

# THE OLD ISAIAH.

BY

A. MOODY STUART, D.D.

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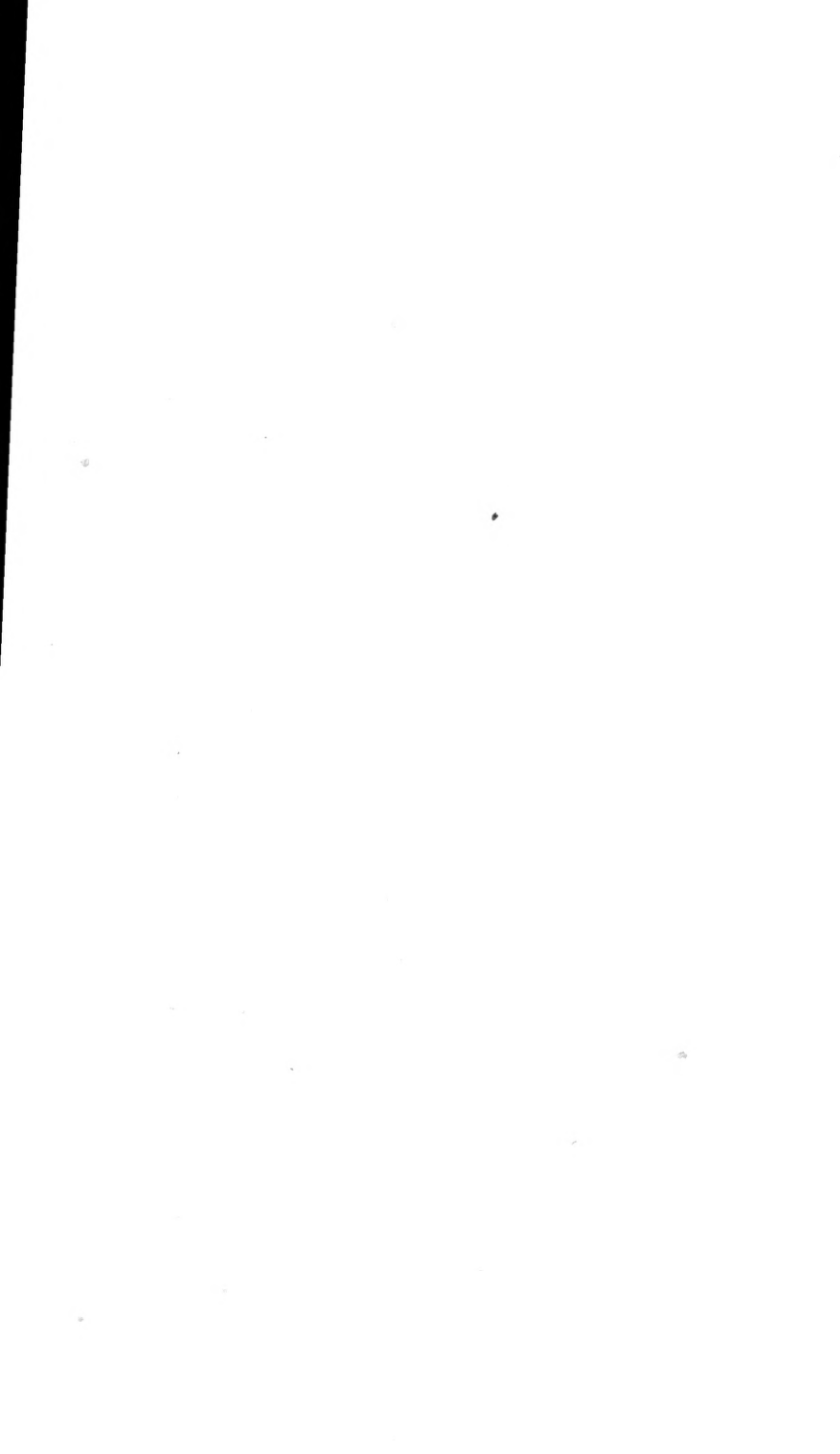
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# THE OLD ISAIAH.

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UR object in these pages is the defence and exposition of a most important portion of Holy Scripture in its integrity and truth; and if these ends could have been attained without any reference whatever to the opinions of respected friends who differ from us, it would have been an unspeakable relief.

As regards our accomplished Biblical critics, whose views of Isaiah we hold to be unscriptural, we desire fully to acknowledge their sincere love for the Bible, and their persuasion that these views will not weaken but uphold the authority and integrity of the Sacred Records.

Some esteemed brethren may be disposed to look on our two concluding chapters as taking too grave a view of the question at issue. The substance of these chapters, as of the rest of this brief treatise, was written more than a year before it was committed to the press, and there has since occurred a further delay in the publication. But the maturer consideration of the subject has only deepened our conviction that to give up the genuineness of the later prophecies of Isaiah is to give up the Bible; that if we concede Thomas Paine's position against these prophecies, his conclusion against the Bible is absolutely unanswerable. To believe in its truth, notwithstanding, is to rest on a foundation already destroyed. Such a faith, however it may satisfy the man who holds it, leaves for others no rock on which to stand.

But while we, therefore, earnestly contend for the genuineness of the entire Isaiah, and hold that genuineness to be part of "the faith once delivered to the saints," it has been our sincere endeavour to "speak the truth in love;" or perhaps we may be allowed to say rather, that to "speak in love" has not demanded an effort.

## CHAPTER I.

*THE MODERN FICTION OF TWO ISAIAS.*

“With the evidence before us, we cannot think the remark of Sir E. Strachey unjustly severe: that, when he thought of the attempted disintegration, he was irresistibly reminded of the tradition, that Isaiah was sawn asunder by those who misunderstood and denied his real office and powers.”—*Speaker's Commentary.*

THE partition of the Book of Isaiah by modern critics is the rending asunder of a great Prophet with a strongly marked individuality; and the severance, which destroys the value of the book itself, is fatal to the truth and authority of the whole Sacred Volume. These two positions, and more especially the first, it will be the design of the following pages to prove.

First of all, however, we have to note the progress of disbelief in the unity of Isaiah; and to state that the mere want of the repetition of his name over the second series of prophecies is no evidence against the unity of the whole.

1. *The progress of disbelief in the one Isaiah.*—Among the books of the Bible the authenticity of which is disputed by modern criticism, one of the first was the latter half of Isaiah, consisting of the twenty-seven chapters from the fortieth, “Comfort ye my people,” to the end of the book; than which there is nothing in the Old Testament Scriptures more highly to be prized or more vigilantly to be guarded.

These prophecies are known and allowed to have been received for more than two thousand years as the authentic writings of Isaiah, whose name they bear. To this day no other name has been associated with them; and their claim to a place in the Canonical Scriptures is not disputed. But many critics now hold that they were not written either by the pen or in the time of the well-known prophet under whose name they stand in the roll of the Holy Scriptures; and having no clue to any other



author, they have given to the writer the designation first of the false or Pseudo-Isaiah, and now more commonly of the Second Isaiah, from the association of his writings with those of the genuine prophet, and from their acknowledged resemblance.

The author of these later prophecies has also, by way of honour, received the appellation of the "Great Unnamed," as if the praise of greatness from human lips could ever compensate the loss of degrading the noblest of God's prophets into a man nameless and unknown. The same spirit of earthly wisdom has degraded the fifty-first Psalm into the utterance of an unknown penitent, whose anonymous confession of the guilt of blood is of necessity insincere. The psalm is not prophetic, and the denial of its author and its date affects chiefly its own value; but the ascription of the half of Isaiah to a writer in Babylon subverts the truth both of the prophecies themselves, and of the Bible in which they are incorporated.

So long as this view was confined to foreign theologians, and to rationalists or semi-rationalists in our own country, there was no call in duty or in wisdom to carry it out of the limited circle of the critics into a wider field. But it has recently been elevated into a publicity that cannot be overlooked; its advocates speak of their own fiction as an established truth; and the subject has come to demand a careful examination, not only by professed scholars, but by the intelligent reader of the English Bible.

The article "Bible" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* seems to regard it as finally settled, past all room for inquiry, that the author of the second half of Isaiah was an anonymous prophet in Babylon during the Exile. "Prophecy," it says, "lays hold of the ideal elements of the theocratic conception, and depicts the way in which, by God's grace, they shall be actually realised in a Messianic age, and in a nation purified by judgment and mercy. But in all this the prophet starts from present sin, present needs, present historical situations. There is no reason to think that a prophet ever received a revelation which was not spoken directly and pointedly to his own time. . . . When the principle is admitted other applications follow, mainly in the Book of Isaiah, where the anonymous chapters, xl.-lxvi., cannot be understood in a natural and living way, except by looking at them from the historical stand-point of the Exile. . . . In the period of Exile more than one anonymous prophet raised his voice; for not only

the 'Great Unnamed' of Isaiah, chaps. xl.-lxvi., but the authors of other Babylonian prophecies are probably to be assigned to this time."

Another article from the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, by one of the ablest and most influential of our professors, expresses no decided judgment, but intimates the writer's permanent impression against Isaiah being the author of these prophecies. Some later portions of the article are expressly written in defence of liberty of opinion on subjects of Biblical criticism; and in these the reader must keep in mind the distinction between what the writer holds for himself to be true, or probable, or possible, and the freedom which he claims for others. But here the writer is reviewing Nägelsbach's "Isaiah," in which the genuineness of the later prophecies is maintained; and he gives us his own impressions against their authenticity in these terms: "The merest glance into the vocabulary (of Nägelsbach) will show how large the number of words is that are peculiar to the second half of the book.\* But it is not words so much as the peculiar use of them, and not individual terms at all so much as phrases or combinations of terms, and not even this so much as the peculiar articulation of sentences and the movement of the whole discourse, by which an impression is produced, so unlike the impression produced by the earlier portions of the book. It is quite possible to subject this impression to the crucible and dissolve it, reasoning it away bit by bit, and then to assert that the testimony of style is worth nothing. Any impression which is produced by the combined force of many elements, can be disposed of in this way. But when the tide of logic recedes, the impression remains as distinct as ever" (*Old Testament Exegesis in 1878*, by Professor Davidson, p. 3). But by a similar train of reasoning the critics of five centuries hence will find an easy and triumphant proof, that the Thomas Chalmers who wrote the "Sermons" could not have been the author of the "Daily Bible Readings."

This doubt or denial of the genuineness of the later prophecies of Isaiah is only one line in that declension from faith in the

\* How little the use of different words in two compositions can prove two different authors is strikingly brought out by Mr. Stanley Leathes in the following conclusion from a comparison of three of Milton's poems:—"Milton must have used for 'Il Penseroso' 450 words not in 'L'Allegro,' and for 'Lycidas' 590 not in 'L'Allegro.' He must have used for 'Lycidas' some 585 words not in 'Il Penseroso,' and more than 660 not occurring in both together."—*Boyle Lectures for 1868*, p. 283.

authenticity of various portions of the Holy Scriptures which is subjecting us to the wondering observation of other Churches. Their criticism may be resented as unwarranted on their part, or refused as extreme against us; but it is deeply humbling for us all that any occasion whatever should have been given to others to commiserate our declension, and to speak of it as "unfortunate that the Free Church, so long the boasted stronghold of Scotland's orthodoxy, should now become the stronghold of German and Dutch Biblical and theological speculations of the freest and broadest character."

The learned authors of both the articles quoted hold the inspired truth of the second half of Isaiah as fully as of the first, or of any other book in the Bible; and the entire incompatibility of its Babylonian origin with the truth and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures is not immediately evident to many who have no sympathy with the theory. Even Scriptural students, who hold fast the Deuteronomy of Moses, and shrink with abhorrence from the ascription of either the whole or the half of that book to an unknown author, seem to look without alarm on a similar and equally fatal treatment of the prophet Isaiah.

2. *The want of the repetition of Isaiah's name over the second section of the book no evidence against its unity.*—One element that is held to render it allowable to assign these later prophecies to another author is the historical break in the middle of the book, after which the name of Isaiah is not repeated. But they are not the less bound up with the earlier prophecies under the name of Isaiah; and they were so received by the Jewish nation, and by our Lord's apostles. The repetition of the name would not have been accepted as a material element in the evidence; for the critics, who refuse the later chapters to Isaiah because of the prophecies against Babylon, deny at the same time that he is the author of those earlier chapters which likewise predict its fall. Professor Alexander calls "the impossibility of inspiration, or prophetic foresight, the fundamental principle of the higher critics;" and he says, "to this, as the original, the chief, and I had almost said the only ground of the rejection of these later chapters, we are still brought back from every survey of the arguments by which it is defended."

These critics except from the authentic writings of Isaiah such prophecies against Babylon as that in chapter xxi. 1-10 under the title of the "Burden of the Desert of the Sea," which they

hold to have been written in Babylon not long before its fall although included in the first, and what they reckon the only genuine half of his prophecies. With equal decision they deny the authenticity of the great prophecy in the 13th and 14th chapters, which is expressly entitled "The Burden of Babylon which Isaiah, the son of Amos, did see."\* The special prefixing of Isaiah's name to his later prophecies would, therefore, have been of no account with the higher critics, and would have availed nothing to secure their acceptance of these prophecies as genuine, so long as they embodied in a definite form the distant doom of Babylon. For this or other reasons most of these critics not only refuse to Isaiah the twenty-seven chapters, xl.-lxvi., but they also eliminate nearly nine chapters from the earlier prophecies—chapters xiii., xiv. 1-23, xxi. 1-10, xxiv.-xxvii., xxxv., xxxvi—making thirty-six chapters altogether; the larger half of the book, which they hold to have been written, most of them in Babylon before its capture by Cyrus, others perhaps soon after, and all of them about two hundred years after the death of Isaiah.

It is only just to Professor Davidson to add that his criticism makes no reference to these earlier prophecies; and also that, as regards the second section of the book, he expresses no opinion on its date or its place of writing. But if men are once persuaded to embrace the negative half of the theory, that it was not written by Isaiah, they will at the same time naturally accept its other half, that it was written in Babylon toward the close of the Exile.

For nearly a century the latter half of Isaiah has been one of the chief battle-fields between faith and unbelief; and now, in the midst of ourselves, the growing doubt of its genuineness in various quarters is one of the signs of a wavering and declining faith. The question is vital to the supernatural character of the entire Bible. If the prophet Isaiah was himself the author of the later prophecies under his name, rationalism has no footing; because the desolation of Zion, the exile of Israel in Babylon, the overthrow of that great city by Cyrus, and the liberation of the

\* The genuineness of this prophecy is set aside in Rosenmüller's "Scholia," Ewald's "Prophets of the Old Testament," Bleek's "Introduction to the Old Testament," Dr. Samuel Davidson's "Introduction to the Old Testament," Cheyne's "Isaiah Chronologically Arranged," Arnold's "Isaiah," &c.; and we apprehend that we must regard it as apparently included by Professor Smith in the "other Babylonian prophecies which are probably to be assigned to this time" (of the Exile).

aaptives, are all clearly predicted by him between one and two centuries before those successive and complicated events. But if these prophecies were written by an exiled Israelite in Babylon, our whole Scriptural ground is undermined; for in that case the change of their date transforms the predictions into a series of false prophecies of the most extreme character, to which both the Old and the New Testaments have affixed their seals.

© In this whole inquiry it is to be kept in mind that, Isaiah having been attested and received as the author of the later prophecies alike by the Synagogue and the Church, the burden of proof rests on those who dispute his title. The two series of prophecies might have been written by the same author without either an evident connection or a marked resemblance between them. In that case, the witness of the Old and New Testaments must of itself have been accepted as amply sufficient evidence to Isaiah as the author of both; but if the internal proofs of unity are also clear and full, they form a valuable addition in corroboration of that evidence.

## CHAPTER II.

*ISAIAH'S VISION IN THE TEMPLE.*

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

"Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

"And one cried unto another, and said, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, IS THE LORD OF HOSTS: THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY.

"And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

"Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

"And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

"And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

"Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

"Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

"And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

"But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."—ISAIAH vi.

**A**S the chief key to Isaiah's prophecies, we naturally turn to the sixth chapter, before the death of his leprous king, with its account of his great vision and of his own prophetic commission. The vision is transcendently bright and glorious; the commission is a dark and singular contrast to the vision; but the Divine thoughts in both are brought out in the later prophecies even more fully than in the earlier.

It has been disputed at what period of the prophet's ministry there was given to him this revelation of the Divine glory. Over against the obviously untenable view taken by some rationalists, that it contains an account at the close of his life of his sad disappointment in his prophetic labours, other critics have held the view that its proper place is at the beginning of the book, as constituting his first call to the prophetic office. But there is no valid ground for conceiving that the vision is not found in its right position; for the brightness of the revealed glory, the depth of the discovered sin, and the darkness of the entrusted message, might all be better borne after some experience in the prophetic ministry than at its very beginning.

For a right understanding of Isaiah's prophecies, it is important to mark the highly spiritual character of this whole revelation. A desolating outward judgment on the people is predicted at the close as the fruit of their sins. But in the discovery of the Divine glory, it is the holiness of the Lord that is revealed; the prophet's overwhelming abasement is not by the effulgence of awful majesty, but by the light of holiness giving a new revelation of his own and his people's sinfulness; and the primary judgment on his people for their sins is blindness of heart, not national desolation. The closing of their eyes and shutting of their ears are purely spiritual, and it is for this moral judgment alone that the prophet asks, "How long" it is to last; although the desolation of the land and people, which is the certain fruit of the moral blindness, becomes afterwards the measure of its duration. The spiritual closing of the eye and shutting of the ear are not peculiar to Isaiah, for Moses had said of old, "The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day;" but Isaiah's spiritual use of these terms is highly characteristic of all his writings.

While it is essential to remember the markedly spiritual character of the vision in the temple, as a safeguard against an excessive interpretation of the prophecies by outward conditions and events, there is also to be noted the singular difference, or rather the extreme contrast, between the earlier and latter half of the vision. This will be taken up with more advantage in a future chapter; meanwhile we only remark, that the continuous depression and deep darkness that follow the joyful light and lofty elevation cannot well be explained except by a designed void that is after-

wards to be filled up, so as to return again to the great opening Light. Let us look now at the

*General correspondence between the vision in the Temple and the later prophecies.*

In the opening of the angelic song, the first host of the seraphim ascribe holiness to the Lord in a thrice repeated tribute of praise, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;" and, in a marked accordance with the angels' anthem, the attribute of holiness is ascribed to the Lord in a special manner through the whole book of Isaiah. "*The Holy One of Israel*" is the characteristic title given to the Most High in both sections of the prophecies. In all the rest of the Bible this peculiar title is found only five or six times; but it occurs twenty-five times in Isaiah, twelve times in the first half and thirteen times in the second. Delitzsch reckons the number greater, and says: "It occurs twenty-nine times, twelve times in chapters i.-xxxix. and seventeen times in chapters xl.-lxvi. As Luzzetto has well observed, 'The prophet, as if with a presentiment that the authenticity of the second part of his book would be disputed, has stamped both parts with this name of God, "The Holy One of Israel," as if with his own seal.'"

The *glory* of the Lord in Isaiah is the glory of redemption, rather than of creation, and He who sits on the throne in the temple is the Son of God in the form of the Son of Man, for "Esaias saw His glory and spake of Him," John xii. 41. The Lord had already sworn by Himself to Moses, "As truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with the *glory* of the Lord," Num. xiv. 21; and David had turned the promise into a prayer, "Let the whole earth be filled with His *glory*," Ps. lxxii. 19. Isaiah afterwards interprets the character of this fulness when he predicts that "The earth shall be filled with the *knowledge* of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," chap. xi. 9; Habakkuk combines Moses and Isaiah, "The earth shall be filled with the *knowledge* of the *glory* of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," chap. ii. 14; and the Apostle Paul adds another kindred term, "The *light* of the *knowledge* of the *glory* of God in the face of Jesus Christ." There can be no doubt that it is the same glory of the Lord in *redemption* that is extolled by the answering host of angels in the hearing of Isaiah for his instruction and joy; and that, in the full assurance of the bright future, they sing of that glory as if already flooding the earth, "THE WHOLE EARTH IS



FULL OF HIS GLORY." This prophetic vision has its exact counterpart in the opening of the second portion of the book, "The *glory* of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," chap. xl. 5. The same Divine glory filling all the earth occupies a leading place in the later chapters, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the *glory* of the Lord is risen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy *light*; all nations and tongues shall come and see my *glory*," chaps. lx. 1, 3; lxvi. 18.

In contrast to the Divine glory, the prophet includes the whole nation, king and people, in his own confession of leprous sin—"I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a *people of unclean lips*," ver. 5; and in the later prophecies all are in like manner included in the similar confessions—"All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we are *all as an unclean thing*," chaps. liii. 6; lxiv. 6. In the vision his own lips are quickly cleansed, and "*his iniquity taken away*," yet with no message of cleansing for his leprous people; but in his second prophecies, in which he is commissioned to say of the Messiah that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," he opens his new message with tidings of joy for them. "Comfort ye my people; cry unto Jerusalem that *her iniquity is pardoned*," chap. xl. 1, 2.

After the cleansing of his lips, there is the prophet's willing offer to be the Lord's messenger, which is met by the dark and unexpected message to "*shut the eyes and the ears*" of Israel, ver. 10. This commission he often recalls in the later chapters, as in the words, "He hath *shut their eyes* that they cannot see," chap. xlv. 18; in the address, "Hear, *ye deaf*; and look, ye blind," chap. xlii. 18; and in many other passages that will be noted afterwards, for this whole subject forms one of the leading features of the book. The accompanying judgment to close their hearts "*lest they understand with their hearts*" is recalled in the later words, "He hath *shut their hearts* that they cannot understand," chap. xlv. 18; and again in the tender pleading, "O Lord, why hast thou *hardened our heart* from thy fear?" (chap. lxiii. 17.

The aggravation of the sentence, "Until the *cities be wasted without inhabitant*," ver. 11, is predicted in similar terms in the later prophecies as fulfilled, "Thy holy *cities are a wilderness*, . . . and all our pleasant things are *laid waste*," chap. lxiv. 10, 11. The further decree, "Until the land be utterly *desolate*,

and there be a great *forsaking* in the midst of the land," is removed in the same express terms by the bright promise toward the end of the book, "Thou shalt no more be termed *Forsaken*; neither shall thy land any more be termed *Desolate*," chap. lxii. 4.

Finally, there is, in the vision, a closing limitation of the judgment set forth under an image taken from the finest of the forest trees, "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten (*i.e.*, 'it shall be eaten again'), as a teil tree and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, ('to which a root-trunk remaineth after the felling,' *Ewald*), so *the holy seed shall be the substance thereof*." The imperial power of the world, the proud Assyrian, is to fall hopelessly like the cedar which, when once cut down, never springs from the root again, chap. x. 34; but Israel, like the oak, is to sprout anew from the root in the revival of the nation, and especially in the person of the Messiah, chap. xi. 1. In like manner, near the end of the later prophecies, there is the same limitation of the affliction under a similar image from the finest of the fruit trees: "As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, *that I may not destroy them all*. And I will bring forth *a seed out of Jacob*, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains," chap. lxxv. 8, 9.

Even this slight sketch of the manifold coincidence between Isaiah's early vision and the later prophecies gives good reason to infer that they were written by himself. Apart from what is personal to the prophet, the vision in the Temple consists of three great prophecies: The Earth, as well as the Temple, to be filled with the glory of the Lord; the eyes and ears of Israel to be closed; and the land and people to be laid desolate, but with the promise of ultimate recovery. Correspondingly among the leading subjects of the later prophecies there is: The glory of the Lord filling Mount Zion and enlightening all the nations; the opening of the eyes and ears of Israel; the desolation of the people and the land, and their restoration.

In the brief prophetic summary there is no naming of Babylon, but there is of the desolation of which it is the instrument; there is no naming of Cyrus as the restorer, but there is of Israel's sprouting again as from the root of the oak after the felling of the tree; there is no specification of the Gentile nations, but

there is the promise of the entire earth to be filled with the glory of the Lord; and while there is no designation of the Righteous Servant who is to bring in the light of that glory, there is the unanswered inquiry for that Messenger, for Isaiah's dark message is evidently not the final answer to the great question, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? It is not yet made known to the prophet that the "Light of Israel" is Himself to be also the lowly minister and messenger of the light that is to fill the earth with the glory of the Lord.

In the light of this vision, however, the Lord's Suffering Servant in the later prophecies is no discordant element; but is one of the great connecting links between the two series of predictions. In the New Testament, the vision of Israel's closed eyes and shut ears has its great fulfilment in their rejection of Jesus Christ; but it is the same in Isaiah's own prophecies. It is emphatically the Righteous Servant who is "seen indeed, but not perceived," and is "heard indeed, but not understood." It is of Him that the prophet exclaims, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" He is "wounded for their transgressions," but Israel "esteems Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" the "chastisement of their peace is upon Him," but "when they see Him, there is no beauty that they should desire Him." While, therefore, in the vision the suffering Servant of the Lord is not yet revealed, it is expressly regarding that Servant that the prophet afterwards brings out the great fulfilment of his own dark commission to Israel, and thus moulds the two sections of his book into one.

## CHAPTER III.

*HIS CHARACTERISTIC USE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS,  
AND THEIR COGNATE TERMS IN A SPIRITUAL SENSE.*

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light,” ix. 2.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come,” lx. 1.

“In that day shall the deaf hear the words of that book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness,” xxix. 18.

“Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see,” xlii. 18.

**I**N proceeding to make a fuller inquiry into the genuineness of the second half of Isaiah, we select the special line of proof that presents itself in the figures and the figurative language with which the book abounds. In comparing the thoughts and words of the first section of these prophecies with the second for the purpose of proving that the author of both is one, we desire reverently to remember that Isaiah belonged to the fellowship of the “holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;” and that the prophet does not merely speak the mind of the Lord, but the Lord Himself speaks to us through His servant. Yet the same God over all, who speaks through the Hebrew tongue of the Prophet Isaiah and through the Greek of the Apostle Paul, uses likewise the individual minds of each according to His own will, and speaks through the thoughts of their hearts, as well as through the words of their lips.

The words of the Lord once revealed to His servants are engraven on their memories as with the point of a diamond, with a depth and a clearness that cannot be effaced; and they are recalled by His Holy Spirit in His subsequent revelations through their ministry. Our Lord seals St. Peter’s great confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” with the words, “On this rock I will build my church;” and His servant in his teaching does not forget to testify to the Rock on which the

Church is built: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." Again, Christ charges him, "Feed my sheep;" and the apostle, in remembering the charge itself, recalls the figure under which it had been given, and transmits to his successors in the ministry the admonition, "Feed the flock of God, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory." In comparing, therefore, the words and thoughts of Isaiah's first prophecies with the last, we are only bringing out in his case the manner in which the Lord has ever spoken by His servants the prophets, both in using their separate minds, and in recalling to their memory the thoughts which He has once imparted to them by His Spirit.

The various corresponding images in the two sections of Isaiah, give a manifold and unanswerable testimony to the unity of the book; a testimony that can be transferred into every tongue, and understood by every reader. But we defer the consideration of these more distinct images, and shall take first the kindred subject of the prophet's use of figurative language. The images in the two sections, as perfect counterparts of each other, prove the book to be one; but as detached pictures, they are less fitted to impart at the same time to each half a unity of its own. But the very substance of the book that underlies it all is embodied in the prophet's figurative terms; and these fit the two portions into one whole like the halves of a tally carefully notched into each other.

In the large discussion on the unity of Isaiah, there has been an elaborate and fruitful examination of his words and phrases. But there seems not to have been taken into the account the most distinctive element in his language, as indicative of a characteristic line of thought, his use of *light and darkness*, with their cognate terms, in a moral and spiritual sense. This use, although not peculiar to Isaiah, is characteristic of his writings, but of no other Old Testament author; in the New Testament it is characteristic of the apostle John, with whom, however, it takes far less varied forms. Following this clue, let us compare the two halves of the book, first as regards the light, and then the darkness; and afterwards as regards the Lord's righteous servant, by whom the light is revealed and the darkness removed.

## I. ISAIAH'S USE OF LIGHT IN A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL SENSE.

1. Looking at it in the *first* half of the prophecies, we note that in reading the *later* chapters of the book the most abiding impression is of a light on Mount Zion, illuminating the whole earth with its glory. "If ever 'that good time coming,' for which we all of us long, was painted with energy and magnificence, it is in these chapters; it is impossible to read them without catching its glow." But this is also the subject of its *opening* prophecy. If we take the view of most expositors, and receive the first chapter as a general introduction, we find the second chapter opening the whole series of prophecies with the great announcement, that "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it," ver. 2. The same prediction is found in Micah, and through several verses the two prophets use the same words in describing the attractive scene. But when they leave the words that belong to both, Micah says, "We will walk in the *name* of the Lord;" but Isaiah says, "Let us walk in the *light* of the Lord;" and this use of light in a moral and spiritual sense marks the book throughout. It is not unfrequent in the Psalms, but very rare in the prophets, although light in the sense of joy and prosperity is common everywhere.

In the fifth chapter Isaiah explains his meaning of *light*: "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness," ver. 20. In the leading vision of the sixth chapter, as already noticed, the prophetic song of the seraphim, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His *glory*," anticipates the light of the glory of the Lord filling the whole earth in the latter day; and in the eleventh chapter the prophet, in describing the holy mountain in this latter day, with its centre in the Root of Jesse, "whose rest shall be glorious" (*marg.* glory), explains the glory that is to fill the whole earth as "the earth being full of the *knowledge* of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

In the ninth chapter spiritual darkness is foretold, and spiritual light promised to those who are under it, in the great prediction quoted in the beginning of the Gospel: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. . . . The people that walked in darkness have seen a great *light*: they that dwell in the land of

the shadow of death, upon them hath the *light* shined," chap. viii. 20; ix. 2; and in the tenth chapter the Lord of Hosts is called "The Light of Israel," ver. 17.

In the middle of the first half of the prophecies, a number of chapters are occupied with special burdens laid on various Gentile nations, in which are less to be expected such references to the final light of the earth. But further on, in this first half of the book, we have a singularly glorious prophecy of light for Israel and for the whole world in the promise: "The Lord of hosts will *destroy* in his mountain the face of *the covering* cast over all people, and *the veil* that is spread over all nations," chap. xxv. 7.\*

Finally, in these first prophecies the *light* of the Lord is first described as so bright as to darken the sun and the moon: "The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, . . . and before his ancients gloriously," chap. xxiv. 23. Afterwards, but still in the first section, this image is singularly reversed, for the lights of heaven, instead of being eclipsed by the brighter glory of the Lord, are intensified sevenfold: "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound," chap. xxx. 26.

2. Turning now to the *second* half of the prophecies, we have at their commencement the same light of the Lord irradiating Mount Zion, and filling all the earth. "The *glory* of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," chap. xl. 5. Further on, in the 42nd chapter, "I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a *light* of the Gentiles," ver. 6; and again, "I will make darkness *light* before them," ver. 16; and in the 49th, "I will also give thee for a *light* of the Gen-

\* The prophecy of chapters xxiv.-xxvii. is one of those of which the Isaian authorship has been disputed by many of the critics; but they are not at all of one mind on the time or place of its utterance. "In this case, as in others," says Alexander, "each writer first determines upon general grounds the age of the production, and then confirms it by internal proofs. If it has not the usual characteristics of the author, it is therefore spurious; if it has, it is evidently an imitation." But Rosenmüller, who goes so far as to say that chapter xxi. 1-10 must have been written after the taking of Babylon by an eye-witness of the events, maintains in the second edition of his "Scholia" (although not in the first) that chapters xxiv.-xxvii. were written by Isaiah. As regards the use of "light" and "darkness," with their cognate terms, in a spiritual sense in both halves of the book, the argument would not be materially affected by the transference of all the disputed chapters to the latter half.

tiles, that thou mayest say to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves," vers. 6, 9; and in the 51st, ver. 4, "A law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a *light* of the people [the nations]."

In the 60th chapter the final light of Zion is described at length: "Arise, shine; for thy *light* is come, and the *glory* of the Lord is risen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy *light*, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," vers. 1, 3. In another connection, St. Paul has said that Esaias is very bold; and in this large illustration of Zion's glory, the prophet takes up again the singular double idea of the light of the Lord first extinguishing and then enhancing the natural lights of heaven, which he had formerly given in two separate prophecies, and boldly reproduces it in two successive sentences. Yet here, as elsewhere, we have a partial change of image, for instead of a sun-like moon and a sevenfold sun, we have now a sun that never sets and a moon that never wanes: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting *light*, and thy God thy *glory*." Then immediately the reverse: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting *light*, and thy God thy *glory*," chap. lx. 19, 20.

In the last chapter, in the closing scene of all, we read: "It shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my *glory*, and they shall bring all your brethren to my holy *mountain* Jerusalem," chap. lxvi. 18, 20; and so the circle is complete, and the end of the book is the exact fulfilment of its first opening prophecy that "All nations shall flow unto it, and many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the *mountain* of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. O house of Jacob! come ye, and let us walk in the *light* of the Lord."

All this is not mere resemblance; it is unity.

## II. HIS USE OF DARKNESS IN A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL SENSE.

In the Vision in the Temple, the seer's bright hope of the light of the Lord filling the earth with glory is suddenly clouded by the intervention of a deep darkness under his own ministration, for there is laid on him the burden—"Go, and tell this people, Hear



ye indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not : make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes," chap. vi. 9, 10 ; the people, it has been justly said, shutting their own eyes sinfully, the Lord shutting them judicially, and the prophet shutting them ministerially. This dark message he accepts in childlike submission, but asks with the promptness of an almost unparalleled grace, " Lord, how long ?" Holding fast the Divine assurance of the *light* in Zion filling all the earth, he earnestly inquires how long the *darkness* is to intervene. This guilty blindness, its removal by the Messiah bearing His people's sins, and the advent of the promised light, are leading subjects of His message to Israel throughout the book.

The various judgments on the kingdoms of the world, in which these subjects have little or no place, are subordinate to this great redemption. Israel's own captivity and deliverance, while occupying a large place in the prophecies, are also secondary to the spiritual darkness and light, which alone are included in the prophet's inquiry, How long ?

The moral darkness is pictured in both parts of the book under a startling variety of imagery and of figurative terms. It is the darkness of Night, the darkness of Prison, the darkness of a dense Mist, the darkness of a thick Veil, the darkness of a Book to a man who cannot read, and of a Sealed Book to one who can, the darkness of Closed Eyes, the darkness of Blindness, the darkness of Drunkenness, the darkness of Sleep, and the darkness of Death.

The closing of the eyes and the hardening of the heart, that are threatened in the sixth chapter, are in the second part predicted as fulfilled : " He hath shut their eyes that they cannot see, and their hearts that they cannot understand," chap. xlv. 18.

The torpor of sleep, or spiritual death, which in the Old Testament occurs only in Isaiah, is in the first part, " The Lord hath poured upon you the spirit of deep sleep ;" and in the second, " His watchmen are ignorant ; sleeping, loving to slumber," chaps. xxix. 10 ; lvi. 10.

In the first a woe is denounced on those who trust in the delusion of a false light : " Woe unto them that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ;" and in the second there is the denunciation of a similar woe : " Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks : walk in the light of your

fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow," chaps. v. 20; l. 11.

The stupefaction of sin is in the first, "They are drunken, but not with wine;" in the second the stupefaction of sorrow as the judgment on sin, "Thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine," chaps. xxix. 9; lvi. 21. In the first there is the darkness of spiritual night; and in the second the similar darkness of the prisoner's cell, chaps. ix. 2; xlix. 9. In the first the mental darkness is the covering of a close veil; and in the second it is the covering of a thick mist, chaps. xxv. 7; lx. 2.

But instead of following out these various resemblances, let us examine the two leading ideas of *blindness* and *deafness* in connection with the prophet's great message to Israel.

1. *The Spiritually Blind.*—In the Old Testament, outside of Isaiah, those whose mental vision is closed are never designated *the blind*, except we so take the expression in one of the last of the Psalms, "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind" (Ps. cxlvi. 8), which seems to include figurative as well as literal blindness. This passage, however, cannot designate inward blindness in its leading New Testament sense conveyed in the words, "Ye fools and blind," and "Thou knowest not that thou art blind." But it may probably embrace the secondary sense of conscious and helpless darkness,\* for the blind are here associated with other objects of compassion, the famished, the prisoners, the strangers, the fatherless, and the widows. The same may perhaps be allowed of the prediction in the 35th of Isaiah, ver. 5, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened;" which certainly refers in the first instance to the spiritually blind, but is taken literally by some interpreters, and may include both senses.

But the promise in the 18th verse of the 29th chapter, "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of *the blind* shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness," refers evidently and by general consent to the morally blind as its primary meaning;† and there is nothing to indicate any other application. "The people that are now blind and deaf, so far as the word of Jehovah is concerned, are changed into a people with open ears and seeing eyes" (*Delitzsch*). The reference is to

\* "Persons in the darkness of misery, Ps. cxlvi. 8."—*Gesenius*.

† "Metaph. de cæcitate animi.—Persons in the darkness of ignorance.—Isaiah xxix. 18; xlii. 18, 19; xliii. 8."—*Gesenius*.

the sin and judgment described in the preceding verses, "the spirit of deep sleep poured on Israel, and their eyes closed," so that "the vision of all had become to them as the words of a book that is sealed," vers. 10, 11; and the promise is that the morally deaf Israel shall hear, and self-blinded Israel shall read the words of this book.

The deafness and the blindness in this passage are as purely spiritual as the closing of the eyes and the shutting of the ears of Israel in the prophet's great vision, or as in the Lord's commission to the apostle of the Gentiles—"I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." But as unquestionably, and with the general concurrence of interpreters, the commands in the 42nd chapter, ver. 18, "Hear, ye deaf; and look, *ye blind*, that ye may see;" and in the 43rd, ver. 8, "Bring forth the deaf people that have ears, and *the blind* that have eyes," belong also to the morally blind, and to them alone. Altogether, in the second section of Isaiah, the term "blind" is used not less than eight times in a figurative sense in such expressions as these: "I have called thee to open the blind eyes: I will bring the blind by a way that they know not: who is blind but my servant: his watchmen are blind," chaps. xl. 7, 16, 19; lvi. 9. The opening of the eyes of the blind is never in the Old Testament ascribed to the Messiah, except in the book of Isaiah.

In the entire Old Testament there is only a single instance in which the designation "blind" is used in a manner that may include a figurative sense, and there is no instance whatever in which it means proud and wilful blindness, except in the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah this singular and absolutely peculiar use of the term is neither accidental nor isolated; but in both halves of this book stands in evident and immediate connection with his mission to close the eyes and shut the ears of Israel. The question why Isaiah so uses the word in a sense peculiar to himself, finds a simple answer in his Divine message. But the question why, out of thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, this book alone so uses the term in both its sections, can be answered only by admitting that both halves of Isaiah were written by himself.

2. *The Spiritually Deaf.*—The same conclusion is brought out even more remarkably in Isaiah's use of the cognate designation of "*the deaf*," who are so invariably associated with the blind.

Isaiah's figurative use of this term in both halves of his book stands absolutely and conspicuously alone in the entire Bible. Christ unstopped the ears of the deaf; He gave it as a token of His being the Messiah, that "the blind receive their sight, and the deaf hear;" and this bodily healing was evidently employed by Him as a sign of opening the inward ear; but He used the term "deaf" only for the outward defect.

The ear of man closed to the voice of God is common in all the Scriptures; yet such men are never called *deaf* either in the Old Testament or the New, except in Isaiah.\* In the new Testament men in spiritual darkness are often spoken of as blind; but the dull hearers of the Word are never designed as the deaf, and the unlocking of the doors of the heart is never called the opening of deaf ears. This is singularly reserved for that prophet alone on whom was laid the burden of announcing the judicial closing of the ears of rebellious Israel. In predicting the great redemption in his earlier prophecies he is privileged to foretell that "In that day *the deaf* shall hear the words of the book," chap. xxix. 18, which refers expressly to moral deafness; and again, "Then the ears of *the deaf* shall be unstopped," which may include the outward with the inward hearing, chap. xxxv. 5.

The author of the later prophecies uses the word quite as clearly in its spiritual sense, and in a still more striking manner. The same Isaiah who had been sent to stop the ears of Israel has already been privileged to predict the recalling of the judgment by foretelling that "the deaf" should hear the words of the book; and he is now inspired to bring near the future as if already present, to repeat his own designation of Israel, and to make the grand announcement, "Hear, *ye deaf*," chap. xlii. 18. Afterwards he advances a step farther, and calls on those deaf hearers of the Lord's voice to come out into light and joy: "Bring forth *the deaf* that have ears," chap. xliii. 8. No prophet had ever so spoken of the "deaf" before; to this day none has ever so spoken of them again; and a form of speech so altogether singular

\* Schleusner's Lexicon of the New Testament contains a careful examination of the Greek word for *deaf*, and gives its different shades of meaning, as in the "dumb and deaf spirit" (Mark ix. 25), which it explains to mean a spirit causing deafness; but it adduces no figurative or moral sense whatever of the term in the New Testament. In the "Thesaurus" of Gesenius the reference for the Hebrew word in a moral sense is only to Isaiah xxix. 18; xlii. 18, 19; xliii. 8; and in his Lexicon he explains it to mean "Those who refuse to hear the prophets and obey the law."

must have come from one speaker in both prophecies. The identity is not in word merely, but in thought; it is not in a matter of a casual or secondary kind, but springs directly from the root of Isaiah's divine message in his great vision in the Temple; and can be ascribed only to an identity of origin in the mind of one author.

Isaiah alone of all the prophets in Israel receives a commission to close their eyes and to shut their ears; and Isaiah alone of all calls them for their proud ignorance of God both blind and deaf, no other Hebrew writer speaking of them as either the one or the other. The connection is at once evident and close between the prophet's commission and his use of these two designations; they are used in the later prophecies exactly in the same manner as in the earlier; and in these, as in the first, they bear the impress of the lips that were touched with the holy fire, of the man who saw the bright vision for Israel, but with their eyes closed to the beauty of the Lord, and their ears shut to the "good tidings of great joy."

## CHAPTER IV.

*THE MESSENGER OF LIGHT TO ISRAEL AND  
THE WORLD.*

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” vi. 8.

“The Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent Me,” xlviii. 16.

“He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations,” xxv. 7.

“Behold my Servant, whom I uphold ; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth. . . . I the Lord have called thee, . . . and will give thee . . . for a light to the Gentiles ; . . . to open the blind eyes,” xlii. 1, 6, 7.

1. *Isaiah's dark message.*—In the Lord's dealings of old with His servants the prophets, there are few of so very peculiar a character as the transaction recorded by Isaiah in his vision in the Temple. The contrast between its opening light and its closing darkness is so great, the transition so sudden from the loftiest ecstasy to the deepest woe, that one of the most recent critics on Isaiah pronounces it to be “psychologically impossible;” and, therefore, divides the chapter in two, holding the latter half to belong to a different time from the first (Cheyne's Isaiah). But the rapid transition would be impossible only if the thoughts were self-originated in the prophet's mind, not when they are given from above ; and the whole scene is evidently one both in place and in time. Yet it is in striking contrast to the Lord's ordinary dealing with His servants, for He is able to raise them out of the depth of sorrow into songs of joy ; but Isaiah could only say, “Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.”

For the explanation of the dark close of the vision, the angelic song of the “Earth being full of the glory of the Lord,” must have been understood by Isaiah as foretelling the glory of the latter day, in exact accordance with his own first prophecy of “the mountain of the Lord's house exalted above the hills, and all nations flowing unto it,” and the house of Israel invited to

“walk in the light of the Lord” (chap. ii. 2, 5). It is only by his having so understood the angels’ song that we can explain his meek and prompt reply to the dark message committed to him, when he inquires, “How long?” It is their assurance that the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord that emboldens him to ask how long the eyes of Israel are to be closed to that glory. The purpose of the Lord, as previously made known to himself, and now gloriously revealed by the seraphic hosts, is to fill the whole world of Jew and Gentile with His own glory; and when the Lord asks whom He will send and who will go, the object of the inquiry evidently is for a fit messenger to convey the light that is to fill all the earth. One of those angels of light might seem the fittest for such an office; but when none of them makes offer of his services, the prophet with his leprous lips now cleansed, and with his heart kindled with love to God and to men, offers himself, “Here am I, Lord, send me.” His offer is to be sent as the messenger of light to the children of Israel and to the sons of men; and while he accepts the message of darkness by not refusing it, he expresses no formal acceptance because he does not understand that this was the object of the Lord’s desire for a messenger; but he humbly asks “how long” the darkness is to last, and by implication “how soon” he is to be entrusted with the message of promised light. The Lord’s answer intimates the long continuance of the darkness, with an ultimate resurrection out of it; but is absolutely silent as to committing to the prophet the great message of light for the world.

Let us not forget that the prophet’s meekness in obeying the Lord under this rarely paralleled disappointment, was amply recompensed by the consolations he has been enabled to minister in his later prophecies to a multitude out of every kindred and tongue, whom no man can number, in all ages of the world; by his wondrous description of the “Man of Sorrows;” and by his bright foretelling of the Lord’s Elect as the light of all nations.

2. *Messiah the Prince in the first prophecies, and the same in the second.*—In the vision the Lord’s inquiry for a messenger to fill the earth with light remains unanswered. The question is double: for before the inquiry who is willing to go, there is the greater inquiry, Who is he whom the Lord will choose for His messenger? Whom shall I send? This is a question which none can answer but the Lord Himself. It is the Lord overheard by the prophet taking counsel with Himself, and

asking on whom His own choice will rest? Whom will He select? The man of the Lord's election to bring light to the earth, in the capacity of a servant or messenger, is not stated in the first series of prophecies. In these prophecies the light that is to enlighten Israel and the world is expressly connected with the incarnation of the Eternal Word: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; . . . for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: . . . his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," chap. ix. 2-6. And so afterwards, "A king shall reign in righteousness; . . . and the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken," chap. xxxii. 1, 3. This deliverer in whom the "great light" is to shine, who is to break the yoke of the oppressor, is the same who had been called the child Immanuel, who is to be a ruler on the throne of David, a prince and a king; but never designated as a servant or as a messenger to bring forth the promised light. In these first prophecies there is no connection indicated between this Prince of Peace, this Immanuel, and the Lord's inquiry, Whom shall I *send*? Nor is there any clear intimation of the Messiah taking the form of a servant; although it is stated that when He is to spring from the royal house of Israel, it is not from the family flourishing in its strength, but cut down to the earth, and a branch springing out of its root, and that not in David the king, but simply in Jesse (chap. xi. 1); and also that the Messiah is to be for "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel," and "for a sign and wonder" (chap. viii. 14, 18). In other respects the promised Messiah is represented in His greatness, honour, and power, and not in His humiliation.

In respect of dignity, the Messiah in the later prophecies is evidently the same as in the first. In the first His birth from a Virgin mother is predicted, and His name is to be called Immanuel; in the second He says, "The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name," chaps. vii. 14; xlix. 1. In the first the people say, "Unto us a Son is given, the government shall be upon his shoulder, . . . his name shall be called the Prince of Peace;" in the second the Lord says, "Behold, I have given him for a Leader (or prince) and commander to the people," chaps. ix. 6; lv. 4. In the first it is promised, "The Spirit of the



Lord shall rest upon him;" in the second the Lord says, "I have put my Spirit upon him;" and he announces, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," chaps. xi. 2; xlii. 1; lxi. 1. In the first His name is "Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God;" in the second He is to be "exalted, and extolled, and be very high," chaps. ix. 6; lii. 13. In the first, "Of the increase of his government and peace there is to be no end;" in the second, "kings are to be dumb before him," and the "isles are to wait for his law," chaps. ix. 7; lii. 15; xlii. 4. In the first, "His throne is to be established with judgment and with justice;" in the second He is to "establish the earth," and to "set judgment in the earth," chaps. ix. 7; xlix. 8; xlii. 4. In both "the meek of the earth" are the special objects of His care, chaps. xi. 4; lxi. 1.

3. *Messiah, the Lord's Servant, sent to reveal the promised light.* The honoured Messiah is clearly the same in both halves of the prophecies; but one of the chief arguments adduced against their unity is that in the first series He is neither called a servant, nor subjected to suffering. But the later prophecies are supposed to have been written by Isaiah fifty years after the vision in the Temple; and it is in accordance with our Lord's dealing with His apostles that the prophet should first have seen His glory, and afterwards have entered into His sufferings. This is strikingly brought out in the title of "Prince of Peace" in the first prophecies, and the price at which the title is purchased in the second, "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed."

The designation Servant of the Lord, given to the Messiah in the second series, is one of high honour, and as such is given to Abraham, Moses, David; it also belongs to the Messiah as subjected to suffering and humiliation. But it is a strongly corroborative proof of the unity of the book that, whether exalted or humbled, He is the Lord's Servant and Messenger to bring in the light, and to remove the darkness. "Jacob, who is termed *the servant of Jehovah*, is called sometimes the *elect*, chosen of God (Isa. xli. 8; xlv. 4); sometimes ambassador and friend (chap. xlii. 19); and so in the plural, ambassadors (chap. xlv. 26). But in all the passages respecting *the Servant of God* in the chapters of the last part of Isaiah (xlii. 1-7; xlix. 1-9; l. 4-10; lii. 13; liii. 12), He is represented as the intimate Friend and Ambassador of God, as aided by the Divine Spirit, and as about

to restore the tribes of Israel and become the teacher of other nations" (*Gesenius*). Now it is this Servant, this Friend, this Ambassador of God, on whom God's choice has rested to bring forth the promised light, and to remove the darkness of Israel and the earth. It is He in whom we find, not in the first, but in the second prophecies, God's own answer to His inquiry, "Whom shall I send?" God Himself brings Him forth with the most solemn attestation both of His own choice, and of the end for which this Servant is chosen and sent: "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth; . . . I will give thee for a covenant of the people (Israel), for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes," chap. xlii. 1, 6, 7.

This honoured Servant is sent for the express purpose, at once, of revealing the *light* promised in the angelic prophecy, and of removing the *blindness* predicted in Isaiah's own mission. It is He alone, and not Isaiah, who calls Himself the Sent of the Lord. His own words on earth are a constant answer to the question, "Whom shall I send?" There is nothing to which He oftener refers than His being *sent*. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me. . . . The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." So in the later prophecies of Isaiah he says, "The Lord God, and his Spirit, hath *sent* me: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because . . . he hath *sent* me . . . to proclaim . . . the opening of the prison to them that are bound,"\* chaps. xlviii. 16; lxi. 1; and in announcing His mission in the Gospel, "He hath *sent* me . . . to preach recovering of sight to the *blind*" (Luke iv. 18).

4. *His embassy of light involves darkness for Himself.*—While this chosen Ambassador and Servant of the Lord stands in the place of highest honour, His embassy and service are unto the deepest humiliation. On earth, when He had taken on Himself the form of a servant, He speaks of it as a service unto death for His people: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." So in Isaiah, "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins," as if the Lord Himself were reduced to servitude in bearing our sins; and the Messiah is not only the honoured Servant of the Lord,

\* Or, the opening of the eyes; Delitzsch says, that as the Hebrew word "is never used to signify the opening of a room, but is always applied to the opening of the eyes, except in chapter xlii. 20, where it is used for the opening of the ears, we adhere to the strict usage of the language, if we understand by it the opening up of the eyes (as contrasted with the dense darkness of the prison)."

but is spoken of as the despised servant of men, as "Him whom man despiseth, whom the nation abhorreth, a servant of rulers," chap. xlix. 7.

Isaiah is sent on a dark mission to others, and he refuses not; but the Messiah is sent on a mission filled with suffering, darkness, and death for Himself, and from this mission of inconceivable sorrow He turns not aside. In contrast to Israel with closed ears, He says of Himself, "The Lord God hath opened mine ears," His ears ever open to every word of His Father; just as in contrast to the prophet with his lips unclean, He is spoken of as the "righteous Servant," with lips that need no cleansing, because "there was no deceit in His mouth." But with His ears open to the message and command of the Lord, that command is that "He shall give His back to the smiters;" He hears the mission, and says, "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," chap. li. 5, 6.

But the predicted suffering of the Lord's Messenger brings out, in a remarkable manner, the *light* and the *darkness* that run as a continuous thread through all the thoughts given to Isaiah, first and last, concerning the glory of the latter day. In the forty-second chapter, the Lord's chosen Messenger is sent "to open the blind eyes," ver. 7; the Lord then takes the humble blind by the hand: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will make darkness light before them," ver. 16;\* and, presently, He speaks the creative word that turns their darkness into light: "Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see," ver. 18. But a wondrous spectacle meets their opening eyes. The Messenger of the Covenant, likened afterwards to the sheep that is dumb before her shearers, is now described under a kindred affection as deaf, just as the two are combined in the Psalms: "I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man, that openeth not his mouth." When Pilate marvelled at the silence of Jesus, he not only asked him, "Speakest thou not?" but "Hearest thou not?" and the suffering Servant, described in the fifty-third chapter as dumb, is in the forty-second represented as deaf. In the process of recovery, Israel has

\* The same distinction between the proud and humble blind is made by our Lord in the Gospel of St. John (chap. ix. 39, 41). He had repeatedly called the Pharisees "blind," and "blind leaders of the blind;" yet He says here, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin;" *si insitiam vestram agnosceretis*—Schleusner; if they acknowledged their blindness, it would be removed.

already passed from the blindness of self-reliant light into the humility of helpless darkness; his designation as blind is no longer a brand of evil, but a recognition of good; and instead of the land being "forsaken" on account of the people's blindness, they are assured that because they are blind the Lord will "not forsake them." In this use of the term, more than half the way has been traversed toward the further transition from the gracious blindness of a penitent people, to the self-denying blindness of the Lord's Servant, when He takes on Himself the guilt of their blindness of heart. The eyes of Israel are now turned to a blindness and deafness of an unparalleled character, when compared with which all other must be reckoned light. There is One on whom all the iniquities of ransomed Israel are laid; to whom the guilt of all their blindness and deafness is so transferred, that He alone is now accounted blind and deaf in Israel; none amongst them blind *but* the Lord's Servant, none deaf *as* the Lord's Messenger. ("*Cæcus est atque surdus imputative.*") Israel is now called to look on their Messiah blindfolded and buffeted for their sakes as a pretended seer, and enduring quietly their cruel mockeries, as if He observed them not. In the beginning of the chapter the Lord says to Israel, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold;" then to His Servant in the seventh verse, "I will give thee to open the blind eyes;" then in the sixteenth, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will make darkness light before them;" then to Israel in the eighteenth: "Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but my Servant? or deaf, as my Messenger that I sent [or, "whom I send," or "will send?"]\* who is blind as he that is Perfect, and blind as the Lord's Servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears [*i.e.*, the ears of the deaf], but he<sup>h</sup> heareth not. The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable," † chap. xlii. 18-21.

\* So Alexander, Delitzsch, Henderson, Cheyne, Nägelsbach, Arnold, Speaker's Commentary.

† Henderson, and Nägelsbach, and the Speaker's Commentary interpret these verses of the Messiah; and every other interpretation does great violence to the description of the Lord's Servant, his Messenger, the Perfect One, as well as to His magnifying of the law. Henderson says that "nowhere in Scripture is Israel spoken of as the Lord's messenger."

"Seeing many things, and not observing," or noticing, is quite different from "seeing and not perceiving."

"Opening the ear" is never, in Scripture, spoken of the hearer; it is always

In the forty-third chapter, there follows the consummation of all the prophet's longings in the Lord's command: "Bring forth the *blind* people that have eyes, and the *deaf* that have ears," that is, the blind that now have eyes, and the deaf that now have ears; and afterwards, in the final annunciation: "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise" chap. xliii. 8, 21.

In the vision in the Temple there is the great promise of the earth to be filled with the glory of the Lord; and the great requirement of a Messenger chosen, sent, and willing to bring in the light of that glory. Isaiah is willing, but for this great work he is not accepted. In the New Testament Christ is Himself the "Light of the world;" and at the same time the chosen, sent, and willing Servant and Messenger of the Father to reveal the light. Isaiah never speaks of himself as either chosen or sent for this end; but in his later prophecies he brings forward the Messiah revealing himself, and saying of the Lord, "In the shadow of his hand hath he hid Me, . . . in his quiver hath he hid Me," chap. xlix. 2; announced by the Father to be His Elect, attested by Himself as Sent; willing to go so as not even to "hide his face from shame and spitting;" and not failing till He has become "a light to the Gentiles, salvation unto the end of the earth."

Regarding the Lord's Righteous Servant, one note more may be added. The discovery in the Temple is of a leprous king, a leprous prophet, and a leprous people, all of unclean lips; and when, in the later prophecies, the Lord lays on Him the iniquity of all, He bears the guilt of the moral leprosy. "He was wounded for our transgressions, but we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God;" the same stroke falling on Him as fell on Uzziah when "the Lord had smitten him;" or, as in one of our old Bibles—"We helden him as leprous" (quasi leprosum, *Vulg.*). So truly do the later prophecies fill up the earlier; and so evidently is it Isaiah himself and none other that describes the Lord's Righteous Servant.

"inclining the ear;" and to open one's own ear and yet not to hear, would seem to be a direct contradiction. "Opening the ears" must therefore be understood of the ears of the deaf.

We desire it to be noted that the interpretation of this passage, whether as applied to the Messiah or to Israel, makes no difference whatever in the argument of our previous chapter for the unity of the book; because the critics who apply it to Israel receive it as a picture of their extreme moral blindness and deafness.

## CHAPTER V.

*IMAGES PECULIAR TO ISAIAH.*

“The covering is narrower than that he can wrap himself in it,” xxviii. 20.

“They cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit,” xxx. i.

“They weave a web without my Spirit,” EWALD’S *Isaiah*, do.

“They weave the spider’s web ; their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works,” lix. 5, 6.

THE same agreement that pervades the substance of the book in both its halves is found in a variety of other forms, which demand less of our attention as they have been noted by not a few authors. Corresponding thoughts and expressions in the two portions will occur to every reader ; as when, in the first, it is said, “The Lord who hideth his face from the house of Jacob ;” and in the second, “Verily, thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel,” chaps. viii. 17 ; xlv. 15. Or again, in the first, “Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation ;” and in the second, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,” chaps. xxv. 9 ; xl. 31.

But, adhering to the line we have mainly followed in the prophet’s figurative language, let us now look at some of the detached images with which the book abounds, as showing a very striking agreement between the two series of prophecies ; an agreement which is evidently not accidental, is too natural to be the result of a designed imitation, and in some instances can only have been the fruit of one mind.

In the first section we have the threatening, “Ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth ;” and in the second we have its confessed fulfilment, “We all do fade as a leaf,” chap. i. 30 ; lxiv. 6.

In the first section there is the judgment, “Ye shall be

as a garden that hath no water;" in the second its promised removal, "Thou shalt be as a watered garden," chaps. i. 30; lviii. 9.

In the first section the Lord asks, "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" In the second He declares, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy," chaps. x. 15; liv. 16.

In the first section it is prophesied of the Messiah that "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots"; in the second the prophet complains that his report is not believed, "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground," chaps. xi. i.; liii. 2.

In the first section the clay magnifies itself against the potter, "Your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not;" in the second the clay humbles itself in the potter's hand, "But now, O Lord, we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand," chaps. xxix. 16; lxiv. 8.

In the first section the gracious promise of life for all people is set forth as a "Feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees;" in the second there is an earnest invitation to all men to partake of this feast, "Come ye, buy wine and milk without money and without price; eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness," chaps. xxv. 6; lv. 1, 2.

Among these corresponding images there are five *peculiar* to the book of Isaiah, being found nowhere else either in the Old Testament or the New. With most of these beautiful figures we are so familiar that we forget that we meet with them only in the pages of Isaiah.

1. In the first half the hour of man's extremity is set forth under the image of a *Helpless Birth*, "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." In the second, the Lord's very present help in the time of need is promised by recalling the image, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth, saith the Lord?" chaps. xxxvii. 3; lxvi. 9. The image occurs first in the words of Hezekiah, but it is Isaiah who records them; they were addressed to him by the king in such a season of extremity as could not fail to engrave them on his heart;

and no words of his own prophecies would be more surely recalled to his memory by the Holy Spirit.

2. In the first section the relation of the Lord to His people, as their honour, ornament, and praise, is set forth under the image of a *Crown and Diadem*, "The Lord of hosts shall be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people." In the second this idea is not copied in the way of repetition; but we have what is more striking, the converse of the relation in His people being a praise and beautiful ornament to the Lord expressed by the same image and in the same words, "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," chaps. xxviii. 3; lxii. 3. The image of a crown is very frequent in the Scriptures. The virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; children's children are a crown to old men; the converts of the Apostle Paul are his hope and joy and crown; and on the head of our Lord are many crowns. Yet Isaiah alone in all the Holy Writings calls the Lord a crown and a diadem for His people, and His people a crown and a diadem for the Lord.

3. In the first half of Isaiah the Lord's constant keeping and seasonable saving of Jerusalem is condensed into the promise of salvation in the abstract, of *Salvation itself for its Walls*—"Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." In the second half this remarkable promise is not reiterated as from the mouth of the Lord; but there is the assured prediction of its vivid apprehension and cordial appropriation by Israel, "Thou shalt call thy walls salvation and thy gates praise," chaps. xxvi. 1; lx. 18.

4. But the fullest of the images peculiar to Isaiah is his early and beautiful picture of the *Wolf and the Lamb* in the latter day, when "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox," which he reproduces towards the end in the prediction that "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock;" while he changes the "child playing on the hole of the asp" into "dust becoming the serpent's meat," chaps. xi. 6, 9; lxv. 25. Elsewhere the lion and the wolf are the emblems of ferocity, the ox and the lamb of gentleness. But in Isaiah alone, either in the Old Testament or the New, is the one *transformed* into the other; not, indeed, that the wolf's outer clothing of fur is changed into the wool of the fleece, but his inborn savageness into the meekness of the lamb.



By the advocates of a second Isaiah the second passage is held to be merely a quotation from the first, and to prove nothing more than acquaintance with his writings. Of itself this familiar acquaintance, which is everywhere so apparent, has a most important bearing on the honesty and the inspiration of the alleged anonymous imitator of Isaiah; but the later prophecies present an interesting and curious proof that the image is not employed by a nameless copyist, but by Isaiah himself. As with the wolf and the lamb, so the brier and the thorn are recognised Scriptural emblems of the wicked; and trees of beauty, fragrance, or fruit, of the righteous. But just as with the wolf and the lamb, so with the *Brier and the Myrtle*, the substitution of the one for the other, or their transformation, is quite peculiar to Isaiah: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree," chap. lv. 13. These words bear a direct reference to the judgment in the earlier prophecies against "the Lord's vineyard, the house of Israel and the men of Judah his pleasant plant," on which were to "come up briars and thorns;" and they announce the reversal of that judgment. But this figure of a holy *transformation* is closely akin to that of the wolf becoming a lamb; and from the same root in the prophet's mind there have sprung, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the twin images in his later writings.

The emblems themselves are familiar in the other Scriptures; but no other writer in the whole Bible either originates or repeats the idea of the Lord transforming the fierceness of the lion into the gentleness of the ox, or the sharpness of the brier into the softness of the myrtle. The author of the later prophecies stands quite alone in thinking Isaiah's thoughts on the peacefulness of earth's latter day; and these thoughts form a beautiful link in the full chain of evidence that he is no other than Isaiah.

5. The image of *Righteousness as a Robe* brings out a striking example of the same kind in the two sections of the prophecies. In one of the later chapters of Isaiah the figure is brought out with great beauty in the song of praise: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels," chap. lxi. 10. But the same figure had already been employed by the patriarch Job: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;

my judgment was as a robe and a diadem;" and it occurs in various forms in other Scriptures, as in the "clothing of humility," and in "the fine linen, the righteousness of the saints."

The image is far from being peculiar to Isaiah, but its very frequency discloses more clearly his marked singularity; for he not only extols the Divine righteousness as a beautiful and ample robe for man, but brings out the converse of the picture, and brands self-deceit in both halves of his prophecy as too scanty a garment to cover him. It is a curious distinction of the prophet's writings, that in the other sixty-five books of the Bible the image of unrighteousness or self-righteousness as an *insufficient Raiment* for man is never employed; while he makes a striking use of it in both sections of his book, yet in such a form that the second has evidently not copied it from the first. In the first half the sin is "Under falsehood have they hid themselves," and the instructive image for the too common cloak of self-deceit is that, "The covering is narrower than that a man can wrap himself in it," chap. xxviii. 15, 20; which is referred to again in the words, "They cover with a covering, but not of my spirit," or as Ewald translates, "They weave a web without my spirit," chap. xxx. 1. In the second half the sin is the same, "They trust in vanity, and speak lies," and the image of the scanty garment the same. But the kind of garment is quite different, "They weave the spider's web, . . . their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works;" the narrow coverlet rising into the more complete image of the self-spun, puny, and fragile web of the spider, which its weaver chooses rather than the robe of righteousness, and the garments of salvation, chap. lix. 4, 5. It would be a strange and incredible coincidence that no succeeding writer in the Bible should have taken up Isaiah's image of the *Narrow Coverlet*; but that a second Isaiah had repeated his very special thought under the new and independent image of the *Spider's Web* in a form more beautiful and perfect than the original; a false Isaiah more strikingly genuine than the true.

The numerous corresponding images in the two halves of the prophetic book, and especially those which are peculiar to Isaiah, The Helpless Birth, the Crown and Diadem, the Walls of Salvation, the Wolf and the Lamb, and the Narrow Covering, show a marked and varied agreement between the two portions for which we can find no natural explanation, except in their

owning a common author. These remarkable ideas in the prophecies of Isaiah, being neither originated by any previous writer in the Old Testament, nor adopted by any subsequent writer in the Old Testament or the New, serve to stamp on the book the seal of one author with his individual and peculiar cast of thought.

*The various proofs of unity.*—The examination of the unity of the book of Isaiah in this and the preceding chapters has been nearly confined to a single line of evidence. But even in this restricted range, the proofs of unity are at once so visible on the surface and so deep in the substance of the book; and they are so numerous, so various, and so concurrent, as to leave no room for doubt that the whole is one. An assiduous author might become the double of another by a skilful repetition of his ideas. But he cannot by any art fashion himself into his second half; he cannot engraft his own conceptions into the other's mind by completing his deepest thoughts; and so fit them in, and fill all up as if only one thinker had conceived the whole.

## CHAPTER VI.

*THE AUTHOR OF THE LATER PROPHECIES NOT  
AN EXILE.*

“Then he [that is, Israel] remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, *saying*, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? . . . Look down from heaven and behold. . . . Thy holy cities are a wilderness, our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire,” lxiii. 11, 15; lxiv. 10, 11.

THE unity of Isaiah has been amply proved by eminent critics on grounds in great part different from those that we have chiefly taken; all the arguments concur in strengthening the whole evidence; and from the proofs we have adduced, apart from all others, we must hold the unity of the book to be conclusively proved.

It is held, however, that the author of the later prophecies could not have been Isaiah, but must have been one of the exiles of Babylon, on the grounds of his language, of his taking the position of an exile, and of his specific predictions regarding Cyrus.

1. *The style and diction do not prove the author to have been one of the exiles.*—Fifty years at least are supposed to have intervened between the vision in the Temple and the later prophecies, which may well account for some difference of style. In his answers on Deuteronomy Professor Smith says that “arguments from style are admittedly difficult and often precarious;” and in his article on the “Bible” his opinion of the recentness of the last half of Isaiah is founded, not on its language, but on the position that these chapters “cannot be understood in a natural and living way, except by looking at them from the historical standpoint of the exile.” Bleek in like manner acknowledges that “the character of the language as a criterion of date has always something very uncertain in it;” whilst he (and also Ewald) holds that one whole

chapter in the middle of the second half of the book must have been written before the exile, and "perhaps by Isaiah himself" (chaps. lvi. 9; lvii. 11).

Professor Davidson founds his argument on the style of the later prophecies; but at the same time it is difficult, irrespectively of style, to reconcile their genuineness with his general view of the character of Scriptural prophecy. "We observe," he says, "that a prophecy springs out of or directs itself to meet the circumstances of its time; and when we find a prophecy crowded with circumstances, referred to a time when the circumstances did not exist, we are compelled to inquire into the truth of such a reference" (*Old Testament Exegesis*, p. 16).

Dr. Samuel Davidson, who is decided and very strenuous against the Isaian authorship, urges the originality and the flow of the thoughts, but may be said to give up the argument of language. He says, "That the Deutero-Isaiah could write good and fine Hebrew even in Babylon shows an original and independent genius. There is not enough evidence in the style and diction (of these prophecies) to show their later origin than Isaiah; yet enough to show the independent genius of a prophet soaring far above his own age, and not detracting from the value of his ideas by investing them with an inferior garb." This is an acknowledgment that the "style and diction" are worthy both of Isaiah himself and of his age. All else is of little weight; for thoughts both new in themselves, and running in a more copious flow, may follow after the earlier writings of any author, but much more of a prophet continuing to receive fresh revelations from Heaven.

On the other hand, the strength of the argument on the ground of language in favour of the genuineness of the later prophecies will appear from the following valuable extract; which refers, indeed, to the 13th chapter in the first instance, but includes also the prophecies against Babylon that are in the second section of the book:—"Chapters xiii.-xiv. 23 contain an entire prophecy respecting the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians. So particular is this prophecy, and so exactly do its specifications tally with the circumstances connected with the fall of the Chaldean monarchy, that Rosenmüller, Eichhorn, Bertholdt, Gesenius, Hitzig, and others, maintain it to be the production of some writer who lived during the captivity, when the hostility of the Medes and the splendid successes of

Cyrus inspired the Jews with the conviction that their oppressor would soon be subdued; or who lived after the return from Babylon, and consequently wrote after the events had taken place. Because human sagacity could not by any possibility have anticipated by nearly two hundred years the particular events in question, it follows, according to them, that the author must have flourished about the time they took place, if not indeed after they had happened.

“The remarks of Michaelis, who lived to witness the commencement of the infidel attacks that have been made upon this portion of the book of Isaiah, are too valuable to be omitted. Adverting to the views just noticed, he observes: ‘Those who have read Isaiah in Hebrew will not easily entertain such ideas. His style is so elegant, so magnificent, and so different from any thing written about the time of the termination of the Babylonish captivity; it is likewise so exempt from foreign words, which we so frequently meet with in the later writers, that to suppose his prophecies to have been concocted in the first year of Cyrus must appear just as improbable as the hypotheses of Harduin, which he could not prevail upon the world to adopt, that the most beautiful of the Odes of Horace were the productions of barbarous monks in the Middle Ages. In the Babylonish captivity the grace and magnificence of the Hebrew language were entirely lost. The prophecies of Isaiah, on the contrary are, next to Job and the odes of Moses, the most splendid Hebrew monuments in existence—a quality which is more obvious on perusing the original than it can possibly be made in any translation. Besides, the prophecies of Isaiah against Babylon are completely in the style of his other prophecies, all of which it will not be maintained are suppositious, and, indeed, may be said to form, with little abatement, the most splendid portions of his book’” (Henderson on Isaiah).

Mr. Arnold, who holds that the later prophecies were written in Babylon, says of the whole book: “The Hebrew language and genius, it is admitted by common consent, are seen in the book of Isaiah at their perfection.”

There is, indeed, a great array of modern criticism against the genuineness of these later prophecies; but, beyond all doubt, it is the predictive element in these writings that is the great leading difficulty with the critics, and outweighs all other considerations. In the words of Mr. Payne Smith, “Remove that

great stumbling-block of the higher criticism, the fact of prediction, and every thing is in favour of their authenticity." We may well give the linguists their own high place, and thankfully acknowledge the great value of their services in Biblical researches, their great acuteness, and their indefatigable industry. But skill in languages, in history, in philosophy, or in a criticism that claims to combine them all, cannot be assigned the first place in forming a sound judgment on the character and the truth of prophecy. If the most accomplished scholars and the subtlest philosophers in the world should all be infidels, it would only prove the truth of the Scripture that "not many wise are called;" the true Church of Christ will never surrender her own high position and commit herself into the hands of mere critics; and believing critics will be the first to acknowledge that for the formation of a sound judgment either on miracles or on prophecy criticism occupies only a secondary place.

But there has been no want of critical research on the part of those who have maintained the integrity of Isaiah. The later prophecies have been carefully examined on critical grounds, and their authenticity abundantly proved by scholars of high standing, amongst whom we have been indebted to Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, Keil, Nügelbach, Henderson, Alexander, Payne Smith, Urwick, and Stanley Leathes.

2. *The prophet never speaks of himself as an exile.*—It is often stated that the author of the later prophecies speaks as from the position and in the circumstances of one of the exiles in Babylon, and that he could not therefore have been Isaiah. Among the critics there is one noted exception to this conclusion, not regarding the date, but the place of the writing, to which Mr. Arnold refers in these words: "One series of chapters Ewald insists we shall believe was written in Egypt, not Babylon, because Persia is called in it the *north*, and Persia is north to Egypt, not to Babylon. How strange that it never occurred to him, before thus making a certainty where there can be none, that Persia is north to *Zion*; and that for the Jewish exile in Babylon, *Zion*, the centre of his thoughts, may well also have been the centre of his geography!" But, in that case, the argument will apply with still more force to one whose dwelling, as well as his heart, was in *Zion*; although it seems rather to be that Cyrus, combining Media and Persia, is said to come both from the north and from the east.

But it is the date and not the place of the prophecies that is chiefly important; and the argument against the real Isaiah is put by Dean Stanley in this form: "All the allusions suppose that Jerusalem (not, is to be, but) has been already destroyed, and that Cyrus and his conquests are (not merely foreshadowed in some distant future, but) already well known.—Micah speaks of the captivity as still to come, Isaiah as already far advanced" (*Jewish Church*, Part II., p. 583).

It is, however, quite in accordance with Isaiah's usage to express the future in the past of prophetic certainty. The great description of the Messiah's rejection by men and affliction by God in Isaiah lii. 13 to liii. 12 contemplates his sufferings and death as if already accomplished; yet the forty-second chapter, which has the very same opening, "Behold my servant," speaks distinctly of his appearance and work as in the future, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street," ver. 2. On the other hand, Micah predicts the birth of the Messiah in the future, "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;" chap. v. 2. But Isaiah foretells the very same future event as if it had been fulfilled, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," chap. ix. 6; speaking of this promised Child as if already born in the earth.

Nothing, therefore, can be more natural than to find Isaiah in his later prophecies using the same prophetic past for events which Micah describes in the future. Micah foretells, "They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek," chap. v. 1; and Isaiah casts the same far future event into the past, and says, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," chap. l. 6.

Our Lord finds no difficulty in Isaiah having used the prophetic past in a description of Himself in the distant future, when He reads in the synagogue, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted." He says to the people, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," in their own time and in His own person, and not in the time of Isaiah; although the Messiah is introduced as if He had already been anointed, and sent in the prophet's own day.

But whilst the prophet vividly anticipates the distant future,



and speaks of it as already present, he never represents himself as sharing in the exile at Babylon. In addressing Israel as if "in the last decade of the captivity," he does not include himself as a partaker in their joyful deliverance. The form of his exhortation is not, "Let us go forth of Babylon;" but, "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans," chap. xlvi. 20. Once, in addressing Babylon, he speaks of the Lord as "our Redeemer;" but, in accosting the proud oppressor, this is no more than the natural language of any prophet who glories in the Lord as the Redeemer of Israel in all generations: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. . . . As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel," chap. xlvi. 1-4.

The large confession of sin in the 53rd chapter, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray," embraces the whole nation, prophet and people, for the past, the present, and the future; but it has no more reference to the people of the exile than to any other generation of Israel, and will certainly be adopted with its greatest fitness by the penitent Israel of the future, when they shall confess, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." So, likewise, the confession and affliction in chapter lix. 10-15, "We stumble at noon-day as in the night. . . . For our transgressions are multiplied before thee: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter," may apply to many times of chastening, either in the prophet's own day, or in subsequent ages, but has a much more natural reference to Jerusalem than to Babylon.

But there is one remarkable description toward the close of the book, in the 64th chapter, which like the Lamentations of Jeremiah speaks expressly of the ruins of Zion, and seems at first sight to number the prophet himself among the mourners. There are reverent students of Scripture who have no difficulty about prophecy embracing either the distant in time, or the minute in circumstance, but are startled at this special form of prediction as if not according to the analogy of the Scriptures. In the 53rd chapter, however, the prophet casts himself into the far distant future when he writes, "We hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not;" and there is nothing at which to stumble if he does the same in the

64th chapter in the touching appeal to the God of Israel: "Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?" vers. 10-12.

To those who doubt that prophecy can be at once distant and specific, these words are of necessity a stumbling-block, which we make no effort to take out of their way, because it is immovable. But there are others who rely with simple faith on the truth of prophecy, but to whom it seems that such a form of writing is a description of an actual event, and not of a distant future. This conception arises from entirely mistaking the character of the complaint and the supplication, as if the writer were uttering a prayer for his own condition, as well as for his people, in these desolations of Zion. The truth is, that these words are so far from proving that the writer is one of the exiles in Babylon that they clearly intimate the contrary. The verses quoted are not spoken by the prophet in his own person, or as if he were one of the suppliants who utter them; but they are expressly put by him into the mouth of Israel for themselves, after the manner of Isaiah in his earlier prophecies, "In that day thou shalt say" (chap. xii. 1).

If the prophet dwelt in Babylon, we should have expected him to introduce a prayer written for his companions in exile, with words like these, "Come and let us return to the Lord, for He hath smitten, and He will heal us." But the preface to the prayer is in the following manner, chap. lxiii. 10: "They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. Then he (that is, Israel\*) remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, *saying*, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? . . . Look down from heaven, and behold. . . . Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire." The introduction speaks historically, as from the prophetic position of a narrator of Israel's future repentance, and plainly intimates that the prayer was written for

\* So Vitranga, Rosenmüller, Delitzsch, Nägelsbach, Cheyne. Alexander says: "The modern writers are agreed that the first clause (of ver. 11) describes the repentance of the people, and that the second gives their very words."

Israel by one who was not himself under their calamities; and the passage, therefore, does not weaken, but clearly confirms the unity of the book as written by Isaiah.

Our conclusion is: That the author of these later prophecies never puts himself, even prophetically, in the position of an Exile.

3. *The naming of Cyrus, several ages before his birth, was not a more remarkable prophecy for the exiles, than other prophecies of Isaiah are to us.*

(1.) The way in which the name of Cyrus is introduced in the prophecy is evidently designed to prepare the reader to expect a prediction of an unusual character. It is after a repeated assurance of the Lord's power to reveal the future, and a repeated challenge to the idols and the idolaters to make it known. "Shew the things that are to come hereafter that we may know that ye are gods. . . . Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. . . . Thus saith the Lord, that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; that saith to the deep, Be dry; I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid," chaps. xl. 23; xlv. 7, 24-28. The whole connection is fitted for the introduction of a prophecy of a most remarkable character; of a prophecy much more signal than a prediction that a conqueror, whose name was already famous, would sooner or later extend his conquests to Babylon and liberate its captives.

(2.) Amongst other prophecies of Isaiah, the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the desolation of Babylon in the first series, and of our Lord's suffering in the second, must be accounted as great as the calling of Cyrus by name.

Of the very first chapter of the book we can see no natural explanation except that of Mr. Stanley Leathes, who refers its picture of desolation to the conquest of the land by Nebuchadnezzar: "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; and the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant,

we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (vers. 7-9). As it seems to us, the prophet Isaiah in these words places himself amidst the future ruins of his country much more expressly than in any of his later prophecies.

In like manner, the burden of Babylon in the 13th chapter sets forth its desolation with a definiteness that is quite equal to the prophetic naming of Cyrus: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation" (vers. 19, 20). This is well brought out in the following extract from Michaelis by Henderson: "The prophecy is of such a character that it could not have been forged in the year in which Cyrus took Babylon; for though Babylon was conquered, it was not destroyed, but continued to be a large and powerful city: was chosen by Alexander the Great as his residence, and thus would almost have become the capital of the world if that monarch had not abandoned himself to intoxication, to which he fell a victim. But it is predicted in this chapter that the place where Babylon stood should be converted into a complete desert—a prophecy which received its fulfilment, indeed, but not till after the birth of Christ; for it was only by slow degrees that it reached the point of degradation to which it is now reduced."

The "Great Passional," in the 53rd chapter, is certainly a far more minute and specific description of our blessed Lord in the history of His sufferings, more distant in point of time, and more wonderful in every way than the foretelling of the Persian monarch by name; and we question if there are many interpreters who stumble at the name of Cyrus in the 44th chapter, without stumbling also at the description of Christ and Him crucified in the 53rd. It is indeed one of the sore and dangerous wounds with which the faith of many is assailed through the denial of the later prophecies to Isaiah, that the same degenerate form of prophetic interpretation, which will not allow it to embrace distant, complicated, and specific events, transforms this 53rd chapter by referring it primarily to an idealised Israel, and applies it only in a secondary sense to Jesus Christ as the highest embodiment of that ideal. In the words of Dr. Samuel Davidson, "God did not see fit to bestow upon the prophets the gift of looking at the *distant* future with its historical details—*idealised*

*Israel* suffering for others to bring them to repentance and faith in Jehovah, is the seer's high theme in lii. 13 to liii." The "chastisement of our peace" resting on idealised Israel, and "the iniquity of us all laid" on it! What an atonement, what a ransom, what a hope for men!

Views of the Servant of the Lord in the fifty-third of Isaiah, too nearly akin to these, seem to be obtaining a footing amongst ourselves. They are the certain fruit of the prophetic theory that the distant and complicated future is beyond the sphere of Scriptural prophecy. If they be cherished, and make progress in the midst of us, their sure result will be the prevalence of rationalism, with the blight of its spiritual and moral death.

## CHAPTER VII.

*THE INFIDEL ARGUMENT AGAINST THE BIBLE  
FROM THE ALLEGED SPURIOUSNESS OF ISAIAH'S  
LATER PROPHECIES.*

“A very glaring instance occurs in the book ascribed to Isaiah. . . . I do not suppose that the compilers of the Bible made these books, but rather that they picked up some loose anonymous essays, and put them together under the names of such authors as best suited their purpose. They have encouraged the imposition, which is next to inventing it, for it was impossible but *they must have observed it.*”—PAINÉ'S *Age of Reason.*

THE genuineness of the later prophecies under the name of Isaiah may appear to some to belong to a class of subjects that must be left to the discussion of critics; and they may hold it to be enough for themselves to believe these prophecies to be true and Divinely inspired, whatever is their date and whoever their author. But on the least reflection all will own that the truth of prophecy depends altogether on its date, that a prophecy after the event is false, that the date and the author are very closely connected, and that prophecy under a wrong name may be no true prediction but a most heinous fraud.

The genuineness of the prophecies of Isaiah, last as well as first, is a matter of the greatest concern to every believer in the Bible. The allegation of a Babylonian origin to the prophecies against Babylon destroys, first, the truthfulness of their author; next, the faithfulness of the original compilers of the prophetic records; and lastly, the testimony of our Lord and His apostles.

1. *To hold that the author was not Isaiah is of necessity to make him a false prophet.*—Some critics maintain that he was a great prophet in Babylon, who, by Divine inspiration, foretold its overthrow by Cyrus when in the midst of his career, before any human sagacity could have foreseen it; and in this,

or some other form, our own professors hold that he was a true prophet. But this gratuitous supposition is clearly impossible, because no inspired prophet would have adopted the demonstrably fraudulent course of this alleged author.

(1.) If the author was not Isaiah, he must have copied and completed Isaiah's work with a studious and deep design. The suggestion of an innocent, because unconscious, imitation is very wide of the evident truth. The writer of the verse LI. 11, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away," could not but have intentionally repeated the verse xxxv. 10, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" and although the rationalists deny that either of these verses was written by Isaiah, the reference is scarcely less plain in many of the passages we have noted as connecting the last prophecies with the first. The command, "Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see" in chap. xlii. 18 is not an imitation either conscious or unconscious, but is an express and evidently designed repeal of the contrary command in chap. vi. 11, "Make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears;" and in many other instances in the later prophecies there is an intentional and careful carrying out of the thoughts in the earlier prophecies. When the writer has done this, and withheld his name, his object must have been the fraudulent one of passing off his prophecies for those of Isaiah nearly two hundred years before.

(2.) If it should be conceded that the imitation was really undesigned, as many maintain, it can be denied by none that the unknown author shows his familiarity with every shade of Isaiah's thoughts, even in their most peculiar elements. No counterpart of Isaiah can be made out of any of the other prophets; the second Isaiah stands quite alone in his peculiar and manifold resemblance to the first. Granting that he wrote without a fraudulent design, it is plainly impossible that he could be ignorant of the great likeness of what he had written to the writings of Isaiah. He knew better than any of us how thoroughly Isaiah's leading thoughts had pervaded his own book; and he must have been well aware that if he published it without his name it would inevitably pass

for the work of Isaiah, as it has done for thousands of years. This difficulty is insuperable, for no man could so imitate another without being aware of what he had done.

The prophets before the Exile, Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah, and others, had either prefixed their own names to their works, or had given them to responsible men who did it for them. If this author had done so, we should have his name at the present day. For his departure from the sanctioned usage no reason can be assigned, except a fraudulent design to have his own prophecies taken for Isaiah's, and to gain for his nation the credit of having long foretold the great events that were passing before his eyes. No conceivable reason for withholding his name could have had any force with an honest writer, who knew the fraud involved in the anonymous publication; for he could easily have suppressed his book, if he could not publish his name.

If the author was a captive in Babylon, his plan for magnifying the religion of Israel by means of false prophecies at the expense of all truth and godliness, has been executed with unrivalled skill and followed with unparalleled success.

But the divine seer, who has been revered as Isaiah in his last and noblest utterances, can never sink into an anonymous impostor concealing himself beneath Isaiah's mantle; but while the world lasts he will be honoured by the Church of Christ, as foremost among the prophets, with his name as well known as his words have been prized.

2. *If the author was not Isaiah, the good faith of the keepers of the sacred records has no defence against the infidel.* The allegation that these prophecies were not Isaiah's involves such unfaithfulness in the trusted compilers of the Bible, in the holy men who had the charge of Israel's sacred books, as would shake all our confidence in the Old Testament Scriptures. By the author of the "Age of Reason," the case is put in this manner:—

"The compilers of the Bible mixed and confounded the writings of different authors with each other, which alone is sufficient to destroy the authenticity of any compilation. A very glaring instance of this occurs in the book ascribed to Isaiah: the latter part of the 44th chapter and the beginning of the 45th so far from having been written by Isaiah, could only have been written by some person who lived at least a hundred and fifty years after Isaiah was dead. I do not suppose that the compilers of the



Bible made these books; but rather that they picked up some loose anonymous essays and put them together under the names of such authors as best suited their purpose. They have encouraged the imposition, which is next to inventing it, for it was impossible but they must have observed it."

On Old Testament prophecy he says, "According to the modern meaning of the word prophet and prophesying, it signifies foretelling events to a great distance of time; but according to the Old Testament, the prophesying of the seer, and afterwards of the prophet, so far as the meaning of the word seer was incorporated into that of prophet, had reference only to the things of the time then passing, or very closely connected with it; such as the events of a battle they were going to engage in, or of a journey, or of any enterprise they were going to undertake, or of any circumstance then pending, or of any difficulty they were then in; all of which had immediate reference to themselves, and not to any distant future time." These views, so like much modern criticism, led Thomas Paine, quite apart from any linguistic studies, to reject the prophecies of Isaiah against Babylon as spurious. With his own repudiation of all prophecy, he regarded it as impossible that the compilers of the Bible could themselves have believed in such predictions of the distant future; and he held that they must have lent themselves to an imposition in affixing them to the genuine writings of Isaiah.

Whether the second section of the book is lauded by Ewald as the work of the "Great Unnamed," or bluntly called by Thomas Paine "a loose anonymous essay," if the compilers of the Scriptures attached it to Isaiah without knowing definitely whose it was; or if, as has been suggested, their only reason was its likeness to Isaiah; they cannot be acquitted of taking part in an imposition, because with this likeness its annexation to Isaiah could not fail to ensure its acceptance by coming generations as the authentic writing of the great prophet. The idea of some critics that they affixed the false Isaiah to the true by a mistake or an oversight, is plainly indefensible; for the difference this annexation makes is so obvious and so vast, that there can be no denial of Paine's clear position that "*they must have observed it.*" In that case his argument is unanswerable, that we can have no confidence whatever in the authenticity of any of those ancient Scriptures.

On the ground either of the rationalists, or of the be-

believing critics who deny to Isaiah his later prophecies, we have no answer to the "Age of Reason," and are helpless in the hands of the infidel. We are not, therefore, shut up to unbelief; but for our sure and only defence we are absolutely shut up to faith. We must, as little children, believe that even in this so regularly revolving world, its Creator could consistently with His plan and His work foretell Cyrus by name as the deliverer of Israel from Babylon several ages before Jerusalem was destroyed, and another long stretch of years before Israel's captives were redeemed.

If we refrain from setting limits of man's devising to the prophetic revelation of the future in the Holy Scriptures, we can have no difficulty in accepting a definite prophecy of the remotest and most complicated events; or in receiving it as most true and certain from the testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures, confirmed by the clearest evidence in the book itself, that these last prophecies were written by Isaiah, and were annexed to the first by the prophet's own hand.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOUND  
UP WITH THE AUTHENTICITY OF ISAIAH.

“Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition.”—MARK vii. 13.

“Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God.”—1 CORINTHIANS xv. 15.

LET us turn now to these later prophecies as accepted in the New Testament. In this case there is no place for an argument advanced in other instances, that our Lord and His apostles have merely refrained from altering the current title of a prophetic book which had given rise to a harmless belief that the whole was written by the prophet whose name it bore. In the present instance the common belief was so far from harmless that it accepted and perpetuated a false tradition, fatal to the truth of all Old Testament prophecy; yet this universal belief in these prophecies as Isaiah's was not repudiated, and must by Jew and Gentile alike have been looked upon as sanctioned under the new dispensation.

1. *Israel's belief in Isaiah sanctioned by our Lord and His Apostles.*—The herald who announces Christ's coming proclaims it in these words: “This is He that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare ye the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.” The words are quoted in each of the four gospels, and in three of them as the words of Esaias the prophet.

In the synagogue of Nazareth, when the book of Isaiah is handed to our Lord, He receives it as Isaiah's; and when He reads out of it, He selects not one of the Messianic passages in the first half of the book, but one from the second, and sets His seal to it as containing His own Divine commission: “There was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was

written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. . . . And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," Luke iv. 17, 18, 21.

The Apostle John states that the unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the saying "of Esaias the prophet which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report?" and he traces the connection between this later prophecy and the earlier one of the Temple in these words: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart," intimating that both prophecies were uttered by the same Isaiah (John xii. 38, 39, 40). If it was not a book but a living man who saw the glory in the Temple, it was the same living Isaiah who said also "Who hath believed our report?"

The Apostle Paul, in the 9th of Romans (ver. 27), quotes a passage from the earlier prophecies which he prefaces with the prophet's name: "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved" (Isa. x. 27); and marks a second quotation as a previous passage of the same prophet: "As Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrah" (Isa. i. 9). After several quotations from the same prophet, but without the name, the apostle repeats his name in two quotations from the later prophecies (Rom. x. 16, 20, 21): "But they have not all obeyed the gospel: for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?—But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I am found of them that sought me not" (Isa. lxx. 1, 2). Undoubtedly he believes for himself, and expects his readers to believe that these verses were written by the same personal Isaiah who wrote the first prophecies, for he introduces them in a similar and even more specific manner with the words, "Esaias saith," and "Esaias is very bold, and saith."

Evidently both these great apostles had no hesitation in believing for themselves that the later prophecies were as certainly written by Isaiah as the earlier; and, beyond all controversy, they had no desire to shake this universal belief in the minds of their Jewish readers, and no difficulty in now making the Gentiles partakers in the same belief.

Altogether, the book of the prophet Isaiah is quoted oftener in the New Testament than any other book of the Old Testament

Scriptures, and the later prophecies much oftener than the first, proving their great importance. "This prophet," says Mr. Arnold, "is of all the Old Testament writers the one far most quoted in the New; moreover, it is in the last twenty-seven chapters that the greatest interest is reached, insomuch that out of the thirty-four passages from him which Gesenius brings together as quoted in the New Testament, there are twenty-one from these last chapters, against only thirteen from the rest of the book."

In all these quotations it will at least be admitted by all, that there is never the slightest hint that is fitted to weaken the firm faith of Jewish readers in those prophecies as the genuine writings of Isaiah; and therefore by the Gentile converts they must have been received as his with the same entire confidence as the earlier prophecies on the broad warrant of apostolic sanction.

At the time of Christ's appearance the fame of the Hebrew Scriptures was spreading through the world; many throughout the Roman Empire were embracing the religion of Israel; and Roman centurions were numbered with the believers in Moses and the prophets. After the death of Christ, when the Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven, the apostles undertook a new responsibility of the most momentous kind in the dissemination of the Old Testament Scriptures; which on the assurance of their word the Gentile nations welcomed as the truth of God. In the book for which Christ gave the injunction, "Search the Scriptures," and of which the apostles testified, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the prophecy in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters, which gives so remarkable a prediction of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and of the restoration of Israel, was expressly declared to be Isaiah's; and all these later prophecies were placed as if they were Isaiah's. So had they been received by the Church and nation of the Jews; so were they now given by the apostles of the Christian Church to the Gentiles; and not only without any warning of mistake, but with every appearance of being certified as such by the Divine seal under the new dispensation.

2. *The alleged falseness of Isaiah would falsify the whole New Testament.*—Against making void the Word of God by the tradition of men Christ spoke severely, even when the integrity of the Word itself had been scrupulously conserved. It can never, therefore, be held that He would select for public reading in the synagogue that portion of one of the sacred books which had been so grossly

corrupted by human device, or most culpable error, as to uproot the whole principles of Scriptural truth and faithfulness; and would found His own Divine commission on it without any protest against the fatal corruption. The roll was put into His hands as the book of the Prophet Isaiah, and as from the book of Isaiah He read His own commission at once to the audience then present, and to the whole world in all coming generations. But in this book, according to the Exile theory, we have an astoundingly false tradition inserted in the heart of the Bible, altering the date of great predictions by nearly two hundred years, and thus directly turning the truth of God into the greatest lie. If this new theory were true it would involve the blasphemous supposition that our Lord and His apostles had transmitted to the faith of the Church in all ages a series of prophecies denouncing in the strongest terms the falsehoods of the heathen gods; yet themselves containing falsehoods more definite, daring, and extreme than could easily be found in the dark oracles of the heathen. These predictions, which by this theory were really written in Babylon after the events were in progress, were thus sanctioned as having been written about two hundred years before by the Prophet Isaiah, when there was no prospect of Jerusalem being taken by the Babylonians, much less of Babylon itself being taken by the Persians.

One of the chief elements in these prophecies is the frequency and fulness of their appeal to the test of Divine prophecy in the event following the prediction. Repeated challenges are offered to the false prophets and the false gods to name a past event which they had foretold, or a future one which they will now foretell:—

“Let them shew the former things, what they be; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to be hereafter, *that we may know that ye are gods,*” chap. xli. 22, 23.

In contrast to these dumb idols, the God of Israel undertakes to declare the future, and specifically the deliverance of His people out of Babylon by Cyrus:

“Thus saith the Lord, *that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. . . . Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I shall do all*

my pleasure : calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country," chaps. xlv. 24-26, 28 ; xlv. 10, 11.

Similar declarations are frequent ; and they were sure to occupy a large place in the thoughts of Israel, as relating to events of the first magnitude in their history. The national belief is brought out by Josephus, who says that Isaiah was distinguished for the truth of his prophecies, and wrote them down that they might be proved by the events ; and he makes special notice of the prediction of Cyrus by name, as the deliverer of Israel, at a distance of time which he reckons 210 years ("Jewish Antiquities," Book x., chap. 2 ; xi., 1). These prophecies could not escape the earnest attention of the apostles, and the subject requires no criticism to unravel it ; for the fishermen of Galilee were quite as capable as Gesenius or Ewald of understanding the difference between a writing during the exile in Babylon, and a prophecy in the time and by the mouth of Isaiah. No man was more alive than the Apostle Paul to the sin of making himself a false witness for God, as he would have been if he had given to the Gentile Christians prophecies of the time of the Exile bearing the name of Isaiah.

Believing critics, who doubt or deny the genuineness of the latter half of Isaiah, seem to think that they retain all that is essential when they acknowledge the author as a true prophet. Now, a prophet among the exiles, well known to his people, might indeed greatly comfort them, in their "present need and present historical situation," by naming the already successful soldier Cyrus as their own future deliverer, before any of themselves had conceived such a hope. But in such a prediction, although divinely inspired, there was no testimony to the heathen. There was nothing to frustrate the soothsayer, to madden the diviner ; for they would themselves have taken the risk of even more unlikely forecastings of the future, knowing that if their guesses failed they would be forgotten, and that if they were verified, the event would confirm the people's faith in their gods. The modern infidel makes no objection to such a prophecy, either by the heathen or by the Jew. The case is completely altered by accepting as Isaiah's the predictions regarding Cyrus ; by holding that the exiles took these prophecies with his name in them from Jerusalem to Babylon, and read them there in the handwriting of ages long past. No unbeliever will tolerate for

a moment the claim of such predictions. But the entire authority both of the Old Testament and the New is responsible for them ; and the whole Bible rests on their truth.

As some men, with a partial desire to receive the Gospel, regret that Christ should have rested the evidence of His Divine mission on His miracles, so they may stumble at the God of Israel giving these prophecies as a testing proof that it is He who is the God of the sea and the dry land ; and at our Lord and His apostles accepting this prophetic test, and transmitting it to us as pertaining to the Scriptures of truth. But we must acknowledge God as He is pleased to reveal Himself to men. If the class of critics who own a general Messianic expectation and prediction in Israel ; but hold as a first principle of criticism the denial of the prophetic foresight of events special, complicated, and distant, are to be accepted by us as the true interpreters of Scripture, we must give up the Bible as the very Word of God. But if we fully accept its Divine authority, then, however great their scholarship, their acuteness, and in some cases their genius, we must resolutely reject the claim of such critics either to interpret or to define the Word of God for us ; and must hold them as lacking some of the first and most essential qualifications for rightly handling the Holy Scriptures.

The common creed of our Presbyterian Churches, in accord with the universal Church of Christ, acknowledges only one Isaiah. If the Church in our land shall depart from this good confession, and shall teach that the latter half of these prophecies either was or may have been written two hundred years after the first by an unknown prophet in Babylon, we shall have taken a dangerous step in that dark path of disbelief in the truth of the Holy Scriptures, which leads at last to the rejection of all that is revealed by Divine authority.

Our Lord teaches us that Abraham could say of Israel, "They have Moses and the prophets" for their rich heritage. But if the genuineness of the book of Deuteronomy is given up, we have no longer Moses either in his fulness or in his truth ; and if the noblest half of Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets, is held to be unauthentic, we have the prophets no longer. The foundation of the law and the prophets is gone from beneath our feet ; the foundation of the apostles will be rejected next ; and last of all Jesus Christ, the Chief Corner Stone, will again be disallowed by the builders, and will become "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence."



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  - III. THIS OTHER SIDE OF JORDAN.
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  - V. ISRAEL'S SERVICE OF SONG.
  - VI. THE JUDICIAL CLEANSING OF THE LAND.
  - VII. THE ONE ALTAR.
  - VIII. THE LAW OF THE FIRSTLINGS.
  - IX. THE TESTIMONY OF JOSHUA.
  - X. THE SEAL OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.
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"It would be difficult to refer to anything called forth by the Aberdeen Heresy that indicates greater personal courtesy to opponents, and at the same time more thorough force and fire in the demolition and destruction of their argumentative sophistries, fictions, and plausibilities."—*London Weekly Review*.

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