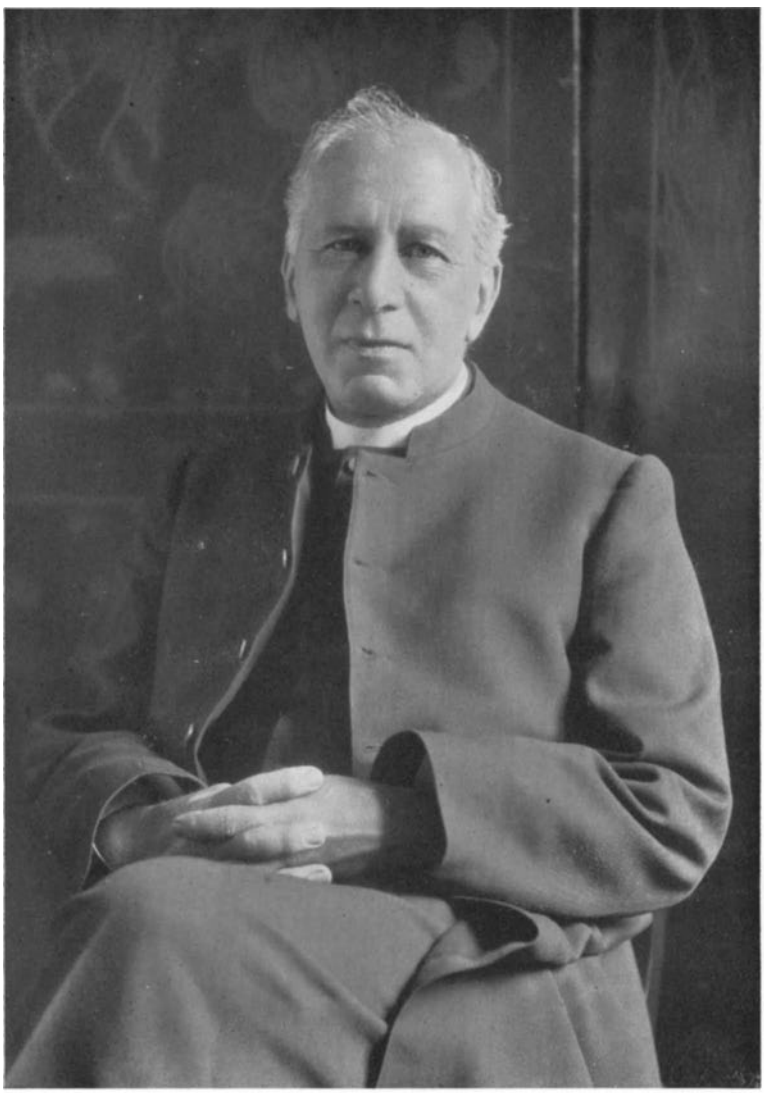
THE CHURCH OF ISRAEL



Yours very sincerely
Robert H. Kennett

THE CHURCH OF ISRAEL

STUDIES AND ESSAYS

By the late

ROBERT HATCH KENNETT, D.D.

Late Regius Professor of Hebrew and Fellow of Queens' College in the University of Cambridge, Canon of Ely

Edited with an Introduction
by
S. A. COOK

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PREFACE

For over forty years the late Professor Kennett was an enthusiastic teacher and preacher who will never be forgotten by anyone who had the privilege of coming into close contact with him. His activities in speech and in writing were ceaseless, and throughout all there ran certain leading ideas, representing an inner unity of conviction. It had been his hope some day to gather together the threads of his work, and crown his life with a book, the final embodiment of his meaning. But this was denied him. Nor was there to be found among the material which he left behind him any indication that he had begun to give effect to his purpose. His scattered works remain, and only he could have set forth the faith that was in him, and the teaching for which he might hope that his name would be remembered.

To some, perhaps, Kennett's name calls up only sundry "extreme" theories or "advanced" views touching Old Testament history and religion or the dates of Biblical writings; and undoubtedly he was a perfectly independent and fearless thinker who stood apart from the "orthodox" Biblical criticism of the day. But to his friends and pupils he was a frank, stimulating and lovable teacher, one who could make the Old Testament real to them in a way that is not usually given even to the "safest" and most "moderate" of writers. His religious sincerity and his "advanced" criticism were of one piece; and he inspired men, and filled with enthusiasm even those who, it may be, could not grasp or accept his particular critical views.

The object of this volume is to collect—if not to rescue—some essays or articles which represent Kennett's most typical work, and illustrate his most distinctive contributions to Biblical study. They supplement his more specialised writings, in particular his important Old Testament

Essays (1928), *by essays of a simpler and more introductory character, suitable for readers less familiar with the details of Biblical criticism. Also, it is hoped they manifest the general unity and coherence of his life-work as a whole. For myself, I am convinced—even more than when I took this volume in hand—that his work is far more valuable for Biblical study than is generally recognised. It is true that Kennett held certain views which are not shared by Old Testament scholars in general; but though all are in agreement as against conservative, traditionalist or anti-critical attitudes, there are serious differences of opinion amongst them over some far-reaching questions of history and religion. In fact, the present position of Old Testament criticism is such that the reader who desires to know something about the field should not ignore a treatment so fresh, so penetrating and so coherent as is Kennett's. His is a new and helpful approach to the subject, for he always had in mind the perplexities of the beginner, the special interests of theological students and the advancement of Biblical criticism.*

The contents of this volume are as follows:

1. *The article "Israel", which originally appeared in* 1914 *in Hastings'* Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (*T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh*). *It was, as he once wrote to me* (1927), "*the result of a good deal of independent labour to reconstruct the history of Israel so as to account for the Old Testament*", *and to the end he saw no reason to modify the general theory as set forth in it. I know of no historical sketch so concise and full and original as his; and as it is an indispensable guide to all his writings, it is a cause of great satisfaction that Messrs T. and T. Clark have permitted me to give effect to his earnest wish that it should be republished. It is here reprinted with a few slight adjustments to its present surroundings.*

2. *Kennett's theory of the compilation and date of Deuteronomy, first indicated in January* 1905 (*published*

in extenso *in* 1906), *was continuously developed, checked and elaborated. It was perhaps most clearly expounded in the booklet* Deuteronomy and the Decalogue (*Cambridge University Press*, 1920), *from which it is here reprinted. Not only is it a necessary supplement to the relevant paragraphs in Chap. I, but the problems of the book of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic writings are now being discussed from different points of view. I do not think it is unfair to say that Kennett's name, when it is mentioned, seems to be better known than his arguments, although these are in many respects his own, and of independent value. Moreover his theory is part of a larger and coherent view of Old Testament literature, history and religion which I, at all events, miss elsewhere; and it has a finish and completeness about it which sets it in a class by itself. Prominent in the theory are the varying attitudes to sacrifice. This leads us to:*

3. *The little-known booklet on* Sacrifice, *published in* 1924 *as No. 5 of the Church of England Handbooks. It gives a convenient exposition of the chief points necessary for an understanding of the significance and vicissitudes of sacrifice in the Old Testament and the New. The subject of sacrifice and the language of sacrifice was uppermost in Kennett's mind and recurs repeatedly in his work; and this brief but far from slight sketch so well illustrates his standpoint as teacher and preacher that I venture to hope that it will be agreed that it should be made more accessible to Biblical students. It is reprinted with a slight omission on p.* 144 (*and note*).

4. *Under the heading* The Grammar of Old Testament Study *are collected various sections and paragraphs from Kennett's writings, illustrating a line of teaching that he made his own. He was firmly convinced of the necessity of elucidating Biblical phraseology and modes of thought, and as an interpreter of the Hebrew mind he excelled. Whatever be one's attitude to Biblical theology the all-important ques-*

tion is whether the significant Hebrew terms are rightly understood, and whether due allowance has been made for Hebrew metaphor and symbolism. It is to this subject that Professor Kennett repeatedly returned. For the present purpose the freest use has been made of the chapter on "Some Hebrew Idioms in the Old and New Testaments" in In Our Tongues (*Arnold and Co., London*, 1907), *his essay on* Early Ideals of Righteousness (*T. and T. Clark*, 1907), *articles in* The Interpreter, *and unpublished material.*

5. *Chapter V, "Old Testament Parallels to Christ and the Gospels", derives ultimately from an article in the* Hibbert Journal, *October* 1906. *This was often expanded and modified, and free use has been made here of some of the redactions. Kennett insisted that students of the Hebrew prophets and students of the Gospels have problems in several respects similar, especially as regards the prophets; and in approaching the New Testament in the light of the Old—or* vice versa*—he had much to say that was suggestive. Both Chaps. IV and V are suitable introductory chapters, especially for the ordinary reader. They are not so technical as the first two, and readers will not fail to perceive how naturally in Kennett the "religious" and the "critical" sides were united.*

6. *Kennett's treatment of the prophets—of the New Testament as well as of the Old—and their attitude to sacrifice leads to the thoughtful study of* The Last Supper, *originally published in* 1921 (*Heffer and Sons, Cambridge*). *It was widely appreciated at the time, and is still valuable, so that it seemed desirable to reprint it here (with a few omissions in the Greek), not only for its own sake, but because it rounded off the series and gave a certain completeness to the main themes of his work.*

These themes may be arranged thus:

(*a*) *the interpretation of Biblical language with special reference to metaphor and symbolism, and to ideas of sacrifice;*

(*b*) *the differing and changing attitudes to sacrifice in the Old Testament, their historical background, and the reconstruction of history involved;*

(*c*) *the interconnexion between the Testaments as regards subject-matter, principles of interpretation, and the significance of the prophets, culminating in Jesus of Nazareth.*

These half-dozen essays might perhaps have been left to speak for themselves; but on going through the whole material it was found that these themes recurred, especially in addresses and lectures, with many interesting variations, supplements and elucidations. It seemed desirable, therefore, to make some use of the more important and instructive remarks which might otherwise be overlooked or, in some cases, never see the light. Hence I have prepared an Introduction (based upon the "appreciation" in the Journal of Theological Studies, *Vol. XXXIII, pp.* 225–236) *wherein I have attempted to weave together a connected account of Professor Kennett's teaching from beginning to end, with references for those readers who may wish to pursue the study farther. That there may be students who will wish to do so I sincerely hope; and they may be glad to know that all the unpublished material (including his studies of the Hebrew text of Psalms, Job, etc.) is preserved in the Library of Queens' College.*

This Introduction, accordingly, surveys Professor Kennett's leading views on the aims and principles of Biblical interpretation and criticism, the interrelations between criticism and religion, and his general critical position, particularly with reference to those views which characterised him. It emphasises what he emphasised, and also what seems to me of special importance; and while care has of course been taken to reproduce his views justly, in a few of the footnotes brackets have been used in some possibly ambiguous cases in order to make it clear that the statements represent my own opinion (e.g. pp. xxviii *n.* 3, xliii *n.* 5).

The title chosen for this volume is one used by Professor

Kennett himself from time to time. "*History as a modern historian understands the word*", *he wrote in* Old Testament Essays (*p.* 91), "*is scarcely to be found between the covers of the Old Testament.*" *But a profounder history can be traced; for the problems of the Old Testament are essentially religious problems, turning upon questions of the development of religion, and leading to far-reaching conceptions of the interconnexion of religion and history. For Kennett's historical scheme his studies of the seventh to the fifth centuries* B.C. *are of really cardinal importance. There he does not stand entirely alone, and the general tendency, as I see it, is towards new and sweeping views of the significance of that period for the history and religion of Palestine* (*see p.* xlvi f.). *And until this period has been more deeply studied it seems to me that his no less distinctive views of the religious and literary activities of the Maccabean age* (*second century* B.C.), *wherein he stands more by himself, cannot be fairly appraised: they certainly cannot be summarily dismissed.*

We commonly speak of the history of Israel, but Professor Kennett repeatedly emphasises the familiar fact of the early fusion of Israelites and Canaanites, and all that this meant. Later there were the rival kingdoms, Israel of the north and Judah of the south. But after the fall of Samaria a new "Israel" came into being; it is the significance of this for the seventh to the fifth centuries B.C. *that has to be stressed. Subsequently a Judah, in fact a rather mixed Judah, repudiated an alien Samaria, and claimed to be the true Israel. Finally there is the new Christian "Israel" which, inspired by the spirit of Jesus, Who is in the line of the Hebrew prophets, broke away and became an independent growth. And this is not all, for Kennett goes farther and, adopting St Paul's conception of religion and history, believes that "when the Christian Church is freed from the last vestige of Judaism" the time will have come for the people who rejected Christianity to be received back, and the Christian Church will be "reinvigorated with the Jewish power of faith and with Jewish poetical intuition"* (In Our Tongues,

p. 53 f.). Thus Kennett's historical treatment of religion and his religious interpretation of history are interwoven; and whatever may be the new stage towards which Biblical criticism is tending, it does not seem extravagant to believe that the value of Kennett's contribution will be ever more highly estimated and that he will have a rightful place in the annals of Old Testament Criticism.

For permission to reprint, quote or otherwise utilise certain published work cordial acknowledgments are due throughout. To Messrs T. and T. Clark for Chap. I and part of Chap. IV, and for other parts of Chap. IV to Messrs Edward Arnold and Co., and the Dean of Canterbury (The Very Rev. Hewlett Johnson, editor of The Interpreter*); for details see below, p.* xxv *n.* 3. *Further, to the editor of* The Hibbert Journal *in the case of Chap. V, to Messrs Heffer and Sons for Chap. VI, and to Archdeacon Paige Cox for assistance in the case of Chap. III. Also, the editor of* The Journal of Theological Studies *has allowed me to use my "appreciation" of Professor Kennett (April* 1932*), which is here considerably expanded.*

I am indebted to Professor Kennett's sister, Miss B. L. Kennett, for information as to his earlier days (p. xv f.*), and to his daughter, Miss Domneva Kennett, who had from time to time acted as his amanuensis and indexer, and who has kindly assisted me by reading the proofs and by preparing the indexes.*

Messrs Lafayette have courteously permitted the publication of the excellent and speaking photograph of Professor Kennett which will be welcomed by all who knew him; and I am further indebted to the magazine of his College for the block. Thanks are due, moreover, to the President and Fellows of Queens' College for generously contributing to the publication of this volume, to the Syndics of the University Press for undertaking it and to the Staff of the Press for their help and skill.

In conclusion I should like to say how great a privilege I have felt it to be able to perform this last duty. I learnt

much from Professor Kennett from my first days as an undergraduate in 1891; *but it is difficult to express how much more I have gained during the last few months while studying his published and unpublished work. I would hope and believe that others too will share this experience.* Ἀποθανὼν ἔτι λαλεῖ.

S. A. COOK

CAMBRIDGE

July, 1933

INTRODUCTION

ROBERT HATCH KENNETT (1864–1932) HIS CONTRIBUTION TO BIBLICAL RESEARCH

THE main outlines of the life of Robert Hatch Kennett can be briefly stated.[1] He was the son of John Kennett by his second wife Jane Hatch of Chegworth, Ulcombe, Kent, and was born at Nether Court, St Lawrence-in-Thanet, on September 9th, 1864. The four other children of that marriage were daughters; but Robert had one step-brother, fifteen years his senior, and four still older step-sisters. As a boy he was always delicate, and his lack of robust health and the preponderance of the feminine element in his generation at home did not encourage the development in him of a taste for vigorous athleticism as required for cricket and football. But he was always fond of exercise of a somewhat less strenuous kind, and particularly delighted in walking, mountain-climbing and tennis. It was never a matter of regret to him in after life that his school-days belonged to the time before the era of compulsory games. He thought that these latter had become something of a tyranny, robbing boys of the necessary leisure and freedom for the growth of individual tastes and the cultivation of hobbies. In spite of deeply ingrained conservatism, perhaps inherited from his mother's family, he was always, from nursery days onwards, contending for the liberty of the subject, particularly in matters of opinion.

Robert began his school life at the age of nine, as day-boy at a private school in Ramsgate, where he remained nearly five years, until he was transferred to Merchant Taylors' School, at the old Charterhouse premises in London. He had already firmly made up his mind that he wished to take Holy Orders; and had begun the pastoral office at the age of twelve by taking a Sunday School class of six small boys. He can never, in later life, have

[1] The details of his early life have been supplied by his sister, Miss B. L. Kennett.

taken more pains over the composition of a University Sermon than he was wont to take over the preparation of his lesson to these urchins, not, however, because he possessed the premature piety of the Fairchild children, but because he was a born teacher. At school he was on the Classical Side, and was hoping to gain one of the Classical Scholarships open to Merchant Taylors and tenable at St John's College, Oxford. At that time there was much the same connexion between Merchant Taylors' and St John's as between Winchester and New College. But at the age of sixteen a bad break-down in health necessitated his absence from school for a whole year, and this put him quite out of the running for this particular scholarship. The disappointment, bitter as it was, was perhaps a blessing in disguise.

He had made a start in Hebrew before his break-down, and on his return, he began, on the advice of the Head Master, Dr Baker, to prepare for an open Hebrew Scholarship at Queens' College, Cambridge. The Hebrew master was the Rev. C. J. Ball, and no doubt from this enthusiastic scholar he gained something of that love for Semitic studies which was to inspire his whole life. Among his contemporaries were G. A. Cooke and, rather later, C. F. Burney, both of whom entered at Oxford and subsequently became respectively Regius Professor of Hebrew and Oriel Professor of Interpretation of Holy Scripture. Robert won the scholarship in 1882 and went into residence in the October of that year. The College immediately seized and always retained his deep devotion and loyalty.

The President of Queens' College, Dr Phillips, was a keen student of Hebrew and Syriac, and among the Fellows was William Wright, the leading scholar of world-wide renown in all branches of Semitic philology. In 1883, Robertson Smith came to Cambridge, and Kennett was one of his pupils in Arabic. In 1886 he gained a First Class in the Semitic Languages Tripos, as it was then called, and in 1887 he was Tyrwhitt's Scholar and Mason Hebrew Prizeman. Those were the great days of Semitic studies in Cambridge; and Kennett had as his contemporaries A. A. Bevan (later the Lord Almoner's Reader in Arabic), N. McLean (later University Lecturer in Aramaic

and the present Master of Christ's), and F. C. Burkitt, his first pupil (afterwards Norrisian Professor of Divinity).

In the same year, 1887, Kennett was ordained, and also appointed Chaplain and College Lecturer in Hebrew and Syriac. In 1890, only four years after his Tripos, he was already examining in the Tripos, as Inceptor in Arts! He also acted as Hebrew Lecturer at Gonville and Caius College from 1891 to 1893, when he succeeded the great Syriac scholar, Prof. Bensly, as University Lecturer in Aramaic. Ten years later Dr Kirkpatrick, the Regius Professor of Hebrew since 1882, was elected Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity, and Kennett was elected to the Chair and the Canonry at Ely then attached to it.

Kennett was assiduous in furthering the progress of Biblical studies by both the spoken and the written word; and, as he was an admirable and inspiring lecturer, he was always in great request. Undoubtedly he overtaxed his strength, and more than once he suffered seriously. But to the end he seemed to be full of zest, in spite of poor health; and the end came rather suddenly, on February 15th, 1932. He had married in 1889, and left a daughter and two sons, one of whom, a brilliant and promising young official in the Government of Nigeria, survived him only a few months.[1]

Eloquent tributes were paid to one who for over forty years had been a successful and ever stimulating teacher.[2] With all that has been said of his scholarship and of his simple goodness I gladly associate myself, while undertaking here the far from easy task of describing his work in the field of Biblical studies. I can make no attempt to record all his writings and all that he stood for; but as an old pupil—from the Michaelmas Term of 1891—I propose to note various aspects of the work of a scholar

[1] Austin Kennett had been formerly employed by the Government of Egypt, and during his service made an excellent study of the principle and practice of Bedouin justice.

[2] Especially *The Times*, Feb. 16; *The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 19 (Mr H. Loewe), *The Cambridge Review*, Feb. 26 (Prof. Burkitt), *The Modern Churchman*, May, 1932, pp. 57–62 (Mr R. B. Henderson), and pp. 63–66 (Prof. Creed), and *The Dial* (Queens' College Magazine), Lent Term, 1932 (Rev. C. T. Wood).

to many of whose more outstanding views I have long been attracted.

Kennett's power, writes one of his pupils,[1] was due to both the man and the message. He was keenly alive to the revolution in the realm of religious thought since the day when "Bible reading, irrespective of the passage read, was considered as an end in itself, a sacramental means of communion with God".[2] The task of our age is to reinterpret the Old Testament, avoiding the extremes of a belief in the literal inspiration, the entire trustworthiness and the equal value of every passage therein and the attitude of indifference or hostility towards it, the repudiation of it, and even the sincere conviction that it is a hindrance to the progress of religion. The aim of Biblical study, he wrote, is "to follow the example of the Jews of Berœa (Acts xvii. 11), and to search the Scriptures to see what they really teach". Much has been done in the last few decades, but "it is surely not over bold to maintain that there may still be many questions connected with the Old Testament on which the last word has not yet been spoken. In any case, with honest, patient, and reverent study there will come a fuller revelation of Him who spake by the Prophets; for 'the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever'".[3]

Kennett combined in one the earnest evangelical teacher and the "higher critic". Says another of his pupils, "The Bible was a holy book to him, not mere material for emendations. The more critical his treatment of the *textus receptus*, the more reverent was his attitude to the thoughts in the Book".[4] "A man of

[1] R. B. Henderson, Head Master of Alleyn's School, Dulwich (author of *A Modern Handbook to the Old Testament* [1927], which is throughout indebted to Kennett, who contributed a Foreword).

[2] From a paper on "The Religious Value of the Old Testament" (quite distinct from the paper of this title in *The Christian Faith*, Essays ed. by Dr C. F. Nolloth).

[3] *The Composition of the Book of Isaiah* (Schweich Lectures for 1909), p. 81 f.

[4] The Reader in Rabbinics, Mr Herbert Loewe, in *The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 19, 1932: a fine tribute, with special reference to Kennett's appreciation of the difficulties of Jewish students confronted with modern Biblical criticism. See in this connexion his striking sermon on "The Vision of God", in *In Our Tongues*, pp. 53 ff.

original views", writes *The Times* (Feb. 16th), "Dr Kennett always had the courage of his opinions, and his conceptions were enunciated in forcible and even vehement language. To any one who judged him by his fierce denunciations of the other side he would have appeared a dogmatic and intolerant man. But this *ardor theologicus*—a very different thing from *odium theologicum*—was never translated into action. Under the strong words there was the kindest of hearts, and the most loudly denounced opponent would have experienced a warm welcome if he had met Dr Kennett in person. He was a very kind, warm-hearted, affectionate, and devout man. . . ."

Now just because Kennett was often regarded as an "advanced" or "extreme" critic, it will be helpful to place in the forefront his general position as regards *progressive* or even drastic criticism, his undying faith in the permanent value of the Old Testament as an integral part of the Bible, and a preliminary statement as to the attitude to be adopted when one approaches its contents. In the first place, then, we are fortunate in having, hidden away in a Congress-paper, of whose existence few of us had any recollection, an excellent discussion of the "Limits of Biblical Criticism". Here he refers to the fact that every careful student of the Bible is in some sense a "Higher Critic",[1] and he proceeds to comment upon the nature of the work of criticism, and the extent to which "critics" depart from the inherited traditional views. The following paragraphs should be noticed:

> It is frequently forgotten that the Bible is, not only in its spiritual value, but in its physical extent, a great book. Leaving out of account the New Testament, it is no easy matter to obtain a thorough critical knowledge of all the Old Testament. But since, as will be admitted both by critics and non-critics, the Old Testament has a certain unity, it is obvious that it is scarcely possible to alter one's conception of any part of it without causing some modification in one's view of other portions. If, for example, a careful scrutiny of the Pentateuch leads to the conviction that the opinion of it previously held is untenable, as soon as an apparently satisfactory solution is found of the problems it presents the rest of the Old Testament will naturally be subjected to a similar

[1] Citing Dr James Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament* (1905), p. 9. (Dr Orr fully recognised the necessity and legitimacy of the so-called "Higher Criticism", but was opposed to certain results and tendencies in it.)

scrutiny in the new light. And when this is done, it will not infrequently be found necessary to modify one's conception even of those passages from which the arguments for the new theory of the Pentateuch were drawn; so that the result will be to open afresh questions which previously seemed to have met with a satisfactory solution. As a matter of fact this process is, and has been, continually going on; so that the pupil who aims merely at continuing the work of his master often finds it necessary to correct views which in his master's time were never controverted, and may even in many cases be driven to abandon the position which was his starting-point.

If there were no difference of opinion among critics, it would only prove that the last word had been said on the critical study of the Bible, and this is surely a claim which will be made neither for Biblical study nor for any other science under the sun. It is frequently the case that the traditional view is felt to be impossible before an explanation can be found to account for all the phenomena. And even when such an explanation seems ready to hand, the testing of it in the light of all the evidence which may be brought to bear upon it is a lengthy process. It is impossible to carry on any study without some working hypothesis, and if the hypothesis which has at one time been adopted is ultimately found to be untenable, it will nevertheless have served its purpose, in that it will, at any rate, have narrowed down the field of subsequent investigation.

There is, moreover, another consideration which militates against the speedy discovery of the solution to a critical problem—I mean the conservatism which is inherent in us all. I am indeed well aware that in the opinion of many people conservatism is the last fault, if fault it be, that can possibly be laid to the charge of the higher critics, and the very suggestion that they may fail from such a reason will doubtless cause a certain amount of amusement. But it is certainly characteristic of the majority of men, when they are compelled to abandon an opinion which they have hitherto maintained, to take up the position which seems to them to be the nearest to their former opinion that is compatible with the evidence. If, for example, it is seen that a book does not possess the antiquity which was once claimed for it, the first impulse, at least of those who are anxious to be, and to be thought, moderate critics, is to find the earliest date which seems to satisfy the evidence. That is to say, be a man critical or anti-critical, in seeking for a working hypothesis, he starts with a bias, albeit absolutely unconscious, in the direction of the opinion previously held. It cannot be gainsaid that those scholars whose conclusions approximate most nearly to the traditional view are commonly applauded as being *moderate*, whereas those whose opinions deviate most from the traditional are commonly stigmatised as *advanced* or *extreme*.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at if scholars who have convinced themselves that certain positions are untenable are inclined in their

re-construction to minimise the difficulties belonging to that position which, from its comparative nearness to the original, commends itself to them. Under such circumstances it is probable that the objections to the new theory will be perceived only when it comes to be applied to other portions of the Bible in the course of further study, and it may ultimately be found necessary to adopt an hypothesis radically differing from the traditional view.[1]

It is true that if one takes up a position deviating not only from the traditional but also from the commonly received critical opinion, one exposes oneself to the charge of holding *advanced* (that is, in the minds of those who use the term, *wild*) views; but I would repeat, the problem before us is, not to find what is the nearest to the traditional view that may be maintained in the light of modern scholarship, but what in itself is *true*. If a theory can be found which will explain all the facts, it cannot be called *wild*, even though it be absolutely different from any theory which may previously have been held.

Kennett was, as he somewhere admits, one of those who felt that his study of the Bible enabled him to say, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see". Of the permanent value of the Old Testament he was firmly assured. Indeed, all responsible Old Testament scholars are agreed that there is something underlying the *letter* of the Old Testament—call it the "spirit" of the Old Testament—which has an abiding value for the interpretation of Christianity and western civilisation. It is the consciousness of this—or the rediscovery of it—which gives fresh stimulus to Biblical scholarship, and Kennett demanded that we should teach the "spiritual force" of the Old Testament not less than its "physical anatomy".

In the Old Testament is the unshakable conviction that all things work together for good to those that love God.[2] The

[1] (It should be mentioned that there have been *gradual* steps in the history of the literary analysis of the Pentateuch and Joshua, but a *radical* one when, e.g. P, the "priestly" document, was taken from its position before J, E and D, and placed at the end. The order J, E, D, P is the distinctive feature of the view that has been dominant now for over half a century (i.e. the Pentateuch in its present form is Post-exilic). On these symbols see p. 116 n., and the Index.)

[2] In these paragraphs I make use, more especially, of the paper mentioned above (p. xviii n. 2), and the valuable essay on "The Contribution of the Old Testament to the Religious Development of Mankind", in *The People and the Book* (ed. Peake, 1925), pp. 383–402.

Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man could be developed in Israel, where the *social* aspect of religion is so clearly enunciated, rather than, for example, in Greece. The Old Testament is a unique record of the Divine revelation to Israel, and with a unity and completeness which is not found elsewhere. It has given us the language of faith and worship; and through all ages the Hebrew trust in God has been a spiritual tonic. The belief that God has "chosen" a people involves the principle of *noblesse oblige*. The rigorous monotheism of the Israelite meant "One Will and One Law—one standard of righteousness to which he must conform". But this was no static dogma: "be ye holy as I am Holy" (Lev. xix. 2, xi. 45), for, "as the idea of God is perpetually rectified and developed, so the idea of what God requires of man undergoes a corresponding rectification and development. Theology has acted on morality, and morality has reacted on Theology".

Now when a man has such firm convictions of the permanent spiritual value of the writings of some 25–30 centuries ago, emanating from a land and from conditions utterly unlike our own, it is inevitable that he should approach them from an historical point of view. The Old Testament, accordingly, must be judged in the light of its times, and Kennett never attempted to conceal his views, which, it must be said, are entirely justified. For example, it is true that, as he asserts, the old customs and laws often seem barbarous and unjust; but none the less they often corrected still greater evils.[1] If the sexual morality was high, it was primarily not so much because of the sanctity of the body, as through dread of strange forces. There are undoubtedly imperfect ideas of morality, and of the vengeance, explosiveness and jealousy of Jehovah;[2] the lower ethical character of some of the Old Testament figures cannot be denied. God is often thought of in terms of a king who must be soothed and propitiated; court ceremonial and religious ritual reacted on each other. The

[1] Peake, *The People and the Book*, p. 392 f. I have also drawn upon a paper on "The Christian Church and the Old Testament".

[2] I retain the form for which Kennett had a decided preference (see p. 8 n. 1).

anthropomorphism might sometimes be absolute (cf. p. 108); but anthropomorphism has been the step towards higher conceptions of personality human and divine.[1] We are rightly offended by the ghastly and bloody sacrifices, the persistence of human victims and the toleration of religious prostitution; but we must never forget that many things which shock our conscience also shocked the great prophets. This observation of Kennett's should be kept in mind, it is the reply to those who denounce the Old Testament on account of its short-comings, not merely as a record of history, but also in the realm of ethics and morality.

Furthermore, in approaching the Old Testament it must be borne in mind, as Kennett repeatedly explains, that in Palestine there were really two religions, that of the invading Israelites and that of the native population (Canaanite, Amorite, etc.). The history of the Bible, he says, is that of the gradual elimination of the latter and the development of the former. In this the great prophets were the leaders, and accordingly there are periods of change, of ebb and flow, in the history—for there was no simple straightforward development. There are many profound differences between the different parts of the Old Testament; and the fact that we find them—indeed they force themselves upon the notice of the careful reader—shows that the Book, as a whole, is the result of a compromise. The task of criticism is to get beneath and behind the Old Testament in its present form, and to recover, as far as we can, the actual course of religion and history during a few crucial centuries.

To this task Kennett devoted his whole life. From an early age he had been captivated by the Hebrew prophets.[2] He in turn captured their spirit, and those of us who knew him as a teacher and preacher hear again in his written word the familiar ringing voice, with all the zeal of the prophets, their moral indignation,

[1] Cf. pp. 108, 167. (Similarly the conception of almost automatic processes of offence and misfortune [pp. 162 f., 166 f.] paved the way for the recognition of God's invariable righteousness and *ethical* holiness.)

[2] He believed he had read and re-read them before he was twelve, certainly before he was fourteen (*The Church's Gain from Modern Thought*, 1910, p. 19).

their often homely imagery, their immediacy, and their grasp of essentials. His was a certain radicalism, impatient at aught that seemed to obscure the vital facts as he understood them. He could write as vigorously as he could speak, and some striking passages of his linger in the memory.[1] How entirely he had made the Bible his own his pupils best know; and it was always his aim that it should be accurately translated, critically and sympathetically interpreted, and faithfully rendered with proper attention to the fundamental differences between Hebrew and western modes of thought. In him the elementary needs of the Hebrew class, the interests of the theological student, and the simple perplexities of the thoughtful layman were met and balanced.

Kennett's fine linguistic ability was, as his record testifies, manifested early, and when at length his *Short Account of the Hebrew Tenses* appeared in 1901, it was obvious that years of careful work lay behind it. Concise and packed—as most of his writings were—it has proved invaluable, whether as an easy and readable introduction to Driver's exhaustive treatise ("that indispensable book", as he styles it), or as a vade-mecum for students whose Hebrew ambitions are more modest. Based upon more than ten years' experience of his pupils' difficulties—it is dedicated to his pupils—it was written to enable them to grasp "those fine shades of meaning which give such life and vigour to the language of the Old Testament". This was a subject to which he was constantly returning: the necessity of understanding, not merely the Hebrew tenses and the niceties of Hebrew syntax, but the real content of words which, familiar enough to English readers of the Bible—at least those of a generation ago—would have presented themselves otherwise to the Hebrew mind. What Kennett has done in this rather neglected field constitutes, I venture to think, one of his most outstanding and permanent contributions to Biblical study.

[1] E.g. "the Jews have shewn a marvellous power of walking loose in the midst of the burning fiery furnace" (*Cambridge Biblical Essays*, ed. Swete, p. 134); "the Psalmist will cry *peccavi*, though he is at sea as to the *peccatum*"; "we say to the timid traditionalists, 'will ye contend for God?'" (Job xiii. 8).

A dead language, he said, cannot be literally translated; word for word renderings must be avoided and it is impossible to keep the same word throughout. There is "*a grammar* of the Bible"; it must be mastered by those who would arrive at the true sense of the Bible, and in eloquent passages he pleads fervently for a truer version, for, as he observes, a literal translation "regardless of idiom of Hebrew and Hebraic scriptures" may be truly "a tongue not understanded of the people".[1] The various attempts to provide "modern" or colloquial translations indicate that the Bible is often unintelligible to the ordinary reader; and while there are terms which no longer convey the same full religious meaning they once had, it is also necessary to consider whether we have as yet arrived at their true meaning. If, on the one hand, less interest is taken nowadays in theology, on the other hand, there is still much to be done in endeavouring to "get behind" the Hebrew mind. "Do not be content with mere analysis", he once said, "but aim at getting to the thought of the writers and tracing out the Church history of Israel."[2]

What has been collected below in Chapter IV could easily have been expanded;[3] but it will suffice to illustrate Kennett's con-

[1] *In Our Tongues: Some Thoughts for Readers of the English Bible* (1907), p. 50; cf. below, p. 134 f. For Kennett's views see also Henderson, *op. cit.* (p. xviii, n. 1 above), pp. 32–47 on "Hebrew idiom".

[2] From a paper on "The Place of the Old Testament in Education". In a very striking sermon on "The Liberty which is in Christ" (*The Interpreter*, XV. pp. 9 ff.), he writes, "if in the Christian church there can be neither Jew nor Greek, it must be possible to set forth the Christian faith in language which is neither distinctively Jewish nor distinctively Greek". (In this connexion reference may be made to some striking pages by Albert Schweitzer, *The Decay and the Restoration of Civilisation*, vol. I (1932), chs. IV–V, on the burden of thought inherited from the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds and foreign to the west.)

[3] Chapter IV is based on the Carey Hall Aytoun Memorial Lectures (on the "Prolegomenon to the Study of the Old Testament") delivered in the Selly Oak Colleges in 1927–28, with excerpts from *In Our Tongues*, pp. 32–36 (here pp. 149–151), 41–47 (pp. 151 ff.), etc.; from *Early Ideals of Righteousness*, pp. 6–29 (pp. 158–170), and two important articles, on "Some Principles of Interpretation", *The Interpreter*, X. pp. 16 f., 23, 28 f., 37–43 (pp. 176–187 below), and "The Development of the Apocalyptic Style", *The Interpreter*, VIII. p. 399 f. (p. 180 f.).

viction of what is necessary as a "prolegomenon" to the understanding of the Old Testament. It will also enable the reader to gain an insight into the nature of the underlying ideas that characterise the Bible.[1] He points out, for example, that the Hebrew *'āmar* and the English "say" overlap, but are not identical in scope; and as the former also means "think", the prophet's formula, "Thus saith the Lord", does not introduce an *objective* revelation of God, but a *subjective* one.[2] Again, Hebrew thought is concrete: divine forgiveness and anger, love and hate are not sentiments but are manifested in, or rather inferred from, practical results. External effect is contemplated rather than internal cause; and, accordingly, to "covet" in the Decalogue is, rather, to "seek to acquire". Words denoting action commonly include the result: work *and* reward, guilt *and* punishment, offence *and* compensation, and—most suggestive of all—covenant *and* state of security, sacrifice *and* redemption. Purpose and consequent result are one, so that the phrase "that the Scripture might be fulfilled" means properly, that so-and-so did as a matter of fact prove to be the fulfilment of Scripture: it was "by way of fulfilment".[3]

In a most suggestive essay on "Hebrew conceptions of Righteousness and Sin",[4] he explains that these ideas refer to *status*, and represent a material or physical type of thinking. "If we are to be sorry for sin, don't let us make people profess sorrow

[1] See further his pages on the meaning of "Satan", *The Interpreter*, XI. p. 27, and sermons on "ropes" of love (Hosea xi. 4) and "cords" of vanity (Isaiah v. 18), *ibid.* XIII. pp. 122 ff., and on "The Christian Priesthood", in *The Churchman*, April, 1930.

[2] *The Church's Gain*, p. 22 f. (taking as an illustration from the New Testament, S. John xii. 28 f.).

[3] In a paper on "Christ the Fulfiller of the Old Testament" he remarks that "it is noteworthy that both S. John (xii. 38) and S. Paul (Rom. xi. 8) quote Old Testament passages in connexion with the unbelief of the Jews, using ἵνα πληρωθῇ and καθάπερ γέγραπται respectively."

[4] *Early Ideals of Righteousness* (1910), partly reproduced here; see above, p. xxv n. 3. Cf. also *O.T.E.* (*Old Testament Essays*), p. 125, n. 1 (צדקה and the Pauline δικαιοσύνη).

where there is no sin."[1] Moreover, it is necessary to remember that the Hebrew language was little adapted for the expression of abstract ideas. A Hebrew thought and spoke in parables—Old Testament stories were parables, rather than history—he illustrates rather than argues; and as he did not draw or carve he used descriptions which could be pictorially represented.[2] To literalise a metaphor is to destroy it. Many of the metaphorical descriptions in the Bible cannot be literalised, and indeed were no more to be taken literally than Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

If we bear in mind these remarks—for the subject plays a great part in Kennett's interpretation of the Bible—we may in some measure understand his rather uncompromising attitude to eschatology (cf. below, pp. 176–187, 194). Kennett, as Professor Creed observes, was of "a prophetic rather than a philosophic mind";[3] and consequently it is not easy for us to know how far his thoughts travelled in working out this difficult and much discussed subject. A few points may be collected here. In the first place, it is of the utmost importance to remember that the so-called "eschatological" expectations did not necessarily involve any serious alteration in what *we* should call the "natural order" of the world (cf. pp. 179, 186, head). Next, the Hebrew had little if any idea of a resurrection; his hopes were concentrated upon *this* life, and upon *this* world. The Old Testament has not the Egyptian ideas of death and judgement: it is cruder. On the other hand, Israel's uncompromising monotheism involved the idea of undivided allegiance to a Higher Power,[4] and the Israelite had the sense of the abiding presence of God (cf. Hosea xi. 9) and of some sort of personal communion. Hence the extraordinary "realism" of Israelite religion must be weighed against the absence of ideas of or speculations about another life. In addition to this, Old Testament terminology must be carefully analysed. To "die" is not necessarily to become *physically* dead, but to be in the state where physical death is near at hand

[1] *The Interpreter*, xv. p. 102.
[2] *O.T.E.* p. 54.
[3] *The Modern Churchman*, 1932, p. 66.
[4] In Peake, *The People and the Book*, p. 388.

(Gen. ii. 17).[1] To "rise" is used also in a special sense. "Life" (e.g. in Lev. xviii. 5) comes by obedience to the Law, and is a state of peace and communion with God. "Those who believed [in a resurrection] expressed their belief in popular language, in which it would often be difficult to determine how much was to be understood literally and how much metaphorically. It would seem indeed that by the resurrection of the dead some understood merely the continuance of the soul of the departed in life beyond the grave, while others looked for the resurrection of the actual body which was laid in the grave."[2]

Perhaps, then, we shall do justice to Kennett's intention if we regard it as a protest against "radical eschatology".[3] A closer study of the religious consciousness of the prophets, if pursued with a keener appreciation of the Semitic mind and of Semitic phraseology, will suggest that we of the western world can only too easily fail to apprehend a type of thought—of profoundly spiritual though realistic thought—diametrically opposed to our common differentiation of "this" world and the "next", the world of Space and Time and the world of spiritual experience.[4]

[1] Cf. *The Interpreter*, v. pp. 266 ff., 384 ff., on S. Paul's references to the Resurrection.

[2] To say that the dead "rise" could mean in later usage that they endure or remain alive, and not necessarily that they rise bodily from the tomb. Certainly the patriarchs were believed to be still buried in the cave of Machpelah (S. Mark xii. 26 f.): "the resurrection of which our Lord there speaks is not something which is to take place in the distant future, but something which does habitually take place". See further *The Interpreter*, v. p. 268 f.

[3] (The term used by Von Dobschütz, *The Eschatology of the Gospels* (1910), who distinguishes the "transmuted" eschatology of Jesus from the literalistic conception of a more or less imminent process in history, and observes that the Kingdom of Heaven could be both present in His mind, yet something to be actualised in the future. Also, H. Wheeler Robinson (*Old Testament Essays*, ed. D. C. Simpson, p. 15) points out that the Pauline conception of the Christian's *present* experience of the Holy Spirit is an ἀρραβών of what was to come. This way of thinking has its roots in the Old Testament.)

[4] Cf. the remarks, below, pp. 102 n. 2, 221 n. (What can only be understood as something "mystical" by our modes of thinking was understood as actual, real, physical. On this difficult subject, cf. also Robertson Smith's illuminating pages on the "Poetry of the Old Testament" in *Lectures and Essays*, pp. 412 ff.)