

## LECTURE VI.

### EXAMINATION OF ISAIAH LIII.

‘OF whom,’ asks the Ethiopian eunuch, whilst perusing the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, ‘does the prophet speak this? of himself, or of some other man?’ The portrait is that of a sufferer : a Man of Sorrows, bowed down, crushed, despised, rejected ; sufferings heavier than those which befall other men have befallen Him ; His countenance is marred in consequence of these untold pains ; all faces are turned from Him ; He is unpitied ; He is forsaken. The people regard His sufferings as well merited ; He is justly stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But the people are mistaken : these sufferings were not for Himself, but for them ; He was their representative, their substitute ; it was their sins that He bore ; it was their sorrows that He carried. And as He knew that He was the destined substitute of others, His sufferings are voluntary ; He offers no complaint, He makes no resistance ; He is led as a lamb to the slaughter ; He openeth not His mouth ; He submits to the stroke of divine justice ; for the

transgression of His people is He smitten. But these sufferings terminate in victory and glory. He is finally delivered from them, and receives, as a reward for His voluntary endurance, a seed to serve Him, victory over His enemies, length of days, and the abiding favour and pleasure of the Lord. 'He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.'<sup>1</sup>

Such are the contents of the prophecy ; such is the Sufferer. Now, of whom does the prophet speak ? Is it of Jesus our Lord, or of some other man ? Was Philip in the right when, from this passage of Scripture, he preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch ? Let us consider, first, the negative answer to the question—the opinions of those who consider this prophecy as non-Messianic ; and, secondly, the positive answer—the opinions of those who see its fulfilment in the Lord Jesus.

### *I. The Negative or Non-Messianic Interpretation of the Prophecy.*

It is undoubtedly the case that this prophecy was written and published ages before the days of Jesus—that is, before the occurrence of the events which Christians say are its fulfilment. This is undeniable and indisputable ; it is a point on which

<sup>1</sup> Supplement I.

there is and can be no difference of opinion. The prediction is contained in the Hebrew Scriptures as they are now in the hands of the Jews, and in the Septuagint translation which was made at least two centuries before the Christian era. It is utterly impossible that the passage can be an interpolation. The Jews who strenuously deny its Messianic application, yet unanimously admit its genuineness. It is also immaterial to our present argument who is the author of this prophecy, whether Isaiah or some other man; all that we require to prove is its publication previous to the event said to be its fulfilment.<sup>1</sup> It cannot, then, be asserted that the prophecy was designedly made after the event, and that the supposed correspondence is the result of human intention or fraud. The passage is also, as Dr. Paley observes, 'taken from a writing declaredly prophetic.'<sup>2</sup> It is not a history, or a moral discourse, or a poem, but professes to be a prophecy. Whatever may be its interpretation, or whether it has any, it is an oracle—a declaration of the future. 'Isaiah,' says the author of Ecclesiasticus, 'saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last, and he comforted them that mourned in Sion. He showed what

<sup>1</sup> 'Even if its author lived as late as the time of Cyrus, still the great prophecy respecting the Servant of Jehovah must have been in existence more than 500 years before the advent' (Row's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 209).

<sup>2</sup> Paley's *Evidences*, Part ii. chap. i.

should come to pass for ever, and secret things or ever they came' (Ecclus. xlvi. 24, 25).

Further, if we take the prophecy not by itself, but in connection with what precedes,—viewing it not as a detached fragment, but as a part of a large prophecy,—we shall find that the Sufferer here portrayed is to be identified with the person called in the preceding chapters 'the Servant of the Lord.' This is evident from the last verses of the chapter immediately preceding: 'Behold, my Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men: so shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider' (Isa. lii. 13-15). And in this very prophecy he is called the righteous Servant of the Lord: 'By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many' (Isa. liii. 11). Now, this phrase often occurs from the Fortieth chapter of Isaiah down to this Fifty-third.<sup>1</sup> The Servant of the Lord is there variously described. He is elected by God to this office, filled with the Spirit of the Lord, taught of God in order to become the Teacher of the Gentiles. He shall recover His people from captivity, and gather again the tribes of Jacob. He

<sup>1</sup> It does not occur after Isa. liii.

shall be a light to the Gentiles, and publish the glad tidings of salvation to the ends of the earth. Kings shall fall down before Him, princes shall worship at His feet, and the isles shall wait for His laws. 'Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. I the Lord have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles' (Isa. xlii. 1, 6). And yet He is often represented as a sufferer, rejected of the people, enduring suffering with patience, meek and submissive, His visage marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men. The Servant of the Lord, then, and the Sufferer delineated in this Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah are identical. This is admitted by all, by Jewish as well as by Christian writers; and therefore the question resolves itself into this: Who is this Servant of the Lord? 'Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?'

The modern Jews are unanimous in the assertion that whoever is meant by the 'Servant of the Lord,' he is at least not the Messiah. The doctrine of a suffering Messiah is rejected and repudiated by them; they assert that it is the product of early Christianity, and that the first impulse was given to it by

the apostles, in order to find a point of attachment between the prophecies and the sufferings of their Master. The only Messiah whom they expect is a victorious Prince, the ideal King who shall rule in righteousness, and bring about the golden age of Judaism. There are many reasons which have induced them to adopt this opinion. The idea of a glorified Messiah is more congenial to their feelings, more in accordance with their patriotic hopes ; whereas the idea of a suffering Messiah has nothing attractive about it, and is opposed to their self-righteousness. Besides, rejecting the fulfilment proposed by Christianity, the Jews found it impossible to reconcile the prophecies concerning a glorified Messiah with the declarations of suffering ; and hence they adopted the plan of entirely denying the idea of a suffering Messiah, and applying the passages which describe a sufferer to some other person. And they were the more induced to this course by reason of their controversies with the Christians. They could not deny the existence of their prophecies, but they denied their fulfilment in Jesus. As, however, suffering was the prominent feature in the life of Jesus, and as Christian controversialists referred to those passages which foretold a sufferer, the Jews felt constrained to deny the application of these passages to the Messiah, and to assert that the doctrine of a suffering Messiah was a mere Christian invention.

1. The prediction, however, must have some meaning. If not of Jesus, of whom speaketh the prophet? Now the most prevalent opinion, both among recent Jewish writers and those Christian divines who adopt the anti-Messianic view, is, that the Servant of the Lord is not to be understood of an individual, but of a collective body, that the idea involves plurality, and that by it *the nation of Israel* is meant. There are, however, different opinions as to the meaning of the term *Israel*. Some suppose that the whole nation of Israel is here personified; others restrict the prophecy to the pious portion of the Jewish people—the cream of the nation; whilst others imagine that an ideal Israel—‘Israel, as it existed in the imagination of the prophet’—is here referred to. The only essential difference between these Jewish and Christian writers is, that the Jewish interpreters suppose that the whole sufferings of the Jewish nation are referred to, and that the prediction which also foretells its future glory is only partially fulfilled; whilst the Christian interpreters restrict the prophecy to the sufferings of the Jews in Babylon and their restoration to their own land, and regard it not as a prediction, but merely as a poetical description of these events.

The reason assigned for this opinion is, that the Servant of the Lord is expressly and repeatedly called by the name of Israel; and this these writers

regard as tantamount to an identification. 'Thou, Israel, art my Servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my Servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away' (Isa. xli. 8, 9). And again, 'Thou art my Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified' (Isa. xlix. 3).<sup>1</sup> But when they come to apply this notion to an explanation of the prophecy, they are constrained to have recourse to the most forced interpretations. Israel is the Servant of the Lord who is despised and rejected by the Gentiles; it is his sufferings which are here portrayed. The Gentiles, however, shall be brought to a sense of their injustice: they shall regard the sufferings which they have inflicted upon Israel not only as unmerited, but as, in a certain sense, vicarious—that Israel was punished for their sins, and not for his own; that they were permitted by God to afflict him, in order that by his stripes they might be healed; and hence the knowledge imparted by Israel shall be the means of the conversion of the Gentiles: they shall repent of their cruelties, become obedient to the law, and worship Jehovah, the God of Israel.

The following extract from Dr. Adler will show

<sup>1</sup> In six passages—viz., xli. 8, 9, xliv. 1, 2, xliv. 21, xlv. 4, xlviii. 20, xlix. 3—the Servant of the Lord is called Jacob or Israel.

what interpretation the modern Jews give to this remarkable prophecy :—

‘ Our expositors agree in saying that the Servant here spoken of is the nation, Israel. All the preceding chapters have spoken of the glorious exaltation that awaits Israel. The prophet now proceeds to speak in more explicit terms of this future greatness: “ Behold ! my Servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.” He shall be exalted in the same degree as he had been degraded during his exile. On beholding this, all the nations and the kings of the earth will be astonished ; they will call to mind that state of abasement which had formerly been the lot of the Israelites. Then follows that wondrous record of our nation’s sufferings, depicted by a master hand, on which each page in our history during the Middle Ages is a life-breathing vivid commentary. “ Israel was despised and rejected, acquainted with grief, and we (the nations of the earth) esteemed him not.” Now, why was Israel dispersed to all quarters of the globe? Why had he to suffer all these afflictions? That he might fulfil his mission, and wean mankind from error and irreligion. When at last the nations of the earth shall reflect upon the martyrdom Israel endured for so many centuries, how he was cut off from the land of the living, how his grave was made with the wicked and his death compassed by the mighty of the

earth, and how he bore it all and refused to become unfaithful to his God,—then the nations of the earth will renounce their sinfulness, and acknowledge the God of Israel as the one true God. They will say, “Israel has been wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and through his stripes we are healed.” They will say in effect, that instead of Israel being the victim of God’s wrath, abandoned by the Lord as we deemed him, he was in truth wounded through our cruelty, he was bruised by our iniquitous treatment. We were permitted to afflict him thus; that by his chastisement our redemption and healing might be effected: redemption from error and sin, healing from false belief; for Israel was to be the teacher of mankind, the exemplar of unflinching obedience to the one God. The prophet continues, “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He has put him to grief; when his soul shall make an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Israel shall be gloriously rewarded for the sufferings he has borne. “Through his knowledge”—through practising and teaching the sacred lessons of his faith—“shall my righteous Servant justify many (that is, bring them to virtue); for he shall endure their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall

divide the spoil with the strong (in other words, he will be the equal of the mightiest of the earth in honour and glory); because he has poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he endured the sins of many, and made intercession with the transgressors." How sublime is this view of the prophet! He stands here, looking, as it were, from the summit of his prophetic intelligence upon the history of the world, and divines the future development and ultimate perfection of man—the golden age that awaits mankind, when they will acknowledge the errors of which they have been guilty, tender the hand of brotherhood to redeemed Israel, and acknowledge Israel's God.'<sup>1</sup>

In all error there is a germ of truth, of which it is the perversion. Israel is, in a certain sense, the Servant of the Lord, because he was the depositary of the true faith, the only nation who acknowledged the true God, the witness of Jehovah amid the darkness of heathenism. But the true Servant of the Lord is the Messiah, the great representative of the nation. The words of the prophecy are too particular and too personal to be applied to a collective idea; they refer to an individual. Nor can they, with any propriety, be regarded as fulfilled in Israel. In what sense can it be said of the nation of Israel, 'Surely he hath borne our

<sup>1</sup> Adler's *Course of Sermons*, pp. 42-44.

griefs, and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him'? Surely it is a gross perversion of language to affirm that Israel was a substitute for the nations of the world. Israel suffered for his own sins, and not for the sins of others. Besides, so far from being a willing victim, as the sufferer in the prophecy, his sufferings were most involuntary. The statement that 'he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death,' is appropriate when applied to an individual, but is utterly incomprehensible when applied to a nation. And so, also, when it is said, 'For the transgressions of my people was he stricken,' no meaning whatever can be assigned to the words on the supposition that the nation of Israel is spoken of. The person stricken and the person (my people) for whose transgression he was stricken, are identical: the passage becomes wholly unintelligible. In short, the idea that the Servant of the Lord here, in this Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, is a personification of Israel, is wholly inapplicable, and can only be forced to correspond with the prophecy by the most arbitrary assumptions.

2. This, however, is the general opinion of those who adopt the anti-Messianic interpretation. There are a few other suppositions which have been partially adopted. It has, for example, been sup-

posed that the Servant of the Lord is a personification of *the prophetic order*. 'The prophetic order,' observes Schenkel, 'was the great hidden blossom which early storms broke.' The prophets stood up as the great defenders of the worship of Jehovah; they denounced the idolatry and apostasy of their countrymen; they stood undaunted before wicked monarchs. Hence they were frequently persecuted; they were rejected by the wicked among the Jews; they were the scapegoats of the nation; they were often put to death; but yet they were recognised by God, they were the true Israel, the servant of the Lord. 'Thus saith the Lord, that confirmeth the word of His Servant, and performeth the counsel of His messengers' (Isa. xlv. 26). The prophet then here describes their sufferings, their courage and faithfulness in opposing idolatry, the self-sacrifice of themselves, and the final victory of their cause.

But it is evident that such a supposition is destitute of all foundation: the points of resemblance are few. The true prophets were certainly the servants of the Lord: they stood forward as His advocates, protesting against the wickedness of the nation, and seeking to re-establish among them the worship of God. They were also in general persecuted, as are all reformers and all preachers of righteousness to an ungodly nation. But they were not the substitutes of the nation. The volun-

tary and substitutionary nature of the sufferings here predicted can only by a forced interpretation correspond with the persecutions to which the prophets were subjected. So far also were the prophets from asserting their innocence, — that ‘they had done no violence, neither was any deceit found in their mouth,’—they were ever ready to abase themselves under a feeling of personal sinfulness. Nor were the prophets as a body ever exalted ; on the contrary, they were always treated with ignominy and hatred. And the individual traits of character stated are wholly inapplicable to such a collective body as the prophetic order. Even Hitzig observes : ‘The supposition that by the Servant of the Lord the prophetic order is to be understood, is destitute of all foundation and probability.’<sup>1</sup>

3. Others, again, and certainly with greater truth, consider the prophecy as applicable only to an *individual*. The description is too personal and too minute to be regarded as a mere personification. Accordingly, the prophecy has been referred to different persons, though, with the exception of Jeremiah, there are not two interpreters who agree upon the individual intended. Some refer the prophecy to one of the kings of Judah, as Uzziah, Hezekiah, or Josiah ; one thinks that Isaiah here speaks of himself, and not of any other man ; another supposes that the ‘Servant of the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Hengstenberg, *Christology*, vol. ii. p. 339.

Lord' is Cyrus, who granted permission to Israel to return to their own land ; another, that He is Zerubbabel, the leader of the returning Israelites ; another, that He is Judas Maccabeus ; and another, that the subject of prophecy is the royal house of David, who were almost extirpated when Nebuchadnezzar slew the sons of Zedekiah. All these are hypotheses without any foundation to rest upon—mere guesses which require no refutation.

A few interpreters suppose that the prophet Jeremiah is here meant. No prophet was so highly esteemed by the Jews. He was invested with a peculiar sanctity: he is represented as appearing in vision, and interceding for the people (2 Macc. xv. 13, 14): his return was expected; and in the Gospels we learn that among the different conjectures entertained concerning Jesus, one was that He was Jeremiah (Matt. xvi. 13, 14). This opinion was favoured by the illustrious Grotius, and has recently been revived and defended by Bunsen, a man who must always be venerated for his deep piety and extensive erudition, whatever views may be entertained concerning his theological opinions. Of Jeremiah, it is asserted, does the prophet speak. He was the man of sorrows,—beaten, despised, rejected,—the weeping prophet. He was taken from prison and from judgment. He says of himself, 'I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter' (Jer. xi. 19), thus

verifying the words of the prophecy, 'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb.' But surely this is mere trifling. The mere general features of suffering, and the mere accidental coincidence of words, are not sufficient to establish an identity. In no sense whatever can it be affirmed that Jeremiah was a substitute for the sins of others. Nor have we any account of Jeremiah's death, whether 'he was cut off out of the land of the living.' And so far was he from making intercession for the transgressors, from praying for the forgiveness of his enemies, that he makes intercession against them: 'Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.' 'Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from Thy sight' (Jer. xii. 3, xviii. 23).<sup>1</sup>

4. One other anti-Messianic solution remains to be noticed,—a solution more dwelt upon in former times than in the present day, and yet a solution which appears to be more plausible than any; and that is the doctrine of a *twofold Messiah*. According to this view, there are two Messiahs who form the subject of Hebrew prophecy: there is a suffering Messiah, Messiah ben Joseph of the tribe of Ephraim; and there is a glorified Messiah, Messiah ben David of the tribe of Judah. All the predictions which refer to the sufferings of the Messiah

<sup>1</sup> Supplement II.

are applicable to the former ; and all the predictions which refer to His glory apply to the latter. Concerning the Messiah ben Joseph, it is asserted that He shall precede and prepare the way for the second Messiah ; that He shall live a life of poverty and wretchedness, and shall at length perish in His contest with the powers of evil. It is to Him that this Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah refers ; and it is to Him that these words of the prophet Zechariah apply : ‘ They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn ’ (Zech. xii. 10). Concerning the Messiah ben David, it is asserted that He shall conquer all His enemies ; that He shall sit upon the throne of David for ever ; that He shall never see death, but shall rule in righteousness and glory. The one is the Man of Sorrows ; the other is the great Anointed King.

Now, when not considered in the light of the fulfilment, the two opposite ideas of suffering and glory must appear an inexplicable problem ; and therefore we do not wonder that the Jewish interpreters of prophecy should have recourse to this idea of a twofold Messiah. But, evidently, this is a mere hypothesis to escape a difficulty. There is no assertion of the distinction in Scripture ; on the contrary, in various passages, suffering and glory are referred to the same person. There are not two Messiahs, but one : He who was to be the mighty God was also to be the Man of Sorrows ; and

He who was to sit on the throne of David for ever, and of the increase of whose dominion there was to be no end, was also to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and to be cut off out of the land of the living.<sup>1</sup>

All the anti-Messianic interpretations, then, are wholly inadequate to explain the prediction. The assertion of substitution is the rock on which they all split. The sinless One is here substituted for the sins of others: 'For the transgression of my people was He smitten; the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' Surely the sins of the Gentiles were not laid on the Jews, according to one interpretation; neither was the prophetic order the substitute for Israel, according to another; nor did Jeremiah bear the iniquities of the nation, according to a third. All these are mere unfounded suppositions, which do not meet the necessities of the case.

## II. *The Positive or Messianic Interpretation of the Prophecy.*

We have seen how inapplicable and forced are all the anti-Messianic interpretations of the prophecy—how unable they are to afford any plausible answer to the inquiry, 'Of whom speaketh the

<sup>1</sup> Supplement III.

prophet this?' But when we apply the prediction to Jesus,—when we take into account not merely His sufferings, but the glory which followed; the success of His religion, the supreme exaltation of His name, the kingdom which He has erected through suffering,—the correspondence between the prophecy and the fulfilment must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind. He suffered as it was predicted that the Servant of the Lord should suffer. He was rejected and despised of men. His own nation did not believe on Him. He was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; during His whole life He was exposed to the persecutions and misrepresentations of His enemies. His sufferings were eminently substitutionary, inflicted on Him not for His own sake, but on account of others. Of Him, and of Him only, can it in the truest sense be said, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.' He endured all these sufferings with patience. He was silent before Pilate; He opened not His mouth in complaint, but submitted to the cruellest indignities without a murmur. He made intercession for the transgressors; on the cross He prayed for the forgiveness of His murderers. He was put to death, cut off out of the land of the living. But although He died the death of a criminal, yet He was buried in a rich man's grave. 'He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His

death.' He was exalted, as it was here predicted that the Servant of the Lord should be exalted. Notwithstanding His sufferings, His doctrine has succeeded, His reign is perpetual, His seed is numerous, and the pleasure of the Lord has prospered in His hand.

We do not see how any one can read this remarkable prophecy without being struck with its pointed resemblance to the character, sufferings, and death of the Lord Jesus. The portrait is complete: the resemblance is striking and unmistakeable. Indeed, it seems more like a history of the past than a prediction of the future: a statement of the doctrines of the Gospel made by some New Testament writer, as St. Paul or St. John, rather than a prediction of some Old Testament prophet. The seven centuries which intervened between Isaiah and Christ seem to be bridged over, and the future is painted in the characters of the present. In no portion of Scripture, even in the most Evangelical parts of the New Testament, is the doctrine of the atonement, that grand characteristic of Christianity, so clearly stated as in these words of the prophet: 'Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.'

And yet nothing is more indisputable than that these words were uttered centuries before our Lord came into this world.

To this Messianic interpretation it is, however, objected that the Servant of the Lord is in many passages of these later chapters of Isaiah expressly called Israel. We have the prophet's own declaration of the meaning of the expression which he employs. But we have already sufficiently proved that in no sense of the term can the nation of Israel denote the sufferer in this prediction. Either the prophet employs the title 'Servant of the Lord' with various meanings throughout the prophecy, or the Messiah is called Israel because He is the representative and personification of the nation—because ideal Israel finds its realization in His person. Or it may be that the representation of the Servant of the Lord begins with a collective subject, but as the prophet proceeds the collective idea is dropped, and in this Fifty-third chapter an individual is represented.<sup>1</sup> But whatever may be the solution, certainly the Servant of the Lord in this chapter is not the nation of Israel, but the great and mysterious Messiah—He on whom the hopes and faith of the nation were founded. 'The idea of the Servant of the Lord,' observes Delitzsch, 'to speak figuratively, assumes the form of a pyramid. The base was Israel as a whole; the central section

<sup>1</sup> The view promulgated by Oehler.

was that Israel which was not merely Israel according to the flesh, but Israel according to the spirit ; and the apex is the person of the Mediator of salvation, springing out of Israel.'<sup>1</sup> Or as Oehler finely represents it : 'The prophetic view ascends in these discourses step by step, as it were, from the broad space covered by the foundations of a cathedral up to the dome, on which the cross is planted.' Indeed, in various parts of this prophecy the Servant of the Lord is contrasted with and distinguished from the people of Israel ; as for example to the Messiah only, and not to Israel, can these words apply : 'And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be my Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel : I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth' (Isa. xlix. 5, 6).

Another remarkable peculiarity connected with this prophecy is that it is a prediction at once of a suffering and of a victorious Messiah. Isaiah here, as St. Peter expresses it, 'testified beforehand of the sufferings of the Messiah, and of the glory that

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch *On Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 174.

should follow' (I Pet. i. 11). In other predictions these two phases of the Messiah's character and life are generally found separately. In some prophecies Messiah is a mighty King, sitting on the throne of David, ruling in the midst of His enemies, extending His dominion over all the nations of the world; the kings and rulers of the earth kiss His sceptre; He rules in righteousness, and executes judgment and justice on the earth. He is the great Prince of Peace, and under His protection His people shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. But in other prophecies the portrait is changed, and a suffering Messiah is presented to our view. His countenance is marred more than that of other men; He appears as a worm and no man—the object of the people's scorn; His hands and His feet are pierced, and the sword of divine vengeance is raised against Him. Now, in this prophecy, both of these descriptions are combined; the suffering precedes the glory. He who was the Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected, wounded and bruised, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and who was cut off out of the land of the living, who made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death, is the same who, after the conflict, shall see His seed and prolong His days, and who shall divide His portion with the great and share the spoil with the strong. Here suffering and glory,

the cross and the crown, are combined. In any other being these opposite qualities of glory and shame would be regarded as plain contradictions, but they meet in Jesus with their full accomplishment.

The doctrine of a suffering Messiah was peculiarly offensive to the Jews; and, considering the views of a victorious Messiah which then prevailed, we do not wonder at the rejection of Jesus by His countrymen. Even the apostles themselves could with great difficulty and extreme reluctance be brought to assent to the notion of a suffering Messiah. Peter rebuked Jesus when He spoke of His sufferings; and even after His resurrection, our Lord had to reprove the erroneous views of His disciples: 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?' (Luke xxiv. 25, 26). And in the present day the doctrine of a suffering Messiah is to the Jews a stumbling-block; it forms no part of their creed, and therefore they refuse to see in the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah a Messianic prediction.

But although recent Jewish writers are unanimous in considering Isa. liii. as non-Messianic, yet this was not the view of their ancient Rabbis, though many of those ancient writers who acknowledged the Messianic character of the prophecy explained away those parts of it which appear to foretell a

suffering Messiah. Thus the Targum of Jonathan freely admits that the Messiah is the subject of this prediction. Isa. lii. 13 is thus paraphrased: 'Behold, my Servant, the Messiah, shall prosper: He shall be exalted and increased and strengthened exceedingly;' and the Messianic idea is represented as pervading the whole prophecy. But there is no admission of a suffering Messiah. It is not the Messiah who is to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, but the Gentile nations who are thus to be led captive by Him. 'He will give the mighty nations like sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before its shearers, so not one shall open his mouth before Him. He will strip all kings of their glory; they shall be feeble and in pain, like a man of sorrows, and one delivered over to diseases.' And the tenth verse is thus rendered: 'It pleased the Lord to prove and purify the remnant of His people in order to cleanse their souls from sin; they shall look upon the kingdom of their Messiah, and their sons and their daughters shall be multiplied; they shall prolong their days, and the doers of the law of the Lord shall prosper in His good pleasure.'<sup>1</sup> The portrait is removed and another is substituted in its place; instead of a suffering, a victorious Messiah is presented to our view—not the Man of Sorrows, but the King of glory is here displayed. It certainly required no little ingenuity

<sup>1</sup> Young's *Christology of the Targums*.

to explain away all those passages which so obviously speak of suffering.

There are, however, numerous quotations from ancient Jewish documents which not only admit the Messianic character of this prophecy, but also involve the notion of a suffering Messiah. According to these quotations, the sufferings described in this chapter refer to the Messiah—He is the Sufferer; indeed, there is in these views a near approach to the Christian Messianic interpretation of this prophecy, without, however, any acknowledgment of its application to Jesus. These quotations are collected by Wünsche in his valuable tract, entitled, *Die Leiden des Messias*. They are of a most interesting nature, and prove satisfactorily that the denial of a suffering Messiah by the modern Jews is a departure from the faith of their ancestors. Thus in the tract *Sanhedrim*, in the Talmud, there is a statement of the titles of the Messiah, and in it occurs the following passage: ‘The Rabbis say that His name is the Leprous One of the house of Rab; as it is written, “Surely He hath borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.”’ From the *Siphre debé Rab*, a Midrash on Numbers and Deuteronomy, there is the following quotation: ‘King Messiah humbled Himself, and made Himself of no reputation on account of transgressors, as it is written, “He was

wounded for our iniquities." Much more shall He merit for all generations, as it is written, "And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The *Bereshit Rabba*, belonging to the sixth century, has the following singular note on Gen. xxiv. 67: 'And Isaac brought Rebecca into the tent of Sarah his mother;' 'This is King Messiah who lived in the age of the wicked; but He rejected them, and chose the Holy One and His holy name, in order that He might serve Him with all His heart; and He applied His heart to seek mercy for Israel, to fast and to be afflicted for them, as it is said, "He was wounded for our transgressions." When Israel sins, He seeks mercy for them, as again it is said, "By His stripes we are healed;" and again, "He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."' In the cabbalistic book *Zohar*, there is the following remarkable passage: 'In the garden of Eden there is a certain apartment which is called the apartment of the sick. Into this the Messiah goes, and calls all the diseases, and pains, and chastisements of the Israelites to come to Him, and they all come to Him. And if He took them not away from Israel, and laid them not upon Himself, no man would be able to bear the chastisements of Israel, which are inflicted on them on account of the transgressions of the law; and this is it which is written, "He has taken upon Himself our sick-

nesses.”’ And according to the *Midrash Samuel*, the afflictions of the world are divided into three parts: one part is laid on David and the fathers; a second part is laid on Israel in banishment; and a third part is laid on the Messiah; and in proof of this assertion, those words of Isaiah are quoted: ‘And He was wounded for our transgressions.’

This ancient application of Isa. liii. to the Messiah is recognised and acknowledged by several celebrated Jewish writers. Thus Rabbi Abarbanel, who lived in the fifteenth century, observes: ‘Christian scholars interpret this prophecy as referring to that man who was crucified in Jerusalem about the end of the second temple, and who according to their view was the Son of the blessed God, who became man in the womb of the virgin. But Jonathan ben Uziel explains it as relating to the Messiah who has yet to come. And this is the opinion of the ancients in many of their Midrashim.’ And Rabbi Alshech, who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century, observes: ‘On the testimony of tradition, our old Rabbis have unanimously admitted that King Messiah is here (in Isa. lii. 13-15) spoken of. Therefore we also, in agreement with them, conclude that the subject of prophecy is David, that is, Messiah, as is evident, and is confirmed by Scripture, for the prophet Ezekiel in the name of God says: “And David my Servant shall

be king over them.”’<sup>1</sup> The probability is that it was not until the controversy arose between the Jews and the Christians that the denial of a suffering Messiah, and the consequent non-Messianic application of *Isa. liii.* became the recognised opinion of the Jewish Church. Gesenius himself observes: ‘It was only the later Jews who abandoned this interpretation, no doubt in consequence of their controversies with the Christians.’<sup>2</sup>

We can *now* easily see the solution of that problem—the reconciliation between the prophecies of a glorified and of a suffering Messiah—which so greatly perplexed those Jews who lived before their historical fulfilment in the person of Jesus our Lord. But if we place ourselves in their position, we shall easily see how dark and obscure—what an inexplicable paradox these prophecies must have been. It is not at all to be wondered at, that, attracted by the view of a glorified Messiah, they overlooked entirely the prophetic intimations of His suffering; or that, perplexed by these contrary descriptions, they had recourse to the notion of a twofold Messiah. Indeed, before their fulfilment, I do not see how the prophets themselves could have understood their own prophecies with any degree of correctness. No wonder that they anxiously searched into what ‘the Spirit of Christ which was

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Wünsche’s *Leiden des Messias*, pp. 43, 44.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Hengstenberg’s *Christology*, vol. ii. p. 310.

in them did testify.' The fulfilment is the only key to the solution of the enigma. The sufferings of Jesus, and the future success of His religion, enable us to decipher the twofold prediction. All that was before dark and perplexing, has now become plain and obvious. And it is this fulfilment of such a complicated prophecy that proves to a demonstration the Messiahship of Jesus. Nay, His glory shines forth from His sufferings; for it was the fact of these sufferings being the expiation of the world's sins, which has given rise to that glory. The cross, the emblem of suffering, has become the emblem of victory; and the crown of shame has been converted into the crown of honour. Surely, then, we may with all confidence give an answer to the question of the Ethiopian eunuch, 'Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?' He speaks of Jesus our Lord, who died for our sins, but who also rose again for our justification, at once the suffering and the glorified Messiah. 'He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death.'

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## SUPPLEMENT I.

## EXEGETICAL REMARKS ON ISAIAH LIII.

I DO not intend to give any exegesis of this wonderful passage. This has been already sufficiently done by many learned biblical critics. The reader is especially referred to the *Commentaries on Isaiah* by Gesenius, Knobel, and Delitzsch, to Hengstenberg's *Christology*, to Bishop Lowth's *Translation of Isaiah*, and to Urwick's *Servant of Jehovah*. And, indeed, our own version of the prophecy is so peculiarly excellent and happy as to require little emendation. I merely add a few notes on some passages which are either in themselves peculiarly interesting, or in which the reading is doubtful, or of which the interpretation is disputed.

Ver. 4. In this verse the word נָגַיָּע (*Nagiua*), rendered in our version *stricken*, has given rise to the curious notion that the Messiah was to be a leper. This verb, signifying *to touch*, is the term usually employed for being stricken with leprosy. The noun נֶגַע is used sixty times in Lev. xiii. and xiv. of leprosy.<sup>1</sup> From this circumstance, the Vulgate renders the passage *et nos putavimus eum*

<sup>1</sup> See also 2 Kings xv. 5, where the same word is applied to Uzziah, who was a leper until the day of his death.

*quasi leprosum.* Hence among the Jews the idea arose that the Messiah was to be a leper. Sometimes this notion is restricted to the Messiah ben Joseph, but generally it is referred to the Messiah without qualification. Thus in the Talmud it is said of the Messiah, that He sits before the gates of Rome among the sick and leprous. And in the tract *Sanhedrim*, we have the following curious passage: 'What is the name of the Messiah?' They of the school of Rabbi Shilo said Shilo is His name; for it is said, 'till Shilo comes.' They of the school of Rabbi Jannai said Jinnon (He shall flourish) is His name; for it is said, 'His name shall flourish before the sun.' They of the school of Rabbi Chanina said Chanina (favour) is His name; for it is said, 'He will show you no favour.' Some say Menachem (the Comforter) is His name; for it is said, 'The Comforter that shall relieve my soul is far from me.' But the Rabbis say, 'His name is the Leper of the house of Rab; for it is written, "Surely He hath borne our sins and carried our sorrows, and we did esteem Him stricken (עָנָה),"<sup>1</sup>—that is, according to the Jewish interpretation, stricken with the plague of leprosy.

Ver. 8. The words, 'He was taken from prison and from judgment,' might perhaps be better translated, 'From oppression and from judgment He was taken away.' The Septuagint renders them: ἐν τῷ

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche, *Die Leiden des Messias*, pp. 62, 63.

ταπεινώσει ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἦρθη, in *His humiliation His judgment was taken away*. And these words are given almost verbatim in Acts viii. 33. The meaning has, however, been much disputed. Calvin supposes that the reference is to the glory of the Messiah. ‘The prophet,’ he observes, ‘here declares that He was rescued from oppression and judgment or condemnation, and afterwards was exalted to the highest rank of honour.’<sup>1</sup> In this interpretation he is followed by Vitranga and Hengstenberg. Gesenius and Meyer suppose that the meaning is that He was taken away or delivered from judgment by death. And Bengel and Lechler render the passage, ‘The judgment pronounced on Him by His enemies was taken away, that is, cancelled or set aside by God.’ The words appear to refer not to the glory, but to the sufferings of the Messiah, and to denote the oppression and unjust judgment which was passed upon Him, and put into execution by His death; hence the meaning would be, ‘By an oppressive judgment He was taken away,’ that is, put to death. So substantially, Knobel, De Wette, and Ewald.

The next clause, ‘And who shall declare His generation?’ has given rise to a great diversity of opinion. וְיִבְרַח signifies *an age or generation of men*. The Septuagint renders the passage: τὴν γενεὰν αὐτοῦ τίς διηγῆσεται; and the Vulgate: *Genera-*

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, *in loco*.

*tionem ejus quis enarrabit?* There is thus no difficulty in the translation of the words. The Fathers in general referred it to the mystery of the Messiah's deity: 'Who shall declare His generation, His divine Sonship?'—a meaning which ill suits the connection with the following clause. Calvin, Vitringa, Wordsworth, and Hengstenberg refer the words to the duration of the kingdom and the spiritual seed of the Messiah: 'Who shall count the number of His spiritual offspring?' Bishop Lowth renders the passage, 'His manner of life, who shall declare?' and thinks that it refers to the custom among the Jews, that before any one was punished for a capital offence, the proclamation was made, 'Whoever knows anything of the innocence of this man, let him come and declare it.' And the prediction is, that in the case of the Messiah no one would be found to stand up in His defence.<sup>1</sup> But the most obvious and natural meaning is to refer it to the contemporaries of the Messiah, that generation in the midst of which He lived. Thus Meyer and De Wette render the passage, 'Who shall set forth the extreme wickedness of His contemporaries?' Such a meaning certainly best suits the context, 'for,' as a proof or demonstration of this indescribable wickedness, 'He was cut off from the land of the living;' that is, He was put to death.

<sup>1</sup> Lowth, *in loco*.

There is a difficulty in the construction of the last clause of ver. 8: נָנַע לְמִי מִפְּשָׁעַי עָמִי, *for the transgression of my people was He smitten*. It is asserted that לְמִי is plural, and used instead of מִפְּשָׁעַי. The non-Messianic interpreters refer it to the collective idea of the Servant of Jehovah; but this is inappropriate, as throughout the whole prophecy an individual is represented. Hengstenberg renders the clause, 'For the transgression of my people, whose the punishment.'<sup>1</sup> Others, however, assert that לְמִי is in the singular, and used instead of לִי. It is so used in other parts of Scripture (Gen. ix. 26, 27; Job xxii. 2; Ps. ix. 7; Isa. xlv. 15). Accordingly they render the passage, 'For the transgressions of my people strokes were to Him.' The Septuagint evidently read τῶν, for they thus render the passage: ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον, *for the transgression of my people, He was led to death*. This appears also to have been the reading in the time of Origen; for he appeals to this passage, in his controversy with Celsus, in proof of the assertion that not the nation of Israel, but an individual was meant. 'We seemed,' he observes, 'to press them (the Jews) hardest with the expression, "For the transgression of my people was He led away to death." For if the people, according to them, are the subject of prophecy, how is the man said

<sup>1</sup> Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. ii. pp. 291, 292.

to be led away to death because of the iniquities of the people of God, unless he be a different person from that people of God?'<sup>1</sup> No doubt Origen quotes from the Septuagint; but as he was well acquainted with the Hebrew original, and was accustomed to quote from it, it is argued that we cannot suppose that he would have urged this passage in a controversy with a Jew, as so decisive, if the Greek version had not here agreed with the Hebrew text.<sup>2</sup> Hence Michaelis, Kennicott, and Lowth suppose that this was the original reading, and that the letter  $\eta$  has dropped out of the manuscripts. This certainly removes all difficulty and gives a clear sense to the passage. It is, however, not easy to understand how a reading so clear should be changed into one so obscure; and the mere authority of the Septuagint and Origen is not sufficient to cause it to be adopted. I would therefore retain the present reading, and interpret  $\eta$  in the singular.

Ver. 9. There are several difficulties connected with this verse. In our version it is rendered: 'And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.' The Messiah Himself is here represented as having made His own grave. Others suppose that the implied subject is God: 'He assigned Him.' It is best to take the verb as impersonal: 'Man appointed Him His grave with

<sup>1</sup> Origen, *Contra Celsum*, i. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Lowth *On Isaiah*, p. 364.

the wicked.' And hence the reference is to the enemies of the Messiah or the Jews, who are also referred to in the previous verse: 'For the transgression of my people was He smitten.'<sup>1</sup>

The phrase, 'with the rich in His death,' is supposed to be analogous to the preceding phrase, 'He made His grave with the wicked.' Hence some suppose עֲשִׂיר to denote *wicked men*. Thus Calvin observes: 'By rich men he meant violent men; for men grow haughty and disdainful on account of their riches, and abuse their wealth to savage cruelty. And thus by wicked men and rich men the same thing is denoted.'<sup>2</sup> But there is no reason for assigning this meaning to the word: it is used in Hebrew to signify *rich* without any reference to character.

The word בְּמָתָי, rendered in our version *in His death*, is supposed by some to be the plural of בְּמָה, a *high place*, and hence rendered by them *His sepulchre*. The word is supposed to be used in this sense in Ezek. xliii. 7, where mention is made of 'the carcasses of their kings in their high places,' that is, in their sepulchres. This meaning of the word is advocated by such distinguished critics as Lowth, Castalio,<sup>3</sup> De Wette, Ewald, Böttcher, and

<sup>1</sup> The Septuagint renders the verse: 'And I will give the wicked for His burial, and the rich for His death.'

<sup>2</sup> Calvin's *Commentary on Isaiah*, *in loco*.

<sup>3</sup> 'Cum divite sepulchrum,' Castalio's *Biblia sacra*.

Dr. Samuel Davidson.<sup>1</sup> This would give to the passage a meaning at once plain and appropriate: 'They appointed Him His grave with the wicked, but with a rich man was His tomb.'<sup>2</sup> The two clauses assert what was the appointment of His enemies, and what was the actual occurrence. The first clause states that His enemies assigned Him His grave with the wicked, that is, with criminals; the second clause informs us with whom it was actually assigned in the providence of God: 'but with a rich man was His tomb.'

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## SUPPLEMENT II.

### THE NON-MESSIANIC INTERPRETATIONS OF ISAIAH LIII.

I. AS stated in the lecture, the most prevalent opinion among recent Jewish writers is that by the Servant of Jehovah, whose sufferings are here portrayed, is meant *the nation of Israel*. According to them, the prophecy describes the misery to which Israel is subjected, his stedfast adherence to the worship of the one living and true God amid the

<sup>1</sup> Davidson's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. iii. p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> See Lowth *On Isaiah*, p. 364.

idolatry of the nations, and his final deliverance and glory. This opinion has been adopted and maintained by Rashi, Abenezra, David Kimchi, Lipmann, Adler, and other distinguished Jewish writers. Among them, however, there is some diversity of opinion. Some suppose that the whole Jewish nation is personified; whilst others, as Rashi and Lipmann, restrict the prophecy to the pious portion of the people. Thus Rabbi Rashi, commenting on Isa. lii. 13: 'Behold, my Servant shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high,' explains the words: 'Behold, in the latter days my servant Jacob shall prosper, that is, the righteous who are in his midst.'<sup>1</sup> Most of those Christian writers, who have adopted a non-Messianic interpretation, have also given a somewhat similar explanation, but with a considerable diversity of opinion. Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Hendewerk, Köster, and Hitzig suppose that the whole nation of Israel is the subject of prophecy; Ewald, Bleek, Riehm, and Dr. Davidson think that the ideal Israel<sup>2</sup>—Israel in the imagination of the prophet—is referred to; whilst Paulus, Thenius, Anger, and Kuenen restrict the application to the true worshippers of God as contrasted with the ungodly. Knobel supposes that we must distinguish the Servant of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Wünsche's *Leiden des Messias*, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Bleek's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. ii. p. 62; Riehm's *Messianic Prophecies*, p. 205; Davidson's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. iii. p. 65.

Jehovah in a wider and narrower sense: in a wider sense, the whole people of Israel are meant, so far as they had not apostatized from Jehovah, thus both the true and false worshippers; in the narrow sense, the true worshippers of Jehovah, the kernel of the nation, are meant; and he asserts that in this prophecy the phrase is sometimes used in the one sense and sometimes in the other.<sup>1</sup> Oehler adopts the peculiar opinion that at first the Servant of Jehovah was used in a collective sense, denoting Israel; but as the prophet proceeded, the collective sense is dropped and an individual is represented, as is especially the case in this Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. 'The figure,' he observes, 'represents first the servants of God collectively, from which the holy seed proceeds which is to form the stock of the new church, and then culminates in an individual. This Servant, the ideal Israel, is accordingly called to establish judgment in the earth, and the isles wait for His law. He is the light of the Gentiles, and through Him the salvation of the Lord is to penetrate to the end of the earth.' And, again, he observes: 'The prophetic intuition of the Servant of Jehovah in the Book of Isaiah (xl.–lxvi.) commences with the nation, but culminates in an individual. So early as chap. xlii. and xlix., the view is gradually transferred from the nation to an individual distinct from the nation, who (xlii. 6) negotiates a covenant for

<sup>1</sup> Knobel, *Der Prophet Isaiah*, p. 435.

the people, and then becomes the light of the Gentiles, who, as mediator of the covenant, re-settles the people, like a second Joshua, in the possession of the land (xlix. 8). Even if these passages are got over by referring the Servant, so far as He is distinguished from the people, to that germ which represents the genuine Israel, the aggregate of the servants of God, including the true prophets, chap. liii., on the contrary, can only refer to an individual.<sup>1</sup> This theory is very ingenious; it accounts for all those passages in which the Servant of Jehovah is called Israel and the 'Seed of Jacob;' and it tries to reconcile both views—the opinion of those who consider that by the Servant of Jehovah the nation of Israel is meant, and the opinion of those who consider that a personal Messiah is intended.

2. The second non-Messianic interpretation mentioned in the lecture is, that by the Servant of Jehovah is meant the *prophetical order*. This opinion is not nearly so generally maintained as the idea that the nation of Israel is intended: still it is adopted and defended by several distinguished theologians. Among its advocates are to be reckoned Gesenius, De Wette, Schenkel, and, to some extent, Umbreit and Hofmann. Umbreit remarks: 'The Servant of Jehovah is the collective body of the prophets or the prophetical order, which is here repre-

<sup>1</sup> Oehler's *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol. ii. pp. 400, 425.

sented as the sacrificial victim taking upon itself the sins of the people.'<sup>1</sup> But he considers that the prophetic order is only fully realized in the Messiah, the ideal prophet; and he thus finds an application of the prophecy to Jesus, as the Anointed Prophet, in whom resided the fulness of the prophetic gift. The view of Hofmann, as given in his *Schriftbeweis*, so far as the meaning of that obscure but most suggestive writer can be understood, is somewhat similar. The vocation of Israel, he observes, is that of a prophet or of a witness of God to mankind, as it is said: 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my Servant whom I have chosen' (Isa. xliii. 10). This is especially seen in the prophetic order, who were despised and rejected by the people, as was pre-eminently the case with Isaiah himself. But the culmination of this prophetic mission will be especially seen in Him who is the ideal prophet, namely, the Messiah.<sup>2</sup> In this view Hofmann carries out his peculiar notion that history itself is prophecy.

3. The third non-Messianic view adverted to in the lecture is, that by the Servant of Jehovah *an individual* is meant. The personal traits in the prophecy have constrained to the adoption of this view. Accordingly various persons have been fixed upon. Augusti supposes that Uzziah is here

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. ii. p. 323.

<sup>2</sup> Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1, p. 95 ff.

meant, Bahrtdt fixes on Hezekiah, and Steudel on the prophet Isaiah himself. Rabbi Abarbanel at first supposed that the nation of Israel was meant, but he changed his opinion, and made King Josiah the subject of the prophecy. 'The whole prophecy,' he observes, 'was uttered with reference to King Josiah.'<sup>1</sup> The person, however, who has been most frequently fixed upon is the prophet Jeremiah. This opinion was first promulgated by Rabbi Saadiah Gaon; it was afterwards favoured by the illustrious Grotius, and has recently been defended by Baron Bunsen. Professor Williams, in his theological essay on Bunsen's *Biblical Researches*, expresses himself favourably regarding it. He observes that if any single person should be selected, it is Jeremiah, and that 'the figure of Jeremiah stood forth amongst the prophets, and tinged the delineation of the true Israel, that is, the *faithful remnant* (whom he considers to be meant by the Servant of Jehovah), just as the figure of Laud or Hammond might represent the Caroline Church in the eyes of her poet.'<sup>2</sup> Ewald was so struck with the personal characteristics of this prophecy that he relinquished in regard to this chapter the view that the ideal Israel is meant, and supposes that some unknown sufferer—some single martyr—is intended; and he regards this portion as inter-

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche's *Die Leiden des Messias*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays and Reviews*, p. 74, 8th ed.

polated from an older book. To such straits are non-Messianic interpreters forced to have recourse.

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### SUPPLEMENT III.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF A TWOFOLD MESSIAH.

AN interesting account of this doctrine is given by Wünsche, in an appendix attached to his admirable treatise, *Die Leiden des Messias*. According to this doctrine, the Messianic prophecies refer not to one, but to two Messiahs. There is a glorified Messiah, to whom all those prophecies which speak of an Anointed King, the glories of His reign, and the extent of His mighty empire, refer; and there is a suffering Messiah, to whom refer all those predictions which foretell suffering, lowliness, and death. The suffering Messiah is to precede the glorified. The first is Messiah the son of Joseph, who is to precede, to prepare the way, to suffer, and to die. The second is Messiah the son of David, who is to follow, to conquer, to reign, to sit on the throne of David, and to abide for ever. Thus the Targum on Cant. iv. 5 says: 'Thy two Redeemers who shall deliver thee, Messiah ben David and Messiah ben Ephraim, are like to Moses and Aaron, who

again are compared to the two young roes which are twins.'<sup>1</sup> This fiction of a twofold Messiah arose about the second century, from an attempt to interpret Zech. xii. 10: 'They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for Him.' According to this view, the Messiah who is pierced is Messiah the son of Joseph, and whose death was the cause of bitter lamentations among the Israelites.

The reason of the name Messiah the son of David is obvious. According to the prophets, the Messiah was to be a descendant of David, and hence 'the son of David' became one of the most common Messianic titles. The other Messiah appears to have been called the son of Joseph, or the son of Ephraim, because He was supposed to arise from the kingdom of Israel, as the Messiah ben David was to spring from the kingdom of Judah; so that both kingdoms were to give birth to a Messiah. Thus an ancient book, entitled, *Mikwêh Israel*, written by Manasseh ben Israel, and which treats chiefly of the redemption of Israel, gives the following reason of the name: 'We may affirm that He is called ben Ephraim, because He sprang out of the tribe of Ephraim, and became the head of the ten tribes which in the Sacred Scriptures are called by the name of Ephraim,

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche's *Leiden des Messias*, p. 111; Young's *Christology of the Targums*.

because their first King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, was of the tribe of Ephraim. He is also called ben Joseph, and that not only because He was descended from the tribe of Joseph, but because Joseph was in a manner a type and emblem of the whole house of Israel. Like as Joseph experienced sufferings, was shut up in prison, was for a long time concealed from his brethren, but afterwards prospered and attained to the government, so is it with the ten tribes who are shut up, imprisoned, and concealed from all men. But in the latter days they will, as Joseph, attain to great prosperity and riches.'<sup>1</sup>

Very different opinions are entertained among Jewish writers concerning the work and office of Messiah ben Joseph. It is, however, generally agreed that the Messiah ben Joseph will be the forerunner of Messiah ben David, that He will suffer and be put to death. To Him this prophecy in the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah refers: He is 'the Servant of the Lord,' 'the Man of Sorrows,' spoken of by the prophet. Some describe Him as a warrior, who shall be slain in battle; whilst others regard Him as a voluntary sufferer, who shall expose Himself to sufferings and death for the sake of others. 'The Messiah ben Joseph,' observes an ancient Jewish writer, 'will not come on His own account, but for the sake of Messiah

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche's *Leiden des Messias*, p. 116.

ben David ; for He will sacrifice His life and pour it out in death, and His blood will atone for the people of the Lord.'<sup>1</sup> He is represented as living a life of sorrow and hardship, exposed to persecution, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, and at length falling a prey to His enemies—the Gentile nations—and by them put to death ; but this death paved the way for the advent and triumph of Messiah ben David. As stated in the lecture, this view of a twofold Messiah is now generally relinquished by Jewish writers, and is chiefly interesting as an ingenious attempt to reconcile the apparent contradiction between the prophetic intimations of a suffering and of a glorified Messiah—intimations which, as we have seen, are blended together in the prophecy under consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche's *Leiden des Messias*, p. 115.