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THE HEBREW NEW TESTAMENT OF FRANZ
DELITZSCH.

By Rev. DR. GUSTAF DALMAN, of Leipzig.

Translated by Prof. A. S. Carrier, Chicago.

Since there were numerous errors in the translation of the New Testament, published by the "London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews," in 1817, and afterwards often revised, Franz Delitzsch as early as 1838 asked for a new translation, in "Wissenschaft, Kunst, Judenthum." But it was not until the year 1864 that the work was actually put in operation, as appears from an appeal of Delitzsch in his Zeitschrift "Saat und Hoffnung" for Christmas, 1864. By June, 1865, the translation of Matthew, James, Hebrews and Revelation was provisionally completed (S. u. H. III 7, 91). The first proof of Romans, with a Rabbinical commentary, appeared in the summer of 1870, together with an appendix containing a critique of that which had already been accomplished, and explanations of the principles which underlay the enterprise. At the same time (S. u. H. VIII. 75) Delitzsch announced that he wished thoroughly to revise Matthew. In May, 1874, he was able to announce (S. u. H. XI. 129) that the translation of the entire New Testament was ready for the press. Certain Jewish friends of Delitzsch, who were indemnified for their trouble by the munificence of the "Gesellschaft für Juden Mission in Baiern und Norwegen," had given important assistance to this work by forwarding proposed translations. After several useless efforts by various publishers the "British and Foreign Bible Society," in the summer of 1875, undertook the publication, so that the composition could begin in Sept., 1875. (S. u. H. XIV 80 ff).

In the spring of 1877 the work was completed (S. u. H. XIV 242ff); but now began the more difficult work of revision and criticism. Men like Prof. Levey in Breslau, Prof. Kaufmann in Budapest, Prof. Kautzsch in Basel, and Dr. Biesenthal in Leipzig, made suggestions for correction. Delitzsch himself

had come to the conclusion that the text of the Sinaitic Codex, which was originally adopted as the basis for translation, was not suitable for this purpose, and he decided, in accordance with the wish of the Bible Society, to make use of the Textus Receptus, and to add only the most important variants of the Sinaitic Codex in brackets. (S. u. H. XV 222ff). In the late autumn of 1878, the second edition, translated on this new principle, appeared. (S. u. H. XVI 55ff). In February, 1880, the third edition was issued (S. u. H. XVII 186f) and in the autumn of 1881, the fourth (S. u. H. XVIII 201f), to which Dr. Baer in Biebrich and Prof. Driver in Oxford had made most important contributions. The text of this fourth edition was electrotyped and is repeated in five other editions, with slight alterations.

In an article written in English, "The Hebrew New Testament" Leipzig, 1883, Delitzsch presented a number of important corrections, which, however, received but partial recognition in the stereotyped edition; though they were fully recognized in the new octavo edition of 1885, which, therefore, until the eleventh edition, which has just appeared, represented the most advanced form of the text.

Afterwards, and especially in consequence of proposed corrections by the Jewish scholars J. Kahan and J. Lichtenstein in Leipzig, and A. B. Ehrlich in New York, Delitzsch was convinced of the necessity of an extensive revision of his work. This he undertook in spite of increasing weakness and so comprehensive was his plan that he could entitle the present text a new translation. The thorough revision of the entire New Testament was provisionally completed when paralysis compelled the old man of seventy-six to lay down the pen and entrust the completion of the work to younger hands.

In the early part of February, 1890, he committed the work to the writer of this article, who had been closely connected with him for twenty years by a common interest in the evangelization of the Jews, hoping, however, to oversee the work until its completion. But God took the weary warrior home before more than the first half sheet could be placed in his dying hands. The review of this half sheet was the last work which was granted to my old friend, a

work in which he had been employed almost uninterruptedly for twenty-five years.*

The increased work given to me as editor, in which, by the request of Delitzsch, the Jewish scholar J. Kahan assisted me, consisted, (1) in the completion of the revision of the translation upon the basis of materials collected by Delitzsch, with the closest adaptation to the guiding principles. (2) In the furtherance of arrangements for the new printing; and (3) in the oversight of the press work. In the beginning of August, 1891, the work was completed; in February, 1892, the new eleventh edition was bound and on the market.

The text which underlies the new edition differs from that of earlier editions in that the *Textus Receptus* is discarded, and the more important and better readings of the older *Codices* find a place in it, while the less worthy readings of the *Receptus*, if they represented additions to the original text, remained in brackets, but if they were real variants they were placed at the foot of the page.

An effort was thus made to obviate the annoyances of the reader, on finding alternative readings standing in the text. Prof. Delitzsch declared that a thorough revision of the text in this particular was necessary, and he committed it to me, but this was delayed by the veto of the Bible Society. Unfortunately, on this account, the present text lacks in complete unity. In reality it is only the critical apparatus which has already appeared in the different editions which I revised, and gave a new form, according to the principles just stated.

At this point I wish to remark that I have replaced the superscription of the Apocalypse, from which Delitzsch had stricken the name of John, in the last edition supervised by him. Since he wished, by this alteration, only to remove the apparent contradiction between the superscription and the opening of the book (*Apocalypsis Iesou Xriston*), I do not doubt that he would have agreed with me on renewed consideration. An Appendix to contain practical notes, which

* An article which appeared after the death of Dr. Delitzsch entitled "Eine Übersetzungsarbeit Von 52 Jahren" containing some utterances of Delitzsch that had been printed before, gives an excessive reckoning, viz., from 1838, although nothing was done from 1838 to 1864.

should correct misapprehensions of Jewish readers, had been long planned by Delitzsch, but in his last remarks concerning the new edition (S. u. H. XXVII 74), which only appeared after his death, they were given up.

For the orthography of the Hebrew, the edition of Old Testament texts by Baer was adopted as a model. Orthographic peculiarities, like defective writing of vowels, are merely accidental. But the eye of the Old Testament reader ought not to be disturbed by a new writing.

By far the most difficult portion of my editorial work lay, as a matter of course, in the realm of the language. Delitzsch had laid it down as his principle that the text should be reproduced as if thought and written in Hebrew. But even if one should admit, which the writer can not do, that some of the New Testament writers really thought in Hebrew and not in Aramaic, it would still remain an impossibility to determine how the written Hebrew of the time of Jesus and the Apostles was constructed. What has been presented by Margoliouth, in *The Expositor* for 1880, regarding the language of the book of Sirach; by Kyle and James in *Psalmi Salmönion*, 1891, regarding the original of the Songs of Solomon, and by Resch in "Agrapha Ausser Canonische Evangelien Fragmenti" 1889, regarding an original Hebrew Gospel, is by no means entirely admissible, and even if it were, could not satisfactorily give a picture of the written Hebrew of that time. Therefore, there remain as the nearest accessible witnesses, the Book of David and the Mishna, which are sundered by three or four hundred years. But Delitzsch has endeavored to construct out of the Hebrew, of all periods of its history, down to the close of the Mishna, a dialect which would be fitted to become the instrument for the New Testament world of thought.

But toward the last, he appeared to have felt that a greater unity of linguistic character was desirable for the translation, and that the new Hebrew of Mishna and of the older Midrash was the idiom which stood nearest the New Testament style. He moved, therefore, in this direction chiefly, in his revision of the translation, without, however, entirely obliterating the older Hebraic basis. This two-fold linguistic

form of the translation; in consequence of which, the oldest and newest elements often stand close together, embarrassed the editor not a little, as one can readily understand. But it must be admitted that the linguistic compromise adopted by Delitzsch, after much thought, was the only way out of a difficult dilemma. It is only too evident, from the Hebrew New Testament of Salkinson published as an example of classic Hebrew, that the New Testament revelation cannot be accurately reproduced in Old Testament Hebrew. On the other hand, a holy book completing the Old Testament revelation could not properly adopt the Rabbinic idiom of the Talmud and the Midrash. From such considerations as these arose that combination of idioms which may prove disturbing to scholars. There is yet another consideration, which led to the compromise.

The Hebrew New Testament was not intended to proclaim Christianity to the Jews of Talmudic times, but to those of the present day. The modern written Hebrew is, however, inter-penetrated with German colloquialisms, and even when there is an effort after the classic idiom, the result is often such an arbitrary hodge-podge of Old Testament phrases, used in utterly absurd senses, that the language seemed better fitted for a playground of wit and humors, than for a dignified medium of thought for scholars and sober, simple readers. No concessions whatever could be made to such poor linguistic taste, especially when it is remembered that ever since the time of Luzzato many profound thinkers among the Jews themselves had raised a bitter lament concerning this abuse of their language. Yet the Hebrew New Testament must contain nothing which the Jewish readers of the present time could fail to rightly understand. Hence it was necessary to employ a great number of expressions for which a Jew of the time of the Apostles would have used Greek terms. We discover from the Targums, less Midrash and Talmud that the Hebrew had no words of its own for certain post-biblical ideas, and that foreign words were adopted even when Hebrew equivalents existed. Since to the Jews of the present day, the exact meaning of the foreign words, is for the most part unknown, it was necessary to choose Hebrew expressions in some measure equivalent.

For the printing of the new edition, which consists of 469 pages in small 8.°, new type was prepared after a Jewish pattern, by the famous printing house of W. Drugulin, of Leipzig, and these were made in Russia for this special purpose. The vowels were for the first time cast as a part of the letters, and thereby the injury to many of the types, during printing, otherwise unavoidable, was prevented. Unfortunately the type for the Superscription was not of this pattern, which explains the fact that the presses caused serious injury in some places. I have called attention to this in the Preface to the reader.

A translation of the Scriptures for practical purpose, if it is not a mere paraphrase, remains always somewhat imperfect. It was not an accident, but a divine Providence, that the completed revelation in Christ entered the world, not in Aramaic nor Hebrew dress, but in Greek, and it is also not an accident, but a consequence of the judgment denounced by Israel upon herself, that the word of the fulfilled new covenant returns to her, not as a Hebrew original, but as a translation out of the Greek. But would that this new offer of Salvation, in the Hebrew tongue by which Christ "who was born from the seed of David according to the flesh," for the second time appears among his people, might prove to be to them not a savor of death, but of life and salvation.

I append a tabular statement of all the past editions of Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament, according to the eighty-seventh report of the British and Foreign Bible Society (1891) p. 440.

EDITION.	COPIES.	WHERE PRINTED.	YEAR.	TYPE OR PLATES.
1st	2500	32mo Leipzig	1877	type
2nd	2500	" "	1878	"
3rd	2500	16mo "	1880	"
4th	5000	32mo Berlin	1881	plates
5th	5170	" "	1883	"
6th	4810	" "	1885	"
7th	5850	" "	1886	"
*8th	5000	8vo "	1885	type
9th	6000	32mo "	1888	plates
10th	4900	" "	1889	"
11th	5000	16mo Leipzig	1892	type
Total 49,230 copies.				

* This edition was originally not numbered at all, but was subsequently inserted after the edition of 1886, as the eighth edition.