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For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. *Rom. 10, 10.*

I.

In 1917, the quadricentennial year of the Reformation, the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States passed a resolution to publish, as a memorial of the Jubilee, a German-Latin-English edition of the symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In the present year, memorable as the quadricentennial of Luther's epochal confession before Church and Empire at Worms, the task was completed, and the trilingual Concordia is now on the market.

The writer approaches with some trepidation the task, with which he has been commissioned, of writing an announcement of this volume for the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY. The publication of the *Triglot Concordia* is more than a bold book-making venture; it is more than an achievement of Christian scholarship even; it is an event that marks an epoch in the history of the Lutheran Church. A century hence, if the world stands, it will be easier to appraise its importance than it is to-day, when with eager eyes we are scanning the pages of this fine volume, with the faint odor of bindery still upon it. Even a generation hence there will be a better perspective than we possess to-day, to measure its importance to the Church of the Reformation and to the kingdom of God. And this all the more so if it is true, as we hold it to be, that the Lutheran Church is even now entering upon a new era of growth and development, greater than any of the past. Who, then, standing at the threshold of a new day for Lutheranism, shall say what this book, containing the history of its great trials and the memorials of its triumphs, the platform upon which it invites the Church Visible to unite for future labor and conquest, — what this *Concordia Triglotta* means to the Church of the coming years?

So much we can discern even now, that its publication at this time will hearten every faithful disciple of Luther in the age of conflict that lies ahead. For let it be said, if there ever was an age in which men ought to hesitate before venturing the issuance

Little Journeys in the Higher Anticriticism.

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I. The Myth Hypothesis.

Of late years a process has been going on which may be described as the unmythifying of myths. Things pronounced incredible and impossible prove to have actually occurred, characters regarded as fabulous have turned out to be genuine flesh-and-blood performers in the human drama, and places thought to have been as fictitious as fairyland have stood forth as actual, solid, brick-and-stone cities. While most men were inclined to admit the concrete reality of Troy, there were some to whom it was merely a creature of Homer's imagination. Schliemann's work with pick and shovel disillusioned them. To quote Sayce: "Troy has been found, though critics declared that it existed only in cloudland." A respectable number of scholars asserted that the descriptions of Nineveh in the Bible and in Herodotus, Strabo, and Diodorus were nothing but fiction, and when Layard unearthed the ruins of its temples and palaces, they were almost as much astonished as if he had discovered Utopia or the land of Lilliput.

Some figures lost in dim antiquity, such, for example, as Minos and Menes, were generally assumed to be mythical. But within the past few years excavation has revealed the palace of Minos in Crete, and a press dispatch only a little while ago brought the news that the golden seal of King Menes, first of Egyptian kings, had been stolen from the Oriental Museum of Chicago University! The bearers of those names, after all, were not a poet's dream or a fabulist's invention, but actual wielders of kingly power.

With fine scorn the naturalistic criticism of the Old Testament relegated to the domain of myth King Sargon, whose name occurs but once in the Bible and not even once in classical literature. But the clay tablets have taught us that the person so named was a veritable ruler of Assyria and father of Sennacherib. The

case of Belshazzar is a close parallel to this, the unmythifying of a myth being involved in each instance.

The Hittites furnish us with another example. They disappeared as a people, leaving no trace. Their name was found nowhere but in the Bible, and they were regarded by the rationalistic critics as about as historical as the Lapiths and Centaurs of popular Greek poetry. To-day we know that the Hittites were a nation prominent in the affairs of the ancient Orient, strong enough to contend with Egypt on equal terms. Their very physiognomic characteristics are known to the scholars.

Thus truth has spoken from the dust of long-buried empires and civilizations and put to shame the all-knowingness in which a pseudo-scholarship sometimes indulges.

And still the tendency to dissipate Old Testament characters into the mist of legend and myth persists. There is something attractive about the demonstration of a theory by means of striking analogy. It is the law of identity that is working out, in this case, unlogical and bizarre results, as in a recent book by Willis Brewer entitled *Egypt and Israel*, a most entertaining volume, in which the author derives all the ideas of the Hebrew Scriptures and most of the story of Jesus Christ from Egyptian mythology! The book has several illustrations from Egyptian monuments, one of which bears the legend: "The Seker Boat of Egyptian Inscriptions; supposed in this volume to be the Scai-rah or Goat Barge [!] which carried off Enoch and Elijah." It is clear that seventy years of progress in comparative philology have left this writer practically untouched.

Speaking before a Chicago club, Professor De Jassey, an Orientalist, recently traced Bible characters and episodes to mythology. The traditions of the Bible are allegorical, he said. "There are," for instance, "three manifestations of the sun. Sarah is the female energy [?!] of the sun. The apparent indecency of Sarah, passing the night at the palace of the Egyptian Pharaoh, is nothing but the abandonment of the heavenly abode during the night. In the morning she comes back, and the presents which Abraham receives are nothing but the presents which the sun uncovers." In the same manner are explained the apparent indecencies of Lot and his two daughters. "Lot represents the sun. In the morning he starts from the arms of his elder daughter, Aurora, the dawn. In the evening he returns in the arms of his younger, twilight." The myth of Lot's wife, who is transformed into a pillar of salt,

is due to the double signification of the word Sarah, which means sun or princess and salt. "Such myths, due to double significations of words, are met in every language and every mythology." In the same way De Jassey cleared up several other "indecencies" of the Biblical narrative. However — *Nec tibi auxilio, nec istis defensoribus S. S. egent!* Indeed, they and their aid are about as welcome to Christian theologians as an open bottle of sulphureted hydrogen in a perfumer's shop. We are not willing to grant that our Bible is a tissue of legend and myth in order to get rid of some problems in ethics and other hard places. But aside from that, the method of De Jassey, which, as employed by him, is simply blind guessing along lines of a crude and superficial use of analogy, may be turned, as we shall see, into a most effective dialectic weapon *against* a reconstruction of Old Testament history, which dissipates many of its characters and incidents into myth.

The history of this critical method would in itself seem to bid the specialists in that field to walk warily. Before the rise of the science of language, about eighty years ago, students of mythology attempted to explain the myths of Egypt, Greece, and Rome as reminiscences of Biblical narratives. One learned author "proved" that the entire history of Egypt is nothing but the history of Israel, told under a different nomenclature. Menes was Abraham, Sesostris was Jacob, and Thebes was Noah's ark! The author, the Abbe Guerin du Rocher, was honored by the greatest universities of Europe as the founder of scientific historiography. Then came a complete reversal of learned opinion, and the narratives of the Bible were identified with the myths of India, Egypt, and Greece, *from which* the Hebrew writers were supposed to have drawn their material. Joshua's "Sun, stand still!" was discovered in the Iliad, where Agamemnon cries: "Do not, O Zeus, permit the sun to sink," etc. Samson, carrying the gates, is Hercules, Joshua is explained, etymologically, by a reference to Sanskrit, etc.

The explanation of Old Testament "myths" on the basis of etymology has had a tremendous vogue. However, the true classification of languages once understood, all these parallelisms of Hebrew with Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Gothic, etc., vanished into thin air. Is it then a species of atavism when such a modern work as Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible* contains paragraphs which build on this foundation? In Prof. Barton's article on *Israel* is an instance of this kind. Jacob had six sons from Leah. Now, says Dr. Barton, Leah probably (!) means "wild cow." This

apparently (!) means that these tribes were near of kin and possessed as a common totem the "wild cow" or "bovine antelope." Rachel means "ewe," and hence the tribes Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin had a different totem. Prof. James Wallace, of New York, in reviewing the Hastings's *Dictionary*, remarks that "this Leah-totem business is about as conclusive as Mark Twain's etymology of 'horse.' It is derived from the Latin *equus*. The 'quus' is dropped and 'e' is changed to 'horse' for euphony!" And he continues:—

"This spinning out of history from etymology is a delightful pastime, albeit the history evolved is 'probably' all 'moonshine.'

"We have an itching of pen to try it ourselves. Our first parents were both Greeks. Adam is clearly derived from 'a' privative and 'dam' seen in the Greek verb *damao*, 'subdue'; 'conquer.' So Adam was called 'unsubdued' or 'subduer,' and as it was his business to 'subdue' the garden, what name could be more appropriate?

"In like manner Eve is as plainly derived from the Greek *Hebe*, 'youth.' To this day the Greek 'b' is pronounced 'v'; 'h' is a mere breathing and does not count. Now what could be more beautiful and appropriate than that the first mother of mankind should be called 'youth'! We are sure that Adam and Eve were alike charmed with the name. But their children were Greeks, too, of course. Cain is derived from the Greek *kainos*, 'new'; and for a first son this simply 'beats the band' for appropriateness. If proof is wanted, we find it in the fact that even now we know people called 'New,' 'Newman,' etc.

"In the same manner Abel is easily derived from 'a' emphatic or intensive, and 'bel' from the root of *ballo*, 'throw' (cf. *belos*, a dart). Hence Abel was a 'mighty thrower.' He no doubt became such from stoning the dogs, 'wild cows' and 'bovine antelopes,' off his sheep! So we conclude that our first parents and the two sons were pure-blooded Ionian Greeks. Of course they were!"

In view of the negative attitude which historical criticism has taken over against argumentation from an etymology based on similarity of sound — Max Mueller's famous dictum is that "Sound etymology has nothing to do with sound" — such reasoning as Prof. Barton's must be regarded as a case of "arrested development." But the newest of sciences, the science of religion, has supplied new lines of thought along which the origin of Hebrew "mythology" might be traced out. Analogies are now discovered

with the astral and solar myths of various ancient peoples, from the Sumerians to the Arabs. A typical instance is Goldziher's *Der Mythos bei den Hebræern* (1876). Goldziher found naturalistic allusions everywhere in the Old Testament. Levi signifies serpent, a reference to lightning. Cain is a Hebrew equivalent for Hephaistos. Joseph is the fructifying rain. Peleg begets Reu: the brook begets the willow-tree. Rachel weeps: the clouds are dropping rain. Solar myths bulk large. The nightly passage of Israel through the Red Sea is the nightly journey of the sun. Shechem violates Dinah: Aurora elopes with the sun. David slays Goliath: the sun-hero throws stones (?) at the storm monster. Balaam: the monster (= storm cloud) which swallows the sun. Abraham slays (!) Isaac: the night slays her son, the twilight. Jephthah offers up his daughter: the sun overcomes the dawn. Jonah in the fish's belly: the storm-serpent swallows up the sun. And so on, through a volume of 400 pages. The climax is reached in its discussion of Jacob and his twelve sons. Jacob, says Goldziher, signifies the nightly firmament, and his sons are the moon and eleven stars. However, in a previous chapter Goldziher had demonstrated that one of these sons, Judah, undeniably is the sun. Hence, under this aspect, he does not belong to the family of the night-heavens. Now, is Goldziher nonplussed by this contradiction? Not in the least. He says: "Whoever seeks and finds contradictions, must not enter a complaint against him who reconstructs and revivifies (!) the myths, but against the myth-creating soul of man. With the human soul he has his quarrel, not with the methods of mythological science" — !

Everybody knows to-day that these efforts to reconstruct a Hebrew mythology out of allusions to solar and astral myths have met a severe check through the work of the archeologist. It is all very well to sit at one's desk in Vienna, Berlin, or Oxford, and with the aid of glossaries and phonetic tables to construct parallelisms between the patriarchs and Egyptian or Hindu myths. But when the excavator puts his spade into the soil of Asia Minor, Crete, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, and there finds seals and tablets dating from pre-Abrahamitic days, containing names familiar to us from Bible story, — Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, — names undeniably borne by real men who signed contracts, leased land, etc., the reconstructions of mythological science vapor off into nothingness. The case becomes, if possible, more doubtful when, without any recourse to the archeological argument, simply by pitting analogy

against analogy, the conclusions of the myth-hunting critics of the Bible are tested. As a matter of fact, history itself contains analogies between legend and fact so strange that extreme caution seems indicated in applying to the stories of an ancient people a criticism which causes them to appear as a deposit of myth. That in the slaying of Siegfried, by the jealousy of Brunhild, or by the anxious solicitude of Kriemhild, we have a fragment of ancient solar myths, may be fully recognized. The analogies — true correspondences — with the Edda, the Rig Veda, and with Persian epics are quite plain. But when we find this myth again in the Nibelungenlied, its heroes are mixed up with living historical persons of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries who actually bore the names of the mythological characters! Nay, the lover of Brunhild has actually been identified with Siegbert, King of Austrasia from 561 to 575, who was actually married to the famous Brunhault, who actually defeated the Huns, and was actually murdered, as was Siegfried by Hagen, at the instigation of one Fredegond, the mistress of his brother. This coincidence between myth and history is so great that it induced some critics to derive the whole legend of the Nibelungen from Austrasian history — (thus reversing the process of Biblical criticism!) — a derivation which is, however, negatived by references to the characters of the myth in the writings of King Siegbert's historian, Jornandes. But is it not clear that the argument from analogy is a very dangerous one to apply in the criticism of ancient narratives? What, to cite only one other instance, would the critic say to the discovery of a Babylonian or Hebrew record which set forth the exploits of the kings of three successive dynasties, each of which dynasties were made to expire with *three sonless brothers*? Would he not promptly "unmask" the ancient forger who so boldly presumed on the gullibility of his age? Yet in the history of France, the dynasty of the Capetians ended with three brothers who died without male issue — Louis X, Philip V, and Charles IV; the house of Valois expired with three sonless brothers — Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III; and the house of Bourbon with Louis XVI, Louis XVIII, and Charles X, three brothers who had no sons to succeed them! Such regular sequences, if found in Numbers or in Judges, would be regarded as positive proof of forgery.

If the critics of the Bible to-day discredit as altogether fabulous such narratives as the fall of man and the translation of Enoch, the story of the Flood, the ten plagues of Egypt, the

theophanies, and, in fact, all miracles recorded in the Bible, and explain them with reference to the "myth-making" period in religious history, we must understand that the *prius* is not any tangible evidence of such origin of the supernatural element in Bible narrative, but a bias of the critic, which does not permit him to assume the reality of the supernatural. Hence, too, we note that no matter how much the conception of mythology, as a phenomenon in religious history, has changed, the reduction of the supernatural in the Bible story to fiction persists. The attitude of Cheyne, Jeremias, Jastrow, and the entire *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* to-day is essentially the same as that of the rationalists of a hundred years ago. The mental attitude is the *prius*, the "demonstration," the *posterius*.

As long ago as 1819, Archbishop Whately wrote: "It is well known with how much learning and ingenuity the rationalists of the German school have labored to throw discredit on the literal interpretation of the narratives, both of the Old and New Testaments; representing them as *myths*, that is, fables allegorically describing some physical or moral phenomena — philosophical principles — systems, etc., — under the figure of actions performed by certain ideal personages; these allegories having been, afterwards, through the mistake of the vulgar, believed as history. Thus the real historical existence of such a person as the supposed Founder of the Christian religion, and the acts attributed to Him, are denied in the literal sense, and the whole of the evangelical history is explained on the 'mythical' theory."

Proceeding upon this theory, and applying the reasoning of the rationalists of his time, Whately then sets forth his doubts concerning the historicity of such a character as Napoleon Bonaparte! "Is it not possible," he asks, "that *Buona-Parte* may have been originally a sort of cant term applied to the 'good' (that is, the bravest, or most patriotic) 'part' of the French army, collectively, and have been afterwards mistaken for the proper name of an individual? Now," he adds, "it is a remarkable circumstance, in reference to the point at present before us, that an eminent authoress of this century has distinctly declared that Napoleon Bonaparte was 'not a man, but a System.'"

We are quoting from the earliest example of what we might call the higher anticriticism, or the *reductio ad absurdum* of the higher criticism, Whately's *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte*, directed primarily against the skepticism of David Hume.

(To be continued.)