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## THE BACKGROUND OF DANIEL

The critics are in the habit of making one or more unfounded assumptions and then basing upon these unproved and unprovable assumptions still others equally baseless. In the case of Daniel they have assumed that the book is unhistorical, that its miracles are impossible, and that its presumably predictive prophecies are dim recollections of long past events. They even assume that there was no man called Daniel living in the time of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus,<sup>1</sup> and that the customs, objects, and events mentioned or not mentioned in the book, as well as the language in which they are mentioned, indicate the age of Judas Maccabeus. That there is no ground for denying the existence and the deeds of Daniel as recorded in the book named after him has been shown in *Studies in the Book of Daniel* where the harmony between the life of the man and his surroundings has been maintained. The existence of such a Daniel is upheld by the testimony of his great contemporary Ezekiel who mentions him three times as a model of wisdom and righteousness (xiv. 14, 20, xxviii. 3). No other man worthy of being placed alongside of Noah and Job, as is done by Ezekiel, is known to history, or would, so far as we know, have been known to the Jews whom Ezekiel addressed. The critics, in their endeavors to account for this singular prominence given by their favorite author to an otherwise unknown person, are reduced to the most absurd conjectures. Hitzig supposed that Daniel was another name for Melchizedek.<sup>2</sup> Prince conjectures that he was "really a well known character under the disguise of another name," probably "some celebrated ancient

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<sup>1</sup> Prince, *Commentary on Daniel*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentary on Daniel*, p. viii.

to abide. We feel assured that a compromise religious philosophy will not survive. It is not real; it is man's substitute for the Words of Eternal Life. Either we shall have to hark back to the Bible taken at its face value, or we are within hailing distance of a first dismembered, then rejected and abandoned Christ. The book is rather too introspective and philosophical for the masses, and will make its main appeal to the literati.

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## EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY

*The Higher Criticism in Relation to the Pentateuch.* By EDOUARD NAVILLE, D.C.L., LL.D., F.S.A., Honorary Professor in the University of Geneva, Foreign Associate of the Institute of France. Translated, with an Introduction, by Rev. Professor John R. Mackay, M.A. Foreword by Sir William M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL.D., Litt.D. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38 George Street. 1923. 12mo. Pp. xxxv, 156.

In this small volume the eminent Egyptologist gives his principal reasons for believing in the Mosaic origin and historical character of the Pentateuch and for his rejection of the methods and results of the destructive Higher Criticism of the Old Testament. Professor Naville follows the historical method of Foustel de Coulanges, formerly professor of History in the Faculty of Letters in Strassburg, who formulated his first principle as follows: "Let us put to one side the absolute logic and intellectual conceptions of the present, and take the ancient texts in their proper and literal sense exactly as they were written. Let us interpret them in the simplest manner possible, and with unsophisticated minds allow them to speak for themselves, mixing nothing of our own with them." On the other hand, Professor Naville rejects the method of the critics, which "consists primarily in dismembering the text throughout, in representing it, not as the work of an author whose name and date are given us by tradition or by the text itself, but as a collection of fragments due to different authors of very different epochs and origin." The principle of these critics is, that in "the study of a document, what gives law is not what the document itself says, but the idea or the theory to which the document gives rise in the mind of the student. That idea it is that is regarded as stable and indisputable—the norm according to which the document is to be judged."

The second principle of Dr. Naville's method is "that we must replace the texts with which we are dealing within the time in which the author actually lived, in the situations with which he was surrounded, with the manner and polity thereof."

The third principle is that "one render to oneself some account of the aim of these writings, of their *raison d'être*."

Following these three principles, Dr. Naville claims to have demonstrated that the Higher Criticism "wrongly claims to be the expression of the truth," which may be summed up in the sentence that we must take an ancient book exactly as it was written and judge it in the light

of its aim and purpose, and of the time and circumstances in which it claims to have been written.

Our judgment is that Dr. Naville has succeeded in his attempted demonstration, and that Dr. Mackay has conferred a great boon on English readers by his excellent translation as, also, by his introduction.

But while approving of Dr. Naville's method, it seems to us that he has himself departed from this method in his treatment of the philology of the Old Testament. No one knows better than he that the geographical lists of Thutmosis III at Karnak represent the language of Palestine in his time as having been what we call Hebrew. Again, the language of Canaan embedded in the explanatory notes of the Amarna letters is clearly Hebrew. Probably not a single Aramaic word is found among the one hundred and eleven explanatory Canaanite words found in these letters and only twenty-six of them have thus far been found in Phœnician. The language of the Moabite Stone of king Mesha contains only one word not found in the Hebrew Old Testament; whereas four occur in Aramaic and fifty-three are not found in Phœnician. The Samaritan Ostraca have eight proper names compounded with the Hebrew abbreviation for Jehovah whereas the Phœnician has no names compounded with this name of God. The Siloah Inscription has twelve or thirteen words not thus far found in Phœnician, whereas all but one occur in the Old Testament. Besides *hāyā* is found in the inscription three times. *Hāyā* never occurs in the Phœnician, where the verb "to be" is represented by *kūn*. Lastly *wau* conversive and the imperfect is found in line 4, a usage never yet found in Phœnician.

As to Hebrew's having been the local dialect of Judah, the facts of the Old Testament seem to contradict it. Many of the puns with which the writings are filled would not suit the Aramaic, whereas they do suit the Hebrew. Half of the names of the sons of Jacob are from Hebrew roots and words that do not occur in Aramaic, and the roots and forms of seven or eight are not found in Babylonian. Not merely the names of the kings of Judah, but most of the names of the kings of Israel and Samaria, and of their fathers, relations, and prophets, are Hebrew. Besides, the variations of the Septuagint and of the Aramaic version can be explained on the basis of a Hebrew original better than on the supposition of an Aramaic original. We must remember that Dr. Naville would have us conclude that the transfer into the Hebrew language and script was made about the second century B.C. How then account for the obvious close relation between the Hebrew as we have it, and the version of the Seventy?

Moreover, that Hebrew was not the language of Judah and Jerusalem merely is shown by the names of the kings of Samaria and Damascus which we find on the Assyrian monuments. Hadadezer of Damascus is given on the Assyrian documents as *Dad-idri* (*idri* being the Aramaic form of *ezer*), and Hoshea, the last king of Samaria, has a name whose root is not found in Aramaic. With one possible exception, all the names of the kings of Israel that are mentioned on the Assyrian monuments may be drawn from good Hebrew words.

Why the Jewish colony in Elephantine wrote Aramaic is a mystery; but who knows that it was not composed largely of Jews who had been mustered into the Babylonian and Persian armies from the Israelites and Jews who had been carried captive by Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon and Nebuchadnezzar and settled among the Aramaic-speaking tribes of Mesopotamia and the neighbouring lands?

Finally, if the Samaritan dissidents took over the Pentateuch from the Jews—a book which they have preserved in what is a slight modification of the old Aramaic or Phœnician alphabet—it is hard to see why it is necessary to suppose that the old alphabet was tied up inextricably with the Aramaic language. Both the Samaritan-Hebrew text and the Samaritan-Aramaic version are written in the same old alphabet. Both the Hebrew Massoretic text and the Targums of Onkelos and the Pseudo-Jonathan are written in the square alphabet. If script and language were inextricably interwoven, the Hebrew texts of both Samaritans and Judeans should be in one script and the Aramaic texts in another. That script and language are not thus interwoven should be manifest when we consider how many different languages are written in Roman and, with slight variations, in Arabic script. Besides, look at how many languages are written in cuneiform and in the Phœnician-Moabitic-Aramaic script.

The opinion of the reviewer which was stated at length in a paper read before the world's conference of Orientalists at St. Louis in 1904 is that the oldest post-Abrahamic works of the Israelites were probably written in the Hebrew language and the cuneiform script, and that at some later time, probably during or after the captivity, they were transliterated into the Aramaic alphabet.

From the brevity of the above criticism, let it not be supposed that the reviewer underestimates the value of the contribution to the right valuation of the historicity of the Pentateuch which has been made by Dr. Naville. In his principles of criticism we concur, and with his conclusions in favor of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch we agree. In Egyptian archaeology he is preëminent, and in its application to the times of Moses convincing, and, we think, impregnable.

*Princeton.*

R. D. WILSON.

*Twelve Great Questions about Christ.* By CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, D.D.  
New York: Fleming H. Revell. 1923. Pp. 221.

Clearly written, expressing firm conviction, setting forth the reasons for his faith, in a style that is direct and forceful, these lectures or discourses—for the form seems to justify the inference that they were prepared originally for public delivery—will meet the needs of a quickened interest in the fundamental truths of the Christian religion and will contribute to sound thinking and intelligent believing. The historical evidence for the manner of Jesus' birth is first set forth and it is shown that this article of the confession of the Christian Church is well accredited and is congruous with the witness of the New Testament concerning the nature of Jesus' person. Perhaps the order of the subjects