

the religion of Egypt, and the Babylonians, while holding them in captivity, taught them the religion of the Chaldeans.

The Mosaic, or Egyptian, religion was their religion for much the longer period of their history, as contained in the Old Testament. That period, and that religion, gave them the distinctive characteristics as a people. Most of their literature was written then, or refers to that period. Their great prophets are represented as having lived and taught then.

Their theocracy and religion were secular, practical, and, in many respects, rational and scientific, as taught by their more enlightened teachers.

We learn, in these ancient records, that the last 500 years of which it gives us the history of them, and after they returned from the Babylonian captivity, they had largely imbibed, and lived in, the Chaldean faith.

The leading objects of the writers of the Gospels seem to have been to endeavor to convert them to the principles of the old Mosaic theocracy, with a more spiritual application, and divested of the outward physical symbols, figures and representations, sensual and savage ideas, adapted to their condition after they emerged from Egyptian slavery.

They had advanced in intellectual and social conditions, and were prepared for better thoughts.

These Gospel writers respected their Jewish traditions and prejudices, that claimed a great superiority for their own people, as the special chosen race or nation, and the peculiar favorites of Jehovah. To secure their interest, the more if possible, they gave the genealogy of the teacher of this new and more spiritual faith, as a lineal descendant of David. The message he brought them was a divine one from their ancient deity, whose son, in that sense, he also was.

One of the first testimonies they put in his mouth, or ascribed to him

as the author, was, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

This was returning at once, and directly, to the Mosaic religion of their fathers, and a brave and severe blow at their then popular Chaldaic faith, which was, that the Divine kingdom and the Heavenly Father that was to save them was not here now on earth, but somewhere among the stars, and he was to save them, not here, but in another existence, and in another life, after they left this earth and these mortal bodies. We must ever bear in mind that the ancient Greeks, Egyptians, and other more cultivated nations, taught their religions through dramatic, allegorical figures, personified, and various outward, visible representations.

Although Biblical Scholars believe these Gospels were prepared in Alexandria, Egypt, or in Greece by Greek writers, yet the personages and geographical references were Judean, in order to attract the attention and interest of Jewish readers. On careful reading we will find Jesus spiritualizing, purifying, and applying to life, the old religion of Moses, the immanence of deity with the people, as expressed in this age by the more enlightened, scientific thinking classes. The convictions of what is wise, best and true, impressed on or arising in our own minds and judgments, is the Divine Guide for our duties and conduct in all the relations of life.

We have now arrived at the interesting point as to what is the drift and purpose of the teachings of these Gospels. We will see at the beginning the words put in the text as being expressed by Jesus, are opposed to the Chaldean and favor the Mosaic theology. He said not one tittle of the law should pass away till all was fulfilled. His mission was not to destroy the law nor the prophets, the teachings of which were substantially all secular. There is found in his emphatically reiterated parables lessons defining the kingdom of heaven, making it secular, and to be obtained, realized