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SOME RELIGIOUS IMPLICATIONS OF CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

In 1864 Dr. James McCosh published a brief essay on "The Philosophic Principles involved in the Puritan Theology."¹ Our present world shows no marked interest either in Puritan theology or in its underlying philosophy, while Dr. McCosh himself is remembered more by the walk and the building called by his name in the University over which he once presided than by that philosophy of common sense he so firmly believed and so earnestly advocated. Nevertheless common sense has a curious way of mixing the obvious and the striking, and in the essay referred to there will be found a statement and an exhortation worthy of remembrance—Philosophy is of great importance to theology, but Biblical theologians as such should always avoid identifying their systems with any peculiar metaphysical system.

The statement is obvious; the exhortation is more often honored in the breach than the observance; and sixty years have brought some striking changes. The term theology is for many obsolescent and is being replaced by the term religion; again *Biblical* Theologians are notably few, and systematizers of religion are very many. Religion has no need of philosophy, argue some; philosophy must produce a new substitute for decaying Christianity, assert others. In this essay we shall attempt to give some account of the latter effort, but let us remember our text: Philosophy is of use to

¹ This was part of the Introduction to the Complete Works of Stephen Charnock, B.D., pp. vi-xlviii of *The Works of Stephen Charnock* (Nicol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period). Edinburgh, 1864.

NOTES AND NOTICES

THE WORDS FOR "KINGDOM" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In Dr. Driver's *Literature of the Old Testament*, it is said¹ that "In order properly to estimate the *Hebrew* of Daniel, it must be borne in mind that the great turning point in Hebrew style falls in the age of *Nehemiah*." The Hebrew of Daniel resembles that of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Ecclesiastes; and Dr. Driver cites a number of words and phrases which are found in two or more of these books with the intention of showing that they prove all of these works (except parts of Ezra and Nehemiah) to have been written subsequent to Nehemiah, and hence that Daniel cannot have been written in the sixth century B.C.² In this note I shall treat of the first of these words and phrases, endeavoring to show that the use of them by Daniel does not prove that Daniel was written subsequent to Nehemiah.

The evidence is stated in *The Literature of the Old Testament* (p. 506) as follows: " מַלְכוּת i. 1, 20; ii. 1; viii. 1, 22, 23; ix, 1; x. 13; xi. 2, 4, 9, 17, 21, as regularly in Ezra, Chronicles, Esther.³ The phrase in i. 1; ii. 1; viii. 1 . . . בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁלוֹשׁ לְמַלְכוּת, as 1 Ch. xxvi. 31; 2 Ch. xv. 10, 19; xvi. 1; xxxv. 19; the earlier language, in similar sentences (Kings, *passim*), dispenses with מַלְכוּת."

The question is, Can this word⁴ and this phrase⁵ have been used by an author living at Babylon in the latter part of the sixth century B.C.?

I. Before entering upon the discussion of the words for "kingdom" *mamlākhā*, *mal^ekhūth*, *m^elūkha* (abbreviated M¹, M², M³) we shall give a table showing the number of times that they occur in the books of the Old Testament and in Ecclesiasticus:

¹ Pp. 504 f.

² As only three of these words or phrases are found in Ecclesiastes, we shall omit this book from the present discussion.

³ A footnote in LOT at this point refers to p. 536, No. 9 of that volume.

⁴ I.e., *malekhuth* instead of *mamlakha*, which is the common word in the literature before 550 B.C.

⁵ I.e., "in the year three to the reign of." The earlier literature dispenses with *reign of*.

	M ¹	M ²	M ³		M ¹	M ²	M ³
Gen.	2	—	—	Lam.	1	—	—
Exod.	1	—	—	Ezek.	4	—	2
Num.	2	1	—	Amos	3	—	—
Deut.	7	—	—	Obad.	—	—	1
Jos.	2	—	—	Micah	1	—	—
J	1	—	—	Nahum	1	—	—
E	2	—	—	Zeph.	1	—	—
JE	1	1	—	Hag.	2	—	—
D	7	—	—	1 Chron.	3	11	1
D ²	1	—	—	2 Chron.	19	17	—
P	2	—	—	Ezra	1	6	—
Hexateuch	14	1	—	Neh.	1	2	—
Sam.	12	1	7	Esther	—	26	—
Kings	17	1	8	Dan.	—	16	1
Isa. 1st Part	11	—	1	Eccles.	—	1	—
Isa. 2nd Part	2	—	1	Pss.	6	6	1
Jer.	17	3	1	Ecclus.	2	2	—

Besides these three words, a fourth *maml^ekhûth* occurs in Joshua xiii. 12, 21, 27, 30, 31, 1 Sam. xv. 28, 2 Sam. xvi. 3, Jer. xxvi. 1 and Hos. i. 4. It will be seen that the books written before 550 B.C. have *mamlākhā* 84 times, *mal^ekhûth* 6 times, and *m^elûkhā* 21 times; as against 24, 78 and 2 times, respectively, for the books written after 550 B.C.; that the books of disputed date have the three words respectively 8 times, 7 times and once; and that the fourth word is found only in the earlier literature. There is no doubt, then, that the earlier writers preferred to use the concrete terms denoting "the place ruled over" and "the place where one rules" to the abstract word for rule or government; nor, that the later writers except in the second book of Chronicles had a decided preference for the abstract term. In fact the writers of Esther and Daniel never use the common concrete term at all and it is found but once each in Ezra and Nehemiah.

To what ideas, or circumstances, are we to attribute this marked change in nomenclature? It does not explain anything to say that it occurred after the time of Nehemiah, nor is this in harmony with the facts. For Ben Sira, who wrote about 180 B.C., employs *mamlākhā* as often as *mal^ekhûth*, the former as concrete and the latter as abstract; and the second book of Chronicles has the concrete word 19 times and the abstract 17 times and in the so-called Maccabean Psalms lxxix, cii and cxxxv the concrete term is used but not the abstract.⁶ In all of

⁶ The Hebrew version of the Aramaic of Daniel, found in Kennicott MS 240, renders the plural of the Aramaic word by the plural of מַמְלָכָה. The MS in which this Hebrew version occurs appears to be dated as from the year A.D. 1327.

these works the distinction between the senses of the two words is for the most part clearly discernible.

It is noteworthy, also, that the Chronicles, in describing events that transpired before the captivity, even in the parts that are not parallel to anything in the books of Samuel and Kings, uses the concrete term 17 times. It follows, therefore, that the common employment of the abstract instead of the concrete term in the late documents was due to radical changes which had taken place, not in the Hebrew language itself, but in the ideas which lay back of the language in which the ideas were expressed. The matter under discussion, then, is at what time did the change in ideas take place. And it seems to me, that the most probable time for the change was in the sixth century B.C. For it was then that the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians, were contending for the hegemony of Western Asia, and no one of these great dominating nations had in its language a concrete word for kingdom.⁷ They all spoke of a king as exercising lordship, or kingship, over a city, or land, or the lands. This will appear clearly to anyone who will read Breasted's *Egypt* or the Tel-el-Amarna Letters, or the inscriptions of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian kings, in any of the excellent translations now before us.

⁷ The ancient Egyptian word for *rule* was *sutenit*, an abstract formed from *suten* "king" by adding the feminine ending (Erman, *Aegyptische Grammatik*, p. 95; Budge, *Egyptian Reading Book*, p. 40); and in Coptic we find the abstract word *metouro*. In Assyrian and Babylonian we find a number of words ending in *utu* to denote lordship and kingship such as *enûtu*, *belûtu*, *malkûtu*, and *sharrûtu*. This last word, which corresponds to the Hebrew *malekhûth* is found in the inscriptions hundreds of times in the abstract sense of rule, kingship, etc., and only seldom in the concrete sense, as possibly in Tel-el-Amarna letter xxxvii. 6, 8., In ancient Persian, also, no word for kingdom has been found though the abstract word for rule Kšathra derived from the word for king occurs in Behistun § 4. In Phenician the word מַמְלָכָה is used in the sense of *royal person* (Lidzbarski, *Nordsemitische Epigraphik*, p. 310). In Ethiopic, we find *neges* "regimen," and *mangeset* "regnum" or "*potestas regia*." In the Sabean and Minean inscriptions, no word for kingdom has been found; but the more modern Arabic, from the seventh century A.D. on, has *mulk* "royal dignity," *malakat* "royalty," *mamlakat* "royaume" and "royauté" and *malakut* "royaume" and "royauté" (the last derived from the Aramaic). In the Aramaic, one word only is found and this an abstract just as in Egyptian, Babylonian, and Persian: to wit,

It follows from all this that a writer like Daniel, who was educated at Babylon in all the languages and literatures of that city of wise men, in that city over which the great kings Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus exercised their kingship, would naturally express himself after the way of thinking (the *Denkungsart*) of that eminent centre of learning and statecraft. It follows, also, that Ezra and the writer of Esther would naturally pursue the same manner of expression. It is not necessary to suppose that the use of the abstract for the concrete word for kingdom was a mere matter of chance. It was a result of a change in circumstances and conditions that arose during the political cataclysms of the sixth century. There is, therefore, absolutely no evidence in the use of the abstract word *mal^ekhûth* in Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, that they were written after the time of Nehemiah. This proof (*sic!*) of the lateness of the book of Daniel should be erased from the *Literature of the Old Testament*, page 506; for, like all other *alleged* proofs brought forward by the assailants of the historicity of the Scriptures, it is found in the light of wider knowledge to be a vain figment of the critics' imagination.

II. Nor has *Literature of the Old Testament* a better proof of the late date of Daniel in the phrase "in the year X to (ב) the rule of Y." As far as the use of "to" (ב) in dates is concerned, it occurs already in Num. xxxiii. 38; 1 Kings xv. 25, 28, 33; xvi. 8, 10, 15, 23, 29; xxii. 41, 52; 2 Kings i. 17; iii. 1; viii. 16, 25; ix. 29; xii. 2, 7; xiii. 1, 10; xiv. 1, 23; xv. 1, 8, 13, 17, 23, 27, 30, 32; xvi. 1; xvii. 1, 6; xviii. 1, 10; xxiv. 12; xxv. 1, 27; Jer. xxviii. 2; xxxii. 1, xlvi. 2; li. 59; lii. 28, 29, 30, 31. So that its use in the early literature before the time of Cyrus is fully established, and in exactly the same way we find it used in later literature as in Dan. i. 21; vii. 1; ix. 2; x. 1; xi. 1; and in Ezra i. 1; vi. 3; vii. 7; Neh. ii. 1; xiii. 6; 2 Ch. xvi. 13; xvii. 7; xxix. 3; xxxiv. 3, 8; xxxvi. 22; Hag. i. 1, 15; ii. 10, and Zech. i. 1, 7; vii. 1; Es. i. 3.

The only question, then, is whether the date of a document

the word *mal^ekhûth*. Hebrew, as we have seen above, has four words *m^elûkha*, and *mamlâkhâ* "royaume," *mal^ekhûth* "royauté" or "royaume" and an abstract form *maml^ekhûth* formed from the concrete *mamlâkhâ*. It will thus be evident that in pre-Christian documents it is in Hebrew alone that a concrete word for kingdom is found.

can be determined by the use of the whole phrase "in the year X to the reign of Y." But since the whole phrase is found in the Scriptures outside of Daniel only in Chronicles and Esther, whose date also is disputed, we are driven to seek in documents outside the Scripture for any evidence of its use, which might help us to fix approximately its date. Where, then, is the extra-biblical evidence to be found? It will do us no good to look in the Aramaic Targums for they were not written till A.D. 200 at the earliest. Besides, the versions were influenced by the original and not the original by the versions. Nor will the Syriac version help us. For it is not earlier probably than A.D. 200 and besides it frequently renders the "to" (ל) by "of" (ד). Nor will the Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus or of the Zadokite Fragments help us; for they have no such phrase and the latter never use any work for kingdom.

As to the inscriptions and papyri, the Babylonian inscriptions use always the phrase "the year X (of) Y." The Phenicians wrote "the year X to Y" except in that of Eshmunazar (c. 300 B.C.), where we have "in the year 14 to the reigning (מלכי) of King Eshmunazar" and in the Idalium inscription from 391 B.C., where we have "in the year 2 of my reigning (למלכי)." The Palmyrenes always date from the era of the Greeks, using simply "year (of) X."⁹ The Nabateans always say "the year X to Y." The Egyptian papyri commonly have "the year (of) Y," though the oldest of all, from the year 495 B.C., has "the 27th year of (ל) Darius the king."¹¹

We thus see that there is absolutely no evidence either in or out of the Biblical text for the statement on page 506 of *The Literature of the Old Testament* that the employment of the phrase "in the year of the reign of X" is a proof of the post-Nehemian date of Daniel, or indeed of any other document of the Holy Scriptures.

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⁸ As in 2 Kings i. 17, viii. 16, xii. 2, xv. 22, xxiv. 2, xxv. 1.

⁹ Lidzbarski, *Nordsemitische Epigraphik*, pp. 417, 421.

¹⁰ Cf. p. 457 ff.

¹¹ It might be stated, also, that the Arabic version in Walton renders the ל by *min* and not by ל.