

Presbyter would be glad of an explanation of Job vii. 15.

First, as to the Hebrew text. Presbyter will please note the reading מָהֵק in Baer's edition, which makes it quite clear that נִפְשִׁי is nominative, not genitive. In the second clause I see no reason to forsake the received reading עֲצוּבוֹתֵי—though Cheyne, following Merx, prefers עֲצוּבוֹתַי, "my pains" (cf. ix. 28). The rendering then is—

So that my soul chooseth suffocation,  
Death rather than (these) my bones.

In plain prose: I prefer death by suffocation to this wretched skeleton. Victims of elephantiasis are said often to succumb to death by suffocation. Job in his despair finds life to be not worth living, and declares his preference for death, even in one of its most awful forms, to continued existence in such a loathsome and miserable body.—ARCHIBALD R. S. KENNEDY.

Can you name books suitable for a course of reading in Evolution, with a view to find out how far a minister can accept it?—J. M. D.

Evolution, Books to read on:—Darwin's *Origin of Species*, and *Descent of Man*; Mivart, *On the Genesis of Species*, and *Contemporary Evolution*; Wallace, *Contribution to the Theory of Natural Development*, and *Darwinism: an Exposition of the Theory of Natural Development*.

Criticisms of the Darwinian doctrine, in which the question of its relation to the doctrines of Theism and of Creation is discussed, may be found in Flint's *Theism*, pp. 390-394, and in Pfeleiderer's *Philosophy of Religion* (the chapter on "Creation," where references are given to German philosophical discussions of the problem). The inquirer may also usefully consult modern Commentaries on Genesis i. and ii., and Handbooks of Christian Doctrine under the head *Creation*.

See also Janet's *Final Causes*, Martineau's *Essays, Philosophical and Theological*, Tulloch's *Theism*.—ALLAN MENZIES.

## The Epistle to the Ephesians:

HINTS FOR STUDY.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR JOSEPH AGAR BEET, RICHMOND.

THE student's first task is to find out the words actually written by St. Paul. And this is by no means difficult. For all variations of importance are noted in the margin of the English Revised Version. Where the revisers give no marginal note, the Greek text underlying their translation may be accepted with reasonable confidence as correct. Students of the Greek Testament may do still better by using Scrivener's *Editio Major* (Bell & Sons), which gives all the various readings adopted by the best critical editors. These variations are printed in thicker type, which at once arrests the reader's eye. Where recent editors agree, the student may, for practical purposes, accept their united judgment as a fair approximation to the original document. In my commentary on the Epistle I have given a list of twenty-four corrections which the revisers agree to recommend, and another list of seven where they are in doubt or their judgments differ. This second list includes all the passages open to serious doubt.

For further critical study of the text of the Epistle, Tischendorf's larger or smaller *Critical Edition* is needful. The student will here find all important readings of MSS. and Versions, and many quotations from early writers. The best way to begin is to take some twelve verses of the Epistle and examine carefully all readings of the best MSS. and Versions. Then select some one important passage and carefully examine it from all points.

The next step for those who wish to study the New Testament in the original is to gain a knowledge, as accurate as possible, of the language in which it was written. For this, Winer's *Grammar* (translated by Moulton, T. & T. Clark) is of the utmost value. The student will do well to read it from end to end, taking some hundred pages a year till he has gone through it. But in so doing, he must remember that from grammars alone no one can obtain a reliable knowledge of a language. He must use Winer only as a means of elucidat-

ing the text of the New Testament. For instance, while reading about the Greek article, he will do well to examine every article he meets with in his reading. But it is much better to read the grammar consecutively than merely to refer to it here and there. For what he needs is a complete and all-round knowledge of the language.

The student will do well to begin his actual study of the Epistle to the Ephesians by reading it carefully through in the Revised Version, noting as he goes along the chief turning points of the Apostle's thought. He will soon see that the Epistle falls into two main divisions, each embracing three chapters, the first containing doctrine, the second chiefly morals. These main divisions he must then further divide. He will notice that the earlier one begins with praise for blessings already received, passing into prayer for further development, then a recognition of salvation already wrought in the readers, this being looked at from two points, personal and ecclesiastical, then some account of the Gospel committed to Paul, leading up lastly to a still loftier prayer.

Having thus gained a general idea of the scope of the Epistle, the student will bring all his resources to bear upon the first of the sections into which he has divided it.

The *words* of the Epistle need, and will well repay, careful attention. For this Bruder's *Greek Concordance* (Williams and Norgate) is of utmost value. It gives the context of each place in which every word is used in the Greek Testament. And its broad margins give room for noting their various uses. Also very useful is Grimm's *Lexicon*, in Latin from Williams & Norgate, English translation published by Clark. This gives the various meanings of each word, with references to the New Testament, to the LXX., and to classical Greek. To these works may be added Cremer's *Lexicon*, in German from Williams & Norgate, translation published by Clark, which gives a fuller exposition of the more important words.

The student will notice that with the words of the New Testament are associated conceptions derived from Greek thought, and others derived from the Old Testament. Each of these currents of thought must be carefully explored.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the complicated construction of the long sentences needs careful attention. Each sentence should be patiently analysed. Notice the main assertion or exhortation, and then the subordinate clauses grouped around it. The participial clauses deserve special attention; for their logical relation to the main clauses is only slightly indicated by the grammatical construction. The emphatic words should be carefully observed; for these will frequently indicate the Apostle's line of thought.

The best commentary is, on the whole, in my view, that of Meyer, translation published by Clark. This I cordially recommend to every student of the Greek Testament. It is marked by accurate grammatical scholarship, and by delicate exegetical tact. Ellicott's *Commentary* is also very useful for its careful study of minute grammatical details. With these excellent works, no modern expositions can be compared.

But no commentary must supersede personal mental grappling with the actual text of the Epistle. For this reason it is undesirable to multiply commentaries. What is most needed is immediate and sustained contact with the word's and thought of the writer.

With the methods and aids mentioned above, the student will endeavour to follow the thought of St. Paul, to grasp the ideas which he designed his words to convey to the minds of his readers. And he will do more than this. Each Epistle is a window through which we can look into the mind of the Great Apostle, a mirror in which we can see reflected his conception of the Gospel and of Christ. To reproduce this conception is the real aim of all intelligent study of the Bible. To this end we must group together St. Paul's various teaching on each several topic, and thus endeavour to reproduce his thoughts as they grouped themselves in his own mind. Each

Epistle thus studied will increase our knowledge of the theology of St. Paul. And, by combining the results derived from each Epistle, we shall gain something more valuable than can be learnt from any one Epistle, viz. the broad and deep thought about the Unseen which underlay all his Epistles, and of which each one is a partial embodiment.

We shall go still further. In the various documents of the New Testament we shall find different types of teaching. The outward differences, and the deep underlying harmony, of these types will assure us that the elements common to all are in very truth the actual teaching of Christ.

We shall do well to keep ever before us, in all our study of the New Testament, this its ultimate aim.

Once more. Our study of the teaching of St. Paul will afford evidence, in the wonderful harmony of its various parts and its harmony with other New Testament teaching, in its close relation to supposed facts,—e.g. the death and resurrection of Christ,—and in its fitness to supply our own spiritual need, that the supposed facts are real, and the teaching is true. Thus our grammatical study of the Greek Testament will contribute both to Systematic Theology and to the Evidences of Christianity.

The prominence given to this practical application of New Testament exegesis is a special and distinguishing feature of my own commentaries. In my earlier volumes I have given special attention to the meaning of the words used by St. Paul; in all of them I have endeavoured to trace his line of thought, and to bring out its value as an evidence of the truth of the gospel; and in the volume lately published on the Epistles to the *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, and *Colossians*, I have endeavoured, after a careful exposition, to reproduce St. Paul's conception of the Church, of Christ, and of the Gospel.

Of all the letters written by St. Paul, of all the products of human thought, there is none better fitted to raise us above the tumult around, to sit with Christ in heavenly places, than the sublime Epistle to the Ephesians.

### Note on Gen. i. 2, 3.

"Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

THIS passage is the consummation of the whole revelation of the grace of God. And in face of the objections made to the early chapters of Genesis, it is worth while to notice, as an encouragement to faith, this continuity and completeness of the revelation made in the history of the old world before the flood.

I. DARKNESS.—Notice the stages of the history. Chap. i. contains the story of the *Creation* (of the world and life). Chap. ii., the *conservation* in God's providential arrangements. Chap. iii., the *corruption*. Chap. iv., the *consequence* immediate on the corruption, viz., the violation of family life. Chap. v. is a *cemetery*, showing the further developments of the corruption, and containing one bright tombstone (v. 24). Chap. vi., the *conflict* between

God and sin. Chap. vii., the *condemnation* of the world for sin.

II. GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT.—In each chapter we have a promise of brightness coming. In i., by the creation of light; in ii., by the picture of paradise; in iii., by the promise of the Messiah, vers. 15, 21; in iv., by the accepted sacrifice; in v., by the hope of immortality (v. 24); in vi., by the building of the ark; in vii., by the safety in the ark.

III. AND THERE WAS LIGHT.—Our general thanksgiving sums up the chapters in this aspect. We may thank God for Creation (i.), preservation and blessings of this life (ii.), the redemption of the world (iii. 15), the means of grace (iv. 4), the hope of glory (v. 24). And then we may pray God to enable us to serve Him in our lives, by walking in holiness and righteousness, of which we have an example in Noah (vi., vii.).

F. ABBEV TINDALL.