

# The Passion Song of Israel

— OR —

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ISAIAH

An Exposition of Isaiah 53

BY

W. HOSTE, B.A.

Author of "The Christ of God," "Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,"  
"The Kingdom of God," etc.



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## FOREWORD.

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IT is with sincere pleasure that I have read Mr. Hoste's exposition of the "Golden Passional" of Israel, and I earnestly hope that Gentile readers will see that this book is widely circulated amongst Christ's brethren "according to the flesh."

It is a remarkable fact that, in the public reading of Scripture in the Synagogue upon the Sabbath Day, the selection for one Sabbath reading ends at Isaiah 52. 12, but on the following week the Book of the Roll is opened at Isaiah 54, thus omitting the whole passage which forms the subject of this book; on the other hand it is interesting to find the following striking paraphrase in the Liturgy of the Day of Atonement:

"Our Righteous Messiah has departed from us: horror has seized upon us, and there is none to justify us. He has borne the yoke of our iniquities and guilt, and is wounded because of our iniquities. He beareth our sins upon His shoulders, that He may find a pardon for our iniquity. We shall be healed by His wound at the time that the Eternal will create Him as a new creature."

A question may be raised as to what share Gentiles can have in Jehovah's Suffering Servant, but a full answer is given to this in the picture that Luke paints for us in Acts 8 (see page 7).

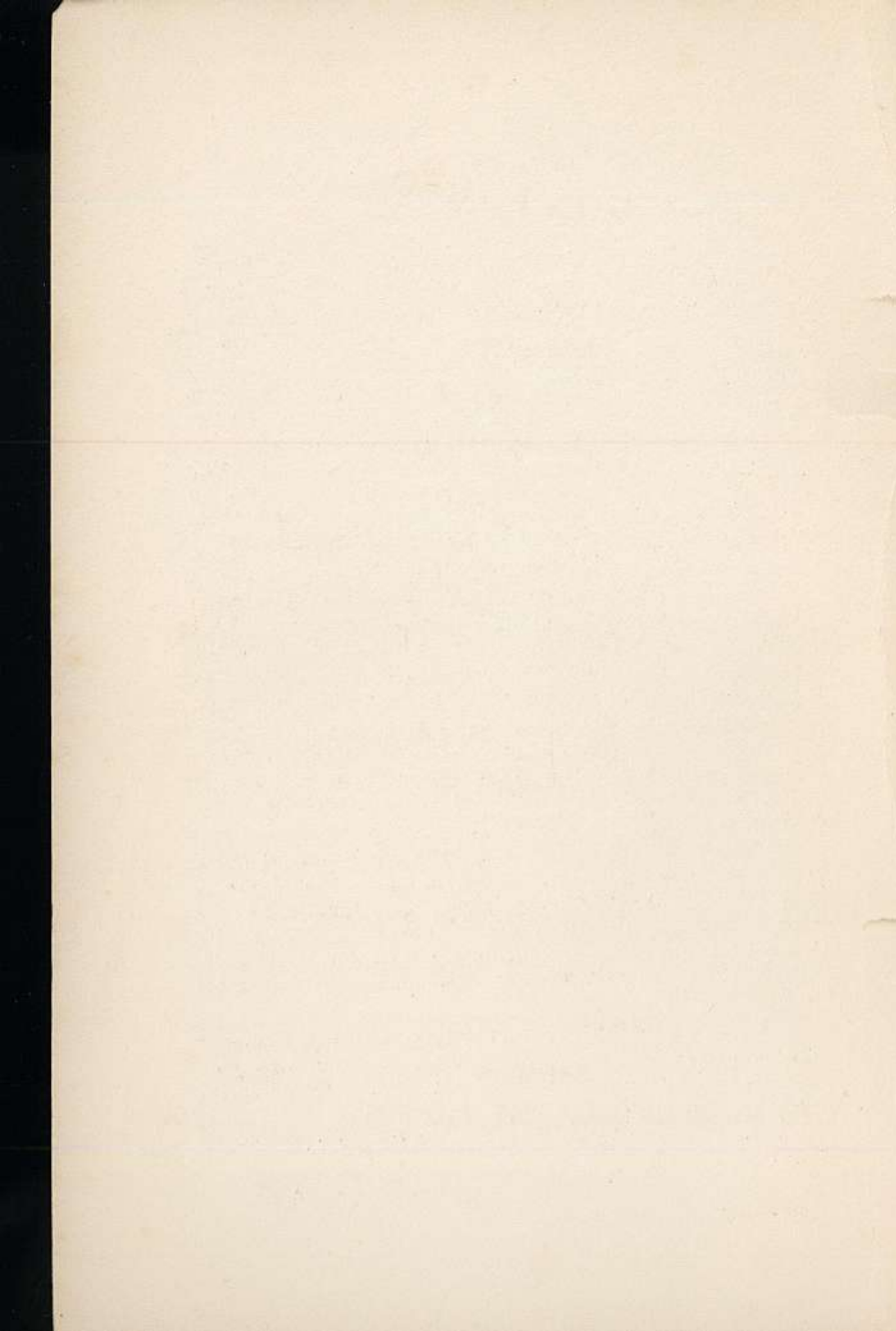
We are shown a maimed and nameless negro, shut out from God's Temple by a pitiless law, reading the story of Messiah's woes; to him comes a true evangelist, who, "beginning at the same Scripture," preaches unto him JESUS; when the two have parted, may we not imagine the Ethiopian picking up the Roll again, and reading a few verses farther on these cheering words:

"Let not the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold I am a dry tree."

Let me ask, have you a share in David's Son and David's Lord?

HAROLD ST. JOHN.

MALVERN.





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ISAIAH 53. 1-6.

Who hath believed our report ? and to whom  
is the arm of the Lord revealed ?

For He shall grow up before Him as a tender  
plant, and as a root out of a dry ground : He  
hath no form nor comeliness ; and when we  
shall see Him, there is no beauty that we  
should desire Him.

He is despised and rejected of men ; a Man  
of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we  
hid as it were our faces from Him ; He was  
despised, and we esteemed Him not.

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried  
our sorrows : yet we did esteem Him stricken,  
smitten of God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities : the  
chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and  
with His stripes we are healed.

All we, like sheep, have gone astray ; we have  
turned every one to his own way ; and the  
Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

# The Passion Song of Israel.

AN EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH 53.

By W. HOSTE, B.A.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Messiah "My Servant."

CENTURIES ago two Africans, a master and servant, were driving by the desert route from Jerusalem to Gaza. The former was most probably a Jewish proselyte. The fame of the Lord's House had reached him in distant Ethiopia, and, drawn by a hand he knew not, he had come to Jerusalem to worship.\* The prayer of King Solomon was now to be answered: "Concerning the stranger, which is not of Thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for Thy great Name's sake; . . . if they come to pray in this house; then hear them from the heavens, even from Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for" (2 Chron. 6. 32, 33). The Ethiopian, like many another before and since, had gone through the prescribed rites, but had not found true peace; that, the knowledge of the Messiah alone could give. But he had procured a guide to that knowledge in a roll of the prophet Isaiah. Reading on his journey he had reached the climax of the book, the 53rd chapter, and was actually at the words "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before His shearers, so He opened not his mouth. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away, and who shall declare His generation for His life is taken from the earth." Probably, while in Jerusalem, he had heard of the strange events which had lately happened

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\* This would evidently not be his first journey thither.



there, and of the controversy which had arisen around the Name of Jesus, the Son of David. Some said this chapter referred to Him, others to Jeremiah or Josiah, or some to one yet to come.

#### THE EVANGELIST AND THE ETHIOPIAN.

To whom and to what strange circumstances could such words apply? Suddenly a voice at his side inquired: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The speaker was a wayfaring man, a Jew, who had at that moment run alongside the chariot. The Ethiopian was a great man in the world, Chancellor of the Exchequer to his Queen, Candace, but he had a further and rarer claim to greatness, he was a humble man and ready to be taught.

"How can I," he answered, "except some man should guide me?" and he bade the stranger come up into the chariot. There they sat, the rich man, poor in spiritual blessing; and the poor man, rich in faith and the knowledge of God. "Of whom speaketh the prophet thus; of himself or of some other man?" asked the Ethiopian. And the other, whose name was Philip, opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. The proof of a key is in the using. If it fit a good lock the chances are it was made for it. As the African listened he was convinced, like millions since, both Jews and Gentiles, that this Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the hope of Israel, the Saviour of the world. He confessed his faith, was baptised, and "went on his way rejoicing."

#### RE-EXAMINATION OF MESSIAH'S CLAIM.

Has not the time come for Jewish people to examine afresh and without prejudice the claims of Jesus, the Son of David, to Messiahship; One for whom myriads would die to-day, 1900 years after His death, and whom many teachers of Israel have come to recognise as the noblest of



her sons and their nation's greatest glory ? The Christian Gospels, containing some account of His lineage, life, and ministry, are within easy reach, and ought to be read by all. They are acknowledged, even by great scholars\* of the world, to be masterpieces of literature, and what is more remarkable is that their authors were confessedly simple men, and not of the schools,—a publican, a peasant, a physician, and a fisherman. Whence had such men the ability to depict the most wonderful character of any age unless their hand was guided by a Higher Power ? How could He of whom they wrote, who has of all men exercised the widest and most enduring influences on the human race, have been other than what He claimed to be, the Sent of God, the Messiah of Israel ?

#### CREDENTIALS SUPPORTING THE CLAIM.

And these claims are supported by credentials which cannot be ignored. How are we to account for the many prophecies, usually admitted by Jewish teachers, to refer to the Messiah, which were fulfilled in Him, where collusion and prearrangement were impossible ? How could any one arrange to be "born of a virgin" in order to fulfil Isaiah 7. 14 (see Matt. 1. 22, 23), or in Bethlehem to fulfil Micah 5. 1 (Luke 2. 4) ? Was it by collusion, in order to fulfil Zechariah 11. 13, that Judas the traitor agreed with the chief priests to betray Him for thirty pieces of silver, or that the potter's field was bought for exactly that price ? Was He smitten by His enemies on the cheek bone, crucified, given vinegar to drink, spat upon, His vesture divided by lot, and He "cut off" in order to fulfil Micah 4. 14 ; Psalm 22. 15-18 ; Psalm 69. 22 ; Isaiah 50. 6 ; Psalm 22. 7-9 ; and Daniel 9. 26 ? Did He arrange beforehand to die between two robbers in order to be "numbered with the

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\* Ernest Renan called the Gospel of Matthew the most important book ever written.

transgressors," in fulfilment of Isaiah 53. 12, or to be buried by a rich man in his own tomb to fulfil Isaiah 53. 9 (Matt. 27. 57, 60) ? How did it happen that Psalm 16. 10, 11 was so accurately fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus ? Certainly His enemies did not arrange this ; they did all in their power to prevent even the semblance of a resurrection. They set a seal on the great stone at the door of His sepulchre and a watch of soldiers to guard it. Did His disciples ? They did not believe He would rise. Who then arranged it ? Not chance, but God, whose Spirit had foretold it, " having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it " (Acts 2. 24).

#### THE CRITICS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

One is reminded of certain critics of the last century who denied the Homeric authorship of the Iliad on the ground that to ascribe the state of civilisation, described in it, to so early a date as that of Homer was an unpardonable anachronism. Then came the archaeologist with his spade and proved the critics wrong. It is rumoured that even then they would not admit Homer wrote it, but another man of the same name who lived at the same time and place.

Equally those who deny the Messiahship of Jesus are coming virtually to admit that the true claimant was another of the same time, born in the same town and family, who lived as He lived and suffered as He suffered. " But," replies some Jewish objector, " you claim that your Messiah was the ' Son of God.' You must give up that claim if you want us Jews to accept Him as Messiah, for such a claim to our ears is monstrous; it saps at the foundation of the great essential truth of the unity of the Godhead : ' The Lord our God is one God ; ' ' I am the Lord, thy God, thou shalt have none other gods before Me.' "



## HUMAN SONSHIP AND DIVINE SONSHIP.

Such an objection has the strongest sympathy of the true Christian. Were the said doctrine incompatible with a belief in the Unity of the Godhead no intelligent Christian could hold it. But we must remember that thoughts inseparably connected with human sonship, such as beginning, succession, separateness of essence, must be rigidly excluded from the thought of Divine Sonship. The Lord did not enter into relationship as Son by His human birth, nor even by resurrection, these only confirmed it, but "in the beginning," in eternity.

This is not a multiplying of the Godhead but an unfolding of His Being, a fuller manifestation of the Divine mode of existence. If we understand so partially our own tripartite nature—"spirit and soul and body"—in one person, who can pretend to fathom the Being of God—One, Eternal, Infinite, Absolute, in three Divine Persons : Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ? We only know of the Divine Being what He is pleased to reveal of Himself.

## THE DIVINE SONSHIP OF THE MESSIAH.

"Yes," you reply, "but that further revelation is in the Christian New Testament, which we Jews cannot admit as a part of the canon of Holy Scripture." Certainly, all revelation is cumulative, and a further revelation may supplement but cannot contradict what has been previously known ; the Divine Sonship of the Messiah, as revealed in the New Testament, could not be true if it contradicted the revelation of Jehovah-Elohim in the Jewish Scriptures. It is remarkable that perhaps the strongest exponent, with one exception, of this doctrine in the whole New Testament was Saul of Tarsus, himself a learned Jew, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel the elder, and deeply versed in the Scriptures and all Rabbinical learning ; but it is neither

John, the son of Zebedee, nor Saul of Tarsus we will interrogate, but certain Jewish prophets who lived centuries before Jesus of Nazareth, namely David, the king; Isaiah, the son of Amos, and Micah, the Morasthite. Ought not their testimony to be heard and weighed with respect? Now King David, in the second Psalm, speaks of One who is the Son of Jehovah. The Psalm at first describes an unholy alliance between the Gentiles and "the people" against Jehovah and His Messiah, and in verse 6 gives us Jehovah's answer: "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." In the next verse the Messiah acknowledges this declaration and reinforces it.

#### JEHOVAH'S KING—JEHOVAH'S SON.

"I will declare the decree, Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Thus Jehovah's King is Jehovah's Son, the Spirit of God being witness. Does this assail "the Unity of the Godhead?" If so, it is a Hebrew psalmist\* who does it. Later David writes in Psalm 110: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand until I make thine enemies Thy

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\* The sixth verse quoted above is applied to the Messiah in the Midrash on 1 Samuel 16. 1, where it is said that, "of the three measures of suffering, one goes to the King Messiah," of whom it is written (Isa. 53), "He was wounded for our transgressions." They say to the King Messiah, "Where dost Thou seek to dwell?" He answers, "Is this question also necessary? In Zion, My holy hill."

For non-Jewish readers it might be added that the Midrash contains the oldest expositions of Scripture by Jewish scholars, composed of Halakhah—the spiritual way, treating of customs and ordinances, and Haggadah or narrative. While the former was held in high reverence, the latter carried only the authority of the individual commentator. What is extant of the Midrash is contained in the Mishna, the chief depository of the Jewish "oral law," which forms the text of the Talmud, as distinguished from the Gemara or Commentary. The Mishna was largely collected about A.D. 220 by Rabbi Jehudah Hannasi, though probably only committed to writing in the fifth century.



footstool." But all agree that Messiah was to be the Son of David, how then can David call Him Lord? Only were Messiah in divine as well as in human relationship to David "made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1. 3, 4). The same strange paradox meets us early in the prophecies of Isaiah, "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" (chap. 9. 6). Who might this mysterious "Son" be who bears among other names "The Mighty God?" Again, do not such passages as Isaiah 42. 13 imply that Jehovah Himself would descend into the conflict with sin? "Jehovah shall go forth as a Mighty Man" ("The Mighty God" is now "The Mighty Man"). "He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; He shall cry, yea, roar; He shall prevail against His enemies."

#### WHO WAS "THE ANGEL OF THE LORD?"

We may also compare passages where "the angel of the Lord" and "the Lord" seem used interchangeably, *e.g.*, Genesis 22. 15, 16: "The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of Heaven the second time, and said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord;" and Zechariah 1. 8, 17 where, moreover, the "angel of the Lord" is identified with "the *man* among the myrtles" (vv. 10, 11). In Exodus 3. 2 it is the angel of the Lord who is said to have appeared to Moses out of the midst of a bush, and in verse 6 this "angel" becomes God Himself, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. See also Exodus 23. 20, 21: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way. . . . Provoke Him not, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My Name is in Him:" expressions which show that this "Angel of the Covenant" is a Divine

Person, for "who can forgive sins but God only?" and of what mere angel could Jehovah say "My Name is in him?"

#### FROM EVERLASTING *yet* BEGINNING IN TIME.

Again, much later, when Herod the Great inquired of the elders of Israel where Messiah should be born they had no hesitation in referring to Micah 5. 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel." Had they not stopped there, the next sentence would have read, "*Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*" Mysterious words! Who could that One be who was to have a beginning in time by being born in Bethlehem of Judah, and yet had existed without beginning "of old from everlasting?"

#### BORN IN TIME *yet* BEFORE ALL TIME.

The prayer of Jesus Christ to His God and Father fits in with these dark sayings: "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thyself, with the glory which I had with Thee *before the world was.*" Though born as man in Bethlehem His memory went back to a condition before time was. How came He thus to be born? The answer is contained in memorable words addressed by Jesus the Lord to a teacher of Israel who afterwards became His disciple: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He was as "a Lamb . . . slain before the foundation of the world."

#### THE UNISON OF "LIGHT" AND "LOVE."

Here are revealed the depths of the heart of God—"God is Light" and "God is Love." As Jehovah, in revealing His Name to Moses on the Mount, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant



in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," adds words which stand out in letters of fire, "AND THAT WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY" (Exod. 34. 6, 7), so the rest of the Scriptures are perfectly consistent: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." In order righteously to pass over sin and bring forgiveness within the reach of all, God, as "Light," being in His holiness, as in all else, infinite, demands an infinite satisfaction to His broken law; and God, as "Love," provides it in the Person of His Son, the Messiah of Israel.

#### BOTH SUFFERING AND REIGNING.

When Jesus of Nazareth presented Himself to Israel His forerunner, John, bare witness to Him: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." And with this end in view, as the sacrificial sin-offering, "He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; He was buried, and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15. 3, 4). The central theme of the prophets is "the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow." How the same person could suffer and reign was an enigma. There must be two Messiahs, it was suggested, one to suffer, Ben Joseph of Ephraim, the other to reign, Ben David of Bethlehem. But is not this of the nature of an expedient?

#### THE HOLY ONE "CUT OFF."

What if the Messiah to be "cut off," according to Daniel (chap. 9. 26), should prove to be the Holy One of whom David sings in Psalm 16: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption?" \*

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\* There is a remarkable comment in Yalkut on Psalm 49. 8 to the effect that the Messiah suffers in every age for the sins of that

“ David is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day, but being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Messiah to sit on His throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Messiah, that his soul was not left in Hell, neither his flesh did see corruption ” (Acts 2. 29, 31).

The only safe conclusion is that the suffering and glorified Messiahs are one and the same Person. The God of resurrection must be reckoned with.

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generation, but that God would in the day of redemption repair it all. But how could the glory of the Son of David repair humiliation and death to some other suffering Messiah, dead and buried years before? Only if the former should prove to be the latter raised from the dead.



## CHAPTER II.

## Messiah—Jehovah—Elohim.

BEFORE studying the 53rd chapter of Isaiah we must look at its context. Jewels lose much by being taken out of their setting. King Hezekiah was on the throne of David ; they were times of reformation in Judah, but the real condition of the people remained unchanged. The words of chapter 1. 4, 6 still described them "no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores," and this was proved by the way they followed King Manasseh in his sin and idolatry. Reformation does not suffice, nor yet restoration to the Holy Land the place of national privilege, so largely the hope of the Jewish people to-day. Men need, whether Jew or Gentile, reconciliation with God and regeneration by His Spirit.

## THE DELIVERANCE OF JEHOVAH.

Such a deliverance only Jehovah could grant, and in chapter 50 He chides His people for not calling on Him for it : "Wherefore when I came was there no man ? When I called was there none to answer ? Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem, or have I no power to deliver ? Behold, at My rebuke I dry up the sea ; I make the rivers a wilderness. . . . I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering." He also recalls the deliverances in Egypt and at the Red Sea. None but He could perform such wonders ; but there is a greater miracle still which Omnipotence alone cannot effect—deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. For this Jehovah must assume a new role. Like the good Samaritan He must come down where the sinner lay in his misery and guilt. Accordingly in the next verses we hear Him of the mighty arm, speaking in a new character, as the obedient Sufferer and as the Comforter of the weary. "Jehovah-

Elohim hath given Me the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to him that is weary. . . . He hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious ; I gave my back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not My face from shame and spitting." Jehovah is the speaker all through from verse 1, and He refers to another Divine Person, Jehovah-Elohim. How can this be explained ? Only by the wonderful fact that the unity of the Godhead does not exclude a plurality of persons.

#### FORESHADOWED IN THE OFFERINGS.

Again, how could Jehovah have ears to be opened, a back to be smitten, cheeks and face ? Only by becoming man. And yet, marvellous condescension as this implies, it was not enough. Neither sympathy with the needy nor suffering at the hands of man could take away sins. A perfect sacrifice was needed ; the antitype and fulfilment of " all the beasts on Jewish altars slain," and only Jehovah could supply this. The need of this atonement was taught by the blood of the Levitical offerings. " The life of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given you the blood upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17. 11). The bullocks and lambs of the Jewish sacrifices must be without external blemish or spot, figurative of the intrinsic sinlessness and holiness required in the great antitypical sacrifice. To suppose that this need could be met by the sinner consuming his own flesh and blood in the act of fasting, as some have sought to explain, betrays a lack of serious thought. Could a murderer pretend to atone for His guilt by fasting ? Man is a defiled sinner ; how could his blood be regarded as anything but defiled even could he offer every drop of it ? By fasting, moreover, a man loses flesh but not his life, and it is that which is forfeited. No man can atone for himself, nor yet redeem his brother



(Psalm 49). Only God can do this, and He declares of the repentant sinner, "Deliver him from going down into the pit : I have found a ransom" (Job 33. 24), and that ransom is the blood of Him who "gave Himself a ransom for all,"

"A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT."

This was not accomplished by His forty days of fasting, but by pouring out His soul unto death on the Cross of Calvary. It was God who made His soul an offering for sin (see Isaiah 53. 10, 12). Chapter 50 ends with an exhortation to the faithful remnant of Israel "who fear the Lord and obey the voice of *His servant*; . . . to trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon their God." Who can this servant of Jehovah be who is thus placed on an equality with Jehovah? Must He not be Himself divine, the same of whom Jehovah speaks through the prophet Zechariah, "Awake, O sword, against *my Shepherd*, and against *the man that is My fellow*; . . . smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones" \* (Zech. 13. 7) ?

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\* A late Jewish writer tries to make this "shepherd" mean the Sultan of Turkey, because he harbours in his dominions so many "sheep of the house of Israel," and explains that Jehovah calls the Sultan "My fellow," because he (the Sultan) reckons himself as God. But even were this the case, would God condone the blasphemous pretensions of a rival? Would He whose word is "Thou shalt have none other gods but Me" recognise a false god and a false leader? The true Scriptural doctrine of the Cross of Calvary is that though Jesus was crucified by men, it pleased the Lord to smite Him on account of our sins when He hung there. On what historic occasion did God smite the Sultan? Note also how closely in verse 8 trouble to the nation of Israel follows on the smiting of "the Shepherd." How well this accords with the terrible events of A.D. 70, following on the death of Jesus Christ and the final rejection by the people of the testimony concerning Him! Clearly, too, the smitten One is recognised by Jehovah as His own true Shepherd—"My Shepherd"—and One who can rightly claim to be His equal—"My Fellow." As

## THE SHELL WITHOUT THE KERNEL.

Passing on to the ninth verse of the next chapter, we see the people of God, instead of "staying themselves on their God," plunged in distress, because deliverance is deferred. They forget that to inherit the promises patience must be added to faith. Jehovah must be asleep they think. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. . . . Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" What can be greater than the deliverances God wrought at the Red Sea? Let Him do the same now! But divine history does not repeat itself. God has some better thing in reserve—the true Deliverer, His Servant, who gave His back to the smiters, the suffering Messiah. They forget Him. They have the types without the antitype, the shell without the kernel, the form without the reality. As one has well said, "Poor blinded ones, they have a lot of empty vessels, a Sabbath without true rest, unleavened bread with no real Passover, a feast of weeks and no covenant, trumpets but no joyful sound, a Day of Atonement but no atonement, booths but no sense of the presence of Jehovah, contented with empty vessels, and heaping reproaches on those who have not emptiness but the essential."

## WHY IS ISRAEL JUDGED TO-DAY?

It is Israel, not God, who needs to awake. "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury" (v. 17). Never has a people suffered like the chosen nation. Yet all avails not to put away their sins, and much less those of the Gentiles,

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there is only one God, this can only be a Divine Person existing in that unity.

See "A Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People," by A. Lukyn Williams, D.D. (p. 210).



for which some of their teachers assure them they suffer. "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still" (see Isa. 5. 25 ; 9. 12, 17, 21 ; 10. 4). What, then, are the judgments for ? To bring Israel to national repentance. Into what terrible national sin, then, has she fallen, "the dearly beloved of Jehovah" (Jer. 11. 15 ; 12. 7), to be thus left to the will of her enemies, and under the judgment of her God ? Why is she scattered to the four winds and her beautiful temple destroyed ? Why these ages of wanderings and persecutions ? Can it be she has "smitten the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek ?" (Micah 5. 2). Is it that she has turned her back on the greatest of all "the sons whom she has brought forth," whose\* "beautiful feet upon the mountains . . . brought good tidings of good, published salvation, and said unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ?" Through Him alone blessing will come to a repentant people, and it will be said in that day, "The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52. 10).

#### CHRIST AS SERVANT.

It is to this blessed Person, whom, as we saw in chapter 50. 10, Jehovah places on equality with Himself, that attention is now called in the thirteenth verse of Isaiah 52 : "*Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.*" It is generally considered that these words begin a new section. Here is one whom Jehovah calls His servant, and in whose faithfulness and ultimate success† He has supreme confidence. Who is He ?

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\* This verse is quoted by a later writer as, "How beautiful are the feet of *them* that bring good tidings"—the One preacher begets many ; as the servant of chapter 52 becomes the servants of chapter 54.

† On the words, "He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high," which the Targum applies expressly to the Messiah, we read

It is true that the term "servant" is sometimes used collectively of the nation of Israel, "O Jacob, My servant" (Isa. 44. 1, 2), but often, as here, individually, "Behold My servant, whom I uphold" (Isa. 42. 1, 7), where "Israel" must clearly be understood as an individual member of the nation (one who Jehovah could recognise as a true "Prince with God"), for part of his work, we learn here, is to restore the nation to God (v. 5), so he cannot be the same as the nation. Surely there can only be one to whom such a service could be entrusted with hope of success—the Messiah Himself.

#### THE SON OF MAN.

A somewhat shallow objection has been raised that if God speaks of Christ as servant He could not also be Divine. But as has\* been well pointed out, "There is no difficulty in this if Jesus, though very God, became man; for as man, of course, He could become servant. The Lord never lost sight of the fact that He was God, one, not the same, with the Father; nor did He ever forget that He was "Son of Man." If a mere man had two titles, one honourable, the other lowly, he might naturally prefer the former; the Lord Jesus used the latter, "He humbled Himself." It was as Son of Man, in His character of servant, that He said, "My Father is greater than I;" as Son of God, in His

in Yalkut 11 (par. 338, p. 53), "He shall be higher than Abraham," to whom Genesis 14. 22 applies; "higher than Moses," of whom Numbers 11, 12 is predicated; "higher than the ministering angels," of whom Ezekiel 1. 18 speaks. But to Him there applies this in Zechariah 4. 7, "Who art Thou, O great Mountain?" "And He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." Rabbi Hara says, in the name of Rabbi Acha, "All sufferings are divided into three parts; one part goes to David and the patriarchs, another to the generation of the rebellious (*i.e.*, rebellious Israel), and the third to King Messiah."

\* "Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People," p. 161, by Dr. Lukyn Williams.



personal relationship, that He claimed equality with the Father, "I and My Father are One." But His self-humbling went much lower, "even to the death of the cross."

ABASED YET "HIGHLY EXALTED."

Jewish teachers have objected that if this be true of Jesus of Nazareth, who died like one of the lowest of the people, it cannot also be said of Him, "He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Such an objection would be valid had Jesus remained dead, but falls before the Christian doctrine of His resurrection. His sufferings, too, were unique, and differed from those of the patriarchs, Joseph, David, Job, who suffered for righteousness' sake, and from those of the rebellious, which were punitive, in that His were atoning, that is, to make reconciliation for iniquity; but they are the prelude of His glory. Thus His exaltation has already begun. "God raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory that our faith and hope might be in God" (1 Peter 1), or, as another, an ex-member of the Sanhedrin, wrote, "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Even those Jews who deny the future glory of Jesus of Nazareth cannot deny that He has already been exalted in one sense, seeing for Him multitudes have laid down their lives, many more to-day for Him "scorn delights and live laborious days," and to Him millions bow in worship. There are more buildings in His honour, more books concerning Him alone, than of all the greatest men that ever lived, all taken together. Is not this to be exalted? This homage is a fact in Heaven, becomes daily more so on earth, and will be so one day even in the infernal regions (Phil. 2. 10, 11).

## CHAPTER III.

## Messiah's Rejection and Recognition

THE prophet assures the Lord's Servant that His future recognition will be proportionate to His present rejection (v. 14). "*As many were astonished at Thee. His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.*"

The word here translated "astonished" (Heb. *Shah-mehm*), sometimes rendered "desolating" (Dan. 8. 13), Margoliouth asserts means "to despise," to "hiss at," but the true sense seems rather to be that of wonderment (see Dan. 8. 27 ; Ezek. 26. 16), though that not always of admiration, but even of disgust. Then follows the cause of the "astonishment." (Some supply the word "saying," but is it not simpler to treat these words as an explanatory parenthesis ? namely His disfigurement.) Had He come in attractive guise the world had welcomed Him, but such would have been a counterfeit Messiah. The reason of His rejection was a reason for His acceptance when He came, and the fact of His rejection should lead to His acceptance now, for this passage clearly speaks of a rejected Messiah. His very rejection then is a credential. "So shall He sprinkle many nations ; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him : for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (v. 15).

## HOW SHALL HE SPRINKLE NATIONS.

Moses at Sinai only sprinkled the people of Israel, but this one—a prophet like unto Moses—many nations. The "so many" corresponds to the "as many" of the previous verse, the humiliation will only find its counterpart in the exaltation. The verb *nah-zah*, frequent in the law, only



means to sprinkle (*e.g.*, Num. 19. 18, 19, 21), but the person sprinkled has *al* or *gl*, omitted here before "nations."

Some think it means "to sprinkle" in the sense of "to scatter words," others "to surprise," as by the sudden shock of cold water splashed on a person. This agrees with or rather perhaps suggested the Revised Version margin "startle," and certainly fits well with the *thaumasontai* of the Septuagint, though there the verse runs "many nations shall wonder."

"REGARD HIM WITH SURPRISED WONDER."

Dr. Durell conjectures that the true reading may be "they shall regard;" *ghazah* is used as meaning to look with admiration, see Psa. 17. 15; 27. 4. If that be so the true translation is, "So shall many nations regard Him with surprised wonder." This will be fulfilled when Messiah returns in glory. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. 1. 7). With this compare Zechariah 12. 10: "They shall look on Me whom they pierced,"\* where it is to be noted that the Speaker all through the chapter is Jehovah. The "pierced" One of verse 10 is the same who, in verse 1, "stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."

THE PIERCED ONE.

This piercing is referred to prophetically in Psalm 22. 16, where Messiah exclaims: "They pierced My hands and My feet." How this was fulfilled in the case of Jesus need not be insisted upon, nor yet how far beyond any human pre-arrangement it all was. What other form of death but crucifixion would have ensured the piercing of His hands and feet. He had, then, to be put to death by the Romans,

\* See Appendix II.

for stoning is the Jew's manner of execution. But there was another fulfilment of the words of Psalm 22 which occurred in a most unlikely and unpremeditated way. The Messiah hung lifeless on the cross. So clearly was He dead that it was not worth the soldiers while to break His legs. They knew His spirit had fled. But as though to make assurance doubly sure "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." He who, under the guise of humanity, was Jehovah will appear to His people, and they will look on Him whom they pierced, and a spirit of grace and supplication will be poured out on them, and "there will be a great mourning in Jerusalem; . . . the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart" (Zech. 12. 11-14). They will have cause to mourn. The touching scene of Joseph making himself known to his brethren (Gen. 45) will be re-enacted on a greater and deeper scale. A greater than Joseph will reveal Himself to Israel, His brethren according to the flesh, and they will realise to their horror and grief that they have rejected and pierced their own precious Messiah—Jehovah Himself, manifest in flesh.

And yet, deep and terrible as this sin is a remedy will be found, and that in the most unlikely place in the universe, at the very scene of its committal. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13. 1).

All their tears and mourning will not cleanse away their guilt in crucifying their Messiah, but then they will be taught the hidden meaning of His death, will believe on Him as their Redeemer, and have His atoning work in all its fullness applied to their souls. The fountain sprang first at



Calvary, as has been well said, but for nearly 2000 years had run like an underground river out of sight, as far as the bulk of the nation was concerned. Now it will be opened out afresh, and these repentant ones will find complete cleansing in the Lord Jesus from all their sin and uncleanness, and as the nucleus of the New Israel will enter the Millennial Kingdom to share its glories under Messiah the Prince.

#### THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

It is in Isaiah 53 that what Zechariah calls symbolically a fountain is prophetically unfolded. Christ Himself is "the Fountain opened . . . for sin and for uncleanness." The chapter is at once a confession and a testimony. A confession on the part of true Israelites of their guilt in rejecting their Messiah, and a testimony to Him as their sin-bearer. Of course the truth of the chapter is for every one who repents of his sin, but it specially applies to the faithful remnant of Israel in the last days, who will suffer at the hands of the nation at large. How closely, too, it applies to Christian Hebrews to-day who have accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour and are misunderstood by their countrymen for so doing. They plead with tears with their fellow-Israelites to believe in Him, but are treated as renegades and apostates, and accused of having forsaken their father Abraham, whereas they are now more than ever his sons and daughters seeing he is the father of the faithful. A great Jew, the celebrated Earl of Beaconsfield, was once asked whether he was a "converted" Jew. "No," he replied, "I am a completed Jew." Oh, that every one might find this glorious completeness by receiving Him who is the Antitype of all the Old Testament types, the fulfilment of every promise, and the channel of every blessing—the true Hope of Israel!



## THE REPORT—THE ARM OF THE LORD.

Isaiah 53. 1. "*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*"

Evidently the speakers have been trying to convince others of what is to them important news, but instead of a welcome they have encountered unbelief and apathy.

The "arm of the Lord" expresses His executive power, as we say "the arm of the law"—that which carries out its sanctions. It takes us back to chapter 51. 9, "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord."

This prayer has been heard, but in an unexpected and, to many, an unintelligible way.

v. 2. "*For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.*"

The personal pronoun "He" shows that the "arm of the Lord" is a Person to whom Jehovah has entrusted His purposes. This can be none other than He of whom Asaph speaks in Psalm 80, "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man, whom Thou madest strong for Thyself"—the Messiah, the anointed One. To whom is He made known, or how? "Not to the wise and prudent, but unto babes;" not by education, but by revelation. As a learned Jew, once the bitterest enemy of Jesus of Nazareth, expressed it when describing his conversion, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1. 15); or, as Jesus Himself affirmed to another Jew who confessed Him as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. 16. 17), etc.

## WHY NOT REVEALED TO ALL ?

Why does this revelation not come to all ? Because so many shrink from the sacrifice it entails, little dreaming of the greater sacrifice they are making in refusing it. They cling to their "religion, received by tradition from their fathers," and refuse the Redeemer foretold by the prophets. They fear the wrath of man, who at worst can only kill the body, and they fear not Him "who can destroy both body and soul in Hell."

## THE PLANT IN THE WILDERNESS.

The first part of this verse describes the early years of Messiah before His presentation to Israel : "He shall grow up," or rather, "Now He grew up." The verbs are all in the past or completed tense up to verse 7, and are to be regarded as "perfects of prophetic certitude." All has been completed in the divine counsels before the foundation of the world.

To find a fragrant rose blooming in a waste wilderness would not be so great a miracle as to contemplate the moral glory of the Messiah in a world of sinners. "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," was the witness of one who knew Him best. The fact of Christ is the greatest miracle ; to admit Him, as we must, and quibble at "incarnation" and "resurrection" is illogical.

## A BRANCH OUT OF HIS ROOTS.

He grew up as a tender plant, without noise or outward show, but the wild beast of the field would have gladly trampled Him under foot. That such a root should grow out of so parched a soil was all to its greater honour, but to the Herods, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes it was a noxious weed to be uprooted and destroyed. In the Karoo desert of South Africa almost the sole vegetable



growth is the Karoo Bush, on which the flocks subsist, but how even this bush could grow in such soil was a mystery till it was discovered that its roots go down forty feet. The Messiah drew His supplies not from below but from Heaven. In Him was fulfilled that other prophecy of Isaiah : " There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots." The idea is of the root of a felled tree sending forth shoots. " There is hope of a tree," as Job tells us, " if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch will not cease " (chap. 14. 7), and often the foliage in such a tree is treble the size of the former leaves. The house of David was this felled tree, but had not Jehovah covenanted with him " that his seed should endure for ever, and the throne of his kingdom to all generations ? " Messiah was this new shoot from the old stock. Why then was He so generally rejected ? Because He was so unlike the preconceived idea which Israel had formed of her coming Messiah. The prophecies relating to His glory had eclipsed the humiliation foretold as preceding it. They looked for a Saviour from their earthly enemies. He came to save them first from spiritual foes ; His holy life was a rebuke to their unholiness. They longed for freedom from the Roman yoke ; they needed first to be set free from the yoke of sin. " They hated Him without a cause," " for His love they were His enemies," but He was Jehovah's delight. " Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth " (Isa. 42. 1), and His true people share this delight.

#### THE BEAUTY OF THE MESSIAH.

In the next phrase of this verse the Revised Version margin has " He hath no form nor comeliness, that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him," which seems to suit the context, though there are notable authorities like Gesenius and Delitzsch who prefer



the Authorized Version as above. The sense is not seriously affected either way. The beauty of the Messiah was not external, but moral ; it did not force unwilling admiration, but attracted those who were willing to see. The same is illustrated in the "Tabernacle" in the wilderness, as we should expect, being a figure of Christ.

#### EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR VIEWS !

The Amalekites and Moabites only saw the dull, dingy, badger skins of its outer covering ; there was no beauty in it to them, but to the priests within how attractive must have appeared the blue, purple, scarlet, gold, and fine linen of the beautiful curtains ! So to mere men of the world, there was nothing to attract in the Lord Jesus ; He was very far from their carnal ideal. His lowly birth, His apparently humble parentage, His provincial up-bringing in despised Nazareth, His lack of scholastic pretensions, and indeed of every adventitious attraction, all combined to produce the effect described here. They saw "no beauty in Him ;" to them He was indeed "a root out of a dry ground." But to those whose eyes were anointed by the Holy Spirit He was "the Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious" (Isa. 4. 2), and "a plant of renown" (Ezek. 34. 29). Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? asked an "Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile," for "Nazareth" was indeed "a dry ground," but when he came to Christ he saw and was conquered. "Rabbi," he exclaimed, "Thou art the Son of God ; Thou art the King of Israel."

One day He will be revealed in majesty, His sword girt upon His thigh, to take vengeance on His enemies, be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe (Psa. 45. 8 ; 2 Thess. 1. 9, 10).

## CHAPTER IV.

## Messiah—The Silent Sufferer.

THAT day has not yet dawned and the next words are still true.

v. 3. "*He is despised and rejected of men ; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from Him ; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.*"

This is no longer the experience of the speakers. Their eyes have been opened, their thoughts towards Him completely changed, but it remains true of the world. The word "rejected" should be rather "forsaken ;" one from whom men held aloof, separating Him from their company. He was despised of those He honoured with His presence, rejected of those He came to bless. "A Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," though He ought never to have known the one or the other. The next phrase has, in one or two MSS., followed by the Septuagint and Vulgate, "his face," as though the Messiah would have to cover His face like the leper of Leviticus, and for a similar cause. To any spiritual mind such an idea has only to be known to be rejected. There is nothing to warrant it ; it is in flagrant contradiction with the essential facts. Disease is a result, direct or indirect, of sin, but Messiah "knew no sin," and "in Him was no sin," and therefore no disease. He was "without blemish and without spot," and though His body was capable of death He was not like the rest of mankind—subject to death. His body was as incorruptible as His Spirit was impeccable. But though, or rather, because this was true of Him, the next verse is also true.

## GRIEFS, SICKNESSES, SORROWS.

v. 4. "*Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our*



*sorrows : and\* we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."*

This verse describes one side of the Lord's public ministry. For "griefs" the Revised Version margin has "sicknesses." This is no doubt correct, as it is not really sin spoken of but one of the results of sin, and that not by any means always the sufferer's own. This agrees with the quotation of these very words by the author of the first Gospel, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness" (Matt. 8. 16, 17); words fulfilled not by His "taking them," as we say, "catching them," but as the context shows by "bearing" them, in the sense of taking them away. This verse then refers to the Lord's ministry; He shared the sorrows He met in His path down here by His sympathy and relieved them by His power.

What was His motive in all this? What claim had man on His time and self-sacrifice? Certainly He did naught for gain. No one ever paid Him; only one, a Samaritan, is recorded as ever having thanked Him. It was primarily for the glory of God to reveal His heart of love. Compassion to sinners, love to His own constrained Him. Surely then men were wrong in saying

"HE WAS SMITTEN OF GOD?"

No, they were right, but the reason they alleged was wrong. They thought it was for some terrible sin of His; it was for terrible sins of theirs. He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21). This does not favour the

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\* On this very passage a remarkable comment appears in Yalkut on Isaiah 60, applying the passage to the Messiah, "the Son of Ephraim," and using almost the same words which the Evangelist narrates, came from the lips of the Jews at the Cross (*e.g.*, Matthew 28. 42, 43), which again are accurately and prophetically described in the Psalms (*e.g.*, Psalm 22. 8).



unscriptural notion that Christ made atonement for "diseases" on the Cross; disease is not in itself sinful and needs no atonement; it is one of the effects of sin which does need atonement. But in order righteously to deal with the effects the root cause had to be dealt with. There could be no blessing, material or spiritual, in this world had Christ not made atonement for sin. It did seem that God, by forsaking Messiah, had rejected Him; it really proved He accepted Him as the Sin-offering, and treated Him as such. But though the nation misunderstood, all was clear to the faithful remnant, as their next words testify.

#### THE KEY TO THE LOCK OF MYSTERY.

v. 5. "*But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.*"

This is the key to the enigma. The righteous One atones for the unrighteous, the Holy for the unclean, the Sinless for the guilty. Is our sin viewed as the infringement of a definite commandment? "He was wounded for our transgressions." Is it regarded as something crooked or uneven? "He was bruised for our iniquities." Does it speak of guilt and enmity? "The chastisement of our peace (or which procures our peace) was upon Him." Is it looked at as a fell disease? "With His stripes we are healed."

In the next verse the two conditions are fulfilled which, in one form or other, are indispensable if men are to be brought into blessing—repentance and faith.

"ALL"—"ALL."

v. 6. "*All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*"

Here we have first a collective confession of wandering like sheep on the part of all the speakers. How fitting this comparison ! How like men are to sheep ! It is the nature of both to wander ; both men and sheep follow one another in so doing. Sheep cannot find their way back to the fold, nor men to God. But men have to admit individually what sheep have not—*responsibility*. “ We have turned every one to his own way.” Then follows faith in God. “ The Lord hath laid on Him (Messiah) the iniquity of us all.” The verse begins in Hebrew, as in English, with the same word, “ ALL.” The verse is entered by the first “ all,” enjoyed by the second. The first “ all ” describes those who confess their need of salvation, the second those who receive it.

As another Hebrew writer bore witness centuries later of Messiah : “ Who His own self bare our sins\* in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness ; by whose stripes ye are healed. For ye *were* as sheep going astray ; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls ” (1 Peter 2. 24, 25).

#### THE SILENT SUFFERER.

v. 7. The Prophet continues : “ *He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth ; He is led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.*”

The previous two verses have anticipated the death of Messiah ; this takes us back to what preceded His death—His patient endurance under affliction, His long suffering,

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\* According to the Rabbis : “ In the latter days the fathers shall stand up in the month of Nisan and say to the Messiah, ‘ Ephraim, the Messiah, our Righteousness, though we are Thy fathers, yet Thou art better than we, because Thou hast borne all the sins of our sons, and hard and evil measure has passed upon Thee, such as has not been placed either upon those before or upon those after, and all this on account of the sins of our children.’ ”



meekness in the presence of His people. He was led before them "unresistingly" as a lamb, He stood before them uncomplainingly as a sheep, defensible but undefended. Twice we are told "He opened not His mouth," a fact noted again and again at the trial of Jesus, and which struck His judges, both Jewish and Roman (Matt. 26. 62 ; 27. 14). As has been remarked, "The martyrs die for what they had said, and remaining silent will not recant ; He dies for what He has not said, and still is silent." It was only when directly addressed in the Name of God that He confessed "I am the Christ, the Son of the Blessed." This was considered a final proof of His blasphemy and sufficient ground for His condemnation. But what if it be true ? Oh, dreadful wickedness which can make of a true confession a ground of united and clamorous condemnation !

"BY AN OPPRESSIVE JUDGMENT."

v. 8. "*He was taken from prison and from judgment ; and who shall declare His generation ? for He was cut off out of the land of the living ; for the transgression of my people was He stricken.*"

The Revised Version gives "By oppression and judgment He was taken away," which makes better sense, and marks the fact that the Messiah would be cut off, not by the sudden violence (*e.g.*, of stoning), which had so often threatened His life (see Luke 4. 29 ; John 5. 11, 18 ; 8. 59), but by a judicial, though unjust, sentence. Another suggestion is, "It was exacted, and He was made answerable ;" that is for what He was not responsible for in the sense of Psalm 69. 4 : "Then I restored that which I took not away." But Dr. Lowth translates, "By an oppressive judgment He was taken away" (which agrees with R.V.), "and \*His manner of life who shall declare ?" These

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\* In the Mishna it is written that before any one was punished for a capital crime proclamation was made in the presence of the prisoner



last words the Revised Version translates, "As for His generation, who among them considered He was cut off?" etc. How few, if any, who were present at the death of Jesus had the slightest idea of the true reason of His death that He was being stricken—"for the transgression of My people."

"STRICKEN—UNTO DEATH."

There is good proof that the words "unto death" were in the original text after "stricken," but seem for some reason to have been deleted by the Jews. Was it that such words correspond too closely to the death of Jesus? The early Church father, Origen, used this chapter in his controversies with the Jewish Rabbis of his day, and laid special emphasis on the additional words "unto death." Had there been a possibility of avoiding his argument by disputing the genuineness of the words they would not have failed to do so. As it was they acknowledged the weight of his argument.

TWELVE PILLARS—TWELVE TRIBES.

There was a special sense in which Messiah "was stricken for that people, whom Isaiah calls "my people," that is Israel. They were the only nation who have ever been in covenant relation with Jehovah. The twelve pillars around

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by the public crier: "Whosoever knows anything of his innocence, let him come and inform!" (Tract, Sanhedrin Surenhus—par. 4, p. 233); on which passage the Gemara of Babylon adds that "before the death of Jesus this proclamation was made for forty days, but no defence could be found." Lowth adds, "This report, though certainly and demonstrably false, illustrates the usual custom, which was omitted in our Lord's case." Our Lord seems to refer to such a procedure in John 18. 20, 21, and Paul in similar circumstances in Acts 26. 4, 5. The Gemara (discussion, complement), be it said for Gentile readers, is the Commentary on the Mishna, the text of the Talmud, the fundamental code of the Jewish civil and canonical law.

the altar in Exodus 24 represented the twelve tribes, and it was thus for them that the blood of the covenant was sprinkled on the altar. This blood pointed to the True Mediator of the New Covenant, Messiah Himself, yet He did not die "for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11. 22).

## CHAPTER V.

## Messiah's Death and Burial.

v 9. "*And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death ;*" or rather Revised Version, "And they made His grave," or "They assigned Him His grave with the wicked."

Crucified persons were buried by the Romans, we are told, with their crosses near the scene of their crucifixion. Dr. Lowth translates, "His grave was appointed with the wicked, but with the rich was His tomb." We should note that the wicked is plural, "the wicked ones ;" "rich" is singular, "the rich man ;" also that "death" is plural, "but in His deaths," a fact which marks the exceptional and intensive death of the Holy Sufferer "a concentrated death of countless deaths." This strange prophecy as to the burial of Messiah could not have been fulfilled by any possible collusion or pre-arrangement, but it was exactly in accord with this prophecy that Jesus of Nazareth was buried. No doubt His grave had been prepared with the two malefactors crucified with Him. How could this arrangement be overruled and He be buried in a rich man's tomb? Very few of His disciples were rich, fewer still could have had a tomb in their garden. There was at anyrate one such (Joseph of Arimathea), and his garden was adjoining the place of crucifixion; he was a secret disciple, but when confession was at its hardest he had courage to go boldly to Pilate and beg the body of Jesus. This "he laid in his own new tomb, which was hewn out of the rock, wherein never yet man was laid." It was important that the tomb should be new, otherwise it might have been suggested, as explaining the resurrection, that some great prophet like Elisha had been buried there, and that contact with his bones had resuscitated Jesus, as in



the case narrated in 2 Kings 13. 21. It is remarkable that though up to that moment wicked hands had done their worst on Him only His disciples buried Him, and those two of the highest Jews in the land, probably both members of the Sanhedrin—Joseph, the rich man, and Nicodemus, the Pharisee, a ruler and a teacher of Israel.

#### TESTIMONY TO HIS HOLINESS.

But why should an honoured\* grave be thus provided for One who died such a dishonoured death? It was a testimony to the holiness and truth of His walk and conversation, "*Because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth.*"

God rewarded Him according to His righteousness, according to the cleanness of His hands hath He recompensed Him. He was holy in deed and word. To this many testified. Judas confessed he had betrayed "the innocent blood," Pilate again and again that he found "no fault in Him" (nor yet Herod), and his wife, too, warned him to have nothing to do with that "Just Man." The centurion also bore witness that He was a "righteous Man;" and the repentant malefactor that "He had done nothing amiss!"

#### A SACRED PARADOX.

v. 10. "*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*"

Not only unjust judges laid heavy burdens on Christ, but another hand, the hand of God, laid on Him heavier burdens still. Here is a sacred paradox! We must of course divorce from the words "it pleased" any thought of pleasure in the sense of complacency. We can never

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\* Our Lord's burial, however, did not cease to be that of an executed criminal, because of Joseph's service of love, for leave for it was granted by Pilate himself, and the chief priests had permission from him to have the sepulchre guarded by Roman soldiers and made as sure as they could.

understand what it cost the Father "not to spare His own Son, but to deliver Him up for us all." Jehovah takes no pleasure in the death of Him that dieth, even of the guilty, how much less in the death of His Holy One. What is meant is that it was part of His eternal counsels, which in time God was determined to fulfil, for only by that "bruising" could blessing come to a sin-stained universe. "Bread corn is bruised" (Heb. *dah-kah*) that it may become bread for the service of man. Christ was "bruised" (Heb. *dah-chak*) that He might become the Bread of Life to a lost world (John 6. 33, 51). Had Messiah been only man His bruising could not have availed even for the nation of Israel; One Holy Man could at most redeem one sinful man. What sacrifice of infinite price was needed to meet the need of a world of sinners! The Redeemer must be truly man—to do the kinsman part—as the "goel"\* and pay the redemption price, but He must be truly God in order that His redemption should be of infinite value. None but a Divine Redeemer could exhaust the claims of a Divine Avenger.

#### THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE SUFFERINGS.

v. 10. "*He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.*"

We must distinguish between the sufferings of the Lord on the Cross at the hand of man and at the hand of God. Only God could inflict atoning sufferings. This is the key to the great mystery of the sufferings of Messiah. He could not reign over an unrepentant race, nor over an unredeemed people, His sufferings must precede His glory. Religious man has no conception of either the heinousness of sin or of the holiness of God. To his shallow thoughts

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\* Goel: part of goal means redeemer; followed by *dām*=avenger of blood, and then a near relative, because the right of redemption and office of avenger belong to the nearest kinsman.



to admit that God's broken law must be avenged is to cast a reflection on His love. Really it is not so. As we have seen, "God is Light" as well as "Love." God must be true to Himself. All His perfections must be safe-guarded and respected. This was so at the Cross. There "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psa. 85. 10). But in order that God might have mercy on the sinner without compromising His righteousness, Messiah, the delight of the Father, became the forsaken of God. To the blind religious leaders of Israel a forsaken Messiah could only be a false Messiah. "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." "Let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him." "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him, for He said, 'I am the Son of God'" (Matt. 27. 40. 43). Speaking thus they unconsciously fulfilled Psalm 22. 7, 8 and proved His Messiahship, for this Psalm is admittedly Messianic. But why did He cry in the darkness,

"ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?"

At that moment He became the Antitype of every sin-offering down the ages. There He was consumed (Heb., *sah-raph*) and brought into the dust of death for the nation (see Lev. 4. 21; Psa. 22. 15). There "He suffered once for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Thus, though never more intrinsically holy than in His death, He was treated as the sinner deserved, having "by the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9. 14). Had God treated Him otherwise than He did when He hung there as the Sin-offering and the Substitute He would have connived at sin and compromised His own holiness. Consider then the infinite love of God in that it was not we who loved God, but He who loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Consider, too, His infinite holiness, that even when His own



beloved Son took the place of the guilty He did not spare Him, but inflicted on Him the full penalty due to sin. Did Christ become surety for His people? Then He must "smart for it" to the uttermost (Prov. 11. 15). "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5. 8). The next words reveal the glorious issue of it.

#### A THREEFOLD GLORY.

v. 10. "*He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands.*"

Jewish teachers have objected that "seed" (*zeh-rag*) always means literal offspring, and that therefore it could not be true of Jesus that "He shall see His seed," for He had none. But how about Genesis 3. 15,\* when Jehovah-Elohim says to that old serpent the Devil, "I will put enmity . . . between thy seed and her seed?" Here it is not the literal seed of Satan, but his spiritual followers. Indeed the word is often used in this sense by post-Biblical writers. The seed of a religious teacher are his disciples. Even during His earthly ministry Jesus Christ saw a few disciples—about five hundred—gathered to His Person: a spiritual seed born out of due time in anticipation of His atoning death, without which He must have remained, as He tells us Himself, alone. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12. 24). This is "the seed" foretold in Psalm 22. 30. "A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." But not only was He to see His seed, but to "prolong His days." Though "taken away in the midst of His days" He would in resurrection survive the earth and the heavens, the works of His hands (Psa. 102. 24, 26). The resurrection is

\* See "Manual of Christian Evidences," by A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., p. 165.

the keystone of the work of Christ. He "had power to lay down His life, and He had power to take it again." This latter was as much the command of the Father as the former (John 10. 18). By it the Spirit witnesses of the righteousness of Christ (John 16. 10). Crucified as a felon, He is justified before the universe by His resurrection, and also "declared to be the Son of God with power" (Rom. 1. 4). By it, too, the believer is assured of his perfect justification (Rom. 4. 25)—all his sins have been forever removed because His surety is raised—and of his own resurrection, and the world of their certain condemnation, for the One they slew has been appointed their coming Judge (Acts 17 31).

#### PRESENT PROSPERITY.

In the meanwhile "*the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands.*" What is this but the calling of repentant sinners to Himself and, especially in the present age, the gathering out of Jew and Gentile a people for His Name (Acts 15. 14 ; Rom. 11. 5). He does not entrust this work to another, but performs it effectively by His Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel. When it is finished, the Church gathered out, the harvest of the earth garnered (there will be no ears left behind to be gleaned in that day), the next words will be fulfilled.

#### FUTURE SATISFACTION.

v. 11. "*He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied ; by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant (lit., a righteous One, My Servant) justify many ; for He shall bear their iniquities.*"

God will then repay Him in full for all His sufferings, and the joy set before Him, for which "He endured the Cross and despised the shame" will be His in perfect measure. This is future, the "justification of many" is a



present work. The usual interpretation is the obvious one "He shall justify many" in the only true sense of justify, that is, "count righteous." But the Revised Version margin has "makes righteous," which betrays hesitancy in the translators. \*Another translates, "By His knowledge shall Thy righteous servant instruct the many in righteousness." A reference to Daniel 12. 3 shows that this form of the verbal root must have this sense of instructing in righteousness at anyrate sometimes, if not always. "They that *turn many to righteousness*" simply means *the instructors of the many* in righteousness.

"BY HIS KNOWLEDGE."

As for the expression "by knowledge of Him," is it objective that "by knowing Him," or subjective "by the knowledge He possesses?" The Hebrew idiom favours the latter. It is by His own knowledge—that spirit of knowledge which rests upon Him by which He instructs His people and leads "them in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake." "The many" carries us back to chapter 52. 14, 15, "many nations," thus binding together the whole prophecy, and forward to the following verse where "the great" ought also to be "the many" and here He is said to "bear the sins of many." Notice the next words should not read "*For* He shall bear," etc., as though explanatory of the previous phrase, but "*And* He shall bear," supplementary to it. That is, besides "instructing in righteousness," which could never take away sins, He will bear their iniquities, thus effectively procuring their remission. The Messiah voluntarily takes the place of suffering, shame, and death due to the sinner, and bears the iniquities of His people. On this ground God can righteously, immediately, and eternally forgive every sinner, be he Jew or Gentile, "who believeth in

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\* "Notes on Isaiah" (in loco.) by W. Kelly, of Guernsey.



Jesus." Nothing else could avail ; nothing more is needed. " Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it : and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him " (Eccles. 3. 14).

#### THE SPOIL AND THE STRONG.

v. 12. "*Therefore will He divide a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong.*"

This has been interpreted as meaning that Satan and his fallen angels will be part victors with Messiah in the age-long conflict between good and evil and share the spoils with Him, but this is a profound mistake. The powers of evil often seem to gain the victory, but their greatest victories are their greatest defeats, and when God has seemed defeated He has gained His greatest victories ; the Cross of Christ proves this. Satan never has been, nor ever will be, really victor in the smallest degree ; he will not reign in Hell, but be forever there the most degraded and most miserable of all the enemies of God. Dr. Lowth's translation commends itself to many : " Therefore will I distribute to Him the many for His portion, and the mighty people shall He share for His spoil." But why should the almighty Victor only *share* the spoil ? Because *all* will not consent to quit the rebel ranks, and so must share the fate of the great leader of rebellion—Satan. All who surrender voluntarily become trophies of the victory of Christ and will enjoy its fruits with Him. Perhaps the " mighty people " refer to the redeemed of Israel, " the many " to the saved of the Gentiles.

## CHAPTER VI.

## Messiah's Final Victory.

ALL this proves the greatness of Messiah's final victory, which will be universally recognised alike by friend and foe. In closing, the prophet gives four reasons for this glorious result.

## HIS LIFE BLOOD OUTPOURED.

1. "*Because He hath poured out His soul unto death.*" This He did when He shed His life-blood on Calvary. The sufferings of Christ were essential; "Christ must suffer," not all His works of power or words of grace could have redeemed one soul. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." Death must ensue. Blood coursing in the veins means life; poured from the veins death. Therefore the bread and the wine in the Lord's Supper are apart, for in it His death is shown forth.

The blood and water which poured from His wounded side on the Cross proved to all the reality of His death. Nor was there more room to doubt His resurrection. His body was visible, recognisable, tangible. The five scars of the crucifixion remained to prove its identity with that in which He had lived and died, though \*allotropically modified, if the expression be allowed, by divine power.

## NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS.

2. "*And He was numbered with the transgressors.*" This was fulfilled when Messiah hung at Golgotha between two malefactors, who were probably murderers as well as robbers (see Mark 15. 7, where "who" is plural). But in a

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\* "Allotropy" is the property possessed by certain elemental substances, such as carbon, oxygen, sulphur, phosphorus, of existing under different conditions or modifications, and exhibiting distinct physical and chemical properties.

sense every man, especially of the Jewish race, "born under law," becomes a transgressor at the age of responsibility, and is in this sense "numbered with the transgressors." But Messiah was without transgression, for He observed all the commandments of God; "He magnified the law and made it honourable;" He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, *separate from sinners*," and so in a category by Himself till the moment came for Him to take His place among them in His death, then "He was numbered with the transgressors." No element of humiliation was wanting. Surely to mark the uniqueness of His death it will occur alone, for God will have all other executions stayed. And if He is to die in company they must be His own disciples, faithful to death, martyrs to His sacred cause, and if the nation are to take any part in His sacrifice it will be as mourners, weeping for their Messiah at the foot of the Cross. Far otherwise was the reality. He died betrayed, denied, forsaken of His disciples, surrounded by a mocking crowd of His own nation and in company with the offscouring of the Jewish mob. Any stranger at Jerusalem would easily confound Him and them. The Friend of publicans and sinners dies between two malefactors, but carries off one as a trophy to Paradise. Another reason for His exaltation is that—

#### THE DIVINE SIN-BEARER.

3. "*He bare the sins of many.*" Some would have us believe that Christ died merely as an example of self-sacrifice. But the essence of self-sacrifice is that there is some one needing rescue. To jump into a stormy sea in which no one is drowning, to rush into a conflagration where no one is in danger of burning, would be the act of a fool or a suicide. Christ did not go to the Cross merely as an example of self-sacrifice, though He was that, but to save sinners from the judgment due to them. Thus it was that, as their



Substitute, "He bore the sins of many." This is abhorrent to the self-righteous religionist or moralist; to the convicted sinner it brings pardon and peace.

It is well to notice the word "many." Christ gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2. 6), but when it is a question of sin-bearing it was for "many." "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9. 28). That death was sufficient for all, efficient for many. Potentially for the whole race, it was only effective for those who believe. As Surety of the New Covenant He became Himself the Covenant victim, and bare the sins of the Covenant people.

#### SIN-BEARING IN SCRIPTURE.

It is always thus that sin-bearing is viewed in the Scripture. On the great Day of Atonement there were two goats. The first was slain and its blood carried by the High Priest into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled once on the mercy-seat and seven times before it. That was a secret transaction between Jehovah and the High Priest, and though on this occasion the Atonement only touched the people of Israel, yet in the antitype, when Christ was offered up as the Atonement for sin, His work had the whole human race in view and not a single member of humanity, but was potentially affected thereby. Provision was made for all. God can now righteously, without the compromise of a single holy claim, stretch forth His hands in grace to every sinner. But when the blood of the first goat had been disposed of, then the other—the scape-goat (*azazel*, lit., the goat of departure)—was taken, and Aaron laid his hands on its head and confessed over it all the *iniquities of the children of Israel*, and all *their* transgressions in all *their* sins, *putting them upon the head of the goat*, and then sent him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, and the goat bore upon him all *their* iniquities

into a land not inhabited, and was let go into the wilderness (Lev. 16). The blood in the Holiest met the claims of God ; the scapegoat bearing away their sins met the needs of the people of God. When a sinner believes in Christ he is let into a family secret : " all his sins were borne on Calvary."

#### THE " CUTTING-OFF."

The word translated " not inhabited " is more correctly, as in margin, " of separation." It occurs in 2 Chronicles 26. 21 with reference to the " cutting-off " of Uzziah, the leper king, from the house of the Lord, and is used in verse 8 of our chapter : " He was *cut off* out of the land of the living." The High Priest did return to testify that in virtue of the sprinkled blood he had seen the face of God and lived ; the scapegoat never returned, and so the sins it bore were typically gone for ever. The great Day of Atonement found its antitypical fulfilment when Christ was slain 1900 years ago. Strictly speaking, the first part of the Day is being enacted in this age ; the High Priest is in the Holiest, and His priestly family are waiting for Him to come forth and receive them unto Himself ; the scapegoat aspect of His work will only be carried out when the remnant of Israel repents as a nation. Then they will understand that Messiah, as the Sacrificial Victim, has borne their sins away. Indeed the sins of all who believe are already " removed as far as the east is from the west " (Psa. 103. 12) ; " made white as snow " (Isa. 1. 18) ; " blotted out as a thick cloud " (Isa. 44. 22) ; " cast behind God's back " (Isa. 38. 17) ; " cast into the depths of the sea " (Micah 7. 19) ; " forgiven and forgotten " (Jer. 31. 34).

One more claim to exaltation remains.

#### INTERCESSION FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS.

4. " *And made intercession for the transgressors.*" These words were nobly illustrated in the prayer of " Messiah,"

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23. 24). The context would show that those specially included in the prayer were the Roman Centurion and soldiers, who completed the act of crucifixion. The prayer was that very day answered by their conversion (see Matt. 27. 54; Mark 15. 39; Luke 23. 47). But it was fulfilled in a broader sense at Pentecost, though not exhausted even then.\* It has been going on ever since. Christ is still making intercession for the transgressors, and all the day stretching forth His hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people (Isa. 65. 2), who for their sins have been for "many days," as Hosea foretold, "without a king, . . . and without a sacrifice, and without an image" (chap. 3. 4). But even from them God is calling out a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11. 5), and visiting "the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name" (Acts 15. 14), to form together "the Church which is His Body." But "when the Redeemer shall come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob" (Isa. 59. 20), "afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days" (Hos. 3. 5).

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\* The future is used with *vav* conversive, instead of the preterite as elsewhere, to mark the fact that the act, though begun, is not yet completed (see Exell and Spence *in loco*).



## APPENDIX I.

## The Dual Authorship of Isaiah.

THE theory of the Higher Critics as to the double or multiple authorship of the Book of "Isaiah" originated, it would seem, in their premise that there is no such thing in the Bible as

## PROPHECY IN THE SENSE OF PREDICTION.

To allow this would be to admit the miraculous ; in their eyes a *reductio ad absurdum*. A certain notorious destructive critic wrote : "It is now commonly admitted (a typical phrase of these writers, which is convenient as assuming what has to be proved) that the essential part of Biblical prophecy does not lie in predicting contingent events. . . . In no prophecy can it be shown that literal predicting of distant historical events is contained." Another affirms, "The prophets never predict far remote events." Why this emphasis, "far remote ?" Is it conceded they could predict a year, or even a month, ahead ? Would not this be miraculous and include the possibility of the greater ? According to these teachers the Old Testament prophets philosophised on passing or past events ; never predicted the future. By this showing we may all be prophets. It is not difficult to-day to foretell yesterday's weather. But some one will exclaim, "No prediction in the Old Testament prophecies !" What do the Critics make of the Messianic prophecies ? Deny there are any ! What of the predictions as to the destruction of Babylon, etc. ? Postdate their pronouncement. What of the promises of restoration to Israel ? Antedate their fulfilment ! It will be sufficient for any Christian, who has the fear of God, to remember that our Lord again and again applied Old Testament prophecies to Himself (*e.g.*, Mark 14. 2 ; Luke 24. 27, 44 ; John 5. 46), and this, too, in a very marked way after His resurrection.

## ARE THE CRITICS EVER WRONG ?

However, the theories of the Critics must be upheld at any cost. Scriptures, like the Book of Daniel, or the section of Isaiah now in question, which profess to contain a detailed account of future events must be brought down to a date subsequent to those events. The logical deduction, then, would be that large parts of these prophecies have not yet been written at all, for it is certain that some of the events foretold in them are still future. When, to quote only one instance, has Mount Zion been established in the top of the mountains, or have all nations flown like rivers to it ? Have swords yet been beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruninghooks ? (Isa. 2. 2, 4). This was still future during the late war, and certain pessimists doubt if it be very near even to-day.

## PROFITABLE FORGERIES !

Forgeries are not edifying documents, but according to the destructive Critics the prophecies though forgeries are profitable for all that. The morality of the Scriptures would not be of a high order if forged documents, universally held in contempt by honourable men, could yet edify according to its standard.

The Jews, however, who may be supposed to know most of their own national writings, were never aware of two or more Isaiahs. They received the book from their fathers as the work of one author ; Josephus, the national historian, only knew of one Isaiah ; and Ben Sira, in Ecclesiastes 48. 2, refers to the opening words of Isaiah 40 as by " Isaiah." The " Modernists," however, know better. They are quite sure they are right. They have strong *subjective* reasons for feeling this. It is as though a society of Chinese mandarins passed a resolution that the " Idylls of the King " were written before the " Canterbury Tales " on the ground that King Arthur lived before Richard II.



It would raise a smile but convince nobody. Are not the Jews of our Lord's time, being nearer the source of their own writings, less likely to be imposed upon by forgeries than modern critics by the exigencies of their pet theories ?

#### ARGUMENTS AMISSING !

The Higher Critics affirm, "as clear to a child," that chapters 1-39 of the Collection called "Isaiah" are addressed to Israel in Jerusalem, and chapters 40-66, "as clearly as words can state it," to Israel in Babylon. It is not an unknown device in controversy, when arguments are scarce, to vouch that none are needed. Neither of the above statements however are well founded. \*Chapters 13 and 14, as has been well pointed out, refer distinctly to the fall of Babylon. In the 40th chapter, on the other hand, we read in verse 2, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," and again in verse 9, "O Zion . . . get thee up into the high mountain ; O Jerusalem, . . . lift up thy voice with strength." How can such words be meant for Israel in Babylon when they are addressed elsewhere ? These must be, I suppose, the interpolations of yet another Isaiah. It reminds one of the cycles and epicycles of the Ptolemaic system invented for the occasion. As has been well said : "Any wild theory can be 'proved' if one may simply blot out, without rhyme or reason, all the opposing evidence." The "modernist" proof of the late date of Daniel is largely a philological one based on certain Greek words, but the Elephantinē papyri, carefully dated, have shown these words were used at the traditional date of Daniel. Had these words been against the modernist view they would long ago have been brushed aside as "undoubted interpolations."

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\* "Bible Investigator" for 1909-1910, to which I acknowledge my indebtedness in preparing this article. "Are there two Isaiahs?" p. 262, by the late J. Urquhart.



## "A PEOPLE THAT SHOULD BE BORN."

Another reason against the prophetic character of the second section of the book is, it is asserted, that it is addressed to a living people, for how could a man comfort a generation not yet born? But is it inconceivable, for instance, that a dying father should write words of comfort for his posthumous child? God's Word again and again is written for those not yet born. In the prediction of Isaiah 25. 7, that God "will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations, . . . swallow up death in victory. . . . wipe away tears from off all faces" (indeed, one might quote the whole of these chapters), is there no comfort even for ourselves? Does not chapter 40. 2 bring comfort to men not yet born? for truly it cannot yet be said that "the warfare of Jerusalem is accomplished." But believing Israelites may be comforted by the thought that one day it will be so. Another fact that necessitates this theory to the Higher Critical mind is the naming of Cyrus in chapters 44. 28, and 45. 1, for how could a man be named before his birth? But why should this be thought incredible? Cyrus is not the only case in the Bible. Ishmael, Isaac, Solomon, and Josiah (1 Kings 13. 2) are other instances, and John and our Lord Himself in the New Testament.

Indeed Josiah was named much longer before his birth than Cyrus in these chapters before his, if we accept their traditional date.

## "THINGS THAT ARE TO COME HEREAFTER."

To deny prediction in Isaiah 40. 66 is to be in flagrant contradiction to the Spirit of this section, which is nothing if not predictive. The whole argument of the beginning of the second section of Isaiah, as to the superiority of Jehovah over every rival, rests on His ability to foretell future events. He challenges the idols to do likewise.

"Produce your cause, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob; let them bring them forth *and show us what shall happen or declare things to come*. . . . Show *the things that are to come hereafter*, that we may know that ye are gods" (chap. 41. 21, 23); and then at once occur the words referring no doubt to Cyrus, "I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come."

Then again, in verse 26, Jehovah asks, "Who hath declared from the beginning that we may know?" and after predicting judgment on Babylon, Jehovah (chap. 44. 28) names Cyrus as the future deliverer of Israel, and this before promising to open before him the two-leaved gates, etc., and use him for the destruction of Babylon.

Once more, in chapter 45. 11,

#### JEHOVAH CHALLENGES ALL RIVALS.

"Ask of Me *things to come* concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands command ye Me." And then lastly, in the following chapter, we read: "I am God, and there is none else. I am God, there is none like Me, *declaring the end from the beginning* and from ancient times *the things that are not yet done*, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Surely no man of honour would claim credit for foresight he did not possess or for discoveries he had never made, and yet the Higher Critics make the writer they call "the Great Unknown" forge (even Cheyne admits them to be professedly prophetic) these documents and make God a party to the fraud, and instead of condemning the whole proceeding they approve. It would be as true to deny colour in a rainbow as prediction in prophecy. If chapter 40 began a prophecy by a new prophet his name would certainly appear at the head of the section according to the invariable custom. The absence of a fresh name shows it is by the same writer who uttered the first part of the prophecy. Another reason for believing in

## THE UNITY OF AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK

are the quotations from the second section in prophecies antecedent to the date assigned to it by the Critics. Thus, Jeremiah 31. 35 is a quotation from Isaiah 51. 15 : " Which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar ; the Lord of hosts is His name." How could Jeremiah, writing in the reign of Zedekiah, quote from a book written ex-hypothesi after the captivity ? Again, how could Zephaniah, writing in the reign of Josiah (that is, in the 7th century B.C.) quote as he does in chapter 11. 15 from Isaiah 47. 8, 10 : " That sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me ? " The Hebrew word for " beside," *aph-see*, only occurs in these two passages. A third instance is Nahum 1. 15, written a little later than Isaiah, which seems clearly an adaptation of Isaiah 52. 7 : " How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." As a matter of fact Isaiah 40 dovetails perfectly into chapter 39. Hezekiah had been consoled by the assurance that the threatened judgment would not be in his day. Were then those who should endure that judgment to be left comfortless ? No, they are assured that their judgment will have an end.



## APPENDIX II.

## Who Was Pierced?

CONCERNING Zechariah 12. 10, "They shall look on Me whom they pierced" (A.V.); did the prophet write *eh-lay*, "on Me," or *eh-layw*, "on Him?" In the usual edition of the Hebrew Bible we have the former. The Jewish authorities who made an appendix to the Revised Version in 1896 tell us to read, "And they (*i.e.*, the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem) shall look up to me, because of Him they (*i.e.*, the nations which come against Jerusalem) have pierced."

But this is, as Dr. A. Lukyn Williams\* remarks, "A startling translation," for how can "because of Him whom" be got out of *eth asher*? *Eth* may mark out definitely the following *asher* as an object; it cannot be translated "because of." Besides, does the passage read as though there were a change of subject here? Must not they who "pierced" be, according to the natural sequence of thought, the same as "they who look upon?"

What, then, does the "piercing" mean. It is not enough to make it mean the suffering of great pain and anguish by God on account of the sin of His people. Nowhere in Scripture do we find *dāh-Kar* with this meaning. It always, as it seems, connotes death (*e.g.*, see chap. 13. 8).

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\* "Manual of Christian Evidences."

## APPENDIX III.

## The Rabbis and the Messiah.

EARLY Jewish interpreters did not contest the Messianic application of this chapter. In fact Jonathan Ben Uzziel\* expressly speaks to this effect in the Chaldee paraphrase ; so the Talmud of Babylon (in Tr. Sanhedrin) applies Isaiah 53. 4 to the Messiah. At the passover, too, they pray, "Hasten and cause the shadows to flee away. Let Him be exalted and extolled, and be very high ; let Him deal prudently." It was also assumed as indisputable by the Christian fathers and universally acknowledged by the Jews until Aben Ezra, about A.D. 1150, when under the pressure of controversy the traditional interpretation was abandoned. Rabbi Solomon Ben Jarchi begins some of his expositions of the Psalms and prophecies with the following word of explanation : " This the ancient rabbis understood of the Messiah, but on account of the use made hereof by our adversaries it is *more safe* to interpret it of David, Hezekiah," etc. It may be more safe, but is it more true ?

## JOSIAH ? JEREMIAH ? OR ISRAEL ?

It has indeed become the fashion among Jewish teachers in later years to seek an application in Isaiah 53 to Josiah, Jeremiah, or even the whole nation of Israel, instead of to the suffering Messiah, as heretofore, and the rabbis warned by the application of it by Christian writers to Jesus the Messiah have omitted it from the lectionaries, but they still confess, at least once a year, on the Day of Atonement, in the special prayers for the day, that it does refer to Him : " Messiah our righteousness has departed from us. With our wickedness and misdeeds He was burdened, and He was wounded for our transgressions, bearing on the shoulder our sins in order to find an atonement for our iniquities ; may we be healed by His wounds ! "

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\* See " Notes on Isaiah," by W. Kelly.

## ONLY ONE SOLUTION.

How Josiah could fit in to this chapter is hard to say. He was certainly wounded to death by Pharaoh Necho through interfering in what was in no way his business, but he was honoured by his own people in his life and death. Jeremiah did indeed suffer reproach as a faithful servant of Jehovah, but not voluntarily, silently, or vicariously. Still less does the nation of Israel satisfy the requirements of the chapter. No doubt she has suffered, but to apply to her the idea of one *voluntarily* suffering at the hands of Jehovah, as the *spotless victim* for the sins of others, is altogether far fetched and contrary to the facts. How can Israel possibly fit in with the last words of chapter 52, not to speak of chapter 53, where the clearest distinction is drawn between the Person rejected and His rejecters—the very nation of Israel. How can the “we” and “he” be the same person? How can those who speak of “our transgressions,” “our iniquities,” “our peace” be the same as the One who was wounded and bruised? No doubt the Jews have suffered at the hands of so-called “Christian nations,” acting in a supremely unchristian spirit, but never have they suffered for their persecutors. Some assert that in verse 8 “*neh-gag lamo*,” “was He stricken” (lit., “was the stroke on Him”), ought to be “were they stricken,” but this is very doubtful. Certainly the word “lamo” is usually plural, but in its first occurrence it is applied separately to Shem and Japheth, though single persons (Gen. 9. 26, 27). In both verses “Canaan shall be a servant to him” (lamo). It is certainly also used in the singular in Isaiah 44. 15: “He maketh it a graven image and falleth down *thereto*.” Indeed earlier in his prophecy Isaiah calls Israel a “sinful nation” (chap. 1. 4), and she had a large share in inflicting sufferings on the Messiah, who was “despised of the people” (Psa. 22. 6).



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