

LECTURE VII.

INFERENCES FROM THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS.

WE have now come to the last lecture of our course, and it may be advisable to review the ground over which we have traversed. Our first lecture was of an introductory character; in it we offered some suggestions on the nature and importance of prophecy in general. In our second lecture, after adverting to the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah, we considered the argument arising from the Messianic prophecies, and showed that these prophecies are contained in records which were indisputably written centuries before the birth of our Lord; and that they are of such a nature that, if fulfilled, this fulfilment could not have been predicted by human sagacity. In our third lecture, we considered the nature of the Messianic prophecies, and proved that there are in the Old Testament primary prophecies concerning the Messiah,—that is, prophecies which apply to Him only, and cannot be predicated of another,—that there is an ideal King who is the subject of

Hebrew prophecy. Our fourth lecture was devoted to a consideration of the nature and validity of the secondary and typical prophecies. The fifth lecture may be considered as the principal one of the series: it formed the application of the argument; in it we proved, by a variety of particulars, that there is a correspondence between the Messianic prophecies and the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth, and that, consequently, Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah divinely foretold in the Old Testament. And in the sixth lecture we illustrated our argument by a special reference to the remarkable prophecy of the suffering Servant of Jehovah contained in the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.

We now proceed, in this concluding lecture, to the application of the whole subject; to advert to those important doctrinal and practical inferences which are deducible from the Messiahship of Jesus. We have demonstrated that Jesus is the Messiah; the important question remains to be discussed, What are the lessons which we learn from this truth?

I. The Old Testament contains a Divine Revelation.

The books of the Old Testament contain many undoubted prophecies of the Messiah,—prophecies of events beyond the reach of human foresight,

uttered centuries before their occurrence, and the accomplishment of which prophecies depended on the Providence of God. These prophecies have been fulfilled in the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth, and in the success of His religion. Here, then, is a clear proof of revelation. These prophecies are from God: He alone could thus foresee and foretell the future, and 'call the things which are not as though they were.' It is also to be observed that the prophets were widely separated from one another in time: a thousand years intervened between Moses and Malachi, yet they all point to the same series of events, and prophesy of the coming of the same person; and although their descriptions of the Messiah are apparently opposite,—at one time celebrating the triumphs of a victorious King, and at another time bewailing the sufferings of a righteous prophet,—yet these descriptions are harmonized in the fulfilment, and all these particulars culminated in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. There is but one individual in the history of the world to whom these prophecies can apply, 'whose name is great among the Gentiles, and who is the source of salvation to the ends of the earth.' He is the Coming One—the Redeemer of the human race. It may be asserted that such a supernatural interference is impossible—that it is directly at variance with the theory of Providence. But such an *a priori* consideration cannot

contradict a plain and indisputable matter of fact. Here are the prophecies : there are the events said to be their fulfilment. We can exercise our own judgment, and unless we be prepared to deny our rational nature, we must admit a supernatural interference.

In the fulfilment of prophecy, we have a proof of the divine origin of Judaism. The prophets were Jewish prophets, and Moses, the author of the Jewish religion, was the greatest of them : they were the revealers of the will of God, and their announcements contained a divine revelation. The prophecies are to us what miracles were to the Jews. The miracles of Moses in Egypt and in the wilderness were the credentials of his authority, the proofs to the Jews that he was their divinely-commissioned leader and legislator. And so the prophecies which we see fulfilled are sensible proofs to us that the Spirit of God was the real inspirer and author of the Mosaic dispensation. Judaism is a revelation from God, and Moses, the mediator of that system of religion, was a teacher sent from God. We must not undervalue the Old Testament ; we must not refuse to believe Moses and the prophets ; we must not, as is too much the custom of the present day, speak slightly of the religion of the Jews. It was from God : a preparatory dispensation indeed ; in many respects imperfect and defective ; a religion suited to the human race in a state of nonage ; an instruction by

means of signs and symbols; a pictorial religion, as much addressed to the senses as to the mind, but adapted to the circumstances and condition of the Jewish people. 'All Scripture,' says St. Paul, meaning thereby the books of the Old Testament, for those of the New were not then collected, 'is given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. iii. 16).

II. *The Truth of Christianity.*

The fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies is a clear and convincing argument not only in favour of Judaism, but especially in favour of Christianity. Jesus is the Messiah predicted in ancient prophecies, and therefore is that great prophet that should come into the world. The argument amounts almost to a demonstration; it is of a cumulative nature; it rests not on the fulfilment of a few predictions, but on the combination of the prophecies. It may be easy to carp and cavil at some of the predictions, and to assert that they have only a probable reference to Jesus; but in evidence the combination of many probabilities leads to a certainty: indeed, as a profound mathematician has proved, the amount of evidence in favour of the Messiahship of Jesus is almost incalculable.¹ And further, the Messiah was foretold as

¹ See Supplement II. to Lecture V.

the author of a dispensation of religion, better and more glorious than Judaism; as an illustrious Prophet, like to Moses the founder of a new religious system. Jesus, then, being the Messiah, His religion is thus asserted to be from God. Thus Christianity appears to be no unrelated, disjointed, or isolated part of the divine economy—not an unforeseen system of religious truth superseding Judaism, but that new and better dispensation foretold by the prophets: ‘It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth’ (Isa. xlix. 6.)

There is a speciality in the evidence of prophecy. It has in some respects all that force which arises from the sight of miracles; it may be called a visible miracle—a sensible proof of the supernatural. We have not here to depend, or at least in a very small degree, on the testimony of others; and thus all those objections which arise from the imperfection of the evidence of testimony, compared with that of experience, lose much of their force, and all those *a priori* objections to the possibility of a miracle do not touch the question of prophecy. We have the records of the prophecies in our hands; and the facts, said to be their fulfilment, are not only recorded in history, but, as

regards the Messianic kingdom, the publication of the gospel to the Gentiles, and the exaltation of the name of the Messiah are visibly realized prophecies: we can *see* the fulfilment with our *eyes*. Moreover, prophecy is a *growing* evidence. The greater the number of fulfilled prophecies, the more numerous are the proofs. We have now more testimonies from prophecy than the disciples had in the days of our Lord. This, which is especially true of prophecies regarding the state of cities and countries and the condition of the Jewish people, applies also to the Messianic prophecies. All those predictions which foretold the glory of the Messiah, the success of His religion, and the extent of His dominion, have received a more complete verification in our days than when the apostles first began to preach the gospel. Thus there is considerable force in the following observation of Bishop Newton: 'God in His goodness hath afforded to every age sufficient evidence of the truth. Miracles may be said to have been the great proofs of revelation to the first ages who saw them performed; prophecies may be said to be the great proofs of revelation to the last ages who see them fulfilled.'¹

But, whilst maintaining that the Messianic prophecies and their fulfilment in Jesus afford a powerful argument in favour of Christianity, we

¹ Newton *On the Prophecies*, 14th ed. p. 3.

do not overlook the numerous other arguments which combine with it in proving that Christianity is from God. There are the miracles of Jesus and His disciples—miracles, numerous and varied, performed before friends and foes—miracles, the most wonderful and stupendous, which clearly prove the power of God—miracles, in bearing testimony to which thousands upon thousands of witnesses laid down their lives. There is especially the resurrection of Jesus, that crowning miracle, which is as well authenticated as any fact in ancient history, and whose reality is the only rational account that can be given for the very existence of Christianity. There are, in addition to the prophecies concerning the Messiah, many other prophecies of our Lord and His disciples, and especially that most remarkable and minute prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the record of the fulfilment of which is contained in the history of Josephus. There is the rapid propagation of the Gospel during the first ages of Christianity, when, notwithstanding the combined opposition of human power, influence, riches, and wisdom, and when one bloody persecution after another threatened to overwhelm it, the Gospel spread and flourished, until the whole Roman Empire submitted to its authority. There are the internal evidences—the morality of the Gospel and the sublimity of its doctrines—taken in connection with

the condition and character of its first writers. And there is the high and holy character of its great Author—the only example of a perfect man, a character original and unparalleled in history, beyond the conception not only of Jewish writers, but of the human mind, and which could only have been painted from the life. These and other arguments go to demonstrate the truth of Christianity, and afford the most complete assurance that ‘we have not followed cunningly-devised fables.’

The truth of Christianity is to be judged by the combination of all these evidences. Each evidence taken by itself may be sufficient, but God in His goodness has given such an abundance of proof as to leave those without excuse who reject the Gospel. Besides, one kind of evidence may recommend itself to our mental peculiarities more than another. Indeed, when we take a general view of the evidence, we do not think it any exaggeration to affirm that the proof of Christianity is as strong as that of any other fact which rests on moral evidence. At the same time, it is undoubtedly true that this evidence is of such a nature as gives advantage to the sceptic to attack particular facts, as if Christianity rested on them, rather than on a conjoint view of all the evidence. ‘It is easy,’ observes Bishop Butler, ‘to show, in a short and lively manner, that such and such things are liable to objection, that this and another thing

is of little weight in itself ; but impossible to show, in like manner, the united force of the whole argument in one view.’¹

The unbelief of the Jews, especially of those who were the contemporaries of Christ and His apostles, is by many considered an objection to the truth of Christianity, and by others as a phenomenon difficult of explanation. The Jews, it is said, had the prophecies in their sacred books; they were conversant with them; they read them every Sabbath in their synagogues; they admitted their Messianic application; but yet they failed to discern any correspondence between them and the life and character of Jesus, and refused to admit His claims to be the Messiah. They were also the eye-witnesses of the miracles of Jesus; but yet these miracles were to them no convincing proof of the truth of His claims: in spite of them they continued in impenitence and unbelief.

The objection is plausible only in appearance. The unbelief of the Jews arose from their misconception of prophecy. They overlooked those prophecies which foretold the sufferings of the Messiah, and attended only to those which predicted the glory of His kingdom; and even these they misinterpreted. The prophets foretold the success of the religion of the Messiah by metaphors borrowed from the glories of earthly kingdoms;

¹ Butler's *Analogy*, Part ii. chap. vii.

and the Jews gave a literal meaning to expressions which were intended to be understood figuratively. According to their interpretation of the Messianic prophecies, the Messiah was to be an earthly Prince who should sit upon the throne of David, rescue the Jews from the bondage and tyranny of Rome, restore the kingdom to Israel, and subdue their enemies. Entertaining such expectations, filled with such hopes, giving such an interpretation to the Messianic prophecies, it is no matter of surprise that they could not see their fulfilment in One whose life and character and fate were so opposite to those of their expected Messiah. The meanness of His birth, the poverty of His earthly condition, the entire absence of all personal ambition, His refusal to nourish their vain expectations or to take any part in their politics, must have disappointed those hopes which His mighty works had inspired, and so blinded their eyes that they could see no signs of the Messiah in the lowly carpenter of Nazareth. The sufferings of our Lord and the ignominy of His death, so far from being any proofs of His Messianic character, as they are to us, were to them evidences of the contrary; that He who expired on the cross could not be that King Messiah who was to occupy the throne of David. And hence, also, whilst the Jews rejected Jesus, they were ever ready to become the dupes of all those impostors and false Christs who

nourished their dream of an earthly Messiah, and pretended to lead them to victory and freedom.

And not only did the life and character of Jesus run counter to the expectations of the Jews, but His teaching was directly opposed to their national hopes. They prided themselves on being the peculiar people of God: 'to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises' (Rom. ix. 4); and they regarded the Gentiles as 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise' (Eph. ii. 12). For generations the Church of God had been almost exclusively confined to their nation. How distasteful, then, must Christianity have been to a Jew, proud of his country and his religion, which abolished all those privileges, and established an equality in religious matters between Jew and Gentile! All the attachment of a Jew to his religion, and all the pride of birth, and all the satisfaction arising from a sense of superiority, and the feeling of patriotism which was so strong among the Jewish race, must have revolted against such a doctrine; and hence the Jews who became Christians were regarded as traitors to the religion of their fathers, and branded as apostates to Judaism. We all know the power of prejudice. A man will easily find objections to what he does not wish to believe: he views facts

through a distorted medium. Thus, for example, we are loath to believe the disclosures which revelation makes of future punishment, and in consequence of this we attempt to modify, to explain away, and to distort the plainest declarations of Scripture which bear upon that awful subject. So also was it with the Jewish contemporaries of our Lord. The doctrine of the admission of the Gentiles to equal privileges with them was most distasteful; and therefore a religion which taught this doctrine must have been regarded by them with suspicion, if not with positive aversion.

The statement that the Jews who were the contemporaries of Jesus and His apostles did not believe on Him, must be taken with considerable limitation. The unbelief of the Jews was far from being universal. It is true that, during the life of our Lord, the Jews in general rejected Him. Attracted at first by His miracles, they were afterwards repelled by His sufferings; these were an insurmountable obstacle to their acceptance of Him as the Messiah. But the resurrection of Jesus removed that obstacle: this was to many the solution of their difficulties. Hence we find that after that event multitudes of Jews believed on Jesus; a great company even of the priests became obedient to the faith; believers multiplied in Jerusalem daily; and the Christians were numbered by thousands, even before the Gospel

was preached to the Gentiles. 'Thou seest, brother,' said St. James to St. Paul, 'how many myriads of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law' (Acts xxi. 20).

But the Jews, it is objected, still continue in unbelief, notwithstanding their possession and acknowledgment of the Messianic prophecies. The reasons of this are not far to seek. The same motives which were the cause of the unbelief of the Jews in the days of our Lord, still actuate the nation in the present day. They deny the doctrines of substitution, of a suffering Messiah, and of His divine nature; like their ancestors, they nourish the expectations of a temporal Messiah, of a King who shall exalt their nation; and they still regard themselves as the peculiar favourites of heaven. Now it is evident that so long as they entertain these views of the character of the Messiah as a national King, and nourish the expectations of national greatness, they cannot see the fulfilment of their prophecies in Jesus, and will not accept Him as their Messiah. Besides, the Jews have been educated in hostility to Christianity; their prejudices against it are the growth of centuries, and hence the extreme difficulty, humanly speaking, of their conversion. Nor must it be forgotten that the cruel treatment they have received from Christians, the terrible sufferings to which they were exposed in the Middle

Ages on account of their religion, the contempt with which they have for centuries been regarded,—being continually trodden under foot as if they were an inferior race,—must have embittered their hatred to the Christian faith, and barred their hearts against the entrance of the truth. It must, however, be remembered that, notwithstanding their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, they admit the existence and authority of the prophecies; they receive them as genuine and divinely inspired, precisely as we do; and the question in dispute is whether they or we are right in their interpretation; and surely we are as able as they to judge of the application and fulfilment of the prophecies.

In point of fact, the unbelief of the Jews, instead of being any argument against Christianity, is an evidence in its favour. ‘Their infidelity,’ observes Pascal, ‘is one of the real foundations of our faith. Here is the miracle, that the same people who were so violent lovers of the predictions should be no less violent haters and opposers of the accomplishments; and that this very hatred and opposition should itself be one of the chief predictions.’¹ Their unbelief was foretold by their own prophets, as well as by our Lord and His apostles, and therefore is no unforeseen event, but a confirmation of prophecy. The Jews are a standing miracle of the truth of Christianity—a visible

¹ Pascal’s *Pensées*, Part ii. art. viii. 6.

prophecy, which all may observe and ponder over.¹

Over and above these historical and moral evidences, there is an experimental evidence, which is in some respects the most convincing. We can apply to Christianity the test of experience. It is a remedy for moral evil, and it has proved its efficacy in numberless instances. We have only attentively to consider the character of those who are undoubtedly living under its influence, in order to see what beneficial effect it has had upon them—how it elevates, purifies, and strengthens them; delivers them from selfishness; fills them with peace in believing, charity toward men, confidence in God, and cheerfulness in suffering; forms within them a temper similar to that of the Saviour; supports them in the hour of death, and inspires them with the hope of a happy immortality beyond the grave. But the greatest evidence of all is when a man experiences the truth and power of the Gospel in his own heart, in destroying all that is bad, and false, and wrong, and in producing all that is good, and just, and true. He has the witness in himself; he believes in the efficacy of the remedy, because he himself has experienced its curative power; and he thus assents to Christianity with a conviction which no sophism, however

¹ See on this point Horne's *Introduction*, vol. i. pp. 310-316, 9th ed.; Kidder *On the Messiah*, vol. ii. 1-83.

subtle, can shake ; he knows and feels the truth. 'If any man,' says our Lord, 'will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself' (John vii. 17).

III. *The Essential Connection between Judaism and Christianity.*

We have seen that in the Old Testament there are numerous prophecies concerning the Messiah and His kingdom ; and that in the New Testament there is a record of their fulfilment in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the dispensation of His Gospel. Thus there is a remarkable chain of prophecy which unites the Old Testament with the New. Judaism and Christianity are closely connected. They are not, as some suppose, two different religions founded on different principles, but parts of the same religion. Judaism contains the elements of Christianity : it is, as St. Paul expresses it, 'a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ.' The Gospel is to be found in the law of Moses, as well as in the writings of the Evangelists. The Mosaic economy and Christianity are two dispensations or revelations of the same truths. In the one these truths are revealed in types and symbols, and in the other in plain language. The same Spirit of Christ pervades both. He who spoke by the

prophets inspired the apostles. Judaism is but the germ of Christianity, and Christianity is the development of Judaism. Judaism is Christianity in the bud, and Christianity is Judaism in its fulness and fruit. 'The Old Testament,' as St. Augustine expresses it, 'is just a prophecy of the New.' In the words of De Wette, a most impartial judge, and who certainly laboured under no preconceptions in favour of the Messiahship of Jesus: 'Christianity sprang out of Judaism. Long before Christ appeared, the world was prepared for His appearance. The entire Old Testament is a great prophecy, a great type of Him who was to come, and has come. Who can deny that the holy seers of the Old Testament saw in spirit the advent of Christ long before He came, and in prophetic anticipations, sometimes more, sometimes less clear, descried the new doctrine? Christianity lay in Judaism as leaves and fruit do in the seed, though certainly it needed the divine sun to bring them forth.'¹

The connection between Judaism and Christianity will be still more clearly seen when we take into account the secondary and typical Messianic prophecies. These we are now at liberty to employ as real prophecies of the Messiah on the authority of Christ and His apostles. In proving the Messiahship of Jesus, we purposely abstained from

¹ Quoted by Fairbairn in his *Typology*, vol. i. p. 55, 6th ed.

their use ; but now, having proved that Jesus is the Messiah, we are entitled to employ at least those secondary and typical prophecies, which are affirmed by Himself and His apostles to be applicable to Him, as decidedly Messianic, and as intended by the Spirit of God to foretell the coming of the Messiah, or to describe His character and the nature of His kingdom. These prophecies are numerous. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews plainly intimates that the whole of the Jewish ceremonial law, with all its rites, and washings, and sacrifices, was typical of the gospel dispensation. Many of the predictions of the prophets, and many of the Psalms of David, are secondary prophecies of the Messiah. Many of the historical persons of the Old Testament, as Melchisedec, Moses, David, and Solomon, are types of the Messiah. Many of the events of Jewish history, as the passage of the Red Sea, the paschal lamb, the brazen serpent, the manna from heaven, and the water from the rock, prefigured gospel transactions. So that, taking all these things into consideration, it is hardly an exaggeration to affirm that the rites and ceremonies of the law are types and shadows of better things under the Gospel ; that the historical parts were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world should come ; that the prophecies minister to our comfort and hope ; that the devotional portions represent

the experience of believers in every age ; and these four, the ceremonial, the historical, the prophetic, and the devotional, constitute the whole of the Old Testament. Jesus, then, is the subject of all prophecy : to Him and to His Messianic kingdom do the prophecies of the Old Testament, either directly or indirectly, apply. The fate of the nations of the world is only mentioned in connection with Israel, and Israel is the Church of the Messiah. 'By Christ,' observes Keil, 'prophecy (and by prophecy, Judaism) is raised from its temporary form to its essence, and through Him the whole earth becomes a Canaan.' Thus, then, all is one great scheme, wherein God works out for His people an eternal salvation. 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been His counsellor !' (Rom. xi. 33, 34).

We may discern here the position which the Messiah, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, occupies in the Old Testament. There is this peculiarity in the books of the Old Testament found in no other writings, that they all point forward to the same illustrious person who was in future ages to appear in this world. A better dispensation of religion is held forth, and at the head of that dispensation, as its Author, an illustrious prophet is predicted. A

kingdom is to be erected by the God of heaven, over which an Anointed King is to be placed. There are constant allusions to this illustrious Prophet and King; they pervade the whole of the prophecies of the Old Testament: the Messiah is the great burden of Jewish prophecy, and His exploits the great subject of Jewish song. He is ever placed in the foreground of the picture. He is the great ideal King who is to sit upon the throne of David, and to rule over the house of Israel for ever. Kings fall down before Him, and princes kiss His feet. His dominion is commensurate with the world, and perpetual as the sun in the heavens. All the efforts of His enemies end in confusion and in shame. 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.' At other times He is the mysterious sufferer: He bears the sins of His people: He is wounded for their transgressions: He makes reconciliation for iniquity. But however He is depicted, it is one and the same person, the great Hero of Hebrew prophecy. The Lord Jesus Christ is as much the subject of the Old Testament as of the New: the law and the prophets, as Moses and Elias on the mount of transfiguration, do homage to Him, for He is the substance of the types of the law, and the subject of the predictions of the prophets.

IV. *The Dignity of the Messiah.*

Seeing that the Messiah is that mysterious Being, of whom all the prophets bore witness, the great centre subject of the Old Testament, the ideal King, the Anointed Prophet, the Priest upon his throne, the Saviour of Israel, we cannot regard Him as a mere prophet, mighty in word and deed, or only as equal to Moses, the greatest among the Jewish prophets, or, as He Himself testifies of the Baptist, more than a prophet, but still human. We cannot help feeling that there must be something supernatural about so illustrious a Being. And, when we search minutely into the prophecies of the Old Testament, we find these anticipations more than realized. The Messiah is there described in the most exalted and august terms—in terms only applicable to the Supreme Being, and which cannot without blasphemy be applied to another. In the Messianic Psalms, He is introduced as the Son of God, and held forth as the object of supreme worship: 'Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way' (Ps. ii. 12). He is expressly called God: 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre' (Ps. xlv. 6). And He is described as being at once David's Son and David's Lord: 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right

hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool' (Ps. cx. 1). Isaiah represents Him as 'Immanuel,' God with us (Isa. vii. 14). He invests Him with the titles and perfections of God: 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace' (Isa. ix. 6). And again: 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God' (Isa. xl. 3). Jeremiah represents Him as Jehovah our Righteousness (Jer. xxiii. 6). Micah asserts that 'His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting' (Micah v. 2). In the prophecies of Zechariah, His divine nature is frequently mentioned: He is the Jehovah who is valued at thirty pieces of silver: 'And Jehovah said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them' (Zech. xi. 13); the Jehovah who is pierced: 'They shall look upon me whom they have pierced' (Zech. xii. 10); and the equal or fellow of Jehovah: 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts' (Zech. xiii. 7). And in the prophecies of Malachi, the divine nature of the Messiah is clearly stated: 'Behold, I will send my Messenger, and He shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly

come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in' (Mal. iii. 1). We must also take into consideration the probability, founded on the position which the Messiah occupies in the Old Testament dispensation, and on the teaching of the New Testament, that the Messiah is the Jehovah-Angel who so frequently appeared to the patriarchs, guided the Israelites in the wilderness, and announced Himself to Moses in the bush as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the great I AM THAT I AM.'¹ Thus the same mysterious doctrine of the divinity of Christ, which is so explicitly taught us by St. Paul and St. John in the New Testament, is not obscurely shadowed forth by the prophets in the Old. The Messiah, the future Deliverer of His people, is there represented as uniting in His person the natures of God and man. We have no words to express a higher dignity than this: the mind cannot elevate itself to a loftier conception; it is an unspeakable mystery, which baffles our faculties to explain, and which is the cause of adoring wonder to the higher intelligences. What a glorious view is here presented to us of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Messiah of the Jews, the Redeemer of the world, at once the Son of God and the Son of man! Let us adore His condescension; let us be attracted by His love.

¹ Supplement I.

The doctrine of the divinity of the Messiah is indeed denied by all recent Jewish writers. The Messiah whom they expect is a mere man, exalted, indeed, above other men in wisdom and holiness, endowed with divine gifts, but still human—a prophet superior to Moses, a king greater than David. Indeed, the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Christ is one of the great obstacles to the conversion of the Jews. They regard it as the peculiar mission of their nation to testify to the unity of God, and to protest against the polytheism of the Gentiles. Thus in their afternoon service there is the following prayer: ‘Guardian of a singular people, preserve the remnant of a singular people, and suffer not a singular nation to be destroyed, who acknowledge the unity of Thy name, saying, The Lord is our God, the Lord is a unity.’ And in their morning service there is the following declaration: ‘Lo, we are ready, all of us together, both day and night, with our mouths and our hearts, to testify of Thy unity, and that Thou alone art God. Thou art our God, and we are Thy servants, and the witnesses of Thy unity.’ Hence any opinion which might seem in any degree to affect the doctrine of the divine unity, is regarded by the Jews with peculiar abhorrence; and as they consider the doctrine of the divinity of Christ in that light, it is especially obnoxious to them. ‘Of all the Christian doctrines,’ observes Dr. Adler,

‘which I have brought before you, and which, in the name of God’s truth, I have felt myself compelled to denounce, this dogma, that the Nazarene was literally the Son of God, is surely the most monstrous, the most repugnant to reason. The all-holy God, the essence of infinite moral perfection, whom the seraphim tremble to approach, “the God so pure that the stars are not pure in His sight,” the God whom holy writ brings before us as exalted so infinitely high above all the imperfections inherent in man’s nature, the Holy One who has said, “To whom, then, will ye liken me, or shall I be equal to?” that same God is dragged down from heaven and likened unto man.’¹

Now this objection is certainly not to be met by any attempt to modify or conceal this great fundamental doctrine of Christianity. Nor can we here appeal to the full and ample proofs of the divinity of Christ given us in the Gospel of St. John, or in the Epistles of St. Paul; for the validity of such an argument the Jews will not admit. If we would convince a Jew, we must make it clear to him that the doctrine of the divinity of Christ is not at variance with the doctrine of the divine unity; that those who believe in a trinity of persons also believe in a unity of substance; and that although the divine nature must needs be incomprehensible, yet there is no contradiction in affirming a plurality

¹ Adler’s *Course of Sermons*, p. 62.

in unity. But especially we must show, by a deduction of passages from the Messianic prophecies which assert the divinity of the Messiah, that this doctrine is contained in their own Scriptures; and that, if they were to take an enlarged view of the dispensation of God, they would perceive that it was the Messiah who was with the Church in the wilderness, and the instrument of divine communications made to their fathers.

The question arises, Was this denial of the divinity of the Messiah also the creed of ancient Judaism? In particular, did the Jews in the time of our Lord call in question the Messiah's divine Sonship? The Jews, indeed, from an attentive study of their prophets, might have attained to the conviction that the Messiah was a divine Being; but the question is not what the Jews ought to have believed, but what they actually did believe. Were their views of the dignity of the Messiah the same as those of Christians? Did they, in general, regard Him as the Son of God?

This question is somewhat difficult to answer. There are opposing testimonies, showing that there was a diversity of opinion among the Jews.¹ But still we think that, on a careful examination of the gospels and apocryphal books, this question must upon the whole be answered in the negative,—that

¹ For this diversity of opinion, see Kuinoel's 'Prolegomena to St. John,' *Novi Testamenti Libri Historici*, vol. ii. pp. 284-286.

the Jews in the time of our Lord, in general, though there were exceptions, did not believe in the divinity of their Messiah. During the lifetime of our Lord, those who among the multitude acknowledged His Messianic character, hailed Him as 'the Son of David, who cometh in the name of the Lord' (Matt. xxi. 9). When our Lord asked the Pharisees, 'What think ye of the Messiah? whose Son is He?' they did not reply, 'The Son of God,' but, 'The Son of David' (Matt. xxii. 42). The Jews repeatedly took up stones to stone Jesus when He appeared to them to assert His equality with God (John x. 30, 31). Indeed, the assertion of His divine Sonship was the ground of His condemnation. It was not because He claimed to be the Messiah; there was nothing treasonable or blasphemous in that: the Jews themselves expected the appearance of the Messiah, and hence they could not regard the assertion of it as in itself culpable; it behoved them to examine into such claims. But it was otherwise when Jesus advanced the higher claim, and asserted that He was the Son of God, and thus claimed equality with God: this was regarded by the Jews as blasphemy, and on this ground He was condemned. When, in answer to the high priest, He affirmed that He was the Son of God, the Sanhedrim condemned Him on His own confession: 'They said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves

have heard of His own mouth' (Luke xxii. 71). 'We have a law,' said they to Pilate, 'and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God' (John xix. 7). This proves that the Jews in general did not regard the Messiah to be the Son of God, but looked upon such a claim as a blasphemous assertion. It would appear that even the apostles and the immediate disciples of our Lord, before His resurrection, were but imperfectly acquainted with the divine nature of their Master. On a few rare occasions we find them acknowledging His divine Sonship, as St. Peter when he made the great confession, and the disciples in general when He stilled the storm on the lake. Their continued intercourse with Him must also certainly have increased their awe and veneration, and must have convinced them that there was something supernatural about His person. Especially this must have been the case with the three favoured disciples who witnessed His transfiguration; but still, though they recognised Him as a superhuman being, they do not seem to have risen to the idea that He was actually 'God manifest in the flesh.' Even after His confession, St. Peter does not regard Him as so divine that he dares not venture to rebuke Him and to call in question His declaration. Indeed, it is difficult to see how, if they believed in His divine nature, they could have held familiar intercourse with Him. It was not

until after His resurrection that Thomas acknowledged Him as his Lord and his God. Hitherto He was to them Messiah, the Son of David; but now their thoughts were raised to Him as their exalted and risen Lord, as Messiah, the Son of God.

We have a corroboration of this view in the dialogue of Justin Martyr with Trypho the Jew. Justin Martyr maintains the divinity of Christ. Trypho replies that the divinity of the Messiah was not a Jewish, but a Christian doctrine. 'When,' he observes, 'you say that the Messiah existed as God before all ages, then that He submitted to be born and become man, yet that He is not man born of men, this assertion appears to me to be not merely paradoxical, but absurd.' He then expresses the general belief of his nation on this point: 'We Jews all expect the Messiah will be a man born of men, and that Elijah, when he comes, will anoint Him. But if this man appear to be the Messiah, He must certainly be known as man born of men; but from the circumstance that Elijah has not yet come, I infer that this man is not the Messiah.'¹ A similar statement is found in Origen's dispute with Celsus. 'A Jew,' observes Origen, 'would not acknowledge that any prophet said that God's Son would come; for the expression which they employ is, The Christ of God will come. And they often dispute with us about the

¹ *Dialogue with Trypho*, chaps. xlvi., xlix.

Son of God, affirming that no such Person exists, or was made the subject of prophecy.’¹ So also Orobio, a learned Jew of the seventeenth century, in his controversy with Limborch,² affirms that ‘if a prophet or, were that possible, the Messiah Himself were to work miracles, and yet lay claim to divinity, he ought to be put to death by stoning, as one guilty of blasphemy.’³

As already intimated, there are some passages adduced from ancient Jewish writings which give a somewhat different view of the subject, and seem to recognise the divinity of the Messiah ; but even these passages are not distinct. In the Book of Enoch, the Messiah is called the Son of God ; and there are in it indications of His pre-existence.⁴ In the Second Book of Esdras, this title, ‘Son of God,’ occurs six times, and sometimes in combination with the title Messiah ; as, for example, in that celebrated passage, to which we have elsewhere referred : ‘For my Son Jesus (or, according to the

¹ *Against Celsus*, chap. xlix.

² *Amica collatio cum erudito Judæo*, 1687.

³ Quoted by Bishop Wordsworth, in Smith’s *Dictionary*, article ‘Son of God,’ vol. ii. p. 1357. The reader is especially referred to this article for some excellent remarks on this subject. For an opposite view of the subject, see Dr. Pye Smith’s *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. book ii. chap. vii. sec. v.

⁴ ‘Before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were formed, His name was invoked in the presence of the Lord of Spirits’ (Enoch xlvi. 3). ‘I and my Son will for ever hold communion with them in the paths of uprightness, while they are still alive’ (Enoch civ. 2). Lawrence’s *Enoch*, pp. 48, 161, 3d ed.

ancient reading, Messiah) shall be revealed with those that be with Him; and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years. After these years shall my Son Messiah die, and all men that have life' (2 Esdras vii. 28, 29).¹ But the most explicit assertions are to be found in that remarkable cabbalistic book, the *Zohar*. In this book the divine nature of the Messiah is distinctly asserted; the various titles of God are applied to Him. The learned Schöttgen made the *Zohar* a subject of special study; and the following is his summary of its views regarding the dignity of the Messiah: 'With respect to the names of the Messiah, He is expressly called in the book *Zohar* by the incommunicable name Jehovah, the Angel of God, the Shekinah or Divine Glory, the Mediator, Michael the Archangel, the Angel of the covenant, the Word of the Lord, God the Holy and the Blessed, the Image of God, the Brightness of His Glory, the Lord of hosts, the Son of God, the Son of the Most High, the Faithful Shepherd, the Lord of ministering angels, the Angel Redeemer.'² The near approach of some of these titles and expressions to those used by the apostles is certainly very remarkable.³

¹ The other passages are xiii. 32, 37, 52, xiv. 9.

² Smith's *Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. i. pp. 390, 391.

³ From the near approach to the Christian doctrines, some suppose that the *Zohar* was the work of a Judaizing Christian; but this supposition is now generally discarded (see Wünsche's *Die Leiden des Messias*, p. 95).

V. *The Purpose for which the Messiah came into this World.*

It must have been for the most glorious of all purposes that the Messiah, the Son of God, came into this world. The Jews indeed, suffering from oppression and wrong, and filled with patriotic feelings, were naturally attracted to those prophecies which announced the Messiah as the Anointed King, the Deliverer of His people, the Ruler of the nations.¹ But it was not to fulfil such carnal expectations that Jesus, as the Messiah, came into this world. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, to break the iron yoke of Rome, to restore the Jews to their ancient freedom, and to bring back the heroic times of David or the peaceful days of Solomon. The purpose which the Lord Jesus Christ came to accomplish was far more noble and glorious and sublime. He came to deliver a world from ruin ; to rescue humanity from that gulf of sin and ignorance and crime into which it had sunk ; to elevate and purify human nature ; and to restore the glories and the bliss of former innocence. He was to be the Deliverer not of one particular nation, but the Saviour of the human race, the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews.

¹ Supplement II.

But the prophets foretold not only the glory of the Messiah, but also His sufferings. It is true that the Messiah is held forth more frequently as the ideal King than as the Sufferer, and that those predictions which referred to His sufferings were, for reasons already assigned, overlooked by the Jews. But the sufferings of the Messiah formed an undoubted portion of Hebrew prophecy, and are there represented as of a substitutionary nature. The prophets foretold that the Messiah would suffer as the Substitute of the people. There is no single passage in the New Testament where the vicarious nature of the sufferings of Christ is more plainly taught than in the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. In this remarkable prophecy it has been remarked that there are no less than twelve intimations that His sufferings were for our sakes: 'He hath borne our griefs;' 'He hath carried our sorrows;' 'He was wounded for our transgressions;' 'He was bruised for our iniquities;' 'The chastisement of our peace was upon Him;' 'By His stripes we are healed;' 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;' 'He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken:' 'When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed;' 'By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities;' 'He was numbered with the trans-

gressors ;' 'He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.'¹ And still more clearly is the expiatory nature of the sufferings of the Messiah revealed in the ceremonial law of the Jews. All their bloody rites and sacrifices, the enactments for which constitute the greater portion of the Mosaic law, were types and emblems of that one great sacrifice for sin which the Messiah was to offer up—prefigurations of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross—all assertions of that principle which lies at the root of vicarious substitution, that 'without shedding of blood there can be no remission' (Heb. ix. 22). Thus, then, the doctrine of the atonement is taught in the Old Testament as well as in the New: the prophets unite with the apostles in asserting that the sufferings of Christ were substitutionary and expiatory. This is indeed the great characteristic of revelation—that which lies at the foundation of all the disclosures of God: the chief doctrine of Judaism as seen in its sacrifices, as well as of Christianity. 'I delivered unto you,' said St. Paul, 'first of all,' as the doctrine of primary importance, 'that Christ,' the Messiah, 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures,' according to the declarations of the Old Testament (1 Cor. xv. 3).

As recent Jewish writers deny the divinity of the Messiah, so they also deny the doctrine of

¹ Wünsche's *Die Leiden des Messias*, p. 35.

substitution. Notwithstanding the prominence given to the doctrine of the atonement in the Levitical sacrifices, it forms no part of the creed of the modern Jews. It is regarded by them as opposed alike to the mercy and to the justice of God. The Jew does not feel the need of any other righteousness than his own: his repentance, if sincere, will, he believes, avail with God for his forgiveness; he still stands on the ground of justification by the works of the law. 'We have,' says Dr. Adler, 'no mediator to save us from the effects of our guilt but our own sincere repentance, by which we hope to obtain the forgiveness of our God.' And hence also the sacrifices under the law were not vicarious, there was no transference of the sins of the offerer to the head of the victim: 'The only value and efficacy of the offering consisted in this, that it proved the sacrificer to be repentant; it was an outward test and sign of his sincerity.'¹ How the whole sacrificial rites of the Mosaic law with their sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, and especially the ceremonies on the great day of atonement, can be so explained as to be divested of their vicarious nature, it is difficult to see; it may be that the long cessation of sacrifices among the Jews has diminished in their eyes their importance, and obscured their significance.

¹ Adler's *Course of Sermons*, pp. 37, 39.

And now, what is the grand conclusion which should be deduced from the whole discussion? What important practical lessons are we to learn? Surely it is the supreme importance of a personal acceptance of Christianity. Christianity is a revelation from God; it is contained in the Jewish law as well as in the Gospel; it is the end of all history, the result to which all the movements of Providence lead; it comes to us with all the authority of God and all the importance of salvation. Let us feel its truth. Let us realize, in our own hearts and consciences, that there is a personal God at whose tribunal we must one day appear, and a personal Christ who has come into this world of sin and death in order to redeem it. How much does it become us not merely speculatively to assent to the dogma that Jesus is the Messiah, but to submit ourselves to Him as our Saviour and our King, who as our Saviour died to atone for our sins, and who now as our King rules over the souls of men! 'To Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins.'

SUPPLEMENT I.

THE JEHOVAH-ANGEL.

IN our lecture we observed that 'we must take into consideration the probability, founded on the position which the Messiah occupies in the Old Testament dispensation, and on the teaching of the New Testament, that the Messiah is the Jehovah-Angel who so frequently appeared to the patriarchs, guided the Israelites in the wilderness, and announced Himself to Moses in the bush as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the great I AM THAT I AM.' This is a statement which requires additional remarks in the way of proof or illustration, and is a subject of considerable interest and difficulty.

In the early historical books of the Old Testament, there is frequent mention of this Jehovah-Angel appearing to the patriarchs, receiving from them divine homage, and using the name and titles of God. These appearances are numerous. We can only make a selection, referring our readers to Hengstenberg's *Christology*, and Dr. Pye Smith's *Scriptural Testimony to the Messiah*, where the subject is discussed at considerable length.¹

¹ Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. i. p. 107 ff., and vol. iv. p. 282 ff.; Pye Smith's *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. pp. 296-331.

The Angel of Jehovah, we are informed, appeared to Hagar: 'and she called the name of Jehovah that spake unto her, Thou God seest me' (Gen. xvi. 13). On several occasions this appearance was vouchsafed to Abraham. When he interceded for Sodom, there appears to have been a visible manifestation of Jehovah. Three angels in human form appeared to him: two went toward Sodom, the third remained and revealed Himself to Abraham as Jehovah: 'Abraham,' we read, 'stood yet before Jehovah' (Gen. xviii. 22). And when the same patriarch was about to offer up his son, the Angel of Jehovah interfered in these words: 'Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, for because thou hast done this thing . . . in blessing I will bless thee' (Gen. xxii. 12, 16, 17). The same mysterious Being appeared to Jacob when he was alarmed at the approach of Esau: 'And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved' (Gen. xxxii. 30). And in blessing Joseph and his sons, he refers to the special providence of the Jehovah-Angel: 'He blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which delivered me from all evil, bless the lads' (Gen. xlviii. 15, 16).

The Jehovah-Angel appeared to Moses in a flame of fire, out of the midst of the bush, and announced Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. iii. 6). He it was who guided the Israelites in the wilderness: 'Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him, and obey His voice, provoke Him not; for He will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in Him. . . . Mine Angel shall go before thee' (Ex. xxiii. 20-23). To Joshua He appeared as the Captain of the Lord's host, and demanded the same reverence from him as He did from Moses at the burning bush: 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy' (Josh. v. 15). The Angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah and his wife, revealing Himself to them by the name of Wonderful, and ascending into heaven in the flame of fire, which arose from the burnt-offering: 'And Manoah said unto his wife We shall surely die, because we have seen God' (Judg. xiii. 22). So also in the prophecies of Zechariah there is frequent mention of the Jehovah-Angel. He is represented as the Messenger of God, as assisting Joshua the high priest in his work of rebuilding the temple, and contending with Satan, the great enemy of God and man. And in that very remarkable Messianic prophecy in Malachi, the Messiah is announced as the Angel

of the covenant: 'Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger (or Angel) of the covenant, whom ye delight in' (Mal. iii. 1).

Thus, then, it is undeniable that there is a mysterious personage, mentioned in the Old Testament as the Jehovah-Angel. He is invested with the attributes of Jehovah; He performs the works of God, forgives sins, and exercises a special providence; He is worshipped by those to whom He appears; He is the Leader of the Israelites in the wilderness, and appropriates to Himself the incommunicable name, 'I AM THAT I AM.' Now the question is, Who is this person? Three answers have been given to this inquiry.

The first answer is, that the Jehovah-Angel is a *created angel*, the messenger of Jehovah. He uses the name of God, and speaks with His authority, because he is His messenger, just as an ambassador represents his sovereign. This opinion is adopted by Origen, Augustine, and Jerome, among the Fathers; and by Dr. Samuel Clarke, Episcopius, Grotius, Le Clerc, Meyer, Delitzsch, Hofmann, and Pusey. 'The angel of Jehovah,' observes Delitzsch, 'is an angel whom God employs as the organ of His own self-attestation.'¹ Hofmann supposes

¹ Delitzsch, *Commentary on Genesis*.

that it is a particular angel, that it is 'always one and the same spirit who speaks and acts in the name of God.'¹ There are, however, several considerations which militate against this opinion. It is not countenanced in the Scriptures. There is no intimation in any of the above passages that this Being is acting for and personating another, that He is not speaking in His own name and authority; unless, indeed, the title Angel or Messenger be regarded as such an intimation. Nor was it the custom among the ancients for messengers to use the names and titles of their employers; as, for example, ambassadors calling themselves by the names of their kings. Besides, the words and actions of the Jehovah-Angel, were He only a created angel, would inevitably mislead those to whom He was sent. He assumes, without any qualification, the titles of God; He demands and accepts religious homage; He announces Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Those to whom He appeared could not help believing that He was a divine Being, and confessing that they had seen God. His acceptance of worship is contrasted with the conduct of the angel in the

¹ *Weissagung und Erfüllung*. This is also the view of Dr. Pusey. 'He is called,' he observes, 'not as an epithet, but as a description of his being, the Angel of the Lord; therefore it seems to me most probable that he was a created angel.' He supposes that most probably he is the same as Michael the Archangel (*Lectures on Daniel*, pp. 520, 524).

Apocalypse. When John fell down to worship him, the angel prevented him, saying, 'See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God' (Rev. xxii. 9).

The second answer is somewhat more plausible. According to this view, the Jehovah-Angel is not a person, but, like the Shekinah, the *visible symbol of the presence of God*. There is here a theophany: God here graciously reveals Himself to His worshippers; He gives them a sensible token of His presence, as, for example, the burning bush, the pillar of cloud, or the human form. This view appears to have been the opinion of Philo; and it is also adopted by Rosenmüller, Gesenius, De Wette, and Belsham. 'The Angel of God,' observes Gesenius, 'is nothing else than that secret and invisible Deity which now became manifest to the eyes of mortals.' 'The angels,' observes De Wette, 'are personifications of natural forces, or of the extraordinary works and ordinances of God; hence "the Angel of Jehovah," as having nothing personal in Himself, is interchanged with Jehovah or God.'¹ Those, indeed, who believe that God manifests Himself by and through His Son, that Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, the true Shekinah, admit in that sense the truth of the explanation, that we have in the Jehovah-Angel a

¹ Cited in Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. iv. p. 309.

visible manifestation of the Godhead. But this is not the sense intended by those who advance this explanation. The hypothesis entirely denies the personality of the Jehovah-Angel: He is regarded as a mere token or sign of the divine presence. In the instances adduced, however, the Jehovah-Angel is represented as a person. He speaks, reasons, moves, walks, commands, and acts. And, besides, in many of these passages He is expressly distinguished from God, even as the person sent is distinguished from Him who sent him. For example, He was the Angel whom God appointed in His stead to be the Leader of the Israelites: 'Behold, mine Angel shall go before thee' (Ex. xxxii. 34).

The third answer is that the Jehovah-Angel is the *Son of God*, the second Person of the Godhead, the Messiah of the Jews, who afterwards appeared in this world as the Lord Jesus Christ. This opinion is the doctrine generally received by the Christian Church. It is adopted by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, Chrysostom, and almost all the Fathers. Justin Martyr especially insists upon it in his controversy with Trypho the Jew. Thus he asserts that the Angel who appeared to Abraham under the oak of Mamre was God, and that He was distinguished from God the Father.¹ This

¹ *Dialogue with Trypho*, chap. lvi.

view has also been adopted in recent times by Bengel, Nitzsch, Lange, Stier, Hengstenberg, Pye Smith, Wordsworth, Alford, and numerous other eminent critics. The Jehovah-Angel is called God, speaks with the authority of God, demands and receives the worship of God; and yet He is distinguished from God as His Messenger or Angel. Now the Christian doctrine of the distinction of persons in the unity of the Godhead is the explanation of this. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Messenger of God, the Angel of the covenant, the manifestation of the divine perfections, 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person.' He is the Ruler of the Church both under the Old and under the New Testament dispensation: the Head of the Jewish as well as of the Christian Church.

When we direct our attention to the New Testament, we find this view of the subject, namely, that the Jehovah-Angel is the Lord Jesus Christ, supported, though at the same time we admit that it is not very prominently advanced. Christ is represented as the 'Sent of God,' as the Apostle or Messenger as well as the High Priest of our profession (Heb. iii. 1). The most explicit statement bearing on this subject is that made by St. Paul in 1 Cor. x. He there not merely asserts that Christ was the spiritual Rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness, but that He was

the Jehovah whom they tempted or provoked: 'Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents' (1 Cor. x. 9). The most obvious meaning of this declaration is that Christ was the Leader of the Israelites in the wilderness, and consequently the Jehovah-Angel. The only passage in the New Testament which seems to favour the opposite opinion, is that contained in the speech of St. Stephen. In alluding to the appearance of the Jehovah-Angel to Moses, he speaks of Him simply as an angel: 'There appeared unto him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai an angel in a flame of fire in a bush' (Acts vii. 30); for it is now generally admitted that the word *Κυρίου* in the *textus receptus* is not in the original. But this does not necessarily militate against the above view of the nature of the Jehovah-Angel. St. Stephen goes on to say that 'the voice of the Lord came unto Moses, saying, I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; and that the Lord said to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet'—words which at least admit of the interpretation that the Angel was identical with the Lord who spoke. And, besides, the Mosaic narrative is distinctly in favour of the view that it is the Jehovah-Angel who is here intended.

When we turn our attention to the views of Jewish writers on this subject, we meet with much

discrepancy and many discordant opinions, so that it is difficult to find out whether they regarded the Jehovah-Angel as a person, or merely as the symbol of the Divinity. One very prevalent opinion was, that He was the same with the Shekinah. 'The Angel of Jehovah,' says the book *Zohar*, 'who appeared to Moses is the Shekinah.'¹ In the Middle Ages the rabbinical writers gave to the Jehovah-Angel the title of Metatron, and seem to have regarded Him as the Mediator between God and man. They distinguished between a superior and inferior Metatron. The inferior Metatron is by some supposed to be Enoch, and to him this appellation was given in the Targum of the pseudo-Jonathan. 'And Enoch served in the truth before the Lord, and, behold, he was not with the sojourners of the earth: for he was withdrawn and ascended to the firmament by the Word before the Lord, and his name was called Metatron.'² The superior Metatron is identified with the Jehovah-Angel and the Shekinah. Thus in the book *Zohar* we read: 'The Angel of the Lord which is the Shekinah;' 'It is He who liveth for ever and ever, who is arrayed with the name Metatron.'³ The most exalted titles are conferred upon Him; so much so, that there would seem to be an approximation

¹ Smith's *Testimony*, vol. i. p. 308.

² Etheridge's *Targums on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 175.

³ Smith's *Testimony*, vol. i. p. 390.

here to the Christian doctrine of the Son of God. Thus Rabbi Solomon, commenting on the words, 'My name is in Him,' says: 'Our Rabbis say, This is the Metatron, whose name is as the name of His Teacher, namely, the all-sufficient God.' 'He is named the Metatron,' says Rabbi Bechai, 'because in this name are comprised the two significations of Lord and Messenger; and because He keeps the world, He is called the Keeper of Israel. It hence appears that He is the Lord of all beneath Him, and that the whole host of things above and things below are in His power and under His hand. He is also the Messenger of all both above Him and below Him; because God has made Him to have dominion over all, and has set Him Lord of His house and all His possessions.'¹ And in the book *Zohar* the Metatron is identified with the Messiah.

SUPPLEMENT II.

THE DOGMA OF A TEMPORAL MESSIAH.

IT has been repeatedly stated in the course of these lectures, that in the time of our Lord the

¹ Smith's *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. pp. 392, 393.

prevailing opinion among the Jews was that the Messiah should be a great temporal Prince. This is a statement which does not require any additional proof or illustration, and, indeed, is generally admitted by all classes of writers. The same view was entertained during His life by the disciples of Jesus themselves. They regarded their Master as the destined King of Israel, and contended among themselves about posts of honour and influence in the earthly kingdom which they supposed He was about to inaugurate. Hence all references to His sufferings and death were most distasteful to them. When He spoke to them of rejection and the cross, they understood not what He meant. His death appeared to put an end to all their hopes, and they expressed their disappointment in these words: 'We trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel' (Luke xxi. 21). His resurrection, whilst it confirmed them in their belief of His Messiahship, at the same time revived their expectations of His temporal reign. The time appeared to them to have arrived when He would take to Himself His mighty power and reign. No power on earth would be able to resist their risen Redeemer. Hence their inquiry, 'Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts i. 6). And after His ascension it was a very prevalent opinion among the early Christians that Jesus would soon return and set

up His kingdom on the earth. No doubt many spiritual elements mingled in these views of an earthly reign among the early Christians ; but still these views are a proof that the Jewish notion of a temporal Messiah was not relinquished by the disciples of Jesus.

It is difficult to discover what are the views of the modern Jews on this point. It would, however, seem that their Messianic expectations bear a close resemblance to those of their ancestors. They still cling to the notion of a temporal Messiah, though their idea is not so gross as that of the ancient Jews. They disregard the prophetic, deny the priestly, and attend solely to the kingly office of the Messiah. The same misconception of prophecy which was the cause of Jewish unbelief in the days of our Lord, is still made by them. The general opinion among those Jews who are regarded as orthodox is, that the Messiah shall restore the Jews to their ancient land, rule over them as King, and convert all nations to their religion. He shall reign in truth and righteousness: the maxims of peace and love will everywhere prevail, and all nations will be converted to the worship of the God of Israel. They assign to their own nation a pre-eminence in the kingdom of the Messiah, and expect that Judaism shall become the religion of the world. But what change shall take place in their religious services, whether the

temple shall be rebuilt and the whole Jewish economy re-established, are points which are left undetermined.

These views are stated, though somewhat vaguely, by Dr. Adler. 'At the advent of the Redeemer,' he observes, 'warfare shall cease, and peace be established throughout the earth; Israel shall be gathered into the promised land, and the Messiah shall rule over them.' 'The belief in the unity of God shall be the governing principle of all hearts; all conflicting creeds shall cease, and the animosity and hatred that spring therefrom shall be at an end.' 'Two sayings of our sages enunciate this grand and sublime truth in apt words. We read: "The time will come when Jerusalem will contain within herself all nations and kingdoms." You ask, How is it possible that so small a city shall contain all those multitudes? Another passage from the Midrash answers this question: "The time will come when Jerusalem will comprise the whole of Palestine, and when the boundaries of Palestine will be extended farther on the east and the west, the north and the south." Yes, brethren, in the days of the Messiah, when the worship of one God shall have become the religion of the world, the whole of Palestine shall be a temple, the whole earth a Holy Land.' He thus states the difference between the Christian and the Jewish idea of the Messiah: 'Christians believe

the mission of a Messiah to consist in delivering mankind from the consequences of their hereditary guilt, and in obtaining atonement for the sins that had been committed by them. Judaism teaches us that in the days of the Messiah, mankind shall be redeemed from ignorance, error, and injustice, and the one God universally acknowledged and adored.' And there is the following remarkable passage, in which he asserts that the mission of Christianity and Mahomedanism is to prepare the way for a universal Judaism: 'Wherein else did the mission of both Christianity and Mahomedanism consist (notwithstanding their admixture of error), than to teach the worship of one God to a heathen world, and to promulgate the pure and lofty doctrines of the Bible? Two of the greatest and most philosophical minds of our nation, Rabbi Judah Halleivi and Maimonides, have declared this truth. The remarks of the latter are especially worthy of note. He says that "the historical mission of these two religions consists in paving the way for the coming of the King Messiah, when all will worship the Lord with one accord. For, by means of these two religions, the predictions relative to the Messiah, and the law and its precepts, have been diffused throughout the world, and have penetrated to distant isles."¹

I cannot better conclude this note than by join-

¹ Adler's *Course of Sermons*, pp. 152-159.

ing in the wish for the Jews with which Justin Martyr concludes his memorable dialogue with Trypho: 'I can wish no better thing for you than that you may be of the same opinion as ourselves, and believe that Jesus is the Christ of God.'¹

¹ *Dialogue with Trypho*, chap. cxlii.