

AN UNOBSERVED QUOTATION FROM THE BOOK
OF ENOCH.

DR. ABBOTT has discussed in his recent work entitled *Clue* the cause of the variation between the transmitted forms of one of our Lord's sayings, which occur in what he calls the Double Tradition. The passage to which I refer is

Matthew xiii. 17 = Luke x. 24,

which is presented by Dr. Abbott in the following English parallel—

<p>Many prophets <i>and righteous</i> [men] have passionately desired to see the things on which ye look.</p>	<p>Many prophets and <i>kings</i> have desired to see the things on which ye (emph.) look.</p>
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The first criticism which is provoked by the juxtaposition of the passages (whether in Greek or in English) is the inappropriateness of the word "kings" which stands in Luke over against the "righteous men" of Matthew, a variation which Dr. Abbott holds to be (a) historically impossible, and (b) out of harmony with other statements of our Lord concerning the rulers of this world. Of these objections the first is the one that has the greater validity, and the two points together are summed up in a question—

"Of how many 'kings' could Jesus say this? Is there anything in Christ's doctrine, or in the special goodness of the kings of Israel or Judah that would lead us to suppose that He would use language so favourable to royalty?"

The question arises as to whether the variation is explicable by the hypothesis of a Hebrew or Aramaic source; and accordingly we find Dr. Abbott suggesting that the cause of the variant tradition may be the similarity between the Hebrew words for *king* (מלך) and *angel* (מלאך): (he has previously disposed of a somewhat similar suggestion of Resch, who, one is tempted to say, can always find a com-

mon Semitic ancestor for any two Greek words taken at random from the dictionary). Thus, according to Dr. Abbott, we are to understand Christ as speaking of the prevision, the insight, the spiritual desire of *prophets* and *angels*. It is even possible that the first form may have spoken of *prophets*, *righteous men*, and *angels*, but this does not affect the point with which we are chiefly concerned, viz., the juxtaposition of *prophets* and *messengers of God*.

Two important suggestions are made by Dr. Abbott upon the form of the tradition as thus reconstructed, viz., that the term *messenger of God* was "applicable to Noah, Abraham, and many others, whom the Epistle to the Hebrews describes as having seen and greeted the promises 'from afar';" and that a similar conjunction of *prophets* and *messengers* (again defined as far-seeing and in-seeing) would elucidate the verses in the first Epistle of Peter (i. 12, 14), "the *prophets* sought and searched diligently," "the *angels* desire to look into"; that is, the angelic inquirers may after all have been righteous men, and even in Peter they may have acquired the celestial connotation (if such be held to be involved in his language) from an earlier and simpler statement.

Now the suggestion of a connexion between the Petrine language and the Synoptic [Dual] tradition is not a piece of imaginative criticism, as the following note from Dr. Hort will show—

"*Προφῆται* without an art. is not likely here to have a limiting power, 'some prophets,' not all; such a restriction is not needed, for, though that which is said was in strictness true of some only, there would be nothing unnatural in gathering up the prophets into one whole. But a more emphatic sense is gained by giving *προφ.* an indirectly predicative force, 'men who were prophets' or, as we should say, 'even prophets,' even the receivers and vehicles of God's revelation were in this respect themselves

seekers and searchers like any other men. This interpretation agrees with the highly probable derivation of the idea from our Lord's own words in Matthew xiii. 17, Luke x. 24, while the one Evangelist has *δίκαιοι* and the other *βασιλείς*, both alike have *προφήται*."

It appears then that both of the critics to whom we refer suggest that the Synoptic passages will throw light on the two sentences in Peter, Dr. Hort going so far as to make the Logion underlie the language of Peter, while Dr. Abbott appears to content himself with the statement that the substitution of "messengers" for "kings" which elucidates the divergent traditions in Matthew and Luke will also throw light upon the two verses in Peter.

Suppose we take up the Petrine text at this point and ask the question over again, "What person or persons are involved in the prophets who inquired and sought diligently?" and if the angels are not mere messengers and so equivalent to the prophets already mentioned, what angels are they that look down upon or look into the history of the world? Dr. Abbott suggests Noah, Abraham, and other patriarchal names. Have we any right to make such a suggestion without some support from written documents? For in this connexion there is no need to assume that it is a part of special revelation to Peter that certain matters had been specially revealed to his forerunners; a revelation concerning a revelation is not to be thought of, and we are therefore led to infer that his reminiscence of the state of mind of the righteous men [and messengers?] is a historical reminiscence. But where in the sacred writings shall we find any such records as we are assuming to have existed? Dr. Abbott says, "Try Noah, Abraham, etc."

But if this hint be a good one, we should expect *a priori* that the writer quoted would be the one that is quoted elsewhere in the Epistle, viz. Enoch, from whom even the

traditions about Noah are borrowed. But is there any reason to suppose that the Book of Enoch can be regarded as a fountain or original for the statement that the prophets prophesied of grace to the Gentiles and had a revelation that it was not for themselves that they saw their vision, but for us?

When we turn to the opening verses of the Greek Enoch, we find the following statement—

ἀγιολόγων ἀγίων ἤκουσα ἐγὼ καὶ ὡς ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτῶν, πάντα καὶ ἔγνων ἐγὼ θεωρῶν. καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὴν νῦν γενεὰν διενουόμεν ἄλλ' ἐπὶ πόρρω οὔσαν ἐγὼ λαλῶ (Enoch i. 2).

Here at the very opening of the Enoch apocalypse we find the writer explaining that he was not engaged upon matters relating to his own day or generation, but upon those which referred to a generation that was afar off. The suggestion is a natural and easy one that this is the reason for the Petrine statement—

οἱ περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος προφητεύσαντες, ἐραυνῶντες εἰς τίνα [? χρόνον] ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν ἐδήλου τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας. οἷς ἀπεκαλύφθη ὅτι οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς ὑμῖν δὲ διηκόνουν αὐτὰ ἀ νῦν ἀγγελῆ ὑμῖν διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισαμένων ὑμᾶς πνεύματι ἁγίῳ ἀποσταλέντι ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι.

The parallel is sufficiently close between *οὐκ εἰς τὴν νῦν γενεάν* and *οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς*, and between *ἄλλ' ἐπὶ πόρρω οὔσαν* and *ὑμῖν δὲ διηκόνουν αὐτά*. If it is not a forced and artificial parallel, we are entitled to recognize the influence of the Greek Enoch upon Peter from the very opening of the Epistle, and before he comes to the legend of the fall of the angels and the story of their imprisonment.

Now there is a curious verification of the correctness of this view to which I venture to invite attention. I premise that no difficulty arises from the titles given to Enoch ;

whatever we wish to call him of the triad—prophet, angel, or righteous man—can be justified from his own writings or from the reputation in which he was held by others. That he was a prophet is sufficiently recognized; that he is Ἐνώχ, ἄνθρωπος δίκαιος, appears from the opening sentences of the book, as well as elsewhere, nor are there wanting statements that he was an angel or messenger of God. Leaving on one side these minor proofs of the fitness of the generalization which has deduced the prophetic characteristics from the statements of Enoch, we turn to the Greek of the two passages referred to, and it becomes clear at a glance that the perplexing διηκόνουν αὐτά of Peter is a textual error, which should be corrected by the aid of the διευοούμην of Enoch; in other words, Enoch was *contemplating* (not *ministering*) the matters of his prophecy, not with a view to his own generation, but with a view to a later day; and we must restore for the διηκόνουν of the extant text of Peter the paleographically almost equivalent διευοούντο which makes at once the linguistic parallel with Enoch complete and restores his argument.

Not only so, but the emendation is immediately justified by the fact that it improves the sequence of the Epistle in a remarkable way. It is customary to divide the paragraphs in 1 Peter chap. i. so as to close the first great paragraph with the words “which things the angels desire to look into,” after which the text resumes, but resumes *de novo*, with an exhortation to a watchful and expectant attitude; when, however, we have restored Enoch’s διευοούμην, we see at once that the break in the text has a very slight claim to a paragraph at all, for the sequence is maintained by the occurrence of a following διάνοια, as follows—

διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν,

where the link with the previous verse becomes obvious, and ὑμῶν is now emphatic; as if he should say, “They con-

templated what should come to you, and therefore 'imp the wings of your own high-flying mind.'"

It appears, then, that a marginal reference to Enoch i. 1 should be added against these verses of the first Epistle of Peter, and that the reference will make them more lucid, more consequent and easier to understand. If the introduction of the new factor reduces to zero some whole pages of commentary and illustration from other quarters, that is also as it should be. Most commentaries on the New Testament are rich in matter that is only remotely applicable to the text, and especially is this the case when, as in the instance to which I refer, the text itself is wrong.

Nor should we omit to notice what is of great importance in the history of the text of Enoch, and not without bearing upon other places where he is quoted in the New Testament, that it is the *Greek* translation of Enoch and not the Hebrew original that is current in the apostolic circle.

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