

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

If the Book of Daniel was not written by the man whose name it bears, why does it bear his name? That question has never been answered till now. And being unanswered, it has had much to do with the determination to hold by Daniel as the author. There are difficulties undoubtedly. Throughout the whole book you breathe an historical atmosphere that is centuries later than the time of Daniel. But there is always this fact, that the book declares itself written by the Prophet Daniel. And the Christian conscience has found it hard to get over that fact.

But the question has been answered now. Professor R. H. CHARLES has issued a new edition of his Jowett lectures. The title is the same as before, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life* (A. & C. Black; 10s. 6d. net). And in most respects the new edition is the same as the old. It differs in one respect. Since he delivered the Jowett Lectures, Dr. CHARLES has made a fresh and comprehensive study of the whole subject of anonymity and pseudonymity, and he has discovered why the Book of Daniel was attributed to Daniel though not written by him.

The question was the more difficult to answer that all apocalyptic is not pseudonymous. In particular—and this is an important matter—there are apocalypses in the New Testament. There is

the Johannine Apocalypse, and there is the short Pauline apocalypse of the second chapter of Second Thessalonians. The New Testament apocalypses are not pseudonymous. They bear their own authors' names. It is necessary to show why apocalyptic writings before Christ were attributed to other than their true authors, and why that ended with Christianity.

The first thing to be observed is that much of the Bible bears no author's name at all. It is anonymous. For 'the Hebrew writer was almost wholly devoid of the pride of authorship, and showed no jealousy as to his literary rights.' He did not seek favour for his own name: he desired only to exalt the name of Jehovah. A post-exilic writer could therefore adopt the work of pre-exilic writers and recast it to suit the needs of his own time, without being at all careful to distinguish its authorship. He could even take the work of a prophet and introduce into it fragments of prophecy whose authorship was unknown. And in doing so he not only committed no outrage, he served his generation well. More than that, he served our generation. For it is sure enough that if these anonymous prophecies which we find in Isaiah had not been introduced into the writings that bore the name of that prophet they would have perished. Such insertions were really pseudonymous. But the question is not answered yet.

Nor does GUNKEL answer the question when he points out that much of the material found in books like Daniel was derived from really ancient traditions already current under the names of Daniel, Enoch, Noah. The final editor of such traditions, says GUNKEL, being conscious that he had not originated but only reinterpreted these traditions, might reasonably feel justified in attaching to his work an ancient name associated with such traditions. In this view, says Professor CHARLES, there is a very slight substratum of truth. For to a certain extent the apocalypticist did re-edit and re-publish earlier traditions. But it is wholly inadequate to explain the adoption of pseudonymity.

There came a time in Israel when all religious writings were divided into three classes, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. And there came a time when each of these classes was held to be complete. The Canon of the Law was closed first. It was closed by the end of the age of Ezra and Nehemiah. Next, the Canon of the Prophets was closed. It was closed about 200 B.C. The Hagiographa was not considered complete for a century later.

Now, as soon as the Canon of the Law was closed, no law-book could be admitted as of authority. And not only so, but no prophetic or holy book could be admitted as of authority if it differed from or added to the Law. If, therefore, any new prophecy appeared claiming recognition, it was first of all scrutinized for its attitude towards the Law. If its attitude to the Law was inoffensive it might be added to the roll of the Prophets, provided its appearance was before 200 B.C. If it appeared between 200 and 100 B.C. it might still be added to the Hagiographa.

But what chance would a new prophecy have of consideration at all at a time when the minds of men were set rather on stereotyping the past than on recognizing the Spirit of God in the present? There was one chance. If a book came bearing

the name of one of the great prophets of the past it would at once be granted examination. Well, the Book of Daniel came. It came under the name of a well-known prophet. It had its chance. It came after the Law was fixed, and there were in it things that were at least suspicious to the strictly legal mind. Still, there was the great name of Daniel. It was not admitted into the Canon of the Prophets, for the prophetic Canon was already closed. But sometime in the second century B.C. it was admitted into the Canon of the Hagiographa.

The Hulsean Lectures for 1911-12 were delivered by the Rev. Reginald J. FLETCHER, D.D., Preacher of Gray's Inn. They have been published by Messrs. Bell & Sons under the title of *Dei Christus, Dei Verbum* (3s. 6d. net).

The lecturer is sensitive to the criticism which has recently been made upon doctrinal Christianity. He is especially sensitive to the distinction which has been drawn between the historical Jesus and the theological Christ. He thinks that we must face that criticism. And in facing it he believes that we shall find it necessary to acknowledge the distinction as in fact true, and to adjust our theology accordingly.

Dr. FLETCHER, we say, believes that the distinction suggested by the query 'Jesus or Christ?' is a real distinction. He does not believe, however, that it is a necessary alternative. 'Jesus' represents one great body of theology, 'Christ' represents another. These two creeds, if we may call them so, are distinct in origin and for a time had an independent history. But the time came when, like two streams, they ran into one. It came in the lifetime of those who had seen Jesus in the flesh. And Dr. FLETCHER holds that it is possible for us to-day to receive them both. He holds that only in receiving them both do we receive Apostolic Christianity in completeness and in power.

But the titles are ill chosen. The 'Jesus'

stream is best known as belief in the Messiah. That is what Dr. FLETCHER means by the 'Dei Christus' of his title. The 'Christ' stream, which should be called the Logos stream, he represents by the other part of his title 'Dei Verbum.' Let us now therefore discard the misleading distinction suggested by the words 'Jesus' and 'Christ,' and let us speak of the Messiah and the Logos.

The Messianic belief was Jewish. That is well known, and no one has ever thrown doubt upon it. The Apostle Paul had it as a belief, therefore, while he was still an anti-Christian Pharisee. And he retained it after he became a Christian. What did it signify? To some it had a more material political significance than to others; but to all it was a conviction that the Creator of the ends of the earth would make Himself known sooner or later as the God of the Hebrew nation, and would punish the Gentiles who held them in subjection. Moreover, the belief was practically universal that when He did reveal Himself He would do so by a catastrophic act, which would be not less striking than the act by which He had overwhelmed the world in the days of Noah. And when this took place God's Messiah, the Christus Dei of the Latin language, would be there, to be established as a Prince over Israel.

Who was this Messiah? He was variously conceived, but always in some degree supernaturally, and always in some degree anthropically. He was a Son of Man. He existed ideally in the Divine mind from eternity, but He belonged actually to the time-order, to history. Moses, David, and (with reservations) the Persian kings were the models upon which the conception was built. But to these models were always added wisdom and power such as were never possessed by common men.

The Logos conception was Jewish also. It was not so exclusively Jewish as the Messianic idea. The Platonic and Stoic philosophy embraced it. But to Paul it was at least commended by the

Wisdom literature of the Old Testament, and especially by the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, with which Paul was, in Dr. FLETCHER's judgment, intimately acquainted. It is probable, he thinks, that before it took final shape in Paul's theology it had passed to him through the Alexandrian speculations which were under the influence of Plato and the Stoics, and through Philo; but its origin and authority for the Apostle was the Old Testament.

Now the Logos conception is wholly distinct from the Messianic idea. It carries us back to the Creation. The Logos is the 'image' or 'shadow' of God, and His instrument in the Creation of the world. The world was 'from' God and 'by' Christ. And being Creator, the Logos was also Preserver, and ever present in the world, the Light of every person that ever enters into it, and sometimes making His presence known in a dream of the night or a waking vision.

Well, the disciples of Jesus identified Him with the Messiah and they identified Him with the Logos. Dr. FLETCHER is not sure in what degree either identification was suggested by Jesus Himself. But he believes that Jesus at least accepted the identification both with the Messiah and with the Logos. The time came, and that within the lifetime of those who had seen Jesus in the flesh, when these two ideas were welded into one. The historic Man, anointed from heaven with the Divine Spirit and endued with Divine power, was amalgamated with the eternal Wisdom or Word, that Divine spiritual Life which was ever in touch with the world. Dr. FLETCHER seems to think that the synthesis was most probably due to the master mind of St. Paul.

This synthesis, we are frequently told, was a serious error, and we must separate the conceptions again. On the one hand we are invited by HARNACK and others to purge Christianity of the philosophical element which has entered into it along with the idea of the Logos, and so preserve

its value for Religion. On the other hand we are advised to drop the historical element. We are urged to give up the old method of thought which, as EUCKEN says, 'conceived of the Divine as being enclosed in a particular point of time.' We are asked to turn from our segregation of the one historic case and contemplate an incarnation in humanity of the Divine Logos, to recognize that the Church is Christ—an extension of His humanity—and its voice His voice.

Dr. FLETCHER does not believe that we require to give up either the Messiah or the Word. But he believes that it is no longer possible to retain either conception in the form in which it has come down to us. The Messianic idea must no longer include the mental picture of a human figure descending from the sky or of a meeting in the air. It must no longer demand a sudden end to the material world or to this planet. And the Logos doctrine must be cleansed of all theories of a pantheistic character, and all speculations which involve the notion that matter is inherently evil. We may then believe in a Christ of God, who comes and goes and will come again; and at the same time in a Word of God, who is ever present. We may believe, and rejoice in the belief, that that very Jesus who comes and goes is with us even unto the end of the world.

About a year ago there was published a life of John Henry Cardinal NEWMAN. It is a large book. Its two volumes contain thirteen hundred pages. Yet it is occupied almost entirely with NEWMAN's life after he became a Roman Catholic. Only seventy pages are given to that part of his life which he spent in the Church of England, though it is by far the most important part. No proper biography of NEWMAN as an Anglican has ever been written.

There are many Lives of Christ. We have just counted those in our own private library. They number eighty-one, yet only two or three of them

touch the life of Christ before He came into the world. They occupy themselves with His life on earth as if there were no other. Yet the heavenly life of Christ is longer far, and far more momentous, than the earthly life.

We do not know so many incidents of the life which Christ lived before He came into the world. But we know enough to enable us to write a consistent biography of His pre-earthly existence. The materials are supplied partly by Christ Himself and partly by His disciples. It is necessary first of all that we should see how it came about that the apostles thought of Him as living an intelligible and significant life before He came into the world.

They knew Him first as an ordinary man. Let us go to Nazareth, where He was brought up, and look in at the carpenter's shop.

In the shop of Nazareth  
Pungent cedar haunts the breath.  
'Tis a low Eastern room,  
Windowless, touched with gloom.  
Workman's bench and simple tools  
Line the walls. Chests and stools,  
Yoke of ox, and shaft of plow,  
Finished by the Carpenter,  
Lie about the pavement now.  
In the room the Craftsman stands,  
Stands and reaches out His hands.

One day He laid the tools aside. Word had reached Him that the Baptist was at Bethany beyond Jordan, calling upon the people to repent and be ready for the coming Kingdom of God. He laid the tools aside and shut the shop door, never again to open it. For this was not His work. The call had come to Him to enter upon the work He had been sent to do. What work was that? It was to seek and save the lost.

That evening, when the Carpenter swept out  
The fragrant shavings from the workshop floor,  
And placed the tools in order, and shut to  
And barred for the last time the humble door,

And going on His way to save the world,  
 Turned from the labourer's lot for evermore,  
 I wonder was He glad?

That morning, when the Carpenter walked forth  
 From Joseph's cottage, in the glimmering light,  
 And bade His holy mother long farewell;  
 And through the skies of dawn, all pearly  
 bright,  
 Saw glooming the dark shadow of a cross,  
 Yet seeing, set His feet towards Calvary's  
 height,  
 I wonder was He sad?

Ah! when the Carpenter went on His way  
 He thought not for Himself of good or ill.  
 His path was one through shop or thronging men  
 Craving His help, e'en to the cross-crowned  
 hill,  
 In toiling, healing, loving, suffering—all  
 His joy and life to do His Father's will,  
 And earth and heaven are glad.

He came to the Baptist at Bethany and was  
 baptized with the rest. Then, after a time of  
 moral and spiritual conflict, differing only in degree  
 from that which every man must pass through, He  
 invited a few men, mostly fishermen, to accompany  
 Him, and went through the towns and villages  
 preaching, the substance of His preaching being  
 almost identical with that of John the Baptist.  
 But His followers, and for that matter people who  
 did not become followers, soon discovered that  
 this was no common man.

It was the miracles He did that arrested their  
 attention first, and especially His power over  
 Nature. When He turned water into wine the  
 disciples were greatly impressed. The striking  
 words are used that He 'manifested forth his  
 glory; and his disciples believed on him.' And  
 when He stilled a storm on the Sea of Galilee the  
 people were astonished beyond measure, and said,  
 'Who in the world is this, that even the wind and  
 the sea obey him?'

But His preaching itself was quite unusual. His  
 word was with authority, the people said; and  
 they contrasted it in this respect with the manner  
 of their scribes. Probably what they meant was  
 that, whereas the scribes quoted others, Jesus  
 was Himself the authority for what He said. 'Ye  
 have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy  
 neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto  
 you, Love your enemies.' And although such  
 teaching was startling enough in its independence,  
 especially to a nation to whom independence was  
 the sign of charlatany, we are told that the common  
 people heard Him gladly. For it was not merely  
 that He spoke with personal authority, He spoke  
 in such a way that even if they did not recognize  
 the obligation of the demands He made upon them,  
 they could not but feel His sincerity, perhaps also  
 the reach of His understanding and the moral  
 weight of His personality.

His personality made a great impression upon  
 them. It was not simply that He was sinless,  
 though that is marvellous enough. Sinlessness is  
 negative. What they saw was the wholeness of  
 His life and character. It was made up of  
 opposites. He was stern enough to drive the  
 traders out of the Temple and tender enough to  
 lift the infants into His arms. And the opposites  
 were all blended into a perfect whole, so that those  
 who knew Him became attached to Him, and those  
 who knew Him best were most deeply attached.  
 It was not the absence of the ordinary and other-  
 wise invariable human errors that they remarked;  
 it was the power He possessed of giving Himself  
 heartily to the self-sacrificing demands of a positive  
 and persistent love.

Then He claimed to be able to forgive sin. This  
 to the Jews was simply blasphemy. For, as they  
 said, and said truly enough, 'Who can forgive  
 sins, but God alone?' They said so truly enough.  
 We are with them in their sense of the im-  
 possibility of pardon coming from the hand of  
 any man. For sin, to be sin, is against God. The  
 cry is old, but every generation of sinful men takes

it up and says, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.' Yet Jesus forgave sin, making no distinction between one sinner and another, unless it were that the greater sinner had the readier forgiveness. 'Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee'—and He gave him to understand that the woman who had come into the house in tears had found pardon already, though her sin might be reckoned at five hundred pence against Simon's fifty.

And it is on record that when the occasion called for it He deliberately claimed to be on an equality with God. This deliberate claim is most evident in the Fourth Gospel. But the claim itself is quite inseparable from the other three. He represented His judgment as invariably the judgment of God. 'I say unto you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other'; that is to say, accepted by God—this publican rather than the Pharisee. And when the lost was found, 'There shall be joy,' He said, 'in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance.'

Then came His death and resurrection. And after the resurrection, one of the disciples spoke the mind of them all, and said, 'My Lord and my God.' It was said quietly, and it was quietly accepted. 'Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.'

Now it was not easy for these men to say 'My Lord and my God.' It went against their most intimate ideas and all their most cherished beliefs. It was simply the result of their experience of Jesus. As one of them afterwards expressed it, they declared what they had seen and heard and their hands had handled. For God was a remote being, and the tendency of Jewish thought at the time was to push Him ever further away. They had begun, it is believed, to shrink from the use of

the personal name Yahweh and to use a paraphrase instead. In the 8th Psalm there is an interesting phrase referring to the greatness of man. The Psalmist says, 'Thou hast made him but little lower than God.' Later Jews could not tolerate God and man being brought so close together, and they changed the expression into 'a little lower than the angels.'

But to call Jesus God not only withdrew the distance that separated God from man, it also went against the letter of the Law, and that in its first and most fundamental particular. 'Hear, O Israel, Yahweh, thy God, Yahweh is one.' The disciples of Jesus could not fail to see that if Jesus was God, and there was also God the Father, of whom He spoke so frequently, then if there were not more gods than one, at least in the Godhead there was more than one Person. And to this day that is the stone of stumbling with the children of Abraham.

We may safely say that when the disciples of Jesus said 'My Lord and my God' they were driven to it by the demands of their experience. But, having said it, they began to think what it involved. They had new material for their thoughts to work upon; evidently also new faculties to work with. And among other things they came to understand that Jesus had a life previous to His coming into the world.

As we approach this life after them, let us remember that it is the life of the very person who left the carpenter's shop in Nazareth and came to John's baptism. Then—

Could I fear such a hand  
Stretched toward me? Misunderstand  
Or mistrust? Doubt that He  
Meets me in full sympathy?  
Carpenter! hard like Thine  
Is this hand—this of mine:  
I reach out, gripping Thee,  
Son of man, close to me,  
Close and fast, fearlessly.