
The EVANGELICAL STUDENT

Quarterly of The LEAGUE OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS

Vol. II

Chicago, Ill., October, 1927

No. 1

THE HUMAN APOLOGETIC

PRES'T JAMES M. GRAY, D.D.

IN the line of Christian evidences or apologetics, I know nothing stronger than the monument D. L. Moody said he wanted after he was dead and gone, namely, "A monument with legs, going about the world—a saved sinner telling about the salvation of Jesus Christ."

Not long ago I read a book review in which the writer referring to the author of the book, said, "If Jesus Christ has given a single soul in the world such a rich experience as He has given this author, that fact in itself proves that Christ is what He is represented to be in the Scriptures. Such an experience can come only from a divine source. It is impossible to be an illusion or a fraud. It is the best proof of the truth of Christ and of the Christian system which springs from Him!"

It is the old story of "beholding the man * * * they could say nothing against it" (Acts 4:14). What was wrought in the man proved the reality and the divinity of Him in Whose Name and by Whose power it was wrought. "Whether He be a sinner, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 4:25). You cannot ignore experiences like these.

And Christian biography, outside of the Bible, is full of such experiences. Young ministers, for whom chiefly these words are intended, can not do better than to specialize in a way, on biographical reading for the strengthening of their faith, the broadening of their vision of God and of human kind, and the illumination of the truth they are presenting to their hearers.

I will take that back. There is one thing better they can do. Instead of using other lives as an apologetic, they can make their own lives such an apologetic. And there is great need of it in the pastorate today, I can assure them.

A few years ago I addressed a letter to some hundreds of Christian leaders concerning the need or value of putting forth a new declaration of the old faith. The replies were interesting, most of them favoring the idea, but there were some that contained suggestions different from what was expected. They bore on the question of Christian conduct as related to sound doctrine. An evangelist wrote:

"I want to add this conviction which is becoming stronger every day—that no mere discussion of doctrine or expression of belief will avail anything for these times unless it is linked up with an equally clear and emphatic declaration as regards practice. The world is more concerned about what it means in daily life to hold our views than it is in those views them-

selves. There is no more fruitful source of destructive criticism than the startling contradiction between the doctrine and the practice of many who are sticklers for the most orthodox truth."

The pastor of a metropolitan church expressed himself in the same way:

"I deplore the departure of some of my friends from the things I believe important if not absolutely essential, but here is my difficulty: Some of the men whom I know well, are in accord with my views of truth—the virgin birth, the resurrection, the Word of God as a divinely inspired book and the only rule of faith and practice, but at the same time they are so unlike Christ. They are selfish and cold and do little to remind one that they are following Him. On the other hand, I find some of my brethren who do not stand as squarely as I could wish for the full truth of God, who seem to have a passion for souls and are full of Christlike ministries. It seems to me that even with less of the truth spoken in love and embodied in the life, more will be done than with a greater amount of truth if the spirit is not there."

This is sad news, but I am unable to deny its truth because my own experience and observation agree with it.

Once on a visit abroad, I courted the opportunity to meet a distinguished Bible expositor whose books had helped thousands besides myself. But I was advised that if I wished to retain my veneration for him it were better to avoid personal contact. He was so brusque and churlish at times as to imperil his testimony.

The remark recalled another about a brother distinguished in a different line, whose correspondents often feared to open his letters because of his cutting and inconsiderate words.

Not long ago a pastor in my presence bemoaned his lack of the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the same conversation he uttered a petty falsehood about the size of his congregations.

Then there is the matter of sacriligious jokes, tobacco, the movies, indiscreet conduct with the opposite sex, money greed, and much more. These things might be looked for where the truth is unknown or seriously mixed with error, but where the Bible is recognized as God's revelation and the Gospel is apprehended and proclaimed, such inconsistencies are shuddering.

I close with a paragraph from a homily I read today:

"Brethren," said the preacher (it was at the Keswick Conference in England), "Brethren, the question of questions is not how much you or I know, even about the Scriptures, all-important as that is; the question is how far we are really listening to all that the Lord has to say to us through those Scriptures. If, in my character or yours, there is some inconsistency that others see, then we are failing to listen to something that God, by His Spirit, is seeking to say to us, while all the time we may be busy about the Lord's business or the coming of His kingdom."

A man may say, "Thou hast faith and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18).

This apologetic of James is the human apologetic, and I repeat, it is required today if ever it were in all the history of the church.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST—THE INNER CITADEL
OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

REV. PROF. ALBERTUS PIETERS, V.D.M.

THERE is a story of a man who died and came to life again. He was really dead, but his corpse did not decay. On the third day it arose, a living body, endowed with new qualities and powers, and left behind an empty tomb. The man, thus restored to life, never died again, but is alive today.

That is what is recorded in the Bible, and believed by the Christian church, about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Moreover, this is no subordinate or incidental element in the Christian religion, that may be stricken out and the faith still remain. No less an authority than St. Paul says: "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." In other words, if no resurrection, then no Christianity and no salvation. This judgment is fully borne out by the place the resurrection has in primitive Christianity. It is set forth in detail in the four gospels. It forms the pivot on which everything turns in the book of Acts. That book opens with the last meeting between the risen Christ and his apostles. They go home, after the ascension, and elect Matthias to fill the vacancy caused by the defection of Judas, in order that there may be a full roster of official witnesses to the resurrection. To bear testimony to that fact was, first of all, the function of an apostle (Acts 1:22; 4:33; 10:41; 1 Cor. 9:1). The earliest opposition arose from this cause (Acts 4:2). St. Paul declared before the Sanhedrin that this was the real question at issue between Judaism and Christianity (Acts 23:6); and the Roman governor Festus came to the same conclusion after hearing both sides (Acts 25:19). It is emphasized in thirteen of the apostolic discourses recorded in the acts.

When we turn to the epistles, whether those of Paul or the others, the resurrection is equally prominent. All kinds of things are proved by insisting upon the certainty of it. Whatever else might be doubted within the Christian church, this never. Faith in Jesus as the Son of God rested upon the resurrection (Romans 1:4). So did assurance of the justification of believers (Romans 4:25); their call to a holy life and the possibility of leading it (Romans 6:4); the Christian hope of immortality (I Thess. 4:14, I Peter 1:3); and even the certainty of the final judgment (Acts 17:31). To believe in the resurrection and to have saving faith in Christ were well nigh convertible terms; or, at any rate, were inseparable, the one from the other, (Romans 4:24, 10:9).

Upon the basis of an inductive study of the early Christian documents, two things are clear:

(1) That a religious belief that does not include the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is not the Christian religion, whatever else it may be.

(2) That the apostles and the other early Christians earnestly and honestly believed the resurrection to be a fact. Their shining sincerity stands out on every page of the New Testament.

This historical relation between the fact of the resurrection and the principal doctrines of the Christian religion is also the logical relation. Dr. Franz Delitzsch, in the introduction to his commentary on Genesis, explains his holding conservative views, in opposition to the prevailing tendencies of criticism, by remarking: "I believe the Easter message and accept its deductions." That is to say, because Dr. Delitzsch believed the resurrection of Christ, he accepted Christianity as a revealed religion, and was unable to handle its documents without reference to that faith. This is logical. Let a man be convinced that the resurrection is true, and he can not do otherwise than to accept Jesus as the divine Saviour and the apostles as his authorized representatives. Conversely, if a man denies the resurrection, apostolic testimony and authority have no meaning for him. He will then construct for himself a fanciful conception of Jesus and the gospel, quite divorced from historical proof and from historic Christianity. Hence belief or disbelief in the resurrection of Christ is one of the clearest lines of demarkation between modernism and the Christian faith.

The evidence for the resurrection is both direct and circumstantial, consisting first of the testimony of eye-witnesses, and then of facts which corroborate that testimony. Since the point at issue is one of fact, these are the only appropriate kinds of evidence.

The testimony of the eye-witnesses is on record in the gospels, the Acts, and the first letter to the Corinthians. The good faith of this testimony is not disputed by any respectable writer today, and hence it is not worth our while here to go over the subject again. We start with what is conceded, that the apostles really gave such testimony, and that they were honest in doing so. This narrows down the question to the problem whether men can possibly be honest in such testimony and the thing itself be untrue.

In regard to some things, this is quite possible. A man who has delirium tremens testifies that he sees snakes, but there are no snakes—yet he is sincere. A woman is terribly frightened because she has seen a ghost. We do not doubt her sincerity, but we do doubt the ghost. Some one has been to a seance, and, by the help of the medium, he has seen and conversed with his deceased friend. We do not accuse him of fraud, but we remain unconvinced of the alleged fact. We read that Joan of Arc had visions of the blessed virgin Mary. We accept the honesty of Joan, but we do not believe that what she saw was objectively real.

This being agreed upon, the way seems open for the so-called "Vision theory" of the resurrection, the great theory put forward in these days by those who admit the honesty of the apostolic testimony, and yet deny the reality of the resurrection. It seems plausible, at first, but only at first; it will not stand sober examination. To make this clear, let us think first of the sharp distinction we all make, and that is made in our courts of law, between an honest belief that can arise without the reality of the event testified to, and testimony that can not possibly be honest if the fact alleged is unreal. To the former class belong such things as we have named—seeing ghosts, seances, visions and hallucinations of all sorts. If a man testifies to these things we may get a poor opinion of his mentality, but we do not discount his honesty.

On the other hand, let two or three people testify under oath that, while sitting in a restaurant at such and such a place, they saw a certain man, well known to them, come in, accompanied by a certain woman, and that they presently saw him slap her face, whereupon the woman drew a revolver and shot him. Their testimony is nothing more than a statement of their belief and recollection that they saw these things; but will any lawyer in court argue thus: "No doubt these witnesses are honest in thinking that they saw these things, but that is no proof that they took place. Hallucinations are common, and this was merely a vision. They thought they saw it, but they did not, really"? Of course not. If the thing is proved untrue, the witnesses go to the penitentiary for perjury; for every one knows that they could not imagine they saw such things without seeing them. Sincerity and error do not go hand in hand in such matters.

Now, the apostolic testimony to the resurrection contains such items as the following: that on the third day the grave was found empty, that two men walking along the road on Sunday afternoon met Jesus and talked with him, that he met ten or eleven of them on two occasions in an upstairs room, that he spoke to them and offered himself to be handled by them, calling their attention to certain marks of identification; that he ate fish and honey in their presence; that he had breakfast with them one morning by the Sea of Galilee; that he was present in a meeting attended by five hundred persons; that he gave them certain instructions and answered certain questions; and that the last time they met they had a walk together from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives, to a place near the village of Bethany. If witnesses in court should say such things and their testimony were shown to be false, nothing would save them from conviction on a charge of perjury.

This distinction between hallucinations, in which men may honestly think they see things which they do not see, and ordinary affairs, in which this is impossible, is not arbitrary. The conditions that produce hallucinations of all kinds are well known. They take place under conditions of nervous disease, as in delirium caused by fever, or in insanity, or in times of great excitement and intense expectation. They occur also to one person at a time, never to a group simultaneously, more readily at night, or under conditions of dim vision, than during the day-time, more readily in a confined space than in the open, and they appeal to the senses of sight and hearing, not to that of touch. There is never anything left to prove their reality after the visions cease, they occur without notice, and it can not be foretold when they will recur. Above all, they always take place in accordance with the ideas and experiences of the person concerned; that is to say, they are moulded absolutely from the materials previously existing in the mind—they contain no new elements. For instance, Joan of Arc, who was a devout Roman Catholic, had visions of the blessed virgin Mary; but a Protestant girl could not have such a vision.

In all of these particulars, the conditions of hallucination were not present in connection with the resurrection. The number and character of the witnesses excludes the explanation of nervous disease. The required condition of expectancy was not present. When the women went to the grave, they carried spices, to anoint a dead body. It is true that Jesus twice met his disciples in a closed room, but the other meetings were in the

open, in broad daylight. He did this from time to time for six weeks, and then took formal leave of them, after which the appearances ceased. Finally, there was always the empty grave, to prove that what they saw was real. All of this is utterly and irreconcilably at variance with the way in which hallucinations are experienced.

The statement of Paul, that above five hundred brethren saw the risen Christ at once, is especially interesting and valuable. St. Paul mentions this in a letter to a church in which he had bitter enemies, who would have been delighted to have exposed him as a fraud if they could have done so. Now, no such meeting of above five hundred at once could take place without more than that number being notified of the time and place of rendezvous. Then, at the time and place set, the risen Christ met them. You don't have hallucinations in that way!

That the story of Christ's resurrection belongs to an entirely different category from all hallucinations and ghost stories, is shown most clearly by the uniqueness of it. Such tales are abundant in folk-lore, history, and fiction, but over against these numerous stories there is one resurrection narrative, and one only, in the whole history of the world. To be sure, there are nature-myths, in which the succession of the seasons is represented under the forms of death and resurrection, but nature-myths of this kind are not history, and can not fairly be brought into comparison with history. There is no historical character, of whose existence we have any assurance, and of whose life we possess some details, of whom it has ever been told and believed that he rose from the dead, except Jesus Christ only. Neither does there anywhere else appear, whether in history or in fiction, any such conception as that of the resurrection body, as sketched for us in the gospels.

Now, in literature as in life, similar causes produce similar effects. Ghost stories, ancient or modern, Asiatic, African, or European, are almost tiresomely alike, because the causes from which they spring are universal. Similarly, there is a certain narrow range for fiction. Critics assure us that there are only thirty or forty types of stories, which must be used over and over again, with endless variations, by all story tellers. If the story of the resurrection of Christ had arisen from psychological causes, there should be other stories like it. All the things suggested by skeptical writers as having given birth to a sincere conviction in the hearts of the disciples that they had seen the Master alive after his death, such as their love, their grief and disappointment, their feeling that he was too great and good to be overcome of death, etc., etc., are common to humanity. They are present whenever a great and beloved leader is torn from the midst of his admiring followers. If such things are capable of producing a resurrection story, why are there not many such tales? Yet never has such a story arisen and been widely believed of any one but Jesus only. Even fiction has not been bold enough to imitate the narrative of the gospels. No matter how incredibly brave and noble the hero may be, when he is dead he stays dead. There is a finality about death which even the wildest writer of fiction feels bound to respect. To pretend, then, that such causes produced the incomparable resurrection story of the gospels, is as futile as to say that one could blow out the light of the sun by fanning it with a peacock feather.

In addition to the direct evidence for the resurrection of Christ, there

are a number of circumstances that tend very greatly to strengthen our faith in it. The first of these is that it fits in so well with the general portrait of Jesus drawn for us in the gospels and epistles. There is an admirable suitability, a supreme congruity about it that carries conviction. Christ is presented to us in the New Testament as the pre-existent and eternal Son of God, who for us men and for our salvation became man and "tabernacled" among us. This incarnation is the very heart of the Christian message. In the record just such a being is portrayed before us with the most wonderful appropriateness, by the manner in which he was born, the way he taught, the miracles he wrought, his compassion for sorrowing and sinful humanity, his sinless character, his transcendent claims, so quietly and calmly put forward, and his sublime attitude during his trial and death. Then, to crown it all, comes this resurrection story, a superb climax to such a life and such a personality. To say: "If this is not true it is well invented," falls far short of what we feel in this case. Rather, we say instinctively: "This is so fitting, it must be true." We might find it difficult, no matter on what evidence, to believe that an ordinary man rose from the dead; we need not find it so difficult in the case of Jesus Christ.

The second circumstance of this kind is the rise of the Christian church and the Christian religion, built upon the resurrection. That is at least an undeniable historical fact; but if you deny the resurrection, the whole mighty structure hangs in the air. Other religions, to be sure, as well as various philosophical systems, have arisen without resurrections, but they aimed at nothing more than to expound the teachings of their founders. Christianity did not take its beginning as an exposition of the teachings of Jesus; so far from it, these teachings are scarcely referred to in the extant documents for more than a generation. Other religions did not call men to trust in their founders as redeemers, able to save to the uttermost. Hence a dead founder was good enough. The rise of the Christian religion presents a very different problem to the historian, one utterly beyond solution unless you recognize the resurrection as a fact. As some one has well said: "The supreme proof of the resurrection of Christ is the resurrection of Christianity."

The weekly Lord's Day, the Easter festival, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, all are witnesses to the same fact. They all can be traced back to the first century, and not one of them has any meaning, or could exist, apart from the resurrection of Christ.

Finally, one of the reasons why men believe the resurrection of Christ, and will always continue to believe it, is its supreme fitness to meet our human need of light on the problem of life and death. By this it is that life and immortality have been brought to light. To those who cling to the conviction that human life must be worth something, that there must be somewhere permanent meaning and value in it, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is like the dawning of the day.

Take all of these things together, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ is supported by no mean body of evidence. To get the full force of the proof, one must think of it in connection with the plan of redemption, gradually unfolded in the Holy Scriptures, with the Messianic prophecies, with the character and acts of Jesus, with the outburst of spiritual energy in the first century, with the rise and institutions of the Christian church, with the

magnificent stream of blessing and moral uplift that flows from it down the ages, and with the profoundest needs of the human race. The narrative of an event that fits them all and throws light upon them all, is no idle and superstitious tale, but the supremely credible record of the greatest event in human history.

OLD TESTAMENT ETHICS

E. VAN DEUSEN

Assertions about the *rightness* of acts and commands recorded in the Old Testament plainly imply the existence of a norm or standard of right to which conduct should conform. That there is a difference between right and wrong—even when there is uncertainty as to what is right and what is wrong—is as clear a conviction of our moral judgment as is the distinction between self and not-self in our mental life. Clearly too, this standard is *outside the man*, or you would have as many so-called standards as there are persons; that is, you would have no standard at all, and so no question of rightness—or conformity to a standard. Furthermore, there can be but *one authoritative norm*, or you would have conflicting standards—which again is equivalent to no standard, hence no right or wrong course of conduct. Ethical questions are not as to the existence of a difference between right and wrong, but as to what is right and what is wrong. Obviously, this must be settled by reference to an authoritative standard external to the persons whose acts are being morally measured.

Again, since conduct and commands about it are essentially personal, the norm of conduct and source of such authority must be also *personal*. As a reasoning being man sees that an orderly universe, functioning according to knowable laws, logically involves an intelligent Creator; that the natural implies the supernatural; that harmonious laws involve a Lawgiver; and these conclusions agree with and are reinforced by man's moral intuitions—which are part of the manifestations of his native or intuitive knowing powers. He also sees that as uniformity of natural laws is prerequisite to understanding them, *unity* of source is requisite to their uniformity. In short, he comes directly to monotheism as the unescapable premise of all ethics. Those who have said in their hearts, 'There is no God' have no basis nor starting point for ethical considerations, nor can they understand Old Testament ethics—nor any other moral science. Yet, the existence of an intelligent First Cause, a supernatural Supreme Being, above and independent of nature and its sequences; a personal, infinite Spirit who thinks, has sentiment, and wills, is evident to any rational and honest intelligence who will candidly consider all the evidence. This is the Christians' God—"infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." This is the basic factual premise of ethical science. And it is the essential nature of this Supreme Being, expressing itself through His will, that is the norm or standard of moral right.

A mark of beneficent personality is the wish for fellowship; and it is to be expected that a Supreme Being or Creator perfect in "wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth" would will the creation of creatures

capable of companionship with Himself—together with a world for their habitation. Furthermore, it is evident that a moral purpose overbroods this world: good thoughts and intents issue in good character, which leads to good action, which eventuates in physical, mental and moral welfare. These consequences follow naturally from the ruling fact and nature of God.

But, the indisputable presence of evil and the plain tendency to *deterioration* so evident and pervasive in the world sufficiently indicate that the beneficent will of the Supreme Being is not fully operative. There is apparent a vital variance of finite wills from the Infinite Will. Both this natural enmity of man's will to the will and way of the Supreme Being, and also each specific violation of this beneficent will, is termed "sin"; and, in further confirmation of the dominant moral purpose behind affairs, individual and national history verify the truth that "sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Obviously, however, an omnipotent though beneficent Supreme Being will not suffer His will to be permanently thwarted—"though He suffer long and is kind."

Incidentally, good sense dictates that it is but wise to fall into step with the will and purpose of the Creator and Ruler of the universe. As Carlyle said, when told that George Elliot had decided to accept the cosmos as she found it. Well, she'd better! But, to the Christian, "His ways are ways of pleasantness and all His paths are peace."

So, on the one hand, man's measureless loss and fathomless need in consequence of his sin, and on the other hand the boundless beneficence and power of the Supreme Being, together give the dominant motive and purpose behind the ethical code of the Old Testament,—viz., to bring about like-mindedness and fellowship between man and his Maker. Spiritual *reconciliation* is the ultimate purpose in "the ways of God to man."

Incidentally, and on the simple mathematical principle that "Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other," likemindedness between men and God results in likemindedness between men; it is the unifying force that makes possible any actual "sonship" to God or any real "brotherhood of man"; for it is the only basis and guarantee of right ethical relations between men.

Now, reconciliation involves not only forgiveness by the injured one but also confession and request for pardon and subsequent right conduct by the offender. This means that he be or be made aware of his offenses, before he can confess them; and he must know the will of his Sovereign before he can conform to it. But, while finite man can and should know from both his moral instincts and a rational consideration of the world around him that the Supreme Being *is*, and is of measureless existence, wisdom and power, yet the finite cannot unaided know the mind or will of this Infinite. As a finite mortal, man's innate knowing powers are as finite as is his being. He is in and measurably a part of material nature, while his Maker is clearly above this nature, is supernatural and spiritual. Man's reasoning machinery—so to speak—alone is inadequate and unadapted to handle the supernatural materials of spiritual knowledge, without the auxiliary equipment of a *revelation*. To know the specific will and ways of the Infinite, this further means of knowledge must be supplied and fitted to man's naturally limited knowing powers. The mind and will of the Super-

natural One—to become available for man's knowing equipment—must be revealed to him in natural forms or ways he can understand. Conformity to this supreme will is ethical conduct; non-conformity is unethical—for this will, however manifested, is the only standard of right.

Reconciliation as the controlling purpose in the Old Testament ethical code, however, met three special problems in three moral facts or conditions. First, the righteousness of God: for righteousness without *justice* is self-contradictory and inconceivable; you can't have unjust righteousness. How a perfectly holy God, the author of and whose nature is the source of righteousness, can be just and also the justifier of repentant sinners, is beyond human ken; the way of this can be only supernaturally revealed.

Second, how to show men that they have *transgressed* their Maker's will and need to be reconciled to Him; this consciousness of personal offense toward God is prerequisite to the confession and repentance essential to all reconciliation. For this, as before indicated, man must know the will to be obeyed, and see by the expressions of his own will that he is disobedient. This will of the Supreme Being is manifestly revealed in His moral laws; and their breach shows man to himself as a moral offender; his disobedience becomes undeniable. The moral use of ethical evil is to convict and convince man of his offenses against moral right and its Author; the ethical breach becomes, in the divine economy, man's moral looking-glass.

The third problem arises from the further moral fact that man's obedience to his Maker's will must be *voluntary* to have moral value; involuntary obedience is virtually no obedience. The question of how this volition is to be secured is but partly answered by saying that "love begets love"; there is the further question "How shall man love God whom he has not seen?" Man must know God before he can love Him; but God must reveal Himself to man before man can know Him. So, reconciliation again involves revelation.

Hence, revelation—through word and deed—has a triple task: first, to show man to himself as a sinner; second, to so show God to men as to win their voluntary obedience and loyalty; and third, to show men the Omniscent's plan and method by which their disobedience may be pardoned without a violation of sovereign and perfect justice.

Revelation, if its messages were to be understood, had to be fitted to men's mental, moral and spiritual life as it was; otherwise, the mission of revelation would fail. Revelation could not suddenly supplant old natures and conditions with new and ideal ones; nor could the messages be in unfamiliar terms. The means to the dominant ends of revelation had to be adapted to existing circumstances. Of these, two especially served to impede the course and impair the force of revelation in its impress upon men.

First are the *limitations of human language*. Speech is a means through which revealed information may be given. But how far can *supernatural facts* and information be made clear through *natural language*? Plainly, such spiritual ideas must be clothed in familiar words; yet, this but increases the difficulty of conveying unfamiliar ideas. And to this is added the limitation of man's native power of understanding—already noted. It is silly to manufacture ethical problems out of the exigencies of a limited vocabulary or the characteristic idioms of Semitic tongues. The Hebrew language espe-

cially preferred concrete, to abstract, modes of expression; so, to say that God hardened Pharaoh's heart was but to state in brief concrete form the abstract natural principle that produces such a result as spiritual blindness and callousness. Evidently, revelation by words should be some way supplemented—as by deeds. Hence, revelations of the Supreme Will by “acts of Providence” or Providential leadings.

A second factor increasing the difficulty of imparting spiritual knowledge to men is their *spiritual obtuseness* or insensibility and forgetfulness. Dullness of spiritual comprehension and repeated lapses from the right are two facts writ large throughout the Old Testament record. Hence the need of repeated messages from and evidences of intervention by the supernatural Supreme Being. “Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little” is a true Scriptural principle of teaching. A pedagogic purpose of progressive moral instruction pervades the precepts and providences of the Old Testament dispensation. Its natural educational method was to fix on the best moral and spiritual facts in a people's life as a step to the better. When this disciplinary principle of moral teaching and development is grasped, many questions of Old Testament ethics will be solved.

But beyond this immediate purpose—man's moral discipline and development—lay an ultimate aim—his redemption. Through the ages ran the gracious design of man's Maker to replevin His own handiwork and make possible man's restoration to his high heritage of fellowship and communion with God. The “end to which” of the Old Testament dispensation is the person and work of Jesus Christ as the perfect revelation of God and the sole way of reconciliation to Him. As stated by that consecrated master mind, Paul—“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.” Only as His true nature and function are recognized and acknowledged can the Old Testament's ethical code be suitably understood. One constant aim—at first operating through imperfect means—to provide at length an adequate way for man's reconciliation to God unifies the Old Testament, and is alone ample evidence of its supernatural authorship.

It is common knowledge that tools are chosen with reference to the work to be done. A spiritual seed among men was an essential part in the supernatural plan for man's redemption and reconciliation to his Maker. To reveal to men spiritually dull and degraded the Supreme One's will and plan and purpose for their restoration to fellowship with Him, a person (Abraham) was chosen as the instrument, through whose descendants this supernaturally conceived plan could be developed and worked out, the evil of sin demonstrated, and the authority, mercy and holiness of God clearly revealed. In a cruel, sensual, idolatrous and spiritually debased world, this family-race was this instrument, was the spiritual leaven in the world's lump of iniquity, the stock supplying the human line through which should come the world's divine Redeemer. Only as the momentous issues of eternal life or eternal death are appreciated will one see how all-important it was that this lineage should not be broken; that it be preserved, under conditions that constantly threatened its destruction. The ultimate welfare of mankind—purposed by the Supreme Will—was and is superior to any temporary and seeming private gain. This principle is recognized daily in the legal right of “*eminent domain*.”

It is in the *applications* of a moral standard, in connection with the spiritual training of this race for its unique service to the world, that ethical questions may arise out of the Old Testament. Circumstances do not alter principles, but they may alter the methods of their application to cases—to achieve given ends. This too is true in the divine economy; for purpose is an element in intelligence, and intelligence is an attribute of the personal Source of moral right. Ethical questions are best solved when one keeps in mind together this authoritative Source, the conditions under which a standard is applied, and the moral purpose involved. Each of these has been already considered, and with reference to the Old Testament.

In the light of the foregoing basic considerations, the moral rightness of certain matters recorded in the Old Testament may be briefly examined.

1st. Israel's racial exclusiveness and seeming selfishness is criticized as unethical and against the idea of human brotherhood and friendliness.

This objection fails to see the vital use of this exclusive spirit—viz., that it was *for the good of all* that one people be kept from the surrounding spiritual contamination and debasement. This exclusiveness saved "the chosen people" from being absorbed by heathen neighbors, and so kept intact our Lord's human lineage. In fact, notwithstanding this aloofness, brotherhood is taught in the Old Testament as in no other contemporary writings—e. g., Ex. 23:9; Lev. 19:33; Num. 15:15. If a sense of racial separateness and pride has survived its usefulness, this is no indictment of its original worth for ethical and spiritual ends.

Again, it must be remembered that as *justice* nowhere involves like treatment of all persons, the God of justice has perfect right to choose and set apart one people for his use and favor. Incidentally, in modern times, this favored nation seems to have been the United States.

2nd. It is urged that the order to exterminate certain heathen—and its execution—was ethically wrong.

Though God is "slow to anger and of great mercy," yet, as the world's Moral Ruler—and while long-suffering to violators of His will—He manifestly must consider first and foremost the ultimate moral welfare of those who obey His moral laws. He must uphold against all violators His supreme government and moral purposes, by means fitted to the times and exigencies of the case. Christ enjoined the same principle—"If thy hand or thy foot offend—cut them off—for it is better—" This is not "doing evil that good may come," but doing the best thing under the circumstances and notwithstanding certain unhappy effects. Today, a morally debased race is eliminated by the slower but equally sure processes of nature and civilization.

Again, this execution of justice—while but punishment fitted to the crime—was yet tempered with mercy; though their wickedness was great, the Canaanites—for example—had 1400 years for repentance, and Sodom would have been spared for the sake of ten righteous men.

Furthermore, Israel was constantly reminded that it was but an agent for the Almighty—who, as the source of right, is entitled to do either directly or through His agents whatever comports with His perfectly just and completely righteous nature. Israelites were not allowed to regard these wars as authoritative precedents for their further attitude or action against their neighbors. Rather, they were enjoined to considerate kindness, and Israel's

continued relation to other nations is repeatedly stated from the beginning to be one of spiritual leadership and blessing.

3rd. The Mosaic laws are criticized as having some seeming moral defects.

As before noted, teaching must be adjusted to a pupil's capacity; you can't impart ideas which have no corresponding analogy in the content of the other person's consciousness. The Mosaic laws were a pedagogic instrument of revelation, adapted to the people's capacity—which measures one's responsibility. Clearly, the Author of moral laws may establish for a people's moral tuition any laws not inconsistent with His own essential nature—the necessary norm and source of moral right. God may rightly make for ethical ends temporary concessions, as it were, to man's moral incapacity—including lack of opportunity and undeveloped moral nature. Yet, laws reflecting rudimentary ethics, because adapted to current conditions and an imperfect moral development, may be of great use as stepping-stones to the higher things of God. This progressiveness of Old Testament morality—in contrast with the static nature of pagan moralities—is another mark of its supernatural origin. Thus, for example, the Mosaic laws, while recognizing the common practice of slavery, nevertheless humanized and greatly modified it, until at length it practically ceased. The educational intent of revelation, and the law's disciplinary methods must be constantly remembered.

Israel's age was one of simple perception—rather than of abstract reasoning. As before stated, the Hebrew mind thought in concrete terms. The people needed plain, specific ethical rules which could be understood and applied to every-day conduct, and backed by a powerful incentive for obeying them.

4th. Prudential motives, it is said, vitiate Old Testament ethics. Objection is raised against the moral sanctions in the Old Testament on the ground that the motives are low and mercenary—selfish gain or loss. Motives, like pedagogic methods, must be adapted to those to whom they are supplied. But a seemingly inferior sanction may be really a step toward an appreciation of higher motives.

The distinction must be kept between a thing—right in itself—that serves as a supplemental aid or encouragement to ethical conduct, and the basic motive for that conduct. A man works to support his family; that is his motive. But he seeks the work or place he prefers or enjoys; this is a secondary or supplemental impulse or influence that leads him to walk to his work two miles rather than one.

It is a further mark of the supernatural origin of Judaism that—unlike pagan religions—it did not try to strengthen its ethical appeal by use of the solemn sanctions of the future life. Obedience to the moral law was desired to be an expression of gratitude to a loving Lord who led them out of a land of bondage into "a land flowing with milk and honey." While it was clearly recognized that "The soul that sinneth it shall die" and that "It is an awful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," yet love rather than a selfish fear was the desired motive for keeping the Mosaic laws; they were but the schoolmaster to lead at length the nation to the completely spiritual moral sanctions of Jesus Christ.

5th. The so-called imprecatory Psalms are objected to as unethical. Everyone—with but even a superficial acquaintance with language—knows that some words have a different and much harsher import today than originally. Speech—like people—was cruder than in this refined age. Imprecatory words had a much less severe meaning or significance than they do now.

Similarly, and as before indicated, early peoples were not so analytical and did not distinguish between sin and the sinner. In fact, this is now a hard distinction to observe in practice; the thief is jailed for his theft, the criminal hung for his crime. Only omniscient insight and infinite affection can separate and keep distinct a sinner and his sin.

Again, to the chosen people, their enemies were the enemies of God. This was a quite natural idea, under the circumstances, and is the main key to what are termed imprecatory Psalms. In seeking to harm God's chosen people or their chosen ruler, his enemies were plainly God's enemies and opposing God himself. The maledictions were primarily and essentially appeals to God to show His sovereign power and uphold His own honor in defeating their common enemies,—who were in fact God's enemies.

6th. The imperfect character of some Old Testament worthies is said to show the unworthiness of its ethical standards. But, as God adjusted His revelations to men's spiritual capacity, so men were taken for His work just as they were. God—and men—use the best instruments at hand; and their imperfection is no reflection on the plan or method. The pupil's faults are not those of the teacher. It must be remembered that men are not automata, but self-determining beings; this is the subjective side of ethics, as an external moral standard is the objective side. Men are not forced, just because of high ethical standards, to do right.

Accordingly, moral teaching may find in human history warnings as well as examples to follow; admonition fills a large place in the Old Testament record. Because this Book records unrighteous deeds is no sign of the righteous One's approval; they are moral beacons marking the shoals of sin. No lesson is more insistently taught in the Old Testament than that—save for God's intervention—the harvest shall be as the sowing. What has been termed David's "moral parenthesis" bore its sad fruitage in the sins of his sons. But to them that love God the promise is that all things shall work together for good; and out of the bitter experiences of a moral lapse came at length some of the most exalted spiritual songs of "the sweet singer of Israel."

Again, certain personal traits or qualities were needed for certain tasks connected with the training and discipline of a people chosen for a definite purpose. By their rugged courage and daring, a Samson or Gideon were useful agents in their times to accomplish given parts in the moral program for their race. It should be again remembered that moralizing was rare in early literature, and the mere absence of unfavorable comment cannot be construed as approval—any more than in our civil law silence can be construed into assent.

7th. It is claimed that Old Testament ethics conflict with New Testament ethics. This objection forgets that while the former were perfectly adapted to those times, the times were those of immature moral and spiritual attainment; hence, the seeming inferiority of Old Testament ethics is in fact

but a spiritual incompleteness: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear"; but each stage in the growth harmonizes with the following. The Old Testament's ethical precepts are supplemented and fulfilled in the New Testament's ethical principles, which reach beyond conduct into its inmost source. The thought or look or desire forbidden in the New Testament includes the act forbidden in the Old Testament. As one lesson followed another in the progressive revelation of the Old Testament dispensation, with a growing insight into the spiritual principles involved in ethical truths, it was natural that the rules of moral conduct should be codified, as it were, and merged in the basic moral principles enunciated in the New Testament.

In conclusion we note that even the sometimes incomplete and preparatory Old Testament ethics, suited to the immature moral understanding of an early people, were vastly above other contemporary moral codes. Thus, the former's humane spirit was unique, and itself evidenced a supernatural origin; there were provisions for the poor and stranger, and punishment was more humane than in Great Britain less than two centuries ago.* Other marks of superiority in Old Testament ethics, as the important means for a world's moral renewal, were the elements of spirituality and universal application. Man's sin—consciousness of which must precede and is essential to the highest morality and spirituality—were recognized, and also his accountability to a personal and holy God.

The Old Testament is not a mere story of a racial religion; it is a purposeful record to reveal God and His will to men, and man and his sins to himself—for sin was both the occasion for and hindrance to carrying out the supremely beneficent purpose that underlaid the Old Testament dispensation; it also shows the insufficient moral or spiritual power of legalism; and it discloses how a race was chosen and disciplined for a unique part in the plan for man's spiritual redemption. Incidentally, the futile effort to explain Old Testament ethics by a preconceived evolutionary dogma ignores the shaping factors and manifest purpose behind these ethics, and loses the explanatory threads seen throughout the record. Old Testament ethics are very practical in their application to conditions, consistent in their reflection of moral rightness, sound in their aim of moral training, and high in their spiritual purpose of man's reconciliation to God.

*Prof. Wm. Brenton Greene, Jr.

MORE HUMAN APOLOGETICS

The prime function of The Evangelical Student is to present from time to time a few of the many cumulative evidences that are the groundwork for our system of evangelical Christian faith. On the ground of the evidences, this is the only reasonable, logical, defensible faith; it is our "reasonable service." That is, the work of The Student is essentially of an "apologetic" nature—though necessarily very partial and incomplete.

Naturally, among these "evidences" is the evidence of a *transformed life*. Some of these are transformed suddenly, and some more slowly; but the

transformation is evident and undeniable. This is an apologetic or evidence for our evangelical faith which shows that "it works"; it is, if you please, the "pragmatic" test.

Following are a couple of cases from real life—one in this country, and one in South America—both in the experience of the gentlemen whose names are respectively attached. One was for years Superintendent of a mission in Chicago; the other is a missionary in Bolivia.

The Power of God's Word

(In Chicago)

There is nothing today that is more interesting to hear than the story of how men and women have been led to Christ. One of the strongest arguments in favor of the inspiration of the Bible is the effect it produces upon men.

Some years ago I was roused from my study by a gentle knock at the door. I arose, and was greeted by a bright eyed, intelligent looking girl of twelve. She asked me to come to their home, stating that father was in the house and would not let the rest of the family in. I put on my coat and hat and followed this girl to the place she called home. She waited in the street while I ventured in between two large buildings having a narrow passage way leading to a few small rooms by the alley. Climbing a rickety stairway, I pushed the door open but found no one in the first two rooms. Then I pushed my way into a small adjoining room, finding there a man dirty, filthy and intoxicated. I roused him from his slumber and brought him out into the small kitchen. The rest of the family were called in from the street. They came at my request and were seated in a distant corner of the room. I took my Bible and explained the wonderful way of Salvation. The story of God's love seemed to grip the man's heart; and, after a little while, he fell to his knees, seeking Christ's help in the forgiveness of his sins. He arose a new man, and asked forgiveness of his family.

This man accepted God's promises, and is now a powerful Christian worker. He was a drunkard for twenty years and in jail twenty-eight times for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. Every effort was made for his reform. Friends, money, position, all failed; but the Word of God made a new man out of him. The little girl that called for my services on the night of his conversion is now a student in the Moody Bible Institute, preparing for Christian work. Well could Peter say the Word of God liveth and abideth and endureth forever.

A. H. LEAMAN.

(In South America)

God's Word is true and His promises sure, apart from man's relation to them; yet it is only as we see them put to the acid test that we come to appreciate their power.

Jose (pronounced "Hose") Maria Flores, by his own confession, was one of the worst men in the small but exceedingly wicked town of Aiquile, Bolivia. The Gospel had never reached that far-off South American village. Sin, superstition and ignorance of the true character and purpose of God,

held undisputed sway. When the Indian Bolivian Mission sent Mrs. Roberts and myself there in 1923, they called us demons; said that we had horns and tails, and that we hung from trees by our tails, and worshipped the devil. Before our coming, Jose's heart had been prepared for the message. Some years previous Colporters had sold Bibles in the town, but there had been no one to explain the Gospel, and the glorious good news it contained had never come to light. One of these Bibles had fallen into the possession of Jose. A few weeks before our arrival in Aiquile God laid it on Jose's heart to read this book. Lacking time in the day, he tried to read it at night. The light was poor and so he relates how, lying on his bed with a candle stuck on his forehead to throw the light on the sacred page, he read from it things new and strange. When we arrived, he was eager to hear all that we had to give him. Night after night he would listen to explanations from God's Word, and noted on the flyleaf of his Bible the references we had discussed. The blessed part of it was that he gave out the truth, as fast as he received it, to his family, to his friends and even to his enemies. A few weeks later he came to me and said: "Don Roberto, I have left off drinking 'chicha'" (the native beer). We had not discussed this subject, yet the Holy Spirit, through the Word, had taught him to live a separated life.

As time went on, Jose grew in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord. After six months he was preparing to go to a combined religious feast and fair, when word came that if he attended the feast he would be killed. Quietly he went about packing his boxes, including in them tracts and gospels. Upon arriving at the feast a former friend met him and said: "Jose, if you say one word about your religion here you will do no business." Straightening himself to his full stature he replied: "I am persuaded that God called me to preach His gospel, and I will preach the Gospel and sell goods afterwards." Then followed days of testing, when the enemy stood in front of his door to dissuade people from purchasing. True to his promise, Jose witnessed to all of what the Lord Jesus had done for him. Then God undertook for him, and he returned to Aiquile a very humble man, saying: "See how God has blessed me, I have sold more goods this year than ever before in my life."

A few weeks before I left Bolivia, he was telling what a wicked man he had been and of how he had quarreled years before with a man and had told him that if he ever dared to step foot in Aiquile he would kill him. Then he turned and said: "But he doesn't know that God has changed my very nature, and so I sent him word the other day that he could come, for I would not harm him."

Jose has suffered persecution. Last spring the enemy tried to dynamite his house. Writing of it he said: "The explosion did no damage other than blowing a hole in the roof of the store, and even the debris fell into the middle of the floor where it could do no damage to my merchandise." He ended by saying, "If God be for us, who can be against us." This from a man who four years ago was a desperately wicked sinner, without God and without hope. Evidently the Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

V. D. ROBERTS.

ANOTHER BOOK LIST

In our last April's issue was a carefully chosen bibliography of fifty-three religious books. These were classified under seventeen different headings; it being the idea to indicate anywhere from two to a half-dozen of the best books under each head. There is much sound and scholarly work that covers and clearly demonstrates the various phases of the truth of evangelical Christianity; some of this material is in the form of pamphlets or periodical articles. Such matter, however, we have not given; simply books.

As stated in our April issue, we have sometimes indicated a book that is not now in current print. However, such books are generally obtainable in a good library or in a good second-hand bookstore. It is desirable that every conservative Christian student should know of these books and pick them up whenever he can; this is the best way to accumulate a worth-while library.

In this number—as the first list seems to have been appreciated—we give a shorter one along somewhat different lines, trusting that it may also be of some service to earnest seekers for truth. Since newness is not synonymous with either trueness or merit, we try to list here good books—rather than necessarily “the latest out.”

APOLOGETICS:

- Beattie, F. R.—“Apologetics” (3 v.).....(Presb'yn Com'tee Pub'n)
 Heffern, A. D.—“Apology and Polemic in the New
 Testament”(Macmillan)

ARCHEOLOGY:

- Ramsay, W. M.—“Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthi-
 ness of the New Testament”(Hodder & Stoughton)
 Sellin, Ernest—“Archeology vs. Wellhausenism”....(Hodder & Stoughton)

THE BIBLE—(See List in April, 1927 issue)

General—

- Angus, J.—“Bible Handbook”(W. F. & R. Martien)
 Giekie, C.—“Hours with the Bible”.....(James Potts & Co. '05 ed.)

The Old Testament—

- Green, W. H.—“The Canon of the Old Testament”(Scribner)
 Raven, J. H.—“Old Testament Introduction”(Revell)
 -Wright, G. F.—“Scientific Confirmation of Old Testament
 History”(Bibliotheca Sacra)

The New Testament—

- Westcott, B. F.—“General History of the Canon of the
 New Testament”(Macmillan)

Books of—

(a) *The Pentateuch*—

- Finn, A. H.—“Unity of the Pentateuch”(Marshall Bros.)
 Green, W. H.—“Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch”.....(Scribner)
 Kyle, M. G.—“The Problem of the Pentateuch”.....(Bibliotheca Sacra)
 Naville, E.—“Higher Criticism in Relation to the
 Pentateuch”(T. & T. Clark)
 Wiener, H. M.—“Pentateuchal Studies”(Bibliotheca Sacra)

- (b) *Isaiah*—
 Alexander, J. A.—“Commentary on the Prophecies of
 Isaiah” (Scribner-Armstrong)
 Orelli, C. von—“Prophecies of Isaiah” (T. & T. Clark)
- (c) *Daniel*—
 Pusey, E. B.—“Daniel the Prophet” (Funk & Wagnalls)
 Wilson, R. D.—“Studies in the Book of Daniel” (Putnam)
- (d) *The Gospels*—
 Meyer, H. A. W.—John’s Gospel (Critical and
 Exegetical) (T. & T. Clark)
 Westcott, B. F.—“Introduction to the Study of the Four
 Gospels” (Macmillan)
- (e) *The Acts*—
 Pierson, A. T.—“The Acts of the Holy Spirit” (Morgan & Scott)
 Purves, G. T.—“The Apostolic Age” (Scribner)
- (f) *The Epistles*—
 Conybeare & Howson—“Life and Epistles of St. Paul” (Scribner)
 Gloag, P. J.—“Introduction to the Catholic
 Epistles” (T. & T. Clark; Scribner)
 Gloag, P. J.—“Introduction to the Johannine
 Epistles” (T. & T. Clark; Scribner)
 Gloag, P. J.—“Introduction to the Pauline
 Epistles” (T. & T. Clark; Scribner)
 Trench, R. C.—“Epistles to the Seven
 Churches” (Parker, Son & Bourn)
- (g) *Criticism*—
 Beecher, W. J.—“Reasonable Biblical Criticism” (S. S. Times; Harper)
 Griffith-Thomas, W. H.—“Some Tests of O. T.
 Criticism” (B. I. Colport. Assn.)
 Wilson, R. D.—“Is the Higher Criticism
 Scholarly?” (Sunday School Times Co.)
- Christ—Lives of—
 Andrews, S. J.—“The Life of Our Lord” (Scribner)
 Bruce, A. S.—“The Humiliation of Christ” (Armstrong)
 Smith, D.—“The Days of His Flesh” (Armstrong)
 Young, J.—“The Christ of History” (Carter & Bros.)

(See also *The Evangelical Student*, April, 1927, page 19)

A STUDENT’S PRAYER

Almighty God, who art the Light of the thoughts that seek Thee, the
 Strength of the minds that know Thee, the Life of the souls that love Thee;
 grant us so to seek Thee that we may truly know Thee; so to know Thee that
 we may truly love Thee; so to love Thee that we may truly serve Thee.
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord.