

**INAUGURAL ADDRESSES.
THE HEBREW REVELATION.
THE GREEK TESTAMENT AND
THE METHODIST MINISTRY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649315673

Inaugural Addresses. The Hebrew revelation. The Greek testament and the methodist ministry
by Milton S. Terry

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MILTON S. TERRY

**INAUGURAL ADDRESSES.
THE HEBREW REVELATION.
THE GREEK TESTAMENT AND
THE METHODIST MINISTRY**

264.11

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES.

THE HEBREW REVELATION.

MILTON S. TERRY, D. D.,
Old Testament Exegesis.

THE GREEK TESTAMENT AND THE METHODIST MINISTRY.

CHARLES F. BRADLEY, B. D.,
New Testament Exegesis.

58

CHRISTIAN UNION.

CHARLES W. BENNETT, D. D.,
Historical Theology.

GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,
EVANSTON, ILL., MAY, 1885.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

THE HEBREW REVELATION.

MILTON S. TERRY.

THE HEBREW REVELATION.

MILTON S. TERRY.

The Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament embody the religious history and beliefs of the descendants of Abraham, and may be appropriately called the Hebrew Revelation. They were received and treated by Jesus Christ and his apostles as sacred books, having divine authority, and worthy to be diligently studied for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." Extravagant notions of their character and purpose have been entertained both among Jews and Christians. A doctrine of inspiration has been taught which logically annihilates the human element, and makes the sacred writers mere machines. False methods of interpretation have also been current, and thereby many a modern fancy has been read into the ancient oracles. And so the Bible has suffered in the house of its friends. Furthermore, some Christian teachers have exhibited a disposition to disparage the Old Testament. They have told us that it is the very imperfect product of a darker age, and has been entirely superseded by the Gospel revelation. Others have grown bitter in their judgments, and, in direct opposition to the Apostles, have affirmed that the Hebrew Scriptures are unfit for doctrine and instruction in righteousness.

We can have no controversy with the proposition that Jesus Christ is the greatest of all teachers, and the Gospel revelation is far in advance of any other revelation the world has known. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any other gospel, let him be anathema." But we do affirm that the ancient Hebrew revelation was given by God as truly as the Gospel of Jesus, and we also say, with much assurance, that the New Testament revelation contains no essential truth or doctrine which may not be seen in some

form in the older Scriptures. The highest and holiest lesson taught by Jesus, in which all the law and all prophetic revelation center, is the twofold commandment of love: First, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and second, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But, turning to that ancient law which was given through Moses, I find there these very words. It detracts nothing from the excellence of the Golden Rule that it antedates the coming of Christ, and is found in negative form even among the sayings of Confucius. Nor does it lessen our admiration for the Lord's Prayer that its several petitions were current in Rabbinic formulas before the birth of Jesus. Our Lord's pre-eminence is seen in putting those petitions in such perfect form, shorn of all vain repetitions.

So we affirm that the Hebrew revelation contains the substance of the New Testament. The Gospel is as truly in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms as in Matthew and John and the epistles of Paul.

A LITERARY TREASURE.

Let us, first, consider the Old Testament merely as a literary treasure. It will be conceded, I think, without question, that the Hebrew Scriptures furnish us more exalted strains of poetry and specimens of more impassioned eloquence than any other sacred book in the world, not excepting the New Testament. Even the profound and beautiful thoughts so characteristic of the Gospel of John are found for substance in the Hebrew Psalms and Prophets; and John's Apocalypse, the most gorgeous and artistic of all works of its class, contains scarcely a figure or symbol which is not borrowed from the older scriptures.

The Hebrew literature is unique among the written monuments of antiquity. Considered merely as a field for philological research, it opens to the student of language a world of absorbing interest. The Indo-European tongues, of which our own is but a stem, are more readily mastered

by the Western mind. But the Hebrew language, with a vocabulary of about seven thousand words, represents many of the oldest features of Semitic speech, and has a grandeur peculiar to itself. He who would master all its principles should make himself familiar with its cognate dialects, the Aramæan and the Syriac, the wide extended and voluminous Arabic, and the ancient Assyrian, now suddenly speaking from the exhumed columns and slabs of Nineveh. He should also study the fragments of the old Phœnician, and other monuments of Semitic races with whom the Israelitish people came in contact. The Samaritan and the Ethiopic will also lend him aid. But what a field is here! What lifetime long enough to traverse such a prairie! Happy he who only attains a fair command of the three sacred tongues. The noblest specimen of Indo-European speech is the classical Greek,

"Whose lofty music graced the lips of Jove."

It has a beauty and perfection like the famous Parthenon, and wisely did the divine Founder of Christianity consecrate its potent formulas of thought to enshrine and preserve the Gospel revelation. But as a linguistic study the New Testament Greek has not the richness of the old classic authors. A portion of the Old Testament is in Aramæan, but those few chapters of Daniel and Ezra have no literary beauty that we should desire them. Their chief value is like that of the huge slabs lately dug from the ruins of old Babylonian palaces, whose inscriptions testify that God once spoke to those barbaric kings in their golden splendor. But if the Greek may be likened to the Parthenon, and the Aramæan to the broken relics of fallen monarchies, the Hebrew tongue is like the temple of Solomon—a wonder of the world. It is half hieroglyphic. Its letters are a picture-gallery. Its emotional expressiveness adds infinite charm to its sacred literature. It appears in full development in its most ancient records, as if it had been crystallized into im-

perishable form by the marvels of the Exodus and the fires of Sinai.

There is scarcely a sentence in the entire Old Testament which does not furnish a most interesting word-study to the Hebrew scholar, and yet it is rather in their broader aspects that the literary beauties of these ancient records chiefly appear. We open Genesis, and the narrative of creation has the measured tread of a highly finished poem, one that might easily have been transmitted through many ages by oral tradition alone. Snatches of ancient song, like Lamech's words, and the controversy between Jacob and Laban, breathe and burn with wildest passion. Is there a more charming romance in all the realm of fiction than the story of Joseph? Can there be found models of grandeur and sublimity like the narrative of the plagues of Egypt and the giving of the law at Horeb? Is there among all the pastoral poems of the ancient world an idyl equal to the book of Ruth, or a drama of such artistic finish as the Song of Solomon? The Psalms abound with lyrics more exquisite than anything to be found in Greek anthology or Indian Vedas. The splendor of Isaiah's diction, as well as the majesty of his thought, entitle him to be called the winged psalmist of humanity's holiest hopes. And so, take psalmody, prophecy, history, government, legislation, politics, and the old Hebrew literature furnishes ideals of incomparable excellence, and in lavish profusion.

Students of English literature are wont to tell how much we owe to Pope's "Essay on Man," and how many words and phrases in common use are due to Shakespeare. The Pilgrim's Progress has become the common heritage of the English world; Milton's immortal epic sings on with majestic swell, and Burns has so entranced the heart of Scotland that over his magic verses the national spirit ever wakes,

"And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

But have these or any others eclipsed the Hebrew bards? In Hebrew literature we truly have no Burns, no Shakespeare, no Milton, no Homer, no Plato; but O how much that transcends them all! Jurisprudence and philosophy, profounder and safer than anything dreamed of by Solon or by Plato; grandeur and sublimity and fiery passion, powerfully depicted without the degrading polytheism of Homer. Bunyan's best thoughts are borrowed from the Bible, and the warp and woof of Milton's "great argument" were gathered from the Hebrew revelation. Shakespeare and Burns, in their happiest strains, speak to the popular heart; but with all their wealth of sententious phrases they have not equaled the Proverbs of Solomon. Their works abound with too large a proportion of what is coarse and low; and in all their nobler efforts at the tender, the pure, and the holy, they can produce no lay or sonnet that will live and sing in the souls of men like the twenty-third Psalm, that deathless nightingale of lyric song.

HISTORICAL VALUE.

But the literary beauties of the Hebrew Scriptures are, perhaps, their least important quality. These Scriptures are a vast mine of archæological and historical wealth. The Pentateuch and the prophetic books embody more solid information concerning the origin and history of the great nations of antiquity than any other monument of the past.

Sir Henry Rawlinson affirms his belief that the genealogy of Noah's descendants in the tenth chapter of Genesis "is probably of the very remotest antiquity, and is undoubtedly the most authentic record we possess for the affiliation of those branches of the human race which sprung from the triple stock of the Noachidæ." (Rawlinson, *Historical Evidences*, page 280.) Another learned ethnologist declares it to be "one of the oldest documents in the world, written in an age when as yet historical science had not be-