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I. BABEL AND ITS LESSONS.

“ALL the languages of the earth,” says an eminent authority, “have affinities enough to indicate a common origin; but they have differences enough to show that some great dislocation has occurred in their history.” The Scriptures tell us when and how this dislocation occurred. It was a judgment of God inflicted upon men because of their rebellion against his will.

The descendants of Noah had greatly multiplied since the flood, and the earth was again filling with people. They had spread themselves out over the East until the centre of population seems to have been the plain of Shinar—that fertile region which lies between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers. There, under the leadership probably of Nimrod, the Cushite, they devised and undertook the ambitious scheme of building a great city, with a tower whose top, in their hyperbolic speech, should reach unto heaven. Josephus says that their purpose was to secure themselves against destruction from another flood. If such was the animus of the movement it is easy to see why it should have been displeasing to God and deserving of his judgment. He had given his promise that the earth should never again be destroyed by a flood; he had set his bow in the cloud as a pledge of faithfulness to that covenant.

Now if, instead of resting on that divine promise as a sufficient and infallible guarantee of safety, they set themselves to provide a refuge of their own, they plainly betrayed the most

II. DR. BRIGGS' CONFESSION OF FAITH.¹

THIS volume is Prof. Charles Augustus Briggs' latest contribution to biblical theology, forming the third in a series of five: *Messianic Prophecy* (1886), *The Messiah of the Gospels* (1894), *The Messiah of the Apostles* (1895), *The Messiah of the Church*, and *The Messiah of the Theologians*.

The series as projected evidently contemplates an exhaustive presentation of the Messianic idea in all stages of its development up to the present time.

We confess a keen curiosity as to the contents of the two volumes yet to appear—what contrasts they may present to the biblical conception set forth in the three preceding volumes, and what shall be revealed as the difference between the Messiah of the church and the Messiah of the theologians. The titles are certainly suggestive, and seem prophetic of much that may prove very interesting reading.

In his preface to the volume now under consideration our author says:

"No one who has studied through the literature of Christology can do other than say that the researches of recent scholars have put the whole subject in such new lights that the writings of the older scholars have become for the most part antiquated. There are doubtless many still living who are unwilling to accept any theological opinions which have not been stamped with the approval of the antiquarians. For such the author does not write. The readers he desires are the open-minded and truth-loving, who would see the Christ as the apostles saw him, and who will not be restrained from the heavenly vision by the pretended perils of the Higher Criticism and of Biblical Theology, or by the supposed safer paths of traditional and ecclesiastical theology. . . . The author has done his best to turn away from the Christ of the theologians and of the creeds and of the church, and to see the Messiah as he is set forth in the writings of the apostles."

These are very frank words, and as significant as they are frank. We will not pause to note the implicit contrasts instituted, the very serious assumptions involved, and the far-reaching implica-

¹ *The Messiah of the Apostles*. By Charles Augustus Briggs, D. D., Edward Robinson Professor of Biblical Theology in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Crown 8vo, pp. xv., 562. \$3.00.

tions of both contrasts and assumptions; we content ourselves with simply inviting the reader's careful attention thereto, and pass on with the free acknowledgment that a part at least of the author's purpose has been crowned with a fair measure of success.

Within the last quarter of a century there has been evident a growing revolt against the dominating pre-eminence of systematic theology. The inevitable result has been an emphasis of what is called biblical theology, which first brought it into active competition with the former, then placed it upon an equality, and now seeks to crown it with an unquestioned superiority which squints towards a practical relegation of systematic theology to a niche in the museum of antiquities.

The astuteness of our very progressive age, in this as in countless similar instances, manifests itself in the name assumed. If the *title* be just and the new department as opposed to the old is distinctively biblical, the battle is won beforehand, and nothing remains but a reverent burial of the venerable deceased.

At first we were inclined to view with great favor the advent of this new rival in the field of theology; we had been frequently impressed with a suspicion of danger, that to the severity of system might be sacrificed the free proportions of truth, that sometimes violence was done to the author's scope and intent by the isolation of single texts in order to their grouping under certain heads of divinity, that the demands of a philosophic system occasionally thus proved a bed of Procrustes for the word of God, and hence we felt an increasing conviction of the importance, nay, of the absolute necessity, of far greater attention to exegesis, not simply by way of illustrating methods by a few specimen cases in the class-room, but in extended and extensive study that should cover large tracts of Scripture consecutively and exhaustively, not merely imparting skill in exegetical work, but adding actually and greatly to the student's field of biblical knowledge. This is still our conviction, but we have reached the conclusion that the comparatively modern school of Biblical Theology is not likely to meet the want. The volume before us is the latest work of one of the most eminent representatives and learned professors of this school; it may be regarded, therefore, as a very favorable speci-

men of the work it proposes to do and a fair illustration of its most improved methods. This method is, in brief, "an effort to see the Messiah as he appeared to each writer in each separate writing." Apart from the author's success in the pursuit of his purpose, we are not fully satisfied that the purpose itself is wise; we seriously incline to the opinion that the very method is vicious. Immediately upon announcing his effort to see the Messiah as he appeared to each writer in each separate writing, the author goes on at once to say, "*The diversity is great.*" We italicize this statement because it suggests what our experience indicates is a most grave objection to the method, viz., a distressing lack of unity in the impression made upon the student. This piece-meal presentation produces a fragmentariness of effect that is painful. It is something like a careful study of features in detail: the nose by one artist, the eyes by a second, the mouth by a third, the brow by a fourth, and so on through the whole series, until finally we emerge from these diverse impressions with the inevitable feeling that, notwithstanding the painstaking care of our very scientific method, the result on the whole is somehow rather unsatisfactory so far as any clear-cut, well-defined picture of the person is concerned. And so when we have finished such a study of the Messiah as is here presented we feel like echoing the request of certain Greeks: "Sir, we would see Jesus."

This very elaborate and very improved method, in its *practical results*, bears about the same relation to the "heavenly vision" promised the student, that a scientific analysis of the chemical constituents of food elements bears to a good dinner. "And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty." Recurring, therefore, to the announcement made by Prof. Briggs in the outset, we are constrained to the fear that while few may be found to question the success of his effort "to turn away from the Christ of the theologians, and of the creeds, and of the church," yet to his endeavor "to see the Messiah as he is set forth in the writings of the apostles," it is not altogether sure that there will be voted the meed of an equal success. Certainly, so far as one reader is concerned, this twofold purpose goes halting, and, alas! it is the better leg of the two that seems to be lame.

There are certain features of the discussion that command our cordial commendation. The author has convictions; he walks with a firm tread. One would never imagine that there was anything less solid than ascertained facts beneath his confident feet; there is no hesitancy, no uncertainty, no diffidence. Whatever doubts concerning the positions maintained the timid, conservative reader may have, it is patently evident that the author has none. His assurance continually reminds us of Lord Melbourne's celebrated saying about Macaulay. Prof. Briggs resembles the great essayist in this respect. As he has convictions, so has he the courage of them. His bitterest enemy could scarcely charge him with any servile subservience to theologian, creed or church; he is certainly free from the reproach of being "unwilling to accept any theological opinions which have not been stamped with the approval of the antiquarians." Dr. Briggs' attitude towards these same antiquarians suggests the severely simple and comprehensive declaration of principles once announced by a "blooming" immigrant from Erin, who, immediately upon arrival on American soil, struck his heels together and exclaimed, "If there's a government in this country, I'm agin it." We cannot recall a single instance in which our author favors the conservative position on any point whatever. If there be any conservatism in a view under discussion, you may with probable safety set down Dr. Briggs as against it; his independence (of "antiquarianism") is so straight that it leans backwards.

His style is strong and clear; with the exception of one or two paragraphs, his meaning is transparent. His composition is eminently suited to a treatise of the character of this, reaching a very desirable mean between the ornate, on the one hand, and the slovenly on the other. His scholarship is constantly in evidence; the abundant foot-notes display a wide acquaintance with the field traversed.¹ Such extended reading is a wonderful tribute to the indefatigable industry of a life so busy as that of the eminent professor must be.

We have been particularly impressed with the happiness of

¹ The reader will find so many references to the author's preceding volumes as to make it exceedingly helpful to have them also at hand, particularly *The Messiah of the Gospels*.

his renderings of Scripture. With a few trifling exceptions, his translations of the New Testament are beautifully apt. We cannot recall at this writing an author within the range of our reading who, on the whole, is superior to Dr. Briggs in this respect. In the matter of exposition, or perhaps expository paraphrase or summation would better describe it, he is more variable. His work in this respect strikes us as being very unequal, presenting both extremes, some of it being so conspicuously fine as to set us to wondering how other of it could possibly be so inadequate and unsatisfying. For such characteristics the work deserves great praise, and we desire to render it here, trusting that the tribute paid him may not be discounted by its brevity.

In some respects we think the volume is open to unfavorable criticism :

1. Judging from our author's presentation of the subject, one would suppose that there was one side only to the views discussed. No one ignorant of the real state of the case would ever imagine that, except in matters of unimportant detail, any difference of opinion existed. He seems utterly to ignore the conservative side ; with him it is all *res adjudicata* ; there is practically nothing in issue. Now, while this may be, and probably is, Dr. Briggs' decided conviction, yet there are many who differ from him ; antiquarians they may be, but as serious and sincere in conviction as he, and they are, at least by repute, scholars. It would not have been unseemly in our author to have recognized their existence, and to have conferred upon them at least the dignity of a foot-note reference. We do not remember anywhere in the volume the name of a single writer representing the distinctly conservative school of critics. There are a few paragraphs which we suppose refer to conservatism, but they are mere allusions, slight and slighting, and but thinly veil his contempt. It may possibly be a question in the minds of some of his readers whether his altitude justifies his attitude.

2. With all Dr. Briggs' candor in certain directions, there is at the same time something that has impressed us as an inexplicable reserve in other directions, an absence of certain positive statements that one would naturally expect in certain connections.

Would it not seem strange that one could traverse the whole field of apostolic Christology and give no decided, unequivocal indication of his views on the fundamental matters of faith that divide the various churches? Is it not remarkable that an author can discuss Paul's introduction to the Epistle to the Ephesians, and yet leave the reader wondering whether the writer be a Calvinist or an Arminian? Would it not be held to indicate a rare reserve in a writer to set forth the Christology of Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, and give no certain indication of his views of the Atonement? Incredible as the statement may seem, we do not believe that, judging from this book alone, a reader could, with any positiveness, assign the author any distinct position among the various churches or any clear alignment amid the differing schools of theological thought. So far as this volume goes, he might be a Methodist, a Baptist, an Episcopalian, or a Presbyterian—well-nigh anything but an "antiquarian."

3. He discusses the development of the Messianic idea just as if it were purely and solely a natural growth. He nowhere says this in so many words. There is no single statement which could be selected and adduced as irrefragable proof that he holds this view, and we do not wish to be misunderstood as charging this or anything like it. At the same time there is no statement anywhere which clearly and unequivocally implies or involves the contrary. If there be in the whole volume any distinct reference to the Spirit of God revealing and inspiring, guiding, restraining, and guarding, such reference has escaped our notice. The phraseology¹ again and again is such as accords perfectly with a purely natural development under the ordinary influences of the Spirit promoting growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and it is equally inconsistent with any such view of divine inspiration as we have been taught to hold.

In this connection it is worthy of note that the discussion begins, as did *The Messiah of the Gospels*, with extra-canonical writings. These are cited as the beginning of the Messianic development, and they are cited with no intimation that as to authority they stand upon a footing entirely different from that of

¹ See, for example, pp. 21, 30, 31, 59, 73, 80, 176.

the New Testament books. Of course, our author may have intended this to be taken for granted; it is altogether likely that he did, but at the same time a sentence saying so much in express terms would not have been at all out of place, particularly in an author whose windows are so wide open towards Germany.

4. In keeping with the foregoing, it seems clearly involved in more than one statement¹ of the author that the declaration of an apostle at any time reveals the full content of that apostle's knowledge at that time, that in each instance he tells all he knows; if later he adds anything, our author seems to infer that he has learned that much more in the meantime. The necessity for such an inference we cannot appreciate. Why the apostles should be bound on any occasion to tell all that they knew about Christ any more than Dr. Briggs is bound to put in this volume all that he knows about the apostles is difficult to say. The Professor would probably claim to have said all that he thought called for by the occasion and the audience addressed, and such a course seems to us no less right or rational for Paul and Peter in their writings. It is, to say the least, a plausible explanation, and, as such, is preferable to the implication of ignorance.

5. Of course, in a discussion pursuing the method followed in this volume, an author would have frequent occasion to refer to the "Pauline Idea of the Messiah," the "Petrine," and the "Johannean." But there are ways more than one of doing this; one is to refer to these "ideas" as if they were altogether original and independent, emphasizing the points of difference as due, doubtless, to difference of view-point, differences of knowledge, of opportunity, of Christian experience, of growth—in short, such variations as would inevitably result from a purely natural development in different minds working under different influences. Another way would be to refer these differing conceptions to the individualizing of the same truth conveyed by one and the same inspiring Spirit of God, but taking on something of the color of the mind and heart through which the revelation in each instance was given to the world. While we may not with too much assurance state that Prof. Briggs pursues the former course, we can,

¹ See pp. 30, 31, 44, 59, 251.

with all confidence, assert that he certainly does not pursue the latter. There is ominous absence of reference to the Holy Ghost as the great unifying element in the various Messianic ideas.

6. Once more in this same connection: We are somewhat startled to find allusions made to mistakes, errors, misconceptions, and ignorance in the apostles or their writings, *e. g.* :

“But the apostle is arguing against the distributive sense of the seed, and in this he is correct. He is incorrect in referring it to Christ alone as a person.” (P. 138, note.) “Paul nowhere in his epistles seems to know of the conception of Jesus in theophany, as described in the Gospel of Luke. . . . But the lack of knowledge of the apostle does not exclude the reality of the event.” (P. 143, note.) “It refers to the daily offerings of the high priest, whether this is an error of ignorance, as Pfeiderer and others think, or an error of inadvertence, summing up, in the work of the high priest, unconsciously, the work of the entire priesthood.” (P. 264.)

We have become accustomed to such references and allusions in other quarters, but to find them so quietly and incidentally and naturally made in a volume published by a professor in a Presbyterian theological seminary in the United States is something novel.

7. Lastly, in the line of general criticism, we dislike exceedingly Prof. Briggs' way of referring to difficulties. We have no patience at all with anything like a complete ignoring of difficulties. We have contempt only for a removal which evidently does not remove; we have small sympathy with any spirit of orthodox bravado which essays simply to “whistle them down the wind,” so to speak. The only dignified, fair, scholarly course is an honest recognition of difficulties where such exist. Nothing is ever really and permanently gained by denying, ignoring, or evading them; but at the same time *one should be as just to faith as he is to doubt*; and if a writer believes the case stronger for the former than for the latter, it should be made evident to every reader. With the statement of difficulties there should always go some facts, if such there be, to render them less formidable. This course is not pursued by Dr. Briggs. For example, in introducing the Revelation of St. John he says:

“The Apocalypse of John has been, from the earliest times, the most doubtful writing in the New Testament. Pious bishops, theologians, and reformers

have either denied its canonicity or have expressed grave doubts whether it ought to be included in the canon of Holy Scripture. It is also the most difficult writing in the New Testament." (P. 284.)

Now, of course this is true; but to leave the statement just as it is, with no reference whatever to the fact that a majority of "pious bishops, theologians," etc., have accepted it in the face of all difficulties; that the grounds for its acceptance outweigh the objections; that the very contest greatly strengthens its claims, in that it has sustained successfully such severe test; to omit all such qualification as this, is to fall short of a full and fair statement of the case. Again, as before stated, it is altogether likely that Dr. Briggs intends this to be taken for granted. It is unfortunate, however, that in every instance *whatever risk there be* must be taken by that side of the controversy on which the author is supposed to stand. We cannot think Dr. Briggs' statements of difficulties at all happy; they are not such as to strengthen faith; on the contrary, we fear that many readers will lay down his work with the uncomfortable feeling that the case is even worse than they thought it to be. Our author is always just to skepticism; were he as fair to faith, we would have no fault to find. This ought he to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

So much by way of general criticism. Going somewhat more into detail in the matter of specific criticism, we mention a number of points in which, if we have interpreted him correctly, the distinguished author seems to hold views, if not peculiar, at least out of accord with those commonly held in the Presbyterian Church. We shall not lengthen this paper and burden the reader with quotations in every instance to sustain these criticisms; foot-notes, in most cases, will indicate the passages upon which the points are based, and each reader can test for himself the critic's conclusions.

1. Dr. Briggs seems to hold to a general as opposed to a particular redemption. As between the Calvinist and the Arminian here, we think that the views advanced in this volume would align the author on the Arminian side.¹

2. It seems involved in certain references and allusions that the

¹ See pp. 124, 152, 474, 491, 516.

author believes in some kind of a purgatory; just what, we are not prepared to say, but we think there are some statements in the volume clearly inconsistent with the declaration that "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory."¹

3. That for some persons dying unsaved there is a probation after death. Of course our author limits the application of this probation to those who have never had an opportunity of accepting Christ during their lifetime. We need not detain readers with the obvious difficulties that confront this attractive hypothesis. If probation at all, why not a wider extension? Why for the heathen in Africa any more than for the heathen in the United States? Why for the heathen at all anywhere, if condemnation for sin be just? If condemnation for sin without opportunity to accept Christ be unjust, wherein consists the grace of salvation? But we cannot enter this inviting field of discussion; our purpose is mainly to indicate the author's view,² not to discuss it.

4. The author plainly indicates the possibility of salvation out of Christ, suggesting a distinction between the Messianic salvation and some other, between "*the* salvation," "*the* life," and some indefinite anarthrous salvation and life, not of "the kingdom," and not brought through the Messiah; *e. g.*,

"Peter³ does not mean to teach that all who know not of this salvation will be condemned to everlasting punishment at death. Such a doctrine is nowhere to be found in Holy Scripture. . . . He teaches that Jesus is the only Messiah. No other Messiah will come. He is the only corner-stone of the kingdom of God. No other will ever be laid. He has brought the Messianic salvation into the world. No other is to be expected. His salvation is the Messianic salvation, and no one else can give it. He is the only Saviour who can give this salvation." (P. 34.)

Commenting on 1 John v. 12, he says:

"The definite article is important, because it indicates that the life here spoken of is the eternal life given unto us by God in his Son; and it does not imply that those who have not received it are altogether destitute of religious life and deprived of every hope of salvation." (P. 491, note. See also p. 518.)

The only salvation we know anything about is "*the* salvation"

¹ See pp, 56, 130, 362, 531, 532, 534.

² See pp. 35, note, 40, 56, 58, note, 362, 493, note, 517 and note, 518.

³ Acts iv. 8-12.

revealed in the Scriptures; the word of God gives not a hint even of any other. This word is certainly the standard and test for all to whom it comes. For those who live and die utterly ignorant of its very existence, God *may* have other standards and other tests. He is sovereign in government, infinite in wisdom and in mercy; we can safely leave all such issues in his divine hands; amid such perplexities one may indulge a hope, but he cannot exercise a faith.

Indeed, we can go further than this: wherever the Scriptures refer to the condition of such persons they seem invariably to suggest the hopelessness of that condition without the gospel; whenever the Jew and the Gentile are in any respect compared, the uniform conclusion is that there is "no difference"¹—no difference in the ruin, no difference in the remedy, no difference in the condition of salvation or the method. We would have been glad to read from our author some comment on Rom. x. 12–15 in this connection.

Moreover, such speculation is far-reaching; it starts one inevitably to questioning the *necessity* of the atonement; and so this very benevolent, somewhat popular theory, harmless as it may seem to many, enters into the very vitals of the Christian system, and reaches even to the character of God, his justice, his wisdom, his mercy.

5. Dr. Briggs has some things to say about the virgin birth of our Lord which seem to be inconsistent with the very clear and explicit historical statements made in the New Testament narrative, and altogether out of accord with the creeds of Christendom. His statements² appear to us inconsistent with the *Confession of Faith*, Chap. VIII., 2, *Larger Catechism*, Quest. 37, *Shorter Catechism*, Quest. 22.

6. There is, as has been already intimated, a great obscurity attending all the references to Christ's atoning sacrifice, a uniform absence of the terms commonly used by writers, from Turretin to Hodge. In a writer less candid than Dr. Briggs such

¹ See Rom. i. 18–21; iii. 23; ii. 7–11; iii. 29, 30.

² See pp. 251, 523.

uniform avoidance of the natural and familiar phraseology would infallibly suggest a suspicion of evasion.¹ We think that a critic should be very slow to insinuate such a charge against any writer, particularly against one as independent and outspoken as the author of this work; but whatever may be the reason for it, the fact remains that there is not in the whole book, from beginning to end, one clear, simple, satisfactory statement of the real nature of Christ's sacrifice as interpreted in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. References and allusions to the atonement there are innumerable, as a matter of course, but there is a certain vagueness and indefiniteness invariably attending them all. This lack of definiteness in statement may proceed from a lack of definiteness in belief. Our explanation of the case is, that Dr. Briggs is obscure in expression because he is obscure in thought; he says nothing more definite because he has nothing more definite to say. He is in a state of transition, and his views of the atonement are, consciously or unconsciously, in suspense. Whether he is himself aware of it yet or not, he has, in our judgment, dragged his anchor from the moorings of the *Westminster Confession*, and is now drifting in some uncertainty, but his general course is Andover-wards. In the initial number of this QUARTERLY we published a somewhat extended review of the "Andover Renaissance." There is much in this work of Dr. Briggs that revives reminiscences of our study of that movement.

From what has been said, the reader will perceive that the grounds of the criticism must necessarily be very subtle, the defect being negative rather than positive. To vindicate our criticism would require an extent of citation and comment out of all proportion to the limits of this paper; we would be compelled to give pages of quotation, followed by comment even more extended and minutely critical. If the reader will consult the references below,² he will be in a position to judge the justice of our criticism.

¹ For an illustration of the same thing in a different connection, note carefully the phraseology on page 189; the avoidance here is something unique in *Presbyterian* literature.

² See pp. 216; 247, 263, 266; 253, 265; 526, 529, 486, note.

In addition to the foregoing, there are occasional statements made by the author which have impressed us as at least questionable; some of them, in themselves alone considered, may be regarded as very trivial, some perhaps more serious, but all are blemishes, affecting, more or less, the value of the volume, possibly the trustworthiness of the author in the matter of accuracy or care. As instances of questionable statements, we note the following:

Discussing the First Epistle of Peter, he says: "The writer nowhere mentions the church or church officers." A writer making such a statement as this owes to his readers some explanation of 1 Pet. v. 1-4; to omit it assumes a knowledge which many of them do not possess. On page 106 he says that in Paul's usage the phrase *church of God* does not refer to local congregations, but to the whole body of Christians, and adds that this is in accordance with the use of church in the Gospel of Matthew. The use of the word in Matt. xviii. 17 leaves room to doubt the statement. Commenting on John iii. 16-21, he says:¹ "This section is evidently a comment upon the words of Jesus." There is something very dogmatic in the positiveness of this "evidently," in view of the fact that such critical scholars as Calvin, Meyer, Alford, Godet, and others, with all their study of the passage, failed utterly to see it.

In his final summation (p. 525) he says: "It is evident, therefore, that the historical events of the life of Christ on earth are of small importance in the doctrine of the apostles." We are at a loss to understand either the motive or the grounds for just such a statement. That there is very little *narrative* in the writings of the apostles goes without saying; there is no call for it. That the teaching of the apostles presupposes a great familiarity with the life of Christ on earth is perfectly evident. The reader will recall innumerable references and allusions which assume this familiarity. Without such knowledge the doctrine of the apostles would be simply a puzzling enigma; so that our author's assertion above is much like stating that the rules of arithmetic are of small importance in the teaching of algebra.

On page 527 we read: "The law became itself accursed when

¹ Page 515.

it crucified the holy Jesus, and lost its authority forever with respect to believers in him."

We cannot recall a single scriptural statement to justify such an assertion; it is nowhere asserted or implied that the law became accursed. The law, on the contrary, is magnified, made honorable, established and fulfilled by Christ. It loses its authority over believers in him just as a note loses its claim when it is paid; and it became accursed just as a note is accursed by the payment thereof.¹

On page 537: "It is evident, therefore, that apart from the Epistles of John, the resurrection and enthronement of the Messiah is the most important Christian doctrine, upon which Peter and Paul dwell most frequently and most fully."

If the apostles dwell most frequently and most fully on the resurrection and enthronement, it is because the resurrection and the enthronement are the attestation and the consummation of Christ's mediatorial work. The importance of these two great doctrines is derived from their necessary relation to this work. Apart from the cross they are as seals sundered from the document they attest, or like conclusions without premises. This is so patent that citation is superfluous.²

Our author says, on page 540, that "the kingdom to Paul is always eschatological," that he "nowhere uses kingdom in the soteriological sense."

Of course, this is a matter of interpretation. We are compelled to record our dissent from such a statement. It must be left to each reader to judge for himself between us.

On page 152, discussing Rom. v. 12-21:

"By one act of trespass the many, all the race of men, were constituted sinful men. By one act of righteous obedience to God, even unto the death of the cross, the many, the same race of men, are constituted righteous men. As Dr. Forbes well says: 'Thus, in Adam, humanity fell; in Christ, humanity rose again. All are involved in the ruin of the first man; all are equally interested in the salvation by "him that was to come."'"

This paragraph needs more explanation than the context affords. Much depends upon the exact reference and meaning of the word

¹ See Rom. iii. 31; vii. 12-14.

² As specimens of Paul's teaching, see Acts xvii. 31; Rom. i. 4; Phil. ii. 9.

“equally” in the last clause. Taken just as it stands, we cannot regard it as a satisfactory statement.

On page 486 (note), referring to 1 John iii. 16, he remarks: “The very fact that laying down of the life for others is what every Christian should do, shows that the conception here is not of a victim of the ritual of a sacrificial system.”

We cannot appreciate the point made here. The *fact* of the self-sacrifice is all that is in issue; the precise circumstances, nature, method of it, do not enter into the apostle’s application at all. It is the spirit of Christ here, as elsewhere, held up for his followers’ imitation. Our author’s comment is irrelevant and useless. There is, perhaps, no single instance in which our Lord is held up to us as an example which, if construed literally and in every detail with exact correspondence, would not be ruled out as impossible for his followers. Such a method of interpretation would play havoc with all illustration and argument from analogy throughout the whole compass of literature.

In his discussion of 1 John v. 6–13, he says: ¹

“There are those who think that this passage excludes from eternal salvation all who have not this life from God. Such persons do not understand the writer. He does not exclude from salvation the heroes of faith in the Old Testament, who did not know Christ and confess him, and receive eternal life in him; for the time had not yet come for the manifestation of the Messiah. No more, then, are the pious heathen excluded, who fear God in the form of religion they profess, but have no knowledge of the Messiah. No more does it exclude those of any age who have not been brought to a knowledge of him, and who have not rejected him.”

This paragraph introduces a needless confusion, unless the writer is prepared to place the Old Testament heroes of faith and the heathen upon the same platform. As to the former, our Lord’s reference to Abraham may have some bearing: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” (John viii. 56.) As to the latter, “pious heathen, who fear God in the form of religion they profess,” have thus far been found only in the hypotheses of kind-hearted theorists. Such heathen and such forms of heathen religion are not historical realities; the real heathen, unfortunately, is not pious, and his religion is not a form to fear God in.

¹ Page 492, note.

About one-third of the whole volume is devoted to the Apocalypse of John, and to this discussion attaches the greatest interest of the treatise. As late as January, 1888, our author published an article in the *Presbyterian Review* (predecessor to the present *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*), of which he was then the chief managing editor. This article was a somewhat brief, but exceedingly vigorous, attack upon Vischer's theory, supported by Harnack and others, that the Apocalypse was a composite document, and showed the traces of two hands in its present form. This theory Dr. Briggs very ably opposed for the following reasons, in brief:

1. If the Apocalypse is to be divided between two authors, these ought to show *differences of language*.

2. The new theory was bound to show differences in *style and methods of composition* between the two authors.

3. Vischer does not present any differences in *historical situation* to justify two different authors.

4. The argument from *citation and use of other writings* counts against the new theory, so far as any evidence has yet been presented on this subject.

5. The argument from *difference of doctrine* in favor of the new hypothesis does not sustain the theory.

Our author then added, most forcibly, we think:

"Furthermore, the title of the Apocalypse ought to have been explained. How could the Christian author embrace a Jewish apocalypse and his own additions to it under the title, Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι τοῖς δοῦλοις αὐτοῦ? It was also necessary to consider xxii. 18, 19. Vischer assigns xxii. 6-21 in general to the Christian author, but leaves out of consideration the objections that spring therefrom against his theory. Verses 18, 19 pronounce a curse upon any one who adds to the book or takes from it. If this belonged to the Jewish original, the Christian editor would hardly have retained this curse upon him for everything he had done. If they belong to the Christian author, what sort of conscience must he have had to pronounce a curse upon any one else who should do with his work precisely what he himself had done with the work of another?"

After some very keen discussion of the difficulties confronting the theory in the twelfth chapter, the article concludes with the following decisive paragraph:

"The new theory does not bear serious examination. The principles of the Higher Criticism are against it. It is a premature birth. If the authors had re-

tained it longer for critical examination they might possibly have strengthened it. It is probable that they would have abandoned it. It will call to a fresh study of the Apocalypse in its historical relations, and will therefore be of service to Christian scholarship. But in its present form it certainly does little credit to the critical judgment of Harnack, and impairs his reputation for scientific criticism."

Such was the position maintained in the article published in 1888. Referring in the present volume to the view he then entertained, he says: ¹

"I was withheld from accepting the documentary theory of the Apocalypse by the unity which I have always found in the book. In adopting the documentary hypothesis, I hold it in entire consistency with that unity. The unity is the work of the final editor. The author of the Apocalypse of John has transposed parts of the different original apocalypses, has pushed the beginning of some of them into the midst of others of them, and so rearranged the whole material as best to suit the symmetry he was aiming to produce. It is impracticable, in a volume like this, which has to do with the Messianic idea of the Apocalypse rather than with its literary forms, to go deeply into the subject of its analysis and composition. I can only state the results which I have reached, and some of the reasons therefor."

It would have been exceedingly gratifying if our author *could* have found space somewhere in his one hundred and seventy-eight pages devoted to the Apocalypse to answer his own seven-page criticism of the theory he now upholds, particularly as to the *honesty* and *conscience* of the alleged Christian editor and "the real core of the problem" contained in chapter xii. These latter points are not even alluded to; and as to the unity, it was surely just as explicable by the work of an editor in 1888 as in 1895. This decisive change of view gives an interesting gauge of Dr. Briggs' rapid progress.² In 1888 the theory of *two* hands concerned in the Apocalypse does not "bear serious criticism"; in 1895 he sees not *two* hands merely, but *four* editions, with the omnipresent redactor, a most marvellous rearrangement, transposition, etc., of material, the beginning of some thrust into the midst of others, numerous editorial seams, and all ingeniously combined into such symmetry that one of the foremost Higher Critics of the age could say confidently in 1888 that the theory of

¹ Page 289.

² It may be well to state here, also, that Dr. Briggs regards the prologue to the Gospel of John as an addition made to the original by some later hand. This and several other passages of the same Gospel were passed over in the volume, *The Messiah of the Gospels*, being reserved for treatment in the present work.

even *two* hands in its composition impairs one's reputation for scientific criticism.

This transposition and rearrangement is so interesting that we will gratify the natural curiosity of our readers by presenting here the scheme according to our author's own readjustment:

TABLE OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS OF THE APOCALYPSE.

IV. EDITION.							
III. EDITION.						REDACTOR.	
II. EDITION.				5. BEASTS.	6. DRAGON.		
I. EDITION.			4. BOWLS.				
1. EPISTLES.	2. SEALS.	3. TRUMPETS.					
i. 9.	i. 4-6.	i. 7, 8.				and many notes throughout.	
i. 10-iii.	iv.-vi.	vii. 1-8.					
	viii. 1.	viii. 2-ix.		x. 1b, 2.			
		x. 1a.		x. 8-11.			
	xi. 15b-18.	x. 3-7.		xi. 1-13.			
		xi. 14-15a.			xii. 1-17.		
		xi. 19.		xii. 18.			
				xiii.			
	xiv. 1-5.	xiv. 6, 7.		xiv. 8-13.			
		xiv. 14-20.					
	vii. 9 17.		xv.-xvii.	xviii.			
			xix. 1-8.	xix. 11-21.	xx.		
			xxi. 9-15.		xxi. 1, 2.		
			xxi. 16b, 17.		xxi. 16a, c.		
			xxi. 22-27.		xxi. 18-21.		
			xxii. 1, 2.		xxii. 3-5.		
		xxi. 6, 7b, 8.			xxi. 3-5a.		
xxi. 5b, 7a.			(xix. 9, 10.)				
xxii. 16, 17.	xxii. 21.	xxii. 10-15.	xxii. 6-9.				xxii. 18, 20.

The author's concluding word in offering this volume to the public is:

"This third volume of the series is now given to those who have read and studied the previous volumes, in confidence that they will see in it the crown of the biblical Messianic idea. It is a birth from many years of severe study and discipline. It expresses my matured convictions. It may be regarded as a confession of my faith."

This solemn statement justifies the title we have prefixed to our paper. Concerning it we have two remarks to make before laying down the pen:

1. Dr. Briggs' confession of faith seems to us in several important particulars to differ from that of the Westminster divines and from their catechisms, concerning which venerable documents it may not be irrelevant in this connection to add that "there are doubtless many still living" who regard these antiquarian symbols as the standards of the Presbyterian Church.

2. While according our author all sincerity in claiming that this volume expresses his "matured convictions," we feel sure that he will find himself mistaken. They are his convictions, of this we have not the slightest doubt; that they are *not* mature, we have as little. We confidently predict that Dr. Briggs will sooner or later put forth another confession of his faith, one which may possibly astonish some of his readers.

If we are not greatly at fault, his convictions are yet far from *ripe*.

SAMUEL M. SMITH.

Columbia, S. C.