, to "seek out and to search out diligently what time, or (failing that) what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was (from time immemorial) in them (as a historic body), was making clear." The Christian Prophets searched the Scriptures in order to find *fulfilment*. Their prophetic spirit indeed "searched all things, yea, the deep things of

God" (1 Cor. ii. 10), and "unto them did God make revelation through the (prophetic) spirit." Their function was, in other words, to find a correspondence between a written text or texts of Old Testament or Apocryphal Scripture on the one hand and a current event on the other. We in the present day are content to say that such and such an event *took place*; they would say of an event in the Divine purpose that it was *fulfilled*. Thus St. Luke in his preface to the Gospel speaks of "the things which have been fulfilled amongst us," for St. Luke was a Prophet himself.

Now let us endeavour to place ourselves in the position of the two Prophets, Paul and Silas, when they were at Troas in this "Second Missionary Journey." In front of them lay the Aegean Sea, with its mountainous islands of Imbros and Samothrace, beyond which lay the promised land of Europe, to be made ere long the possession of Christ; and in their hands was a guide-book, the Book of Joshua in Greek. But why call it the Book of Joshua? To them, as to all readers of the Septuagint, it was the Book of "Jesus." That is its one and only Greek name. And so, if there was one book of the Old Testament which must convey to the Christian Prophets their prophetic spiritual guidance in "things which are to be fulfilled among them," it was the Book of Jesus. Consequently when we read that the two Prophets Paul and Silas—for we know that Silas was a Prophet from Acts xv. 32—had been "forbidden by the Spirit of Jesus to go into Bithynia," we know what that expression means. "The Spirit of Christ" is not the same as "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts xvi. 7), for this is the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth as typified by that of Jesus son of Naue (LXX for Nun). The Spirit of Jesus inspired them to find their guidance in the Book of Jesus. And so they were led in the course of this memorable journey to descend from the mountains of Mysia to the coast of Troas.

Here took place the next *fulfilment*. I do not say the first, for we shall find that there had been previous fulfilments. Prof. Ramsay has suggested that "*the man of Macedonia who stood and besought Paul in a vision of the night at Troas*" was none other than Luke himself. The suggestion—I gather from friends of mine—has "caught on," and commended itself. But without considering it to be "moonstruck fancy," to use the Professor's term, I think it will prove untenable eventually, though space forbids me to discuss it fully now. For there is one passage in the Bible where the expression occurs, "*Come over and help us,*" and it is in the Book of Joshua (Josh. x. 6), where "the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Come up to us . . . and help us." The rest of the vision originates or is suggested in the preceding chapter of Joshua, where the Captain of the Lord's host came beside him: "Behold, there stood a man before him, and his sword drawn in his hand" (v. 13). The two thoughts are blended, as thoughts which have passed in the day are so often blended, in the one vision of the night. Thus was the conviction of the two Prophets confirmed.

But where was the Lord's host? It was not yet; albeit the holy angels were with them. They were themselves but the pioneers of conquest; they were the two spies sent by Joshua Son of Naue, to spy out the land and Jericho. And here before them was their Jordan, the north-east corner of the Aegean Sea. Perhaps they knew how the Rabbis said (upon Josh. iii. 16) that "the breadth of the waters divided in Jordan was twelve miles" (John Lightfoot on Acts i. 12, quoting Kimchi). But the waters of their present Jordan were on a scale ten times as large; and as the Jordan did not divide for the spies to pass over them, neither did they expect their Jordan to divide for them.

We now come to a passage which has hitherto, I think, never received a satisfactory solution. What is the mean-

ing of Philippi being called (the) "first city of the portion Macedonia, a colony"? Hort wrote (*Notes on Select Readings*): "*Μερίς* never denotes simply a region, province or any geographical division: when used of land or of anything else it means a portion or share, i.e. a part in a relative sense only, not absolutely" (*μέρος*). The whole note should be read. He adds: "It is not impossible that *μερίδος* should be read as *Πιερίδος*," i.e. "the first city of Pierian Macedonia, a colony," but he acknowledges that the conjecture "Pierian" has no support and is unlikely. Although Hort says the reading must remain for the present in doubt, I venture to think that the text he has given us is sound, and indeed, as regards the one word *μερίδος*, the testimony is overwhelming. Nor is the meaning of *μερίδος*, *portion*, open to any more doubt than the reading, *pace* Prof. Ramsay. Nor is the explanation of it more difficult than the reading when once we have the clue in the Book of Jesus.

Jesus said (Josh. xviii. 6): "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land? Give out of yourselves three men from a tribe, and let them arise and go through the land and describe it before me. . . . And ye shall describe the land into seven *portions*. . . . The Levites have no *portion* among you." In xix. 9 we have: "The *portion* of the sons of Judah was made greater than theirs." What then can be plainer than the idea which was in the mind of the Prophet who wrote the Acts? He saw that the two Prophets had divided the Roman Empire into seven portions, one of which was "the portion Macedonia," and all of which were prepared by God in the Promised Land, the new inheritance of His people which He instructed Jesus of Nazareth, as He had instructed Jesus son of Naue, to allot to the tribes of the new and greater Israel.

When then the lots were cast in Selo (Shiloh) before the Lord, the first to come up was the tribe of Benjamin. This

of course was St. Paul's tribe, and he accepted Macedonia, as the inheritance of the Lord, in fulfilment of that allotment by Jesus.

But why was Philippi the first city of the portion Macedonia? Neapolis was where they set foot upon Europe. All that we know is that no particular fulfilment is connected with Neapolis. The fulfilments began in full at Philippi. Neapolis was the first city of Europe in order of time at which they touched; but Philippi was the *first city of the portion*. Philippi was their Jericho. We shall see further the truth of St. Paul's remark to the Thessalonians, how "the gospel came to them at first," and also to the Philippians, "in much fulfilment."

The capture of Jericho took place on the seventh day of solemn compassing. In Philippi Paul and Silas had sojourned certain days, till on the Sabbath day "we went outside the gate," and the crowning incident occurred.

The type of faith amidst unbelief was Rahab (Heb. xi. 31); the anti-type at Philippi was Lydia, who said: "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there."

Not only was Rahab saved when Jericho was taken, but "all her house"; so were the "house" of Lydia baptized.

The token of Rahab's house was a line of scarlet thread: the house of Lydia too had its stock of Thyatiran purple. With Clement (Cor. i. 12), who devotes a paragraph to Rahab, the scarlet thread is a type of the blood of the Lord, and he shows how "not only faith (Heb. xi. 31) but prophecy is found in the woman."

Jericho was "straitly shut up *and made fast with bars* (LXX): none went out and none came in." This is fulfilled in the prison at Philippi.

The shattering of the wall of the city, which fell down flat, is fulfilled in the earthquake at Philippi.

And a subsidiary fulfilment is to be discerned in the

manner of the city's fall. For "when the people heard the trumpets, all the people shouted together with a great and strong shout. And all the wall fell around." And so we read in Acts: "Paul and Silas were singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly a great earthquake took place. . . ." The great shout was fulfilled in the hymns; the hearing of the people in the listening of the prisoners; the simultaneous fall of the walls in the simultaneous opening of the prison doors.

There is however one part of the occurrence at Philippi, in fact the central incident of the ventriloquist girl, which has no parallel in the Book of Jesus. This girl, who had "a spirit, a Python," and who is commonly known as a Pythoness, was in fact a ventriloquist. Plutarch, who was living in St. Paul's time, tells us distinctly that Python (feminine Pythoness) was in his time the modern name for a ventriloquist. Now the witch of Endor is called by the LXX a *ventriloquist*. And we naturally look in 1 Samuel xxviii. to find some resemblance to the narrative in Acts xvi. Nor are we disappointed. Paul the Prophet was entitled to find some *fulfilments* in the book which records the saying about his fellow Benjamite: "Is *Saul* also among the prophets?" In this particular chapter however we first observe that the "witch" *constrained* (*παρεβιάσατο*) Saul to eat when there was no strength in him, whereas at Philippi it was not the Pythoness, but Lydia, who "constrained them to enter her house and abide there." The verb in Greek is the same in both cases: in the New Testament it only occurs in Luke xxiv. 29, and here; in the Old Testament half a dozen times. If this threefold fulfilment is not enough to satisfy all doubts, there is a further coincidence which does. The "witch" said unto Saul: "Behold now thy handmaid *heareth thy voice*, and I place my life in my hand, and I *hear the words which thou speakest* unto me." Of Lydia we read in Acts: "*She heard*, whose heart

the Lord had opened to *give heed to the things that were spoken by Paul.*"

It remains for us to observe the remarkable *fulfilment* of names of localities mentioned in the Book of Jesus, which is to be discerned in the record of Acts in dealing with this Macedonian journey.

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SCIENTIFIC LIGHTS ON RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS.

V.

IS NATURE MORALLY INDIFFERENT?

WHAT is the prevailing impression suggested to the mind by the contemplation of Nature? I think with most people it is a sense of being in the presence of a power which is indifferent to us. Perhaps the impression is most felt in the hour of sorrow. In seasons of joy we experience the poet's rapture—the sense of communion with wood and field. But in the time of grief, in the suffering of personal wrong or in the witnessing of public injustice, I think the most general sentiment is a feeling of being *overlooked* by the physical universe. I believe this is a far more common experience than the impression of an *angry* universe. Even in her stormiest moments Nature does not suggest that; if she did, her aspect would be less terrible. Analyze your thunderstorm, your hurricane, your tornado—what is it that invests the scene with an element of terror? Is it the dread that the powers of Nature may be your enemies? No; it is the sense that the powers of Nature are indifferent to you. Even the belief in their enmity would not be so bad. It is the sense of being overlooked that appals you. It is the impression that between you and the outside universe there exists no bond of interest whatever—that there is neither love nor hatred, neither pleasure nor anger,