

WHOSE SON IS CHRIST



FRIEDRICH DELITZSCH

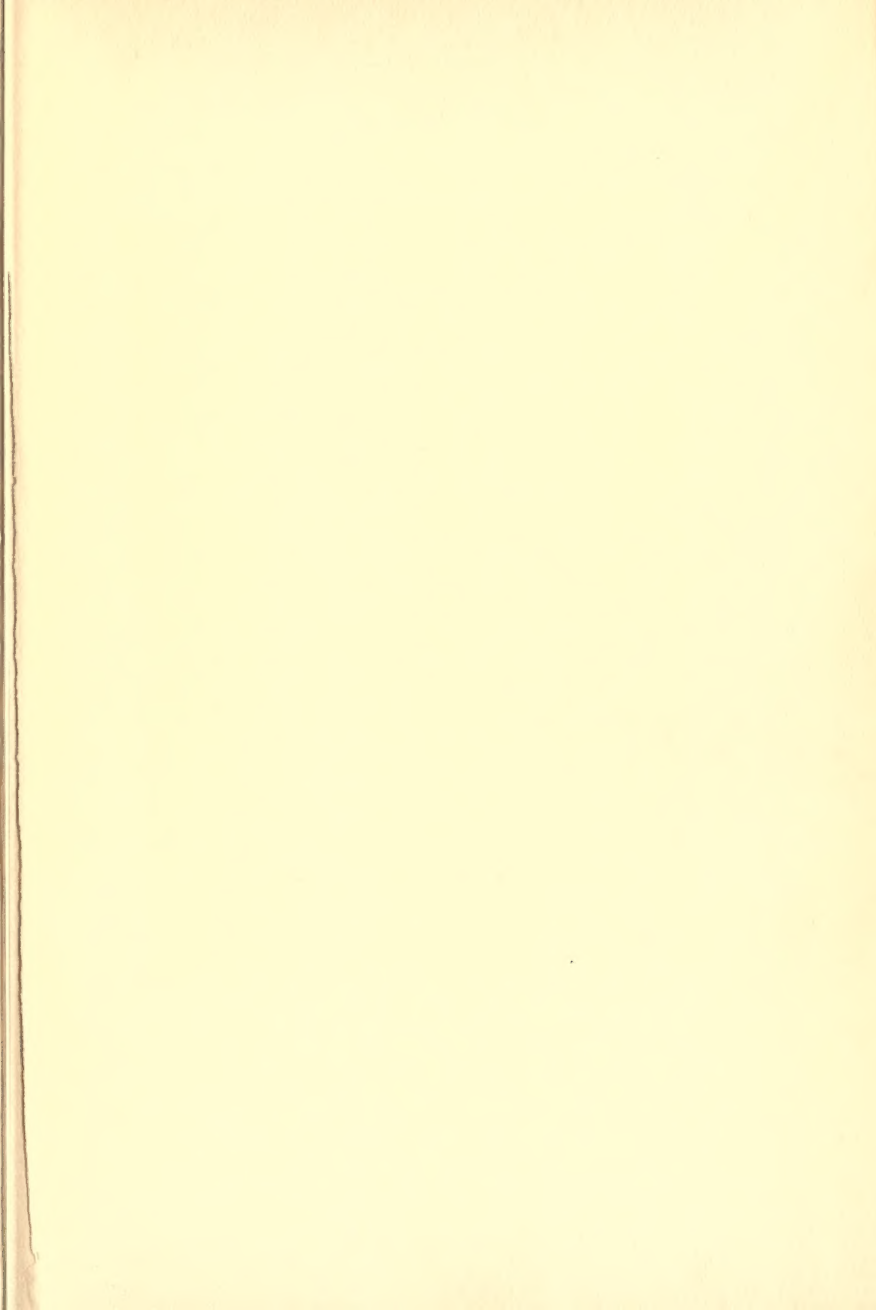


EMMANUEL



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Whose Son is Christ?

TWO LECTURES ON
PROGRESS IN RELIGION

BY

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE two Lectures here presented to English readers were delivered by Professor Friedrich Delitzsch to the Lessing Society in Berlin on November 6th and 13th, 1907. They were published in 1908 under the title 'Zur Weiterbildung der Religion.' In kindly giving permission to issue them in this country, Prof. Delitzsch desired that the title to be prefixed to the second German edition, 'Wessen Sohn ist Christus?' should also be adopted for the English translation.

The author has for over thirty years occupied a leading position in the field of oriental studies; and has held professorial chairs at Leipzig, Breslau, and, since 1899, at Berlin. During this period he has written largely on subjects connected with his chair, but his works have been calculated to appeal chiefly to students and specialists. In 1902-3, however, he delivered three popular lectures on 'Babel and Bible,' in which he maintained that large portions of the Old Testament show unmistakable traces of strong Babylonian influence. This thesis attracted widespread attention, especially in view of the discovery of the Code of Hammurabi in 1901-2, and the whole subject became the centre of a vigorous theological controversy. Additional significance was lent to Prof. Delitzsch's first two lectures owing to the fact that they had been delivered in the presence of the Kaiser, and the latter thought it advisable to write a letter to Admiral Hollmann repudiating the lecturer's treatment of the subject of revelation.¹ In the lectures which follow, Prof. Delitzsch declares that the scientific study of theology is not subject to the authority of either the Kaiser or the Pope (p. 31). He applies the method of historical investigation which he had used in 'Babel and Bible' to a more general treatment of some of the chief problems and difficulties which are raised by modern criticism of the New Testament, and deals with questions of supreme religious interest.

F. L. P.

OXFORD, *September*, 1908.

¹ See Note (3) p. 67.

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LECTURE I

IF a philosopher or a scientist stood in my place to speak to you on behalf of that progress in religion which has long been the desire of many earnest minds, it is probable that he would use the opportunity to lay before you some new view of the world. But it is more fitting that a man who is only a student of oriental history, languages, and religions, should treat the subject from the point of view of the history of religion, and should connect what he has to say with the three great monotheistic religions of the present day. The adherents of Judaism at the present day number nearly eleven millions ; Christianity, which sprang from Judaism, is professed by five hundred and fifty millions ; and Islam, which is founded on both Judaism and Christianity, has two hundred and forty-seven million followers, the three together embracing more than half the population of the world. Thus these three monotheistic religions resemble mighty trees which have struck their roots deep into the soil, and which have afforded and still afford shade to millions of souls, and hence it would be unjustifi-

able to destroy them summarily and to plant in their place some frail shoot which affords no shelter from the burning heats and desolating storms of life. We must go further and higher, we may perhaps have to go back, but we must not overthrow.

Religion is an affair of the heart and becomes entwined with the affections from youth onwards, like one's native language and one's mother-country. Wherever the heart is concerned, unsought interference in the affairs of others is both objectionable and dangerous, and nothing is further from the intention of these lectures than to alienate anyone from the faith of his fathers. The pious Israelite who, faithful to the usages of his forefathers, prays to the One Eternal who once led his people out of Egypt; the Christian who is confident of reconciliation with God his Father through Jesus Christ, his Saviour; the Mohammedan who, in obedience to the precepts of the Prophet, prostrates himself in the dust five times a day before Allah, the All-Merciful and Gracious—shall our Father in Heaven not be equally near to all these his children, provided that they prove their devoutness by their deeds? For without works assuredly every form of faith is dead.

But in these days of religious unrest there are many who are not content to belong to this or that religion or church merely through the accident

of birth. They wish to go beyond their denominational religious instruction and to give some more thoroughgoing account of their faith in order that the latter may become what the word originally denotes, a really 'firm conviction.' There are many also who would like at the same time to gain a clear understanding of the reasons for the bitter spirit of dissension, which is absolutely inconsistent with their common belief in God, but which not only separates these three great religions by apparently impassable chasms, but also divides individual churches and sects within them into hostile camps. We read a short time ago in an earnestly written Jewish pamphlet that the transition from Judaism to Christianity can only be made 'at the cost of a broken heart' (1). And on the other hand, to us Christians it must appear incomprehensible that, while we do full justice to the prophets and sages of ancient Israel, the name of Jesus, who, up to the day of his death, was always animated by the warmest love for the Jewish people, should be passed over without mention even in the historical part of their catechisms (2). In fact the Jews prefer to avoid even the arrangement of the calendar by years before Christ and after Christ. We know that Mohammedan fanaticism threatens with death a Mohammedan who is inclined to be unfaithful to his religion. And while Ultramontanism, as

we see at the present day, represses with pitiless severity even the slightest stirring of the scientific conscience in order to preserve the dogmas of the 'one saving' Church, we are equally pained to see how, within the evangelical Christianity of our country, while permission is granted indeed to the university teacher to proclaim and make use of the assured results of the scientific study of theology, for the rest these results are proscribed as hostile to religion—a fact which leads to unspeakable pangs of conscience among both preachers and teachers. In face of this conflict over the genuineness of the various 'rings,' do not the words of Nathan the Wise come to our lips. 'The genuine ring must have been lost, that opal ring glittering with a hundred beautiful colours, and gifted with a magic power of making its possessor beloved by God and men.'

No, it has not been lost. We all subscribe to the saying, which we owe to the spirit of Lessing, that religion is 'an effluence from the heart and being of man, arising from his communion with God' (3). We are all adherents of that true and genuine religion which is preached both in the Old Testament and in the New and also in the Koran, 'heartfelt trust in God, gentleness, loving-kindness, and well-doing.'¹ That is the ever fresh and living source from which all

¹ Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, Act III., sc. 7, l. 2045. (F.L.P.)

truly inspired men have drawn, and to which all the great religious leaders have striven to bring back religion when its development has turned in the false direction of human dogmas. 'Religion has never been a product of science' (3). But as regards the origin, history, and binding character of dogmas, science which is free from presuppositions, should alone be called in to decide. And science will always discharge the duties of her exalted and responsible office in spite of all the party-cries which seek to cast suspicion on her: 'so-called' science, rationalism, and even atheism. Her motto is ever 'Veritati,' 'To the Truth.' At the present day, when there is so much discussion of religious questions always going on, and when there is a danger, in consequence of many dogmas having become doubtful even to the faithful, that religion itself may come to be despised, it appears to me to be the duty of every man of science who has not lost his sense of religion, to make known the proved results from his special field of investigation, which can bring any enlightenment into the confusion of the religious struggles of the present. This appears to me to be a duty all the more pressing, since only a few, comparatively speaking, have the chance of penetrating to the depths in which the roots of our faith spread their ramifications. We already have an excellent literature of the subject, written by competent

scholars (4), and much of what I am going to say has been spread abroad through all classes by means of popular books dealing with the history of religion. For these reasons, there can be no hesitation in speaking earnest words to an audience who are interested in religion.

Religion is eternal, but the forms in which it clothes itself are temporal and for this reason subject to change. The Mohammedan indeed believes on the authority of his Prophet that the Koran lay from eternity ready and complete before the throne of God until the time was fulfilled and Allah charged the archangel Gabriel to reveal the book to Mohammed piece by piece. And although Jews and Christians are not so uncompromising in accounting for the origin of their Scriptures, yet the orthodox Jew believes that his law, the Torah, was revealed by Yahweh to Moses word for word from beginning to end, and that Yahweh twice inscribed the ten commandments with his own fingers on the two tables of the law. Many Christians too still consider that the books of the Bible, up to the last verse of the Apocalypse, are revelations from God, free from error and contradiction. In opposition to this it is the imperishable service of the scientific study of the Old and New Testaments which owes its origin to the Reformation, that by constant, earnest, and courageous intellectual work, without injury to the moral and

religious truths that illuminate the Bible, it has recognized and proved with ever greater clearness not only that the Torah has passed through a long course of development, extending over centuries, and that the individual Gospels are of very unequal value as sources for the life and teaching of Jesus, but also that the origin and evolution of very many Biblical ideas and stories is truly human and not always free from objection. Even the three great doctrines and ordinances, the belief in One God, the command to love one's neighbour, the institution of a weekly day of rest, by the foundation or development of which Judaism has rendered mankind unforgettable services, have been proved to be the result of protracted historical processes. And besides the recognition of Time as a scarcely noticeable but never-resting and powerful agent in religious development, the most interesting feature in this historical survey is the observation of the continual conflict between dogmatism and religion, or what corresponds pretty closely to it in the Old Testament, the conflict between the priesthood with their external statutes, and the prophets with their demand for a deeper religion of the heart.

Like the other nations of antiquity, the Hebrews offered sacrifices to the Deity : bloody animal sacrifices which to an originally nomad, pastoral people appeared more pleasing to God (compare

the story of Cain and Abel), and bloodless vegetable sacrifices, the so-called meal-offerings. It was surely a beautiful thought, to show their thankfulness to God, the giver of all good gifts, by offering the first-fruits of their flocks and fields. But among the Hebrews too this system of sacrifice developed in a perverse direction. Originally every one was allowed to build an altar of earth, 'in every place where Yahweh causes his name to be remembered' (Ex. 20²⁴), and to offer on this altar his sacrifice of sheep and oxen. But from early times the priests laid claim more and more to the business of sacrifice as their exclusive prerogative, and men came to believe that ceremonial worship, of which sacrifice was exalted to be the central point, should be restricted to the Temple at Jerusalem. Following Babylonian usage, the priests claimed that they could allay the anger of God, which had been provoked through the transgression of the individual or the nation, by means of the blood of sacrificial animals and the odour of their burnt-offering, and thus gain reconciliation. Hence they multiplied the kinds of sacrifice through the addition of sin-offerings and expiatory sacrifices, they regulated in the strictest manner the details of the sacrificial cult, and finally they codified all their ritual prescriptions into a great ceremonial law, which in all its ordinances, even those of the time of the Exile, they claimed to have been

already enjoined upon Moses and Aaron by Yahweh himself. The strict observance of these external laws of sacrifice and fasting was thought to be the most essential part of the service of God, and the real religion of the heart was grossly neglected. It is no wonder that those who preserved the tradition of true piety, the prophets of ancient Israel, from early times took the field with holy zeal against the system of sacrifices, nor did they confine their opposition to the abuse of sacrifice, while the heart was still alienated from God, but finally inveighed against all sacrifice. After Yahweh had spoken through Hosea, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings' (Hos. 6⁶), it was above all the prophet Micah who struck a vigorous blow for an astonishingly bold development of religion, inspired by the deepest religious feeling, in the ever memorable words, 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil. Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God' (Micah 6⁶⁻⁸).

To be sure, sacrifice lingered long, even in post-exilic times : at festivals, such as the dedication of the second Temple, hecatombs of oxen and sheep were sacrificed to Yahweh (Ezra 6¹⁷). But although the religion of the heart failed to drive out external worship, fresh champions were ever taking the field against the sacrificial system. In a most impressive manner the author of Psalm 50 makes Yahweh express in person his utter indifference to sacrifice and burnt-offerings, and proclaim that the only sacrifices demanded by him are prayer and praise. Similarly the author of Psalm 51 declares that the only sacrifices well-pleasing to Yahweh are ' a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart ' (5). Even with fasting Deutero-Isaiah will have nothing to do: ' to loose the bonds of wickedness, to deal thy bread to the hungry, to give shelter to the homeless, and to clothe the naked '—to the great Prophet of the Exile this is the only fasting which is well-pleasing to God (Is. 58⁶).

In the fullest agreement with these enlightened predecessors, from Isaiah to Jochanan or John, who united in preaching inward conversion, i.e., repentance and piety of heart, Jesus of Nazareth continued to develop the religion of Israel by deepening and intensifying it (cf. Mark 7⁶). His words indeed were so convincing that we should imagine that every thinking Jew who was free from prejudice must have agreed with

Jesus, since, to be sure, it makes absolutely no difference if perhaps other wise men of Israel proclaimed the same or similar teaching. The prophets of the Old Testament also repeated the same truths without the loss of any of their significance. Hence the truth, even when proclaimed by Jesus, remains the same, and the history of the world has proved, I might almost say, has given a mathematical proof, that no one but Jesus has preached the truth so effectively, in such a way as to seize upon the whole world and still to take hold to-day of each individual personally.

To gain a true understanding of the person and teaching of Jesus, the most important passage for both Jews and Christians is Mark 12²⁸⁻³⁴ (cf. Matt. 22³⁴⁻⁴⁰, Luke 10²⁵⁻²⁸). Here Jesus professes his own adherence to the two chief commandments of the Mosaic system, belief in the One God and love of one's neighbour, and he not only places the observance of these two commandments above all burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but declares that they are the very foundations of that kingdom of God which he preaches. It is possible or even probable that Jesus, as a Galilean, was not of pure Jewish blood and had adopted some foreign ideas, but in his moral and religious views and doctrines he was entirely rooted in Judaism. The passage just cited is sufficient proof. But at the same time

Jesus, like all the prophets before him, strove with the greatest energy to oppose the ordinances of the priests by the demand for personal religion. And what unbiassed judge could not subscribe unreservedly to all the sayings of Jesus which have this aim ? But at a time such as the period after the Exile, when the most exact and exaggerated external legalism held all pious Jews under its spell, and especially the priests and scribes (the 'lawyers,' Luke 10²⁵), it certainly required no small courage for Jesus to proclaim to his contemporaries the decisive words that there is nothing from without a man, that, entering into him can defile him, but that which cometh out of a man, viz., the evil thoughts of the heart, lasciviousness, theft, murder, adultery, covetousness, pride, foolishness, etc.—these defile the man (Mark 7¹⁵⁻²³); that the Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2²⁷); or when, with his 'But I say unto you' he met the literal quotation of some of the ten commandments with an interpretation full of the deepest morality, in this way truly 'fulfilling' the ordinances of the Torah. But the history of the world has since fully justified Jesus' attitude to the law of Moses. For us children of the twentieth century it has been made very easy to pronounce judgment on matters connected with the history of religion. More and more clearly we see how time has been

an irresistible factor in the development of the religion of ancient Israel. Just as, within the individual constituents of the Torah, many provisions of the law seem to have been modified and even set aside owing to the altered circumstances of the period, in the same way subsequently, through the change in men's views, the progress of medicine, jurisprudence, etc., a large number of other Mosaic laws concerning sacrifice, purification, priests, slavery, etc., have been abrogated. We rightly read therefore in the pages of those who represent that tendency within Judaism which was founded by Moses Mendelssohn, that 'even the Israelites who are strictest in their adherence to the pentateuchal law, if they were again in Palestine, on the breaking out of a skin disease would not call in a man of the tribe of Aaron but a capable physician, and if a deposit of fungus or saltpetre took place on a house, would have recourse not to a priest but to a builder': that 'the religion of the heart, as taught by the Jewish prophets, independent of time and circumstances, is the eternal religion that is worthy and capable of being preserved'; that 'sacrifice is only a lower way of worshipping God,' etc. (6). Nineteen hundred years ago, indeed, i.e., at the time of Jesus, only the most enlightened and prophetic spirit, the consciousness of deep inner communion with God, and an heroic courage faithful in all

circumstances to its convictions, could struggle against the prevailing tendency, against that Judaism which was faithful to the law, and justified by the law, and which held tenaciously to the Mosaic law as the eternally valid revelation of Yahweh. Judaism did this in spite of all the utterances of the Prophets and Psalmists, which partly contradicted the Mosaic law and with equal right claimed to be the revelation of God, and it has since, by its traditional expositions of the law and additions to it collected in the Talmud, cut itself off from the rest of the world as though by a rigid wall. Personally Jesus was anything but unfriendly to the Mosaic law, but yet beside the two commandments of faith in the One God (Deut. 6⁴ foll.) and love towards one's neighbour (Lev. 19¹⁸), which he declared were the chief commandments, he held that out of the whole law along with the 'tradition' (Mark 7⁸ foll.), only those statutes were binding which aimed at the practice of personal religion. At the same time he summoned mankind, in spite of all the moral obligation, from which even his own disciples are not free, to the glorious freedom of the children of God.

But, again in continuation of the teaching of the Prophets, Jesus developed the religion of his people in a still deeper way.

The so-called Old Covenant was a covenant of Yahweh with Israel, the people of the circum-

cision. It was the covenant of an individual and only too anthropomorphic national God with his own special people. Israel should be Yahweh's special property, and Yahweh was willing to be their God while the other nations of the earth were given over to star worship (7). After Israel had gained possession of the Promised Land, Yahweh chose among his people one city, Jerusalem, for the dwelling place of his name, and the Temple on Zion as the only legitimate place for worshipping him. It is true that as time went on, Israel's outlook became wider and the conception of the One God of Israel gradually grew to the conception of One God over all nations and men, but the idea of special choice, which could only be understood and justified in the case of a national God, was so deep-rooted in Israel that the people was not content to be 'a light to the Gentiles,' as Isaiah said (49⁶), and to convey to all nations the idea of monotheism, but persisted in looking upon themselves as God's chosen people, and hence regarded it as inconceivable that anyone could approach God without becoming a Jew (8). And to-day even in the more unprejudiced circles of Judaism the hope is still expressed that 'some day Israel and mankind will be equivalent conceptions' (9), that is, since Israel is taken to be 'the people of immortality,' that all mankind will some day be merged into the people of the circumcision.

In the face of such apparently universalistic but in reality strictly particularistic views, all non-Jewish nations raise eyes and hearts full of thankfulness to Jesus, the far-seeing prophet of Nazareth in Galilee. To us who live at the present day, Jesus' comprehensive view of God and the world, his teaching concerning the New Covenant, the kingdom of God which embraces the whole world, and to which all nations and men have immediate access, may probably appear only too natural and almost a matter of course. But the obstinate struggles which in the time of the apostles Judaism carried on against the Jewish Christians, and these in turn against the Gentile Christians, remain an ever-eloquent witness to the opposition which the people of the Mosaic law offered to Jesus' view of God. Yes, in the case of one no less exalted than Jesus himself, we see how difficult it was to break away from the old views, which rested on too high an estimate of the Torah. For even in the sayings of Jesus we repeatedly catch echoes of a faith in the specially favoured position of Israel ('salvation is from the Jews,' John 4²²; 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs,' Matt. 15²⁶, cf. also 10⁶ foll.). But with a prophetic outlook which continually widened Jesus went beyond Deutero-Isaiah and rose to the knowledge of a God who was no longer confined within national limits, and at the same time was a purely

spiritual God. Of this he gave proof when he spoke to the Samaritan woman words which pre-eminently pointed to a further development of religion (John 4²¹), 'Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father,' and (v. 24) 'God is spirit and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth'—sublime, prophetic sayings which later on receive their confirmation as utterances of Jesus (10) in the confession of the Apostle Peter, which similarly breathes forth the feeling of freedom from an obsession (Acts 10³⁴ foll.), 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him.'

When we reflect how Judaism, faithful to the law, clings even at the present day to the hope that God will some day again establish the throne of his glory permanently on Zion, it is easy to understand how in the time of Jesus sayings such as (Mark 14⁵⁸) 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands,' were bound to fill the Jewish priests with deadly hatred. And yet this saying has been absolutely confirmed by the history of the world. We all know that the worship of God is not confined to temples nor to a priesthood supposed to be specially consecrated. In the remotest valley and on the furthest shore

of the great ocean thou canst worship God in the silent chamber of thy heart, as Jesus has taught thee. Of a certainty we understand the pain which the Israelites of Palestine pour out in prayer on the wall of lamentation of Jerusalem. But no one of their fellow-believers with a somewhat freer historical outlook, and some knowledge of the nature and history of the Torah, would advocate any longer the return of the Jewish nation to their ancestral land, with the one central shrine of Yahweh on Zion provided in the Torah. For the observance of whatever is eternally valid in the Torah for all men and for all ages, such as the ten commandments, the care of the poor and of widows and orphans, etc., is not restricted to Palestine. The Jewish longing for Zion depends in fact on exclusively *national* aims, as the leaders of the 'new' or 'political' Zionism themselves admit (11). These are comprehensible to a certain degree, especially in so far as Zionism has striven to provide its persecuted fellow-believers with a sure place of refuge. For the rest, history suggests that a Jewish state on the soil of Palestine without a theocracy on Zion would be very like a tree without root and crown (12).

Jesus' rejection of the Temple on Zion as the only legitimate place of sacrificial worship involved a far more difficult renunciation for the Jewish people of that time: it destroyed all

their hopes of the future, partly very extravagant, which had been nourished by the Prophets, all dreams of an earthly predominance of the theocracy or of the Messianic kingdom, whose central point was represented by the Temple on Zion. Here too we cannot be too clear in recalling the historical circumstances. We Christians can only express our satisfaction when the Messianic kingdom which is hoped for is defined in the Jewish catechisms as 'the time when the true knowledge and worship of the One God shall be so spread abroad upon the earth that all nations with one accord shall glorify the All-Father, shall love one another as brethren, and through brotherly love, the fear of God, and virtue, shall be happy' (13). To be sure, Jesus himself has taught us to pray in this sense 'Thy kingdom come!' But in the post-exilic period down to the age of Jesus the Messianic hopes of the Jewish people were diametrically opposed to this conception. The exiles who were returning home to Palestine had painted in glowing colours their own future and that of the Jewish state. The eloquent words of the Prophets, e.g., Deutero-Isaiah, that from all sides not only the Israelites would return to Jerusalem, but all the nations and princes of the earth would bring boundless treasures as tribute; that the walls of Jerusalem would be rebuilt by foreign nations, that her flocks would be tended and her vineyards tilled by foreigners—

these and other sayings full of the highest poetical flights must have awakened in the people boundless hopes of the outward glory of the kingdom on Zion and of the Anointed One or Messiah who was to be installed by Yahweh. But the rebuilding of the Temple and, later on, of the walls of Jerusalem went on only slowly amid the continual hostility of the neighbouring tribes, and when the Jewish people had to a certain extent established and settled themselves in their old home Antiochus Epiphanes (175 to 164) brought new and heavy afflictions upon the unhappy land, the Temple was profaned and ravaged, and thousands of faithful Jews died the death of martyrs. When at length the heroic Maccabees gathered together the Jews, conquered Jerusalem, restored the worship of God, and led the Jewish hosts from victory to victory over the armies of the heathen, it seemed that all at once the great day had dawned, both at home and in the camps there resounded the triumphant cry of victory, 'Yahweh is king!' and while on the one hand men looked henceforth for the end of all war upon earth, on the other hand they were burning to take penal vengeance on the Gentiles, to cast their princes into chains, and 'to execute judgment upon them as it was promised' (Ps. 149). Men believed that the time had come when the Messiah whom Yahweh was to install on Zion, and who had been expressly promised by the

Prophet Daniel (chap. 7) for the period after Antiochus, should break with a rod of iron, like a potter's vessel (Ps. 2), all those who were not subject to Yahweh, and when all the kingdoms should fear 'the people of the saints of the Most High' and should obey them (Dan. 7²⁷). But the more extravagant were the hopes which, in the popular conception still more than in the canonical writings, centred somewhat indefinitely round the Messiah, the more bitter was the disillusionment when victory was followed by grievous defeats and the Jewish state sank again to a plaything of the most diverse rulers and states. The kingdom of God, or as men then preferred to describe it, substituting 'heaven' for 'God' (14), the kingdom of heaven, which they longed for and which had been promised for the near future, obstinately refused to come. Then there rang forth from the lips of the great Prophet of Nazareth the weighty saying which opened up an outlook into a world at that time actually new: 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation but is within you' (Luke 17²⁰), 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matt. 10⁷), that is, according to the Semitic way of speaking, it has already come, it is there, and each one of you can become a citizen of this kingdom of God as soon as he seeks no longer to be justified by the law but repents and becomes a new man. This is to deepen religion in the highest sense

of the word. Jesus, whose attractive personality and powerful discourses brought him followers from near and far (Mark 3⁷ foll.) held more and more strongly the conviction that he was sent by God, that he was anointed with God's holy spirit (cf. Mark 3²⁹), and that he was called to be the Messiah. With ever increasing clearness and completeness he saw in himself, just as his prophetic fore-runners had done, the tool and mouthpiece of his God, he recognized in himself the Messiah who was sent to bring true peace to his people, to preach glad tidings to all who were faint-hearted and oppressed, and to be the herald and prince of the true kingdom of God. Hence he spoke of himself, the Messiah, after the custom of the time, as the 'Son of Man' (in accordance with Dan. 7¹³), and as the 'Son of God' (Matt. 16¹⁶ 26⁶³ foll.). This last designation can no longer be characterized as a 'secret.' Sometimes indeed it has in Jesus' mouth that moral and religious meaning in which he used it, e.g., in Matt. 5⁹, 'Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God' (cf. also Luke 2⁴⁹), but above all he used that designation as it had been used in Psalm 2⁶ foll., where the Psalmist makes Yahweh say to the Messiah 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.' Here, as we now learn for the first time from the Babylonian monuments, the Messiah is spoken of metaphorically as the *adopted son* and at the same time the

heir of the Most High God, to whom God will give the nations for an inheritance and the ends of the earth for a possession (15). As Luke 3²² declares that these very same words 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee,' were heard from heaven at the baptism of Jesus, it is clear that Jesus was the 'son of God' in the sense of this Messianic Psalm, and only in this sense so called himself and was called. Those who are not Old Testament scholars can have no notion how thankful we must be that the words of Psalm 2, which were not understood all through the centuries and which the Apostles could not understand in their proper sense, have found their true interpretation in the cuneiform texts. The Son of David, the Son of Man, the Son of God, were three absolutely synonymous terms for 'Messiah.'

We stand in reverence before the courageous moral and religious exhortations of the Old Testament prophets, but we do not conceal the fact that, as they themselves must have partly recognized and even openly admitted, their predictions of external events did not always coincide with the thoughts and ways of God. There is no doubt that the prophets of Israel were mistaken about the time and circumstances of the fall of Babylon (16), and the fact, which was full of significance for the Jewish people, that the larger part of the Jewish exiles made no

use of the permission to return, but became fond of Babylon as a second home, and that Babylon was henceforth to assume the spiritual leadership of Judaism, was not suspected by any Old Testament prophet, even those of the time of the Exile. In the same way, the ideas of the Prophets as to the Messiah who was to come were delusive. God had determined it otherwise, and in Jesus of Nazareth raised up a prophet and a Messiah for the Jewish people, who came not to rule but to serve (Mark 10⁴⁵), and who had to seal with his blood the redemption of the New Covenant or Testament, but at the same time won over to his doctrine of the kingdom of God 'many,' yea more than many—the peoples of Greece and Rome and millions out of all nations. The cross, the sign of victory of the New Covenant, i.e., Christianity, was recognized even by Greece and Rome as the turning point between two worlds. Should it not henceforth be the bridge between the Old and the New Covenant, between the prophecy of the Old Testament and Jesus' spiritualized kingdom of God? The history of the world and therefore the judgment of the world have at all events given their fullest recognition to Jesus' Messianic ministry.

But however superhuman the person of Jesus and the success of his teaching may appear to us, yet as faithful Christians, as far as the person of Christ is concerned, we must resign ourselves to

following faithfully and steadily the plain testimony of our Lord and Master and of his Apostles. In the presence of this central question of dogmatic Christianity we should never forget that it is not a question of belief or unbelief, but of holding fast to the teaching of Jesus and his apostles, or on the other hand of adherence to the ecclesiastical dogma which laboriously reached its present shape in the course of centuries, under the most diverse and in part exceedingly questionable influences. No one will fail to recognize the beneficent power of the Christian Church, but with regard to the person of Jesus we can admit no authority, not even that of the Kaiser or the Pope, as standing higher than Jesus and his apostles. He who said (Mark 10¹⁸, Luke 18¹⁹), 'Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God' (17); who taught men to pray to God, his Father and our Father, and to love the One God with all their heart and with all their soul; he who on the cross cried to his God and committed his spirit into the hands of God, well knew that God's holy spirit was active in him, but the dogma of his own consubstantiality with the One eternal God would have been for him an unthinkable conception. And do we think that we can or ought to be more faithful disciples of Jesus, truer Christians, than the evangelist Mark and the Apostles Peter and Paul, and the earliest

Christian Church, to all of whom Jesus was not the semblance of a man, or 'God in human form' (3), but a true man, a son of Joseph and Mary, and through Joseph ('the son of David,' Matt. 1²⁰) an actual and genuine descendant of David, as Peter says 'fruit of the loins of David' (Acts 2³⁰), and as Paul declares 'according to the flesh, of the seed of David' (Rom. 1³)? Luke too, declares that to the future son of Mary God the Lord will give the throne of 'his father' David (1³²). And this is the unassailable consolation of those who are faint-hearted and anxious and publicly assailed! He who confesses with full conviction that Jesus is the 'son of God,' but who refuses to recognize Jesus' consubstantiality with the One God *is in agreement with our Lord Jesus himself, with the original gospel, with Peter and Paul, and with the entire first generation of Christendom.* Ought not this to be sufficient for any Christian, even if the scientific study of the Old Testament had not placed it beyond doubt that the two solitary passages in the whole of the New Testament which relate the supernatural birth of Jesus (Matt. 1¹⁸⁻²⁵, Luke 1²⁶⁻³⁸) (18) rest upon an error in translation and a palpable mistake in exegesis?

The authors of our New Testament had to depend for their Old Testament quotations upon the frequently unsatisfactory Greek translation of the so-called Septuagint. In addition to this,

owing to the low level of the exegesis of the time, men thought that they could tear the Old Testament passages out of their context, just as they pleased, and attribute to them a sense, e.g., a Messianic sense, quite foreign to their real meaning. This is what happened to the passage in the Prophet Isaiah 7¹⁴, 16. For the last two centuries the representatives of Old Testament criticism have pointed out, sometimes at the risk of their life, as the Catholic scholar Isenbiehl found to his cost in 1778, that the words of the Prophet 'a virgin shall conceive and bear a son,' have been wrongly translated by the Septuagint, and that their connexion with the Messiah is excluded by the context. In the year 735 B.C. (and let the date be taken to heart), I say in the year 735 B.C., King Ahaz of Judah was hard pressed by the kings of Aram and Israel who had invaded his land. The Prophet Isaiah however proclaims to the king who consulted him, that Israel and Aram within a short time would be laid waste by the Assyrians, and he gives to the king as a pledge for the correctness of his prophecy, the sign that every young woman (19) who is now with child shall be able to name the son which she is to bear Immanuel, i.e., 'God with us,' since within a few months the deliverance which has been promised shall be accomplished. It is plain that Isaiah could not have given Ahaz as a pledge of his word a sign that would be

fulfilled 700 years later. In addition, every one who has even a slight knowledge of Hebrew, knows that if the idea of immaculate conception was to be expressed, *bethûlâ* is the only word that could have been chosen, and that on the contrary the Greek rendering of the word in the text, 'alma, by 'virgin' is simply false. It follows that the foundation on which the comparatively late New Testament legend has been built, breaks down.

But God has since testified still more plainly to the lofty spiritual monotheism taught by Jesus. The earliest of the three synoptic gospels, the gospel of Mark, as is well known, knows nothing and says nothing of a supernatural generation of Jesus. And even within the gospels of Matthew and Luke, which contain the announcement of the virgin birth to Joseph or Mary as the case may be, there exist between these announcements and the rest of the story unmistakable contradictions (see e.g., Luke 2⁵⁰, 'and they understood not the saying which he spake unto them') (20). Yes, both Matthew and Luke have genealogies (Matt. 1¹⁻¹⁶, Luke 3²³⁻³⁸) which carry back the descent of Jesus of Nazareth *through Joseph* to David and David's forefathers. Common sense teaches us that these genealogies, whose sole aim is to prove that Jesus is the son and descendant of David through Joseph, the son and descendant of David, would be absolutely *meaning-*

less and useless if Joseph had not been the father of Jesus according to the flesh, if his fatherhood were only in appearance and Jesus were a son of Mary (21) who only belonged to Joseph according to the law. Further, this would be in direct contradiction to the testimony of the apostles. We can understand that in early times, in order to reconcile these genealogies of Jesus with the legend of the supernatural birth, men thought they were justified in introducing corrections in the gospel of Matthew at the end of the original wording of the genealogy, but higher criticism has long been clear-sighted enough to see through these alterations of what we must presuppose as the original text. And just as though Sinai, from which according to the Old Testament there went forth the call, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God,' was to be once more a witness before all the world to the sole unity of God, so it was on Sinai, as is well known, that the original text of this passage in Matthew was lately discovered. In the monastery of St. Catharine the English scholar Mrs. Lewis discovered in 1892 a palimpsest manuscript containing the four gospels in a Syriac translation. The troublesome deciphering of this, which we owe in the first place to the English scholars Bensly and Burkitt, has given us a text of the Gospels which in the judgment of the most competent New Testament scholars (22) is two

See
Salomon

II 4

Monastery

II 5

III 16

Monastery

II 8

hundred years older than the Greek manuscripts of the gospels which underlie our editions of the Bible, and is superior to these in many places through its earlier readings. In this gospel from Sinai, however, we find the sixteenth verse of the first chapter of the gospel of Matthew still in the original form which the context shows to be the only authentic one (23). 'Jacob begat Joseph; *Joseph*, to whom the virgin Mary was betrothed, *begat Jesus*, who is called Messiah.' It is evident already in this passage that the interpolated phrase 'to whom the virgin Mary was betrothed,' which is aimless and in disagreement with verses 3, 5, 7, is a hesitating attempt to lead on without contradiction to the quite different story of the supernatural birth of Jesus from the virgin Mary, but nobody yet had the courage to touch the most important words 'Joseph begat Jesus.' It was only in later times that the text received a more thoroughgoing 're-editing'; first, 'Jacob begat Joseph, to whom the virgin Mary was betrothed, who bore Jesus the Messiah,' then, as it stands in our Bibles to-day, 'Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ' (24). It is important for us Christians to face this saying, 'JOSEPH BEGAT JESUS,' along with the testimony of the Evangelists and the Apostles, which we have already quoted. We should bring home to ourselves by quiet reflection its far-

reaching consequences before in the second lecture I continue and conclude these expositions. Until then let us be certain that, if our great German 'man of God,' as the Old Testament prophets were usually called, if our Luther, whose memory we celebrate anew in these days, were able to see now the results of that scientific study of theology which was founded by him, he would take up anew his development of religion, his work of reformation, and declare that it was to the original gospel that his exhortation applied :
*'The Word of God they shall not touch.'*¹

¹From C. Winkworth's translation of Luther's hymn, 'Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott.' (F.L.P.)

LECTURE II

'The Word of God they shall not touch'—unfortunately the Evangelists and Apostles lay themselves open to this exhortation, as they, of course without any blame attaching to them, have only too often misunderstood and misinterpreted the Old Testament passages to which they appeal.

It is a matter of common knowledge that during the last few centuries before the appearance of Jesus Hebrew gradually ceased to be the everyday language of the Jewish people, that the common language was Aramaic, and that Jesus himself made use of the Palestinian Aramaic vernacular. In consequence of this, the knowledge of the old Hebrew idiom and the exact understanding of the Holy Scriptures became continually more circumscribed, which was all the more serious as the absence of vowels from the texts in question likewise left room for manifold errors. At a time when a nicer understanding of Hebrew accidence and syntax and a sound knowledge of the more difficult or rarer words was already in abeyance,

there originated in Egypt the Greek translation of the Septuagint (LXX). At first the books of the Torah were translated in the time of Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) in order that the Jews of the Dispersion who had forgotten their mother tongue, should continue in the observance of the law of their fathers, and afterwards the translation of the remaining books was added. 'Originally perhaps only a private undertaking, this translation was soon adopted in their homes and synagogues. It acquired an official character and finally became the received version of all the Jews of the Greek Dispersion and afterwards of the original Christian congregations' (25). This is not the place to set forth the value for the textual criticism of the Old Testament possessed by this Greek translation, which, like the Old Testament text itself, was looked upon as *inspired*. Scientific theology is unanimous in declaring that it is just in those passages from the Old Testament which are quoted in the New that the Greek version challenges manifold objections, in part of the most serious character, and that the wording given by the Evangelists and Apostles, for which they rely on the Septuagint, is often in absolute disagreement with the original text (26). In addition to this, in consequence of the absence of any method of philological and historical criticism, it was quite usual in the centuries before and after Jesus (27), to tear the quotations

from the Old Testament out of their context, and to weld together into one quotation the most heterogeneous passages, in which the same word happened to occur. It was not uncommon even to quote half a sentence, and to leave out the other half on which the meaning depended (28). Hence it is easy to understand that the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament have been and still are the source of many and grievous troubles to theological science. As long as men believed that both the Old Testament and the New Testament were 'revealed' in the now obsolete literal sense of the word, they strove to get over the discrepancies by all sorts of forced expedients, and where this was absolutely impossible, to attribute to the palpable mistakes of the Septuagint and the New Testament writings, the character of 'providential' errors. But as Old Testament criticism became more independent and strove more earnestly to gain a complete insight into the text of the Old Testament according to the original sense in which it was spoken and written down, apart from all apologetic considerations, the discrepancies between the quotations in the Greek New Testament and the wording and sense of the originals appeared more and more glaring and, in certain specially important passages, really disquieting.

The familiar designation of John the Baptist as the 'Preacher in the Wilderness' has insufficient

support in the passage from Isaiah (40³) quoted in our four gospels. For there the meaning is not: 'Hark! the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!' (29). Rather, the prophet sees in a kind of vision Yahweh at the head of his people returning from Babylon through the wilderness, and he says 'Hark! they call: Through the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh, make ready through the desert a road for our God.' In Psalm 8, that beautiful song of praise to God, who has graciously endowed the lowly child of man with power over everything upon earth, we read (v. 4 foll.), 'What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the child of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him but little lower than a God and crownest him with glory and honour: thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.' The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (2⁶ foll.), who leaves out of consideration everything that is said about sheep, oxen, etc., and in verse 6 follows the erroneous translation of the Septuagint (30), understands the child of man to be the 'son of man,' the Messiah, who is to be crowned with glory and honour on account of his passion. (There is a simi-

lar misunderstanding in I Cor. 15²⁷.)—In Psalm 16 a pious Israelite, who knows that he is safe in God from need and death, full of inward joy, sings: 'Because Yahweh is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoiceth, my flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy pious one to see the pit,' etc. In consequence of the very inexact translation of the Septuagint: 'moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope, because thou . . . wilt not let thy Holy One see corruption,' the Apostle Peter, in his speech on the day of Pentecost, explains these words of the Psalm, which he makes King David place in the mouth of the Messiah, as a prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (Acts 2²⁴ foll.). Paul too does the same violence to the unmistakable words of the Psalm (Acts 13³⁵) (31). Anyone who has ever read the Gospel of Matthew, even superficially, must remember the exceedingly frequent quotations from the Old Testament 'in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' The Jewish-Christian author believed that he could only make it clear to himself and to his contemporaries that Jesus was the Messiah by discovering in the life, deeds, and words of Jesus continual fulfilment of Old Testament passages, especially those which were supposed to be predictions pointing to the Messiah. This dogma-

tizing frequently caused him to do violence in an exceedingly unfortunate way to the wording of the Old Testament, since the life and activity of Jesus of Nazareth by no means coincided with the prophetic picture of the Messiah. The Evangelist got into difficulties at once with Nazareth, since the Messiah could only be expected to come from Bethlehem. We read indeed (2²³) 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets: he shall be called a Nazarene,' but no such passage in the prophets is known, as there is not the slightest mention of Nazareth in the Old Testament. And the plain words of the prophet Hosea (11¹), 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt,' are taken by the Evangelist as pointing to a sojourn of Jesus in Egypt 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son' (2¹⁵). Since Matthew alone is acquainted with the story of Jesus' sojourn in Egypt, and in addition this story directly contradicts the early gospel history of Luke (see 2³⁹), it is more than probable that it owes its origin simply to the misinterpreted passage in the prophet Hosea, just as the story of the virgin birth of Jesus rests on the misunderstood passage in Isaiah, 'a virgin shall be with child.' We have already spoken of this passage, and it is one which has given rise not only to the arbitrary correction,

already mentioned, at the close of the genealogy in Matthew's Gospel, but also to a second correction, this time in Luke's Gospel (2⁵). In this latter passage we now read that Joseph went to Bethlehem to be taxed with Mary, *his betrothed*, who was with child, and that Jesus was born in the manger at Bethlehem, but the Sinaitic Gospel, which is so much older, makes Joseph travel thither with Mary his *wife* (32). We rejoice at this enlightenment which has come to us from Sinai. For just as we deplore that the unworthy fragment of heathen mythology concerning the intercourse of the sons of the gods with the fair daughters of men, has found its way into the sixth chapter of Genesis, so the analogous New Testament legend of the supernatural generation and birth of Jesus is no less irreconcilable with a pure and refined conception of God. The 'holy night' is so far from losing any of its divine consecration through this early gospel from Sinai, that it rather gains in this respect. The child Jesus, who is no longer merely 'clad' in our poor flesh and blood, approaches immeasurably nearer to us personally, and because Jesus really and truly belongs to the human race, the whole of mankind seems to be in the highest sense transfigured and ennobled.

There can be no doubt that Christianity will more and more come to realize, though not immediately, that the errors and confusions which

have been brought about by the passage in Isaiah 7¹⁴ and the misunderstanding of the designation 'son of God,' must be once and for all given up in view of the clear testimony of Jesus, of the Apostles, of the original Gospel, and of early Christianity. It is only to be deplored that such dogmatic speculations had already come in at the time when our gospels arose and that they diverted the religious conceptions of Christendom only too soon on this by-way of mythological superstition. It was by this road that heathen polytheism, which had hardly been overcome, gained an entry into the church in another form *and almost destroyed the life-work of Jesus*. This fact we ought at all times to keep earnestly in view. At the beginning we can hardly help feeling some pain at heart when we find that there is much to which we ought no longer to attribute the significance of well-established facts which have a claim on our belief. We must give up the stories from the early history of Jesus, which come to us surrounded by the magic glamour of the East, and which in addition, through the highest creations of art, have become the noblest treasure of our hearts, and, for the sake of truth, we must renounce many a lovely Christmas hymn. When this troubles us, let the picture of Jesus ever come before our eyes, who was so firm in his convictions that he opposed a whole world full of deep rooted prejudices, and took upon himself the most cruel

torments, in order that the soul of each one of his fellow-men, in order that our soul, by sincere repentance and moral self-renewing, should be gained for the one God, his Father and our Father. '*Ecce homo!*' Behold the man! And what a *man!*

No one will reproach the ancient church, nor the church generally, for her errors, so long as she was compelled to do without the lamp of knowledge. But now she ought to reflect and not close her eyes tightly to the results of the scientific study of theology, a study which far from injuring the Christian religion, is actually saving it.

In the year 1902 I was the guest of a Mohammeden, 70 years of age, who was the deputy-superintendent of a south Babylonian village. After we had finished our dinner he approached a securely locked cabinet in his shabby room, and in the act of opening it he told me that he would show me the brightest jewel in his house. Then he undid many careful wrappings, took out a ring and pressed it fervently to his heart. 'This ring,' he said, 'contains a likeness of our Lord Jesus. Blessing and peace be to him!' This is the attitude of Islam towards Jesus, which is so good for the Christian to see. The Mohammeden honours the greatest prophet before Mohammed, but the dogmatic Christian conception of the person of Jesus was rejected by Mohammed with the most vehement assertions of a clear

and definite monotheism (33). Even the peaceful prospect to which Jesus looked forward, when there should be 'One flock under one shepherd' has been removed to an immeasurable distance by the dogmatic perversion of the doctrine of his person on the part of the Christian Church.

But even the Church did not dare to take the fateful step of placing Jesus on an equality with the One God until the third and fourth centuries, although the dogma had been already proclaimed in the preface to the Gospel of John, under the influence of the Alexandrine philosophy. 'In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,' a philosophical speculation worlds removed from the teaching of our Lord Jesus.

And how rapid was the progress forwards, or rather backwards, along the path of polytheism, when a start had once been made. Among the nations of antiquity there was a deep-rooted veneration for the number three, as we see in the Old Testament from the Holy, Holy, Holy, of the Seraphim and in Babylon, e.g., in the triads of Gods. This tendency had led in the early Church to a three-fold formula for the Godhead, which had manifold variations, and was in the beginning purely a matter of style, e.g., I Tim. 5²¹, 'I charge thee before God and Christ and the elect angels.' The change in the expression for the third member, as well as the variation in the order (I Peter 1²),

proves that in early Christianity the dogmatic formula was still in a state of flux. Above all we must hold fast to the fact that even to the Apostle Paul the holy spirit was no personal Deity, but an impersonal energy of God. It could not possibly come into the head of any Jewish Christian to set a second Holy Spirit with a separate personality, by the side of the One God, who is spirit, and at the same time holy, and is thus holy spirit, and, as the living God, permeates and penetrates everything with his holy spirit (Is. 63^{11,12}, Ps. 51¹³). But in spite of the Apostle Paul, when men had already placed the missionary command 'to baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 28¹⁹) in the mouth of the Risen One himself, a Holy Spirit, separate in personality from God the Father and God the Son, was enthroned beside them, and the One God was buried and obliterated under the 'pagoda of terminology' (3) used to describe a God who was 'three in one.'

We know further how the church subsequently and with absolute consistency not only adored the Virgin Mary as the immaculately conceived 'Bride of the Holy Spirit' and 'Mother of the divine Son,' but, when the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were declared to be consubstantial and co-eternal, also raised the Virgin to be the 'Mother of the Creator' and then without qualification the 'Mother of God,' and paid her what was

practically divine worship as the 'mightiest Queen of heaven and earth,' the 'Queen of the angels.'

There is another important point of our faith about which it is the duty of every Christian to make up his mind, and that is the significance of the *Lord's Supper*. With regard to this we must be satisfied with keeping strictly to the words of Jesus as they are reported by the Evangelists Mark and Luke and the Apostle Paul. The prophet Deutero-Isaiah paints a moving picture of Israel dying away from home in servitude in Babylon and bearing the punishment for the sins of his forefathers under the similitude of the 'servant of Yahweh' who is chastened by Yahweh. Although Jesus, following the exegetical method of his age, was inclined to apply these words of Isaiah to his own sufferings and death, yet he described the surrender of his life only as a 'ransom,' *λύτρον*, which should redeem many from the bondage (cf. Gal. 2⁴) of the Old Covenant of the law, and his blood as the seal of the New Covenant (Mark 14²⁴, Luke 22²⁰), just as the Old Covenant was once ratified by the offering of sacrifice (Ex. 24⁵⁻⁸). When Jesus celebrated the last Passover among his disciples it was in this sense that he spoke, symbolically indicating his approaching death: 'this is my body,' 'this is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many' (Mark 14²⁴). In

agreement with this both Luke and Paul know of the Lord's Supper only as instituted in *memory* (Luke 22¹⁹, I Cor. 11^{25, 26}) of him who sealed his doctrine of the New Covenant, the kingdom of God, with his death. The words which are familiar to us, 'This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many *unto remission of sins*' (Matt. 26²⁸), contain an addition of which neither Mark nor Luke nor Paul knows anything. It was added only when the story of the Fall, which has undergone strong Babylonian influence, was brought into dogmatic connection with Jesus as 'the second Adam' and when Jesus' death was conceived as a sacrifice for sin, as a sacrificial death, and Jesus was transformed into the saviour from sin and death and the mediator between God and man. All this is absolutely irreconcilable with Jesus' own words. As 'the Lord's Prayer' (Matt. 6¹²) shows, Jesus himself knew of only one path to the forgiveness of sins, namely the penitent confession of sin and prayer for forgiveness, after we have already forgiven our own debtors (cf. also Matt. 6¹⁴ foll., Luke 18¹³ foll.) (34). Although the Prophets and Psalmists of the Old Testament had already repudiated sacrifice, owing to the dogma of Jesus' sacrificial death it came back into the Catholic Church in the form in which it had been most strongly condemned, namely human sacrifice, and with it there came back the institution of priests, which is in diametrical contradiction

to the idea represented by Jesus, of a universal priesthood.

It follows from this that the fundamental conditions of any healthy progress of the Christian religion are the transition from Trinitarian to Unitarian Christianity, from the Christ of dogma to the Christ of history, and the return to the teaching of the historical Jesus. In our time we can and we must, under all circumstances, hold fast to this return. For just as the history of mankind shows here and there points of attainment which will perhaps never again be reached, much less surpassed, but which on the contrary remain as examples and sources of new life—think of Homer, Phidias, Beethoven, Goethe—so in the domain of ethics and religion the saying of Goethe will ever remain true: ‘However far spiritual culture progresses, however greatly the natural sciences increase in breadth and depth, and however much the human spirit expands, it will never surpass the sublimity and moral culture of Christianity, as it gleams and shines in the Gospels’ (35). Certainly the most glorious virtues in the garden of faith, the virtues of gentleness, peacefulness, purity of heart, dutifulness, and above all, love of one’s neighbour, were taught by the sages of Israel before and after Jesus, and, we might add, by the sages of Babylon, Greece, and other nations. But never again will the whole circle of moral and religious duties be brought before

the eyes of mankind so vividly as in the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of Jesus, who has not only left us in his parables, such as that of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, an inexhaustible treasure of ever living sayings, continually impelling us to new life, but at the same time has been a living example to all of us. He remains in fact 'the most personal of all personalities' (3), and proves, by ever stimulating Christendom to new service after his example, in his own person the truth of the deep saying with which he met the Sadducees, who said that there was no resurrection: 'God is not a God of the dead but of the living' (Mark 12²⁷, Luke 20³⁸, Matt. 22³²). And so *Jesus is living* and is ever near us with his spirit and his gifts. 'The Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto but to minister.' What a power for blessing on earth has been this one uniquely great saying of Jesus! It has permeated the whole of Christianity with the conviction that nothing is more ennobling to man than the service of his fellow-men, and all the 'uncounted deeds of duty done to children and to the sick, in the service of the state and of human society, from the care of a nursing sister to the royal declaration of the "first servant of the state"' (36)—they are all fruits of the seed which Jesus, the incomparable sower, scattered with that one saying.

And for this reason I am not afraid of those

who ask from within the charmed circle of the dogmas of the Church: 'After all this, what is left of the Christian religion?' I answer: As far as *faith* is concerned, everything is left which was taught by Jesus, who is the only legitimate head of the Christian Church, namely the living faith in One Spiritual God, in which, since we have put God the Father rather in the background, we are surpassed even by Jews and Mohammedans. And yet how immeasurably superior is Jesus' conception of God to Allah, who has exclusively predestined the Mohammedans to the true faith and to eternal blessedness. How superior, too, to Yahweh, who, through the sign of circumcision, which was the sign of his covenant with his people, retains the predominant character of a national God. But the true Christian faith is the most perfect monotheism, faith in One God, to whom all nations and men have immediate access, a spiritual God who, in spite of all conformity to law, is the living ruler of the whole universe. Then, as far as the *practical application* of the teaching of Jesus is concerned, everything remains, and he who carries out only a part of what the Old Testament prophets preached and what is taught of the Christian virtues from the Sermon on the Mount onwards on almost every page of the New Testament, must add his weekdays to his Sundays to enable him to become perfect, and yet as regards the fulfilment of the true

Christianity and not only the conventional Christianity into which he was born, at the end of his life he must close with an emphatic confession of failure. The true service of God does not consist in saying Lord, Lord (Luke 6⁴⁶), but in doing the will of God, in subduing our lower impulses and faults, e.g., slander, and in developing in ourselves by earnest moral effort all the noble tendencies of human nature, in order to become ever more perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. 'If any man seemeth to be religious while he bridleth not his tongue, this man's religion is vain' (James 1²⁰). 'Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world' (James 1²⁷). 'And though I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing' (I Cor. 13²). Jesus has left us Christians as a legacy the words 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me' (Matt. 25⁴⁰); and to this exhortation he has at the same time added the threatening words 'Depart from me, ye *cursed*! For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink, I was naked and ye clothed me not, sick and in prison and ye visited me not' (v. 41 foll.).

Well, I am convinced that if all those who come to the morning service on Sundays, instead of

listening to Jesus' words, would for a short time carry out this command of Jesus, and seek out the abodes of the poor, the sick, the needy, the homeless, the abodes of the hundredfold misery which cries to heaven—they would thank God when they went to church on Sunday evening that through Jesus he had made them realize what is necessary, what Christianity means, and what Christian duty demands, namely, to take a personal part in the solution of the social problem. The individual churches, and the small ones even more than the large ones, should be the centres of a carefully organized service of love to our fellow-men, in which each member of the congregation should take part in the way most suited to himself. They should be, as it were, the heart of our practical Christianity, which gathers into itself and distributes in thousands of channels, a warm love to every individual who stands in need of the Christian's love of his neighbour. There is no doubt that Christian benevolence, like that of our Jewish fellow-citizens, has accomplished great things. But when men who have travelled all over the world agree in testifying that nowhere on God's wide earth 'is there so much depravity and misery found as stares them in the face in their Christian homeland' (37), that is a sufficiently eloquent testimony to the vast responsibility which rests on the Christian state, the Christian Church, and the Christian individual.

If we thus actively carry out the teaching of Jesus and hold fast to him as the foundation of every future development of religion, we shall have no difficulty in renouncing other religious errors which exert an oppressive influence on our minds. In the first place we must get rid of those which have arisen from a wrong estimation of the oriental forms in which our Biblical documents have been clothed. We must never forget that, as soon as we open our Bibles, we are transported from the sober, serious world of the west into the magic world of the east. The east has always been, and is to this day, the world of miracle and imagination. Even at the present day the account of the most commonplace events is liable to be adorned or transformed in the most arbitrary and unscrupulous way, by the ever active imagination of the narrators. Just as the oriental mind thinks and invents without restraint, so it judges that with God, too, nothing is impossible—neither that the sun should stand still nor that the ass should open its mouth and speak. It necessarily follows that our ideas of the being and activity of God have to a certain extent been led astray owing to the fact that the cradle of our own religion was in the east. From prehistoric times, in Babylon just as in Palestine, the oriental sees everywhere the personal activity of God, and looks upon him as constantly appearing to men in dreams, and revealing himself to

the dying by word of mouth, *in Babylon, I say, exactly in the same way as in Palestine.* It became a literary formula to make the Deity speak to mankind, and this formula the Hebrews, like the Babylonians, employed without hesitation, whenever they had higher didactic or similar ends in view, in spite of their being forbidden to take the name of God in vain. But this favourite peculiarity of style led to many grievous errors. For if it had not been for this oriental idea of personal speech on the part of the Deity, it is probable that men would not have fallen into the error of taking such personal revelations of God for granted and reducing his actual revelations to the second rank. I mean such revelations of God as his impressive witness to himself in our heart, mind, and conscience, with its irrepressible 'thou shalt,' 'thou shalt not,' the sublime revelation of God in the marvels and the wonderful laws of nature, and above all, in the moral order of the world. But as regards all the lesser miracles and signs, we can never forget that throughout all the thousands of years during which history has been written in the east, whether on clay tablets or rolls of parchment, or in books, miracle is of universal occurrence, that, as George Ebers well says (38), even 'into the noble field of the Scriptures the products of the oriental imagination have made their way, like gaily coloured weeds,' in only too great abundance. It is better to make an

exception in the case of the miracles of healing. For every one who has any knowledge of the east, knows what a strong influence a word of encouragement may have on a sick man, if it is spoken with conviction and promises a speedy recovery. He knows too that when hope and courage are awakened they are immediately accompanied by new vitality. In addition to this, medical science has proved that illnesses which owe their origin to hysteria, as was evidently the case in many of the instances of epilepsy, paralysis, etc., cured by Jesus, can really be cured in an astonishingly short time by sudden psychical influences, such as religious exaltation, fear, etc. Such a powerful personality as that of Jesus, and such forcible preaching of the kingdom of God within us, must have brought healing to many who were sick. But this affords no justification for looking upon Jesus as a miracle-worker—a view against which he guards himself.

In another respect our return to the moral and religious truths which were taught by the Old Testament prophets and the Prophet of the New Covenant, must not be slavish. Jesus was unmarried, without property, and lived free from care amid the simple conditions of the east, and his life can no longer serve in all points as an example to us children of the west and of the twentieth century. Consequently we must open

wide the doors and windows of our churches in order to shake off and disperse the thick dust which in the course of centuries has gathered on the golden vessels of our faith. All the popular ideas which the Israelites held in common with the other nations of antiquity, or got from the system of Babylonian culture, partly in definite historic periods, have no place within our purified religious conceptions as soon as we realize that they are simply the products of a mythological way of viewing things (39). The radiant angel figures may have become dear to us through art and poetry, but their Old Testament designation of 'sons of God' or 'sons of the gods' (Luke 20³⁶), i.e., inferior divine beings, as well as their frequent representation on Assyrian monuments in the form familiar to us, proves that they have a polytheistic, or, speaking more exactly, a Babylonian origin. And in the same way we should be guilty of the grossest ingratitude (40) if, in face of the great progress of medicine, we persisted in believing in demons of disease and 'unclean spirits' which take possession of men. Thanks to the Babylonian excavations, the historical evolution of the demons and especially of the evil god or devil, is now so clear to us that we can almost fix the century in which the Babylonian idea of an evil god lying in wait for men reached Palestine, and perhaps specially North Palestine.

It was an analogous thought that as the dead body is laid to rest in the earth, the soul too finds its resting place in the earth, in a kingdom of shades deep down in the interior of the earth, the gloomy 'land from which there is no return,' which resembled a hot and dusty desert in which a refreshing draught of pure water is the reward of special good deeds. These are popular ideas which were familiar in almost the same form to both the Hebrews and the Babylonians, and from which the later ideas of hell and Paradise were consistently developed. It is natural that Jesus, in accordance with the custom of his time and his people, should speak of the torments of hell and the joys of heaven which one day awaited mankind. But this creates no presupposition as to the correctness of these ideas, and we are the less justified in assuming that it does so, because Jesus also gave expression to other conceptions of the life after death, e.g., in the parable of Lazarus, the poor man, who was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16²²). The ancient religions undoubtedly knew far more about the condition of things after death than we do ; our religion has become more modest, and, like science, finds itself much more often compelled to make a public confession that *Ignoramus* (we do not know) and even *Ignorabimus* (we are not likely to know). Our own popular ideas have long since turned away from the conception of

an underworld in which departed souls are kept in prison either temporarily or eternally. We feel that we are immeasurably happier to know that the departed souls of our dear ones have been taken back to God, carried up to the source of all life, to those glorious heights where, as Job comforted himself, 'out of the flesh' and freed from their poor perishable body, they see God face to face. We must be content to leave the manner of their recompense to the Judge of all the world, but if we have striven to be true disciples of Jesus, when we reach the end of our life we can be sure of the fullest consolation, if we can say in the words of the Psalmist, which Jesus also made his own: 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.'

That the story of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis is a beautiful and sublime attempt to make plain to us God's creative activity, has never been denied. But at the present day no one who has the slightest insight into the matter can deny that it is nothing more than an attempt which is closely dependent on the cosmogony of the sages of Babylon. These sages thought that heaven and earth and everything in them came forth, just as in Genesis, from a dark and watery chaos, by the fiat and activity of Almighty God, and they looked upon them as following one another in succession and as each being a work

of creation complete in itself. But if natural science finds itself compelled to explain the origin of the world differently, we shall rejoice at every addition to our knowledge, just as the continual discovery of new laws of nature shows us the Lawgiver as ever greater, more wonderful, and more worthy of adoration. If it should prove that the conception of the Israelites and Babylonians, according to which death is the wages of sin, and sin has come into the world through the temptation of the serpent, likewise rests only on human speculation: if it should prove in particular that the conception of the serpent as the tempter and the author of evil has been taken up into the Old Testament history from Babylon—and the well-known old Babylonian cylinder seal probably shows a representation of the Fall—yet we can comfort ourselves with the thought that the Bible gives expression to the most diverse and mutually destructive views as to the process of creation and the origin of evil. As far as religion is concerned, it is a matter of indifference to know *how* evil and sin have arisen: it is sufficient to know *that* sin is there and that it is our supreme duty not only to curb the sinful and animal impulses in ourselves, but to co-operate in reducing the breeding-places of vice year by year, and securing for every man an education worthy of his station as a man.

While we thus on the one hand get rid of all

that is earthly and mistaken from the content of our religious thinking, on the other hand we ought to use for our religion and our service of God everything that is good, noble, and true, wherever or whenever it has been taught or practised. Jesus, our Lord and Master, did not shrink from holding up to his Jewish contemporaries the Samaritan as an example of the two noble virtues of self-sacrificing love for one's neighbour and gratitude for an act of kindness. He did this in spite of the contempt with which the Jews looked down on the Samaritans, and thus showed that he did not regard the virtues of the Gentiles after the manner of St. Augustine as 'splendid vices.' In the same way both we and our preachers ought to follow the precedent of earlier times, and take whatever is good, and value and use it, wherever it exists, even outside the Bible. Since we have learnt to survey and judge the history of religion from a higher coign of vantage than the narrow outlook of the Israelites, even the Babylonians who were so despised from the religious point of view, have ventured to come timidly to the front. For behind and beneath the official Babylonian polytheism, with its adoration of images, its long-robed priests, its system of sacrifice and incense, its motley ceremonial, its view of prayer as a sacrifice, its waters and oils of purification, its processions, its Sumerian speech, which was

incomprehensible to the layman, its adoration of the 'mother of the gods,' as the most powerful intercessor for men with God, its dedication of models of injured or cured limbs in the temples, and many other similar external usages—behind all this we encounter among the Babylonian people extraordinarily tender blossomings of religious sensibility, such as the belief that every man is a child of his god, that at the entry of man into life his god enters into him and dwells in him but departs from him if he continues in sin, that such desertion by his god is the most grievous curse that can befall the man, that at the end when the man dies his god summons him back to himself, that a man should show love to his neighbour and should not despise or tyrannically oppress him, which will necessarily bring down upon the offender the wrath of God, but should rather give food and drink to him who asks for it, as this is God's good pleasure. Or could it do any harm if our German Christendom were reminded from time to time that the virtues of our Germanic forefathers, which were celebrated even by their enemies, included above all chastity and the sanctity of marriage? Or could it do any harm if our Christian preaching were interspersed with the golden grains of moral and religious reflection which occur in hundreds in the works of our German thinkers and poets (41), or with the many sayings of Greek and Roman sages, which

resemble 'rays of light of imperishable glory and eternal brightness' ? (42). The kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus, leaves to each nation its own peculiar work and outward form and even its embellishment with all sorts of poetical and even heathen usages. Psalm 118 v. 27 runs, 'Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar,' but Luther by his rendering, 'Adorn the festival with May-blossom even unto the horns of the altar,' has called into being our lovely German custom at Whitsuntide. And what would become of the German Christmas festival without the old Germanic Christmas tree, ablaze with candles ? Wherefore, when sooner or later the spirit of the Reformation is again awakened, may the strong religious feeling of our German people once more work itself out in words and songs and deeds corresponding to the tasks and the spirit of our modern age.

I have reached the end. While the Catholic hierarchy, underestimating the power of science, at the present moment finds itself compelled to call in discipline to protect its dogmas, we Evangelicals once more thank God from day to day for giving us the Protestant theology. For Protestantism, with all due piety, but with a full consciousness of its sacred task of serving the truth, is ever more surely freeing the life and the teaching of Jesus from the dross which had collected on both and threatened to smother them.

Theological science will yet show that it is a mighty force, all the more irresistible the more completely it renounces all compromise. But as regards the instruction of our young people which claims our consideration in an especial degree in connection with all religious questions, let us be mindful of a grand saying of Jesus, the great children's friend, 'Let the children come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God' (Mark 10¹⁴, Matt. 19¹⁴, Luke 18¹⁶). With these words Jesus assumes on the part of pure and unsullied children's souls a special joy in and capacity for receiving his teaching of the kingdom of God. And we too should not cause our children to stumble by compelling them to listen to incomprehensible dogmatic teaching. Rather let us resolve to give them in a pure and unspoilt form that teaching of the kingdom of God which aims at developing a living religion of the heart, and let us bring them up to have a firm trust in God and a courageous joy in living, to be faithful in doing their duty, unbending in their adherence to truth, and constant in loving-kindness. If we do all in the interests of true religion, without deception and without hypocrisy, we shall confer at the same time a true blessing on our people.

NOTES

The New Testament passages are quoted for the most part from the translation of Carl Weizsäcker, *Das Neue Testament übersetzt*, 9th ed. Tübingen, 1900, but sometimes according to the Greek original. The Old Testament passages are rendered throughout from the Hebrew original. [In the English translation the Revised Version has been followed for the most part.]

(1) p. 9, Properly 'a broken soul.' The title of the pamphlet is *Die Lösung der Judenfrage. Eine Enquête. Veranstatet durch die Redaktion des General-Anzeiger* (Dr. Julius Moses), 1907.

(2) p. 9, See, e.g., Dr. S. Herxheimer, *Glaubens- und Pflichtenlehre für israelitische Schulen*, 35th ed, Leipzig, 1904.

(3) pp. 10, 11, 32, 48, 52, *Babel und Bibel. Ein Handschreiben Seiner Majestät Kaiser Wilhelm des Zweiten an das Vorstandsmitglied der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft, Admiral Hollmann (vom 15. Februar 1903)*, 'Die Grenzboten,' 62nd year, No. 8 (19th Feb., 1903), pp. 493-496. The Kaiser's letter was called forth by the concluding passage of my *Zweiter Vortrag über Babel und Bibel*, which culminated in the Kaiser's phrase about the 'development of religion.'

[An English translation of this letter appeared in 'The Times' of 21st Feb., 1903, and is reprinted in L. H. Jordan's '*Comparative Religion, Its Genesis and Growth*,' Edinburgh, 1906, p. 496.

An English translation, edited by C. H. W. Johns, of Prof. Delitzsch's first two lectures on Babel and Bible has been published by Williams and Norgate in the Crown Theological Library: London, 1903. F.L.P.]

(4) p. 12, We may call attention to: Johannes Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments, neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt*. Vol. I. *Die drei älteren Evangelien. Die Apostelgeschichte*, 2nd ed., improved and enlarged, Göttingen, 1907.—P.R. 'Geboren von der Jungfrau.' *Zweite nach Publizierung des alten syrischen Evangelientextes vom Sinai vermehrte Auflage*, Berlin, 1894. (It appeared originally in the 'Preussische Jahrbücher,' Nov., 1894.)—Wilhelm Soltau *Das Fortleben des Heidentums in der altchristlichen Kirche*, Berlin, 1906.

(5) p. 16, Psalm 51, with its two concluding verses, which are a later addition, shows with great clearness the opposition long encountered in many circles by such a spiritualization of worship, especially so far as it was a question of the sacrificial cultus. As to whether these two concluding verses are a later addition, the matter is settled, e.g., by Kautzsch, *Die Poesie und die poetischen Bücher des Alten Testaments*, p. 53 foll., in the words, 'It is quite easy to understand that, at a somewhat later period, an anxious and pious disposition, which was unable to rise to this height of conception, to this prophetic anticipation of the true New Testament worship, took offence at those magnificent words (v. 18, 19), and hence added the two concluding verses. . . . But it is quite impossible that the Psalmist should have contradicted himself in such an incredible way. No, he rigidly rejects all sacrifices, and the concluding verses consequently represent a conception foreign to the Psalmist.' The essay by the Jesuit Hermann Weismann, *Die 'opferfeindlichen' Psalmen*: Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth, *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale*, II., 1907, pp. 321-335, is not at all satisfactory either as a whole or in detail.

(6) p. 19, See Leopold Stein, *Die Schrift des Lebens* (Strasburg, 1877), II. No. 39, etc., quoted in Herm. L. Strack, *Das Wesen des Judentums. Vortrag, gehalten auf der internationalen Konferenz für Judenmission zu Amsterdam*, Leipzig, 1906. Mention may also be made of the quotation from Stein,

II. No. 43. 'The red cow, although in the Mosaic law it forms so important a centre of the law of purification, is and remains for us eternally dead.'

(7) p. 21, 'While the other nations of the earth were given over to star-worship.' The words of the original text are properly speaking still stronger :—Yahweh has 'assigned' to the other nations the worship of the stars. (See *Zweiter Vortrag über Babel und Bibel*, p. 40, with note 22; *Babel and Bible*, ed. by C. H. W. Johns, p. 207.) There is no getting away from this sense of the Hebrew verb *chalaq*. Deut. 4¹⁹. See also Deut. 29²⁵.

(8) p. 21, Cf. the drastic saying, Zech. 8²³, that men out of all nations shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, 'We will go with you for we have heard that God is with you.' See *Zweiter Vortrag über Babel und Bibel*, p. 40 (Johns, p. 208).

(9) p. 21, See p. 17 of Strack's pamphlet, mentioned in note (6). (He there quotes Leopold Stein, *Die Schrift des Lebens*, I, No. 346.)

(10) p. 23, Compare also Matthew 21⁴², where Jesus refuses the Jewish nation the kingdom of the world. Although the words, John 4²³⁻²⁴, may come 'from the workshop of the evangelist,' 'it scarcely needs to be emphasized that they are really a profound summary of weighty thoughts in the preaching of Jesus, and thus are historical in a higher sense.' (J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, Vol. II., 2nd ed., Göttingen, 1908, p. 757.)

(11) p. 24, Cf. Dr. Max Nordau, *Der Zionismus*, 2nd ed., Brünn, Jüdischer Buch-und Kunstverlag.

(12) p. 24, It is a question whether the 'nation of the idea,' as the Jewish people is so fond of calling itself, has any need at all of a land enclosed with boundary-posts. But above all in face of all the Jewish thoughts and hopes of return and especially the prayers for return of the authors of the Babylonian Talmud, there remains the depressing memory of the historical fact that, when in the year 538 B.C. the promises of

the Prophets were fulfilled by a wonderful dispensation, and Cyrus gave permission for the Jewish exiles to return home to Palestine, yet by far the largest part of the Jewish nation, from considerations of commerce and industry, remained behind in Babylon, the land of their deadliest enemies, and all too light-heartedly abandoned the Promised Land with all that was inseparably bound up with it—thus turning into the soberest prose the magnificent poetry of Psalm 137, 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'

(13) p. 25, See p. 23 (§ 82) of Herxheimer's Catechism, mentioned in note (2).

(14) p. 27, 'The heavens' as equivalent to 'God,' see Dan. 4²³.

(15) p. 29, For the close relationship of the ideas 'son' and 'heir' cf. also Matt 21³⁸. Babylonian *aplum* means 'son' and 'heir.'

(16) p. 29, Cf. *Zweiter Vortrag über Babel und Bibel*, Note 20.

(17) p. 31, 'We who, in spite of the teaching of the Church, have accustomed ourselves to the human aspect of Jesus, recognize in the humility which here finds expression the earnestness of a soul struggling to attain the highest aims, which will never let itself be satisfied with what it has reached but has a deep feeling that human and divine goodness are incommensurable: God is a Being for himself with whom no one can be compared.' (J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, Vol. I, p. 170.)

(18) p. 32, According to Adalbert Merx (the title of the work here referred to will be found in note (22)) only a single passage, namely Matt. 1^{18.25}, need be taken into consideration. He understands (II, 2, p. 179 foll.) Luke 1³⁵ to the effect that 'the education and development of the promised son will be carried out under the special protection of God.' 'The sentence says nothing about the begetting of the child.' For my part, I am inclined to think that Merx's proof on this point is not absolutely convincing.

(19) p. 33, More exactly: every marriageable female.

(20) p. 34, According to the Gospel of Mark (3²¹ foll.) Mary, as well as Jesus' other relations, thought that he was 'beside himself,' as also Jesus complains that he finds no recognition 'among his relations and in his own house' (6²⁻⁴). If the stories of Jesus' early history had been in existence before his public appearance, in the opinion of J. Weiss (l.c., Vol. I, p. 427) 'the reception of Jesus in his family and among the people, must have been quite different. There can thus be no doubt that they first arose when love and adoration for their exalted Lord made men feel the need of surrounding his childhood with the brilliancy of divine glory, which in reality was completely absent from it.' In Luke's Gospel see further the passages 2³³, 'His father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken (by Simeon) concerning him'; v. 48, 'Thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.'

(21) p. 35, Cf. Agnes Smith Lewis, *Some Pages of the Four Gospels retranscribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest with a Translation of the whole Text*, London, 1896, where likewise the opinion is expressed 'that our Lord was conventionally, that is, legally and socially, though not actually, the son of Joseph' (Introduction p. xi. foll.). To the same effect, p. xii. : 'We must either prove beyond a doubt, that some part of this introductory chapter is a later addition to the gospel, or we must reconcile it with its context by taking it in a purely conventional sense.' But to what purpose these artificial and threadbare attempts to give a new meaning to the unmistakable 'begat,' especially as the corresponding assertions of the Apostles Paul and Peter cannot be got rid of by any philological subtleties? Incidentally we may remark that Jesus neither ought to be nor could be proved to be a descendant of David through Mary, for the Jews reckoned family descent in the male line, and in addition Mary was not a descendant of David.

(22) p. 35, See, e.g., Adalbert Merx, *Die vier kanonischen Evangelien nach ihrem ältesten bekannten Texte. Uebersetzung (und Erläuterung) der syrischen im Sinaikloster gefundenen*

Palimpsesthandschrift, Berlin, 1897, p. 230. 'The manuscript of this oldest Syrian text of the Gospels was produced about 400 A.D., but is demonstrably derived from a Greek original which belongs to the second century A.D., while the boldest estimate has not ventured to carry back the oldest Greek manuscripts from which we have hitherto received the Gospels further than the fourth century A.D.' The above mentioned work of Adalbert Merx is the leading work of German scholarship on the Syrian manuscript of the Gospels. The 'Explanations' were included in a second part of which the first half is *Das Evangelium Matthäus*, Berlin, 1902; the second half *Das Evangelium Markus und Lukas*, Berlin, 1905.

(23) p. 36, This is the opinion of J. Weiss, l.c. Vol. I, p. 233, 'But the strangest fact of all is that the genealogical tree (Matt., chap. I.) has its conclusion cut short by the birth-story which follows. If Jesus was *not the son of Joseph*, the table of ancestors has no sense for in that case it does not contain the ancestors of Jesus. It is not open to doubt that the genealogical table cannot originally have ended with verse 16 as it runs in our Bibles to-day: "Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus." It was only possible to draw up a genealogy of Jesus on the assumption that Jesus was the son of a man and the descendant of human forefathers. It follows that the last clause must originally have run, "But Joseph begat Jesus." So also Adalbert Merx, *Die vier kanonischen Evangelien* (II, 1, p. 14 foll.), 'A genealogical table of Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham, if it was to be a genealogical table at all must derive each clause from the preceding, or else it is not a genealogical table at all. The *fiction of a legitimate sonship*, because Joseph at the time of the birth was the spouse of Mary cannot get over the difficulty. . . . Therefore the conclusion of the table must be: "Ja'qub begat Joseph, Joseph begat Jesu," and the words "to whom Mary the virgin was betrothed," along with the addition "of whom was born Jesu," which prepare the way for the story of the birth in

Matt. 1¹⁸-2²³, were originally impossible, for they call attention to the fact that Joseph, instead of being the father, was not the father at all.'

(24) p. 36, In view of this fateful 're-editing' it is easy to understand the justification for the verdict of Adalbert Merx (*Die vier kanonischen Evangelien, Uebersetzung*, p. 232): 'Even the man who has had no philological schooling can see by this that textual criticism is a highly important, I may say, a sacred business; it acts the part of the policeman in the domain of historical truth, and where it does not discharge the duties of its office, the way is opened for every kind of untruth and deception.'

(25) p. 39, Cf. H. Guthe, *Kurzes Bibelwörterbuch*, Tübingen and Leipzig, 1903, p. 690.

(26) p. 39, The familiar quotation, e.g., 'I believed and therefore did I speak' (II Cor. 4¹³) will be looked for in vain in the original text of Psalm 116¹⁰. And when the Apostle Paul seeks to prove to the Jews that the heathen nations were already called in the Old Testament to the worship of the true God, and for this purpose brings forward among others the passage in Deut. 32⁴³ according to the Greek translation, 'Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people' (Rom. 15¹⁰), we know now that the original text runs, 'Rejoice, O ye Gentiles, over his people.' See further note (28).

(27) p. 39, All the exegesis of the Midrash, as we have it in the Midrashin and in the Talmud, goes to prove this assertion.

(28) p. 40, Cf. e.g., Rom. 15¹¹ with Ps. 117. It is of course quite a different matter, whether the exhortation of the Psalmist, as quoted by Paul, 'Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him,' is complete as it stands or whether it is followed by the words 'for his mercy is great toward Israel.'

(29) p. 41, So Mark 1³, Matt. 3³, Luke 3⁴. Cf. John 1²³. 'John said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.'

(30) p. 41, 'Thou madest him a little lower than the angels.'

(31) p. 42, Cf. also v. 34 with the wording of Isaiah 55³.

(32) p. 44, The original text, preserved by the 'Sinaitic Syrian' and the Old Latin translations, 'with Mary, his *wife*, who was with child' stands in contrast to the re-edited reading 'his *betrothed*' which is given by the most celebrated Greek manuscripts. The reading of the later Greek manuscripts, 'his *betrothed wife*,' which has become familiar through Luther's translation, is evidently 'an untenable compromise between the two first readings.' 'The view which is represented by the reading "his wife" is the older; we have here again the older conception which regarded Jesus as the son of Joseph. In agreement with this is the fact that Joseph was not at all surprised that Mary conceived and brought forth a son, and that in verse 7 mention is made of Mary's "first-born" without any embarrassment. The writer knows that subsequently she had other children and does not indicate that in some sort they were children of another kind.' J. Weiss, l.c. Vol. I, p. 425. See also Merx, l.c. II, 2, p. 189 foll.

The passages Matt. 1¹⁶ and Luke 2⁵ are not the only ones which have been subject to emendation. Matt. 13⁵⁵ and Mark 6³ are well worthy of notice, where by the help of the 'Sinaitic Syrian' we may conclude that the original wording ran, 'Is not this *the son of Joseph the carpenter*, and the name of his mother is Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simeon and Judas, and his sisters are all with us?'

(33) p. 47, Cf. the specially sacred Sura of the 'Pure Worship of God' (Sura 112). 'Say, "He is God alone! God the eternal. He begets not and is not begotten, Nor is there like unto him any one!"' Or 19, 91 foll., 'They say, "The Merciful has taken to himself a son"—ye have brought a monstrous thing! The heavens well-nigh burst asunder thereat and the earth is riven, and the mountains fall down broken, that they attribute to the Merciful a son! But it becomes not the Merciful to take to himself a son; there is none in the heavens or the earth but comes to the Merciful as a servant.' And 6, 101: 'The inventor of the heavens and the earth! how can He have

a son when he has no female companion?' (From E. H. Palmer's translation of the Koran in S.B.E., Vols. 6 and 9. F.L.P.)

(34) p. 50, Matt. 6¹⁴ foll.: 'For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.' The publican who said, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner!' went down to his house 'justified' (Luke 18¹³ foll.).

(35) p. 51, See Waldemar Freiherr v. Biedermann, *Goethes Gespräche*, Leipzig, 1890, Vol. 8, p. 149. Conversation with Eckermann, 11th March, 1832.

(36) p. 52, J. Weiss, Lc. Vol. I, p. 174 foll.

(37) p. 55, See e.g., Andrew Carnegie, *Was eine Weltreise lehrt*: 'Der Morgen,' 1907, p. 559.

(38) p. 57, Georg Ebers and Hermann Guthe, *Palästina in Bild und Wort, Nach dem Englischen herausgegeben*, Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1884, Vol. II, p. 396.

(39) p. 59, With regard to Babylonian conceptions within both the Old and the New Testament, which are here briefly recapitulated, see my 'Lectures on Babel and Bible,' especially the first, and also *Mehr Licht*, Leipzig, 1907. I there beg my readers to examine the accompanying illustrations of the Babylonian and Assyrian representations of angels and demons and likewise the Babylonian cylinder seal with the picture of the 'Fall.'

(40) p. 59, From a similar consideration both the Church and the State reject prayers for health, although these in themselves are in accordance with the Scriptures (Mark 9²⁹).

(41) p. 64, Cf. the *Germanen-Bibel. Aus heiligen Schriften germanischer Völker. Herausgegeben von Wilhelm Schwaner.*

(42) p. 65, Edmund Spiess, *Logos Spermaticos. Parallelen zum Neuen Testament aus den Schriften der alten Griechen*, Leipzig, 1871. See pp. xxxvi. to xliii.





