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Miscellanea

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Lohn vom Herrn zu bekommen? Nimmt die Liebe zur Welt, zum Geld, zur Bequemlichkeit nicht auch unter uns überhand? Bist du schuldig? Ja, mehren sich nicht die Anzeichen, daß der Herr sich anschickt, auch über uns Gericht zu halten?

2.

Das Gericht über Israel. Jesus treibt Käufer und Verkäufer aus dem Tempel, V. 12; läßt sie stehen, überläßt sie ihrem Schicksal, V. 17. Die Verfluchung des Feigenbaumes eine Weissagung des bald hereinbrechenden Gerichtes, V. 19.

Steht es bei uns nicht ähnlich? Ist nicht das Nachlassen der Liebe zum Heiland ein Anzeichen, daß er anfängt, uns seine Gnade zu entziehen? Ist vielleicht der Umstand, daß so viele Kandidaten müßig stehen, der Anfang des Gerichtes: „Nun wachse auf dir hinfort nimmermehr keine Frucht“? Will der Herr uns verdorren lassen? Wenn das Gericht über sein Volk Israel kam, weil es Glaube und Liebe verloren hatte, können wir uns da wundern, wenn uns ein ähnliches Gericht trifft, da wir uns derselben Sünde teilhaftig machen?

Noch redet der Heiland zu uns. Raffen wir uns auf; machen wir unsere Häuser und Kirchen zu Stätten des Gebets; rufen wir mit jugendlicher, vom Heiligen Geist neu entzündeter Begeisterung unser Hosianna dem Sohne Davids, das unsere Anteilnahme an der Reichs-sache bekundet; reinigen wir unsere Herzen und Gemeinden von allem Weltwesem! Kehren wir zurück zur alten Liebe, zum alten Glauben, dann werden wir erfahren, daß noch heute Wunder geschehen, daß neues Leben entsteht, alle Schwierigkeiten, mögen sie gleich Bergen sich aufstürmen, aus dem Wege geschafft werden, V. 21, und selbst in der letzten, betrübten Zeit Gottes Reich gebaut wird zum Heil vieler teurerkaufte[n] Seelen.

T. L.

Miscellanea.

Words from the Mystery Religions in the New Testament?

With regard to such words a number of requests for information have been received, especially since a good deal has been written during the last few decades about the cults of Cybele, of Isis and Serapis, of Mithras, and others. While the study of certain parallels has not yet been included, it is certain *a priori* that no New Testament writer borrowed from any mystery religion. But that words with a religious and doctrinal connotation were included in the revelation of the New Testament which occur also in writings connected with the mystery religions may well be granted, the obvious reason being that the language had to be used as it existed. Even so we may safely assert that such words were impregnated with a new meaning. The following statements from Glover (*Paul of Tarsus*, 132 f.) may be of interest here: "In the centuries of Greek life it is little to be wondered at that the technical terms of philosophy and religion were somewhat cheapened in popular use, as they are in other societies. . . .

When Paul writes: 'In everything and in all things I have been initiated (*μεμύημαι*), both to be full and to be hungry, to have too much and to have too little' (Phil. 4, 12), the playfulness of the language proves a colloquial use, but not necessarily personal knowledge of Greek mysteries. . . . Other words, perhaps less likely to be popular, are found common to Paul and to the documents of the mystery religions — documents (once again) hard to date. The contrasts between spirit and soul and flesh (*πνεῦμα, ψυχή, σάρξ, σῶμα*), between spiritual and heavenly on the one hand and on the other between natural and earthly (*πνευματικός, οὐράνιος, ψυχικός, ἐπίγειος*), are noted and such terms as transform and transfigure (*μεταμορφοῦσθαι, μετασηματίζεσθαι*). Some of these are shared by the Stoics of Paul's day, and some are as old as Plato. Where language is so widely prevalent, a particular association between two groups of people who use the same popular psychology will be hard to establish to the exclusion of others. Some other terms, similarly shared, it is said, Paul may have got from Judaism. In the case of others again it is suggested that Paul may have gained insight from his converts into what mystery religions had been for them." P. E. K.

Interesting Archeological News.

In the *American Journal of Archeology*, Vol. XXXVI (1932), No. 1, there is a lengthy report by Millar Burrows of the American School in Jerusalem, which presents a summary of "Palestinian and Syrian Archeology in 1931." The following sections of this report are especially significant and instructive: "During April, May, and June a joint expedition of Harvard University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the British School of Archeology, and the Palestine Exploration Fund worked at Sebastiyeh (Samaria), where the palaces of Omri and Ahab had been found by the earlier Harvard expedition. Mr. Crowfoot, the director of the British School of Archeology, was in charge. Harvard was represented by Professors Lake and Blake and the Hebrew University by Professor Sukenik. . . . As before, nothing earlier than the time of Omri was found. One of the most interesting discoveries was a part of the wall which surrounded the acropolis in the Israelite period. It gives a new idea of the size of the city at that time and of the progress which had been made in the art of masonry under the influence of Jezebel's countrymen. The palaces discovered by the earlier expedition were further cleared also." In this section it is especially significant that the report speaks so incidentally of the absence of archeological remains previous to the time of Omri. This is as a matter of course corroborative of 1 Kings 16, 24. — A good deal of space is devoted to Garstang's work at Jericho. This has already been referred to in a review of Garstang's latest book. Much of the same material is treated by Duncan and less successfully by Albright. P. E. K.

The Modern Vatican.

The present Pope, Pius XI, in addition to his work in the sphere of Church and politics, will remain known as the Pope who has more than any Pope before him contributed to the modernization of the Vatican. He is not only the first Pope who has installed his own bathrooms in the

Vatican, who possesses his own automobiles, who has a golden telephone on his writing-table, who can send forth his missionaries by airplane, who can set the church-bells going by means of electricity and disposes over his own broadcasting station, but he is also the first Pope who has modernized the services in St. Peter's Church. A microphone and loud speakers have been so installed that both the spoken word and the music can be heard in the most extreme corners of the enormous building and also in the square outside. What is more, the domain of the Vatican is the only one which has been modernized at practically no expense to the Pope, as American, German, and Italian firms vied with one another in supplying gratis all that was necessary.—*Ev. News Bureau in Holland.*

An Advertisement from "America."

America is a weekly magazine, "a Catholic review of the week," published by the America Press in New York City. In the issue of March 12, 1932, the following advertisement appeared, which we have copied verbally: "*Our Family Membership.* — If you enroll yourself as a special member for the offering of \$6 per year, you have the privilege of naming 9 others (living or deceased) without any extra offering to share yearly in the spiritual benefits of the prayers, masses, and good works of 65,000 missionaries the world over. Really, this is a splendid way of having your dear ones remembered daily at God's altar. The Society for the Propagation of Faith." The names and addresses of the chairman and the director follow.

P. E. K.

The Birth-Rate in Japan and in Vienna.

While in Europe the birth-rate is steadily falling, a strong increase is reported in Japan. According to the census of October 1, 1930, the number of inhabitants in Japan proper amounted to 64,450,005 as against 43,800,000 in 1904. At the present rate of increase Japan should number one hundred million in thirty years' time. On the other hand, the Vienna press reports an alarming drop in the birth-rate in Vienna. In 1900 51,000 births were registered; in 1931 this number had dropped to 17,000.

Evangelical News Bureau in Holland.

Sale Price of Gutenberg Bibles.

One of the forty-one existing Gutenberg Bibles was lately sold by a London dealer to a Swiss collector for three million French francs. The last previous sale of such a copy took place in 1926, when the Austrian monastery at Melk sold a Gutenberg Bible to an American library for \$106,000.—*Evangelical News Bureau in Holland.*

Islam in Africa.

In Africa, propaganda for the Islamic faith has lately assumed a decidedly anti-European character. In the Sudan, propaganda is openly carried on against the white race, and prophets who travel around announce victory in the name of Islam within three years. The Roman Catholics feel the influence of this propaganda strongly in their sphere of work.

Evangelical News Bureau in Holland.