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CENTURY BIBLE HANDBOOKS

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APOCRYPHAL BOOKS OF THE
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS
OF THE OLD & NEW
TESTAMENT

BY

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LONDON
T. C. & E. C. JACK
16 HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.
AND EDINBURGH
1908

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APOCRYPHAL BOOKS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA— INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT-DAY VALUE OF THE APOCRYPHA

THE first question which naturally suggests itself in approaching the study of Jewish Apocryphal literature is, Why should we trouble about the Apocrypha at all? What value has the Apocrypha for us to-day? Immersed as we are in theological problems of the first importance, why should we devote time and strength to the study of books which have been unanimously rejected by the whole of Protestant Christendom?

This question might be answered in various ways.

There are many grounds upon which the Apocrypha can lay claim to our interest.

i. We must remember that up to the time of the Reformation the Apocrypha formed *an integral part of the Christian Bible*. It is true that many of the Christian Fathers drew a distinction between the Apocrypha

and the rest of the Old Testament; but after the fifth century the distinction was almost universally forgotten, and for a thousand years the Apocrypha held a well-nigh unchallenged place in Holy Writ. The Council of Trent definitely decreed that it was of equal authority with the other books of the Bible, and this position is still maintained by Roman Catholics to-day. Even after the Reformation the Apocrypha still held a high place in the affections of a large number of Protestants, though it was assigned a subordinate position as compared with that of the other books of Scripture. The sixth article of the English Church, for instance, defined the position of the Apocrypha thus : “ And the other books (as Jerome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners ; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine.” It was not till 1827 that English Bibles began to be commonly printed without the Apocrypha. The Apocrypha, therefore, has played no insignificant part in the history of the Christian Church. For more than half the time, during which Christianity has been in existence, it was regarded as an integral part of Scripture, and during the other half it has exercised an influence only second to that of the inspired books themselves. For this reason alone, no student of Church History or Christian Doctrine can afford to neglect the Apocrypha. We are bound to recognise the force which it has exercised in shaping Christian thought and moulding Christian char-

acter. And though the question of the Canon has been closed and is not likely to be reopened, the Apocrypha, as I shall hope to show presently, has still an important rôle to play in the work of theological reconstruction, which is the immediate task that lies before the Church.

2. The Apocrypha has claims upon our interest on account of the *intrinsic value* of some of its books. There can be little doubt that, if it were possible for us to revise the Canon of the Old Testament, very many people would prefer to substitute Ecclesiasticus for Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Wisdom for the Song of Solomon. Some might even, like Josephus, consider I. Esdras an improvement on our Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, while the religious tone of Judith is undoubtedly higher than that of Esther. The spiritual value of much of the Apocrypha has been recognised in the Church from the very first. Traces of its influence are obvious in the pages of the New Testament. Some of Paul's arguments in the Epistle to the Romans were undoubtedly inspired by the Book of Wisdom, and the language in which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews describes Christ (chap. i. 1-3) was borrowed from the same source. The Fathers of the Church always recognised the worth of the Apocrypha, and, for the most part, treated it as Scripture. When Augustine, towards the end of his life, made an anthology of the passages of Scripture which he considered specially

helpful for the culture of the spiritual life, the quotations from Ecclesiasticus occupied no less than an eighth of the book (36 pages out of 285 in Wehlrich's edition of the "Speculum"), twice as much space as was given to the Gospel of St. Matthew. Even though we may think that Augustine attaches too much weight to Ecclesiasticus, it is impossible to dispute the proposition that the best books of the Apocrypha are undoubtedly worth reading for their own sakes, and contain much that is profitable and stimulating.

3. The Apocrypha is also of immense importance from a *historical point of view*. Between the latest book of the Old Testament (the Book of Daniel, which dates from about 168 B.C.) and the birth of Christ, there is a gap of more than a century and a half. During this period, radical changes took place both in the political and religious condition of the Jewish people. Why should our interest in the history of Israel cease with Daniel? Why should we ignore the interval between the two Testaments? If the story of the Maccabæan struggle for freedom does not appeal to us, the history of the development of Jewish theology ought surely to command our attention. God's revelation of Himself to Israel did not end with Ezra. It is impossible to think of Him as silent for four hundred, or even for a hundred and fifty years. There was no hiatus in the Divine preparation for the advent of the Messiah. The

religious and political movements during this intermediate period profoundly affected the life and thought of the infant Church. For this reason alone, if for no other, the Apocrypha is of priceless value to us, [since it is the source from which we derive most of our knowledge of Jewish history during the years that separate the Old Testament from the New.

4. *A knowledge of Apocryphal literature is absolutely indispensable for the scientific study of the New Testament.* It is no exaggeration to say that New Testament criticism has been simply revolutionised during the last ten years, and the revolution has largely been produced by the publication of the Jewish Apocalyptic writings. New problems have been raised which never before excited serious attention. We cannot, for instance, read the Epistles of Paul to-day without asking questions which never troubled theologians in the past. It is impossible for us to take Paul's statements just as we find them. We are bound to ask, What is the source from which he derived his ideas? How much of his theology, for instance, is simply Judaism carried over into Christianity? To what extent is his interpretation of Christianity coloured by his Pharisaic training? What is the origin of the thought-forms in which he clothes his Christian experience? Whence did he obtain the categories which he uses in explaining the Person of Christ or the Doctrine of the Atonement? What is the validity of

these ideas for modern theology? Questions like these, and many other similar problems which confront us in New Testament criticism to-day, can only be answered by the scientific study of Apocryphal literature. As Sanday and Headlam say in their Commentary on Romans, "It is by a continuous and careful study of such works that any advance in the exegesis of the New Testament will be possible." Two epoch-making books have already appeared which illustrate the tremendous importance of the new method. Dr. Charles' "Eschatology" throws a flood of light on the Pauline doctrine of the Future Life; and Tennant's "Sources of the Doctrine of Original Sin" has proved conclusively the influence of the Apocrypha on this particular aspect of Pauline theology. These books are only the pioneers of a new principle of criticism which must, sooner or later, be applied to the whole range of New Testament theology. In this work, the effects of which upon the theology of the future can scarcely be foreseen at present, the Apocrypha is destined to exercise an enormous influence. It may be said, therefore, that *a knowledge of Apocryphal literature is even more essential for the study of the New Testament than a knowledge of the Old Testament itself.* The present handbook is merely an attempt to give an account of the literature, but an opportunity has been taken, wherever it was possible, of pointing out the value of each particular book for the student of the New Testament.

CHAPTER II

THE APOCRYPHA PROPER

THE term Apocrypha in its technical sense has been used since the time of the Reformation to describe a collection of Jewish books, whose claim to be regarded as part of the Old Testament has been challenged by the Protestant section of Christendom. This collection comprises some fourteen works of varying character and value. They may be classified as follows :—

1. *Historical Works.*—I. Esdras ; I. and II. Macca-bees.
2. *Didactic Works.*—The Wisdom of Solomon ; the Book of Sirach (*Ecclesiasticus*).
3. *Religious Romances.*—The Book of Tobit ; the Book of Judith.
4. *Prophetic or Apocalyptic Works.*—The Book of Baruch ; IV. Ezra (sometimes called II. Esdras).
5. *Additions to the Old Testament.*—The addition to the Book of Esther ; the Prayer of Manasseh ; the three additions to Daniel, viz. (a) The Song of the Three Holy Children ; (b) The Story of

Susanna ; (c) The Story of Bel and the Dragon. Most of these additions might very properly be placed in the class of Religious Romances.

What is the Apocrypha?—The Christian Church in modern times first became conscious of the existence of the Apocrypha at the Reformation, though individual scholars and theologians had of course always known of it before. Up to the Reformation the Bible in common use was the Latin version originally made by Jerome, and known as the Vulgate. When, however, Reuchlin reintroduced the study of the Hebrew language, and Protestants began to read the Hebrew original of the Old Testament, the discovery was made that the Vulgate contained many more books than the Hebrew Bible. *The name Apocrypha was accordingly given to those books which were found in the Vulgate but not in the Hebrew Bible.* But how did the books get into the Vulgate? If they were not part of the original Hebrew, whence did Jerome obtain them? The answer to the question is simple. The Jews in the early centuries of the Christian era had two versions of the Old Testament, one the original Hebrew, which was used more particularly in Palestine, the other a Greek translation, called the Septuagint, which was originally made at Alexandria and used by the Greek-speaking Jews of the Dispersion. The Greek Bible, like the Vulgate, contains

the extra books, known as the Apocrypha (with the exception of IV. Ezra), which are not found in the Hebrew, and it was from the Greek Bible that Jerome introduced them into his Latin translation. The Apocrypha therefore *represents the difference between the contents of the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint plus IV. Ezra.*

The Origin of the Apocrypha.—The statement that the Apocrypha is the excess of the contents of the Septuagint over the Hebrew Bible, only drives the question which was raised about the Vulgate a stage further back. We have still to ask how the Apocrypha got into the Septuagint when it is absent from the Hebrew. To answer this question it is necessary to consider the problem of the origin of the Old Testament Canon. It is impossible to go into the details, or discuss the debatable points connected with this important subject. All that can be done here, is simply to state the main conclusions with regard to which there is general agreement amongst modern scholars. How, then, was the Old Testament formed? Obviously it did not drop from the skies, and equally obviously its books were not composed at the same time. The Old Testament is a collection of books written by many different people over a period of several centuries. How were the books collected together? It is certain now that the collection was not made at any one particular point in the history of Israel, though it may have received

official sanction at a particular date. The Old Testament was formed very gradually, and over five hundred years elapsed between the beginning and the end of the process. The chief points in the evolution of the Canon were as follows : (1) In its earliest form the Old Testament consisted merely of "the Law." The word "Law," however, in this connection is used in a broad sense, and covers the six books of the Hexateuch. These books were recognised as authoritative about 444 B.C. or perhaps in their present form a little later. If the Bible of 400 B.C. had been stereotyped, it would thus have ended with the Book of Joshua. As a matter of fact, the Samaritan Old Testament only contained the Pentateuch. (2) In the second stage, a further collection, consisting of the prophetical writings, and including the historical books (*i.e.* Judges, I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings), was added to the Canon. When exactly this addition was made cannot be precisely determined, but we know that it must be placed somewhere between 400 and 200 B.C. The Old Testament of 200 B.C. therefore consisted of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Historical Books. (3) A final addition, consisting of the Hagiographa, and comprising all the books not found in the two other sections, was made between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100, and the total collection received official recognition at the Jewish Synod of Jamnia (about A.D. 90), so that the Old Testament, as

we know it in its complete form, was finally adopted as the Bible of the Jewish people about the end of the first century of our era. Here the process stopped as far as Palestine was concerned. If we ask why a development which had been going on for five hundred years should have been suddenly arrested, the only satisfactory explanation that we can find is that it was probably due to the revolutionary change in the character of Judaism which resulted from the destruction of the Temple. Before A.D. 70 the Temple had been the centre and soul of the Jewish religion. When its Temple was destroyed, it had to find a new centre, and it turned to its sacred writings. The first problem it had to settle was the question as to what was to be regarded as sacred, and what not. The decision of this question was of vital importance. Hence the Synod of Jamnia. From this point onwards, the Bible took the place of the Temple, and Judaism became the religion of a book. But though the process stopped in Palestine, it did not stop in Alexandria. The Jews of Alexandria still went on adding to the Old Testament, and the books which they added consisted of the writings which we now call "the Apocrypha." We owe the Apocrypha, therefore, to the fact that the process of the evolution of the Old Testament was arrested at an earlier stage in Palestine than it was at Alexandria.

Reasons why the Apocrypha was rejected.—The

grounds upon which the Apocrypha was rejected by Protestants are not far to seek. Protestantism was the religion of a Book. Its seat of authority was the Bible. The Bible was to it what the Church had hitherto been to Christendom. Its doctrine of inspiration sharply differentiated the Bible from all other literature. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, to reject all books of disputed canonicity. The right of the Apocrypha to a place in the Bible had never been universally acknowledged. It had no place in the Hebrew Scriptures. It was with great reluctance that Jerome had admitted it into the Vulgate. Several of the Fathers of the Church had protested against its use. In the face of this divergence of opinion, it was impossible to regard the Apocrypha as inspired Scripture, and no book of doubtful inspiration could have any place in the Protestant Bible. Besides the divergence of opinion, there were other reasons which probably weighed with the Protestants. (*a*) The re-discovery of the Hebrew and Greek originals had created a revulsion of feeling against the Vulgate. Some of the renderings of the Vulgate seemed to afford unfair support to the doctrines of Roman Catholicism. The whole version was therefore regarded with suspicion, and the suspicion naturally extended to the Apocrypha. (*b*) The Apocrypha contained some passages which conflicted with Protestant theology. The doctrines of the intercession of the

saints and of prayers for the dead were both clearly taught in some of the books. Many passages in Ecclesiasticus lent support to the Romanist doctrine that "salvation is of works." There cannot be much doubt that theological considerations weighed both with Roman Catholics in their acceptance of the Apocrypha and with Protestants in their rejection of it. Many of the old objections have lost their weight to-day. The rigid theory of inspiration has been given up. Few would now deny that there is more inspiration in some of the books of the Apocrypha than there is in some of the writings included in the Old Testament. On the other hand, every impartial student is bound to admit that the general spiritual level of the Apocrypha is nothing like as high as that of the Old Testament, and partly for this reason, and partly too because of the grave problems that would be raised if the question of the Canon were reopened, the verdict, which was passed on the Apocrypha by Protestantism at the Reformation, is not likely to be reversed.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

THE FIRST BOOK OF MACCABEES

THERE are only three books in the Apocrypha proper which can be termed historical, viz. I. and II. Maccabees and I. Esdras, and of these three I. Maccabees is by far the most important. Its importance is due to the fact that it is our chief authority for one of the most stirring periods in Jewish history. From it we derive our most trustworthy account of the heroic struggle for civil and religious liberty which forms almost the only brilliant episode in the dreary centuries that separate the epoch of the great prophets from the time of Christ. As Westcott says, "History offers no parallel to the undaunted courage with which the Maccabæan brothers dared to face death, one by one, in the maintenance of a holy cause. The result was worthy of the sacrifice. The Maccabees inspired a subject people with independence: they found a few personal followers and they left a nation."

The Contents of I. Maccabees. — The narrative

covers a period of forty years from the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B.C. to the death of Simon in 135 B.C., and gives therefore a complete picture of the struggle. The book may be conveniently divided into five sections. (1) *The cause of the revolt* (chap. i.). The writer gives a vivid description of the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes, in conjunction with the Hellenising party in Judæa, to abolish the Jewish religion and establish paganism in its stead. A Greek gymnasium was erected in Jerusalem ; the Temple was desecrated, and became the scene of idolatrous sacrifices ; a terrible inquisition was instituted, and all Jews who refused to abandon their faith were put to death. (2) *The outbreak of the revolt* (chap. ii.). The standard of revolt was raised at Modin by Mattathias and his five sons, who gathered together a force and resisted the demands of Antiochus (167 B.C.). Just before his death, which occurred in the following year, Mattathias charged his sons "to be zealous for the law and give their lives for the covenant." (3) *The struggle under the leadership of Judas* (chaps. iii. 1–ix. 22). Judas is the hero of the book, and the writer dwells at length on his valorous deeds during the five years (166–161) of his captaincy. In his first campaign he won three signal victories, the first over Apollonius, the second over Seron, the third over a large army specially sent from Antioch to avenge the previous defeats under the command of Nicanor and

Gorgias (chaps. iii., iv.). In the following year he was again successful against a still larger Syrian army under Lysias, and this triumph enabled him to obtain possession of the Temple at Jerusalem, which he purified and re-dedicated to the worship of Jehovah (chaps. v. and vi.). The victories of Judas, and the difficulties which arose in Syria after the death of Antiochus, compelled Lysias to abandon the policy of destroying the Jewish religion, and grant the Jews religious liberty. Judas, however, was not content with this concession. The remainder of his life was devoted to the attempt to secure political independence as well (chaps. vii.-ix.). (4) *The leadership of Jonathan* (chaps. ix. 23-xii. 53), which lasted from 161 B.C. to 143. After a fruitless guerilla warfare, in which Jonathan won some victories, a change of fortune took place through a civil strife in Syria. Jonathan was made High Priest in 153, and by diplomatic alliances succeeded in maintaining his position for ten years. (5) *The leadership of Simon* (chaps. xiii.-xvi.) from 143-135 B.C. Partly by success in war, partly by diplomacy, Simon consolidated his position and secured complete independence for the Jews. His rule was characterised by many administrative reforms. In 135 B.C. he was treacherously murdered by his son-in-law, Ptolemy, who hoped to secure the position.

Authorship and Date.—The name of the author of I. Maccabees is unknown. It is certain, however,

that he must have been a Palestinian Jew. This is clearly proved (1) by the fact that, as we know from the express statements of Origen and Jerome, the book was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic; (2) by the author's minute acquaintance with the geography and topography of Palestine. Many scholars think that the religious tone of the book indicates that the writer was a Sadducee. The date cannot be fixed with precision. The book must have been written before the Roman invasion of Palestine in 63 B.C., because otherwise the writer's attitude to the Empire must have been much less favourable than it is: 63 B.C. is therefore the latest possible limit. The earliest possible date seems to be fixed by the reference to Hyrcanus in chap. xvi. 23. The statement, "the rest of the acts of John . . . are written in the chronicles of the priesthood," seems to imply that Hyrcanus was already dead, and that an account of his life had been written. The death of Hyrcanus occurred in 105 B.C. Consequently the majority of modern scholars date the book between 100 and 80 B.C. There is, however, another view. Some scholars, including Wellhausen, think that the last two chapters did not form part of the original book, but are a later addition. If this be so, an earlier date may be adopted, and some authorities place the book in the early part of the reign of John Hyrcanus, between 140 and 125 B.C.

Characteristics of the Book.—(a) *Its historical value.* For accuracy and trustworthiness I. Maccabees compares very favourably with most historical writings of ancient times. It is not entirely free from mistakes. It represents, for instance, the partition of Alexander's empire as having been made by himself (chap. i. 6), and it is at variance with the statements of other historians with regard to the date of the murder of Antiochus VI. (chap. xiv. 1). No historian, however, not even Thucydides, is absolutely infallible, and such errors as have been discovered in the book belong for the most part to extraneous affairs, and do not affect the essence of the narrative. (b) *Its freedom from legendary accretions.* The most remarkable characteristic of I. Maccabees is its absolute freedom from mythical elements. It confines itself to the sober facts of history. The narrative contains no miracles, no portents, no supernatural interventions. In this respect it stands almost alone among ancient histories, and the fact is all the more wonderful, when we remember that the writer was dealing with a great religious movement, which must have afforded no little material that a superstitious imagination might have easily developed into supernatural events. (c) *Its religious tone.* One of the most striking features about I. Maccabees is its religious reticence. This is not due to scepticism or want of faith, however. There can be no question about the genuine faith and religious

devotion which the writer exhibits throughout the book. He is in fullest sympathy with the aims of the movement which he is describing. He shows the greatest zeal for all the institutions of Judaism, for the Law and the Ordinances, for the Temple and for the Scriptures. He refers to the Divine deliverances of Israel in the past, and is confident that “none that put their trust in Him shall want for strength.” Yet never once, from beginning to end of the book, according to the true text, does the term “God” or “Lord” occur. The writer either describes God by the word “Heaven,” or leaves the reader to supply his own subject to the verb. The writer evidently belongs to a school of thought which had lost the sense of the nearness of God, and which no longer used the old familiar names. To it God had become remote and far away—in fact, little more than an abstraction. I. Maccabees is lacking, too, in a belief in the future life. There is no hint of any reward or punishment, or even of any existence after death. It contains, however, an adumbration, at any rate, of the Messianic hope. Twice the writer speaks of certain temporary arrangements which have been made and are to continue “till the prophet comes” (chaps. iv. 46, xiv. 41).

THE SECOND BOOK OF MACCABEES

II. Maccabees presents many points of contrast with I. Maccabees. It is widely different in (*a*) the scope of its contents, (*b*) its aim and purpose, (*c*) its historical value, (*d*) its religious outlook.

The Contents of II. Maccabees.—While the first book of Maccabees covers the whole period from 175 B.C. to 135 B.C., the scope of the second book is much more limited. It begins a year earlier, but only extends to the death of Nicanor, which occurred in 161 B.C. Thus it only covers fifteen years, and, like the Acts of the Apostles, ends without recording the death of its hero. The first seven chapters contain new material; chaps. viii.-xv. run parallel to I. Maccabees i.-vii. The new material comprises the following elements: (*a*) two prefatory letters from the Jews of Palestine to their brethren in Egypt (chaps. i. 1-ii. 18), which, however, seem to be a later addition and not an integral part of the book; (*b*) the writer's preface describing the aim and source of the book (chap. ii. 19-32); (*c*) the attempt of Heliodorus to plunder the Temple (chap. iii.); (*d*) the intrigues amongst the High Priests at Jerusalem (chap. iv.); (*e*) the attack on the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes (chap. v.); (*f*) the martyrdom of Eleazar and the seven brethren (chaps. vi., vii.).

The Aim of the Book.—The interest of the author

of I. Maccabees is purely historical : the book is entirely free from any ulterior purpose, and is intended to be an unvarnished record of facts. The case, however, is different with the second book. The writer definitely states that his object was to write for the pleasure and profit of his readers. "We have been careful that they that will read may have delight, and that they that are desirous to commit to memory might have ease, and that all into whose hands it comes might have profit" (chap. ii. 25). He compares himself to a decorator putting the finishing touches on the ornamentation of a house (chap. v. 29). The writer's idea of what would be profitable to his readers may be gathered from the general tone of the book. His purpose is "writ large" on almost every page. He is always striving to impress upon the Egyptian Jews that they were part and parcel of the Jewish race, and so the participants in the glories of the Maccabæan age. His great ideal is the unity of Jewish people. Centrifugal forces were at work. A temple had been established at Leontopolis, and there was a danger that the Diaspora in Egypt would be completely dissevered from Palestinian Judaism. It is against this spirit that the author of II. Maccabees is protesting, and he uses the events of the Maccabæan struggle to exalt the Temple at Jerusalem and to urge the necessity for keeping the Palestinian festivals. The book might be described as a tract in favour

of unity based on the events of the Maccabæan war.

Historical Value.—II. Maccabees is of considerably less historical value than the first book, for : (a) Historical accuracy and chronological order are subordinated to the religious purpose of the book. The festivals of the Dedication and of Nicanor, for instance, are taken out of their proper place in the narrative for dramatic effect. There are many discrepancies, too, between the statements of the two books on points of detail and order, and in every case internal evidence favours the narrative of I. Maccabees. (b) The writer of II. Maccabees has a predilection for introducing marvellous and supernatural incidents. He speaks of the manifest signs which came from heaven (chap. ii. 21). Amongst the prodigies related in the book may be mentioned the great apparition of the terrible rider who smote Heliodorus (chap. iii. 24-29), the apparition of the horsemen fighting in the air (chap. v. 2-4), the supernatural protection given to Judas on the battle-field (chap. x. 29-31), &c. (c) There is a lack of true historical perspective. Minor events often receive an undue emphasis, and a disproportionate amount of space is allotted to them.

Yet in spite of all this, the fact remains that the book possesses no little historical value. There is much in it that we have to discount. No one, for

instance, accepts the account of the martyrdom of the seven brethren (chap. vii.) as literal history. Nevertheless, by the use of critical methods, it is possible to extract many precious grains of fact from the husk of fiction which overlays the narrative.

Religious Outlook.—The dissimilarity between the two books is most obvious when we come to the question of religious tone. If the first book can be said to represent the Sadducean standpoint, the second is certainly written from the point of view of the Pharisees. There is no reserve or reticence about the writer of II. Maccabees. He is always obtruding his religious convictions upon his readers. He never misses an opportunity of “pointing the moral” of the story. The most interesting feature in the theology of the book is the emphasis which it lays upon the resurrection of the dead. There is no other Pre-Christian Jewish book where the doctrine of the future life is so strongly insisted upon as in II. Maccabees. There is, moreover, most distinct evidence that the resurrection to which the writer looked forward was a resurrection not merely of the soul but of the body as well. Most of the crucial passages on the subject occur in the account of the martyrdoms in chaps. vi. and vii.

Authorship and Date.—Nothing is known about the author except that he was probably an Alexandrian, who sympathised with, if he did not actually belong to,

the Pharisaic party. He derived the bulk of his information from a history of the Maccabees written by Jason of Cyrene, whose work he abridged. It is not always easy to decide, however, what was taken from Jason and what is the author's own production. Nor have we any clear indications which enable us to fix with certainty the date of either work. There are a number of small points in II. Maccabees which have led the majority of modern scholars to assume that the book was written in the closing decades of the first century B.C., between 60 B.C. and A.D. 1. It seems probable, too, that Jason's History was written about a century earlier—possibly between 150 and 120 B.C.

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS

The different titles which are given to this book are somewhat confusing. In the Septuagint it is called the First Book of Esdras (Esdras A); II. Esdras being equivalent to our canonical Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which originally formed one work. In the Vulgate, on the other hand, it is termed the Third Book of Esdras; I. and II. Esdras representing respectively our Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. To avoid the ambiguity modern scholars often speak of it as the "Greek Esdras."

Contents.—With the exception of one section, viz. chaps. iii.—v. 6, the book is a compilation from

II. Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The following table will make its relations to these books apparent:—

Esdras i.	=	II. Chron. xxxv., xxxvi.
ii. 1-14	=	Ezra i.
ii. 15-25	=	Ezra iv. 7-24.
iii.-v. 6	=	The original section.
v. 7-70	=	Ezra ii. 1-iv. 5
vi. vii.	=	Ezra v., vi.
viii.-ix. 36	=	Ezra vii.-x.
ix. 37-55	=	Neh. vii. 73-viii. 13.

The main theme of the book is concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple. The chronological arrangement, however, is hopeless. After mentioning (chap. ii. 1-14) the decree of Cyrus (538-530 B.C.), the writer without a word of warning leaps over a period of eighty years, and proceeds to describe (chap. ii. 15-25) the opposition encountered from Artaxerxes (464-425 B.C.). In the original section of the book we are transferred to the second year of Darius (520 B.C.). Chap. v. 7-70 returns to the reign of Cyrus. In chaps. vi. and vii. we are back again in the reign of Darius, while the remainder of the book belongs to the reign of Artaxerxes. With chap. ii. 15-25 and chap. v. 7-70 in their present places, it is impossible to reduce the chronological chaos of the book into order. The original section is interesting. It gives an

account of a literary contest between three pages-in-waiting at the court of Darius. The three pages submit three themes to Darius on "what is the strongest force in the world." The first maintains that "wine is the strongest," the second that "the king is the strongest," the third that "women are strongest, but above all things truth beareth away the victory." The last-named, a Jewish youth, won the prize, and received as his reward a promise from the King that the Temple at Jerusalem should be rebuilt.

Historical Value.—The historical worth of the book is a matter of keen controversy amongst scholars to-day. At first sight, its chronological inaccuracies would seem to put it out of court altogether. There are, however, some important considerations on the other side. (1) It is clear that Josephus used I. Esdras as his authority for this period of Jewish history in preference to the other narratives which were at his disposal. (2) The position assigned to the book in the Septuagint suggests that more importance was attached to it at the time than to Ezra and Nehemiah, which are accorded an inferior position. (3) The contents imply that it belongs to a comparatively early age, when Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah were as yet undivided. (4) The book was universally accepted in the Christian Church up to the time of Jerome. In face of these arguments, it is impossible to set the book aside as a

worthless compilation. The difficulties, however, remain, and present an insoluble problem. Josephus substituted the name of Cambyses for the Artaxerxes of chap. ii. 15, and so removed one very serious stumbling-block. Sir H. Howorth, who is the foremost English champion of I. Esdras, suggests that the Darius mentioned in chaps. vi. and vii. is not Darius Hystaspis, as is usually supposed, but Darius Nothus (423-404). Many scholars think that the book was a compilation of gradual growth. The earliest stratum is the original section (chaps. iii.-v. 6). This was placed in a historical setting by the addition of chaps. vi. 1-vii. 15 and ii. 16-30 from an Aramaic document. It was only in the third stage that the book assumed its present form, the further additions being made by a later writer from the canonical books. Some such theory seems necessary to explain the arrangement of the book. On any hypothesis, however, it is clear that the failure of the compiler to arrange his sources in proper order does not detract from the historical value of the original documents themselves.

Date of the Book.—The date of the book cannot be fixed except within broad limits. Its use by Josephus (A.D. 100), and the fact that he would not have been likely to use it unless it had already acquired an established reputation, prove that it could not have been written later than the early decades of the first century A.D. On the other hand, its linguistic affinities with

the Book of Daniel prove that it could not have been written earlier than 168 B.C. We may be tolerably certain, therefore, that the book falls between 160 B.C. and 1 A.D., but it is impossible to arrive at any certain date between those limits. There is an absolute cleavage of opinion among scholars as to whether the book belongs to the first or second century B.C.

Motive of the Book.—Judging from the contents and tone of I. Esdras, there seems to be a suggestion of three underlying motives for its compilation. (1) One of its objects was undoubtedly to establish the dictum, “*Fortis est veritas et prævalebit.*” This suggests an apologetic purpose, and possibly the book may have been written in a time of persecution to encourage the Jewish sufferers and assure them that ultimately the truth was bound to prevail. (2) There is a second apologetic note in the book. The writer seems to lay stress on the fact that great emperors like Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes had shown favour to the Jews, and so to suggest to the authorities of his own time that their attitude ought to be imitated. (3) The emphasis laid on the rebuilding of the Temple seems to be intended by the author to encourage his readers in a similar project. The theory has been propounded that the book was written to support Onias in his task of establishing a temple at Leontopolis. There is, however, no evidence in support of the conjecture, and the date of the

building of the temple (168) is too early for the composition of I. Esdras.

The author of I. Esdras completely hides his identity. It is probable that he was an Alexandrian. It seems clear, too, that he did not use the Septuagint version of his sources, but either an earlier Greek version which has been lost, or the Hebrew original itself. The original section of the book shows no signs of Hebrew or Aramaic origin.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIDACTIC BOOKS

THERE can be little doubt that the two didactic books, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon, constitute the most valuable part of the Apocrypha for us to-day. These books belong to a special class of writings to which the name "Wisdom Literature" has been given. They occupy the same position in the Apocrypha as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. While the other types of Jewish literature deal with the peculiarly national aspects of Israelitish religion and law, the Wisdom Literature moves on a broader plain, and treats of the universal elements in morality and religion. The priests and the scribes were content, for the most part, with expounding and expanding the enactments of the legal code, but the wise men or sages set themselves to face the wider problems of life and discover the essential truths which lie at the basis of morality. The spirit of the sage is well described in Ecclesiasticus xxxix. 1-11 : "He that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High . . . will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients. . . .

He will keep the sayings of the renowned men, and where subtle parables are, he will be there also. He will seek out the secrets of grave sentences and be conversant in dark parables. . . . He will travel through strange countries. . . . He will give his heart to seek early to the Lord, and will pray before the Most High. When the great Lord will, he shall be filled with the spirit of understanding: he shall pour out wise sentences. He will direct his counsel and knowledge, and on His secrets shall he meditate."

ECCLESIASTICUS

The Title of the Book.—The word Ecclesiasticus means "belonging to the Church" or "used in the Church." The title was bestowed on certain books, which, though they had not been admitted into the Canon, were recognised as suitable for use in public worship. Our present treatise subsequently seems to have monopolised the term, as being *par excellence* the "Church-book" of the Apocrypha, and so in the Vulgate it is called Ecclesiasticus, and from the Vulgate the name has passed into common use. In the Greek versions, however, the book is generally described as the "Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach," and so it is often referred to by abbreviation as the "Book of Sirach."

The Author.—The book was originally written in Hebrew by Jesus, the son of Sirach, and translated into

Greek by his grandson, who bore the same name. The family relationships are described in different ways in different MSS. Many scholars think that Jesus was the son of Eleazar, and that the phrase "Son of Sirach" or Ben Sira is a family title. Nothing further is known about either author or translator. The former is described in some MSS. as belonging to Jerusalem, but the text is doubtful. We may infer from certain allusions in the book itself that he was a man of means and leisure, fond of travel, a philosophical observer of life, an ardent Israelite, belonging to the religious party which afterwards developed into Sadduceeism.

The Date.—The date of the Greek edition of the book may be fixed from the statement in the prologue, "Coming into Egypt in the thirty-eighth year when Euergetes was king." There were two kings of Egypt named Ptolemy Euergetes. The first, however, only reigned twenty-five years (247-222 B.C.), and so is impossible. The reference must therefore be to the second, who reigned, partly as co-regent, and partly as sole king, from 170 to 116 B.C. The date of the translator's arrival in Egypt thus falls in the year 132 B.C., and his book was published shortly afterwards. We may assume that his grandfather's original work was written about fifty years before. The only other reference of importance bearing upon the question of date is found in the eulogium passed upon "Simon the high priest, the son of Onias"

(chap. l. 1). Simon is singled out for such high praise, and his achievements are described in such detail, that we are warranted in drawing the conclusion that he lived near to the times of the writer of the book, and possibly may have been contemporaneous with him. Unfortunately, however, we cannot identify him with certainty. We know of two men who answer to the description given: (1) Simon I., the son of Onias I. (310-291 B.C.); (2) Simon II., son of Onias II. (219-199 B.C.). The second named fits in with the date mentioned above (190-170 B.C.), but we cannot be certain with regard to the identification because we only possess very scanty information about him. A theory has recently been propounded by N. Schmidt that the Simon of Ecclesiasticus ought to be identified with Simon the Maccabee (143-137 B.C.), the phrase "son of Onias" being due to a corruption of the text. There is a good deal to be said in favour of this view. It need not, however, affect the date which we have assigned to the original work, as Schmidt holds that the concluding chapters of the book are a later appendix, and did not form part of the Hebrew edition. We may safely, therefore, date the Greek Ecclesiasticus between 130 and 120 B.C. and the Hebrew original between 190 and 170 B.C.

The Contents of the Book.—It is impossible to give an analysis of the book. It consists very largely of a number of proverbs and counsels strung loosely

together without any orderly development of thought. It gives advice on the regulation of conduct under all possible circumstances and in every relationship of life. It lays down rules for the training of children, the management of business, the treatment of slaves, the government of the nation, &c. There is no attempt, however, to arrange these precepts on any definite principle. The writer turns at random from one subject to another. The process by which the book was composed seems to have been this.—The writer collected from every available source striking sayings, interesting proverbs, sage counsels, shrewd remarks, and apposite phrases, and then without even attempting to classify them, threw them together into a book, adding here and there dicta of his own. He describes himself as “one that gathered after the grape-gatherers, and filled his wine-press like a gatherer of grapes” (chap. xxxiii. 16). The last eight chapters of the book on “the praise of famous men,” seem to be a separate composition, and are marked by a unity of purpose which is entirely lacking in the remainder of the book.

Religious Teaching.—*Ecclesiasticus* is of supreme importance to us because it gives a clear picture of the religious thought and ethical teaching of the second century B.C. The doctrine of God represented by the book may be described as conventional and commonplace. The writer is a firm believer in God as the Ruler

of the Universe and the Lord of mankind, but his statements are altogether devoid of originality, and lack prophetic insight and passion. "It would have been as impossible for him," says Schmidt, "to watch with the eyes of an Amos or an Isaiah the doings of Israel's Holy One, as to go forth with unwavering faith in his own inspiration to deliver the oracles of Yahwe." He emphasises the forbearance and mercy of God. "Great is the pity and forgiveness of God, for all things are not possible to men" (chap. xvii. 25). He attaches very little importance to the conception of atonement. "Say not, God will look upon the multitude of my oblations" (chap. vii. 9). "Concerning propitiation be not without fear to add sin to sin" (chap. v. 5). Almsgiving is of more importance, as an act of atonement, than the sacrifices of the Temple. The book knows nothing of angels or spirits. There are a few allusions to supernatural beings in the Greek version, but they are completely absent from the original Hebrew. Even when quotations are given from the Old Testament, all references to angels in them are carefully obliterated. The sole intermediary between God and Man is the Divine attribute of Wisdom, which is personified and represented as the eternal principle of creation. There is absolutely no place in the theology of Ecclesiasticus for the conception of a future life. "Who shall praise the Most High in the grave? . . . The son of man is not immortal" (chap. xvii. 27, 30).

Ethical Teaching.—Ecclesiasticus was intended by its author to be a compendium of ethical teaching—a kind of *vade mecum*—the moral “guide, philosopher, and friend” of the average Jew in every relationship of life. “It gives,” as Schmidt says, “more detailed directions than any other book in the Bible as to proper conduct in different circumstances. It teaches a man how to govern his wife, his children, and his slaves: how to deal with his friends and his foes, his superiors and inferiors, his creditors and his debtors, the rich and the poor: how to behave at the banqueting table and in the house of mourning, in the home and in the public assembly, in the Temple and in the mart: how to control his passions, practise moderation, cultivate his nobler tastes, emulate the example and seek the company of the wise.” Amongst the more prominent characteristics of the ethical teaching of the book we may note: (1) *The influence of Greek philosophy.* Wisdom is identified with knowledge according to the Socratic principle. Throughout the book the pious man is represented as wise, the sinner as a fool. (2) *The utilitarian character of the system.* The writer undoubtedly attempts to connect his ethical system with his religion, and to make the fear of God his main moral motive; but all his sanctions are prudential; the end of morality is always the man’s own well-being and happiness. (3) *The externality of the ethical teaching.* The book deals almost entirely

with the external aspects of morality: very little is said about the aspirations, motives, and ideals of the inward life. (4) *Limitation to the present life.* There being no conception of a future existence in Ecclesiasticus, the ethical teaching is concerned entirely with the present life. The punishment of vice and the reward of virtue are dealt out here and now. (5) *Individualism.* The ethics of Ecclesiasticus are individualistic. No interest is taken in the national life or in society as a whole.

The Different Versions of the Book.—The author of the Greek Ecclesiasticus says in his preface that the book was originally written in Hebrew, and Jerome states that a Hebrew version was in existence in the fourth century A.D. All traces of the Hebrew original were lost up to 1896, when Mrs. Agnes Lewis brought a fragment from Palestine containing chaps. xxxix. 15–xl. 18. This discovery led to further investigation, and many other fragments have been brought to light, largely owing to the efforts of Mr. S. Schechter. These fragments contain the bulk of the book, though several chapters are still missing. A good deal of discussion has been raised as to whether these fragments can claim to represent the original Hebrew text. Some scholars have maintained that they are a re-translation made either from a Persian or Syriac version. On the whole, however, it may be said that the consensus of modern criticism favours the view that they represent the original

Hebrew, and regards them of great importance for the work of textual criticism. Besides these Hebrew fragments, we have versions in Syriac (made from the Hebrew), in Latin (made from the Greek), in Coptic, in *Æthiopic*, and in Armenian.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

The Book of Wisdom belongs to the same class of literature as *Ecclesiasticus*, but represents a great advance upon it in many important respects. In its prophetic insight, in its religious outlook, in the ordered development of its thought, and in the broad range of its ideas, it is undoubtedly far superior to the earlier book.

Contents.—The book may be divided into the following parts: (1) Chaps. i.—v. are polemical, and attack the current unbelief and pessimism of the age. Wisdom is depicted as the source of immortality. (2) Chaps. vi.—ix. contain the writer's own positive statement, based, or supposed to be based on his own experience. Wisdom is commended as the source of all moral and intellectual power. (3) Chaps. x.—xix. are an appeal to the history of Israel in support of the writer's fundamental position. Illustrations are taken from the lives of the patriarchs, and the early history of the nation, to prove that wisdom has always been at the root of success, and the lack of it the cause of failure. In the

midst of this section there is a digression (chaps. xiii.-xv.) containing a very strong denunciation of idolatry.

Aim and Purpose.—The book is partly polemical and partly apologetic. Its opening chapters contain a very strong attack against “the ungodly.” By “the ungodly” the writer probably means the Sadducees. He describes them as men who deny the future life, and are not deterred by the fear of punishment after death. “After our end there is no returning.” As a result they became Epicurean in their attitude to moral questions. “Our life is short and tedious,” they said; “let us enjoy the good things that are present; let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and deck ourselves with rosebuds before they are withered!” (chap. ii. 5-9). The arguments with which the Book of Wisdom meets the Hedonism of the age imply a great advance upon the ethical situation in Ecclesiasticus. The writer of Ecclesiasticus is content with the simple statement that men should be virtuous because virtue is its own reward in this life. That position, however, in the interval between the two books, had fallen to pieces because it seemed contrary to the facts of life. Virtue did not always secure the prize. The righteous suffered like other people. The loss of the conventional moral sanction drove men over into Epicureanism, and it is as a protest against this fatal tendency that the Book of Wisdom was written. Upon

what does the writer base his new Apologetic? He bases it: (1) Partly upon his doctrine of the future life. He introduces new religious sanctions in place of the old exploded Utilitarianism. (2) Partly upon an appeal to his own personal experiences. (3) Partly, too, upon an appeal to history. It was the first argument, however, that constituted the writer's chief contribution to Jewish thought. He attempted to redress the balance in favour of morality by "calling a new world into being." We shall not be far wrong if we say that the Book of Wisdom was written to counteract the pessimism and scepticism which had been created by the failure of Utilitarianism as represented by Ecclesiasticus.

Author.—We know nothing about the author of the Book of Wisdom, except that he must have been an Alexandrian Jew. Augustine attributed it to Jesus the son of Sirach, but the differences between it and Ecclesiasticus put the theory out of court at once. Jerome tells us that many of "the old writers" of his time regarded Philo as its author, and this view was accepted by Luther and many other scholars of the Reformation period. A careful examination of Philo's works, however, reveals such marked discrepancies of style, terminology, method of quotation, and philosophy that this theory is now universally rejected. An attempt has been made in recent times to associate the name of Apollos with the authorship of the book. This hypo-

thesis is based on the assumption that Apollos was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is nothing more than a conjecture, and cannot be substantiated. The absence of any specifically Christian ideas is a most serious objection to the theory.

Date.—We have very few data for fixing the date of the book. The writer uses the Septuagint of the Pentateuch, and the book must therefore have been written later than 250 B.C. It is certain that the book was known to and used by Paul, especially in the Epistle to the Romans. This fixes the latest possible limit at about A.D. 50. There is the utmost divergence of opinion as to the point at which the book ought to be placed within these two extremes. Modern scholars prefer either a date between 100 B.C. and A.D. 1 or a date between A.D. 1 and 40. We shall probably not be far wrong if we say that the book was written somewhere about the commencement of the Christian era.

Religious Outlook.—The religious teaching of the Book of Wisdom is extremely interesting. The writer emphasises the omniscience and omnipotence of God, yet links with this conception a firm belief in the Divine Fatherhood. He lays far greater stress on the love of God than other Apocryphal writers. “Thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing. . . . Thou sparest all things, O God, thou lover of souls” (chap. xi. 24–26). The most interesting point in his doctrine of

God is the way in which he develops the personification of the Divine attribute of Wisdom. "Wisdom is the breath of the power of God and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty. . . . She is the brightness of everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God and the image of his goodness. And being but one, she can do all things, and remaining in herself she maketh all things new, and in all ages entering into the holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets" (chap. vii. 25-27). The conceptions of the Logos and the Holy Spirit are also a prominent feature of the book, though the exact relation between these ideas and Wisdom is not defined. In one passage the three great conceptions—God, Wisdom, and the Holy Spirit—are joined together in a manner which adumbrates the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (chap. ix. 17). There can be little doubt that the speculations of the writer of the Book of Wisdom helped to provide the categories for the Christian interpretation of Christ. In fact, some of the language in which he describes Wisdom is boldly borrowed by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and applied to Christ (compare chap. vii. 26 and Heb. i. 1, 2). It is in his doctrine of man and the future life, however, that the writer of Wisdom shows most originality. He believes, for instance, in the pre-existence of souls, an idea which he borrowed from Greek philosophy. He

holds that man was created for immortality. "God created man," he says, "for immortality, and made him the image of his own eternity" (chap. ii. 23). "God did not make death, and takes no pleasure in the destruction of the living" (chap. i. 12). Death was introduced into the world through the Fall. "Through envy of the devil death came into the world" (chap. ii. 24). Another conception borrowed from Greek thought is to be seen in the stress which is laid on the dualism of body and soul. "The corruptible body presses down the soul and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind" (chap. iv. 15). Wisdom cannot dwell "in a body subject to sin" (chap. i. 4). The writer's belief in the future life is expressed with indomitable conviction. "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. . . . Though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality" (chap. iii. 1-4). "The righteous shall live for ever, and in the Lord is their reward" (chap. v. 15). The wicked will suffer retribution in this world and the next.

No one can read the Book of Wisdom without being struck by the many points of similarity between its teaching and the theology of the Apostle Paul. There can be little doubt that it was one of the most important sources from which Paul drew the materials out of which he constructed his philosophy of the Christian religion.

CHAPTER V

THE RELIGIOUS ROMANCES

THE Jews utilised all the resources of literature in their efforts to enforce the truths of their religion and kindle the flame of religious enthusiasm. History, poetry, philosophy, and prophecy were all pressed into service, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find them using legends and romances—religious novels, as we should term them to-day—as vehicles for conveying instruction and arousing faith. The two most important of these romances are the Books of Judith and Tobit. “The Story of Susanna” and “The Story of Bel and the Dragon” are further illustrations of the same literary principle. It is a fatal mistake to attempt to discover history in these works. They are religious novels pure and simple, and it is only when we recognise this that they become intelligible.

THE BOOK OF JUDITH

The Story of the Book.—The tale of Judith has come down to us in two different versions. The story as it is told in the ordinary version is as follows:

Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Assyrians, after defeating Arphaxad of Ecbatana, resolves to send a punitive expedition against the nations between Persia and Memphis which had refused to render him help in the war. Holofernes, who is put in command, marches towards Palestine and occupies the principal towns on the sea coasts. The Jews, terrified by the tidings of his approach, hastily fortify the hill-country in order to protect Jerusalem. Special instructions are sent to the fortress of Bethulia, which commanded the situation, to arrest the progress of the Assyrian army. Holofernes lays siege to Bethulia and cuts off the water supply. The people, in despair, beseech the rulers of the city to surrender, and they agree to do so unless help arrives within five days. Judith, however, hearing of this craven counsel, determines to save the city with her own hands. After obtaining permission of the rulers, she puts off her widow's dress, and attiring herself in her finest robes, goes into the camp of Holofernes and obtains an audience with him on the plea that she has useful information to impart which will enable him to take the town. Holofernes becomes enamoured of her beauty and invites her to a banquet. She accepts the invitation in order to gain her purpose. Holofernes drinks deeply and falls into a drunken sleep. Judith with her own scimitar cuts off his head and carries it back to Bethulia in triumph. The Assyrian army, when

it hears of the death of its general, retreats in confusion and Jerusalem is saved.

In the shorter version, though the story is practically the same, it is put in a different setting. Seleucus takes the place of Nebuchadnezzar and Holofernes, and the scene is laid at Jerusalem and not at Bethulia.

The Religious Tone of the Book.—The Book of Judith possesses some very marked religious characteristics. No one can read it, for instance, without noting the stress which is laid on legal observances and ceremonial. Judith's piety is described as consisting largely (*a*) in the regularity of her fastings (chap. viii. 6), (*b*) in the scrupulous care with which she avoided unclean meats (chap. x. 5, xii. 2), (*c*) in her attention to the ritual "washings" prescribed by the law (chap. xii. 7-9). The same conception is very prominent, too, in the significant passage in which Judith declares to Holofernes that the city will be taken because its inhabitants will be forced by famine to offend God by eating unclean food (chap. xi. 11-19). The Temple, too, occupies an important position in the book. The main concern of the Jews at the prospect of Holofernes' conquests is that the Temple will be destroyed (chap. iv. 11-15). All these marks point to the fact that the author sympathised with the Pharasaic party, though it should be noted that there is no reference to angels or a belief in the future life.

Object of the Book.—It is quite clear that Judith is not history. Luther was right when he spoke of it as a “poem” or “sacred drama.” It was written to encourage the Jews to be faithful to their religion and their law in the face of heathen attacks. “Judith,” says Dr. Sayce, “is a type of that portion of the Jewish nation who remained true to the Law and its observances, and against whom, therefore, weak though they seemed to be, the whole might of the Gentile world was unable to prevail.” The book may be described as a religious novel with a purpose—the purpose being to induce men to keep the Law under the promise of God’s protection.

The Date.—The date of Judith is a matter of dispute. There are numerous theories, but the only two which claim consideration are: (1) the theory which connects it with the Maccabæan age (160–140 B.C.); (2) the theory which places it at a date soon after the Roman invasion in 63 B.C. We have not sufficient evidence to decide absolutely between these two views, but the similarity of the religious outlook in Judith and the Psalms of Solomon has led many scholars to accept the second alternative, and date the book about 50 B.C.

THE BOOK OF TOBIT

The Book of Tobit, though of quite a different type from Judith, may be regarded as a companion volume because it belongs to the same class of literature.

The Story of the Book.—Tobit tells the story of the misfortunes which befell two Jewish families, and of a happy *dénouement*, resulting in their union by marriage. The plot is of a less heroic and more domestic character than in the case of Judith. Tobit, a pious Jew, had been carried away captive, together with his son Tobias and his wife Anna, by Shalmaneser to Nineveh. At Nineveh, though remaining faithful to the principles of the Jewish religion, he obtained favour at court, and was appointed royal purveyor. After the accession of Sennacherib, who succeeded Shalmaneser, he fell into disrepute, owing largely to his habit of giving burial to his Jewish kinsmen who had been killed in the streets of Nineveh. He lost his sight, too, through an accident, and became entirely dependent upon his wife for support. One day his wife, in a fit of temper, taunted him with the uselessness of his alms and deeds of piety. In despair he prayed to God that he might die. At this point we are introduced by the story to the second family, who lived at Ecbatana. Sara, the daughter of Raguel, had been married to seven husbands, all of whom had been slain by the demon Asmodeus on the bridal night. And on the day when Tobit was taunted by his wife, Sara was also driven to distraction by the reproaches of her maids, and prayed for death. The prayers of both were heard, and the angel Raphael was sent to deliver them. The help

came in the following way. Some time previously Tobit had deposited ten talents of silver with a Jew at Rages. Under the pressure of poverty he now resolved to send his son Tobias to secure the money. When Tobias sought for a guide to accompany him, the angel Raphael offered his services. Terms were arranged, and the two set out on the journey. It was necessary for them to go through Ecbatana, and they stayed with Raguel, who was a kinsman of Tobit. Tobias fell in love with Sara, and sought her hand in marriage, undeterred by the fate of her previous husbands. By means of a magic charm, given to him by the angel, Tobias exorcised the evil spirit, and the wedding festival was celebrated amidst much rejoicing. Having obtained the repayment of the loan, Tobias and his wife went to Nineveh with Raphael. Tobit is cured of his blindness and all ends happily.

The Religious Teaching of Tobit.—The religious purpose of Tobit is very similar to that of Judith. Great stress is laid upon legal observances and upon almsgiving. This is clearly brought out in the description of Tobit's piety. "I went often to Jerusalem at the feasts . . . having the first-fruits and tenths of increase . . . and them gave I at the altar to the priests" (chap. i. 5, 6). "All my brethren did eat of the bread of the Gentiles . . . but I kept myself from eating (chap. v. 7). "I gave many alms to my brethren, and bread to the hungry,

and clothes to the naked, and if I saw any of my nation dead I buried him" (chap. v. 16, 17). The same ideal appears in the words of the angel (chap. xi. 4-15): "Prayer is good with fasting and alms and righteousness. . . . It is better to give alms than to lay up gold, for alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin." The moral of the book appears in Tobit's final appeal: "O, ye sinners, turn ye and do righteousness before him; who can tell if he will accept you and have mercy on you?" (chap. xiii. 6). There are, however, some points which are emphasised in Tobit which have nothing corresponding to them in Judith. (1) The belief in angels and demons plays a most important part in the book. Raphael and Asmodeus are two of the chief *dramatis personæ*. (2) The belief in magic is also most pronounced. The demon Asmodeus is expelled by the smoke produced by burning the heart and liver of a fish, according to the instructions of Raphael. Tobit's eyes are cured by an application of gall taken from the same fish. (3) The necessity for the proper burial of the dead is insisted upon.

Different Versions of the Story.—The story of Tobit was so popular that versions of it were issued in Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Latin, and Greek. These versions vary from each other in many important details. Some of them, for instance, omit the reference to the dog which accompanied Raphael and Tobias. Some of

them speak of Tobit in the third person throughout, others make Tobit speak in the first person as far as chap. iii. 15. Some of them expand the didactic part of the book. These variations show that the book as we possess it to-day in the ordinary form passed through many stages, in each of which it received accretions. The allusions to Achiacharus are interesting. They represent a separate story—the legend of Ahikar—which has been woven in different forms into the Tobit narrative. Ahikar, according to the legend, was a pious courtier of Sennacherib, who, being childless, adopted a boy, Nadan, and brought him up as his heir and successor. Nadan, however, turned against Ahikar, and by means of forged documents accused him of treason and secured his condemnation. The executioner, however, spared his life and imprisoned him in a cellar beneath his house. Later on he was rescued and restored to favour (see Tobit xiv. 10).

Purpose of the Book.—The writer of Tobit used, as his groundwork, a common story, which has its counterpart in most mythologies, and adapted it as a vehicle for enforcing the moral and religious truths of Judaism—especially the duty of obeying the Law, giving alms, and burying the dead. Luther described the book as “a truly beautiful, wholesome, and profitable fiction.”

Date of the Book.—The only data which we have for fixing the approximate date of Tobit are: (1) We

know that it was quoted by Polycarp in A.D. 112. (2) In chap. xiv. 5, 6 we read, "God will bring them again into the land, where they shall build a temple, but not like to the first . . . Afterward the house of God shall be built with a glorious building." This passage has been taken to mean that Tobit was written before the commencement of Herod's Temple, but the deduction is not absolutely convincing. (3) The prominence given to the burial of the dead may point to the Maccabæan age. Antiochus Epiphanes "cast out a multitude" unburied. (4) Tobit has many points of resemblance with the Book of Ecclesiasticus. These indications have led the majority of modern scholars to place the book in the second century B.C., probably between 150 and 100 B.C.

THE STORY OF SUSANNA

The Story of Susanna is one of the three additions made by the Apocrypha to the canonical Book of Daniel. In the Septuagint it is placed before chap. i.; in the Vulgate it stands as chap. xiii.

The Narrative.—The story has no connection with the Book of Daniel, except that it illustrates the wise judgment of the hero of the book. Susanna is the wife of Joachim, a wealthy Jew of Babylon. Two Jewish elders, ravished by her beauty, form an intrigue against

her. Foiled in their purpose, they charge her before the Council with having committed adultery, and produce evidence in support of their accusation. Susanna is condemned by the Council. At this point Daniel comes into the court and calls for a new trial on the ground that the witnesses have committed perjury. He demands that the two elders shall be examined separately. A discrepancy at once makes itself apparent between the stories of the two men. Susanna is acquitted and the elders are condemned.

The Motive of the Story.—Here, again, there can be little doubt that we have a common story, which is widely circulated in different forms, put into Jewish dress and used to enforce a Jewish moral. An ingenious theory as to its origin and motive has been suggested by an English scholar, C. J. Ball. About the year 100 B.C. a miscarriage of justice occurred in Jerusalem, the son of Simon, the President of the Council, being condemned by the perjury of his accusers. This led the Pharisaic party to advocate legal reforms : (a) the more stringent examination of witnesses ; (b) the infliction of severer penalties on false witnesses. If perjury was discovered, the guilty parties were to suffer the same penalty which they had *attempted* to inflict on the innocent. The Sadducean party opposed, arguing that the penalty ought not to be inflicted on the perjurers unless the innocent victim had actually suffered it. On this theory, the

story of Susanna is a tract issued by the Pharisees in support of their policy.

BEL AND THE DRAGON

This forms another addition to the Book of Daniel. It consists of two independent stories, which have no connection with each other except that they are both associated with the name of Daniel, and both are directed against idolatrous practices.

The Story of Bel.—The image of Bel was one of the chief objects of worship in the city of Babylon. Daniel, true to his principles, refused to obey the king's edict enjoining the worship of the image. The king expostulated, and in proof of the deity of the image pointed to the amount of food which it consumed. Daniel in reply asks the king to arrange for a test. The food is prepared and the doors are sealed, and Daniel, suspecting the trickery of the priests, has the floor lightly strewn with fine ashes. Next morning, though the seals are unbroken, the food is gone. Examination, however, discloses the marks of naked feet on the floor. The priests are convicted and put to death.

The Story of the Dragon.—There was in Babylon a great dragon which was universally worshipped as divine. Daniel, however, again refused, and offered to kill the beast. Upon obtaining the king's permission,

he prepared a concoction largely comprised of pitch, and threw it to the dragon. As a result the dragon burst asunder. The furious populace demanded that Daniel should be thrown into the lions' den. He remained unharmed, and was finally restored to favour.

The stories are full of anachronisms and extravagances, and evidently are merely folk-lore adapted as a vehicle of religious instruction. The motive is sufficiently obvious. Like the Epistle of Jeremy, they are an attack on idolatry, and probably belong to the same period—the first century B.C.

OTHER ADDITIONS TO THE CANONICAL BOOKS

Besides the passages inserted in Daniel, already mentioned, there are other additions to the canonical books which, though they cannot be described as legendary, may be conveniently dealt with in this connection.

The Song of the Three Children, or “The Prayer of Azarias,” as it is sometimes called, is an addition of sixty-eight verses, inserted by the Septuagint after Daniel iii. 23. It is divided into three parts: (1) the prayer of Azarias (vers. 1–22); (2) a continuation of the narrative in Daniel iii. 23, describing how the king's servants kept on heating the fiery furnace with naphtha

and pitch, and how an angel came down and formed an inner zone within the furnace which the flames could not reach (vers. 23-27); (3) the thanksgiving song of the three martyrs (vers. 28-68). It is probable that the document is the work of more than one writer. Whether it was originally composed in Hebrew or Greek is a matter of dispute.

The Rest of Esther.—This document contains six chapters of additional material which was inserted in the Book of Esther by the Septuagint. The English Apocrypha, following the Vulgate, has collected the added parts into a separate whole. In the Septuagint they are scattered about in different places of the book. Thus—

Chap. x. 4-xi. 1 forms the conclusion of the Septuagint Esther.

Chap. xi. 2-xii. 6 forms its commencement.

Chap. xiii. 1-7 is placed after iii. 13.

Chap. xiii. 8-xiv. 19 is placed after iv. 17.

Chap. xv. is substituted for v. 1-3.

Chap. xvi. is placed after viii. 12.

The object of the addition was twofold: (1) partly to expand the narrative by the addition of new material, (2) partly to give a religious tone to the book. In the canonical Book of Esther the name of God never occurs, and the religious interest is very slight. In the additional parts the religious note is very emphatic. To

take one instance. Observe the frequent introduction of the Divine name in chap. x. 9: "Israel which cried to God and were saved; for the Lord hath saved his people, and the Lord hath delivered us from all those evils, and God hath wrought great signs and wonders."

The Prayer of Manasseh.—The explanation of this addition is to be found in the statement in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19: "Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God . . . behold they are written in the acts of the kings of Israel. His prayer also, and how God was intreated of him . . . behold they are written in the history of Hozai" (or the seers). The prayer of Manasseh, therefore, is an attempt to supply an omission on the part of the writer of Chronicles. There is no justification for regarding the prayer as genuine. Everything points to the fact that it was an imaginative composition, and the work of a Hellenistic Jew. It is generally found appended to the Book of Psalms.

CHAPTER VI

PROPHETIC WRITINGS

THE BOOK OF BARUCH

THE Book of Baruch has most affinities with the type of prophecy represented by Jeremiah, with which it is closely associated in the Septuagint and Vulgate.

Contents.—The Book of Baruch is not a unity. It consists of two, perhaps three, quite distinct documents : (1) The preface (chap. i. 1–14). (2) The first part, containing a confession of sin, and prayer for restoration to Divine favour (chaps. i. 15–iii. 8). (3) The second part, containing a discourse of encouragement to the Jews of the Diaspora (chaps. iii. 9–v. 9).

The **Preface** gives what purports to be a historical introduction to the book. The scene is laid at Babylon, in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldaeans. Baruch, the author, reads his work to Jehoiachin and his court, who at once determine to send it to Jerusalem. They also collect money that the Jews at Jerusalem may purchase sacrifices to offer on behalf of the King of Babylon. The preface

is highly artificial, and does not fit the contents of either of the documents which follow, though some scholars think that it may possibly have originally been the introduction to the second document.

The First Document appears to contain two distinct confessions of sin, and a prayer for restoration: (*a*) an ancient form of confession used by the Palestinian remnant (chaps. i. 15–ii. 5); (*b*) the exiles' confession (chap. ii. 6–13); (*c*) the exiles' prayer (chaps. ii. 14–iii. 8). The style of the document resembles that of Deuteronomy and the prophecy of Jeremiah.

The Second Document may be divided into two parts: (*a*) A passage in praise of wisdom, identifying wisdom with the Law (chaps. iii. 9–iv. 4). This passage possesses many characteristics of the descriptions of wisdom found in the Wisdom Literature. (*b*) A discourse containing words of comfort and encouragement to the Jews of the Dispersion, resembling in many particulars some of the poetical passages in Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Job. Whether these two sections are separate entities is a matter of debate amongst scholars. It is quite easy to regard them as parts of a single document, the first section showing that the calamities which have befallen the people are due to the fact that they have deserted the fountain of wisdom, the second consoling them with promises of future restoration.

The Date of Baruch.—From what has already been

said it is clear that we are concerned with at least two documents, each of which must be dealt with separately. It will be simpler to deal with the *second document* first, because modern opinion is much more unanimous with regard to its date than it is in the case of the document which forms the first half of the book. There is a general agreement amongst recent critics that this document cannot be placed earlier than the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This result seems to be decisively established by the fact that the author used the Psalms of Solomon (especially Ps. xi.). The Psalms of Solomon date from 70–40 B.C., and it was probably not till after the commencement of the Christian era that a Greek translation of them was published. This being so, we are bound to place our document in the first century A.D., and there is no historical situation suited to its contents, till after the destruction of Jerusalem.

There is much more diversity of opinion with regard to the date of the *first document*. Leaving out of account the impossible theory which regards the document as belonging to the historical situation described in the Preface (*i.e.* 583 B.C.), the following views find favour in different schools of criticism to-day: (1) some scholars, following Ewald, place the document in the period following the conquest of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I. in 320 B.C.; (2) others place it in the Maccabæan period,

160–140 B.C.; (3) others regard it as belonging to the same age as the *second document*, i.e. the period subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The only datum that seems to help us in arriving at a definite conclusion in the undoubted connection between chaps. i. 15–ii. 12, and Daniel ix. 4–19. The fact that Baruch seems deliberately to omit three references in Daniel to the desolation of Jerusalem which would have been particularly appropriate if the book were written after A.D. 70, militates against the third theory. Those who accept 320 B.C. as the date, have to resort to the hypothesis that Baruch and Daniel are embodying a common tradition, in order to explain the resemblances between the two. On the whole the second view seems to present least difficulty, and we may place the document in the period between 150 B.C. and the beginning of the Christian era.

The Religious Outlook of Baruch.—There can be little doubt that Baruch was compiled in its present form by a devout Jew in the last decades of the first century A.D. for the purpose of consoling and comforting his people for the loss of their city. It is contemporaneous, therefore, with a large part of our New Testament, and throws a flood of light upon one type of Jewish thought during this important period. We notice in reading the book: (1) the writer's firm confidence in God and in the divine promises to Israel; (2) his pride

in his religion—"God hath found out all the way of knowledge and given it unto Israel his beloved" (chap. iii. 36); (3) his anti-Gentile prejudices—"Give not thine honour to another, nor the things that are profitable unto thee to a strange nation"—a statement which helps us to understand the opposition of the Judaisers to St. Paul; (4) his devotion to the Law, which he regards as the expression of the wisdom of God, and so of eternal value (chap. iv. 1-3); (5) that the writer never advances upon the position of the prophets. He lives in the spiritual world of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Deutero-Isaiah. This is especially noticeable in the absence of any allusion to the future life.

THE SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS

The second book of Esdras (sometimes called IV. Ezra) is by common consent one of the most important books in the Apocrypha. It occupies the same place in the Apocrypha as the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, and is the only specimen of apocalyptic (as distinct from prophetic) literature in it. The wide popularity which it enjoyed in ancient times is evident from the fact that versions of it are found in Latin, Armenian, Syriac, Æthiopic, and Arabic. The Hebrew and Greek originals have been lost. The Latin text from which the Authorised Version was translated

is imperfect, and lacks an important section, which has been torn out between the 35th and 36th verses of chap. vii. The missing fragment, however, has been recovered by the discovery, made by Professor Bensly in 1875, of an unmutilated MS. at Amiens.

Contents.—The version of II. Esdras in our Apocrypha contains the original book in a Christian frame. The first two and the last two chapters are a later addition, and were attached to the book to make it suitable for use amongst Christians. The original book, as we know from the versions, comprised only chaps. iii.—xiv. It is generally divided into seven parts, answering to the seven visions which it describes. (1) *The first vision* (chaps. iii. 1—v. 20). Esdras, perplexed by the problem of the sufferings of his own people and the prosperity of their enemies, asks God for an explanation. The angel Uriel is sent to him, and tells him that he must not inquire into things which only God can understand. (2) *The second vision* (chaps. v. 14—vi. 63). After seven days Esdras, dissatisfied with Uriel's words, appeals to God a second time. Uriel reappears, and tries to console him by pointing out the weakness of man's judgment and the approach of the Day of the Lord, when all will be set right. (3) *The third vision* (chaps. vi. 35—ix. 35), contains a further discussion between Esdras and Uriel, more particularly on the question whether few or many should be saved. Uriel

replies that the number of the elect is small. The main point in the vision is the vivid picture of the final judgment and the future state of the righteous and the wicked. (4) *The fourth vision* (chaps. ix. 25–x. 59). On the plain of Ardat Esdras meets a mourning woman who has just lost her only son. He tries to comfort her by referring to the greater desolation of Jerusalem. She suddenly vanishes and Esdras beholds a city. Uriel returns and tells him that the woman represented Jerusalem. (5) *The fifth vision* (chaps. xi. 1–xii. 39). Esdras sees in a dream the vision of an eagle with three heads, twelve wings, &c., which is destroyed by a lion. The eagle, he is told, represents the fourth kingdom seen by Daniel, and the lion is the Messiah. (6) *The sixth vision* (chaps. xii. 40–xiii. 58). A further vision of the Messiah, who destroys his foes and sets up his kingdom on earth. (7) *The seventh vision* (chap. xiv.). Esdras is warned that he is soon to be translated from the earth. He pleads for his people, who will be left without a teacher. He is told to write, and under the influence of the angel dictates ninety-four books—twenty-four of which were to be published (*i.e.* the Old Testament), and the remaining seventy hidden for the use of the wise (*i.e.* the Apocryphal writings).

The Date of II. Esdras.—There is a general agreement amongst modern scholars that II. Esdras was written in the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81–96).

This conclusion is based upon the following data: (1) The book must be later than Daniel (168 B.C.), which it mentions, and earlier than Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200), who is the first Christian writer to quote from it. (2) The author himself says that he wrote "in the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city" (chap. iii. 1). There can be little doubt that "the ruin of the city" refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (3) This date affords the simplest interpretation of the Eagle vision. The eagle represents Rome, and the three heads are the three emperors, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. It should be noted, however, that some modern scholars (among them Charles) hold that II. Esdras is a composite work, made out of five earlier Apocalypses, ranging in date from 20 B.C. to A.D. 100. These documents were combined by a redactor about A.D. 120.

The Problem of the Book.—II. Esdras presents a striking contrast to Baruch, the bulk of which belongs to the same period. The author of Baruch is a man of simple faith, whose confidence in God remains unshaken by the destruction of the city. He is content with a simple explanation of the disaster. It is due to Israel's sin, and Israel's repentance will lead to restoration. Esdras, however, is not so easily satisfied. The Jews were not the only sinners. "Are they of Babylon better than they of Sion? Why has God destroyed His

people and preserved His enemies?" (chap. iii. 30, 31). II. Esdras, therefore, is a problem book, and deals with the old enigma, which forms the subject of the Book of Job, and which rent the heart of the apostle Paul (Rom. ix.-xi.): "Why hath God cast off His people?" It cannot be said that the book discovers a real solution for the difficulty. It does, however, suggest some lines of thought in which comfort can be found. Perhaps its greatest contribution is its frank admission that no single formula meets the case. We must look in many directions for our solution of the problem. (1) We must remember our own limitations, and that it is impossible for us to understand the inscrutable dealings of Providence. (2) We must trust in the boundless love of God. "Lovest thou the people better than He that made them?" (chap. v. 33). (3) This world is not the end of things. The future life will make amends for present suffering. (4) The day of God's Redemption is drawing near, when the Messiah will come and restore the kingdom. On the whole, in spite of its pessimistic tone, II. Esdras is undoubtedly the finest discussion of the problem of evil in the whole range of Jewish literature.

Value of II. Esdras for Theology.—Apart from the main problem of the book, II. Esdras has many points of interest for modern theology. (1) It lays great stress on the doctrine of original sin. "The first Adam transgressed and was overcome, and so be all they that are

born of him" (chap. iii. 21). (2) It has a developed doctrine of the future life. All the dead will arise either to bliss or woe. The reward of the good, and the punishment of the wicked, are sevenfold (chap. vii.). (3) It has a firm belief in the advent of a Messiah, who will reign for 400 years and establish the kingdom of God. (4) A man's future destiny is fixed by this life, and cannot be changed after death. Prayers for the dead, therefore, are useless. (5) It links together faith and works in a way which shows that the discussion on the subject in the Epistles of St. Paul and St. James was familiar to the Jewish schools. (6) It attaches more importance to the Apocryphal books than to the Old Testament.

The Christian Framework of the Book.—The date of the concluding chapters, xv. and xvi., is placed about A.D. 268 by most modern critics. Chap. xv. 10-12 refers to the troubles of Alexandria under Gallienus (A.D. 260-268); chap. xv. 28-33 to the conquests of the Sassinidæ (especially Sapor I., A.D. 240-273); chap. xv. 33 describes the murder of Odenathus at Emesa (A.D. 266). The date of the opening chapters cannot be fixed with such precision, but probably belonged to the same period.

THE EPISTLE OF JEREMY

The Epistle of Jeremy is a separate fragment in the Greek version of the Apocrypha, but in the Vulgate and other Latin MSS. is attached to the Book of Baruch, of which it forms the sixth chapter. It purports to be a letter written by Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon, to warn them against idolatry. This claim, however, is quite out of the question for several reasons. (1) The Epistle is written in Greek, and shows no signs of having been translated from Hebrew. (2) Its style and general thought are quite unworthy of Jeremiah. (3) Its statement that the captivity would last for seven generations points to the fact that it is the work of a later writer. We have very little evidence to guide us in determining its data and origin. Many scholars think that there is an allusion to it in II. Maccabees ii. 2 : "Jeremiah charged the exiles not . . . to be led astray in their minds when they saw images of gold and silver." If this is so, we may surmise that the fragment originated in Alexandria in the first century B.C. It affords us an excellent illustration of the temptations to which the Jews of the Diaspora were subjected, and so throws light upon the attitude of the Apostle Paul to the question of "eating meat offered to idols."

CHAPTER VII

THE WIDER APOCRYPHA

IN addition to the Apocrypha proper, there are many other Jewish writings, belonging practically to the same period, which have never claimed to be regarded as Scripture, though they were held in high value by large circles of Christians in early times. In all probability, if the process, by which the Old Testament was evolved, had been continued, they too would eventually have obtained a place in the Canon. Two of them, at any rate, III. and IV. Maccabees, are actually found in one of the most valuable MSS. of the Septuagint.

The most important books of the wider Apocrypha may be classified as follows :—

1. *Historical*.—III. and IV. Maccabees. The latter, however, as will be explained, though purporting to be historical, is really a philosophical discourse.
2. *Poetry*.—The Psalms of Solomon.
3. *Apocalyptic Literature*.—The Book of Enoch; the Book of the Secrets of Enoch; the Apocalypse of Baruch; the Assumption of Moses; the

Book of Jubilees; the Ascension of Isaiah; the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

It will be observed from this list that the Apocalyptic writings occupy the largest and most important place in the wider Apocrypha. A few words must be said with regard to the character of these books.

The Meaning of "Apocalyptic."—The word Apocalyptic is, of course, an adjective formed from the noun "Apocalypse," and so means "of the nature of" or "belonging to" an Apocalypse. "Apocalypse" itself is the Greek equivalent of the better-known Latin form "Revelation." Thus, we speak of the last book in the New Testament as "the Revelation" or "the Apocalypse" of St. John. What the Book of Revelation is to the New Testament the Jewish Apocalypses are to Apocryphal literature. The Apocalypses claim to give a vision of the future. They are a peculiarity, as far as their form goes, of Jewish literature. There is nothing exactly like them elsewhere. The nearest approach is to be found in books like Plato's "Republic" or Sir Thomas More's "Utopia," which contain a dream of an ideal state. No one, however, who reads "Utopia" and the Jewish Apocalypses side by side would think of classing them together, because in form and style they are utterly dissimilar.

The Origin of Apocalyptic Literature.—There are elements of Apocalyptic in some of the later Jewish

prophets, notably in Ezekiel. In Daniel, of course, the Apocalyptic element is very marked. It may be said that Daniel started a new fashion in literature, and between his day and A.D. 100, Apocalyptic became the popular mode of conveying religious teaching. There was, however, a stronger reason for the adoption of the new mode than the desire to copy Daniel. "Apocalyptic" appealed to writers and teachers because it seemed to be the most appropriate vehicle for expressing the religious aspirations of Israel. Throughout this period, from a political point of view, the Jewish nation was in an evil plight. The hopes, of which the prophets had spoken, had not been realised, and what is more, their realisation now seemed quite beyond the range of possibility. Palestine had fallen under the sway of one foreign power after another. There was a brief revival of hope during the Maccabæan age, but it was short-lived; and when at last Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans, a dark despair settled upon the people. It was owing to these disappointments, and to the failure of the promises which the prophets had given to Israel, that the soul of the nation found a new outlet for its faith in the vision of a millennial future, an era of blessedness after the judgment-day. The new faith found its expression in Apocalyptic literature. It must not be thought, however, that the Apocalyptic writings deal solely or mainly with the Millennium; many

of them are contented with making an attempt to find a solution for the problem, which continually confronted them, of the sufferings of Israel. A new philosophy of religion was needed, and in one way or another all the Apocalyptic books are more or less engaged in the effort to discover it. We find, therefore, important discussions on such questions as the origin of sin, the explanation of evil, the future destiny, &c.

Importance of Apocalyptic Literature.—In certain circles of the Jews, Apocalyptic was regarded as of even higher value than the Old Testament itself. This is clear from the famous passage in II. Esdras (chap. xiv. 42–48). “The Highest gave understanding to five men, and they wrote the wonderful visions of the night. . . . In forty days they wrote ninety-four [some texts read 204] books, and it came to pass, when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Highest spake saying : The first that thou hast written [a reference to the Old Testament] publish openly, that the worthy and the unworthy may read it. But keep the seventy last [*i.e.* the Apocryphal books], that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be wise among the people. *For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge.*” The modern value of the literature cannot be better stated than in the words of Dr. Charles. “No attempt to study Christianity in its origins can dispense with a knowledge of this literature. If we wish

to reconstruct the world of ideas and aspirations which filled the heart of an earnest Jew at the beginning of the Christian era, it is to this literature that we must have recourse for our materials. Although in its higher aspects Christianity infinitely transcends the Judaism that preceded it, yet in others it is a genuine historical development from such Judaism. Christianity came forth from the bosom of Pharisaic Judaism, and in Apocalyptic literature this form of Judaism found its essential utterance. . . . Thus Jewish Apocalypses not only supply a history of religious beliefs in the two pre-Christian centuries, but they also fill up the otherwise unavoidable gap in the history of Jewish thought, and constitute the living link between the prophetic teachings and ideals of the Old Testament and their fulfilment in Christianity."

CHAPTER VIII

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

THE BOOK OF ENOCH

THE Apocalypse which is known as the Book of Enoch is not a single book, but a library containing at least five volumes, written by different authors at different periods in the last two centuries of the pre-Christian era. It is not difficult to see why it was that a whole literature grew up around the name of Enoch. The well-known statement in Gen. v. 24, "Enoch walked with God," suggested that the favour of Divine intercourse was bestowed upon Enoch in an unusual degree, and his name, therefore, naturally occurred to Apocalyptic writers as a fitting medium for the conveyance of their ideas. The importance of this Enoch literature can scarcely be over-estimated. There is hardly a book in the New Testament which does not show some traces of its influence, and the Epistle of Barnabas quotes it as Scripture.

The Contents of the Book.—The Book of Enoch has been divided by Dr. Charles, who is our chief

authority on Apocalyptic literature, into five parts. (1) *The first book*, comprising chaps. 1-36, was written some time before 170 B.C. Like most Apocalyptic writings, this book deals with the problem of evil. The distinguishing features of its teaching are: (a) Its explanation of the origin of evil. Sin is represented as coming into the world, not through the fall of Adam, but through the lust of the angels for the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 1-8). (b) Its demonology. The present evil in the world is largely due to the influence of the evil spirits which went forth from the seed of the fallen angels and the daughters of men. (c) The material character of the future Messianic age. The Millennium is described as a time of sensuous enjoyment. (2) *The second book*, from a chronological point of view, consists of chaps. 83-90. The date is fixed by certain allusions to the Maccabæan rising which make it clear that the book belongs to the reign of Judas (166-161 B.C.). The explanation of evil given in this section is interesting and original. God had entrusted Israel to the charge of seventy shepherds (angels). These shepherds had proved faithless to their trust, and destroyed those whom they ought to have protected. God will, however, require vengeance, and then Israel will be restored. A righteous league will be established in Israel, and in it will arise a family from which the deliverer of Israel (Judas Maccabæus) will come forth. (3) *The third book*

is made up of chaps. 91-104, and belongs to the last quarter of the first century, between 134 and 95 B.C. Its author is clearly a member of the Pharisaic party, and the book may be said to represent the views of the Pharisees of the period. He finds the solution of the problem of evil, not in the establishment of a Messianic kingdom on earth, nor in the advent of a great deliverer, but in the future life. He "calls a new world into being to redress the balance of the old." After the final judgment the righteous will be raised as spirits and enter into the portals of the new heaven, where they will become companions of the heavenly hosts and shine as the stars for evermore. The wicked, on the other hand, are doomed to eternal punishment in the Sheol of fire and darkness. (4) *The fourth book*, known as the "Similitudes" (chaps. 37-70), was written either between 94 and 79 B.C. or between 70 and 64 B.C., and contains a denunciation of the later Maccabæan princes and their allies, the Sadducees. Its most noticeable features are: (a) The origin of sin is traced one stage further back. The sinful angels of the first book are represented as sinning owing to the evil influence of "the Satans." (b) The solution of the problem is found in the advent of a Messiah, who will come to judge the earth, inflict the direst punishment on sinners, and inaugurate an era of righteousness. This is the most remarkable conception in the book, and marks the climax of Messianic

prophecy. (5) *The fifth book*, or the “Book of Celestial Physics” as it is called, consists of chaps. 72–82, though the order of the chapters has been disarranged by the compiler—chap. 79, which contains the conclusion of the book, being put in the wrong place. Its contents are quite unlike anything which is found in the other sections. It is an attempt to establish an essentially Hebrew calendar in preference to the heathen calendars which were then in vogue.

The Influence of the Book of Enoch on New Testament Theology.—There can be little doubt that New Testament theology owes a very considerable debt to the Book of Enoch. This is particularly apparent when we compare its Messianic conceptions with the New Testament interpretation of Christ. The Book of Enoch provided a large number of the categories which were used for explaining the person of Christ. (a) In the Book of Enoch the term “Christ,” is applied for the first time in Jewish literature to the coming Messianic king. (b) The title “the Son of Man” makes its first appearance in Enoch, and passes from Enoch into the New Testament. (c) Two other titles which are used in Enoch of the Messiah, viz. “the Righteous One” and “the Elect One,” are used of Christ in the New Testament (*cf.* Acts iii. 14, vii. 52). (d) One of the main functions of the Messiah in Enoch was that of judgment, and this conception is almost verbally reproduced in

John v. 22. (e) The Messiah is depicted as "pre-existing" and as "sitting on the throne of His glory"—two ideas which are also familiar to readers of the New Testament.

THE BOOK OF THE SECRETS OF ENOCH

The Book of the Secrets of Enoch is a recent discovery, for which we are indebted to the energy and acumen of Dr. Charles. In 1892 a statement was made by a student of Russian Pseudepigraphic literature, named Kozak, that a version of the Book of Enoch existed in Slavonic. As the Book of Enoch had hitherto only been known in the *Æthiopic* version, Dr. Charles at once caused an investigation to be made. The examination which was instituted resulted in the discovery that the Slavonic Enoch differed *in toto* from the *Æthiopic* edition, and represented an entirely new work. In 1896 Dr. Charles published a translation of the book, with introduction and commentary.

Date and Authorship.—There are various indications that the Slavonic Enoch was originally written in Greek, probably at Alexandria. The author was an orthodox Hellenistic Jew, who, however, was broad-minded enough to appreciate and assimilate many elements in current Greek and Egyptian thought. The date may be fixed approximately by the following considerations: The fact that the book makes use of the *Æthiopic*

Enoch in its present form proves that it could not have been written earlier than the commencement of the Christian era. The absence of any reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the implication that the Temple was still standing, clearly show that the book must have been published before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. "We may therefore," as Dr. Charles says, "with reasonable certainty, assign the composition of our text to the period A.D. 1-50."

Contents of the Book.—The book describes the ascension of Enoch, and his voyage through the seven heavens. In the *first* heaven Enoch sees a great sea, the rulers of the stars, the treasures of the snow, the clouds, and the dew, and their guardian angels. In the *second* he sees the fallen angels and the prisoners awaiting eternal judgment. The *third* heaven is the place of Paradise, which is prepared as an eternal inheritance for those "who turn their eyes from unrighteousness and accomplish a righteous judgment, and give bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, raise the fallen." On the western side of this heaven is "a very terrible place of savage darkness and impenetrable gloom," which is reserved as an eternal inheritance for those "who commit evil deeds upon the earth." In the *fourth* heaven Enoch is shown the courses of the sun and the moon and "an armed host of angels serving the Lord with cymbals." The *fifth* heaven is the prison-house of the

angels who had rebelled and committed sin with the daughters of men. The *sixth* heaven is the abode of the angels who regulate the powers of nature and record the deeds of men. Finally, in the *seventh* heaven, Enoch sees God sitting on His throne surrounded by the heavenly hosts. The remainder of the book is occupied with a description of the creation of the world and a prophecy of the Millennium.

The Religious Value of the Book.—The Slavonic Enoch is valuable because it helps to explain the origin of several conceptions which played an important part in later Christian theology.

(1) The idea of the Millennium is first found in this book. The conception is derived from the story of the creation. God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. One day is to God as a thousand years. The world will last, therefore, for six thousand years, and then will come a Millennium of one thousand years.

(2) The book helps to explain many allusions to the heavens in the New Testament, especially in the Epistles of St. Paul. When Paul speaks, for instance, of being caught up to "the third heaven" (II. Cor. xii. 2), it is quite clear that he is familiar with the conception of the heavens in the Secrets of Enoch. The agreement seems to extend even to details, for both Paul and the author of Enoch locate Paradise in "the third heaven."

Paul's description of Satan as "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. ii. 2) is unintelligible without the explanation of Enoch that Satan was driven out of the heavens and given the air as his domain. In the same way such statements as Col. i. 20, "to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether things upon earth or things in the heavens," and Eph. iv. 10, "He ascended far above all the heavens," can only be explained by supposing that Paul accepted the scheme of heavens described by the author of the Slavonic Enoch.

THE APOCALYPSE OF BARUCH

The Apocalypse of Baruch is also a comparatively recent discovery. We owe it to an Italian scholar, named Ceriani, who found a Syriac version of the book in the Milan Library and published a Latin translation of it in 1866. The Syriac version was translated from the Greek, which in its turn was derived from a Hebrew original, so that we only know the real Apocalypse at third hand.

Contents of the Book.—The name Baruch is of course assumed by the author or editor of the book, in accordance with the customary usage of Apocalyptic writers, who always father their productions upon some well-known figure in the history of Israel. The scene is laid in Jerusalem, during the period preceding and

following the capture of the city by the Chaldæans. The writer makes a careless blunder in connection with his fictitious background. He dates the book in the "twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah," who, however, only reigned three months, and was carried captive to Babylon eleven years before the fall of Jerusalem. The truth is that the author of the Apocalypse is really dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and, instead of using contemporary figures and names, clothes the story in all the imagery of ancient history. The book divides itself into seven sections. In the *first* the fall of Jerusalem is announced, but Baruch is comforted by the promise that the overthrow of Israel will only be "for a season." In the *second* the destruction of the city is described. The overthrow is depicted as the work of angels and not of the Chaldæans. The *third* section contains Baruch's complaint to God, and raises the old problem—which is the theme of the second Book of Esdras—as to the explanation of evil. The *fourth* contains the promise that the future world is made in the interests of the righteous, and states "that the blessings of life are to be reckoned not by its length but by its quality and its end." In the *fifth* Baruch complains of the delay in the advent of the kingdom, and receives the explanation that the predestined number of men must be made up before the day of the Lord can come. As soon as the number is complete, the

Messiah will appear. The *sixth* gives the vision of the cedar and the vine, which symbolise the Roman Empire and the triumph of the Messiah. When Baruch asks who will share in the future glory, the answer is given, "Those who believe." In the *last section* the future course of history is described in the form of the vision of a cloud which discharged "black waters and clear." The six "black waters" denote six evil periods in the world's history, and the "six clear waters" a corresponding number of good periods. It is in this section that the writer's doctrine of the resurrection of the body is developed.

The Date of the Book.—The Apocalypse of Baruch is not a unity but a compilation of several documents. This is proved by the diversity of tone and outlook which we find in different parts of the book. Some sections, as Dr. Charles says, "agree in presenting an optimistic view of Israel's future on earth and in inculcating the hope of a Messianic kingdom," whereas in others "such expectations are absolutely abandoned, and the hopes of the righteous are directed to the immediate advent of the final judgment and the spiritual world alone." Dr. Charles thinks that the various documents, out of which the Apocalypse was compiled, were written at different points in the period which preceded and followed the destruction of Jerusalem, *i.e.* between A.D. 50 and 100, and that the Apocalypse in its present form was com-

posed a little later, certainly before A.D. 130. All the authors were Pharisees, "full of confidence in the future glories of their nation, either in this world or the next."

The Theological Value of the Book.—The Apocalypse of Baruch is of exceptional interest to us because it affords us a clear illustration of Jewish thought in the last half of the first century of the Christian era, and shows us the sort of literature which the Apostle Paul would probably have produced if he had not become a Christian. The measure of the difference between the Apocalypse of Baruch and the Epistles of Paul is the measure of the influence of the Christian religion. The book enables us to see, too, what exactly Pauline theology owes to Judaism, and how Paul has purified and christianised the Jewish elements which he incorporated into his new philosophy of religion. Among the more interesting points connected with the theology of the book—(1) The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is emphatically affirmed. In answer to the question, "In what shape will those live who live in thy day?" the statement is made, "The earth will assuredly restore the dead . . . making no change in their form, but as it has received, so will it restore them . . . to show to the living that the dead have come to life again." After recognition, however, the form of the body will be changed. "They shall be made like unto angels, and changed into every form they

desire, from beauty into loveliness and from light into the splendour of glory" (chaps. xlix.-li.). (2) In its doctrine of free will and sin, the Apocalypse represents the more liberal form of Jewish theology. It denies altogether the theory of original sin and maintains, that "every man is the Adam of his own soul." The only effect upon mankind of Adam's sin was the introduction of physical death into the world. (3) The Apocalypse strongly maintains the view that "salvation is of works." The righteous are saved by their works, and their works avail not only for themselves, they are a defence also to the unrighteous among whom they dwell, and even after death are regarded as a lasting merit, on the ground of which God will forgive His people.

THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

This Apocalypse was also, like Baruch, discovered by Ceriani in the library of Milan in 1861. It exists only in a single Latin fragment, which is incomplete. The Latin version contains evidence which proves that it was made from a Greek original, which came itself from a Hebrew autograph.

Contents of the Assumption.—The book puts into the mouth of Moses, who is on the point of death, a summary of the future history of Israel in the form of prophecy. The story, which is told with great brevity,

begins with the work of Joshua and ends with the rule of the sons of Herod the Great. At this point the writer turns to the future, and the second half of the book gives us his religious and political outlook. The writer thinks that troublous times are in store for Israel. Tyrannical and impious rulers will arise. The Jews will be persecuted for their faith by "the king of the kings of the earth," who, like Antiochus Epiphanes, will make circumcision a penal offence. A second Eleazar will arise who, like the famous martyr of the Maccabæan age, will take his sons into the wilderness and suffer martyrdom rather than transgress the Law. Then the kingdom of the Lord will appear on earth, and God Himself will redeem His people and punish its Gentile oppressors.

Religious Teaching of the Book.—The chief interest of the Assumption of Moses lies in its general point of view rather than in its opinions on the details of Jewish theology. It raises the important question — What ought to be the attitude of a religious Jew towards his persecutors? The Zealots answered the question by proclaiming the doctrine of resistance. Force must be met by force and violence by violence. "We must emulate the example," they said, "of Judas Maccabeus, who raised an armed force and defeated the oppressors." The Assumption of Moses is a protest against this view. It preaches the doctrine of non-resistance, or rather of passive resistance. We must not take up arms, it

argues, but quietly suffer for our religion. The ideal attitude is not that of Judas Maccabæus, but rather that of Eleazar, the great martyr of the Maccabæan age. It is martyrdom and not violence that will usher in the Messianic age. The Assumption may thus be termed the manifesto of Jewish Quietism.

Date.—The date of the book may be fixed within narrow limits. It takes us up to the death of Herod the Great in 3 B.C., and it was evidently written before the destruction of Jerusalem, because the Temple is still standing. But we can reduce these limits still further. The writer speaks of Herod's sons in a way which implies that the book was written before the end of their reign. We may place the Assumption, therefore, between A.D. 1 and 30. This fact adds greatly to the interest of the book, since it must have been written during the actual lifetime of Jesus.

Value of the Book for the Study of the New Testament.—The Assumption throws light on many passages in the New Testament. (1) There are several phrases in the Epistle of Jude, and in Stephen's speech as recorded in Acts. vii., which can only be understood when compared with the statements of this book. (2) The writer's vivid description of the ruling classes in Palestine (the Sadducees) proves that others, besides Jesus, felt acutely the degradation into which the government of the day had fallen. He speaks of the rulers as “scorn-

ful and impious men, treacherous self-pleasers, dissemblers, lovers of banquets, gluttons, gourmands, devourers of the poor . . . filled with lawlessness and iniquity from sunrise to sunset"—language which more than corroborates the picture which is drawn of these same men in the Gospel narratives.

CHAPTER IX

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE (*continued*)

THE BOOK OF JUBILEES

THE Book of Jubilees was first published in modern times in the form of a German translation from the *Æthiopic* version by Dillmann in 1851. A Latin version was also discovered by Ceriani in the Milan Library a little later, and printed for the first time in 1861.

Character of the Book.—The Book of Jubilees is also known as “the little Genesis.” This second title indicates the character of its contents. It is a revised version of the earlier history of Israel, from the creation of the world down to the institution of the Passover (Exodus xii.). It contains the narrative of the Book of Genesis, re-written from the point of view of later Judaism. Just as the author of Chronicles modified the historical narrative of the Books of Kings to suit his own religious ideas, so the writer of Jubilees wrote over again the story of the patriarchal age, and brought it into harmony with his own conceptions of what ought to have happened during that period. The title “little

Genesis" is given to the book, not because it is an abbreviation of our canonical Genesis (for, as a matter of fact, it is of greater length), but to show that it is of inferior and secondary authority. The chief modifications which the writer introduces into the Biblical narrative are as follows: (1) The story is put into the mouth of "the angel of the face," who is represented as telling Moses on Mount Sinai the part which the angels had played in the creation of the world and the history of the patriarchal age. (2) The writer evinces a particular interest in chronology. He divides the period into jubilees (hence the title of the book) and dates each event in relation to the particular jubilee under which it fell. (3) The writer omits many stories which apparently offended the religious sense of his day. One or two examples may be given by way of illustration. The story of the offering of Isaac (Gen. xxii.), for instance, seems to have presented as much difficulty to the author of Jubilees as it does to the modern reader, and he boldly solves the problem by stating that Abraham was tempted, not by Jehovah, but by an evil spirit named Mastema. Many incidents which appear to reflect upon the character of the patriarchs are cut out altogether, *e.g.* Abraham's deception of the Egyptians (Gen. xii. 11-14), Jacob's attempt to outwit Laban (Gen. xxx., xxxi.), Jacob's fear of Esau (Gen. xxxii., xxxiii.). The whole of chap. xl ix. is suppressed because

of its severity on Levi and the pre-eminence which it assigns to Judah. (4) Many additions are also made to the narrative. The names of the wives of all the patriarchs are given, and the writer even knows the name of the wife of Cain. The story of Abraham is expanded, and many legends are added in connection with his early life. Particular prominence is assigned to Levi. (5) Great stress is laid on the Hebrew feasts, all of which are supposed to have been instituted in patriarchal times. The Feast of Tabernacles, for instance, owes its origin to Abraham. (6) The utmost emphasis is laid on the Jewish Law, and the writer of Jubilees traces the origin of its various enactments back to the age of the Patriarchs.

Date of the Book.—Dr. Charles gives a series of strong arguments to prove that the Book of Jubilees falls within the period 135–96 B.C. The main grounds upon which he arrives at this result are as follows. The book was evidently written by a member of the Pharisaic party who was in strong sympathy with the Maccabæan movement. In the year 96 B.C. a serious rupture occurred between the Pharisees and Alexander Jannæus, the representative of the Maccabæan family at the time. After this date it is unlikely that a Pharisaic writer would have shown the same attitude towards the Maccabæans which we find in the Book of Jubilees. The detailed allusions of the Apocalypse also seem to imply a

Maccabæan background. The insistence which is laid upon circumcision and the keeping of the Sabbath, the pre-eminence which is assigned to Levi over Judah, the references to Edom, find their simplest explanation in the events connected with this period of Jewish history. The Book of Jubilees was used, too, by the author of *Æthiopic Enoch* (chaps. 91–104), and as the year 95 B.C. is given as the latest possible date for this section of *Enoch*, it follows that our *Apocalypse* must have been composed some years earlier. We may say, therefore, that *Jubilees* belongs to 135–115 B.C.

It should be stated, however, that there is another view which has found many supporters amongst the specialists who have made this book their particular study. This alternative theory maintains that the Book of *Jubilees* was written during the period which immediately preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, *i.e.* between A.D. 30 and 60, and was intended largely as a Pharisaic manifesto against the teaching of the Apostles.

Purpose and Aim of the Book.—There is no doubt, whatever the date of *Jubilees* may be, that its main purpose was to utter a protest against an attempt which was being made to weaken the force of the Jewish code. If we agree with Charles in placing the book at the close of the second century B.C., we shall see in it an effort to resist the Hellenic spirit which was creeping over Judaism at the time, and trying to rob it of the

distinctive features of its legal system. If we accept the theory which places the book in the Apostolic age, we shall look upon it as a kind of counterblast to the arguments used by St. Paul and the other Apostles in their attack upon Judaism. It must be admitted that there is a good deal in Jubilees which seems to fit excellently into this latter hypothesis. One of St. Paul's favourite arguments in replying to the Judaisers was this : " You insist upon the Law of Moses, but you must remember that the Law is not eternal : it is only an interlude in the history of Israel's religious development. We must go back behind Moses to our forefather Abraham, and when we do that we find that the great principle of Abraham's religion was not law but faith." Paul's appeal from Moses to Abraham was practically unanswerable. The only possible reply was to do exactly what the author of Jubilees has done—*i.e.* assert that the Law itself did not originate with Moses, as the ordinary narrative of the Old Testament implies, but goes back to the patriarchal age, and is as ancient as the human race itself.

The Value of the Book.—The Book of Jubilees contains many points which are full of interest to modern readers. (1) It illustrates, for instance, in a very striking manner the freedom with which Jewish writers dealt with the Old Testament narrative. The author of Jubilees did not feel the slightest hesitation in altering the story

of Genesis in order to substantiate his own particular theological views. The historical sense is altogether subordinated to religious interests. (2) The manner in which the author attempts to prove the eternity of the Jewish Law is also most instructive. He is not content with antedating the enactments of the Mosaic code, but he even argues that the Law is kept in heaven. Angels were created circumcised, and are subject to the law of the Sabbath. (3) Another interesting feature of the book is its developed angelology. The author divides angels into three classes or grades: (*a*) the angels of the face, (*b*) the angels of sanctification, (*c*) the angels who superintend the work of nature. (4) Equally important is the author's belief in demons. They originated from the giants who were the offspring of the "wicked angels" and "the daughters of men." They are under the rule of an evil spirit named Mastema, and they are the source of all sin and evil in the world.

THE ASCENSION OF ISAIAH

This Apocalypse has been preserved in its entirety only in an *Æthiopic* version, though fragments are found both in Latin and Greek. It differs from any of the Apocalypses, which we have hitherto dealt with, in containing a large admixture of Christian elements.

Contents of the Book.—The Ascension of Isaiah

may be divided into two main sections. The first half of the book (with the exception of one very important interpolation) is Jewish, and gives an account of the martyrdom of Isaiah. The second half is mainly Christian, and describes Isaiah's vision of the advent of the Messiah. (a) *The martyrdom* (chaps. i.-iii. 13; v. 2-14). The story is as follows. At the end of his reign King Hezekiah summons his son Manasseh to receive his last instructions, and to hear an account of the revelations which had come to him during his sickness. The prophet Isaiah tells Hezekiah of the fate which he foresees will befall him when Manasseh becomes king. Upon the death of Hezekiah, Manasseh abandons the service of Jehovah. Isaiah and the prophets flee into the wilderness for refuge. A false prophet, named Balkira, discovers his retreat, and tells Manasseh. Manasseh at once sends his emissaries to seize the prophet. [At this point comes the interpolated section, which will be discussed separately.] Isaiah refuses to recant, and is "sawn asunder with a wooden saw." (b) *The interpolated section* (chaps. iii. 13-v. 1) is really an independent Apocalypse, though an attempt is made to connect it artificially with the remainder of the narrative. One of the grounds for Belial's enmity to Isaiah, was his prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. In this section, the Christian interpolater relates how the prophecy will be fulfilled; how the twelve Apostles

will preach the Gospel after the death of Christ and win many converts: how evil will creep into the Church, and how Belial will incarnate himself in the form of an impious king: and how, finally, he will be overthrown and Christ will return to the earth and establish His kingdom. (c) *The vision of Isaiah* (chaps. vi.-xi.). This part of the book, which presents some points of resemblance with the Slavonic Enoch, describes the journey of Isaiah through the seven heavens. Each of the heavens is depicted at length. The series represents an ascending scale of glory, which reaches its climax in the seventh, where Isaiah beholds the Lord of Glory, and "a second most glorious one like unto Him," and "the angel of the Holy Spirit, the inspirer of the prophets." Then the voice of the Most High is heard speaking to His Son, bidding Him descend through the heavens to the world. "The Beloved" (this is the title commonly bestowed on the Messiah in this book) carries out His Father's bidding, passes through all the heavens unrecognised, and enters into this world through a Virgin Birth. His life, death, and resurrection are briefly described, and then the prophet beholds His ascension through the heavens, in all of which He is now recognised, until at last He reaches the seventh heaven, and takes His seat on the right hand of the "Great Glory."

Date of the Book.—The Ascension of Isaiah in its present form is, as we have seen, a compilation of three

different documents, two of which contain large Christian elements. This final stage in the composition of the work cannot have been reached till the second century A.D., and possibly may even have to be placed at the commencement of the third century. The documents themselves, however, go back to earlier times. *The Martyrdom* probably belongs to the first half of the first century, A.D. 1-50. This conclusion is based on two grounds. (a) There seems to be an allusion to it in Hebrews xi. 37. (b) It is scarcely probable that Jewish books would obtain recognition in the Christian Church after the destruction of Jerusalem. The other two documents, according to Charles, originated a little later, and belong to the last decades of the century, A.D. 80-100, at least in their simplest form. Harnack, however, adopts a much later date for the documents. He thinks that the interpolated section belongs to the second century A.D. and the *Vision* to the third.

Value of the Book.—The chief points of interest in the book for the modern student occur in the Christian sections. The first of these (*i.e.* the interpolated section) gives a graphic picture of the condition of the Church about A.D. 80. “In those days,” says the writer, “many will love office though devoid of wisdom. There will be many lawless elders, and shepherds dealing wrongly by the sheep. . . . There will be much slander and vain-

glory in those days. . . . And there will not be many prophets, nor those who speak trustworthy words, save one here and there. . . . There will be great hatred in the shepherds and elders towards each other." This description is borne out by similar statements which we find in I. Peter and the Epistle of Clement of Rome. Other valuable features in these sections are: (1) The description of the seven heavens. It should be noted that there are some important points on which the account of the heavens in the Ascension differs from that given by the Slavonic Enoch. (a) In Enoch some of the heavens are tenanted by evil angels: in the Ascension the evil angels are located on the firmament. (b) Enoch places certain physical elements in the lower heavens, e.g. the treasuries of the ice and snow. In the Ascension the heavens are purely spiritual worlds. (2) The Messiah is almost uniformly described as "the Beloved," a title which is often found in the New Testament (*cf.* Mark i. 11, Eph. i. 9). (3) There is a clear reference to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity in the *Vision* section. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are linked together and receive adoration and worship, though the two latter are placed in a subordinate position, and in their turn do homage to the Father. The Holy Spirit is described as an angel ("the angel of the Spirit" or "the angel of the Holy Spirit"), and twice is identified with Gabriel. (4) The

doctrine of the Virgin Birth is also plainly taught, and in a manner which marks a clear advance upon the statements in Matthew and Luke. (5) There is a marked trace in the book of Doketism—the theory that denied the real humanity of Christ, and held that He possessed merely a phantom body. (6) The book is valuable, too, because it enables us to trace the development of the belief in the appearance of Antichrist, and so throws light upon Paul's prophecy of the coming of "the man of sin" in II. Thessalonians, and similar statements in the Book of Revelation. (7) The doctrine of the future life is in complete agreement with the later views of St. Paul. The righteous after death will receive "garments," in which they will be clothed, and then they will ascend with Christ into heaven.

THE TESTAMENTS OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs is one of the most interesting of the documents which belong to this class of Jewish literature. It consists of twelve small pamphlets, which purport to contain the last utterances of the twelve sons of Jacob. Each of these men is represented as calling his children around him on his deathbed and giving them words of counsel and advice with regard to the conduct of life. In most cases the

Patriarch recalls some of the leading incidents of his own career, and uses them as a text from which he draws lessons of warning or exhortation for his children. The Testament of Gad may be taken as an illustration of the method of the writer. Gad tells the story of his own enmity against Joseph. Joseph, according to the narrative, had carried to his father a tale that his brothers were killing the best of his flock and making a feast. This angered Gad, and made him often wish to kill Joseph. His plans, however, were frustrated by the action of Judah, who sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites. Upon this incident the writer bases his sermon against malice and hatred, which forms the theme of the book. "Beware, therefore, my children, of hatred, for it worketh lawlessness even against the Lord Himself. . . . Love ye each one his brother and put away hatred from your hearts."

The Character of the Book.—There has been a great deal of discussion among modern scholars as to the character of the book. Until quite recently the prevailing opinion seems to have regarded the Testaments as the work of a Christian, and to have given it a place in early Christian literature. The monographs of Schnapp and Charles have, however, completely reversed this verdict. There are, of course, undoubted Christian elements in the book, and the problem that faces the modern scholar is, How are these Christian elements to be accounted for? The older view maintained that

they represented the views of the original author. Schnapp and Charles, on the contrary, argue that they are later interpolations. The case for the latter view seems to have been substantiated by the following considerations : (a) Many of these interpolations are not found in the Armenian version. This fact proves that the process of interpolation was gradual, and that when the Armenian version was made, it was still incomplete. (b) Even the Greek MSS. differ among themselves with regard to the amount of the interpolations. Passages found in one are absent from another MS. (c) The interpolations are not homogeneous, and do not represent a uniform theology. The older view was completely at a loss when it attempted to define the theological position of the author of the document. Nitzsch, for instance, described him as a Jewish Christian of Alexandria who had imbibed certain current Essene beliefs. Ritschl regarded him as a Gentile Christian, while Kayser defined him as an Ebionite. The only theory that satisfactorily explains the facts is the view of Charles, that the Christian elements were interpolated at different times by different hands.

The Date of the Book.—The Testaments consist of three different strata: (a) the original groundwork, which contains about eleven-twelfths of the whole work; (b) certain Jewish interpolations; (c) the Christian additions. The date of the original groundwork is placed by

Charles between 109 and 107 B.C. The arguments upon which this conclusion is based are: (1) Certain references in the book imply that the Jewish nation was ruled by one who combined in his own person the offices of prophet, priest, and king. These three functions were only united in a single person, viz. John Hyrcanus (137–105 B.C.). (2) There are various indications—e.g. the allusion to the destruction of Samaria—which suggest that the book belonged to the end of the reign of John Hyrcanus, *i.e.* between 109 and 105. (3) Just before the end of his reign a breach occurred between John Hyrcanus and the Pharisees. It is inconceivable that a Pharisaic writer, such as the author of the Testaments, could have spoken of Hyrcanus in such terms of praise after the outbreak had taken place. The date, therefore, may be fixed between 109 and 107 B.C. With regard to the Jewish interpolations, Dr. Charles holds that the bulk of them were made between 70 and 40 B.C. The Christian additions were made at different periods. Many of them must have been introduced into the text at a very early date, because they are found in a Greek version, with which St. Paul was familiar, and which must therefore have been in existence before A.D. 50.

Value of the Book.—The Testaments are full of interest for the modern student.

(1) There is no Jewish document which had a greater influence on the New Testament. Charles cites a

number of passages which seem to prove conclusively that the resemblances between certain elements in the teaching of Jesus and the statements of the Testaments could not have been accidental. He further quotes no less than thirty passages from the Epistles of Paul which make it absolutely certain that our document must have produced a great impression upon the mind of the Apostle. There are, for instance, no less than seventy words common to the Epistles of Paul and the Testaments which are not found elsewhere in the pages of the New Testament. From the point of view of New Testament exegesis, therefore, the document is of incalculable value.

(2) The Testaments represent the high-water mark of Jewish ethics. No other document affords us such clear insight into the higher moral teaching of the Judaism of this period. In many respects there is a considerable advance upon the ethical teaching of the Old Testament and an approximation to that of the New. It contains, for instance, as Charles says, "the most remarkable statement on the subject of forgiveness in all ancient literature." "If a man sin against thee, speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he repent and confess, forgive him. But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him, lest catching the poison from thee, he take to swearing and so thou sin doubly. . . . And though he deny it and yet have a sense of shame

when reproved, give over reproving him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee ; yea, he may also honour thee and be at peace with thee. But if he be shameless, and persisteth in his wrong-doing, even so forgive him from the heart and leave to God the avenging" (Test. Gad, vi. 3-7).

(3) Another important feature of the book is its *universalism*. It has a broader outlook than any other document of the period. The Gentiles are included in the scope of the Divine purpose. The Law was given "to lighten every man," and not merely the Jew. There are righteous men to be found in every nation. At the great consummation "the twelve tribes shall be gathered together, and all the Gentiles, until the Most High shall send forth His salvation."

CHAPTER X

OTHER APOCRYPHAL LITERATURE

THERE are three other books belonging to the wider Apocrypha which cannot be classed as Apocalyptic, and must therefore be treated separately, viz. III. Maccabees, IV. Maccabees, and the Psalms of Solomon.

THE THIRD BOOK OF MACCABEES

The title bestowed upon this book is altogether a misnomer. There is absolutely no reference to the Maccabees or the Maccabæan age in it at all. How the book got its name is quite inexplicable. The only point which it has in common with the other books of Maccabees is, that it tells the story of the faithfulness of the Jewish people in a time of persecution. Some scholars have tried to justify the title by supposing that it was intended originally to be a kind of introduction to the books which deal with the Maccabæan rising, but there seems to be nothing in the book itself that at all substantiates this theory. The only plausible explanation is to suppose that the title is due to an accident in transmission, though it is quite impossible, of course, to discover how the accident happened.

Contents.—III. Maccabees may be termed a historical romance. The scene is laid in Jerusalem and Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy (IV.) Philopator (222–204 B.C.). The story of the book is as follows. After his victory over Antiochus at Raphia in 217 B.C., Ptolemy visits Jerusalem and makes an attempt to enter the Temple, in spite of the indignant protests of priests and people. A scene of the utmost confusion ensues. The people clamour for armed resistance. Amidst the panic the voice of the High Priest Simon is heard supplicating God to prevent the violation of the Temple. In answer to Simon's prayer, Ptolemy is smitten with paralysis, and returns to Alexandria, resolved on vengeance. He issues an edict ordering all the Jews in Alexandria to embrace the worship of Bacchus or forfeit their civic status and privileges. As this edict does not produce the desired effect, Ptolemy determines to proceed to more extreme measures. He commands that the whole of the Jewish population of Alexandria shall be imprisoned in the hippodrome, and that their names shall be taken down in a register before the general massacre, which he contemplates, is carried into effect. The work of registration goes on continuously for forty days, and then the clerks report that, owing to the vast number of the Jews, the supply of writing materials has been exhausted. Ptolemy then gives the order that intoxicated elephants are to be let loose upon the Jews in

the hippodrome. The description of the manner in which the catastrophe was averted by Providence forms the climax of the story. The final deliverance was preceded by two temporary respites. On the first occasion, King Ptolemy overslept himself, and did not awake till it was too late to execute the order on the appointed day. On another occasion, Ptolemy is made by Providence to forget his orders and declare that he never issued them. These interventions were only a prelude, however, to the *dénouement*, when, in answer to the prayers of the venerable priest Eleazar, "two angels, glorious and terrible," appeared from heaven and struck consternation into the hearts of the king and the people. The miracle completely changed the attitude of King Ptolemy. The advisers who had counselled the persecution were ignominiously dismissed, and the Jewish people restored to all their ancient privileges.

Historical Value.—Very little value can be attached to the narrative of III. Maccabees. A similar story is told by Josephus of a later king, Ptolemy VII. (146–116 B.C.). His account is as follows: "When Ptolemy Physco had the presumption to fight against Onias's army, and had caught all the Jews that were in the city (Alexandria) with their wives and children, and exposed them naked and in bonds to his elephants, that they might be trodden upon and destroyed, and when he had made those elephants drunk for the purpose, the

event proved contrary to his preparations, for the elephants left the Jews and fell violently upon Physco's friends and slew a great number of them; after this, Ptolemy saw a terrible ghost which prevented his hurting these men. . . . It is well known that the Alexandrian Jews do with good reason celebrate this day on account of the great deliverance which was vouchsafed to them by God."¹ The accounts in Josephus and in III. Maccabees contain so many discrepancies that it is impossible to reconcile them, and difficult to regard either of them as historical. Probably, however, there is some basis of fact behind the stories. The Alexandrian Jews doubtless, at some time or other, were providentially delivered from a fierce persecution, in which perhaps the royal elephants may have been destined to play a part. The original fact, however, has been so overlaid with legendary elements that it is quite impossible to disconnect the truth from the fiction with which it has been surrounded.

Date and Authorship.—An attempt has been made by several distinguished scholars to connect the book with Caligula's attempt to defile the Temple at Jerusalem by erecting within its precincts a statue of himself, and his subsequent persecution of the Jews (A.D. 40). Though this hypothesis furnishes an excellent motive for the composition of III. Maccabees, it cannot, unfortunately, be substantiated. The writer would surely

¹ Treatise against Apion, ii. 5.

not have allowed Caligula's claim to receive divine honours to pass unnoticed, when an allusion to it would have heightened the colours in which he has portrayed Ptolemy's acts of sacrilege. Since this theory seems to fail us, and no other explanation of the occasion of the book is forthcoming, it is only possible to form the vaguest views with regard to the authorship and date of III. Maccabees. All that we can say is that the author must have been an Alexandrian Jew, and that he composed the book either in the first century B.C. or (as seems more probable) the first century A.D.

Religious Teaching.—There are very few specially distinctive features about the religious teaching of III. Maccabees. It discusses no theological problems, and it makes very little contribution to theological thought. Its interests are in the practical rather than in the speculative side of religion. The following ideas are prominent: (1) Great stress is laid upon the value of prayer. The miraculous interventions are represented in both cases as direct answers to prayer, and the prayers of Simon and Eleazar, which produced the interventions, are reported at length. (2) Emphasis is laid upon the conception of Providence. The writer speaks of "the unconquerable Providence" which came to the assistance of the Jews (chap. iv. 21). This is a Greek idea which attained particular prominence amongst the Stoics.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MACCABEES

The fourth book of Maccabees is quite unlike the other books which bear the same title. It makes no pretence to give a historical account of the Maccabæan age. Its chief interest is in philosophy and religion: the historical elements (if such they can be called) are entirely secondary and subordinate, and are only introduced to illustrate and substantiate its philosophical principles. The book is really a sermon or homily, a hortatory address intended to urge its hearers or readers to a life of fidelity to God and self-control.

Contents.—The theme of the book is stated in the opening sentence. The writer says that “he intends to demonstrate a most philosophical proposition, viz. that pious reason is absolute master of the passions.” It is through reason, he asserts, that man is able to attain self-control, and curb the appetites and passions which constantly threaten to destroy his virtue. There is one limitation, however, to the power of reason. It cannot control its own affections. It does not enable a man to root out desire, though it does make it possible for him to avoid being enslaved to it. “A man may not be able to eradicate malice, but reason has power to prevent him yielding to it,” “for reason is not an eradicator but an antagonist of the passions” (chap. iii. 1-3). The writer’s method of proof may be given in

his own words. "I might prove to you from many other considerations that pious reason is the sole master of the passions, but I shall prove it most effectually from the fortitude of Eleazar, and of the seven brethren and their mother; for all these proved by their contempt of torture and death that reason has command over the passions." These historical illustrations, which the writer regards as a demonstration of his thesis, occupy three-fourths of the book. We may divide IV. Macca-bees, therefore, into the following sections: (*a*) state-ment of thesis and definition of terms (chaps. i.-iv.); (*b*) narrative of the trial and torture of the aged priest Eleazar (chaps. v. 1-vi. 30); (*c*) the lessons which are to be drawn from the story (chaps. vi. 31-vii. 23); (*d*) description of the torture and martyrdom of the seven youths (chaps. viii. 1-xii. 20); (*e*) the writer's comments on their fortitude (chaps. xiii. 1-xiv. 10); (*f*) reflections on the sufferings and constancy of their mother (chaps. xv. 11-xviii.). These historical illus-trations are an expansion of the narrative in II. Maccabees (chaps. vi. 18-vii. 42).

Characteristic Features of the Book.—(1) As has already been said, the book is probably a homily, and the only specimen of Jewish sermonic literature which has been preserved in the Apocrypha. This conclusion is drawn from the frequent appeals which the writer makes to his hearers or readers (*cf.* chap. xviii. 1).

Though the writer adopts the sermonic form, however, it can scarcely be supposed that the book represents an ordinary Jewish discourse such as might have been delivered in the synagogue. There is a certain artificiality about the language and the argument of the book which seems to show that the form has been chosen as a literary device rather than as an example of Jewish preaching. (2) The book has been described as a "characteristic product of Hellenistic culture of the best type." The influence of Greek thought is patent upon every page. The very thesis of the book may be described as a Jewish version of the Socratic dictum, "Virtue is knowledge." The terminology which the writer uses in his treatment of his subject has far more in common with Greek philosophy than it has with the Old Testament. There are marked traces, too, of Stoic tendencies. The four cardinal virtues, for instance, upon which the writer so strongly insists, are borrowed directly from Stoicism. Yet in spite of his sympathy with Greek and Stoic thought, the author of IV. Maccabees is a loyal Jew, devoted to the Law, and passionately opposed to any weakening of its authority. Indeed he goes as far as to maintain that "it is only the children of the Hebrews who are invincible in the fight for virtue" (chap. ix. 18). (3) The book has absolutely no historical value. The writer borrows his illustrations from II. Maccabees, a source of most dubious authority,

and expands the narrative in order to suit his own purpose. The speeches and prayers which he puts into the mouths of his heroes are clearly his own composition.

Authorship and Date.—Many of the early Christian Fathers, *e.g.* Eusebius and Jerome, attributed IV. Maccabees to Josephus. There does not, however, seem to be the slightest justification for the theory, since the book presents the most marked differences, both in style and thought, from the genuine works of Josephus. The name of the author is lost beyond recovery, but the internal evidence of the book itself enables us to form a tolerably clear conception of his character and general outlook. We know that he must have been : (a) A *Jew*, who sympathised mainly with the Pharisaic party, and probably belonged to it. His attitude to the Law is enough in itself to make this conclusion unassailable. (b) A *Quietist*, like the author of the Assumption of Moses. This deduction is obvious from the fact that he selects as his heroes, not Judas Maccabæus, but the martyrs who laid down their lives rather than submit to the demands of Antiochus Epiphanes. “And the nation through them,” he writes, “obtained peace, and having renewed the observance of the Law drove the enemy out of the land” (chap. xviii. 4), a statement which is not strictly true, as it ignores altogether the work of the Maccabees. (c) A *Hellenist*, who had come under the

influence of Greek and Stoic ideas. There is no other book in the Apocrypha which shows such sympathy with the wider culture of the age. (*d*) Probably an *Alexandrian*. The use which the book makes of II. Maccabees, and the fact that the earliest notices of it are found in literature of Alexandrian origin, seem to make this assumption a certainty. With regard to the *date* of the book, we have no evidence to go upon, except that we know that it must have been written later than II. Maccabees, from which it drew a considerable amount of material. The probability is that it was composed either just before or just after the commencement of the Christian era.

Religious Value.—IV. Maccabees is of great value for the student of the New Testament. Its author had many points in common with the Apostle Paul. Both were zealous Pharisees, both were animated by intense religious fervour, both were influenced by the culture of the day, especially in its Stoic form. In fact, it would not be difficult to imagine that the book might have been the composition of Paul if he had never been converted to Christianity. We may almost say, therefore, that the measure of the difference between IV. Maccabees and the Epistles of Paul represents the measure of the influence of Christianity. The following points in the book seem to be particularly instructive : (1) The main theme of the book—or rather its limitation—that reason

is not master of its own affections, and so cannot control thoughts and motives, throws a clear light on the religious development of Paul in his pre-Christian days. It was when Paul realised that the Law did not enable him to keep the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," and that it had no power to govern the inner realm of the spirit, that the crisis came which proved the turning-point in his spiritual life. It was this limitation, which is so acutely recognised in IV. Maccabees, which gave Paul no peace till he found peace in the Gospel of Christ. (2) Great stress is laid in the book on the conception of "propitiation." The death of the martyrs atones for the sins of the people. This idea occurs several times in the book, but the clearest statement is found in chap. xvii. 22. "So that they became an atonement for the sin of the people, and by the blood of those pious ones, and by their propitiatory death, the Divine Providence saved Israel, which aforetime had been afflicted." It seems probable that this passage suggested to Paul some of the ideas which are found in his great statement in Rom. iii. 25. (3) This book helps also to explain and illustrate the combination of Jewish and Stoic elements in the Pauline theology, though, of course, the combination in Paul is not the same as that in IV. Maccabees.

THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

The Psalms of Solomon occupy the same place in Apocryphal literature as the Psalter does in the Old Testament, though it is clear, from the scantiness of the allusions to them in early times, that they never secured a wide circulation, nor won their way into the affection of the Christian Church. The collection consists of eighteen Psalms of varying length and value. They are written for the most part in imitation of the Old Testament Psalter, and often reproduce its language, though it must be admitted that some of them are not devoid of originality and forcefulness.

Date.—The date of the Psalms can be fixed by the allusions to historical events which are found in them. The political situation, which constitutes the historical background of the book, is as follows. The Jews are in a condition of great outward prosperity, when suddenly a rumour is heard that a hostile host is approaching the city, led by a stranger who comes from the uttermost parts of the earth, and is called, at different times, “the sinner,” “the lawless,” “the dragon,” and “the adversary.” The invader attacks Jerusalem, and breaks down its walls with his battering-ram: the Gentile host enters the Temple and pollutes the altar. A massacre takes place, in which blood is poured out like water in the streets of Jerusalem. Large numbers of Jews are sent

into exile "in the bounds of the west." Later on, however, retribution overtakes the conqueror for his profanity. He is assassinated in Egypt, his body lies tossing on the waves, and there is no one to bury him. There is only one episode in Jewish history which at all answers to this description, viz. the destruction of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C. We may therefore, with confidence, place the Psalms of Solomon in the period 70-40 B.C., the latter date being fixed by the death of Pompey, which occurred in 48 B.C.

Authorship.—In view of the minor differences which appear in the various Psalms, it is impossible to maintain the theory of a common author. The collection was probably the work of a group of men who, while agreeing with regard to their general religious outlook, differed among themselves upon smaller questions. There is no difficulty in deciding upon the party to which this group belonged. They were evidently Pharisees, and the Psalms were composed with the object of strengthening the Pharisaic position and attacking the Sadducees. Throughout the book the Pharisees are termed "the righteous" and "the saints," while the Sadducees are described as "sinners" and "transgressors." All the distinctive Pharisaic tenets are strongly enforced and emphasised by the Psalmists; in fact the books afford the best portrait which we possess of the Pharisaic ideal in the middle of the first century B.C. Everything

points to the fact that the Psalms were the work of Palestinian Jews who almost certainly lived in Jerusalem. The evidence of the language and style proves conclusively, too, that these Psalms, which we only possess in a Greek version, were originally written in Aramaic.

Religious Outlook.—As we have already seen, the book represents the creed of the Pharisees, and its specific theological teaching is therefore necessarily that of this particular school of Jewish thought. Among the ideas which are most prominent in these Psalms we may note the following: (1) The belief in theocracy. The watchword of the Pharisees, especially in the face of the Roman domination, was always, "The Lord is King." (2) The belief in the Law as the expression of the Divine ideal. True righteousness consists in strictly keeping the legal ordinances and avoiding any violation of the ceremonial law. It must be admitted, however, that much more stress is laid upon the inner life and the need of prayer and repentance by the authors of these Psalms than by the later Pharisees who are described in the pages of the New Testament. (3) The belief in the future life. At the time of God's visitation, the righteous will rise to "life eternal" and inherit the promises of the Lord. The fate of the wicked, on the other hand, is stated in terms which seem to imply the doctrine of annihilation. "The destruction of the sinner is for ever." There is no evidence to show that the writers

believed, like most Pharisees, in a physical resurrection, though this idea is not excluded.

The Prophecy of the Messiah.—The most noteworthy feature of the Psalms is the great prophecy of the advent of the Messiah which is found in Ps. xvii. 27-51. The Messiah, to whom the Psalmist looks forward, is undoubtedly an earthly ruler. He is described as “Son of David” and “the Lord Christ,” but has no Divine attributes assigned to him. This Messiah is to be raised up by God to deliver the people from the Roman supremacy and to terminate the Sadducean rule. He will cleanse Jerusalem from all impurity, and bring back into Palestine the Jews of the Dispersion. He himself will be free from sin and will make his people holy. He will win his victory not by force of arms but by “the word of his mouth.” To quote the words of Ryle and James, to whom we owe our best edition of the Psalms : “The Messiah of this Psalm is not Divine. Divinely appointed, divinely raised up, endowed with Divine gifts he is, but he is nothing more than man. Neither of supernatural birth nor of pre-existence in the bosom of God or among the angels of God do we find any trace. If he is called Lord, the word is only used of him as it might be used of an earthly lord. However high the conception of his moral character and spiritual qualifications, he is man and man only.”

CHAPTER XI

THE NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

THERE is a sense in which it can be said that the New Testament does not possess an Apocrypha. There is no well-defined collection of writings, like the Old Testament Apocrypha proper, which have been recognised at any time as Scripture by the general consent of the Church. The New Testament Apocryphal writings correspond more nearly to the wider Apocrypha of the Old Testament, and comprise a number of documents of very varying value, which claim to have originated from the Apostolic age, and some of which were held in high esteem by the Christian Church.

The reason *why there is no New Testament Apocrypha* in the technical sense of the word can easily be explained. The Old Testament Apocrypha is the result of the existence of two different Canons of the Old Testament, both of which won for themselves wide recognition. In the case of the New Testament this phenomenon does not exist. There have been, of course, different Canons in different sections of the Church.

The Æthiopic Canon, for instance, contains eight books which are not found in our New Testament. The Canon of the Greek Church omits the Book of Revelation, and includes some documents which are not recognised elsewhere. The Syrian Canon omitted four of the Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse. The Muratorian Fragment (A.D. 170) did not include Hebrews, James, or II. Peter, but recognised the Apocalypse of Peter. Individual Fathers, too, in the third and fourth centuries, showed their own particular preferences by their acceptance or rejection of different books. But there never was a time, at least after the third century, when two rival Canons divided Christendom.

At one period it seemed as if such a division of opinion were inevitable. At the close of the second century we find different Canons of the New Testament in the Eastern and Western divisions of the Church. Both Canons included the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles of Paul, I. John, I. Peter, and the Apocalypse. The Eastern Canon added to this list Hebrews and James, the Western II. and III. John, and Jude. Neither Canon included II. Peter. Now, if this cleavage of opinion had been maintained, the result would have been that a New Testament Apocrypha would have been created, consisting of the differentia between the two Canons, viz. Hebrews, James, II. and III. John, and Jude, to which doubtless II. Peter would have been

afterwards added. The difference, however, was not perpetuated. The two Canons coalesced, with the result that our present New Testament was produced.

The Apocryphal Writings.—But though we have no Apocrypha in the technical sense of the term, we have a large number of documents which correspond to the wider Apocrypha of the Old Testament. They may be classified as follows :—

(1) *Books which were at one time used as Scripture* in the Church. This class forms the nearest approach to a New Testament Apocrypha proper. The New Testament, like the Old, was only gradually collected together. The process took, at any rate, three centuries. During this period, several books which did not finally get into the Canon were used in public worship. Some of them are actually found appended to the two earliest and most valuable MSS. of the New Testament. The most important documents belonging to this class are the Epistle of Clement, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas. The Gospel and Apocalypse of Peter were also used in church, but for purposes of convenience they will be dealt with in another class.

(2) *Apocryphal Gospels.* We possess a large number of Apocryphal Gospels of varying importance. They may be classified as follows : (a) *Gospels which have some claim to be regarded as genuine and authentic.* The only

Gospel which is generally admitted into this class is the Gospel according to the Hebrews. (*b*) *Heretical Gospels*, i.e. Gospels which have been altered and amended to suit the views of some heretical sect. The most important Gospels of this kind are: the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel according to the Egyptians, and the Gospel of the Ebionites. (*c*) The *Logia* documents, or the newly discovered "Sayings of Jesus," to use the better known description, must be put in a class by themselves, because at present we do not possess sufficient data for determining their value. (*d*) *The Legendary Gospels*, all of which are full of romantic stories about Jesus which are universally regarded as fictitious. These Gospels may be divided into the following groups: (1) Those which relate to the Virgin Birth and Infancy of Jesus. The most important document of this class is the Protevangelium of James, which is the source from which several of the other Gospels of this species, viz. the Gospel of the Pseudo-Matthew, and the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, were derived. Under this heading we may also conveniently place the History of Joseph the Carpenter, and the Assumption of Mary. (2) Those which deal with the boyhood of Jesus. The chief place in this class must be given to the Gospel of Thomas. (3) Gospels which relate to Pilate. The most important of these is the Gospel of Nicodemus.

(3) *Apocryphal Acts*. We also possess a considerable

number of documents written in imitation of the Acts of the Apostles, and claiming to give a history of the work of different Apostles after the Ascension of Jesus. The most important of these are: the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the Acts of Thomas, the Acts of Andrew, the Acts of John, the Acts of Peter, the Acts of Peter and Paul.

(4) Very few *Apocryphal Epistles* have survived. The most important of these are: the Correspondence between Jesus and Abgarus, the Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans, and the Correspondence between Paul and Seneca.

(5) The most valuable and best known of the *Apocryphal Apocalypses* is the Apocalypse of Peter, a large fragment of which has been recently discovered. There are others, e.g. the Apocalypses of John and Paul, but they are of slight importance.

Value of the New Testament Apocrypha.—The New Testament Apocrypha are not so important for us to-day as the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. They have a greater value for the student of Church history and Christian doctrine than for the student of the New Testament. They illustrate, for instance, the rise of the heretical sects and their treatment of Scripture, the growth of Mariolatry, the prevalence of the Doketic explanation of Christ, the development of superstition, &c. Still they are not without some value even for

New Testament work. (*a*) The fragments of the Gospel to the Hebrews, for instance, are now generally regarded as containing authentic material for the life of Christ. So, too, the fragment of the Gospel of Peter, when the heretical elements in it have been discounted, appears to contain genuine tradition which can be judiciously turned to account. (*b*) The Logia throw some light on the synoptic problem, since they bear witness to the existence of separate collections of sayings of Jesus similar to the document which must have been used by Matthew and Luke in the writing of their Gospels. (*c*) The earlier documents are valuable for the purposes of textual criticism, since they preserve certain early readings. (*d*) The Apocryphal books also at times assist us in the work of exegesis, since they give the interpretation placed upon certain passages of the New Testament in early times. (*e*) The Legendary Gospels act as a foil to show the sobriety of the narratives in the Canonical Gospels.

CHAPTER XII

NON-CANONICAL BOOKS WHICH WERE USED AS SCRIPTURE BY THE EARLY CHURCH

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF CLEMENT

THAT the first Epistle of Clement was used in public worship is clearly proved by two statements of Eusebius (330) in his Ecclesiastical History. The first statement is found in an excerpt from a letter of Dionysius of Corinth (160-180) to Soter, Bishop of Rome. In reply to Soter, Dionysius says: "To-day has been the Lord's day, and we have read your Epistle. Whenever we read it, we shall have our minds stored with counsel, as we do when we read the letter which was written to us in former times by Clement" (Book iv. 23). It was not only in Corinth, however, that this Epistle was used in worship, for in his second statement (Book iii. 16) Eusebius says: "This Epistle we know to have been publicly read for the common benefit in most of the churches both in former times and in our own day." The custom of using the Epistle in church seems to have continued for some time after Eusebius, for at the commencement of the

fifth century Jerome tells us that "it was still read publicly in some places."

The Character of the Epistle.—The Epistle was written in the name of the Church at Rome to the Church at Corinth. "The Church of God sojourning in Rome" (so runs the opening verse) "to the Church of God sojourning in Corinth." The occasion of its composition was the outbreak "of an unholy and detestable sedition" which threatened to destroy the unity of the Corinthian Church. The Church at Corinth seems never to have been able to shake off its unenviable reputation for party divisions and factions, which from the earliest times, as we know from the Epistles of St. Paul, marred its harmony and hindered its development. What particular form the dispute took on this occasion, cannot be definitely determined. It raged round the heads of some of the presbyters, as the officers of the Church were called, but on what ground it is impossible to tell. It may have been a purely personal quarrel: possibly the Church had grown tired of its officers. Or it may have been the birth-pangs which attended the rise of a new system of government in the Church. The old order of things, as we know, was beginning to pass away, and a new method of government, which finally placed each Church under the control of a single bishop, was beginning to develop, and it may be that the strife at Corinth was in some way connected with

this change. Whatever its source, the controversy was absolutely fatal to the peace of the Church, and stultified its influence. And so the Church at Rome, for the first time in history, intervened with this letter of friendly counsel and wise advice. The Epistle may be described, therefore, as a tract in favour of unity and charity, and it must have been largely due to its character that it obtained its position among the “sacred writings” which were used in the worship of the Church.

Authorship and Date.—The Epistle is anonymous, and affords no hint as to the identity of its author. Tradition from the time of Dionysius of Corinth is unanimous in ascribing it to Clement of Rome. Who was this Clement? Many of the ancient Fathers identify him with the Clement mentioned by Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians (chap. iv. 3). This theory, however, seems to be very improbable. Though Clement mentions Paul in the Epistle, he never alludes to any personal connection with him, and neither in contents or style does the Epistle show the slightest trace of Pauline influence. The name Clement was very common, and no two Clements ought to be identified on the mere ground that they bore the same name. A second attempt to identify Clement has been made in modern times. We know that a certain Flavius Clemens, a consul and relative of the Emperor Domitian, was sentenced to death for atheism [*i.e.* for being a Christian]

during the time of the persecution. A later writing ascribed to Clement of Rome (though not really his) states that he was of regal extraction. Putting these two facts together, many scholars have concluded that the bishop and the martyr were one and the same person. The fatal objection to this hypothesis, however, is the fact that there is absolutely no reference in Christian literature or tradition to the martyrdom of Clement of Rome: on the contrary, Eusebius distinctly asserts that he died a natural death in the third year of Trajan's reign. We are driven, therefore, to the conclusion that nothing can be ascertained with regard to Clement of Rome, except that he was a distinguished leader in the Roman Church, and in later days was dignified with the title of Bishop. The date of the Epistle is almost unanimously placed in A.D. 95–96.

Value of the Epistle.—It cannot be said that the Epistle of Clement possesses a very great intrinsic value of its own. The style is diffuse and tedious, and the writer's ideas rarely rise above the commonplace. The theology is conventional, and shows but little appreciation of the great truths which constitute the essence of the teaching of St. Paul. It is not easy at first sight to explain the attraction which the Epistle had for the early Church. Its popularity was probably due: (1) to its plain and simple message; (2) the fact that its exhortation to unity was constantly needed; (3) its antiquity,

for it was more ancient than some of the later books of the New Testament ; (4) its Roman origin, which in later times, when the Roman Church was claiming the supremacy, naturally commended it. To-day no one would put in a plea for its recognition as Scripture, yet from a historical point of view the Epistle has no little interest for us. (a) It is probably the earliest Christian document outside the New Testament. (b) It gives us a very good conception of the Christian belief at the time, and proves conclusively that the teaching of St. Paul had not yet been assimilated by the Church. (c) It contains an explicit reference to Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, and gives several quotations from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and so proves that these books were widely circulated and recognised before the close of the first century.

THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES

The Didache or Teaching of the Apostles was discovered in 1873 by Bryennius, an ecclesiastic of the Greek Church, in the Jerusalem Convent at Constantinople, and published ten years later. We have abundant evidence that the book held a very high place in the regard of the early Church. Clement of Alexandria quotes it as Scripture. It is mentioned in Athanasius' list of sacred writings, where it follows immediately after Judith

and Tobit. In Eusebius' classification of the books which claimed recognition in the Canon, it is ranked in the class of "the rejected."

Character and Contents.—The book falls into two parts, which are only loosely connected together. The first part, known as "The Two Ways," is an ethical tract setting forth the contrast between the paths of righteousness and unrighteousness, "the way of life" and "the way of death." It gives us a clear exposition of the general moral teaching of the early Church. Christians are urged to follow the rule of forgiveness and charity as laid down by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, and warned against the sins forbidden in the Decalogue and in the teaching of Jesus and Paul. The second part of the book deals with the institutions of the Church. It lays down regulations for the rite of Baptism and the celebration of the Agape. It gives the criteria by which the true teacher can be distinguished from the false, and offers advice with regard to fasting and the election of ministers.

Date of the Didache.—There is a considerable divergence of opinion with regard to the date of the Didache. Some scholars place it as early as A.D. 70 or 80. Harnack thinks that it did not assume its present form till between 130 and 160. Harnack's conclusions are based upon the assumption that the author of the Didache used the Epistle of Barnabas, which, according to him,

was written about 130. This assumption, however, is not demonstrable. The undoubted relation between the two books can be explained in other ways. The Didache bears on its face clear tokens of an early date. The Lord's Supper, for instance, is still part of the Agape ; the authority of the bishop has not yet been established ; the order of prophets occupies the highest rank in the Church. The book was evidently written during a state of transition, when the simple organisation of the New Testament was beginning to pass over into the episcopal form of government which was almost universally adopted before the middle of the second century. The Didache, therefore, seems to stand half-way between the Epistles of St. Paul and the Letters of Ignatius (A.D. 117). We shall not be far wrong if we date it about A.D. 100, though it may have been written a decade or two earlier.

The Value of the Didache.—The Didache is a treatise of very great importance from a historical point of view. (*a*) It gives us a graphic picture of the ethical teaching of the early Church. There can be little doubt that it was originally composed as a manual of instruction for catechumens before Baptism, and represents, therefore, the teaching which was given to new converts before their admission to the Church. It may thus be said to preserve the opinion of the Church in the last decades of the first century with regard to the essential truths of

the Christian religion. (2) It bridges over the gap between the New Testament and Patristic literature, and shows us how the organisation and simple rites of the Apostolic Church were beginning to pass into the elaborate system which they assumed in later time. The reference to Baptism, for instance, is very interesting, because it reveals to us the way in which the transition from immersion to aspersion took place. "Baptize" (so runs the regulation of the Didache) "in running water: but if running water is not available, use other water. If you cannot baptize in cold water, baptize in warm. If neither is possible, pour water over the head [of the candidate] thrice in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." (3) It gives us an interesting description of the Agape and Lord's Supper. The most remarkable feature about the statement is that, in the prayers which are given for use on the occasion of the celebration of the Sacrament, there is no allusion at all to the redemptive value of the death of Christ. (4) It proves conclusively that Lightfoot and Hatch were right in maintaining that episcopacy was not the earliest form of Church government, but only originated in the second century. The ministry to which the greatest importance was attached at first was that of the prophets. In the Didache the influence of the prophets is beginning to wane, and there are already signs that their place is beginning to be taken by the bishops.

To the student of the New Testament, therefore, who is anxious to form some conception of the condition of the Church at the close of the Apostolic age, the Didache is a document of supreme value.

THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS

The high importance which was attached to the Epistle of Barnabas in early times is proved by the following facts: it is found in one of the earliest and most valuable MSS. of the New Testament—the Sinaitic—where it follows immediately after the Book of Revelation; Clement of Alexandria (200) frequently quotes it, and ascribes it to the Apostle Barnabas; Origen (250) describes it as the “Catholic Epistle of Barnabas,” and cites it as Scripture.

Contents.—The Epistle seems to be addressed, not to the members of a particular congregation, but to the Church as a whole. Its aim and purpose are defined by its author thus: “I write unto you that along with your faith ye might have perfect knowledge” (*gnosis*). The problem with which the book deals is one which is familiar to readers of the New Testament, and which forms the theme of some of the Epistles of Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews, viz. What attitude ought the Church to adopt towards the Jewish Law? Is the legal code of the Old Testament

binding upon Christians? The writer, who is extremely anti-Judaistic, takes up a very radical position, which he attempts to substantiate by some extremely novel arguments. (1) He shows that the attacks which the prophets made upon the sacrificial and ceremonial system prove that the Jewish code could not, as ordinarily interpreted, be of Divine origin. (2) As a matter of fact, the Jews had definitely rejected the covenant which God had offered to Moses. When Moses broke the tables of stone, it meant that Israel had refused the covenant. (3) The Old Testament, therefore, is not a Jewish but a Christian book, and only the Christian can properly interpret it. (4) The true interpretation of the book cannot be found by taking the statements literally. We must look below the surface. The Old Testament is an allegory, and it is only when it is treated as an allegory that it yields its true meaning. When we read it aright, we find that, far from being anti-Christian, it proclaims the essential truths of the Christian faith. (5) The writer then proceeds to work out his principle, and gives us some of the most interesting illustrations of the method of allegorical interpretation found in the literature of the Church. Two examples may be given. (a) The writer cites inaccurately the statement of Genesis with regard to the 318 servants of Abraham, and asks, Why 318? There must be a mystical explanation, he says, lying

behind the number. The Greek equivalent for the number 318 is formed of the letters TIH. Now T obviously represents the Cross, and IH are the first two letters of the word Jesus (it should be noted that, in Greek, H is the form used to denote capital E long). The 318, therefore, typifies the death of Christ upon the Cross. (b) Equally remarkable is the writer's explanation of forbidden foods. "Moses spoke with a mystical reference. 'Neither shalt thou eat,' says he, 'the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the kite, nor the raven.' Thou shalt not join thyself, he means, to such men as know not how to procure food for themselves by labour and sweat, but seize on that of others in their iniquity."

Author and Date.—The traditional view which ascribes the book to the Apostle Barnabas is very improbable, and has now been almost universally rejected. The main grounds for the rejection are: (a) The mistakes which the writer makes in describing Jewish ritual would be incomprehensible if the Epistle were written by a Levite like Barnabas. (b) The rabid anti-Judaism of the Epistle is quite foreign to the spirit of Barnabas—at least, if the picture of him which is drawn by the writer of Acts is true. (c) The Epistle exhibits none of the characteristics which we should naturally expect to find in a book written by the Barnabas of Acts.

There is a great deal of controversy amongst scholars with regard to the date of the Epistle. Many place it

in the decade following the destruction of Jerusalem. Others (among them Harnack) date it about 130. The present writer is inclined to accept the latter view, on the following grounds : (a) There is no direct reference to or connection with the Apostolic age in the Epistle. Its whole tone seems to breathe the spirit of the second century rather than the first. (b) The writer makes a definite quotation from Matthew, which he introduces by the formula, "it is written," implying that he regarded the source from which the citation was taken as Scripture. Matthew could scarcely have been quoted as Scripture before the second century. (c) The writer's statement in chap. xvi., "They who pulled down the Temple shall built it up," seems to refer to the rebuilding of the Temple, which took place in 130.

Value of the Epistle.—The chief value of the Epistle for us to-day lies in : (a) The fact that it proves that the Old Testament constituted a serious problem in the minds of the early Christians. If the Old Testament was divinely inspired, why should not its injunctions still be enforced? The Epistle gives us one solution of the problem—a solution which in different forms has always been popular in the Church. (b) The illustrations which it gives of the application of the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture—a method which obtained great vogue in the Church, and some traces of which are found in the Epistles of St. Paul.

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

No book outside the New Testament was more popular in the ancient Church than the Shepherd of Hermas. It is found in the famous Codex Sinaiticus at the close of the New Testament, and in several other MSS. besides. Irenæus (180) quotes it as Scripture. Origen (250) regards it as "divinely inspired." Eusebius (330), though he refuses to recognise it as canonical, says that "it was publicly read in churches," and "deemed most necessary for those who have need of elementary instruction."

Contents.—The book falls into three divisions, consisting respectively of (*a*) visions, (*b*) commandments, (*c*) parables. (*a*) In the first part Hermas relates *five visions* which came to him at different times. The visions are of different kinds. The first, for instance, the vision of Rhoda, his former mistress, is intended to impress upon Hermas the sinfulness of unchaste thoughts. In another, an old woman, who represents the Church, appears to Hermas and reproaches him for his failure to restrain his wife and children from folly and sin. The reason why the Church was portrayed as an *old* woman is explained thus: "She was created first of all, and for her sake the world was made." In the last vision Hermas sees "a man of glorious aspect dressed like a shepherd," who teaches him the commandments and parables which form the remaining

part of the book. It is from this vision that the book gets its name. (b) The *commandments* contain an interesting epitome of the ethical teaching of the Church of the second century. They emphasise the following virtues and graces of the Christian life: belief in God, simplicity of life, truthfulness, chastity, forbearance, the fear of God, temperance, cheerful trust in God, confidence in prayer, the necessity of discerning between true and false prophets, &c. (c) The third part of the book consists of a number of disconnected *parables* and *similitudes* intended to enforce the main teaching of the book. The parable of the vine and the elm, for instance, is used to enforce the lesson that the rich man is helped by the prayers of the poor. The fact that in winter all trees look alike, and the living cannot be distinguished from the dead, is used to show the impossibility of judging the real character of men in this life.

Authorship and Date.—Some of the Patristic writers thought that the book was written by the Hermas mentioned by Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (xvi. 14). This view, however, is quite impossible, and finds no support in modern times. There is a much more probable account of the origin of the book in the Muratorian Fragment (about 170): “The Shepherd was written very recently in our times by Hermas during the bishopric of his brother Pius.” This would make the date about 140. There is one great objection to this theory:

in the second vision Hermas mentions a man named Clement, who is generally identified with Clement of Rome. Clement of Rome could not have been living, as the passage implies he was, at as late a date as 140. Hence many modern scholars reject the statement of the Muratorian Fragment, and date the book about 100. Probably the best solution of the difficulty is to suppose, with Harnack, that the book in its present form was written about 140, but that it embodies elements of a much earlier origin, some of which may go back to the commencement of the century.

Value of the Book.—The Shepherd of Hermas has been very aptly called the “Pilgrim’s Progress” of the early Church. Like the great allegory of Bunyan, it tries to enforce religious truth by visions and illustrations and parables. The book is valuable for us because: (a) It shows the literary devices to which early teachers resorted in order to make their teaching easy to understand. (b) It contains an excellent manual of the ethical teaching which was in vogue in the Church about the middle of the second century. (c) Like all the other literature of the period, it proves the insignificant influence which the theology of Paul had as yet exerted over the thought of the Church. Nothing is more remarkable in early Christian literature than the almost complete eclipse of Paul. Paulinism never held the place in early theology which has been assigned to it in Protestantism.

CHAPTER XIII

THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS

THE Apocryphal Gospels, as we have seen, may be divided into three classes: (1) Those which possibly preserve elements of genuine tradition. (2) Heretical Gospels, *i.e.* Gospels in which the narrative has been purposely altered to suit the tenets of some heretical sect. (3) Legendary Gospels, which embroider the account of the beginning and end of Christ's life with fictitious stories.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE HEBREWS

The only Gospel which has any serious claim to be regarded as genuine and reliable is the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Unfortunately, however, we only possess a few fragments of it, culled from the writings of various Fathers of the Church. The most important and interesting of these are:—

(a) Two references to the Baptism of Jesus. “Lo, the mother of the Lord and his brethren said to him, John the Baptist is baptizing for the remission of sins;

let us go and be baptized by him. But he said, What sin have I committed that I should go and be baptized by him, unless perchance this very word which I have spoken is a sin of ignorance."

"Now it came to pass, when the Lord had come up out of the water, the Holy Spirit with full stream came down and rested upon him and said to him, My son, in all the prophets I was waiting for thee, that thou shouldest come and I might rest in thee, for thou art my rest. Thou art my first-born son, who reignest for ever."

(b) An extract containing an account of the visit of the rich young man to Christ, which proceeds upon the lines of Matt. xix. 16-22, but adds the following words :—

"But the rich man began to scratch his head, and it did not please him. And the Lord said to him, How sayest thou, I have fulfilled the law and the prophets, since it is written in the law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, and lo! many of thy brethren, sons of Abraham, are clothed in filth, dying of hunger, and thy home is full of many goods and nothing at all goes out to them."

(c) A fragment recording the appearance of Jesus to James after the Resurrection :—

"Now the Lord, when he had given the cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to

him. For James had taken an oath that he would not eat bread from that hour on which he had drunk the cup of the Lord till he saw him rising from the dead. [And the Lord said] Bring a table and bread. And he took the bread, and blessed and brake, and afterwards gave it to James the Just, and said to him, My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man has risen from that sleep."

(d) The following post-Resurrection utterance of Jesus :—

"Take hold, handle me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit."

(e) A few sayings of Jesus :—

"He that wonders shall reign and he that reigns shall rest."

"Never be joyful except when ye shall look upon your brother in love."

Origin of the Gospel.—The question of the origin of the Gospel to the Hebrews has been a matter of keen debate amongst scholars in recent times. There are several views. (1) Some of the ancient Fathers regarded the Gospel as the original of our Matthew. Jerome, for instance, says, "Vocatur a plerisque Matthæi authenticum." Judging from the fragments which have been preserved, this view seems quite untenable, as they bear very little relation to our Gospel of Matthew. (2) For the same reason the view of some modern scholars, that

the Gospel to the Hebrews was a version of our Matthew, made in the interest of Jewish Christians, seems equally out of the question. (3) The Gospel has been identified with the original Logia, or Collection of the Sayings of Jesus, which was one of the main sources out of which our Gospels of Matthew and Luke were composed. This view, however, is a pure hypothesis, and does not seem to rest on any substantial basis. (4) The theory which seems to be most in favour with critics to-day maintains that the Gospel is an independent version of the Gospel narrative based on the same sources which underlie our Synoptics. It was originally written in Aramaic, and was composed to suit the needs of the Jewish Christian congregations of Palestine. It never secured much of a circulation outside Palestine, and as Palestinian Christianity sank into comparative insignificance, the Gospel to the Hebrews attracted little attention, and gradually fell into disfavour.

Date and Value of the Gospel.—There is a marked tendency amongst modern scholars to attach a very early date to the Gospel. Harnack, for instance, places it between A.D. 65 and 100, thus making it coeval with our Synoptics and earlier than the Fourth Gospel. This conclusion is largely based upon the fact that the Gospel is definitely mentioned by Hegesippus (170) and quoted by Ignatius (115). If Harnack is right, then the fragments of the Gospel become exceedingly valuable, and must be

taken into consideration in every attempt to construct a life of Christ. The fragments which deal with the Baptism and Resurrection of Jesus are particularly important.

HERETICAL GOSPELS

I. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. PETER

The most interesting of all the heretical Gospels is that ascribed to Peter, a large fragment of which was recently discovered by the French Archaeological Mission, in a tomb at Akmîm (Pentapolis), in Upper Egypt, and published in 1892. The fragment, unfortunately, only covers the last scenes in the life of Christ. It begins with the trial before Pilate, and ends with the visit of the women to the empty tomb on Easter morning.

Character of the Gospel.—The Gospel of Peter is a version of the life of Christ written in the interest of the Doketic heresy. The Doketists held a peculiar theory with regard to Christ. They thought that Divinity and humanity could not co-exist in one person, and that the humanity was therefore not real, but merely apparent. A God could not be born or suffer hunger or be put to death. The Divine Christ, therefore, descended into a human form after the Baptism and ascended into heaven again before the Crucifixion. In order to substantiate this view there were many points in the Gospel narrative

which needed amendment, and the Gospel of Peter affords us some interesting illustrations of the freedom with which heretics treated the Gospel story. The most startling alteration is found in the treatment of the cry of Christ upon the Cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This, of course, is a flat contradiction to the Doketic position, and so the words are changed into "My power, my power, thou hast forsaken me"—an allusion to the departure of the Divine Christ before the Crucifixion. In the account of the Crucifixion, too, the statement is made that Jesus "held his peace, as having no pain." This is another feature of the Doketic position. The body in which the Divine Christ dwelt is regarded as incapable of suffering. Another marked characteristic of the Gospel is the antipathy which it exhibits towards the Jews. The whole responsibility for the Crucifixion is placed upon their shoulders. Pilate is completely exonerated from any share in the blame. After the Crucifixion they are represented as coming to their senses and lamenting their crime. "Then the Jews . . . began to lament and say, Woe for our sins: for the judgment and the end of Jerusalem hath drawn nigh." The Gospel contains some expansions of the ordinary narrative, which are evidently due to legendary accretion. The most famous is the account which it gives of the actual Resurrection of Jesus :—

"And in the night in which the Lord's day was

drawing on, as the soldiers kept watch two by two on guard, there was a great voice from heaven: and they saw the heavens opened and two men descending thence with a great light and approaching the tomb. And that stone which was put at the door rolled away of itself and departed to one side, and both the young men entered in. When, therefore, the soldiers saw it, they awakened the centurions and the elders, for they too were hard by keeping watch. And as they declared what things they had seen, again they see coming forth from the tomb three men, and two supporting the one, and a Cross following them. And of the two the head reached unto the heaven, but the head of him that was led by them overpassed the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens saying, Hast thou preached to them that sleep? And an answer was heard from the Cross, Yea."

The last sentence is particularly interesting, as it illustrates the statements in 1 Pet. iii. 19, iv. 6, which assert that the Gospel was preached to "the spirits in prison."

Date of the Gospel of Peter.—Harnack regards the Gospel as a very early production, dating it between 110 and 130. The grounds upon which he arrives at this conclusion are: (*a*) The Gospel was used by Justin Martyr (150). (*b*) The account of the Resurrection implies an early date, because the scene of Christ's

appearance to the disciples is laid in Galilee and not in Jerusalem. Harnack attaches a great deal of value to the Gospel, and looks upon it as a source "of first importance," after our canonical Gospels. Though Harnack's date has many supporters, a large number of scholars think that we must place the Gospel later, between 150 and 170, since its use by Justin Martyr cannot be proved.

II. OTHER HERETICAL GOSPELS

The **Gospel of the Ebionites** has often been identified with the Gospel according to the Hebrews on the strength of certain statements in Jerome and Epiphanius, who certainly confused the two narratives. Harnack, however, has clearly shown that the Gospel of the Ebionites is quite a distinct production. Only a few fragments of it remain. They may be found in Westcott's "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," pp. 471-473. The fragments prove : (1) That the Gospel was originally ascribed to Matthew, since Matthew is personally addressed in the second person by Jesus. "Thee, Matthew, I called, as thou wert sitting at the receipt of custom." (2) That the Gospel was written in the interest of a sect which held vegetarian principles. In the account of John the Baptist, it is said that his food consisted of wild honey and honey-cakes—the

latter term being substituted for the “locusts” of the Gospel narrative. The change is effected by the alteration of a couple of letters, the Greek word for locusts being *akridas* and for honey-cakes *egkridas*. For the same reason the statement of Luke xxii. 15, “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover,” is changed into an interrogative: “Have I desired to eat this flesh, the Passover, with you?” The *date* of the Gospel is placed by Harnack between 180 and 200.

The Gospel according to the Egyptians.—Harnack regards this Gospel as a document of the highest value. He thinks that it was originally written, as a counterblast to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, for the use of Gentile Christians. Unfortunately we have only two authenticated excerpts from it: (a) A sentence preserved in Epiphanius, which attributes to Christ the saying, to which so much importance was attached by the author of the Sabellian heresy, that “one and the same Being was alike Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” (b) An important extract preserved in Clement of Alexandria:—

“When Salome asked, How long will death prevail? the Lord said, As long as ye women bear children: for I have come to destroy the functions of women. And Salome said to him, Did I well, then, in not bearing children? And the Lord answered and said, Eat of every herb, but do not eat of that which is bitter. And

when Salome asked when the things would be known about which she had inquired, the Lord said, When ye have trampled upon the garment of shame, and when the two shall be one and the male with the female neither male nor female."

This quotation shows that the Gospel was written in the interest of a sect which regarded marriage as a sin. In spite of the fact that these two quotations constitute our only authenticated information with regard to the contents of the Gospel, Harnack thinks that it is possible to extend our knowledge, and claims for it certain other anonymous quotations which are found elsewhere. In the so-called Second Epistle of Clement of Rome, which is really a homily (ascribed by Harnack to Bishop Soter of Rome, about 170), there are a number of citations, giving sayings of Jesus, some of which cannot be traced back to any known source. One of them corresponds in many particulars to the authenticated fragment from the Gospel according to the Egyptians quoted above. Upon the basis of the identity of these two excerpts Harnack argues that (1) all the other quotations come from the same source, (2) and the fact that the Gospel is so largely drawn upon by a Roman bishop proves the exalted position which it held in the estimation of the Church. Harnack's arguments, however, are not conclusive. The quotation in II. Clement, upon which he relies for

the identification, has many remarkable dissimilarities from the authenticated fragment, which must make us pause before we jump to the conclusion that they come from the same source ; and even if the identity of the two could be maintained, there would still be no proof that the other citations in II. Clement were taken from the same Gospel. On the whole, it must be said that Harnack's position is "not proven." His attempt to rehabilitate the Gospel to the Egyptians cannot be regarded as successful. The most probable view is still that of the ancient Fathers, who describe it as a heretical Gospel written in the interests of the Sabellians and Encratites. Harnack's date, too, seems far too early. He places it in the reign of Trajan, certainly earlier than 130. The Gospel could scarcely have originated, however, before 150.

THE NEWLY-DISCOVERED "SAYINGS OF JESUS"

In 1897 a papyrus fragment was discovered, in the mounds of Oxyrhynchus, an Egyptian town on the edge of the Libyan desert 120 miles south of Cairo, containing seven or eight "Sayings of Jesus."

The most important of these "Sayings" are as follows :
"Jesus saith, Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God ; and except ye make the Sabbath a real Sabbath ye shall not see the Father."

“Jesus saith, I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart.”

“Jesus saith, Wherever there are (two), they are not without God, and wherever there is one alone, I say, I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I.”

“Jesus saith, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country, neither doth a physician work cures upon them that know him.”

In 1904 further excavations at Oxyrhynchus brought to light another papyrus leaf with five more “Sayings,” the most interesting of which are the following:—

“Jesus saith, Let not him who seeks cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the kingdom, and having the kingdom he shall rest.”

“Jesus saith, Ye ask, Who are those that draw us to the kingdom if the kingdom is in heaven? The fowls of the air, and all beasts that are under the earth, and the fishes of the sea, these are they which draw you, and the kingdom of heaven is within you, and whosoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive, therefore, to know yourselves and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the Father, and ye shall know . . .”

"Jesus saith, Everything that is not before thy face and that which is hidden from thee shall be revealed to thee, for there is nothing hidden which shall not be made manifest, nor buried which shall not be raised."

These "Sayings" constitute a very interesting problem in criticism, which cannot at present be said to have found a satisfactory solution. It is easier to ask the questions which naturally come into the mind when we read them—*e.g.* Whence did they originate and what is their value?—than it is to supply an answer. We shall probably have to wait for other "finds" before we obtain the clue which will enable us to give a sure explanation of the "Sayings." Upon one point, however, there seems to be a general agreement amongst scholars, viz. that the "Sayings" belong to a very early date. A.D. 140 is given as the latest possible time at which they could have come into existence, and they may possibly be considerably earlier than that; some scholars suppose that they go back to the first century. Upon the question of *the origin of the "Sayings"* there is the utmost divergence of opinion amongst scholars. Some suppose that they are extracts from one of the Apocryphal Gospels. Harnack, for instance, thinks that they are excerpts from the Gospel of the Egyptians—a theory which is based upon his more than doubtful reconstruction of the Gospel in question. Others suggest the Gospel to the Hebrews or the Gospel of Thomas as

the source from which they were taken. Others again, regard them as a cento of quotations taken not from a single Gospel but from several. It is impossible to make out a convincing case for any of these theories. There are no Gospels with which we are familiar which seem altogether to suit the character of the "Sayings." On the whole, opinion seems to be coming round to the view that the papyri represent an independent collection of the sayings of Jesus of very early origin. There is nothing to show that the collection was made in the interests of any heresy or schism in the Church. We seem to find in the papyri an illustration and example of the Logia, or collections of the sayings of Jesus, which we know must have been the earliest form, or one of the earliest forms, in which the Christian tradition took shape. To what extent the "Sayings" of the papyri preserve authentic utterances of Jesus cannot be determined. As far as our present fragments are concerned, there seems to be no motive which explains the invention of "the sayings," though of course, if we had larger data to go upon, perhaps the key to the riddle might be found. If further discoveries do not reveal the hand of the heretic, or suggest a clue which can account for the manufacture of the "Sayings," we shall be warranted in supposing that the collection preserves genuine elements of tradition, and so is a document which the student of the Gospels is bound to take into account.

CHAPTER XIV

THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS (*continued*)

THE LEGENDARY GOSPELS

WE possess some twenty-two documents — most of them belonging to a late date—which expand certain parts of the history of Christ's life by the addition of legendary embellishments. They may be divided into three classes : (a) Those which deal with the history of Joseph and Mary before the birth of Jesus. (b) Those which deal with the infancy and boyhood of Jesus. (c) Those which relate to the history of Pilate.

I. THE GOSPELS OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

1. The most important of the first class of legendary Gospels is the book known as the **Protevangelium of James**. This title does not appear in the document itself, but was given to it by Postel, who published the modern version of it in Latin in 1552. The book is extant in Greek, Syriac, and Coptic versions, and we possess no less than fifty MSS. of it altogether. The book may be divided into three parts : (a) The story of Mary before the birth of Jesus. Mary is the daughter

of Joachim and Anna, who were childless till late in life. They vowed that, if God would give them a child, they would dedicate it to His service. When Mary was three years old, they took her to the Temple, and placed her in the charge of the priests. When she reached the age of twelve, the priests, fearing the responsibility of keeping a marriageable girl in the Temple, resolved to place her in the charge of a widower. Joseph is miraculously chosen for the task, and Mary is placed in his keeping. (*b*) The account of the miraculous birth. The document follows in the main the narrative of Luke, though there are some important legendary additions, *e.g.* the ordeal imposed on Joseph and Mary of drinking "the waters of jealousy," the unbelief of Salome, &c. (*c*) The story of Zacharias. At the time of the slaughter of the Innocents, Elizabeth and the child John are miraculously saved by the opening of a mountain, which effectually conceals them from their pursuers. Zacharias, refusing to give information as to their hiding-place, is murdered by command of Herod. The utmost diversity of opinion exists among scholars with regard to the date of the Protevangelium. There are some, *e.g.* Zahn and Krüger, who regard it as a very early document, and place it in the first decade of the second century (100–110). Others go to the opposite extreme, and hold that it belongs to the fourth century. Harnack strikes out a mediating position. He thinks that the Protevangelium

is made up of three separate documents. (1) The story of Mary (which is, properly speaking, the Book of James) was written a little before 250. (2) The account of the birth of Jesus probably belongs to the end of the second century or the commencement of the third. (3) The Book of Zacharias dates from the opening decades of the third century. He agrees, however, with the prevalent opinion, that in its present form the book does not go back beyond 350. The author of the Gospel was evidently a Jewish Christian, as is clearly proved from the interest which he takes in Jewish rites and ceremonies. This, however, does not prevent him from falling at times into serious anachronisms. The narrative does not seem to have been written in the interest of any doctrinal or ecclesiastical theory. There is no evidence to show that the writer advocated the Adoration of the Virgin, though the book certainly bears witness to the increasing sanctity which was attached to her.

2. **The Gospel of the Pseudo-Matthew** is largely based upon the Protevangelium of James, the greater part of which it embodies. It carries the story to a later date, giving an account of the visit to Egypt, and recounting many miraculous incidents in the later boyhood of Jesus. It adds many new legendary elements to the narrative of the Protevangelium. For instance, it describes the adoration paid by the ox and ass to the infant Jesus as He lay in the manger at Bethlehem, and

says that this was the fulfilment of the prophecy, "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib." The Gospel also describes many miraculous events which happened during the flight into Egypt ; how, for instance, lions and leopards adored the child, how a palm bowed its head at the child's command and supplied its fruit to satisfy His mother's need, how when He entered an idol-temple the idols all fell shattered to the ground. The account of the boyhood of Jesus is borrowed from the Gospel of Thomas, with which we shall have to deal later on. Pseudo-Matthew contains more mythical stories, probably, than any other Gospel, and cannot be dated earlier than the fifth century.

3. **The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary** is also a lineal descendant of the Protevangelium. The story of Mary is told almost exactly upon the lines of the Protevangelium, though of course Mary now becomes the central figure of the narrative, and the story ends with the birth of Christ. There are some embellishments in the narrative, *e.g.* angelic visitations to Mary are of daily occurrence during her sojourn in the Temple. The Gospel of the Nativity can scarcely be earlier than the fifth century. It had a wide circulation, and exercised an important influence in mediæval times —especially upon art and theology.

4. **The History of Joseph the Carpenter.**—This Gospel, which is preserved in Arabic and Coptic, relates

the story of the life of Joseph. The narrative is put into the mouth of Jesus, who is represented as telling it to the disciples on the Mount of Olives just before the Crucifixion. The first part of the story follows the Protevangelium, but carries the history on to the death of Joseph, who was about ninety years old when Jesus was born, and lived to the age of a hundred and eleven. Full particulars are given of various incidents connected with Joseph's death, *e.g.* his confession of sin and his conflict with devils, the miraculous preservation of his body from corruption, &c. It seems probable that the Gospel was composed in Egypt, possibly in the fifth century, to celebrate the Festival of Joseph's death.

5. Another document which may be conveniently placed under the class of Apocrypha, though it does not deal specifically with the Virgin Birth, is the little work known as the **Assumption of Mary**, or the "Passing of Mary." It is found in several forms, which, though differing in details, are in substantial agreement with regard to the main points of the story. Two years after the Ascension of Jesus, Mary is warned that her end is approaching. The Apostles are miraculously borne on clouds from the ends of the earth to witness her departure. In the full sight of them all, Mary is carried up to heaven without dying. The document probably belongs, as Tischendorf thinks, to the fourth century.

II. THE GOSPELS OF THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

1. The most important of the Gospels which deal with the boyhood of Jesus is the **Gospel of Thomas**, which occupies the same place in this class as the Protevangelium in the former. We possess no less than four different recensions of this book: (*a*) the longer Greek, (*b*) the shorter Greek, (*c*) the Latin, (*d*) the Syriac. All these recensions differ in general contents as well as in detail, but contain enough common matter to prove that they were derived from the same source. The Syriac is not even ascribed to Thomas, and is known simply as the “Syriac Gospel of the Boyhood of our Lord Jesus.” These Gospels purport to describe the life of Jesus from His fifth to His twelfth year. They teem with miraculous events. The boy Jesus restores the dead to life, and also sometimes inflicts death upon those who thwart Him. He makes birds of clay and causes them to fly, miraculously lengthens a short piece of wood to make it equal to a longer, cures His brother James when he had been bitten by a venomous serpent, confounds His teachers by an exhibition of prodigious knowledge, &c. The portrait of Jesus is anything but majestic. The miracles are generally puerile displays of magical power, and lack the ethical motive which is so prominent in the Gospels of the New Testament. It is not easy to determine the

date at which the Gospel of Thomas was written. We know that a Gospel of Thomas circulated in Gnostic circles in the second century. Hippolytus quotes from a Gospel of this name which, he says, was used by the sect of the Naasenes. Quotations in Irenæus (180) seem to imply that the Gospel was in existence at his time. We may be certain, therefore, that a Gospel of Thomas did exist amongst certain sects between 150 and 180. But we cannot be sure that our version of the Gospel is identical with the Gnostic Thomas, for two reasons : (1) A quotation in Hippolytus taken from the Gnostic Thomas is not found in any of our recensions. (2) Our Gospel does not exhibit any traces of heresy. The probability therefore is, as Harnack suggests, that our Gospel is an expurgated edition of the Gnostic Thomas made in the interests of Catholic Christianity. When, and by whom, this version was made, cannot be determined.

2. The only other Gospel of importance belonging to this class is the **Arabic Gospel of the Infancy**. The author states that he derived his materials from "the book of Joseph the high priest, and some have said that he is Caiaphas." The contents of the book fall into three parts : (1) The story of the birth of Jesus, which is derived from the Protevangelium. (2) The story of the flight into Egypt, which has much in common with Pseudo-Matthew. (3) The story of the boyhood of Jesus, which seems to be taken from the Gospel of Thomas.

III. GOSPELS WHICH RELATE TO PILATE

A very large Apocryphal literature has gathered round the person of Pilate. By far the most important work is the so-called **Gospel of Nicodemus**—a book which obtained a remarkable popularity both in ancient and mediæval times. The title is comparatively modern, and is not found till the thirteenth century. The Gospel of Nicodemus contains two documents of very different character and origin : (1) the Acts of Pilate ; (2) the Descent of Jesus into the Underworld. There are several different recensions of both documents in Greek, Latin, and Armenian. A Coptic version also exists.

The first document, the Acts of Pilate, contains an account of the trial of Jesus before Pilate and of the subsequent action taken by the Jewish Sanhedrin. The most important points in the narrative are : (a) The charge of illegitimacy which is brought against Christ by the Jews and successfully rebutted. (b) The defence of Jesus by Nicodemus, who proceeds on the lines of Gamaliel in Acts v. (c) The witness in favour of Christ by those whom He had healed. (d) The action of Joseph of Arimathea, and the persecution which he received from the priests. (e) The testimony to the Ascension of Jesus by the three men of Galilee.

There is a keen controversy amongst scholars as to the date at which the Acts of Pilate was written. There

are some who, like Tischendorf, suppose that it was written very early in the second century, and hold that it is therefore a very valuable document, containing genuine traditions, which may be used to expand the account of the Crucifixion in the Gospels. Others think that the book belongs to the fourth or even fifth century, and is a worthless compilation. The arguments in favour of the latter view, which has the support of Harnack, are: (1) Eusebius never mentions a Christian Gospel of Pilate, though he gives an account of a pagan Acts of Pilate, which was used in public schools to throw derision upon Christianity. (2) The allusions to Acts of Pilate in Justin and Tertullian, which are the basis on which the theory of an early date rests, are inconclusive. It is true that Tertullian does quote some document relating to Pilate, but there is no proof that this document is identical with the Gospel of Nicodemus. On the contrary, Harnack argues with much acumen that the statements of Tertullian were used by the author of Nicodemus as one of his sources. In spite of the fact that Dr. Rendel Harris has recently ingeniously championed the theory of an early date, the case for the genuineness of the Gospel cannot be made out. The probability is that the Gospel was composed as a Christian reply to the heathen Acts of Pilate mentioned by Eusebius.

The second document of the Gospel deals with the

descent of Christ into Hell. Two young men, Charinus and Leucius, who had been raised from the dead, describe the visit of Christ to Hades. They recount how suddenly a great light filled the underworld, how the Lord appeared in glory and, amid the songs of the redeemed, set up the Cross as the symbol of His triumph. The document is interesting because it expands and develops the statements in our First Epistle of Peter and the Apocryphal Gospel of Peter. The account, of course, is purely imaginary, and its sole value consists in the fact that it illustrates the position which this article of the Creed had obtained in the fourth century.

There are five other minor documents dealing with Pilate, some of which are appended to the Gospel of Nicodemus in some MSS., viz. the *Letter of Pilate* to the Emperor Tiberius; the *Report of Pilate*, which purports to be Pilate's official report of the Crucifixion of Christ to the Emperor; the *Paradoses of Pilate* and the *Death of Pilate*, which give an account of Pilate's death; the *Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea*, which describes the part played by Joseph in the Crucifixion. All these are late fabrications, and have no claim to receive consideration from a historical point of view.

CHAPTER XV

APOCRYPHAL ACTS, EPISTLES, ETC.

APOCRYPHAL ACTS

MORE than a dozen different Apocryphal Acts have been preserved, of varying date and value. They all attempt to supplement our canonical Acts by giving an account of the lives and works of the Apostles. Amongst these Apocryphal books, the following are the most important:—

The Acts of Paul and Thecla.—This book records an interesting episode in connection with Paul's visit to Iconium (Acts xiv. 1-7). Stripped of its mythical elements, the story is as follows. During his stay at Iconium, Paul lived in the house of Onesiphorus. In an adjoining mansion there resided a noble Iconian lady, named Thecla, who from her chamber often listened to Paul's preaching. She was fascinated by his message and became a Christian. This so enraged the members of her family and her affianced husband, Thamyris, that they induced the magistrates to cast Paul into prison. Thecla visited Paul in prison secretly,

and when this was discovered, the Apostle was hurriedly expelled from the city. Thecla, however, resisted all the attempts which were made to induce her to renounce her Christian faith, and finally fled to Antioch, where she was arrested and condemned, on the charge of having insulted a pagan priest. She had a marvellous escape from the wild beasts in the amphitheatre, which refused to touch her, and was afterwards released. She subsequently lived under the protection of Queen Tryphæna, whom she was the means of converting to Christianity.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the *Acts of Thecla* was written at a comparatively early date. Tertullian (A.D. 200) states that a presbyter of Asia had confessed to the authorship of the book, pleading that he had written it through his love to Paul. The book could scarcely, therefore, be later than 170, and this is the date at which Harnack puts it. Sir W. Ramsay holds that, though in its present form the book belongs to 130–160, yet the present version shows signs of being based upon an earlier document, which originated in the first century. He accordingly regards it as containing a genuine tradition, and thinks that some such incident actually occurred. Harnack, however, argues that the case for the existence of an earlier document has not been made out, and maintains that the *Acts of Thecla* contains “a great deal of fiction and very little truth.”

The Acts of Thomas.—Next in importance to the

Acts of Thecla comes the Acts of Thomas. This is a specially interesting book, because it bears upon its face the stamp of Gnostic influence. We shall not be far wrong if we describe it as a religious novel, with the Apostle Thomas for its hero, written in support of the doctrine of celibacy. According to the story of the book, when the world was parcelled out among the Apostles, India fell by lot to Thomas. He at first refused to go, and it was only when the Lord appeared to him and sold him as a slave to an Indian merchant, who was looking out for a carpenter, that he consented to undertake the mission. The most interesting incident in the book is the following. When Thomas arrived in India, he was commissioned by King Gundaphorus to erect a royal palace. He at once consented to undertake the contract, but instead of building a palace spent the king's money in relieving the wants of the poor. When the king returned and found no palace, he was exceedingly angry, and ordered Thomas to be arrested. It so happened, however, that the king's brother Gad died about this time. After death, upon arriving in heaven, he saw a beautiful palace, and asked permission to make it his home. He was told, however, that the palace had been built by Thomas for King Gundaphorus. Gad thereupon returned to earth, and, appearing to his brother, endeavoured to purchase the heavenly palace from him. This opened the eyes

of Gundaphorus, and led to his conversion. The other stories in the book are all written to support the view that marriage is sinful, and celibacy the only right mode of life. Thomas's preaching finally resulted in his martyrdom. He converted the wife of the chief minister, who refused to live any longer with her husband. The minister complained to the king, and he ordered his soldiers to put Thomas to death. The date of the Acts of Thomas is difficult to fix. The book is first mentioned by Eusebius, who denounces its heretical character. Our present version is possibly a purified version of the original Gnostic edition, made for the benefit of Catholic Christians. The majority of modern scholars, including Harnack, hold that it was not composed till after the commencement of the third century.

The Acts of Andrew.—There are several documents which deal with the history of the Apostle Andrew, viz. the Acts of Andrew, the Acts of Andrew and Matthias, the Acts of Peter and Andrew. The most important incidents related in these documents are : (1) The story of Andrew's rescue of Matthew from the island of the cannibals. The narrative abounds in impossible and fantastic romances. Andrew receives orders from God to go to Matthew's help. When he reaches the coast he finds a boat, with Jesus at the helm under the guise of a steersman, and manned by angels under the form of sailors. Upon arriving at the island, he miraculously

enters the prison. The warders fall dead when he breathes upon them, and Matthew is released. The most amazing scenes follow. A statue belches forth acrid water, which destroys all the inhabitants of the city. They are restored to life by Andrew's intervention, and eagerly embrace Christianity. (2) The story of Andrew's martyrdom at Patara in Achaia. The bulk of the narrative is taken up with a discussion between Andrew and the proconsul *Ægeates*. After a long argument, *Ægeates*, unable to answer Andrew, orders him to be executed. The account of the crucifixion is full of marvels. Andrew hung upon the cross for three days and three nights, entrancing the crowd with his eloquence. The crowd, astonished at the miracle, begged that his life might be spared, but Andrew prayed that God might not allow him to be released. His prayer was answered, and he was suffered to die. Tradition ascribes the Acts to Leucius, who is supposed to have been a disciple of John the Apostle. Innocent I. (d. 417) says that it was written by the philosophers Nexocharis and Leonidas. The book is first mentioned by Eusebius, and we know from later references that it circulated at first amongst heretical sects. Our present fragments, however, contain no traces of heretical influence, and so probably represent a purified edition made for the use of ordinary Christians. The date can scarcely be earlier than the third century.

The Acts of John describes: (*a*) The appearance of John before the Emperor Domitian in Rome. Domitian was anxious to stamp out Christianity. Information was given him that John was the champion of Christianity in Asia. Accordingly he at once sent soldiers to arrest him and bring him to Rome. John made a great impression upon the emperor, and by drinking a cup of poison without any ill effect convinced him that the new religion was not altogether a superstitious fancy. Unwilling, however, to revoke his edict against the Christians, Domitian ordered John to be imprisoned in the isle of Patmos. (*b*) The death of John. Towards the end of his life John called his disciples around him and bade them farewell, exhorting them in many speeches to remain loyal to the faith. Then he ordered a grave to be dug, threw in his clothes, and entered it alive. Next day his disciples found no trace of the Apostle, but there was a fountain where the grave had been.

The book is associated in tradition with the name of Leucius. The stress which it lays upon celibacy and abstinence from meats shows that it emanated from heretical sects. Whether it belongs to the second or the third century cannot be determined. There is a comparative freedom from romantic and fantastic elements about the book.

The Acts of Philip, which appears in several forms, describes: (*a*) The work of Philip at Athens. Philip meets

three hundred philosophers at Athens and expounds to them his doctrine. They ask for time to consider his arguments, and write to the high priest Ananias at Jerusalem asking him for information about Philip. Ananias determines to hurry to Athens at once, and confront Philip before the Athenians. The book recounts the story of the meeting of Philip and Ananias and the utter discomfiture of the latter. The Athenian philosophers are converted and accept the Christian faith.

(b) The martyrdom of Philip at Hierapolis. Philip came to Hierapolis in company with his sister Mariamne and Bartholomew, one of the seventy. Through the influence of Mariamne, Nicanora the wife of the proconsul was converted. This so infuriated "the gloomy tyrant, her husband," that he at once ordered the arrest and execution of the missionaries. Philip was crucified head downwards, and the other two were subjected to the most shameful indignities. Philip, in the agony of his suffering, implored the vengeance of God upon the city. In response to his prayer, the abyss opened and swallowed up the persecutors. The Lord, however, appeared to him and reproached him for this act of vengeance, and told him that, because of it, he was doomed to die and spend forty days in the anguish of hell before entering heaven. The Acts of Philip can only be described as a religious novel of Gnostic origin. There is no evidence to prove that it belongs to the second century.

The Acts of Peter and Paul.—A whole Apocryphal literature naturally clustered round the names of Peter and Paul. The Acts of Paul has unfortunately been lost, but the Acts of Peter and the Acts of Peter and Paul have been preserved for us, as well as some other documents of minor importance. The Acts of Peter and Paul are best known and most accessible to the ordinary reader since they appear in most collections of Apocryphal literature. The story is as follows : The Emperor Nero is warned by the Jews that Paul is coming to Rome, and issues an edict ordering the governors of any city to which he may come to arrest him and put him to death. At Puteoli, Dioscurus, the captain of the ship, is mistaken for Paul, and put to death. Paul is thus enabled to reach Rome in safety. The Jews urge him to champion their religion and confute Peter, who is seeking to destroy the Mosaic Law. Paul promises them to put Peter to the test. The two men meet in the most amicable spirit, and find that their views are in exact agreement. Paul is successful in healing the feud between the Jewish and Gentile Christians of Rome. Then follows an account of the contest between the Apostles and Simon Magus in the presence of Nero. Simon performs many feats of witchcraft, and the Apostles work miracles of healing. Peter challenges Simon to a contest of thought-reading, which the latter declines. After several long debates and

many rival exhibitions of skill, Simon undertakes to fly through the air. In the midst of his flight, the supernatural support which enabled him to achieve his success is withdrawn, owing to the prayers of the Apostles, and Simon falls to the ground and perishes. Nero orders the Apostles to be put into irons, and finally sentences Paul to be beheaded and Peter to be crucified. The Acts of Peter tell practically the same story, with the exception of the important fact that they contain no reference to the presence of Paul in Rome. The majority of scholars seem to be agreed that the Petrine Acts are the earlier version of the legend. Nothing can be definitely determined with regard to the date at which these works were written. Harnack puts the Acts of Peter about 220. The Dutch scholar Van Manen thinks that both versions originated almost simultaneously in different circles of the Church about 160. There can be no doubt that the contents of the books are mainly fiction. They may contain some germs of fact, but it is almost impossible to disconnect the fact from the fiction. They bear witness to the fact, however, that there was a strong tradition in the Church to the effect that both Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome.

APOCRYPHAL EPISTLES

The Correspondence between Jesus and Abgarus.—Eusebius tells us that he discovered in the archives of Edessa two Epistles, one written by Abgarus to Jesus, and the other containing the reply of Jesus. These letters were in Syriac, and Eusebius translated them into Greek. The contents are as follows: Abgarus, King of Edessa, being smitten with a grievous disease, and having heard of the miracles wrought by Jesus in Palestine, asks Him to come to Edessa and heal him, saying that he was convinced that Jesus was either God come down from heaven or the Son of God. Jesus replies, "Blessed art thou, O Abgarus, who without seeing hast believed in me," but states that it is impossible to comply with the request because it is necessary for Him to fulfil the mission for which He had been sent into the world. After his death, however, He promises to send one of His disciples to cure Abgarus. The book from which Eusebius probably extracted these letters is still extant in Syriac. It is known as the Teaching of Addai, and was edited with an English translation by Dr. Phillips in 1876. It contains a great deal of material which Eusebius does not use, and which possibly may be a later addendum to the original work. It relates how the promise given by Jesus was fulfilled by the mission of

the Apostle Addai, who was sent by Thomas to heal Abgarus and preach the Gospel in Edessa. We have also a Greek version of the story, known as the Acts of Thaddæus. There seems to be no possibility of doubt that the correspondence is fictitious. The first trace of Christianity in Edessa is not found till about A.D. 200. The letters were probably forged in the third century by an Edessan Christian who was anxious to bring the origin of his Church into relationship with Christ.

The Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans.—In his Epistle to the Colossians (iv. 16) Paul writes, “And when this Epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans and that ye also read the Epistle from Laodicea.” A letter is in existence which purports to be this “letter from Laodicea” mentioned by Paul. It is found only in a Latin form (see Lightfoot’s “Epistle to the Colossians,” p. 285), but internal evidence proves that it was originally written in Greek. “The Epistle,” to quote the words of Lightfoot, “is a cento of Pauline phrases strung together without any definite connection or any clear object. . . .” “The Apostle’s injunction in Col. iv. 16 suggested the forgery, and such currency as it ever attained was due to the support which that passage was supposed to give to it. Unlike most forgeries, it had no ulterior aim. It was

not framed to advance any particular opinions, whether heterodox or orthodox. It has no doctrinal peculiarities. Thus it is quite harmless, so far as falsity and stupidity combined can ever be regarded as harmless."

The Correspondence between Paul and Seneca.—Fourteen letters are in existence, six of which claim to have been written by Paul to Seneca, and the remaining eight by Seneca to Paul. The contents of these letters are very flimsy and uninteresting. They consist mainly of an interchange of compliments between the Apostle and the philosopher, and relate to an attempt which Seneca is supposed to be making to secure the interest of Nero in the writings of Paul. The letters carry their condemnation on their face. As Lightfoot says, "the letters are inane and unworthy throughout: the style of either correspondent is unlike his genuine writings: the relations between the two, as there represented, are highly improbable: and lastly the chronological notices (which, however, are absent in some important MSS.) are wrong in almost every instance." The correspondence is obviously a forgery, dating probably from the fourth century, the object of it being either "to recommend Seneca to Christian readers or to recommend Christianity to students of Seneca."

APOCRYPHAL APOCALYPSSES

The Apocalypse of Peter.—The oldest of the Apocryphal Apocalypses is undoubtedly that ascribed to Peter. A large fragment of it, containing probably about half the original book, has recently been discovered at Akmîm (Pentapolis), together with the fragment of the Gospel of Peter. The Apocalypse enjoyed a great popularity in the early Church. It is mentioned in the Muratorian Fragment (about A.D. 170), was quoted by Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200), and, as we know from the statement of the historian Sozomen, even as late as the fifth century, though it had been definitely rejected by Eusebius and other writers, was publicly read once a year in certain churches of Palestine. The Apocalypse has very little in common with the canonical Book of Revelation. The subject, which forms its theme, is the condition of the dead. The disciples are represented as coming to the Lord and asking Him to show them “one of the righteous brethren that had departed from the world, that they might see of what form they were and take courage.” The fragment is made up of two visions : (a) the vision of the saints in Paradise, (b) the vision of Inferno. The first vision depicts the saints thus : “Their bodies were whiter than snow and redder than the rose, and the red was mingled with the white : there came forth from their countenance a ray as of the sun, and all their raiment

was light such as never eye of man beheld." Paradise is described as a land "blooming with unfading flowers and full of spices and fair-flowering plants incorruptible and bearing a blessed fruit." It is, however, to the picture of Inferno that the Apocalypse devotes most space. The place of chastisement is described as "very squalid." It contained a lake of "flaming mire" and many other loathful places. Punishment is meted out to various types of sinners in different ways. Blasphemers, for instance, are described as hanging by their tongues over a flaming fire. Murderers were cast into a "narrow place full of evil reptiles." The selfish rich were rolled in torment upon red-hot pebbles sharper than any sword. Usurers were compelled to wallow up to the knees in "a lake of pitch and blood and boiling mire." The sensual were hurled from the top of a cliff into a deep abyss, and forced to reascend continually that the process might be repeated. The influence exerted by the Apocalypse can scarcely be overestimated. Its ideas reappear in other writings, *e.g.* the Apocalypses of Paul, the Sibylline Oracles, &c., and through these and other writings influenced mediæval theology, and were thus the source from which Dante's picture of the Inferno was derived. The Apocalypse must have been of comparatively early origin. It can scarcely be later than A.D. 150, and may be even earlier.

The **Apocalypse of Paul** is a weak imitation of the

Apocalypse of Peter. It deals with the same theme, and gives a description of heaven and hell. It belongs, however, to a much later date, as the following passage shows: The angel, when asked what certain prisoners had done, who had been cast into a deep well in Inferno, replies, "These are they that denied that the Holy Mary is the Mother of God and said that the Lord did not become man out of her, and that the bread of thanksgiving and cup of blessing are not His flesh and blood." This statement is a clear proof that the Apocalypse could not have been written before the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century.

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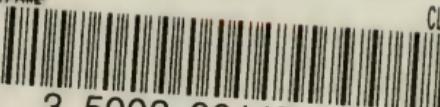
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