



THE HOMILETIC REVIEW

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of
Religious Thought, Sermonic Literature
and Discussion of Practical Issues.

EDITORS

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THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—ROME FIFTY YEARS AGO—PASSION WEEK.

BY THE LATE PROF. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.

MARCH 20, 1842 (Palm Sunday).—At eight o'clock I preached on the Crucifixion. I spoke of the process of the Crucifixion which must go on in the heart, and which is followed by the resurrection and true life in God.

After the service go to St. Peter's to see the festivities. The pope approached his throne, wearing a bishop's cap and in splendid violet vestments. After kneeling and offering a short prayer, he sat down on the throne. Cardinals came up to him in procession to kiss his hand. The distribution of the palm branches prepared by Camaldulian monks—a beautiful custom. After the distribution the pope arose, uttered the *Dominus vobiscum* (The Lord be with you)* and offered a brief prayer, to which there was choral response. Then began the procession. The pope, with the bishop's cap on and the palm in his hand, is carried under the red baldachin by twelve persons and followed by a great company of clergy. Then came the Passion music, Psalms, "Stabat mater," etc., and last the mass, which this time Cardinal Prince Schwarzenberg celebrated. The whole service makes an impression of the decided worldliness of the Catholic Church. It appeals to the senses and the imagination, which it esteems too highly. It is a drama. A plain pungent sermon on the atoning sufferings and death of Christ would be of much more worth than all this gay and perishable pomp.

MARCH 23.—Already at two o'clock the crush was terrible on the steps leading to the palace of the Vatican. We were not admitted to the Sixtina Chapel (Sistine) till half-past three, and there we had to wait another hour before the singing began. I occupied the time studying with great wonder the picture of Michael Angelo of the "Last Judgment," into which, with amazing pictorial power, he has poured the immortal creation of his genius. On the altar were six yellow tapers burning, as there were also on the railing, and fifteen on the arch. The number fourteen represents the fourteen weeks in which

*The renderings of Latin phrases are by the translator of Dr. Schaff's Journal.—D. S. S.

swer. Something richer than that for which you ask shall crown what you think denial;

(b) though the answer tarry, it will come;

(c) though it may seem to you that God is not answering, He often really is answering all the time—the bloom shall appear.

Still pray, then. Launch out into the deep of prayer. Keep casting the nets of prayer.

(B) Apply this fact and teaching, that we should put more faith in the Word of Christ than in our experience of failure to the *daily duty*.

Both by example and by teaching our Lord enjoins the sanctity of the doing of the daily duty, *e.g.*, the “straight-way” of Mark (see 1st chap.). “He went about doing good,” etc.

But sometimes it seems to us as though our daily duty were as vain, as to any special outcome, as the fruitless fishing of the disciples.

(a) A business man in such hard times as these.

(b) A woman in the household.

(c) A discouraged Sunday-school teacher.

(d) A discouraged pastor, etc., etc.

But when the daily duty seems a failure and monotonous, what then? Remember that “forthwith” of Mark concerning Christ. Remember what Christ said, “My meat is to do the will

of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” Cast again the nets of the daily duty. Any way, duty is best. You shall come at last surely to see that no sincere and honest doing of the duty with you is ever lost.

(C) Apply this fact and teaching, that we are to put more faith in the Word of Christ than in our experience of failure to the *duty of confessing Christ*.

If Christ has word for anything, He has word concerning this duty of confessing Him. “Him that confesseth Me before men,” etc.

But how many Christian people I have known whose Christian experience was like that fruitless fishing of the disciples! They fish for strength, joy, peace, love. Somehow they fail to get much precious spoil of them. Yet all the time they are refusing a brave and open confession of Christ. Suppose they should begin to take more account of the Word of Christ concerning the confession of Him than of their hitherto failure, I think their failure would swiftly turn into a rejoicing abundance.

(D) Apply this fact and teaching also to the duty of *winning* others. If the winning seem difficult and frequently failing, take account of the Word of Christ concerning winning others, and keep on casting the nets of attempt for them. You shall not always cast such nets in vain.

EXEGETICAL AND EXPOSITORY SECTION.

The Homiletic Value of the Book of Leviticus.

By PROF. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D.D.,
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THE Book of Leviticus has suffered at the hands of homilists in two opposite ways. In the first place, owing to the symbolic character of its ritual for the ceremonial worship of the Jews, it has presented a peculiarly attractive

field for allegorists both of ancient and of modern schools. These disciples of Origen have been so busied with research after hidden meanings and spiritual interpretations under the minute details of the Levitic ceremonial, their fancy has found such delight in disporting itself amid the hooks and cords and rings and staples of the tabernacle, and in weighing the relative spiritual significance of caul and kid-

ney and fat and liver, that they have in large measure overlooked the great underlying principles illustrated in the book—principles that are regulative of all true worship under all dispensations and to the end of time.

On the other hand, conservative students of Scripture, repelled by the fanciful interpretations of writers of this spiritualistic school, have hesitated to enter upon any homiletic study of the book lest they should be beguiled into the same methods of accommodation of Scripture that they condemn in others. To see how little homiletical use has been made of Leviticus, it is only necessary to examine the pages of the *Sermon Bible*, or the *Homiletic Index*, or to consult the index to THE HOMILETIC REVIEW or to any other promiscuous collection of sermons. Certainly it were better to err, if error there be, with Bauer and others, in tracing developments of New-Testament doctrines under the minutest details of Old-Testament ritual, rather than to neglect altogether so rich and instructive a portion of God's Word. Between the two extremes which we have been considering there must be a safe middle course for homilists, and the object of this article will be to give some of the landmarks by which it may be determined.

I. In general terms, then, it may be said that the homiletic value of the Book of Leviticus arises out of the fact that it is, in its relation to the other books of the Old Testament, preeminently the *book of worship*. Thus its very name imports. The *Λευιτικόν* (see *βιβλίον*) of the Septuagint version, from which our word Leviticus comes, implies that it is a manual for the guidance of the Levites, whose chief office was that of the conduct of public worship. The same thing is implied in the names given to the book in the Talmud, *חירח כהנים*, *the law of the priests*, and *חירח הקרנות*, *the law of the offerings*. Every chapter of the book bears more or less directly upon the subject of worship, so that it may be appropriately designated as the inspired *directory for worship*.

Now, in this is its first element of homiletic value. Worship in all its essential elements is the same under all dispensations, however it may vary as to its outward forms of expression. We may expect, therefore, to find, under the outward shell of prescriptions that were ritual in their character and limited in their scope, deep underlying principles that are as vital and propædæutic for the Church of to-day as for the Church that was in the wilderness with Moses in Mount Sinai. The minister of the Gospel who succeeds in bringing forth these eternal principles for the regulation of worship as they are illustrated by the picturesque ceremonials of the Levitic ritual will have rendered to the people to whom he ministers incalculable service.

II. It may be helpful to some of the younger brethren of the ministry to indicate, as far as space will allow, some of the lines along which this search for underlying principles may be most profitably directed.

Let us take, then, to begin with, the opening word of the book, the one which in the Jewish canon was used as its title, *וַיִּקְרָא*, "And He (Jehovah) called." The essential idea in the verb *וַיִּקְרָא* is that of calling or speaking to one with audible voice. An examination of the first verse of the book in its relations to all that come after will show that Jehovah is represented as speaking to Moses with audible voice out of the midst of the tabernacle, and uttering in his ear almost every word of the whole book. This is something peculiar. Very little of inspired Scripture is given by this method of oral dictation. Ordinarily, even in matters of most importance, the natural faculties of memory, judgment, constructive imagination, taste, etc., are quickened and directed, so that what is written is truly the product of the writer's thought, although by virtue of the Spirit's presence and power it is truly and infallibly the Word of God. Here all these processes are held in abeyance. Moses receives the

revelation, word by word, at the mouth of God, and writes it down as he receives it. With the exception of two brief interludes, one recording Moses' strict compliance with the command for the consecration of Aaron, and the other the swift judgment which came upon two priests for venturing to deviate from the inflexible ritual that had been prescribed, every word of the book is given by this highest form of dictation.

Why this peculiarity in the one book which prescribes the method of divine worship? Why but to give emphasis to the truth that the manner in which God may be acceptably worshiped is, and must ever be, matter of pure revelation. Man may not invent forms for himself. God will not be pleased with will worship. To that question, "Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" the only proper answer is, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." It is not enough that certain ordinances, imposing and expressive, it may be, are not forbidden in the Word of God. It must be shown that they are expressly commanded, or warranted, by inspired precedent and example. To go beyond and invent, is to bring upon ourselves the displeasure that flamed forth in wrath upon Nadab and Abihu in the wilderness. This first word, *Wáyyiqrá*, opens up, therefore, a field of most important homiletic study and exposition.

III. Passing on to an examination of the book, we shall find that it naturally falls under six leading divisions: those which respectively treat of the offerings, the priesthood, ceremonial purifications, festivals, idolatry, and vows. And a still closer study will show that in each of these divisions is illustrated one or more of the great principles or characteristics of acceptable worship whenever and wherever it may be rendered by man, the sinful creature. These characteristics may be stated as follows: Worship, to be acceptable to God, must be: (1) upon the basis of a prescribed

sacrifice, (2) through the medium of a consecrated priesthood, (3) with clean hands and a pure heart, (4) at stated seasons and in convocations of God's appointment, (5) with the whole heart, (6) with recording and performance of vows. Or, to state these characteristics yet more succinctly, worship must be sacrificial, priestly, pure, festal, exclusive, vital.

Now, take any one of these principles and study it as illustrated by the ceremonials prescribed in the book, and it will be seen at once what scope is given for broadest and most varied homiletical treatment.

Look at the first division (Chap. i.-vii.) which treats of the offerings. Its keynote is in the words "bring an offering" of the next to the opening verse. Observe that there is no approach to the tabernacle in worship for which some sacrificial offering is not prescribed, and so we have illustrated the first principle, that worship to be acceptable must be distinctly and consciously upon the basis of sacrifice, and that sacrifice one which God Himself has appointed and therefore will approve.

Again, when we come to examine these sacrifices, we find them arranged in three classes: the Dedicatory, including the burnt offerings (ch. i.) and the meat offerings (ch. ii.); the Eucharistic, consisting of the peace-offerings (ch. iii.); and the Propitiatory, including the sin-offerings (ch. iv.) and the trespass offerings (ch. v, vi.), chapter vii. being occupied with sundry regulations applying to one or more of these orders of sacrifice. Take any one of these classes and see its fertility in homiletical material. The dedicatory, for instance, in which the whole sacrifice was consumed, no part of it being returned to the worshiper, illustrates, first of all, that full and unreserved surrender of Himself made by our Lord when he said, "Lo! I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me," etc.; and then, secondarily, the full and final surrender of the redeemed soul laying itself upon the altar, "a

living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." The eucharistic, on the other hand, in which only that part which was prohibited as food was consumed on the altar, and the priest, after retaining a portion for himself, returned the greater part of the flesh to the offerer, that he and his household might eat it with rejoicing before the Lord—how beautifully is illustrated in this the relation of Christ, not only as the atonement for sin, but as the life and joy of the redeemed soul!

Notice still further, in reference to the third class, the propitiatory, that although the laws regulating it are subsequent in the order of enactment to those of the other two classes, yet in the order of actual observance it always had precedence.

The sin-offering always precedes the burnt-offering and all the rest. There must be propitiation, atonement, forgiveness, before even the whole burnt-offering of self-sacrifice and personal consecration can be accepted.

Passing to the second division, that of the priesthood (ch. viii.-x), what wealth of illustration there is of the great truth that the worship of the sinner must be through the mediation of a priest! Not only must he have the appointed sacrifice, but, unworthy and defiled, he must have one to represent him, to come before God in his stead, to offer for him the sacrifice for him, to sue for and receive and pronounce absolution. The anointing of the high priest (ch. viii.), the ministry of the high priest (ch. ix.), the sin of Nadab and Abihu (ch. x.), all throw wondrous light upon our relationship to Him who is the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession," the "one mediator between God and man—the man Christ Jesus."

The third division (ch. x.-xxii.) treats of the distinctions of clean and unclean, of ceremonial defilement, and cleansing. There is not one of its twelve chapters that is not rich in practical truths illustrative of the great principle that God is to be worshiped in the beauty of

holiness, and that he that would "come into the hill of the Lord or stand in His holy place" must have "clean hands and a pure heart." The law of the clean and the unclean in food (ch. xi.), of bodily pollution and ceremonial cleansing (ch. xii.-xv.), of blemishes in victims for sacrifice (ch., xvi., xvii.), of violations of the laws of social purity (ch. xviii.-xx.), and of the blameless life required of the priesthood (ch. xxi.-xxii.)—what are all these but object-lessons designed to impress the great truth that holiness becometh the house of the Lord, and that the only acceptable worship is that of the purified in heart?

In the third division, that of the religious festivals (ch. xxiii.-xxv.), three great principles emerge, each finding ample illustration for homiletic use: the employment of stated seasons of divine appointment for public worship, the social element in public worship, and the joyousness that should characterize the worship of forgiven and accepted worshipers who have been admitted to communion with their God. Each of the seven subdivisions, having reference respectively to the Sabbath, the Passover, the Feast of First Fruits, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles, might be profitably used as the basis of an exposition of one or more of the principles of acceptable worship.

The fifth section, that which treats of idolatry (ch. xxvi.), illustrates the great principle that worship, to be acceptable to God, must be exclusive. There must be no other God besides Him. He takes a place in no Pantheon; sits upon no divided throne; must be worshiped wholly and solely or not at all.

The last division (ch. xxvii.) covers the important and delicate question of the making and keeping of vows as a part of worship. A careful study of this chapter in relation to other parts of Scripture will throw much light on the occasions on which vows are to be made, and the spirit in which they are

to be made and performed. It may be made of inestimable service in impressing upon the people the necessity of

vowing and paying unto the Lord that which is vowed, since He "has no pleasure in fools."

THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

CONDUCTED BY J. H. W. STUCKENBERG, D.D.

Social Themes in the Pulpit.

WE do not intend to discuss the propriety of introducing them; they cannot be kept out. The preacher in touch with the age cannot escape them; he cannot proclaim the law or prophets, the gospels or epistles, without discussing these themes. Everywhere the Bible thrusts them on him, everywhere the Church needs them, everywhere the age demands them. The second commandment, pronounced by Christ equal to the first, involves many of the most essential elements of the social problem: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Far more important is the question, How shall they be introduced? Many texts and subjects involve them, and they came in naturally as a part of the exposition or application. In such cases the preacher finds little difficulty; the plain teachings of Scripture and the laws of Christian ethics are his guide. He will find the Bible rich in thoughts bearing directly on many of the burning social questions of the day.

The difficulty is less with the Christian doctrines than with the social problem, and most preachers are perplexed as soon as they begin to expound it. Foreigners who come to our shores speak with astonishment of the general ignorance on the subject. The reason is that as a burning question it is comparatively new with us; while the older nations were agitated by it and everybody studied it, we boasted that America is the paradise of labor, that our resources are boundless, and that we have no social problem such as Europe

grapples with, and never shall have. Hence we treated it as foreign, did not study it, and were not prepared for it when at last it came as one of the dominant forces of our country and times.

Many pastors who have not been able to master the subject nevertheless recognize it as their duty to say something about its meaning and solution. They have not entered deeply enough into it to learn how exceedingly complicated it is, how very many of the most difficult departments of thought it involves, how contradictory the views of specialists are, how the same words are used in different senses, and how even statements apparently plain are misapprehended and increase the prevalent confusion. Not infrequently some thought that lies as the circumference is treated as if the center and heart, and problems which have thus far baffled the profoundest specialists are disposed of flippantly. This would be ridiculous if it were not so pitiable. Not only are sociological specialists offended, but also all who are earnestly seeking for light on these weighty themes. This trifling with the subject is especially calculated to repel laborers who are so deeply interested in all that pertains to social movements and transformations.

No one is fit to discuss these living themes unless he is in living touch with them. They must be studied long and thoroughly in order to fathom their depth and measure their breadth. Especial attention must be given to labor, to the condition of laborers, to the needed relief and the best means of