

ARTICLE VII.

THE MEANING OF יְיָ.

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[THE following was published in Latin by Prof. Paul de Lagarde as a part of a Corollarium at the end of his edition of Jerome's Psalter (*Psalterium juxta Hebraeos Hieronymi e recognitione Pauli de Lagarde*, to be procured through Ch. Trübner, of Strassburg, Alsatia), in 1874. Two other valuable parts of the Corollarium may also be read there. We have sought eagerly for permission to give this interesting investigation to the American theological public. We are glad not only to make that public acquainted with men who are steadily doing thoroughly scientific work in the theological field, thus showing to those who do not know the fact, that theology is not "effete," but is a busy and an exact science, quite as much so as most other sciences; we are glad not only to present for example and encouragement to workers in this country a piece of genuine Semitic work, done by one who is really fit for his profession; but we are glad also to present a result which has such evident practical, and we may say homiletical value. For it is easy to see the point given by Prof. de Lagarde's result to the multitude of passages in which it is recorded that the Hebrew preachers declared, — God will do so and so, "that ye may know his name is יְיָ;" and the like. Or, again, see what strength the verse of the poet has, "He restoreth my soul for his name's sake"; or his plea, "Hear me for thy name's sake." This translation was made for the *Bibliotheca Sacra* with the express sanction of the Author, and was revised by him. — Ed.]

In the Journal of the German Oriental Society (*Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*) xxii. 331,¹ for January 1868, I showed that יְיָ means Creator, τὸν τοῦ εἶναι αἴτιον. When I wrote that demonstration I was not aware that Johannes Clericus had held the same opinion long before me, and that Wilhelm Gesenius, in his *Thesaurus* ii. 577 foot-note, published in 1839, had come very near

¹ Lagarde, *Symmicta* 104.

commending the same view. I had listened, in 1844 and 1845, to the lectures of Hengstenberg, a most severe critic of Clericus,¹ and afterwards had read the letters of R. Bentley; and I had concluded that Clericus was not worthy of much esteem,² especially as I noticed that he had a very limited knowledge of Greek, and yet had a proud opinion of himself. I owe it to a mere chance that I now think better of him. For I saw in a note on Petavius' *Theological Dogmas* viii. 9, 7, in the Antwerp ed. of 1700, i. 342, written by Theophilus Alethinus, the *nom de plume* of Clericus, as follows: "De nomine tetragrammato egit nuperus pentateuchi interpres . . . ostenditque eo significari eum qui facit ut res sint, *γενεσιουργὸν* seu creatorem et effectorem rerum" (i.e. a recent interpreter of the Pentateuch discusses the tetragram, the Divine name יהוה . . . and shows that it signifies "He who causeth things to be, Creator or efficient cause of all things"). Upon reading this, I at once turned to Clericus' *Commentary on Exodus* at this passage (vi. 3), and to my great joy found that there Clericus had advanced much concerning יהוה (for so he pronounced it) which I had long taught in my lectures as something of which I had been the first discoverer. Let me ask those to read this to whom truth is dear, and who desire that every man receive the praise due to his own merits. But since I have learned that my opinion, as it was briefly published in 1868, has been disseminated as public property, and that my name has been suppressed, I purpose to set forth here those arguments for my view which I have been wont to give in my lectures. I shall omit several things which Clericus made known before me.

In the first place, then, it is very certain that יהוה was pronounced Jahwe. Clement of Alexandria gives *Iaové* in his *Stromata* v. 6, 34 [240, 34 Sylburg ed.]. Compare what I published in the *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* for 1870, p. 807 [= Lagarde, *Symmicta*, p. 14]. Epiphanius gives

¹ Consult concerning Clericus Abraham des Amorie van der Hoeven de Joanne Clerico et Philippo a Limborch *Dissertationes*. Amsterdam, 1843.

² See Lagarde's edition of the *Clementine's*, p. 23, towards the end.

'*Iaβé* in his Panarium, 40, 5 [132, 12, 15, Basle ed.] ; where the Venetian ms. gives *íave*, and the Basle mss. vary and give both *íáβe* and *iaβé*. Theodoret, in his Epitome, on Ex. xv., Roman ed. 116 [78 in Paris ed. of 1558] ascribes *iaβé* to the Samaritans. Everybody can see that it is יִרְחָה, and not יִרְחָה. Nor can I imagine it possible that while the Hebrews were accustomed to distinguish between the first and fourth forms of the verb, and while they knew, for example, that יִרְחָה differed in meaning from יִרְחָה, they would regard Jahwe, a derivative of the fourth (= יִרְחָה) form as identical with Jihwe.

Again, derivatives of the fourth form were used for proper names. That this was customary is seen in the well-known word יִרְחָה (see Num. xxxii. 41 ; Judges x. 8 ; and in Mark v. 22 the equivalent is *Iáeiros*), which name was used at a later period in the form יִרְחָה, now often heard in Jewish families in Germany (written Meyer). Whether יִרְחָה, the name of a deity, which has been preserved in عبد ياليل (Pococke, specimen 78), may be adduced here in illustration, I am not sure. But we may compare the following appellative nouns : يعقيد (See Lagarde's *Abhandlungen* 52, 29), يعقيد meaning *mel igne concretum*, from اعقد (See Butrus Bustânî 1438 a, at the end) ; يقطين (see Butrus Bustânî 1736², 5 ; Abdallathif 129) which means *planta erecto caule carens*, and = יִרְחָה (Cf. Amos viii. 5 ; and cf. also the notes which H. L. Fleischer has written on S. de Sacy i. 129, 13). In Syriac יִרְחָה (See Bar Ali 4480) belongs to the root יִרְחָה, II. = IV. ; cf. Isa. xxxiii. 15 ; Matt. xiii. 15 (from this the Arabs have taken يعقيد). For יִרְחָה is ريباس (rheum ribes, the sharp, acid juice of which was used for healing eye diseases (Avicenna Arab. i. 254 = Lat. [Venetian ed. of 1582] ii. 581), and it is very natural that the eyes should be made to shut by the juice له قوة خصاص الاترس والحصرم possessing the sourness of the lemon and the unripe grape. It is, therefore, clear that in calling יִרְחָה a derivative of the fourth form we are following correct analogy.

It is very natural to remark here that the notion of "Being" or "essential existence" could not have been employed in early times to express the nature of the Deity. I pointed this out publicly six years ago. I said that this notion was too abstract to be thought of as occurring to the minds of simple men who were utter strangers to scholastic teaching. If any insist on thinking differently they may possibly please this fickle and ignorant age by their persistence in boasting, and even by their very ignorance; but they will certainly be always a laughing stock among prudent people.

Further, יהוה = יהוה = **هو** which means *cecidit*. In illustration, note that in Syriac **ܝܚܘܗ** may bear the meaning *accidit ei* (cf. Bar Ali 3283); and **ܝܚܘܗ** among the Syrians (cf. Ps. lxxix. 2, 15; Luke xvi. 26; Bar Ali 3284) is the same as the Arabic **هوى** = *βόθρος*, Prov. xxii. 14, and = *χάσμα*, Luke xvi. 26. Therefore the notion of "being" or "existence" is not what lies originally in יהוה; so that those who explain יהוה as meaning *The Existing One*, or *He who is*, and assert that this is an ancient name, are not up to the mark. Since **ק** takes the place of יהוה among the Arabs and Phoenicians, one sees at once that **קִיִּי** is the same as **קִיִּין** 1 Kings vii. 21), or, according to later usage, **קִיִּין**.

But now, thirdly, there exists a trace of this interpretation which I have given in the sacred book itself. For the author of Exod. vi. 3 certainly could not have meant to say, that the name of Jahwe was unknown to the first founders of the Jewish people. For then he would have removed all mention of Jahwe from Genesis, which he himself edited (cf. *Goetting. gelehrte Anz.*, 1870, 1558 [= Lagarde, Sym. 55]). But we know that he left the name standing there in a great many instances. If, however, we may suppose that the name which the ancients used as meaning Creator, *καλῶν τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα*, Rom. iv. 17, was used by this editor and writer in one particular application, viz. to mean *ὁ στήσας τὰς ἐπαγγελίας*, then all is plain and harmonious. I am confident that the correct meaning of Exod. vi. 2-6 is given by the following paraphrase; I am called Jahwe; and I am the same who

gave to your fathers tokens great enough and many enough of my power ; but I could not prove myself to be the *fulfiller of promises*, because, of course, in the very nature of things, it is impossible to make a promise and to fulfil it both at the same time. But I remember the covenant which I made (Gen. xv.), and I will show that I am rightly called Jahwe ; for I am he who causeth things to be which are not.

Fourthly, it seems to me that with this interpretation of Jahwe, we can explain how the name came to be no longer used in speech. This took place, I think, in times of disturbance, when it seemed almost sacrilege in the eyes of devout men to call God a performer of promises, while they saw him turning away his face in anger from his own people. He who withheld from his servants the promised rewards of piety and virtue was not יהוה. So it began to be considered impious to use the name. I rather think, too, that the author of the Jobeid, who uses the name יהוה in his exordium and in his conclusion, shows that he was one of the downcast, the doubting hearts of his time, by his use of אלה alone in the dialogue of the disputants. He had lost faith in God as one who peculiarly favored the Jewish race ; he had lost faith in him as יהוה, as one who loved them in times long gone by, and established among them his own congregation. Weighed down with sorrow, they paid no attention to the various manifestations of divinity which shine forth throughout the whole earth (אלהי-עולם). But they did not deny that there was some sort of a Deity (אלהי), and yet they did not perceive any benefit arising from his worship. We know that in the latter years of the Jewish commonwealth the high-priest used to pronounce the name Jahwe at the feast of the atonement only, and this in the holy of holies. On this one day they felt it possible to thank God for remembering his promise : *τὰλλα πάντα φροῦδα.*

Having given this exposition, I have then usually turned to Exod. iii. 14. For there the words יהוה אשר אמרתי לך¹ dō not

¹ Concerning which passage, see E. W. Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*, II. 1544, midd.

show that the name Jahwe signifies *τὸν ὄντα*, but they are an exhortation to Moses to be reverent in his inquiry concerning the name (i.e. the nature) of God. It is as if the speaker said, 'It is nothing to thee who I am; thou knowest (note that two answers to Moses' question are given) that I am he who promised thy fathers that at a certain time I would come to the help of their children, and thou knowest that my whole nature is summed up in this name which men give me, and by which they express their belief that I am a faithful performer of both threats and promises. יהוה אשר אודיה is to be explained by similar passages, e.g. the following: Gen. xliii. 14, נאשר שכלחי שפחתי; 1 Sam. i. 24, ויהוה נטר; 1 Sam. xxiii. 13, ויהוהלכו באשר יהוהלכו; 2 Sam. xv. 20, אני והיך על אשר אני והיך; Zech. x. 8, רבו כמו רבי; Ezek. xii. 25, אדבר את אשר אדבר; Raschi on Gen. xx. 13, אינאקלים; John xix. 22, *ὁ γέγραφα γέγραφα*; Acts of the Council of Ephesus 13^a *חי רחוק נחויק*, i.e. let him depart who will, we hinder no one (as may be seen in the German translation of my friend George Hoffmann, 9, 37); Bar Ali 614, אינא דחי קאיןא מא קאן; Bar Bahlûl *ما كائنا ما كان*, to which he adds (see the *تعريفات* of Gurgâni, 17, 20, for explanation) the following, *ويكون ايما علي سبيل الاستفهام* (comp. *Yâqût* iii. 38. 4, and *كائنا من كان* in Ahlwardt's *Fakhrî* 312, 11; Kosegarten's *Arabic Chrestomathy* 33, 3 *انى قلت لك ما قلت*, also 8 *صنع بنا ما صنع*; *Thousand and One Nights*, second *Bulâq* edition, i. 393, 13 *لكان ما كان*, i.e. 'it was what it was,' meaning 'never mind'; i. 454, 10 *فاصنع ما انت صانع*, i.e. 'do what thou doest,' meaning, 'I do not care what thou art going to do, I give thee full liberty to do as thou wilt'; in the same work i. 482, 7, 8 *كنت السبب في هذا الذى جرى بينى وبين ولدى كله حيث اشرت على بما اشرت* i.e. 'you have been the cause of all these (ill-feelings) which have arisen between me and my son, and you did it, too, by advising me as you did advise me,' meaning,

‘you did it by giving me worse counsels than I am willing now to talk about.’ In the same work iii. 10, 9, **طلع** **من طلع**, i.e. ‘there rose from the waves those who rose,’ meaning, ‘it is no use to tell who and how many rose’; in the same work, iii. 167, 2, **ان اسلموا اسلموا وان ابوا**, i.e. ‘if they turn to our faith, let them turn to our faith (then we will say nothing), but if they refuse we will burn them with fire’; in the same work, iv. 411, 5 **فالذى يجرى يجرى**, i.e. ‘what will happen will happen,’ meaning ‘for my part I will throw away all care, for the affairs of men are so controlled by fate, that to be cautious and provident does not benefit one, and to be incautious and improvident does one no harm.’ Again, i. 494, 11, 12; iii. 156, 3; 159, 1; 160, 9, **جرى ما جرى**, ‘what happens happens’; Knös History of the Ten Viziers, 50, 7, **عملت معه ما عملت**, i.e. ‘she did with him what she did,’ meaning ‘things which I will not narrate, for they are obscene’; Maqqarî, i. 88, 22, 23 (Leyden edition), **قد قدر ذلك فيك من قدر**, i.e. ‘he made the decree, who made the decree on your behalf,’ meaning, ‘do not trouble yourself, the thing will have its accomplishment,’ (compare concerning the same affair Bayân, ii. 3, 17 **يقدر ذلك من قدر ما قدر**); in the same work, i. 89, 1 **وكان منه ما كان ثم اتى عليه ما اتى**, i.e. ‘there proceeded from him what proceeded from him, and there came upon him what came upon him,’ meaning, ‘seeing that both are known publicly there is no need of repeating them. Again, i. 133, 7, **ال الامر الى ما يؤول اليه**, the thing came whither it came. Compare Ibn Arabshâh Tîmûr, 4, 14, 15, ed. of Golius, **الى ان الامر الى ما ال**, and 7, 14 **الى ان** **كان من امره ما كان**; Ibn Arabsâh, in the book mentioned, 35, 8, 9 **لما اثار سجستان ما اثار قصد بعساكرة مدينة سبزوار**, i.e. ‘after avenging the damage inflicted by the Sacae, in the manner in which he did avenge it, he departed to Sabzawâr (Yâqût, i. 804, 13, Ibn Bathûtha, iii. 65, 5) with his army;

in the same work, 304, 10, 11, *وفعل مع مباشر ذلك ما فعل*, i.e. 'he did things already related'; Yâqût, iv. 191, 10, *وفد على كسرى ابرويز فيما كان يفد عليه*, i.e. 'he departed to Parwêz king of the Persians, with the design with which he departed,' meaning, 'it is not of importance to explain what was the cause and reason of his journey; Henzi's Arabic Fragments 26, end (they are the words of Fakhreddîn of Rhagæ), *ثم كان من الامر ما كان*; Harîrî Durra 180 end, Thorbeck's ed., *حتى دهاها الذى دهاها*, i.e. '(Baghdâd was the seat of the kings) until that happened which happened to it,' meaning 'until something happened sadder than I can bear to speak of plainly. Again, Hariri in his Maqâmât 209, 1/2 Reinaud's ed., *حتى انتشر عن حباله الحطب ما انتشر*, i.e. '(even in early times quarrels harrassed that most excellent man Muchammad) so that that was declared concerning the wife of Abu Lahab which (Qurân 111) was declared,' meaning 'it is so ominous that I will not say much about it'; Ibn Hishâm 152, 13, *حتى اذا كان الشهر الذى اراد الله به*, i.e. '(Muchammad was wont to do thus) until the very month in which God had decreed to confer that boon upon mankind which he did confer,' meaning, 'until the well-known message of Gabriel to Muchammad.'