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of the syntax of Gn 1<sup>1-3</sup>, which issues in the following translation: 'In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth having been a desolate waste, while darkness was upon the surface of the abyss and a mighty wind was beating upon the surface of the waters, then God said . . .'

This objective sketch gives little idea of the

richness and variety of the book or of the gathering whose labours it embodies, and the discussions which followed most of the papers were often as suggestive and valuable as the papers themselves. A record of them, had that been possible, would have considerably enhanced the value of a very valuable volume. But the volume, as it stands, will give Old Testament students much to think of for many days to come.

## The Sermon on the Mount.

### The Beatitudes.

BY PROFESSOR W. M. MACGREGOR, D.D., GLASGOW.

THE Sermon on the Mount, as Matthew records it, is a greatly enriched and elaborated version of an earlier document which Luke seems to have reproduced (6<sup>20-49</sup>) with little change. Matthew has worked into it a wealth of authentic sayings, many of which are found in other connexions in Mark and Luke, and he presents the whole as the first of five collections of the words of Jesus (chs. 5-7, 10, 13<sup>1-52</sup>, 18, 23-25), which were, no doubt, intended by him as a parallel to the Five Books of Moses, the Five Books of the Psalms, and the Five Megilloth (*i.e.* Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther). These are not accidental or haphazard groupings, so each is concluded with the deliberate formula—'And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings (or parables).' When the Evangelist thus brings together fragments of wholly separate origin (as where 5<sup>13-16</sup> follows on 5<sup>1-12</sup>) there is at least a presumption that he meant them to be read in sequence as throwing light upon each other. It is possible that he sought to give the Church merely a loose handful of precious stones, but it is more likely that in his own mind these were joined together in a construction.

Certainly in setting forth the teaching of Jesus he could not have chosen any word more profoundly characteristic than Blessed ! for Jesus' distinctive message was always a *makarismos*—both a declaring and a making men blessed. Dr. Rendel Harris somewhere says that Jesus had the gift, even in saying Good-day, of making the day good,

and this in varying fashion is recognized at the outset of each of the Gospels. Luke opens his account of the public ministry with the scene at Nazareth (4<sup>16-20</sup>), where Jesus, in the synagogue, read from Isaiah the promise of a work of healing and comfort on the large scale, and then added: 'To-day this scripture is fulfilled.' To the same effect John begins his record with the symbolic story at Cana, where, at Christ's word, water became wine, stint was turned to abundance, and radiance and exhilaration flowed in. More briefly and bluntly, as his habit is, Mark makes the same point. He tells that Jesus began His work with the same message as the Baptist (1<sup>4, 15</sup>), only He set it to an entirely different tune; for, instead of John's thunder and alarm, Jesus came preaching the good news about God (1<sup>14</sup>)—that His coming to men means not terror and destruction, as John had conceived it, but far extended blessing.

It is not possible in one short article to develop the meaning of all the Beatitudes, but some of them peculiarly demand investigation, especially those in which Luke and Matthew come together, since their differences are instructive. Where Matthew speaks of 'the poor in spirit,' Luke speaks of 'the poor'; where Matthew has 'those who hunger and thirst after righteousness,' Luke simply gives the 'hungry'; and, with a charming departure from the conventional language of the pulpit, Luke reports—'ye shall laugh' for 'they shall be comforted.' Looking at the surface of the two reports, one might suppose that while

Matthew was concerned with spiritual conditions, Luke, at least in the first place, was concerned with material. So Dr. Colin Campbell (p. 217): 'The poor are blessed not because they are poor in spirit but because they are poor: the hungry are blessed and shall be satisfied with food because they are hungry. There is to be a complete reversal of fate, the exalting of those of low estate—the poor receiving good things, and those who now weep rejoicing over their altered lot.' That, as I think, is an overstatement; and yet no one who considers Luke's continuous sympathy with the poor as such will leave this element out of account. It is, of course, possible and even likely, that Jesus pronounced some of the Beatitudes on different occasions and in varying forms. But if we take it that Matthew and Luke derived this part of their Gospels from an earlier source, we may be confident in saying that Luke's barer form is the original, and that Matthew, in compiling his Gospel for the use of preachers and catechists, expanded some of the phrases so as to make Jesus' meaning plain. In Textual Criticism it is accepted as a general rule that 'the briefer is to be preferred to the longer reading'; and certainly in this case it is less likely that 'the poor in spirit' would be curtailed to 'the poor' than that the poor (a word which on its face challenges explanation) would be unfolded and interpreted.

How would this phrase 'the poor' be generally understood within the Palestinian Church? One lesson learned in the course of the Old Testament revelation was that outward prosperity or health was no sure token of the Divine favour. For a time it had been a part of orthodox belief that trouble was always retributive, but in the Book of Job that reading of the ways of God was indignantly and conclusively set aside; and, especially in the later Scriptures, 'the poor' are spoken of as virtually equivalent with the godly. Wellhausen (*Matthew*, p. 13) notes that 'already in Is 29<sup>19</sup> 61<sup>1</sup>, and in the Psalms, "the poor" has been sublimated into a religious conception; they are not merely people who have no money, but the godly who, in this world, are disenchanting and oppressed.' Poverty in itself, as we sorrowfully know, may be embittering, narrowing, stupefying; but those who heard Jesus in Aramaic using this word would inevitably import into it a secondary, ethical suggestion, understanding that it was the poor in this later Old Testament sense who were blessed. Thus, though Matthew's added words 'in spirit' are probably a gloss, they are a sound and intelligent gloss, which makes clear a great part of Jesus'

meaning. It may be objected that such an added explanation would have been more naturally expected in Luke, writing for a Roman official like Theophilus; but, for one thing, Luke as a man of letters had a literary conscience, which inclined him to keep faith with the text of the document he was copying.

But more than this is involved. Luke, as has been noted, had an eager sympathy with the poor as such, and a glowing sense of the elements of revolution and upturn in the work of Jesus: 'He hath put down princes from their seat and hath exalted the humble and meek.' Now Jesus' original saying in its challenging bareness was susceptible both of the Old Testament meaning and of this New Testament revolutionary sense. Luke heard in it something like this: 'You, poor waifs and outcasts, against whom every door has long been barred, to you one Door is now open at which you need not fear rebuffs; and in that fact, you are blessed indeed.' Whilst Matthew exhibited the Hebrew meaning in clearness, Luke, with his keen sense of the revolutionary character of the Gospel, protested that he must stand by the Master's spoken word; and to make his protest emphatic, he inserted the corresponding woes (6<sup>24-26</sup>). Thus we may note three stages in the explanation of the Beatitude—the naked word as first spoken by Jesus; the word explicated by Matthew in a religious Old Testament sense; and finally, the word reasserted by Luke without any explanation, in its half-defiant bareness.

The same difficulty arises in connexion with Mt 5<sup>6</sup> and Lk 6<sup>21</sup>: did Jesus originally speak of 'hunger for righteousness,' or was His promise designed simply for those who are hungry—for the grim world of the unprivileged and the excluded? Again, as in the previous instance, there is Old Testament authority for the spiritual sense. The Lord 'satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry with good things' (Ps 107<sup>9</sup>); 'the soul which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry will give thee praise and righteousness' (Bar 2<sup>16</sup>). Matthew thus did not need to seek far for justification of his expansion of the Lord's saying; but is this all its meaning? It is not without significance, that whilst Matthew conceives of the light as being kindled for 'all that are in the house' (5<sup>15</sup>), Luke twice over (8<sup>16</sup> 11<sup>33</sup>) represents it as for *those who are entering in*. He has the urgent, pitying sense of people who are without, and who need to be encouraged with the promise of an open door and the guiding light. But if we thus recognize a twofold reference,

another question remains—what did Matthew mean by hungering after righteousness? Dr. Moffatt, following some good authorities, translates the word by ‘goodness,’ taking the Beatitude as offered to those who sincerely seek to become better men. This cannot be ruled out as impossible, though when in another passage (Mt 6<sup>30</sup>) he translates righteousness by ‘goodness’—‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his goodness,’ he will find few to agree with him. John Weiss and others read the Beatitude in a Pauline sense, as giving assurance to the man whose heart’s desire it is to stand right with God that he will not be disappointed. In the thirty-second Psalm the poet sings of the blessedness of the man ‘whose transgression is forgiven, to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin’; but there is blessedness, says Jesus, even in the longing for such forgiveness and acceptance. There is substantial Old Testament support for this interpretation, as in Ps 24<sup>5</sup> 132<sup>9, 16</sup>, Is 54<sup>17</sup> 61<sup>10</sup>, where righteousness is used as an equivalent for deliverance or vindication coming from God. ‘To hunger and thirst after righteousness’ would be thus to long for acceptance and public acquittal from God, and that, clearly, is a possible and a worthy reading of our text. But the Old Testament also suggests one which is still grander. In Ps 51<sup>4</sup> the poet makes his unreserved confession of fault, ‘that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest,’ for above all things he is eager that in the face of the world God should be seen to be righteous. So in Bar 2<sup>18</sup> ‘the eyes that fail and the soul which hungered shall give thee glory and righteousness,’ *i.e.* shall confess that Thou art in the right. These men were concerned not with what might befall themselves, but only that God’s name and character should appear without obscuration or disguise. It scarcely needs to be said that this passionate craving for a theodicy—the justification of God as utterly good and wise and righteous—has largely lost its hold upon the modern mind; and yet in age after age it has broken out afresh. In the Book of Revelation it finds ample utterance. After the eager pleading (6<sup>9</sup>), ‘How long, O Lord, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?’ there comes the triumphant outcry (15<sup>3, 4</sup>): ‘Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, righteous and true are thy ways, thou king of the ages. . . . All nations shall come and do homage before thee, because thy righteous acts have been made public.’ That is a hunger and thirst after righteousness of a very noble, though it be an unfamiliar, kind; and

though there is no room for dogmatism, the probability is that Matthew in his expansion of the Lord’s Beatitude was thinking not so much of a man’s desire for personal goodness as of his passion for seeing God gloriously acknowledged in His universe, or for that recognition and acquittal which is reserved for those who love Him.

The other of the Beatitudes which calls for separate note is the blessedness of the pure in heart: ‘They shall see God,’ says Jesus. The first suggestion for our ears and hearts is unquestionably of that immediate vision after which devout souls in all ages have longed; and in substance this remains central in the promise, whatever changes in the metaphor or the method may be involved. Philo speaks of those who persevere in their high quest ‘until they see That which they have desired.’ ‘With the flash of one hurried glance,’ says Augustine, ‘I attained to the vision of That which is, and at last I saw Thy invisible things.’ Repeatedly he deplors the shortness of these moments of seeing: ‘I could not sustain my gaze: my weakness was dashed back, and I was relegated to my ordinary experience’; ‘I could not stand still to enjoy my God, but was swept up to Thee by Thy beauty, and again was torn away by my own weight, and fell back with a groan into the world of sense’; on that immortal evening at Ostia with his mother he tells how the vision passed, ‘and we heard again the babble of our own voices.’ As this vision is the crown of our human attainment, so its brevity and transience are a constant burden to great souls: ‘now we see in a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then we shall know as also we are known.’ And of this craving and contention Jesus says that satisfaction is sure for the clean-hearted: they shall see God’s face. So much is clear; but the likelihood is that Jesus in the words He employed pointed His simple hearers to something equally simple. In 2 S 14<sup>24, 28, 32</sup> ‘seeing the king’s face’ recurs as a popular phrase for coming to his presence; and the same familiar metaphor meets us in the Psalms: Ps 11<sup>7</sup>, ‘Jehovah is righteous, he loveth righteousness, and the upright shall behold his face.’ That is based on the practice of an Eastern court; and in word and idea it lies close to the saying of Jesus; so in Ps 17<sup>15</sup>, and, with a slight change of image, in Ps 24<sup>3, 4</sup>. And thus in this Beatitude a grave note is sounded. The Gospel assures the fullest chance even to the unprivileged and the outcast; but not to the neglect of character. This verse is one of Matthew’s treasures; and it is not without significance that, later in his

Gospel, when he relates the Parable of the Banquet, though he is as liberal as Luke in representing the wideness of the invitation, he adds a fragment of another parable (22<sup>11-13</sup>). The summons is without restriction, to bad and good alike (v.<sup>10</sup>), but for every guest the wedding garment is required. Grace certainly is universal but not at the expense of ethics; and it is impressive to find this note struck even in the list of the Beatitudes.

One important general question is often raised about all the Beatitudes—Is their promise for the present or only for the future? Do they speak of a good to be awaited or of one which even now may be enjoyed? On the surface the future seems to predominate: men *will* be comforted and satisfied, and in view of this they can endure hardness. The present tense in vv.<sup>3, 10</sup> has no great force on the other side, for if Jesus spoke in Aramaic He probably would use no verb at all; and in any case, the present might be nothing more than a present of assured expectation. Claude Montefiore accordingly takes the futures as determining the whole passage. 'The Beatitudes show that the Kingdom at present is only a heavenly treasure, which as yet can only be hoped for, yearned for, believed in. The poor and oppressed are not happy now, they are to be accounted happy since they are heirs of a Kingdom which will assuredly be theirs.' This raises questions of the interpretation not merely of words and grammatical forms, but of the modes of Christian feeling. In his First Epistle (1<sup>6</sup>) when Peter says of the persecuted Christians that they 'exult, although now for a little while, if it must be, they are distressed by manifold trials.' Alford reads that word 'exult' in 'a quasi-future sense'; Blass calls it 'a present of confident expectation'; Windisch says that 'the exultation and the short-lived distress are not simultaneous.' But is that certain? Paul claims for himself and his fellow-preachers that though 'sorrowful they were always rejoicing' (2 Co 6<sup>10</sup>); Jesus declared that those who were reproached and persecuted and slandered for His sake were happy, and He bade them 'rejoice and exult' (Mt 5<sup>12</sup>); and Peter repeats the Master's word (1 P 4<sup>14</sup>), adding that 'the spirit of glory' rests upon all such. That note of victorious gladness sounds and resounds throughout the New Testament, which surely is the most buoyant book that ever was written. And Montefiore (p. 484) acknowledges this as fact, and says without undue regard for self-consistency: 'Whatever the reasons given for the assertion that certain classes

of persons are happy, the emphasis lies here upon the fact that they are so . . . and in this present happiness lies the originality of these Beatitudes.' So the blessing, it seems, is not all deferred.

One consideration of weight may be added in view of the succeeding paragraph (vv.<sup>13, 16</sup>). Clearly it is possible that nothing binds the sections to each other, but it is likelier that Matthew intended or imagined a connexion. If vv.<sup>3-12</sup> are read in an exclusively future sense, without any present realization, how is any natural passage to be found over to vv.<sup>13-16</sup>, which are directly missionary? But if the Beatitudes convey the assurance of gifts of light and health and satisfaction in this present time the sequence is obvious. In virtue of these gifts from Jesus, the Church possesses energies of infection by which the world is bettered. In opposition to any narrowly apocalyptic reading these verses present the world as having a future and as susceptible of improvement, whilst Christ's friends are thought of as having a function in and for the world, and a Divine equipment to match it.

On the detailed interpretation of the verses there is little need to dwell, for Christ's metaphors of salt and light and the hill city explain themselves. In spite of Job 6<sup>6</sup> and Rev 3<sup>16</sup> there is a touch of the comic in Montefiore's suggestion that 'as salt is to food in general, so should the disciples be to the world: they are to make it, as it were, palatable to God, by giving a higher morality and religion to the world.' That is scarcely an example of exegetical tact. Salt is that which hinders putrefaction, and its gospel analogue is meant to keep society sound and wholesome. But that function can never be discharged by men who have sunk to the level of the society about them. Holtzmann suggests that the saltless salt refers to the Dead Sea deposits, when the salinity has been washed out by heavy rains, and of this geographers and scientists may judge. But Christ's point is clear, that the Church's influence tells through its unlikeness to the surrounding society. Have salt in yourselves, He said again (Mk 9<sup>50</sup>). The same point is involved in both the other metaphors—of hilltop and lampstand. Jesus never counselled ostentation, but in good living there must be nothing timid or shamefaced. There is an element of the conspicuous, of marked and appreciable difference which He required of His followers, if their work is to be done. You must 'have your behaviour noble among the Gentiles,' says Peter (1 P 2<sup>12</sup>), 'that they beholding your good works

may glorify your Father who is in heaven.' 'The church of the living God,' says Paul (1 Ti 3<sup>16</sup>), 'is pillar as well as support of the truth,' making it not only secure but conspicuous. A lamp is kindled in order that it may give light, says Jesus ;

and if we are entitled to read these two sections together, we must add that the secret of the radiant goodness which helps men thus is found in the present receiving of the blessings of which the Beatitudes speak.

## Commentaries on the Old and New Testaments.

BY PROFESSOR ARTHUR S. PEAKE, D.D., MANCHESTER.

### II.

I PASS on now to speak of the commentaries on individual books or groups of books.<sup>1</sup> On Genesis the outstanding exposition is Gunkel's (*HK*). Adopting the accepted critical analysis, and indeed extending it, and at one with the Grafians in their post-exilic dating of the Priestly Code, he had a keen sense for the primitive features in the earlier narratives. He exhibited fine appreciation of literary values, remarkable aptitude for tracing the affinities and the developments of myth, a gift of penetrating and sympathetic interpretation. His commentary opened a new era in exegesis. Dillmann's work was learned, comprehensive, and laborious, but Gunkel far surpasses it in its faculty of entering into the thoughts and feelings of the writers. Holzinger's contribution to *KHC* was a very useful compendium, earlier than Gunkel but still worthy of consultation. It was strong in its critical analysis. The author has written on Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua in the same series. Procksch's Genesis (*KAT*) is more recent and is a good and thorough piece of work, though not in the same class with Gunkel. König published an independent commentary. The author is one of our most learned Old Testament scholars, a great philologist with an almost unrivalled knowledge of the literature of Old Testament scholarship, an adherent of the Grafian criticism, but much more conservative with

reference to the historicity of Biblical narratives and the history of the religion than most scholars. He is apt to occupy too much space with polemic, sometimes on rather insignificant points. Our best British commentary is Skinner's (*ICC*). It has been much influenced by Gunkel, but is fully abreast of all the relevant literature. It is characterized by fine scholarship and great sanity of judgment. Driver (*West. C.*) pays much attention to the question of Genesis and modern science ; but the notes are rather meagre, and the general standpoint is rather that of Dillmann than that of Gunkel. I imagine that the substance of it dates back to the pre-Gunkel period. Bennett (*Cent. B.*) and Ryle (*CB*) are both excellent.

Baentsch's Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers (*HK*) is a masterly work. Dillmann's Exodus and Leviticus has been revised by Ryssel and is full, accurate, and competent. Holzinger's Exodus and Numbers are worthy companions of his Genesis, and Bertholet's Leviticus and Deuteronomy (*KHC*) are also excellent. For Exodus and Leviticus in the *ICC* we have still to wait, but McNeile (*West. C.*) and Driver (*CB*) on Exodus are both valuable contributions, the latter being in my judgment much better than the author's Genesis. Bennett's Exodus (*Cent. B.*) is good but too brief. On Leviticus, Chapman (*CB*) is excellent. The book was translated and annotated by Driver and White in the *Polychrome Bible*. Leviticus and Numbers were combined in Professor A. R. S. Kennedy's commentary (*Cent. B.*). The author's great authority in Hebrew archæology lends special value to his work, but the commentary is too short. On Numbers much the fullest commentary is by G. B. Gray (*ICC*) ; but it may be usefully supplemented by Binns (*West. C.*) which is quite recent. and takes account of much work published after

<sup>1</sup> I use *ICC* for *International Critical Commentary*, *CB* for *Cambridge Bible*, *Cent. B.* for *Century Bible*, *West. C.* for *Westminster Commentaries*, *EGT* for *Expositor's Greek Testament*, *HC* for *Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament*, *HK* for *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, *HNT* for *Lietzmann's Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, *KHC* for *Kurzer Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, *Mey* for *Meyer's Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, *SNT* for *J. Weiss's Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*. *ZK* for *Zahn's Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*.