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APOCRYPHAL AND LOST SCRIPTURES.*

BY FREDERIC CLIFT, M.D.

“All writings not canonical are apocryphal.”—JEROME.

The Bible as accepted by the Christian churches of today does not contain all that God has revealed, neither does it contain all that he intends to reveal to his sons and daughters. It is incomplete; therefore it is not a sufficient guide under all conditions, neither was it so intended. The Bible is often considered as the

* The term Apocrypha or Apocryphal is derived from the Greek, and originally signified something that was “hidden,” and later that was “unrecognized”—hence spurious. In ecclesiastical use, it is a term given in the early church to various historical and other writings of uncertain origin and authority, written prior to the birth of Christ, and regarded by some as inspired, but rejected by many authorities. Such books were either works acknowledged to be useful and edifying, or else heretical writings absolutely rejected by the Church. This term also occasionally includes similar books written subsequent to the time of Christ, which, however, are more generally known as the Antilegomena, or “things spoken against,” of the New Testament.

The term, Lost Scriptures, refers to certain books or writings mentioned by the writers of the Old or New Testaments, but of which we have, at present, no copies. In the case of a few of such writings, certain alleged copies are claimed to be authentic, but they have not been accepted as such by Biblical authorities, even to the extent of being classed as Apocryphal.—F. C.

fons et origo of the church, whereas the contrary is the fact. A second thought will show incontrovertibly that it was evolved and grew out of the ecclesia—the church.

No part of the New Testament was in existence at the time when Christ committed the care of the Church to his apostles. He was the personal revelation of the Godhead. He came to restore, and did, in fact restore, the broken line of prophets. Malachi, the last of the Jewish prophets, closed the Hebrew canon some 397 years before the birth of Christ. As a result, we find that during the time the restored prophets, the apostles and their immediate successors, were allowed to perform their duties, there was no lack of revelation. The sevens were endowed with direct authority from Christ, and when sent out received no pocket edition of even the Old Testament, with commentary, concordance, and handy helps, etc.: in fact, the four gospels were non-existent, even at the time when Paul, Barnabas and others departed on their missionary journeys. These men went forth, relying on the promise of the Savior, that the Holy Spirit of Truth would lead them. Accordingly, as special matters arose from time to time, which called for direct instructions, they were led to seek for, and they did, in fact, receive, direct and personal revelation in relation to the subjects in question. History proves that they became the direct agents and representatives—the voice of the living God, in their day and age. These men have been recognized as prophets of God throughout all the subsequent ages, and the records contained in the New Testament, when transcribed without mistake, and “as far as it is translated correctly,”* were the product and result of their work, and are revelations from God. Their successors, however, gradually lost this gift of direct personal communication with the Godhead. Their power and authority ceased. They failed to find responsive answers. Why? Simply, they were not living in accord with the gospel plan of salvation. Jehovah declared to a former prophet (Noah): “My spirit shall not strive with man forever, in their going astray; they are flesh.”† So it was with the Christian church. Jehovah did not

* Articles of Faith—8.

† Genesis 6: 3. Bible quotations are from the American Standard, Revised Version, 1901.

strive with the leaders of the church forever, and as they drifted down the stream of apostasy, they themselves recognized the fact that God would have nothing to say to them. To explain his silence, and maintain their ecclesiastical standing with their followers, they invented the theory that personal and direct revelation was no longer necessary,—that God had nothing to communicate to his children beyond what was found in the Bible. Men are ever prone to believe a lie rather than a truth, and as this theory explained the prevailing conditions in the church, it grew into a cardinal doctrine of the apostate churches of Christendom. The *dead letter* of the Bible became the sole standard, and was substituted for the *living voice* of God. As a result, the thousand and one churches, each and all, worship the written word and claim the Bible as the authority for their respective conflicting and separate tenets. If these churches would know of the doctrine, let them listen to the living voice of God: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.”*

With the restoration of the gospel, in 1830, came a restoration of the “gifts,” including the power of entering into personal and direct communication with the Father of all spirits. Once more the words of Amos are fulfilled: “Surely the Lord will do nothing except he reveal his secrets unto his servants, the prophets.”† With the restoration of the Priesthood and all its officers, including prophets, the heavens are once more unsealed, and man is once again in personal communication with God. The Lord’s anointed, those who are his representatives, are *known to his people—the sheep know the voice of their shepherd*. Thus “Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground. And *all Israel*, from Dan even to Beersheba, *knew* that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Jehovah.”‡ It was not necessary that the enemies of Israel should know that Samuel was a prophet. It was Israel alone to whom the knowledge was granted. So it is today: the knowledge that Joseph Smith was a prophet was not forced upon his enemies—those who persecuted

* Rev. 3: 22.

† Amos 3: 7.

‡ I Samuel 3: 19, 20.

and murdered him. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and his enemies are not compelled to accept his revelations. It is, therefore, unreasonable to suppose that Jehovah would today reveal to those who are hostile to his Church the fact that the mantle of the Prophet Joseph has fallen upon his successors. Again, the angel of the Lord announced the birth of John the Baptist, and that he should be "great in the sight of the Lord,"* but Herod did not wish to know, or think, that he was a prophet; and Herod, in his ignorance, proceeded to decapitate the messenger of God. So, too, Gabriel was sent from God to announce the birth of Jesus Christ. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High."† If Herod had appreciated the true facts, he would not have sent forth and slain "all the male children that were in Bethlehem and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under."‡ Some of the foolish ones of today are so busy hunting the dross of the earth, that they refuse to recognize the prophet of the Lord. Herod-like, they make ready to slay him, whilst pretending to make diligent search that they "also may come and worship him."§ His Saints of old, however, knew, and his Saints of today are just simple enough to believe that the angel spoke the truth when he proclaimed: "He shall be called the Son of God."|| Others, with less excuse than Herod, wise in their own conceit, are to be found, even today, who dare to deny that fact. A so-called Christian preacher, only recently, on a Salt Lake rostrum, said: "I firmly believe that religion came out of the heart of man. I believe the gods are all man-made. I believe the sanctity of our Bible, and all bibles, artificial." In a more recent discourse, he says: "Yet religion is in its essence, half a madness and half a vision. * * * In Christianity alone we have had the tongues, prophecies and visions of the early church. * * * I am not trying to disparage religion." This gentleman is recognized by other sectarian preachers as a Christian, although he

* Luke 1: 15.

† Luke 1: 32.

‡ Matt. 2: 16.

§ Matt. 2: 8.

|| Luke 1: 35.

denies the divinity of Jesus Christ, the Savior. He is consistent with his creed when he denies the fact of Divine revelation, but inconsistent when he sets himself up as a teacher of revealed Christianity, in the church of "tongues, prophecies and visions" described in the Acts of the Apostles. Are the vain imaginations of such men to be accepted as truth without a particle of evidence? Shall we admit that all the wisdom and knowledge of the ages is with these babblers, and that all Christians, both past and present, must take a back seat? Judging from the past, is it remarkable that there are still some who repudiate the work of Joseph Smith and his successors, and refuse to acknowledge him and them as prophets and revealers of the secret things of the Most High God? The question may well be asked, How are the children of men to place themselves *en rapport* to receive revelations such as were given to their forefathers, and by them preserved in part and handed down to us in the Bible? Christ has instructed us—Those who seek shall find, and to those who ask, further knowledge shall be given. Let Latter-day Saints continue to seek, in the full assurance that they will find the knowledge that passeth all understanding.

In a previous article—July, 1904—it was shown that the King James Bible of 1611 A.D., was not an accurate translation, inasmuch as the opinions and policies of men largely controlled those who were appointed by the king to prepare what has since been known as the "Authorized Version." The committee, nominees of the king, to whom the revision was referred, was composed of Episcopalians (High churchmen and Puritans) and Presbyterians. Politics were running high, and policy had much to do with the adoption of compromise readings of doubtful passages. The mistranslations might be innocuous, or if not so, might yet be capable of being construed to meet or support the doctrinal views of the king and of those opposing ecclesiastical bodies. It was also shown that when the so-called canon, or collection of scripture, was adopted under the guidance of Augustine, bishop of Hippo, at the councils of Carthage, 393 and 397 A.D., the Book of Revelation was accepted as inspired, and included in the New Testament, as we now have it, by one vote only. At that time numerous other scriptures—many of them equally well known and generally read in the Christian churches of that day—were rejected by partizan

votes as uninspired and unworthy of a place in what is now called the Christian Bible. These rejected scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, have since been generally known as apocryphal. The term was applied in the Christian church at first to the esoteric or private writings and doctrines of the early church; that is, to those not publicly read or taught in the general meetings or assemblies.

It may be noted that from the earliest establishment of the Jewish form of worship, by Moses, certain private or sacred enclosures were set apart, within which only certain members of the priesthood could enter. The Holy of Holies was found in each of the successive Jewish temples, and history shows that the Christians also had their sacred places, which were not allowed to be profaned by the presence of the public, or even by the newly professed converts. The latter had to pass through a probation before they were allowed to take part in the secret services connected with the *sacred mysteries*. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, being in possession of the first principles of Christianity, is, therefore, naturally found to have temples, and holy places to which only those in good standing are admitted. The Catholic churches throughout the world have their holy of holies; only certain privileged members being allowed within the precincts of the altar. The invasion of the privacy of the monastical, conventual, or even fraternal organizations, and any attempted disclosure of their secret or apocryphal rites and symbols, would possibly, even today, in some parts of the world, entail very serious consequences. The only people, according to some, who, in this enlightened day, have no rights of privacy in their religious rites and ceremonies, are the members of the so-called "Mormon" Church. The world desires, if not requires them, not only to abandon their principles, but to decry the very acts of God himself, and in order that these "purists" may be consistent, they frequently deny the inspiration of their Bible.

The exact principles upon which the various canons* of

* The term canon or canonical is derived from the Greek word signifying "a straight rod or pole," which from its keeping things straight or upright, finally came to mean a "collection or list of books that form or contain a rule of faith and doctrine."

scripture were formulated are not clear; the selection of the several books was, no doubt, often a matter of chance. It may be noticed in passing, that whereas the inspiration of the Book of Mormon was vouched for by the personal testimony of some eleven or more eye witnesses, the inspiration of the Book of Revelation was decided by the vote of one man. To whom are we indebted for the several books of the New Testament? A claim is put forward by the Roman Catholic church, but without foundation, inasmuch as that church did not exist till the middle of the second century. The preservation of the apostolic and other Christian writings is due to the separate churches to which they had been addressed or sent. They were prized as sources of instruction, and copies were sent to other churches as directed by the apostles.* The Alexandrian canon was begun by a few of the leading Greek fathers, and was based upon the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. This translation also included certain apocryphal books not included in the original Hebrew text. Hence, these books were more generally known to Greek-speaking Jews than to Hebrew—Aramaic—speaking Jews. The Alexandrian canon was formulated prior to the first general council at Nice, and it became the foundation of our Bible of today. The subject is an interesting one and has led to much research.

The first canon, in point of time, to claim attention, is the Samaritan, consisting of the five books of Moses, known as the Pentateuch. After the return of the Jews from Babylon, Ezra added the subsequent historical and other writings, which, with other additions by Nehemiah, formed what is known as the Hebrew or Palestinian canon. It is almost identical with the Jewish scriptures as used by that people today. The reasons for these scriptures being so venerated is suggested by Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century A.D.:

For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us * * * but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine. And of them, five belong to Moses * * * But as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of

* Colossians 4: 16. "And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea."

Persia, the prophets who were after Moses wrote down what was done in their time in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true our history has been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but has not been esteemed of *like authority* with the former by our forefathers, because there has not been an *exact succession of prophets since that time*: and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our nation is evident by what we do, for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it has become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and if occasion be, willing to die for them.*

This teaches, no prophet, no revelation, and is in line with both recognized and apocryphal scripture. Amos declares—"Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets."† Whilst in the apocryphal Maccabees it is stated: "So there was a great affliction in Israel, the like thereof was not since the time that a prophet was not seen among them."‡ * * "until there *should arise a faithful prophet.*" § The Jewish apostasy was in progress for some four hundred years before the coming of Christ, and no books composed after the succession of prophets had admittedly come to an end, were held worthy of a place in the Hebrew canon. The books of the Maccabees were written during this period, but, although a faithful history of the events of that period, they were not recognized because, as shown in the above extract, "a prophet was not seen among them." The absence of prophets, *ipso facto*, deprived the Jews of the power of receiving revelations from God,—"*until there should arise a faithful prophet.*" This possibly refers to John the Baptist—for he was indeed faithful, even unto death. The like absence of prophets *after* Apostolic times, deprived the early Christian church of this same privilege of immediate communication with, and revelation from, God.

After the return from Babylon, the Jewish community was

* Josephus—Contra Apion, 1-8.

† Amos 3:7.

‡ I Macc. 9:27.

§ I Macc. 14:41.

feeble in the extreme. It had no productive power of its own; its literature began and continued to degenerate. The loss of the prophetic power, and the consciousness of its loss, explains most of the characteristics of the apocryphal literature of the Old Testament. Evidence both for and against the inspiration of the Apocryphal books has been sought from various sources. Thus it has been claimed that the Master and his Apostles, although in the habit of making frequent quotations from the Scriptures, do not quote directly from these Apocryphal writings; still it is admitted that ideas or thoughts seemed to be frequently borrowed from them. The fact, however, must not be overlooked that Christ and his Apostles spoke the Aramaic dialect—the vernacular of Palestine, which in the New Testament is designated as Hebrew. Christ and his followers, therefore, used the Hebrew, or Aramaic, and not the Greek or Septuagint version of the Scriptures. Consequently, they were not so familiar, probably, with these historical writings; though, no doubt, many of the ideas and thoughts to be found therein were well-known to those speaking Aramaic. Christ's personal speech and sayings were those of his neighbors and kindred. He did not speak the polished language of the educated Greek, Roman or Jew. Like Joseph Smith, he was one of the people, and spoke and thought in the dialect of the carpenters and fishermen of Galilee, as Joseph did in the colloquialisms of his fellow workers of Vermont and New York. So it is that the Greek of St. Luke's gospel and the Acts of the Apostles differs from that of the other writers. St. Luke, as a physician, belonged to a more educated class, and as a result, wrote in a more polished style. The early Fathers, being of Grecian birth or education, used the Greek or Septuagint translation of the Scriptures, which included the apocryphal writings, and not the original Hebrew or Aramaic. As a result, Origen, Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, and others, quote and cite the Apocryphal writings as "Scripture," "Divine," "Inspired," and at times prefix their remarks or quotations with the words—"as it is written."

The degree of estimation in which the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament have been held in the churches has varied much according to time and place. In 1546 A. D., the Roman canon was adopted at the Council of Trent. It included all the writings

found in the Vulgate—a Latin translation from the Septuagint. In 1672 A. D., the Greek Catholic church came to a similar decision; and in 1870 A. D.,—*some forty years after Joseph Smith began to teach the necessity for direct revelation*—the Roman church awoke to the fact that such revelation was a necessary constituent of a living church. At this council, the recognized Apocryphal books were again affirmed.

The Scriptures as used in the Arminian Catholic church are translated from the Peshito, Syriac and Greek texts. In this Arminian version, the order of the books differs somewhat; the Epistle to the Hebrews precedes those to Timothy and Titus; whilst in the appendix following the New Testament is found the book of Sirach, Manassah, Paul's Third Epistle to the Corinthians, and an account of John's death. The Protestant churches have differed as much on the question of apocryphal writings as on "predestination," "saving grace," "infant and adult baptism," "baptism by immersion or otherwise," and other purely doctrinal matters. Luther, in his German translation, with his accustomed self-reliant judgment, accepts and rejects both the accepted and apocryphal writings at pleasure. He rejected the book of Revelation, calling it neither apostolic nor prophetic. The Epistle of James, he pronounced unapostolic, and an epistle of straw. Coverdale, in his English translation of 1535, separated the apocryphal from the other books, and set them apart at the end of the Old Testament, as not having the same authority. From that time, and up to a comparatively recent period, the recognized apocryphal books were bound up with and formed part of the English Bible, but they are now only to be found in special editions, such as those in use on the reading desks of the Episcopal church—some parts being occasionally read in their services. This church, both in England and America, in commenting on these books, states: "the other books (apocryphal) the church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth it not apply them to establish doctrine."* Modern revelation supplies the key, and sets forth their specific value as follows: †

* Articles of Faith, (Ch. Eng. and Protestant Epis. Ch. Am.) 6.

† Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 91.

1. Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, concerning the Apocrypha, there are many things contained therein that are true, and it is mostly translated correctly;

2. There are many things contained therein that are not true, which are interpolations by the hands of men.

3. Verily, I say unto you, that it is not needful that the Apocrypha should be translated.

4. Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth.

5. And whoso is enlightened by the Spirit, shall obtain benefit therefrom;

6. And whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited, therefore it is not needful that it should be translated. Amen.

The fourteen Apocryphal books as found in the English Bible, are: 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras; Tobit; Judith; the additions to the book of Esther; Wisdom of Solomon; Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus; Baruch; Song of the Three Holy Children; History of Susanna; History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon; Prayer of Manasses, King of Judah; 1 Maccabees; 2 Maccabees.

The following from the Apocryphal book of Esdras will interest those who are seeking to trace the route taken by the ten tribes after their departure from Media, the country of their captivity. Esdras, in a dream, beheld a "peaceful multitude," which Uriel, the Angel, interpreted as follows:

Those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea, the King, whom Salmanasar, the King of Assyria, led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so they came into another land.

But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country where never mankind dwelt,

That they might there keep their statutes which they never kept in their own land.

And they entered into Euphrates, by the narrow passages of the river. For the Most High then showed signs for them, and held still the flood till they were passed over.

For through that country there was a great way to go; namely—of a year and a half; and the same region is called Arsareth.

Then dwelt they there until the latter time; and now when they shall begin to come

The Highest shall stay the springs of the stream again, that they may go through; therefore, sawest thou the multitude with peace. *

* 2 Esdras 13:40-47.

A reference to a map will show that possibly after leaving Media, where they had been located by their captors, they directed their journey towards Samaria, but taking "counsel among themselves" they decided to "go forth into a further country." They accordingly turned north and, instead of crossing over the mountain passes, as is usual with pioneers, they followed the river bank and "entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages (canyons) of the river." This course would lead them to the eastern shores of the Black Sea, and, still continuing in a northerly direction, they would necessarily cross the Kuban River. On the banks of this river, and northward, ancient burial places, the construction of which, the manner of burial, and the jewelry found, all indicate that they were built and used by a people of similar habits to the Israelites.* It has been suggested that these traveling Israelites divided into three companies. That one of such companies still kept in a northerly direction, and in a year and a half reached Arsareth where they are still waiting "until the latter time." A scattering of the tribe of Dan gave the name of that tribe to that portion of Scandinavia now known as Denmark, or Danmark. A second company traveled west, by the Danube, and then to the mouth of the Elb, leaving traces of their journeying in the names of rivers up which they traveled; the Dneiper, the Dneister, etc. The third company may have traveled up the Don, to the far east, through Siberia and China, and become the ancestors of the Japanese Samurai. Amos declares: "They shall wander from sea to sea and from the North even to the East."†

Japanese tradition and pictures are said to robe Jimmu Tenno, the first Mikado, who landed in Japan about 660 B. C., in the armor of Assyria and Media, with the tachi, or short sword of Persia, and shod, like the ancient princes of Israel, with badger skins. It is further said that the Japanese Imperial family have in their possession rolls handed down from generation to generation, which show all the ancient Hebrew temple instruments and figures whose features are Israelitish. In the Shinto temples are found a Holy of Holies, an ark, a seven-branched candlestick, and priests

* See, *Are we of Israel?* by Elder George Reynolds.

† Amos 8:12.

in white linen vestments, offering up "Mochi," or unleavened bread with sweet wine. There is also a wave of first fruits. Several of the Shinto festivals occur on days corresponding to the Jewish festivals. On the sixth day after birth, a Japanese child is taken to the temple and dedicated. The chain of coincidences are singular, and afford food for thought.

Does this dream or vision of Esdras give us a key to the great truths connected with the lost tribes of Israel? If so, this one subject alone makes the Apocrypha worthy of study. Our elders are opening up Japan in the expectation of finding many of the seed of Ephraim in that country. Why? Let us seek for the golden truths which are to be found scattered throughout the Apocrypha, but in doing so let us not forget the instructions given by the Lord himself through Joseph, the Seer.*

It is frequently asked—"What became of the New Testament apocryphal writings, that is, of those that were rejected by the Council of Carthage, in 397 A. D.?" After the Council of Nice, 325 A. D., the Roman branch of the Catholic church became more and more despotic, and usurped unwarranted power and control over the rest of Christendom, until finally, after some five hundred years of controversy and protestation, Pope Leo the Ninth, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, mutually excommunicated and anathematized each other, and their respective churches. The Greek Catholic church having thus obtained complete freedom from Rome, in 1054 A. D., came to be recognized as the leader of the other Eastern churches, and without usurping arbitrary power became the protector of the Arminian, the Coptic, the Abyssinian and other churches. Some of these churches are being intruded upon by Rome, but are yet semi-independent. The Arminians still possess their own canon of Scripture. In the West, the Lutheran and other Protestant offspring of Rome, largely adopted her canon of the Bible as decreed by the Council of Trent; and, although some of the apocryphal books of the New Testament are found in the ancient versions, such as 1st Epistle of Clement, in Codex of Alexandrinus—the Pastor of Hermas, and the Epistles of Polycarp and Barnabas, in the Codex Sinaiticus, yet, but few of

* Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 91.

these churches admit these books to a place in their Bibles, or quote them in their controversies. They teach authority too strongly—the voice of God rather than the voice of man.

A translation from the Arminian of the apocryphal third Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians will be given in a future article.

Provo, Utah.

THE CALL.

(*For the Improvement Era*)

The light of a glorious day hath dawned,
And from the watch-tower high,
The bugle sounds the "call to arms,"
Materialism must die.

Men come from the mountain; men come from the plain;
Leaving college work, shop and plow.
Quickly they answer their country's call;
Columbia hath need of them now.

The blare of the trumpets, the beat of the drum,
The tread of marching feet,
The sight of "Old Glory" waving on high,
Maketh death for one's country sweet.

But they who fight in this long, long war,
Shall be cheered not by music nor voice,
Though when the glorious cause is won,
The noble of soul will rejoice.

For the "civic banner" is now unfurled,
And "no quarter" the battle cry;
If Freedom and Justice together reign,
Their enemy Fraud must die.

Neath the "civic banner" of order and law,
Shall this army enlist today,
From the best of our brain, the best of our brawn,
To be recruited alway.

Armed with the weapons of virtue and truth,
Honesty, purity, love,
Relying on One divine for aid—
The God who ruleth above.

MAUD BAGGARLEY.

Salt Lake City Utah.