

Bible Study Lectures

Bible been found to be out of harmony with the records of the discovered monuments. On the other hand, it was contended, the higher critics and unbelievers had been silenced by the voice of the stones. The record of the Hittite nation, lost to the knowledge of the world except for the Bible, had been unearthed. Likewise every other character that the critics had condemned as mythical had now been proved to be exactly as the Bible had stated.

Referring to Sargon, the king mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, it was declared that in 1842 the archaeologist, P. E. Botta, was sent-out by the French Government to the city of Mosul in the upper Tigris. He was directed to the village of Khorsabad by one of his workmen, and began operations on a curious hill. Just under the surface he discovered a wall built of gypsum. He discovered room after room, chamber after chamber. The whole archaeological world was aroused. Money flowed in to assist him, until the most magnificent palace the world has ever seen, covering twenty-five acres, was exposed to view. Botta had unearthed the palace of the great King Sargon, the so-called mythical monarch of the higher critics, "another instance," said Mr. Mitchell, "of the stones crying out, telling the world that the Bible is correct, and it is the critics who are ignorant."

BLAZONING THE TRUTH

Professor Sayce, LL.D., D.D., the eminent Assyriologist and author, was quoted as writing: "A skeptical attitude towards the records of the Old and New Testaments is today usually the mark of ignorance or semi-knowledge. The leading scientists have returned in great measure to what may be termed the traditional views on the subject, and nowhere is this more strikingly the case than as regards the historical records of Scripture." (From a letter read in a meeting in the Albert Hall, London, 1923)

Sir William Mitchell Ramsay, D.C.L., Litt.D., in a speech made at the same time in the above-mentioned hall, was quoted as saying: "Do not deceive yourselves with the pretence that these narratives are mythological tales hiding a beautiful truth. The Christian religion blazons the truth, it placards it before the eyes of men; it does not hide it."

Dr. Sayce was also quoted as, saying in "Monument Facts": "There is only one admissible test of the authenticity and trustworthiness of an ancient record, and that is the archeological test, in other words, the test of contemporaneous evidence." "Wherever archeology has been a ble to test the negative conclusions of criticism, they have dissolved like a bubble in the air." - Pages 11, 14, 25.

From the pen of the late Professor R. D. Wilson, the famous Oriental linguist, who mastered twenty-six languages in his more than fifty years, prodigious task of examining all the available evidence in ancient literature, in order to ascertain whether the Bible was really trustworthy and accurate, the following was cited: "I have now come to the conclusion that no man knows enough to assail the truthfulness of the Old Testament. Wherever there is sufficient documentary evidence to make an investigation, the statements of the Bible in the original text have stood the test." - "Is the Higher Criticism Scholarly?" page 10.

08. THE BIBLE AND COMMUNISM

No need whatever for antagonism; The people's Book.

SPEAKING on the subject, "Communism and the Bible," in the Naval Hall on Thursday night, Pastor Mitchell contended that Communists are at war with the Bible because of their lack of knowledge of its teachings. He maintained that almost all cases of antagonism to the Bible sprang from ignorance of its contents.

He stated that from his association with Communists he gathered that many of them considered that the Bible was a capitalistic book. "I agree," he said, "that the Bible is indeed a capitalist book, but not a book that favored capitalists; it rather favors the poor."

It was the speaker's conviction that while there were many sincere hearts among the Communists, yet they were too prone to get their ideas from enemy sources, rather than to study the Bible for themselves. He recollected what he quoted as a typical case met in his evangelical work in the city of Newcastle, back in the year 1925. He had often conversed with this very militant representative, who, though antagonistic, refused to study the Bible for himself, excusing himself by saying that the Labor Daily was his Bible.

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A TREASURED VOLUME

Mr. Mitchell stated that in the year 1869, Russia, at that time a Bible-loving nation, paid 900 pounds to the monks of St. Catherine's monastery, located at the foot of Mount Sinai, for the treasured Bible manuscript, Codex Sinaiticus. This manuscript was treasured because of its antiquity, being a fourth-century Greek manuscript; and, together with the Vatican and Alexandrian manuscripts, is of outstanding importance among the ancient copies of Scripture. But sixty-four years later Russia had so completely changed that no Bibles were wanted in the country. What would they do with this historic treasure? Would they destroy it? On second thought it was offered for sale, and the people of another nation, Great Britain, paid 100,000 pounds for this treasured volume, and considered the price cheap.

What had wrought the change? It certainly was not the result of nation-wide reading of the Bible, but rather the absence of first-hand knowledge by the majority, and the acceptance of the critical views of a few militant leaders, inspired by the teachings of Karl Marx.

Karl Marx, it was declared, was a radical revolutionary writer, who lived from 1818 to 1883, and whose principal book, "Das Kapital," was an attack upon capitalist ownership of private property.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

Pursuing the thought that lack of knowledge was the cause of antagonism, the following illustration was read from "The Common Bond," published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1935:-

"A New Master. The Communist owner of a cafe at Piraeus in Greece bought a Bible from our colporteur. He started to read it earnestly, and from time to time requested the colporteur to explain passages he could not understand. He had been a thorough-going atheist, believing that the Bible encouraged the exploitation of the poor by the rich. After our representative had explained to him how our Lord came to this earth as a Man who had no where to lay his head, he continued to read the Bible and became convinced that it was the truth. The result was that this man, who was once preaching Lenin as the savior of mankind, now preaches Christ, and testifies to his friends of his change of outlook."

"FRIEND OF POOR AND NEEDY"

Several scriptures were read to show that the Bible was a book for the servant as well as for the palace. It was emphasized that Christ, the central figure of the Bible, was the friend of the poor and needy. James 2:5 was read: "Has not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?" From Ezekiel 16:49 it was asserted that one reason for the destruction of the city of Sodom was because of neglect to "strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." "You shall not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy," was read from Deuteronomy 24:14.

Other scriptures were cited to support the statement that while the Bible upheld the cause of the poor, it uttered grave warnings to the rich, such as, "Woe unto you that are rich." Luke 6:24. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Mark 10:25. The Scriptural advice to the wealthy was read from 1 Timothy 6:17, 18: "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."

In view of such teaching, it was stated that, instead of the Bible being the enemy, it was the friend of the poor. "Unfortunately," said the speaker, "both rich and poor have neglected to a certain extent the teaching of the Bible, but if followed more completely it will lead to a much kindlier feeling between both."

THE BIBLE'S INFLUENCE

Another illustration of how the Bible strengthens and encourages the poor was read from "The Common Bond," page 68: "One day a colporteur was crossing a bridge over a railway line. A man was leaning on the parapet. Like the one who was struck down on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, he had been wounded in life and was lying, as it were, bleeding by the wayside. He intended to end his life by throwing himself under a train, for his misery was too great for him to bear. The colporteur got into conversation with him; the poor wretch opened his heart to the stranger who showed an interest in him. He spoke of his old age, his unemployment, of his complete discouragement. The Bible-seller had neither silver nor gold to offer him, but he gave him what he had-his sympathy and friendship. He spoke of Jesus, and the man left the dangerous spot and went away thoughtful. When later the two men met again, the would-be suicide said: 'It is the Bible that saved me, renewed my courage, and gave me strength to go on living.'"

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That the Bible if followed is a blessing to all mankind was taught in the words of Dr. Adolf Deismann: "The New Testament is the people's book. When Luther, therefore, took the New Testament from the learned and gave it to the people, we can only regard him as restoring what was the people's own. And when at some tiny, cottage window, behind the fuchsias and geraniums, we see an old dame bending over the New Testament, there the Old Book has found a place to which by right of its nature it belongs. Or when a Red Cross sister finds a Japanese Testament in the knapsack of a wounded Japanese, here, too, the surroundings are appropriate. Time has transformed the Book of the People into the Book of Humanity."

09. EASTER IN PROPHECY

Crucifixion and resurrection of Christ foretold in Bible; Historical evidence of resurrection.

EASTER lectures delivered by Pastor Mitchell in the Naval Hall dealt with Easter in prophecy and the testimony of history to the fact of the resurrection of Christ. Prior to Christ's earthly mission, faith in His coming was expressed by the annual sacrifice of the Passover lamb, offered on a fixed month, day, and hour of every year, which sacrifice was the type of the predicted sacrifice of Christ.

It was contended from the Messianic prophecies of Daniel that the very year of the crucifixion of Christ was foretold hundreds of years beforehand. And from the New Testament records and dates the year as prophesied was the exact year in which Christ was crucified. And the day of the year was the day in which ordinarily the Passover lamb would have been slain. Christ, the true vicarious and antitypical lamb, was slain instead, and that very day the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, signifying the fact that type had met antitype, and that there was no further need for animal sacrifices. Thus Mr. Mitchell claimed that the exact year, month, day, and hour of the atoning death of Christ had been accurately foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament centuries before hand.

RESURRECTION A FACT

In a later address, discussing the subject, "Did Christ Live, Die, and Rise Again?" Mr. Mitchell claimed that no fact was so completely established in history as the resurrection of Christ. Dr. Alexander Campbell was cited as saying it was "the best-attested fact in the annals of the world!"

Modern scholarship did not deny the birth of Christ, nor His death. That much, that Jesus lived and died, was admitted even by non-Christians. But that was not sufficient to explain the existence of the Christian church, it was affirmed.

If Christ's career had ended with His death, the Christian faith would have remained with Christ in Joseph's new tomb. The buoyant hope of the followers of Christ in their disappointment would have encountered an anti-climax from which it would not have recovered.

The speaker contended that while other beliefs such as Mohammedanism continued after the death of its founder, Christianity was different in that it was the only religion ever established upon the death and resurrection of its author.

Several scriptures were cited showing that Christ had predicted His resurrection on the third day after the crucifixion. Further scriptures revealed the disappointment of the disciples at the death of Him to whom they had looked to establish a kingdom on earth at that time. Reference was made to His unexpected death and burial on Easter Friday, to the sad Sabbath day that followed, and the forlorn visit to the tomb on the Sunday morning, as recorded in Luke, chapters 23 and 24.

FAITH IN THE RISEN

Their hopelessness changed only with the knowledge of the resurrection. Easter Sunday morning had found the little band of Christians hopeless. By night they were a group of men and women holding a belief that had since turned the world upside down, changed the course of history, transformed whole nations, and still dominates the minds of men. That belief was the belief that Christ was raised from the dead.

Mr. Mitchell then proceeded to outline the evidence of the resurrection. He firstly referred to the many appearances of Christ after the resurrection. The women at the sepulcher received the message from the angel, "He is not here; He is risen." Matthew 28:6. Later Jesus appeared to these women, who were the first to proclaim the gospel of a risen Savior. Luke 24 recorded the appearing of Christ to two of the disciples as they journeyed on Easter Sunday to the village of Emmaus. That evening He appeared to all the