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THE BOOK OF ENOCH

R. H. CHARLES

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The Book of Enoch by R. H. Charles.

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says that this concluding piece has in some degree suffered at the hands the final editor of the book, both in the way of direct interpolation and of severe dislocations of the text. The interpolations are: xci. 11, xciii. 11-14, xciv. 7^d, xcvi. 2. The dislocations of the text are a more important feature of the book. They are confined (with the exception of xciii. 13-14, and of cvi. 17^a which should be read immediately after cvi. 14) to xci.-xciii. All critics are agreed as to the chief of these. xci. 12-17 should undoubtedly be read directly after xciii. . . . Taken together xciii. 1-10, xci. 12-17 form an independent whole--the Apocalypse of Weeks--which has been incorporated in xci.-civ. . . . The remaining dislocations need only to be pointed out in order to be acknowledged. On other grounds we find that xci.-civ. is a book of different authorship from that of the rest of the sections. Now, this being so, this section obviously begins with xcii.: 'Written by Enoch the Scribe.' etc. On xcii. follows xci. 1-10, 18, 19 as a natural sequel, where Enoch summons his children to receive his parting words. Then comes the Apocalypse of weeks, xciii. 1-10, xci. 12-17. The original order of the text, therefore, was: xcii. xci. 1-10, 18, 19, xciii. 1-10, xci. 12-17. xciv. These dislocations were the work of the editor, who put the different books of Enoch together, and added lxxx. and lxxxii." ²²

This book is concerned with the question of the final reward of the righteous and the final punishment of the wicked. . But a new teaching of great importance is put forth here. Hitherto it had been taught that although much incongruity and apparent injustice were to be found on this earth owing to the suffering of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked,. nevertheless all things would be righted in the world to come, where the wicked would receive their deserts, and the righteous would come to their own. In this book it is taught that retribution will overtake the wicked, and the righteous will have peace and prosperity, even on this earth, with the setting-up of the Messianic Kingdom; and that at the last there will come, with the final judgement, the destruction of the former heaven and earth, and the creation of a new heaven. Then will follow the resurrection of the spirits of the righteous dead who will live for ever in peace and joy, while the wicked will perish everlastingly. The important point, which is a development, is the idea of the punishment of the wicked taking place on this earth, the very scene of their unrighteous triumphs.

vi. *The Noah Fragments* (vi.-xi, lvii. 7-lv. 2, ix. lxv.-lxix. 25, cvi., cvii.). These fragments are not of much importance; the main topics touched upon are the fall of the angels and sin among men in consequence; judgement on mankind, *i.e.* the Deluge, and the preservation of Noah.

The first five chapters are generally held to be as late as any part of the whole collection; they deal with the punishment hereafter of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous. Chapter cviii., which reads like a final word to the whole collection, touches upon the same theme.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK FOR THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN ORIGINS

This is a subject which cannot be thoroughly appreciated without studying the book in detail, especially from its doctrinal standpoint, and seeing in how many aspects it represents the doctrine and the popular conceptions of the Jews during the two last pre-Christian centuries. To do this here would involve a far too extended investigation; it must suffice to indicate a few of the many points which should be studied; from these it will be seen how important the book is for the study of Christian origins. Charles says

²² *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

