

The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

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Number 5.

The Angels Of Christ's "Little Ones."

In the midst of one of our Lord's most significant discourses, there occurs, as recorded by Matthew, this warning: "See and despise not one of these little ones; for I tell you that their angels in the heavens look ever on the face of my Father who is in the heavens." So, at least, Mr. JAMES MOFFAT renders it, with perhaps unnecessary literality, in his *Historical New Testament*. The authors of the *Twentieth Century New Testament* present it in this form: "Beware of despising one of these lowly ones, for in Heaven, I tell you, their angels always see the face of my heavenly Father." Perhaps the emphases of the saying may be brought out by some such rendering as this: "See that ye despise not a single one of these little ones; for I say unto you that it is the angels that belong to them, which in the heavens continually behold the face of my Father which is in the heavens." It is a passage, which, in the familiar form given it in our common version, is much upon our lips. But it is one of those passages which it is easier to repeat as a whole than to explain in detail. And it may be doubted whether we

always pause before we make use of it, to ask whether we are employing it in the exact sense our Lord intended to be put upon it. Certainly there are puzzling questions that emerge as soon as we scrutinize it with care, on the answers to be returned to which serious students are by no means agreed. Who are these "little ones," not a single one of whom we ought to dare to despise? What is meant by their angels,—their own special angels as emphatically as the combined employment of the definite article and the possessive pronoun can mark them out? What is implied by the continual looking upon the heavenly Father's face in heaven by these angels? And how does the fact that their angels continually behold the Father's face in heaven give support to the warning that we must not despise a single one of these "little ones" on earth? Every one of these questions, at least, must receive a distinct reply before we can attach a definite meaning to the passage. Let us make a beginning by looking somewhat closely at one of them. What is meant by "the angels of these little ones?"

Are Guardian Angels Meant? The answer that has been most commonly given, at least from ORIGEN's day, has been that "guardian" or "tutelary" angels are meant. ORIGEN himself seems to have no doubt of it. Speaking of God's goodness to those that approach him in prayer, he remarks that not only may the angels in general be employed for their aid, "but also the angel of each, even of those who are little in the Church, always beholding the face of the Father that is in the heavens and gazing on the Godhead of him that created us, prays with us and works with us, as far as possible, for the things for which we pray."* Elsewhere he tells us that not only has each church an angel, as we are told in the Apocalypse, but each of us, down to the least in the Church of God, has his own angel, who for our support and gain continually beholds the face of the Father who is in heaven.† To the later fathers this has become an axiom. "Each one of us," insists CHRYSOSTOM, "has an angel." "All Christians," declares MACARIUS, "at the moment of baptism, receive, each, an angel from God." The idea has become an article of faith in the Church of Rome.‡ And it seems to be little less than an article of faith to many Protestant commentators, if we may judge by the dogmatism of their assertion of it. "The belief that every individual has a guardian angel—which is a post-Babylonian development of the Old Testament view that God exercised his care over his people through angelic instrumentality—is here confirmed by Jesus (Acts xii. 15),—a point which is to be simply admitted," and not softened by an "as it were," as BLEEK seeks to do, or the like. That

**De Orat.* 11, *ad finem*; *Migne* I., 452.
 †*Hom. in Num.* xx. 8; *Migne* II., 738.
 ‡*Cf. Cat. rom.* IV., 9.

is the decisive way in which MEYER expresses himself. And he has a great host in his company.

Did Our Lord Borrow a Jewish Notion? Nevertheless, this confidently held opinion is by no means free from difficulty. Certainly, for one thing, the Bible knows nothing elsewhere of this doctrine of "guardian angels." Unless it is alluded to here and in the parallel passage (Acts xii. 15), there is not a word in the whole Bible that in the remotest way suggests it. Indeed, it is not usual for the commentators to claim a Biblical basis for it. They rather suppose our Lord here, and the early Christians reported in Acts, to adduce a popular Jewish belief, which had grown up since the close of the Old Testament canon, and the only clear traces of which in the New Testament are discoverable in just these two passages. Thus PAGE, commenting on the passage in Acts, remarks that "It was a popular belief among the Jews that each man had a guardian angel;" and KNOWLING a bit more unguardedly asserts that "According to Jewish ideas they would believe that Peter's guardian angel had assumed his form and voice and stood before the door." It certainly is, however, on the face of it, rash to assume that our Lord took up into his teaching a popular piece of Jewish angelology like this. It is quite contrary to the general fact regarding the relation of his teaching to such Jewish notions. EDERSHEIM closes his interesting account of Jewish angelology, in the appendix to his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, with this striking judgment: "One thing, at least, must be evident. . . . The contention of certain modern writers that the teaching about angels in the New Testament is derived from and represents Jew-

ish notions, must be perceived to be absolutely groundless and contrary to fact. In truth, the teaching of the New Testament on the subject of angels represents, as compared with that of the Rabbis, not only a return to the purity of Old Testament teaching, but we might almost say, a new revelation" (II. 752).

Did the Jews Believe in Guardian Angels? But beyond this, it seems exceedingly rash to assume the existence of such a popular Jewish belief in our Lord's day. There exists no proof of it. The commentators give us references enough, it is true, in support of their assumption; but the references, when turned up, do not support it. They tell us a good deal about a Jewish belief in "ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation;" but they tell us nothing of the permanent attachment of a given definite angel to a given definite individual, to be his life-long guardian. Even the classic instance—the narrative of TOBIT—does not go beyond a temporary mission of ministry. The impression that this is the essence of Jewish teaching grows so strong that even when we read in WEBER'S excellent account of Jewish beliefs as to the personal ministry of angels, the single sentence relevant to our present investigation, that tells us that in the late Rabbinical collection called the *Jalkut Shimeoni*, at Bereschith, 119, it is affirmed that "all Israelites have angels as companions, and that in foreign countries, as well as in the land of Israel,"* we feel like suspending judgment until we can see the passage referred to. It would be very difficult for our Lord to take up into his teaching a popular Jewish notion that did not exist.

**Jüd. Theol.*, s. 171.

Will the Passages Allow Of Guardian Angels?

But the real difficulty of explaining these passages by the aid of the notion of "guardian angels" is that this notion does not in the least fit their requirements. Where should a "guardian angel" be, except with his ward? That is the essential idea of a "guardian angel;" he is supposed to be in unbroken attendance upon the saint committed to his charge. But neither in Mat. xviii. 10, nor in Acts xii. 15 are the angels spoken of found with their wards; but distinctly elsewhere. Our Lord says that the angels of the little ones of which he speaks, are not on earth with their charges, but "in heaven, constantly beholding the face of my Father who is in heaven." It was because the Christians gathered in Mary's house could not believe it was the imprisoned Peter who was at the door, that they supposed it must be his angel. It is thus characteristic of these angels mentioned in the New Testament that they are *not* constantly with those whose angels they are. If "guardian angels" are intended, one wonders how it gives force to the warning that we would do well not to despise a single one of these "little ones," to be told that their "guardian angels" are not with them but are "always in heaven, beholding the face of my Father which is in heaven." And one wonders whether if Peter had a guardian angel at all, it would not be just the time when he would be supposed to be with him, when he lay languishing in prison, expectant of the worst on the morrow. Nay, one knows that God's angel—which seems something better than Peter's angel—was actually with Peter, ministering to his needs at this exact time. Mr. JOHN HAY expresses himself with almost incredible coarseness, when he gives us to understand, in the closing lines

of his pathetic ballad of "Little Breeches," that in the view of the commonalty, angels would be in considerably "better business" saving little children and "bringing them to their own," than (as he phrases it) "loafing around the throne." If we may be permitted to confine the remark specifically to "guarding angels," whose particular function is to guide and guard the individuals whose "guardian angels" they are, it does not appear, however, but that in the essence of the matter he may be fairly right.

Are Ministering Angels Meant? All these circumstances being taken into consideration, we cannot wonder that many commentators refuse to call in the notion of "guardian angels" properly so-called, and fall back on the undoubtedly Scriptural doctrine of the general employment of angels in ministering to the heirs of salvation, the great warrant for which in the New Testament is Heb. i. 14. KÜBEL is a good example of commentators of this class, and it may be interesting to have before us the essence of his polemic note. The definite article, along with the possessive pronoun attached to the word "angels," he says, shows "certainly that Jesus here speaks of definite angels as charged with the care of the interests of the children of God. But," he adds, "it does not follow from this that there are definite angels universally and permanently distributed to definite persons, especially to children, as is assumed by the theory of guardian angels Even Tobit xii. 14, 15, does not go beyond the conception that one or another angel (who may be interchanged) have specially committed to them particular interests. SCHANZ allows that our passage does not of itself prove that 'every man has his angel,' but appeals to other indications and the teaching of many

fathers. He does not say what passages give these indications. . . . 'Their angels,' accordingly, are angels in general (certainly definite angels for definite cases) as watching our children. These, just as generally all angels, 'always behold,' etc. (cf. Luke i. 19)." With KÜBEL, NÖSGEN fully agrees, and, to go no further, our own American commentator, Dr. BROADUS, argues strongly for the same general position.

Difficulties Of this Assumption. Attractive as this explanation is, and plausibly argued as it has been by numerous commentators of the first rank, it nevertheless seems burdened with serious difficulties. The individualization of the angels spoken of in both passages, certainly is sufficiently emphatic to bid us pause before we neglect it. The definition of the angels of "these little ones," in Mat. xviii. 10, by means of both the definite article and the possessive pronoun, is very pointed. We should scarcely misrepresent it if we translated, "The specific angels belonging to them." And in Acts xii. 15, similarly, it is specifically "Peter's angel" that is brought before us. The interpretation now under consideration does not seem to do justice to this individualization. Moreover, what, on this theory, shall we say of the implication in the passage in Acts that "Peter's angel" was recognized by the maid by his voice? "She knew Peter's voice." Apparently the visitation was pronounced to be Peter's angel only because it seemed to be Peter. This fact presents a great difficulty even when we think of Peter's special "guardian angel;" for why should one's guardian angel be like him? Surely this necessity, if it be a necessity, must introduce searchings of heart among the "guardian angels!" And if we are to think not of a "guardian angel" but

only of one of God's angels sent on a special ministry of succor to Peter, the difficulty becomes insuperable. The commentators jauntily tell us, to be sure, that it was "in accordance with Jewish ideas" that it was believed that the angel had assumed Peter's form and voice; but they have neglected to quote the evidence that the Jews of that day—or of any day—had any notions of the sort. The fact assumed seems to be inferred from this passage only, supported by nothing more germane to it than the Jewish (and Biblical) teaching that angels when they appear to men assume visible forms, at their will. There is nothing in Jewish literature, so far as has appeared, to support the notion that angels on special service, look or speak like their charges. Neither does the argument in the passage in Matthew seem to be satisfied if we assume that angels in general are meant. For how is the warning to us not to despise a single one of these little ones supported by the remark that the angels which have been from time to time employed in ministering to them—as to others—along with all other angels, constantly see the face of the Father in heaven? Surely we expect something more specific to give point to so specific a caution.

**Are Angelic
"Doubles"
Meant?**

This failure of what must be recognized as the simplest and most natural explanation of the phrase "their angels," to fulfil the conditions of its use, predisposes us to hospitality towards other suggestions, even though we may have to go far afield for them. OLSHAUSEN hinted at such an explanation, when he suggested that the underlying conception is that "there lives in the world of spirit the archetype of every individual, to be realized in the course of his development," and that

"the higher consciousness which dwells in man here below, therefore, stands in living connection with the kindred phenomena of the spirit world." Something of the same kind is suggested also by F. D. MAURICE in his *Unity of the New Testament* (i. 183). He supposes that the "angels" of little children, that is, as he explains, "their pure original type, which they were created to be," "are ever present with God, ever looking up into his face." Obviously, here are reflections of the Platonic doctrine of "ideas," which there is little in the Scriptural doctrine of angels to justify. The same general notion has, however, been lately taken up and given precision and unexpected attractiveness by Dr. JAMES HOPE MOULTON in an interesting article in the July number of *The Journal of Theological Studies*. Dr. MOULTON does not go to Plato for the origin of the conception which he thinks underlies our passages, but to the Persians and ultimately the Magians. The later Parsees, it seems, supposed man to be made up of no less than five elements: body, life, soul, form or image, and the *fravashi*. The *fravashi* is, it is explained, the part that abides in the presence of Ahura; it is, in a word, as DARMESTETRE remarks, the divine element in man, the only immortal element in his nature, by union with which alone the "soul" escapes perishing with the "body." In the Avestan stage of Parsism, however, the *fravashis* appear not so much as an "inseparable part of man, the part which is hidden with God," as angelic representatives or "doubles" of good men and perhaps of communities. Dr. MOULTON supposes that the Jews picked up this notion during the exile and worked it into the complex of their own angelology. He thinks it already appears as the "princes," representatives of the nations, in the latter part

of Daniel; and again in the "angels" of the churches in Revelation. And he proposes to interpret Mat. xviii. 10 and Acts xii. 15 out of this conception. The essence of the idea is that "the angel" is not the *guardian* but the *representative*, the "double" of the person with whom he is associated. These "representative angels" are to be conceived "as spiritual counterparts of human individuals or communities, dwelling in heaven, but subject to changes depending on the good and evil behavior of their complementary beings on earth."

Attractiveness The attractiveness of
Of this Dr. MOULTON'S sug-
Suggestion. gession grows out of
two circumstances.

First, he is able to point to an actually existing conception, into contact with which the Jews may have come and which they may really have assimilated. And secondly, this conception does yield a fair account of the chief phenomenon of our passages, before which the common assumption that "guardian angels" are meant is helpless. If by Peter's "angel" is meant Peter's "double," it is not so difficult to understand how it could have been supposed to be mistaken for himself. If by the "angels of these little ones" is meant their heavenly representatives, hidden with God, it is not difficult to understand how due reverence for these little ones could be inculcated by the revelation that just their representatives stood especially close around the Father's throne.

Difficulties Nevertheless, this
Of this new explanation
Assumption. seems to us beset
with difficulties of its
own. Primarily there is the very serious difficulty of finding traces of the Zoroastrian notion adduced in the Biblical text at all. In order to do so, Dr. MOULTON sweeps together

passages which on the surface appear sufficiently incongruous. The "princes" of Daniel and the "angels of the churches" in the Apocalypse—what, on the face of it, have they in common with the "angels of these little ones" of Matthew and "Peter's angel" of Acts? Assuredly, very different conceptions underlie these two pairs of passages. And these two pairs of passages are all the passages that Dr. MOULTON can find to which to make appeal with any confidence. Next, Dr. MOULTON has not, as yet at least, been able to adduce any direct or even plausible evidence of the intrusion of this Zoroastrian conception into Jewish or early Christian thought. The only two Christian passages he has quoted which seem possibly to show the influence of this circle of ideas, come from somewhat late Syriac documents—the *Testament of the Lord* and the *Hymn of the Soul*—in which they do not seem to represent primitive Christian ideas. Lastly, the conception proposed does not after all meet all the requirements of the passages themselves. Surely, in neither of our passages is there talk of a heavenly counterpart hidden with God, whose fortunes and destiny are determined by the conduct and issues of the earthly life of its "principal." Rather, if we should enter this circle of ideas at all, in Mat. xviii. 10, it might seem to be the precise opposite that is assumed; the high state of the "angels" in heaven is the *prius* to which the fortunes of the "little ones" on earth shall be conformed. And why, on this theory, should Peter's heavenly counterpart, and not rather his earthly soul, be found, clothed in his earthly semblance, knocking at an earthly door? The appearance is very strong that the only point at which Dr. MOULTON'S theory fits into the requirements of the passages is the

single point which the theory of "guardian angels" failed to fit—viz. it gives us "angels" who may be supposed to be in heaven and not on earth, and who may be supposed to have some resemblance (though surely not external) to their clients. Are we prepared to purchase this bit of adjustment at the cost of everything else?

**May
Disembodied
Souls be
Intended?**

There is yet another explanation which has sometimes been suggested, but which has been received with very little consideration by scholars. This is the very simple one that by "angel" in these passages is meant just "the disembodied soul." WEBSTER and WILKINSON explain Mat. xviii. 10 thus. The souls of these little ones, they say in effect, when they go to heaven, stand peculiarly near the throne. Subsequent commentators have for the most part treated the suggestion with silent contempt; or, if they mention it, with a contempt that is not silent. "Not their own 'spirits after death,' as WEBSTER and WILKINSON strangely suppose," is MORRISON'S comment. "There have been many opinions" on this verse, says ALFORD, "some of which (*e. g.* that given by WEBSTER and WILKINSON, '*angels, their spirits after death:*' a meaning which the word never bore—see SUICER *sub voce*—and one respecting which our Lord never could have spoken in the present tense, with 'constantly') have been broached merely to evade the plain sense of the words." Ah! if there only were a "plain sense of the words!" WEBSTER and WILKINSON cannot, it must be admitted, be numbered among expositors of the first rank. But possibly few will deny that position to REUSS. And he, though willing to admit the idea of tutelary angels in this passage,

broaches something very like WEBSTER and WILKINSON'S idea at Acts xii. 15; only to receive, to be sure, from the hands of BARDE something like the same contemptuous treatment, and from the hands of GLOAG a somewhat more serious but scarcely more deferential refutation. It may be worth our while, nevertheless, to hear what REUSS has to say. "A great difficulty," he says, "attaches to the phrase we have rendered by the words, 'It is his spirit.' Ordinarily, it is translated, 'his angel.' But that does not seem to us to yield a plausible sense. The angel of Peter should be strictly his tutelary angel, an idea not foreign to this epoch (Tobit; Mat. xviii. 10); but we must observe that the servant professes to have recognized Peter by his voice, and nobody has ever said that the tutelary angels imitate the voice of their clients. On the other hand, it is clear that the intention is to designate something superior to this material world, to our mode of existence, since it could not be Peter himself (in the opinion of the people present), while yet it was his voice, something that could come only from him. It is not strange, at bottom, that the same word should be employed for angel and spirit (ghost), the latter word having with us both usages."

**Was Peter's
Angel Peter's
Spirit?**

Assuredly, if we could dare take the word "angel" in these passages in the sense of disembodied spirit, the requirements of both passages would be fully satisfied. What more natural than that the Christian brethren assembled in Mary's house, when assured by the maid that Peter stood at the door, speaking with Peter's voice,—though they knew him to be closely guarded in prison, or perhaps already in worse case than even this—should have sprung to the only

other possible explanation of the phenomenon: "It is his spirit!" Dr. MOULTON remarks, it is true: "The incredulous Christians, if they meant Peter's ghost, must have thought of a 'phantasm of the living,' for there is no suggestion that they supposed he was dead without their having heard it." But this does not seem convincing. There is every suggestion that they knew he was destined for death and feared the worst; and there is no reason why they may not have jumped to the conclusion that the worst had come and they had not heard of it, but were being only now and thus advertised of it. Many others, in every age of the world, have done this very thing. The only difficulty derived from the passage itself, that strikes us, is the occurrence in the immediate context (vs. 7 and 9) of the same word "angel" in a different sense, to wit, in the sense of "the angel of the Lord" sent to minister to this saint. It would be ordinarily more natural to understand "It is his angel," in verse 15, as referring to the same angel whose transactions with Peter are recorded in verses 7-10. But this consideration is weakened by the fact that the words in verse 15 are quoted words, and the scene there depicted does not presuppose in the minds of the actors in it the previous scene, but derives its whole force from the contrary assumption. In these circumstances the use of "angel" in its ordinary sense in verses 7-10 can scarcely be treated as a bar to its employment in a secondary and derived sense in verse 15.

**May the Angels
Of the Little
Ones be Their
Souls?**

In the passage in Matthew, nothing could seem more appropriate than the sense of "disembodied spirits." What could so enhance the reverence with which

"these little ones"—especially if literal "children" are meant—should be treated here than the assurance that it is specifically their souls which in heaven stand closest to the Father's throne? ALFORD, indeed, tells us that this sense is rendered impossible by the use of the present tense and the qualifying word "continually." But neither does this seem convincing. We must remember that it is a class that is here spoken of: a class, some members of which are safely gathered into the heavens though others still abide on earth. Of this class it is stated that their souls find in the heavens their due station close to the Father's throne; "they continually look on the face of my Father which is in heaven." Surely nothing could so heighten the sense of the real dignity that belongs to these little ones, whether the specially humble or the specially young be intended, than such a declaration. They may be lowly on earth; in the heavens they are lifted up.

**This is a
Natural
Extension of
Meaning.**

Is it so impossible, then, that the term "angel" could come to be occasionally employed of disembodied spirits? From the general philological point of view the legitimacy of such an extension of its meaning is, of course, indisputable. Indeed, we may say such an extension was even inevitable. That the term should come to be applied not only to angels properly so called, but to "persons who resemble angels either in attributes or actions," was as certain as that it should continue in use at all. Consider what a multitude of applications it has received in English, for example. When SCOTT tells us that Marmion, on crossing the court, "Scattered angels 'round," it is not of "heavenly messengers" he is speaking. The specific

extension we are concerned with here has also, as was inevitable, been made in our current English speech. Who of us has not been taught as a child to sing: "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand?" Some of the elders may have shaken their heads and spoken severely of corrupting the meaning of sacred words. But the song has raised little consciousness of incongruity in the minds of the congregation. An extension so simple as the application of a term, designating spiritual beings, blessed in the heavens, enjoying close communion with God, to all beings sharing these fundamental characteristics, was sure to take place. The only question of interest is whether it can be shown actually to have taken place as early as the first Christian century. And the existence of two passages, best explained by the assumption that it had already taken place in our Lord's day, goes far to give reply to this question in the affirmative. Just on the basis of Mat. xviii. 10 and Acts xii. 15 we might almost affirm the existence of this meaning.

**It Has a
Natural Point
Of Departure
In Our Lord's
Teaching.**

Additional likelihood is given to this assumption by the existence of a natural point of departure for such an extension of the meaning for the word. Replying to an entangling question of the Sadducees, our Lord declared that God's people in the resurrection "shall be as God's angels in heaven" (Mat. xxii. 30). The primary reference here is to marriage; but that the resemblance is not to be confined to this is evident from the parallel passage in Luke (xx. 36). There it is said that "they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in mar-

riage; for neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." Here the emphasis seems to be on immortality. This revelation of the similarity of our glorified state to the state of angels supplies a very distinct point of departure for the employment of the term "angels" to designate our future condition. We cannot be surprised, therefore, to find this step actually taken in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*,* where we read, "Blessed are they that fear God, for they shall become angels of God." Here there is, moreover, no direct reference to the resurrection, though naturally it is the fruition of the Messianic blessings that is in mind. The main point, however, is that the blessed estate of the children of God is no longer conceived merely as like that of angels, but as the angelic state itself. Nor do we lack further proof that this mode of thought and speech was current in the days of our Lord. Both in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, coming from pre-Christian Jewish hands, and in the Apocalypse of Baruch, coming from post-Christian Jewish hands, we meet essentially the same conception. In Enoch (li. 4; CHARLES, p. 141) we read that the righteous are all "to become angels in heaven;" and in the Apocalypse of Baruch (li. 5; CHARLES, p. 184), that they shall be "transformed into the splendor of angels," and even (li. 12) shall "surpass the excellency of angels." On the passage in Enoch CHARLES comments: "This is not to be weakened down into a mere likeness to the angels. At the least it denotes an equality with them." His whole note should be read. It is not quite exact to say with ALFORD, then; that to attribute to the word "angels" the sense of "spirits of righteous men after

*Ed. Tischendorf, p. 42, § 5, *ad finem*.

death" is to give it "a meaning which the word never bore." The righteous in their eternal state are spoken of as "angels" in both Jewish and early Christian documents. And it is not the least of the circumstances commending this interpretation of our passages to our best consideration that it proposes to explain them out of a conception demonstrably current in the days of our Lord.

The Most Likely Meaning.

It is perhaps unwise to draw conclusions too definite from such a survey. There has been suggested no explanation of these two unique phrases—"the angels of these little ones" and "Peter's angel"—which has not difficulties in its way. Possibly it may be found, however, that the interpretation which sees in them designations of disembodied spirits, despite the scorn with which this suggestion has ordinarily been treated, has more to say for itself and fewer difficulties to face than any other. It satisfies all the conditions of the passages themselves—which cannot be said of any of its rivals. It is rooted in a natural extension of the common meaning of the term employed. And it presupposes no conceptions which cannot be shown to have existed in the circles out of which Christianity arose—which again cannot be said of its chief rivals. Perhaps that is as much as we should ask before we give it our preference.

B. B. W.

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Science and Speculation.

Unquestionably there is a place for speculation as well as for science. We may go further and admit that speculation performs legitimate and important functions in scientific investigation. It is all important, however, that science be

rigidly distinguished from speculation and that the true relation obtaining between them be discerned and observed. Science, of course, is the mistress, and speculation merely her handmaid. Science is modest and patient of being challenged; speculation is apt to be cocksure and imperious. Speculation is eager of solutions; science is concerned only that its solutions be correct. Science is content to wait for knowledge and to deal with ascertained facts; speculation makes a free, often a licentious use of the imagination. Speculation is never final. Its findings may be ingenious, plausible, probable, highly probable. Further than that they cannot go. The shadow of an interrogation always rests upon them. They are and must remain *sub judice*. In saying this we are not decrying speculation. That were idle. The tendency to it is inherent in the human mind. Despite its vagaries and its varying fortunes, speculation has its legitimate functions. Its perils and its abuses are unquestionably many: still, the wise, and, indeed, the only practicable thing to do is to watch it; ever and again to disclose to itself and to others its true character and thus to try rigidly to restrict it to its proper sphere. On the other hand, it will hardly be denied that, like many another mistress with an indispensable but often officious maid, science has suffered not a little at the hands of speculation. The latter has been only too prone so to identify itself with its mistress as to construe any questioning of itself into a slight to her. This self-deception is all the easier because, being the handmaid of so austere a mistress, and really bent on doing her faithful service, speculation frequently assumes the livery, observing, as far as practicable, all the outward forms and methods of science. And yet just because sci-

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Number 1.

A Jewish Doctrine of Guardian Angels?

In the November number of THE BIBLE STUDENT we took occasion to say a few words on the meaning of the phrase "The Angels of Christ's Little Ones," which occurs in Mat. xviii. 10. In the course of those remarks we were led to express doubt of the currency, in the Judaism of the time of Christ, of a belief in "guardian angels" in the strict sense,—that is, in the sense of specific angels specifically attendant on individual men for their entire lifetime. This subject has some inherent interest which may justify us in returning to it: and this interest is quickened by the appearance of a new book in the meanwhile on *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter*, by Dr. W. BOUSSER, Professor at Göttingen, in which the subject receives appropriate treatment. We think it will repay us to hear what Dr. BOUSSER has to say and to inquire into the grounds he presents of his expressed opinions.

Bousset's Presentation.

We shall find his remarks on the subject set down on pages 317-318 of the book. They run as follows:

"From this"—that is from the notion that each of the natural elements is under the direction of its own special spirit—"is explicable

also the conception that every individual man has his guardian angel. These guardian angels too belong to the class of those little elemental-spirits. The influence of the old belief in ghosts is traceable here. The guardian angel or the *daemon* of each man is originally nothing but that part of man which after death remains over of him—as ghost—and as such is looked upon with religious awe as a being of a strange, miraculous, often malignant sort. Out of this conception developed the remarkable idea of a wonderful (heavenly) 'double' of a man, a second higher ego, which is not the man himself, and yet stands in indissoluble connection with him. In Acts xii. 13sq., the disciples believed when the maid maintained she had seen Peter, that it was his 'angel.' The heavenly 'double' of a man appears in his form. In a series of (early Christian) inscriptions, which were found in the Greek island of Thera, there is regularly found an 'angel,' with the accompanying proper name in the Genitive. In an inscription from Melos it is expressly said that the angel protects the grave, cf. A. ACHELIS *Zeitschrift für neutest. Wissenschaft*, I. pp. 88 sq. The angel that here watches the grave is originally nothing else than the disembodied spirit protecting its own grave. The development here postulated shows itself most clearly in the Iranian belief in the Fravashis (SÖDERBLOM, *Les Fravashis*, Paris, 1900). For the idea of the guardian angels, cf. further Mat. xviii. 10, the Graeco-Slavic Apocalypse of Baruch 12-13 (cf. the Apocalypse of Paul, 7-10), Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, at Genesis xxxiii. 10, xlvi. 16 (GFRÖRER, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, I. 374).

In the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Joseph 6, the angel of Abraham is invoked as the guardian angel of Joseph. Similarly the Iranian believers call on the Fravashi of Zarathustra (or the Fravashis of the pious)."

Then Dr. BOUSSËT proceeds to speak of the guardian angels of whole peoples.

Bousset's Evidence.

The reader of this interesting passage will not fail to observe the large place which theoretical interpretation plays in it. Dr. BOUSSËT knows apparently the exact lines of development of every notion that turns up, and sets down each in its due relations to all the others. And how many separable notions turn up in the passage! Here are elemental spirits and ghosts, dæmons and fravashis. certainly mingled, if not even confused. Our present task is to sift out what is said of guardian angels properly so-called, and to observe the evidence on which a belief in them is attributed to the Jews in the time of our Lord. Though Dr. BOUSSËT introduces it with a "*see further*," the evidence is absolutely confined to the items accumulated at the end of the passage: "Mat. xviii. 10, the Apocalypse of Baruch 12-13, the Targum Ps.-Jon. at Genesis xxxiii. 10, xlvi. 16, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs at Jos. 6." And this evidence on analysis melts very much away. The Gospel of Matthew, and the relevant section in this Apocalypse of Baruch, with its "double" in the Apocalypse of Paul, are all Christian documents, not Jewish. The passage from the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs merely represents Joseph as saying: "The God of my Father and the angel of Abraham will be with me." Why this should be understood to be a "guardian angel" either of Abraham or Joseph is dif-

ficult to see. That Joseph expected the angel that appeared to Abraham to be his temporary helper is all that is implied. There remain only the two passages from the Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan.

Gfrörer's Presentation. For these Targum passages, Dr. BOUSSËT sends us to GFRÖRER; and it will be most satisfactory to go to GFRÖRER. Here is his statement at large:

"The Jews at the time of Christ believed further, that by the side of every man one or more guardian angels stand. The Book of Tobit already presents this idea when (v. 16) the father says to the son as he is about to depart: 'The God that dwells in heaven will prosper your journey and his angel will keep you company.' In the Targum of Jerusalem at Genesis xxxiii. 10, Jacob says to Esau, 'Receive my present, for as I saw thy face, it seemed to me as if I saw the face of thy angel.' Similarly in Genesis xlvi. 16: 'The angel whom thou hast joined to me (*sugeordnet*), that he may save me from all evil.' In *Berachoth bab.*, p. 60, b, we read: 'When one goes to the closet, let him say (to the guardian spirits that accompany men), 'Honor to you, ye high and holy ones, servants of the Highest; give glory to the God of Israel. Leave me till I have gone within and performed my purpose and then again come to you.' Rabbi Asai thinks this should not be said lest they go away altogether, but it should rather be said, 'Guard me, guard me, help me, help me, strengthen me, strengthen me, wait for me, wait for me, till I go in and come out again.' To understand this passage we must bear in mind that the Jews were of the opinion that unclean places were the resort of devils, so that the guardian angels of men, who accompanied them everywhere else, would not enter these with them. What was sought by the prayer was to secure at least so much as that they should await the man's return.—The doctrine of guardian angels is also recognized by the more recent Jews. See EISENMENGER 2, 389 sq. A peculiar turn is given it by the mystics. According to ORIGEN (*Contr.*

Cels. vi. 27: *Opp.* I. 651, at the top), CÆLSUS maintains that the same (Jewish Christian) party which divided the world into ten circles, also taught that seven angels surround the soul of the dying man: some of these are angels of light, others belong to the class of archontics (fallen spirits) whose chief is the accursed God. This notice fits in with the esoteric Jewish teaching as to guardian angels. In *Sohar* on *Genes.* p. 40, we read: "Two angels go forth with each soul, one on the right and the other on the left. And if the man is righteous, they protect him, and if not, they accuse him. But R. PINCHAS said, "There are three angels who are man's tutors." On the other hand we read in the same treatise, at pp. 337 and 379, "The two angels that conduct man are good and bad concupiscence; so that if he walks in the good way, he corroborates good concupiscence; but if he walks in the bad way, he corroborates bad concupiscence." Similarly, *Sohar* on *Exodus*, p. 190, "From the thirteenth year onwards, God adjoins two angels to man, one on the right and the other on the left. If he walks in the good way, the right angel is strengthened, but if he walks in the bad way, the left angel grows stronger." Man has, that is to say, two *Jezer* (or innate inclinations), a good and a bad one, which begin to work about the thirteenth or fourteenth year. The doctrine of guardian angels is here subtly adjusted to this,—a play that lies at the bottom of the passage quoted from ORIGEN also.—Whether now this latter conception goes back to the time of Jesus Christ I would not venture to decide, however certain it is that the simple doctrine of guardian angels belongs to that time. *Acts* xii. 15 speaks clearly for this. What can be meant by this passage except that it is not Peter himself but his guardian angel that knocks at the door? And it is Jews who are represented as saying this. The declaration of Jesus, *Mat.* xviii. 10, comes to the same thing. The guardian angels of the little ones must necessarily be meant here, who, no doubt, prosecute their task on earth, but still also, at the same time, like the other blessed spirits, dwell in heaven."

So far GFRÖRER.

The information as to the angelology of later Judaism brought before us by this passage from GFRÖRER is very interesting. But much evidence that the conception of guardian angels was current among the Jews of the time of Christ is not afforded by it. It will have been observed that GFRÖRER himself hangs his own belief that such was the fact solely on the two New Testament passages, *Acts* xii. 15 and *Mat.* xviii. 10. Of the later evidence adduced, no doubt the two passages from the Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan are the most striking; and BOUSSER has rightly isolated them as alone worthy of attention. It must be remembered, however, that this Targum comes from, at the earliest, the seventh century after Christ, and can scarcely be treated as bearing witness in its incidental language to early Judaism. It should be said moreover that the two passages quoted by GFRÖRER are apparently the only two passages derivable from the Targums, in which the idea of guardian angels could seem to be expressed; although a good deal of *bisarrerie* about the angels is inserted here and there into the Targums (cf., for instance, the legend of the angels sent to Sodom in the Targum of the Pseudo-Jon. *Gen.* xxviii. 12). One of these passages, moreover, is sufficiently puzzling. We refer to *Genesis* xlvi. 16. GFRÖRER translates: "The angel whom thou hast associated with (or 'joined to,' [or does he mean 'ordained to?'] *sugeordnet*) me, that he may save me from all evil." This appears to involve an undue pressure of the verb *יומן*, which appears to be the standing representative in the Targum of the Hebrew *שלח* and would seem to imply no more than it. Even so, however, the substitution by the Targumist of "The angel whom thou

hast sent to me to save me from all evil," for the Hebrew designation of God himself as the "Angel which hath redeemed me from all evil," certainly has the appearance of suggesting that the Targumist had in mind a specific angel that had accompanied Jacob through his whole chequered career and saved him from the evils that dogged his steps. Additional color seems to be given to this suggestion by the fact that Jacob seems to be represented here as praying that this angel should be accepted by God—if, that is, the language is to be translated thus: "Let there be an acceptance before thee of the angel whom thou hast sent to save me from all evil." It is not impossible to see implied in this all that is seen implied in Mat. xviii. 10 by those who interpret it of guardian angels, viz: that Jacob at least was constantly accompanied by a specific angel charged with the duty of protecting him from all evil and that this angel appeared before God in heaven in his behalf. Some of these inferences are a little remote, it is true. But none of them are beyond the limits of plausibility. And a certain support is brought to the general suggestion by the second Targumic passage, Genesis xxxiii. 10. In the Hebrew, Jacob in this passage compares the sight of Esau's face to the vision of the face of God—with such reverence did he look on it. It would create no surprise if the Targumist had altered this into, "The face of an angel," or "of the angel of God." But he has actually altered it into "The face of *thy* angel," and so sets us naturally wondering what "Esau's angel" can well be. To infer that by the specific angel that belongs to Esau his "guardian angel" is intended, seems very natural. And certainly the analogy with the phraseology of Mat. xviii. 10 and Acts xii. 15 is very close. We ought not to lay too heavy a burden on two obscure pass-

ages, to be sure; but it is certainly very plausible to argue that a doctrine of guardian angels quite similar to that which is assumed by the majority of commentators to lie behind these two New Testament passages, lies behind these two Targumistic passages also. If only the Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan were seven or eight hundred years older, the four passages might be put side by side and made to support the inference that such a doctrine of guardian angels was current in the Judaism of the first Christian century.

The Ascent Of Baruch.

This interval of seven or eight centuries can scarcely be bridged by the Ascent of Baruch with its "double" (in this passage) in the Apocalypse of Paul. For, to go no further, as we have already intimated, these documents bring us Christian and not Jewish traditions. As the passage is a very favorable specimen of Apocalyptic dreaming, however, it is not without interest in itself and may be set down here. Baruch is represented as conveyed to the fifth heaven where Michael is wont to receive the prayers of men; and he saw

"and behold angels came bearing baskets full of flowers: and they gave them to Michael. And I asked the angel [*i. e.* the angel who accompanied Baruch and acted as his interpreter], 'Lord, who are these and what is it that they bring?' And he said to me, 'These are the angels who are with the Righteous.' And the Archangel [*i. e.* Michael] took the baskets and emptied them into the receptacle, and the angel said to me. 'These flowers are the virtues of the Righteous.' And I saw other angels bearing empty baskets, not filled [this seems to mean 'only half-filled baskets']. And they came sorrowing and did not venture to draw near because they had not full prizes. [*Βραβεία* as in Phil. iii. 4, cf. I. Cor. ix. 24.] And Michael called and said, 'Come ye, too, O angels, bring what

ye have brought.' And Michael was exceeding sorrowful; and also the angel with me, because they did not fill the receptacle. And likewise different angels came, lamenting and sorrowing, and saying in fear, 'See how melancholy we are, O Lord, because we are assigned [*παρεδόθημεν*] to wicked men, and we wish to depart from them.' And Michael said, 'You cannot depart from them, lest the enemy finally prevail; but tell me what you seek?' And they said, 'We beseech thee, Michael, our Arch-commander, transfer (*μεταθές*) us from them, for we cannot abide with evil and foolish men, because there is no good in them but all wickedness and greediness. . . . We beg then that we may depart from them.' And Michael said to the angels, 'Wait until I learn from the Lord what shall be.'

Michael then takes the virtues of men to God; and the narrative continues:

"And in the same hour Michael came down and the door was opened. And he brought oil. And the baskets of the angels who had brought them full he filled with oil, saying, 'Bear forth; give hundred-fold reward to our friends, even those who have toilsomely wrought good works; for those that sow well shall also reap well.' And he said also to them who had brought half-full baskets, 'Go, ye too, take back the reward according as ye have brought, and give to the sons of men.' Then said he also, to those alike who had brought full and half-empty baskets, 'Go and bless our friends and say to them that thus saith the Lord: Be ye faithful in little, over much will He set you; enter ye into the joy of your Lord.' And turning to those who had brought nothing, he spoke also to them: 'Be ye not of sorrowful countenance and weep not, neither desert the children of men . . . but since they have angered me with their works, go,' . . . and punish them in detail. The Slavonic text differs a little at the end, reading thus: "But Michael said, 'Listen, ye angels of God; it is not ordered that ye should depart from sinful men, but you are ordered to labour for them till they repent and turn: I will judge them, saith the Lord. And again

there was a voice from the heaven: Attend upon the sinners until they repent and turn: for if they do not repent, then ye shall inflict upon them'" . . . the punishment they deserve, in detail.

It is not necessary to set down here the form which essentially this same passage takes in the late Apocalypse of Paul. It is accessible to all in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Clark's Edition, xvi. 478; Scribner's Edition, viii., 575). In either form the story involves a quite developed doctrine of "attendant angels," if not precisely "guardian angels;" and if it were only Jewish and early it might form a ground for assuming that the doctrine was current in our Lord's day among the Jews. Unfortunately, however, the Ascent of Baruch is itself, as JAMES (*Apoc. Anecd. II.* in *Texts and Studies* vi., p. lxxi.) says, "a Christian Apocalypse of the Second Century," *i. e.*, certainly later than A. D. 136; and this closing section as it has come down to us (as both JAMES and RYSSSEL perceive) belongs to a much later date than this.

Almost contemporaneously with Bousset's presentation M. Hackspill's presentation there came into our hands another, equally full but from a very different standpoint. It is from the pen of M. L. HACKSPILL, Professor of the Holy Scriptures and Oriental Languages in the Catholic Institute of Toulouse. It forms a section in a comprehensive study of "Jewish Angelology in New Testament Times," the first instalment of which is printed in the *Revue Biblique Internationale*, for October, 1902. It runs as follows:

"The angels sent to the earth to protect men become their 'guardian angels.' This belief has its foundation in Old Testament data, where the protection accorded through the intermediation of angels is very often

spoken of. Sufficiently vague at the first, and limited to speaking of the protection accorded by angels to the righteous in general, this doctrine little by little acquired the more definite sense of an individual protection accorded to such and such a righteous man or to every righteous man by a single angel. The Book of Judith mentions the angel that protected its heroine; in the Book of Tobit the archangel Raphael plays an essential part. Thus the Christian doctrine of a guardian angel accorded to each man from his birth, was not yet formulated, but was being prepared, and in the times of the New Testament it had reached a very advanced stage. It was no longer a matter of isolated cases, of tutelary angels of pious men or of those who played an important part in the history of Israel; but guardian angels of such and such a bad man also were beginning to be spoken of, while the attribution of them to all men indiscriminately, good and bad alike, still tarried. The relations between the protecting angel and the protected men were regarded as very close. Nevertheless we do not yet learn the moment at which men received a guardian angel; is it at their birth, or during the course of their life? And did these relations cease, or were they modified at death? No clear response was yet given to such questions, and we are not told what the angels are who bear the elect to heaven and the damned to hell."

M. Hackspill's Evidence. A body of copious footnotes supports the statements of M. HACKSPILL'S text. We must not gratify ourselves by transcribing them, but must be content with merely remarking that none of them brings a testimony from early Judaism for the existence of a belief in "guardian angels," properly so called, in the time of Christ. M. HACKSPILL, it will be observed, hardly affirms this. He distinguishes the Christian doctrine of guardian angels from the early Jewish, and supposes the latter to have been only a preparation for the former. This preparation he considers, no doubt,

to have gone a considerable way by the time of Christ: but even an advanced stage of preparation, of course, falls short of the formulation of the complete doctrine. He appears to suppose, however, that the preparation had reached the stage that properly so-called "guardian angels" had by then begun to be assigned to some men, and that good and bad men alike; while only the attribution of them to all men indifferently lagged. We are bound to say that if this be his meaning the passages he quotes in support of it do not prove it. He appeals to Enoch c. 5: "He shall charge the holy angels to keep watch over all the righteous and saints, to guard them as the apple of their eye"—where obviously the element of particular distribution is lacking. He appeals to Jub. xxxv. 7, when the "protector of Jacob" is declared to be "greater, more powerful, more honored, and more glorified than that of Esau," which is more to the point, especially when taken in connection with the passage concerning "Esau's angel," quoted by GFRÖRER from the Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan: but which yet manifestly falls short of the proof we want. He appeals to the Greek Apocalypse of Baruch 12-16 (which we have already quoted), as exhibiting a doctrine of guardian angels for both good and bad, "in the bosom of Judaism at a time very little posterior to the New Testament." But this is valid only on the hypothesis that this document is Jewish and not Christian, and that this portion of it is an authentic portion of its original form. We have already expressed our opinion in opposition to both hypotheses. The former of them is indeed debatable: and it appears from the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* I. 255, that Mr. JAMES now sides with M. HACKSPILL in the matter. The latter scarcely seems to

be open to debate. For the rest, he appeals only to such passages as we have already had before us, and which we cannot interpret in the sense he places on them,—the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Jos. vi. and of course Acts xii. 15, and Mat. xviii. 10. M. HACKSPILL'S presentation leaves us, therefore, just where BOUSSER'S does.

Nor does WEBER
 Weber's Presentation. give us anything more solid to rest upon. Here is his presentation of the matter (*Jüd. Theol.*, p. 171):

"Besides their service to the people, however, the angels are set also to serve *individuals*, to protect them from evil spirits, and to declare to them divine acts. In the Targum Jer. i. at Gen. 24, F, Abraham prays Jehovah Elohim, whose dwelling is in the heights of heaven, to send his angel to accompany and help Eliezer. Michael was the guide of Dinah's daughter on the road to Egypt, and in the house of Potiphar, where she was brought up and afterwards, under the name of Asenath, was married to Joseph, *Talkut Shimeoni* at *Bereshith*, 134. Indeed all Israelites have angels as companions, and that in foreign countries as well as in the land of Israel, *as above*, 119. In *Tanchuma*, *Mishpatim* 19, we read: 'If a man has kept one commandment, he is given an angel; if he has kept two commandments, he is given two angels; if he has kept all the commandments, he is given many angels. For it says (Ps. xci. 11): He will give his angels (plural) charge concerning thee. And what angels are these? They are those that protect from the *Massikim* (evil spirits) . . . For the whole world is full of spirits and demons.' Sec. 54. When they pass by unclean places, such as a closet (*בית הנסא*), where the power of hurtful demons is particularly great, the pious should always invoke their protection, *Bereshith* 60b. He who breaks a commandment falls thereby into the power of the demons, whereas keeping the commandments protects against them; they are everywhere on the watch to injure transgressors, while the angels

are engaged in the service of the pious, *Debarim rabba*, c. 4. In order still further to make known to the pious the acts of God, the angels make use of dreams; nevertheless one should not permit himself to be deterred from asking mercy even when the angel of the dream has told him that he is to die the next day, *Bereshith*, 10b. Finally the angels mediate the help which God wishes to send men in answer to prayer; so Raphael appears and heals Jacob when he was wounded by Michael; for he is set over the *רפואה*, i. e., healing is his business, *Talkut Shimeoni*, *Beresh.*, 132."

There is much interesting lore here about the general ministry of angels, but very little about specifically "guardian angels" and that very little is notably of late date. It is quite clear that nothing that WEBER tells us will help us to find a belief in "guardian angels" prevalent in Israelitish circles in the time of Christ.

We are not absurdly
 State of the Case. trying to prove a negative. We are only seeking to illustrate by a sufficient number of instances, the fact that there is nothing in the ordinary presentations of the subject that justifies the ordinary appeal to them by the commentators as supporting the assumption of a current belief in guardian angels among the Jews in the time of our Lord out of which Mat. xviii. 10, say, should be interpreted. It may be that adequate evidence of the existence of such a belief among the early Jews is in existence, and that it may be adduced to-morrow. Meanwhile, it has not been adduced: rather, the ordinary presentations base the existence of this belief in Jewish circles of the first Christian century practically on the New Testament passages, Mat. xviii. 10, and Acts xii. 15, alone. We cannot use that assumed belief, therefore, as a reason for explaining these passages in that way. That were a

gross circle: the belief is inferred from these passages and the meaning of these passages is inferred from that belief. The passages obviously must be independently interrogated as to their meaning: and only if when so interrogated, they seem to imply a belief in "guardian angels" underlying them, can that interpretation be put upon them, and then the existence of such a belief in that day be inferred from these manifestations of it. But, as we said in our previous discussion, referred to at the opening of this paper, the New Testament passages when thus simply interrogated and permitted to express their own meaning, do not seem to refer to "guardian angels." They seem rather inconsistent with that idea.

Intercessory Angels. Perhaps we may appeal to the variety of interpretations offered of Mat. xviii. 10, for example, as a proof that that passage does not very clearly suggest the doctrine of "guardian angels," specifically so called, as its basis. Commentators, as we have seen, have variously explained "the angels of Christ's little ones" in that passage, to mean "guardian angels" properly so called, general "ministrant angels," angelic "doubles" of the little ones, and the disembodied spirits of the little ones themselves. And there is yet another explanation offered to which we have not heretofore adverted, but which it is worth while to mention in this connection. This is that "intercessory angels" are meant, angels, that is, who intercede for God's saints at the throne of grace. This explanation is suggested by Prof. G. BUCHANAN GRAY, of Mansfield College, Oxford, writing in Dr. CHEYNE'S *Encyclopedia Biblica*, vol. 1, page 107. Let us hear his admirably condensed statement. He says:

"Especially prominent in the Apo-

calyptic literature is the cognate belief"—cognate, that is, with the belief that angels are intermediaries from God to man—"in the intercession of angels with God, in behalf of the righteous, or against the unrighteous: see e. g., Enoch ix. 10, xv. 2, xl. 6 (where the function is specially referred to Gabriel, xl. 6, 9; yet compare also Tobit xii. 12, 15, where Raphael intercedes), xcix. 3, 16, civ. 1, Rev. viii. 3 sq. Compare, also, in the Old Testament, Zech. i. 12, Job v. 1, xxxiii. 23, Eccles. v. 6 (5), and perhaps in the New Testament, Mat. xviii. 10, unless this be a case of angelic guardianship."

Dr. GRAY is indebted for his list of passages to Dr. CHARLES' note on the first of them (Enoch ix. 10), in his excellent edition of Enoch; and Dr. CHARLES adds one more, which Dr. GRAY seems to have missed, viz. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Levi. iii. In this passage we are told that in the heaven next to the highest "are the angels of the presence of the Lord, who minister and make propitiation to the Lord for all the ignorances of the righteous; and they offer to the Lord a seasonable, sweet smelling savor, and a bloodless offering. And in the heaven below them," it is added, "are the angels who bear the answers to the angels of the presence of the Lord." Similarly in Tobit xii. 15, Raphael describes himself as "one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the holy one." The same conception underlies the passages quoted from Enoch: thus, in the last of them (civ. 1), the author asseverates to the suffering saints, "I swear unto you that in heaven, the angels are mindful of you for good before the Glory of the Great One: your names are written before the Glory of the Great One." It seems that it is essentially the same idea again that gives color to the language in Rev. viii. 3 sq.

**Why Not
Acceptable?**

There can be no doubt that the idea of "intercessory angels" was current among the Jews of the time of our Lord. And it supplies a natural explanation of the declaration in Mat. xviii. 10 that "the angels of Christ's little ones in heaven, continually behold the face of the Father in heaven." But we are afraid it supplies explanation to little else in the passage. It does not appear, for example, that the "intercessory angels" are distributed among the saints, so that each of the saints, or each class of the saints, has its own especial interceding angel. The conception, that is to say, has no explanation to offer of the strong appropriation of the angels in question to Christ's little ones,—"the specific angels that belong to them." And when we turn to the passage in Acts xii. 15, the conception is wholly inapplicable. It is not absolutely necessary, to be sure, that both passages should be thought to rest on the same conception. But surely it is an added commendation of a suggested explanation that it does supply an appropriate account of all apparently kindred passages. And in the presence of an explanation that will do this, other suggested explanations, which will not do it, labor under a disability which can be removed only by some very cogent reason for accepting them. On the whole, then, Dr. GRAY's suggestion, it would seem, must give way to some of the others that fit better the requirements of both passages.

B. B. W.

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**The Miracle
To the Front.**

In the *Expositor* for September Professor W. M. RAMSAY, under the caption "Shall We Hear Evidence," discusses the miraculous element in Paul's history. In the

Expository Times for November, Professor SANDAY writes on "Miracles and the Supernatural Character of the Gospels." In the *Expositor* for the same month, Rev. ALFRED E. GARVIE discusses "The Function of the Miracle." In the *Independent* for December 4, an editorial is devoted to "The Recession of the Miracle." From all which it would seem clear that the miracle, if receding, is at least still within sight: nay, is challenging special attention. Else, why these papers, all of them, except perhaps the last, serious and earnest in tone. It matters not that the views they express about the miracle are not all of them, from our view-point, altogether satisfactory. It matters not that some of the views expressed are very apologetic and not very coherent. It matters not that the editorial in the *Independent*, for instance, has every appearance of being a not specially seemly effort to speed a guest that has overstaid his welcome. The fact is that the miracles of the New Testament are still with us. The fact is that they are still performing at least one of their original functions: for they still arrest attention and invite investigation. They are still all that they ever claimed to be—*σημεία, δυνάμεις, τέρατα*. They refuse to be either explained away or to be ignored. They resolutely proclaim themselves an indefeasible part of the record of the Christian system and an indefeasible part of the Christian system itself. This statement will, of course, be an offense to neo-paganism. Such remarks cause it to look grave and to protest that 'this is the way to drive men away from Christianity!' But even the neo-paganism's concern for the perpetuation of Christianity must yield to facts. And the fact is that the miracle as part of Christianity is still with us.