

## Notes on Select Passages of the New Testament.

BY PRINCIPAL THE REV. DAVID BROWN, D.D., ABERDEEN.

REV. xiii. 8.

It is much to be regretted, I think, that the English Revisers did not reverse the order in which the words of this verse are translated in the Authorised Version. By referring to ch. xvii. 8, where the sense is the same, I did my best to persuade them that the true sense of the verse is, "Whose names were not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain." When I failed in this, I hoped they would put a comma after the word "slain," which would give the reader a chance of guessing the true sense of the statement; but all they would do was to put that sense into the margin. The American Revisers, as will be seen in the notes at the end of the Revised Version, voted that the marginal reading should be in the text.

To me this is not a matter of indifference. For (1) the statement that "the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world" is an idea altogether foreign to the language of the New Testament on this subject. That the death of Christ was *fore-ordained* before the foundation of the world, we are expressly told; and that "eternal life was *promised* before the world began," the apostle says (Tit. i. 2). But that Christ was *slain* before the foundation of the world, is what there is not the least warrant for saying. Did the words admit of no other sense, we should, of course, have to believe it. But so far from that, the other sense is the most natural rendering of the words, as will be seen, I think, from the way in which the book of life is referred to in ch. xvii. 8.

But (2) it obscures the important fact that "the book of life" is a book of *names*, and nothing but names, written in it from the foundation of the world. This is made strikingly apparent from the grand scene of the Last Judgment, the details of which, as given in Rev. xx., should be studied closely: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before God; and books were opened: and *another book* was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the *books*"—not (observe) "in the book of life," for there were no "things" written there, but *names* only; they were judged out of *the things* that were written in the *books* according to their *works*, or (as in 2 Cor. v. 10) "the deeds done in the body" by each one. "And whosoever was not found written in the Lamb's book of life was cast," etc. (ver. 15). The order of events, as described in this scene, seems to be, *first*, the judgment of each one, according to his works, as written down in the *books*. After this, the book of life will be referred to, when, lo! it will be seen that those who have been adjudged to eternal life "according to their works" are precisely those whose names were written from the foundation of the world "in that book of life of the Lamb that was slain"; for only through the blood of that slain Lamb were they "ordained to eternal life." Yes, for known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.

## Requests and Replies.

Is there any really reliable evidence that circumcision was not a rite peculiar to the Hebrews?—  
W. S. G.

Certainly. On the statue of Anskha at the Ghizeh Museum, No. 20,—the only nude statue,—circumcision is evident. Date, iv.—vi<sup>th</sup> dynasty, about 4000–3500 B.C.

Many of the sculptures show the same on figures of servants and others in the early period. At Karnak is a sculpture showing the ceremony per-

formed on two sons of Ramessu II. about 1250 B.C. (see *Revue Archéologique*, 1861, iii. 298).

WM. F. PETRIE.

Will Professor Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament* contain the articles on the theology of Isaiah which he has contributed to *The Expository Times*? When will his *Theology* be ready? If not soon, can you recommend a capable book on the subject?—E. W.

I. No. These articles were written for THE