

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

*THE CONSUMMATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT  
IN JESUS CHRIST.*

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT REACHED ITS CONSUMMATION  
IN THE APPEARANCE AND WORK OF JESUS.

THIS proposition can be best explained and demonstrated on the following lines of thought.

1. The appearance and work of Jesus are presented as a development or rather as the culmination of a history which began in earlier times.

Many besides myself must be conscious of a thrill of emotion when they read in the book of Isaiah the anxious question which sounds from the mountainous region of Seir, the dwelling-place of the Edomites to the south of the Dead Sea—a question twice repeated because of its urgency: “*Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?*” Not less striking are the words borne upon the air as the answer of the guardian or watchman (i.e. the prophet), “If ye will inquire, inquire ye; turn ye, come” (Isa. xxi. 11 f.). A similar question to that of this passage, “*Watchman, what of the night?*” came once more in actual truth in a later age from the shore-country of the Dead Sea. I mean the question which John the Baptist sent to Jesus from his prison in the fortress of Machärus, and which, as we remember, was as follows: “Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” Jesus in His answer said nothing as to any longer waiting. Instead, He pointed the questioner to His miracles as the

beneficent results of His superhuman gifts of power ; and to the message, already proclaimed among men, of the Gospel, the glad tidings of the dawn of a new epoch in the history of the kingdom of God. Jesus, therefore, considered it quite proper that His appearance and His doings should be viewed as a *continuation* ; and He solved the doubt which, as we can readily understand, haunted John as he languished in his dungeon, by explaining that His deeds formed the *termination* of the preceding history of the kingdom of God. Thus the very first fact made clear in the coming of Jesus to earth was that the Old Testament history in general does not form a *process of development without an end*.

But, further, the appearance of Jesus in the domain of religion proved this especially, that the *prophecy* of the Old Testament was *not a call without an echo*.

We hear the echo in the first sentence which Jesus uttered. When He cried to the men of His age, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," there was a sonorous echo of the thought as to the super-earthly kingdom of God which was uttered in the passages on the pilgrimage of the patriarchs and the priestly kingdom, right on to the words of Daniel (ii.'44) about the kingdom which should triumph over all the powers of earth and abide for evermore. It was not, then, in vain—let us note this especially—that the prophets of the Old Testament, in a life shadowed by conflict and misunderstanding, had held firmly to the conviction that, in spite of the thousandfold unfaithfulness of Israel, the cause of their God was moving forward to a brilliant triumph. No, *the prophets were not always misunderstood*. Jesus acknowledged their truthfulness, and made it possible for their glorified vision to behold as an actual reality that great turning-point in the history of the divine kingdom of grace which they had once proclaimed.

The next point will illustrate what I have said in the

clearest way. It was at Nazareth, as we know, that Jesus preached His so-called inaugural discourse. When He read these words from the book of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor," etc. (lxi. 1), and when the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened upon Him, how did He begin His sermon? He did not remark, "This is a consoling promise of ancient days, and we hope that it *will* be fulfilled in the future." No, He said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears," i.e. "in Me, who now speak to you" (Luke iv. 21). He applied the prophecy in a personal way, thus representing Himself as in line with the preceding course of the history of salvation. But at the same time Jesus declared that this prophecy had been *realised* in Himself, and in doing so He expressed the consciousness that the line of prophecies had reached its final point in His appearance upon earth.

We have seen, then, that at the beginning of His public activity Jesus characterised His ministry as the concluding portion of that history of religion which is narrated in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In doing so He bore distinct and formal testimony to the fact that the Old Testament does not resemble one of those shallow streams which are often found in the East, and which are known in Hebrew literature as "deceitful brooks." In the rainy spring season they overflow their banks like the Jordan when Israel passed over into Canaan (Josh. iv. 18), but in the hot summer they vanish in the sand. The Old Testament history of religion was no shallow brook like these. It was an *inexhaustible* stream, which pours its waters into the sea of eternity. Jesus bore witness to this at the beginning of His work by the simple fact that He connected His own ministry with the prophetic period.

The same twofold witness, first as to His own relation to

the preceding history of redemption, and next as to the historic continuity of the Old Testament in His own work, was borne by Jesus in several other ways. This was done, to begin with, when at the commencement of His public ministry He associated Himself with the *national principle* of the Kingdom of God. When His mental vision surveyed the successors of that heathen captain who had distinguished himself by the firmness of his faith in the supernatural power of Christ, His eye did *not* exclude the earlier citizens of that kingdom. On the contrary, He said that many from the east and the west should sit down in the kingdom of God *with* Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Matt. viii. 11 and Luke xiii. 28 f.). He spoke also of the children of the kingdom to whom the bread of the Gospel must *first* be offered (Matt. xv. 26). Nay more, He declared that "Salvation is of the Jews" (John iv. 22).<sup>1</sup> Surveying the world-wide domain of the true kingdom of God, Jesus was not so devoid of the historical sense as to overlook the former earthly point of contact with the divine kingdom of grace. Jesus did *not ignore* the fact that the actual descendants of Abraham were the first heirs of salvation. He only wished to cultivate more extensively the old fruit-bearing soil of religion and morality which was depicted by Isaiah (v. 1-7) in the parable of the vineyard.

Let us inquire, further, whether Jesus established the regulations of the true kingdom of God without any reference to the Old Testament. That also cannot possibly be maintained. He *did not destroy the fundamental principles* of the Old Testament legislation on religion and morals. The cardinal principles of the Old Testament faith, "Thou shalt have no other gods besides Me," or "Thou shalt not make

<sup>1</sup> These are proofs of things which have been wholly overlooked by Friedrich Delitzsch, when he maintained in his last lecture on "Babel und Bibel," 1905, p. 48, that Jesus founded "a truly new religion."

unto thee any image to represent the spiritual God," etc., and also all the best maxims—the strong pillars—of Old Testament morality were retained by Jesus as the foundation principles in the upbuilding of the perfect kingdom of God. It was not only that He tolerated these principles by a tacit acceptance: they received from Him express confirmation. For what was His answer when a Scribe asked Him which was the first and greatest commandment? He answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc. (Matt. xxii. 37–40). Even the title by which He designated Himself "the Son of Man" was certainly used by Jesus in connexion with the Old Testament. By the choice of that epithet He wished, in my view, to declare this truth to His contemporaries: *I am He* who represents the seed of the woman in the Protevangelium (Gen. iii. 15). *I am He* who is to bruise the head of the serpent (i.e. of the world-elements which lure men to enmity with God). *In Me* is incarnated that symbol of the true kingdom of God of which Daniel wrote (vii. 13).

For the attempt which has been made recently<sup>1</sup> to trace the title "Son of Man" to a Babylonian origin has, we may safely assert, entirely failed. It is suggested that in the Babylonian language *mâr avilim* means also "child of man," and is a paraphrase of the simple expression "man," but that the meaning always carries with it a certain idea of honouring. This does not, however, account for the fact that the prophet Ezekiel is often addressed as "son of man." For this interpretation is contradictory to the entire spiritual relationship of that prophet to God. He is described as "son of man" in contrast to the Judge of the world, who would at last be obliged, unhappily, to set Himself in stern opposition to Israel. We see this from the words, "I fell upon my face" and "I was afraid" (i. 28 ;

<sup>1</sup> Friedr. Delitzsch. Last lecture on *Babel und Bibel*, 1905, p. 51.

ii. 14, etc.). Neither did Jesus apply to Himself the expression "Son of Man" as a synonym for "a man" or as a title of honour. On the first point we have proof in the following passage, "John came neither eating nor drinking," etc. (Matt. xi. 18 f.). "The Son of Man is come eating and drinking," etc. (Matt. xi. 18 f.). How could another "man" be put in opposition to the one man, John? And finally, Jesus did not choose the designation Son of Man as a title of honour for Himself, but because it was necessary for Him to conceal His claim to Messiahship until He had trained a group of adherents to understand the loftiness of His Messianic idea.

The preceding exposition has made it sufficiently clear that the historical appearance and work of Jesus was intended to be, and actually was, the continuation and culmination of the Old Testament history of salvation. Along with this it has been shown that the history of religion which is unrolled before us in the Old Testament reached its *final point* in the appearance of Jesus on earth. While the work of Jesus has been set forth in its true light as a manifestation which was *not separated* from the Old Testament, the history of salvation as recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures has been unfolded as merely the *beginning* of a great plan for the kingdom of God. The appearance of Jesus in history was no "erratic block," and Old Testament history was not left as an unfinished torso.

But the whole has not been said when we have traced this simple correlation between the coming of Jesus and the Old Testament history of religion. It is possible to show that the special line of tendency as regards the future which we see in Old Testament history found its consummation in the work of Jesus.

2. The continuation of the Old Testament history of salvation which lies before us in the doings of Christ on earth

*corresponds* to the indications contained in its pages as to its future completion.

(a) Let us examine this first in the field of legislation.

Here we recognise in the Old Testament writings, first of all as regards religious and moral principles, an unquestionable advance towards greater spirituality and a deeper inwardness. For even if we consider all the passages<sup>1</sup> it is only in the fifth book of Moses (vi. 5), which characterises itself distinctively as a transcript of the *farewell* words of Moses, that we find the command that veneration for the divine Being is to show itself in love. That feeling of love to God is there pressed upon the people's hearts with melting tenderness. And, further, the command "Thou shalt love thy neighbour" is *not* absent from the Old Testament (Lev. xix. 18), although the idea of "neighbour" was there almost exclusively<sup>2</sup> limited to one's own countrymen.

This line of development which we may observe in the Old Testament was continued with entire accuracy by Jesus when He named these two duties as the first and greatest commandments (Matt. xxii. 37-40), and at the same time set them free from their Old Testament separation from one another and put them on an equal footing. Thus He taught men to see in the love of God and the love of their neighbour the twin rays of a double flame, which stream forth from the two focal points of the same ellipsis. Humanitarian feeling in the moral domain of Old Testament legislation bears strongly-marked characteristics of the future. We may recognise this in the fifth Book of Moses from which we have just quoted. To take one example only (for others cf. my *Geschichte*, p. 366), the wife, who in the Decalogue of Exodus xx. 2-17 is placed after the house, is ranked before the house in the Decalogue of Deuteronomy v. 21, and is thus honoured

<sup>1</sup> They are collected in my *Geschichte*, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> But cf. Exodus xi. 2 and the conduct of Elisha to Naaman, etc.



as a man's most intimate possession. In this case also Jesus moves upon the same line and takes only one step forward. He rejects the law of the "bill of divorcement" which, even according to Deuteronomy (xxiv. 1 f.), the husband is allowed to present to the wife who has some quality objectionable to him; and proclaims the indissolubility of marriage, except in cases where one wedded partner has by actual adultery already broken the marriage covenant (Matt. xix. 3-9). He protects the wife against a wanton dismissal, and thereby raises the dignity of woman, while at the same time He advances humanity a step farther on the path of its development.

In the field of moral legislation also the Old Testament moves towards a deeper psychological inwardness. In Leviticus xix. 10b, 17 f., the people are forbidden not only to kill their brother, but to oppress him or to *hate him in their heart*; and in Job xxxi. 1 even the lustful gaze upon an unmarried woman is regarded as sinful. Jesus therefore was merely moving forward on a path already opened when He ranked insults offered to a brother or "anger" against him "without a cause" as on the same plane with murder; and when He described the lustful gaze upon a woman as adultery committed already in the heart (Matt. v. 22, 28).

Further, with reference to the legislation on worship, it was a great historic task of the prophets to protect from misinterpretation and neglect that primacy which in the Decalogue is given so unmistakably to religious piety and morality as *above* the mere carrying out of formal acts of worship. They were therefore obliged to oppose as dangerous errors all those merely corporeal forms of worship which were practised without any participation of the heart, and especially the combination of ceremonial worship with impiety and immorality. We have such a protest in that early saying, "To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. xv.

22), and guiding voices in the same conflict may be recognised also in Amos v. 25 ; Hosea v. 6, etc. ; Isaiah i. 12, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Even fasting is spiritualised in Isaiah lviii. 6 ff. How close is the connexion between such ideals and the teaching of Jesus, who in His words on almsgiving, prayer and fasting (Matt. vi. 1-18) rejected all merely external action, all unspiritual lip-service, all suggestion of a mere *opus operatum*, and in contrast to these stressed vehemently the perfect ideal of the religious life, a full and unlimited self-surrender in thought and effort to the fulfilment of the purposes of God (vi. 19-34) ! He developed this idea even as regards the observation of *times of worship*, in His references to the Sabbath. We know how plainly He set forth the truth that works of necessity and mercy are permitted even on the Sabbath day (Matt. xii. 1-13), and we remember how He refuted the accusations of His contemporaries by the utterance of those words of dazzling clearness : " The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath " (Mark ii. 27).

(b) Let us consider, in the second place, whether the words and acts of Jesus correspond with the *prophecies* about a future development of the Old Testament plan of salvation. We observe, first, under this head, that the prophets always endeavoured to divest the conception of the *divine kingdom* of its earthly character. We know the prophetic utterances which are meant to elucidate this point, and also the fact, so intimately bound up with them, that the throne of the descendants of David was *not* set up again after the close of the Babylonian exile. Jesus also from the commencement of His ministry never intended to establish an earthly Messianic kingdom. For this reason He introduced into the

<sup>1</sup> Full information as to this work of the prophets will be found in my *Geschichte*, pp. 321-325, 378 f., 394-396.

Gospels the lately-discovered (!) "Messianic-secret." Jesus, as we know, enjoined silence about His deeds of mercy on more than one of the persons whom He healed (Mark i. 44 ; iii. 12, etc.). He also bade the disciples keep silence when they had recognised His Messiahship (viii. 30). What was the reason of this ? Simply that notwithstanding the numerous references of the prophets to the non-political mission of the kingdom of God, the Jewish people, whose interests were wholly external, regarded that kingdom as a political power. In the Gospels themselves we find that the masses wished to acclaim Jesus as King (John vi. 15). But as Jesus was not intended to be a political or merely national Messiah, and had no desire for such a position, His first concern was to explain the true conception of the Messianic kingdom to a group of trusted men, and to plant it deeply in their minds. He could not attain His end by the mere recurring expression of this idea. Any one who fancies that this was possible has formed a mistaken opinion as to the state of men's minds at that time in Palestine. Surely we ought not to be ignorant that under the oppression of the direct Roman rule over Judea, etc., which was established in the year 6 A.D., the longing for a political Messiah among the great majority of the Jewish people had reached the boiling-point. One method alone could suffice to cool it. Only if a group of men, living in continuous intercourse with Jesus, allowed His spirit to influence their own, could the Messianic hopes which were part and parcel of their being be finally rooted out, while at the same time there was no uprooting along with these of their personal trust in Christ. But the chief point to notice here is this : while Jesus was labouring for the realisation of a *non*-political Messianic kingdom, His plan was in full accord with those many voices of prophecy which had declared that the true vocation of the commonwealth of Israel lay in "quietness and confidence" (Isaiah

xxx. 15), and in the spreading of religious and moral light over all the races of the earth (xlii. 6, etc.).

We observe further that from the time of Nathan's significant utterance (2 Sam. vii. 11-16)<sup>1</sup> the prophetic message had connected the origin of the future Saviour with the family of David (cf. Hos. iii. 5, also Isa. ix. 5 f., etc.). The discrepancy which occurs in lv. 3-5 is only apparent. For there the assurances of a perpetual leadership for David are represented as promises made on the conclusion of a covenant with the people. It is highly probable that this passage is intended to emphasise the idea that the family of David must, so to speak, return into the people of Israel before the promises made to it can be fulfilled. Note how closely the coming of Jesus is connected with this prophecy! For it was only after the family of David, as a sharer in the sufferings decreed for Israel, had been dethroned and, as it were, reduced to a root hidden beneath the earth (Isa. xi. 1), or, in other words, had returned into the people, that Jesus was actually born of David's line.

In the prophecies about the *salvation* which was to be realised in the culminating period of the kingdom of God, the material side, then, recedes more and more into the background. In ever more insistent language stress is placed on the religious and moral side of that salvation, and on the fact that the soul must receive it (Isa. ii. 3 f.; Mic. vii. 19, etc.). Can there be a clearer concord than that which we find between the prophetic language already quoted and some of the earliest leading utterances of Jesus?

He too had to answer the tempting question, whether He might entice and bind the masses to Himself with promises of material possessions. Such was the meaning of the tempter's proposal, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Matt. iv. 3). But He

<sup>1</sup> Its age is discussed in my *Geschichte*, p. 248 f.

rejected this method of gaining a ready popularity with the multitude no less vigorously than the other two suggestions, that He should seek to win the favour of the staring street-crowd, whose minds were wholly turned on outward things, by performing the juggling tricks of the magician or by proclaiming an earthly kingdom. Jesus understood the deeper need of the human soul and longed to satisfy it. In proof of this, we need only quote His sublime saying: "Man shall not live by bread alone." These words show that His ear had caught the dominant note which resounds through the prophets' writings on the future salvation, and that He had re-composed the old music into a new harmony.

Do we not also recognise in the prophetic utterances an ever clearer indication that the circle of those who were to share in the coming salvation was to widen out till it embraced all nations? Although Jesus, as we have seen already, did not for a moment forget that Israel was the historic point of connexion in the offer of the true salvation, His eye was turned still more fully on the world-wide company of those who should partake of it. We see this from such passages as these: "Many shall come from the east and west," etc. (Matt. viii. 7, 11); "the field is the world" (xiii. 38), etc. Isolated sayings which express the opposite idea are merely the teacher's instructions as to the progressive character of the offer of salvation which was to extend itself from a narrower to a wider field. This is the meaning of that direction to the disciples whom He first sent forth, that they should go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. x. 6); and the words to the woman of Canaan, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the little dogs" (xv. 26), were not intended, as we see from the choice of the diminutive "little dogs," as a serious rejection. They were meant rather to provide an opportunity for the woman's faith to display itself under test.

The promise of the New Covenant was long forgotten. All the apocryphas and pseudo-epigraphs to the Old Testament are silent about it. Even in Baruch ii. 35 the words "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them" refer merely to the "everlasting covenant" which is mentioned in Isaiah lv. 3; lix. 21; lxi. 8; Jeremiah xxxii. 40; Ezekiel xvi. 60; xxxvii. 26.

In 4 Esdras iii. 15, which a recent interpreter quotes along with Baruch ii. 35,<sup>1</sup> the reference is only to the covenant with Abraham. Philo also is silent about the new covenant, and I have not discovered any reference to it in the Mischna or the Talmud, either in my own reading or in works on Talmudic theology.<sup>2</sup> But Jesus, unlike the others, did *not* keep silence about it. In the last Passover meal which He held with His disciples He said as He handed them the cup, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."<sup>3</sup> Thus the thrilling words of Jeremiah xxxi. 34b, according to which the treading down of guilt was to form the foundation for a new union between God and men, found a perfect realisation in fact.

Note also, that among the three fruits of the covenant in the soul of man (faith, obedience or love, and hope) the prophets gave the same prominence to *faith* that it held in the patriarchal age (Isa. vii. 9, etc.; my *Geschichte*, p. 341 f.). How distinctly does the teaching of Jesus correspond with theirs even in this respect! Faith, for which a change of mind (or repentance) prepared the way, was the fundamental requirement of Jesus (Mark i. 15: "Repent ye and believe the Gospel"). It was necessary that this should be so, and we must stress this fact in opposition to many voices of Judaism (my *Geschichte*, p. 521). For peni-

<sup>1</sup> Kneucker, *Das Buch Baruch* (1879) on this passage.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue* (1907).

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvi. 28 and the parallel passages, I Cor. xi. 25; Heb. viii. 8.

tential faith, as we may understand even on psychological grounds, is the one true lever of the religious and moral progress of a human soul, and therefore the one true means of pleasing God.

We see, then, that even the upward tending lines of prophecy were continued in the words and deeds of Jesus. We may therefore claim that as the Old Testament, compared with other literatures of antiquity, was conspicuously the herald of prophecy and expectation, so its utterances were not without an *echo* sounding clearly from afar. We ourselves indeed sometimes expect a beloved guest, but when we go to greet him we stand at an empty door. But when the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel," *He stood before them there* and revealed Himself by His language beyond all question as the Redeemer of whom the prophets had testified in truth.

Is it possible that some will refuse assent to these conclusions? We must assume such a possibility. For there is no complete correspondence between the Old Testament and the acts of Jesus. There are also discrepancies between the two, and so we have to explain the nature of such differences, and inquire whether, in spite of them, the Old Testament attained its fulfilment in Him. In a few concluding paragraphs let us set ourselves to this task.

3. The consummation of the Old Testament in Jesus is proved from internal evidence.

(a) The works of Jesus passed beyond those points which had been attained before His time in the forward movement of the Old Testament. The superiority of His achievements as compared with the highest landmarks of Old Testament development reveals itself alike in regard to legislation and to prophecy.

In the department of *legislation*, to begin with, we have

already touched upon the fact that Jesus advanced even beyond the highest limits of Old Testament progress. We have noted, e.g., that Jesus was the first to co-ordinate and equalise the two commands on the love of God and the love of one's neighbour, which are already to be found in the Old Testament. In doing so He showed for the first time the full compass and meaning of love to God and at the same time He showed the true and permanent source of neighbourly love. Jesus also was the first to give the classical definition of the idea behind the word "neighbour,"<sup>1</sup> and He crowned all previous rules of kindness by the command "Love your enemies!" (Matt. v. 44). Further, He formulated a wholly new instruction of cardinal importance with reference to the mutual obligations of men, for He said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. vii. 12). In this utterance He was borrowing from no one—neither from Tobit iv. 16 or § 207 of the Aristeas letter, or Hillel's saying, "Thou shalt not do to thy neighbour that which is hateful to thyself," for all these previous sayings were negative, but the saying of Jesus is affirmative. Moreover, Jesus emphasised more strongly than any previous teacher the religious duty of man. This is the idea of the first of the Beatitudes, in which He sets forth the essential qualities which fit a man to attain citizenship in the true kingdom of God. Among these fundamental virtues the first place is given to the lowliness of spirit which realises that notwithstanding all the force of intellect man is unable of himself to solve the riddle of the universe or do away with guilt. He expresses the same thought again, e.g., in that soul-shaking sentence, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26). This

<sup>1</sup> Luke i. 30 ff. : our neighbour is any man who at any given moment requires our help.



deepest religious and moral duty of man outweighs the positive law of *worship*, as we gather from the words: "First be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. v. 24). Note also that in Deuteronomy xii. 5 ff. the exclusive sanctity of that place, where alone in later times sacrifice was offered, was firmly maintained. Jesus, on the other hand, said to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (John iv. 21). And as He revised the Sabbath legislation like one having sovereign power, so He appraised at their true value, from the same standpoint of sovereignty, all the "negative acts of worship," as I prefer to call them. He does so in a single sentence: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which proceedeth out of the mouth reveals him as stained with impurity (cf. Matt. xv. 18). It was true indeed that "He taught as one having authority and not as the scribes" (vii. 29).

The "fulfilment of the prophets" (Matt. v. 17), i.e. of their predictive utterances, although less apparent on the surface, was also an integral part of the work of Jesus. The proof may be clearly set out from the following passages:—

It is certain that in the Old Testament the connexion of the true kingdom of God with the earth is frequently denoted as a negative relationship. But did any of the prophets say anywhere in plain words that the divine kingdom of grace in coming days should not be bound up *at all* with an earthly domain, and should not be *in any respect* of an earthly nature? No, such a declaration as this was never made in the Old Testament. Even keeping in view such passages as Isaiah xxx. 15 and Daniel ii. 44, etc., we find that a savour of earth, if I may put it so, still clings to the special kingdom of God as there described. Jesus, on the contrary, explained clearly that the divine kingdom could not

be apprehended by the senses (Luke xvii. 21), and *His* proclamation, uttered at a decisive moment, was in these words, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John xviii. 36). Jesus, then, was the first to set forth with perfect clearness the purely spiritual (i.e. religious-moral) character of the kingdom of God.

It is true that the eyes of prophecy were opened to perceive ever more clearly the superhuman *equipment* of the coming Saviour (Isa. xi. 2, etc.). But how much more distinctly do we hear the rushing mighty sound of such words as these: "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father," etc. (Matt. xi. 27; John x. 30, etc.).

It is true also that in the prophetic history of the Old Testament the *suffering* of the future Saviour was not concealed (Isa. vii. 15, etc.). But in prophecy the image of the suffering helper was placed merely *side by side* with that of the ruling descendant of David, and for that very reason this feature in the portrait of the coming Saviour became dimmed in later centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus, on the other hand, with His vigorous words of rejection, "Get thee hence, Satan!" (Matt. iv. 10), cast down beneath the stage of human action all those dazzling images which might have guided Him towards the path of outward rulership; and we remember how decidedly He opposed Simon Peter, who wished to hold back his Master from the way of suffering (xvi. 23). For Jesus the culminating point of His Messiahship was found in the sacrifice He offered for the redemption of humanity, in the ransom He paid for the sins of the world when He yielded Himself unto the death of the Cross (xvi. 28), thus obtaining eternal redemption for us (Heb. ix. 12). He kept full in front of

<sup>1</sup> Proof of this is supplied in my *Geschichte*, pp. 536-539.

Him the ideal purpose of attaining through *suffering* the highest throne in the history of the human spirit.

In view of all this, three facts stand forth as incontestable. In the first place Jesus put an end to the term of prophecy and expectation (see above, Luke iv. 21, etc.); He might have said to the flowing stream of the prophetic period, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther!"<sup>1</sup> Next we see that in the work of Jesus the highest utterances of the prophets in every direction are united into one corporate organism and filled with actual historic life. And thirdly, we recognise that in the Person of Jesus, in His coming amongst men, in His teachings and in the work He accomplished, the loftiest summits of Old Testament development were flooded with the golden radiance of the rising sun.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Can it be that the differences which exist, as has been shown above, between the highest points of Old Testament development and the work of Jesus, may prevent some from seeing the fulfilment of the Old Testament in Him? The right answer, it seems to me, lies along the following lines.

In judging the above-mentioned disparity between the summit-heights of prophecy and the work of Jesus, this may be said to begin with: The far superior number of the points of agreement, which are found between the two given quantities, decides as to their homogeneity. But we need

<sup>1</sup> He prepared the way for such records as these, "All the promises of God in Him are yea" (2 Cor. i. 20).

<sup>2</sup> St. Paul's words on "the shadow" (Col. ii. 16 f.) are true in a double sense. He said of the distinction between meats, and "in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days," that they were "a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ." The regulations of the Old Testament kingdom of God are thus explained as a shadowy cloak of the glorious body of Christ (i.e. of the Christ phase of the divine kingdom) which was moving onwards towards its full manifestation. But we may also say that the factors of the Old Testament kingdom of God which concerned worship were thrown into shadow by the teaching and work of Christ. Cf. Gal. iv. 9 f.; Acts vii. 38-51; Heb. x. 1a.

not depend upon this argument. For we are dealing with a different matter in discussing, as in this case, the disparity between two historical phenomena. The second of the two is not mechanically different from the first, so that there could be any question as to the quantity or number of the deviations. No, the differences between the acts of Jesus and the Old Testament religion all lie on the line of the *actual* development of that religion.

The enlarging, deepening, and spiritualising tendency which, as has been proved in the above narrative, did exist as a fact in the Old Testament literature, alike in the sphere of legislation and in that of prophecy, was *really carried forward* in the words and deeds of Jesus. If we see anywhere that a plant grows, unfolds and puts forth a bud, may not the flower which finally develops from it display many new colours and forms ? <sup>1</sup> Surely it was only natural that the further development of the divine kingdom, founded by the call of Abraham, which had its beginning in the Old Testament, should progress in the *same direction* even after the age of prophecy had ended. Therefore we may briefly summarise as follows in conclusion : The consummation of the essential elements of Old Testament religion which lies before us in the work of Jesus was meant to be an *organic* development, i.e. a development which grew out of the inner nature of the Old Testament. So the relationship between the summits of prophecy and the work of Jesus cannot be accurately described as a mere deviation or a difference. It is rather a progressive unfolding, or, if we again apply the illustration used above, an opening of the bud into the blossom.

This historical process may be placed in a still clearer

<sup>1</sup> Cf. what M. Noordtjij, in his exposition of *De achtenzestigde Psalm* (1900), remarks on v. 19 : "Christianity possesses in the Old Testament root, stem and bud, but when have we ever seen that the fruit even resembles the bud ?"

light and guarded against some mistaken ideas by these further considerations.

Note first that the astonishing position of the Consummator which Jesus claimed, as has been shown, in reference to the Old Testament period of the kingdom of God, is explicable also from other points of view. For the unfolding of salvation involved a necessary progress. The divine Being possessed above all things the right to draw up a plan according to His own wisdom, whereby He might educate the citizens of the kingdom of God to advance from the outward to the inward, from the lower to the higher. But the divine grace was actually compelled, as we see from the prophecy about the new covenant, to offer ever larger proofs of its own fulness, to invite men by ever greater benefits, to blot out human sin by ever heavier sacrifices, that a full satisfaction might be offered to the divine holiness, because justice must remain the fundamental law of world history (Isa. v. 16 ; Rom. iii. 26). Moreover, the spiritualisation of the Old Testament laws, as, for instance, in relation to the unclean foods (Matt. xv. 18), is, as a rule, readily admitted to be a fact.

The same fact must be accepted also as regards the spiritualising of the prophecies.

We remark in the second place that if any one thought it his duty to protect Moses, e.g. in opposition to the Prophet Jeremiah, who proclaimed a new and different covenant, Moses would have been obliged to answer, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Or rather, Moses would have simply recognised that the God who chose him to be His herald had a right to develop His work yet farther. That would not have been difficult for "the man Moses," who was "very meek,"<sup>1</sup> and he did actually foresee that a prophet of equal authority with his own would arise in the future (Deut. xviii.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xii. 3. Cf. my *Hebräisches Wörterbuch*, p. 338b.

15). How much easier it would have been for Moses and the other prophets to use with regard to such a historic figure as Jesus those words of confession which, as we know, were uttered by John the Baptist when he beheld the Saviour's works, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John iii. 30). John also agreed with that judgment which forced itself upon the people as they listened to the sayings of Jesus: "He spake as one having power" (i.e. authority), as we read in the original text of Matthew vii. 29.

In the third place, this authority is one of the factors that must be duly weighed when we attempt to answer the question, "Did Jesus fulfil the Old Testament?" Let us recall His own words on that authority as we find them, for example, in this saying: "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father" (Matt. xi. 27)—words which imply at the very least an adequate knowledge of God. Let us remember how He rebuffed the Pharisees when they accused Him of performing His miracles with the aid of Beelzebub (xii. 24-36); or how He even dared to describe the Pharisaic movement, which had great ends in view, as a "plant which His heavenly Father had not planted" (xv. 13); or how He claimed the right to forgive sins (ix. 2 ff., etc.). But I pause here. I care not who may presume to question the superhuman authority of Jesus—for me the proof is sufficient. That steep path by which He climbed to the summit, that patience which endured even unto the death of the Cross, and along with these the noontday clearness of the consciousness of Jesus, are to me an unshakeable testimony that He really was that which He declared Himself to be—the Child of God whose place is far in front even of the prophets' ranks, the true Messiah.

Further, we observe that the claim made by Jesus to supreme authority, which is securely established by the testimony already noted, was *acknowledged* by those who

knew Him *most intimately*. These first witnesses of Jesus, who in their writings come before us as strict guardians of a conscientious accuracy,<sup>1</sup> must not be imagined as the kind of people who could furnish for themselves a dream-captain, round whose banner they would gather for the desperate charge against a world in arms. The authority of Jesus, established on sure evidence and accepted by those who knew Him best, affords yet another proof that it was He who truly fulfilled the Old Testament.

The first witnesses of Jesus were right, then, when they saw no difficulty in the fact that a plank was missing, so to speak, in the bridge which leads from the Old Testament to the New; and for us to-day this very fact is of supreme importance. Let us suppose for a moment that the picture of Christ's person and work which is delineated for us in the Gospels, corresponded with strict exactitude to those lines on which in the Old Testament the future Saviour and His deeds are described. What conclusion would immediately follow? Those people, it might be said, who disregard the clear utterances of Jesus about His relation to His heavenly Father and also about His own sinlessness (Matt. xi. 27, etc.; John viii. 46, etc.) would find it all the easier to draw the following inference from the precise agreement we have supposed between the Old Testament preparation with the New Testament reality: "Ah, then Jesus drew His Messianic consciousness out of the Old Testament. He read the Book and thought He might be the Messiah." But in view of the *actual* correspondence between the prophetic utterances, on the one hand, and the words and deeds of Jesus on the other, this opinion with regard to the originating source of the consciousness and claim of Jesus is entirely inadmis-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 7 ff.; Rom. xii. 6, etc.; 1 Cor. xii. 10 ff.; Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 4, etc.

sible. *That* objection to Christ, thank God, was made impossible for men!

In Jesus, then, the Old Testament reached its perfect consummation. In proof of this we were able to cite so many testimonies from historical books and so many securely established arguments, that the fact itself is one of the most certain things in the history of the world. As we turn over afresh all the evidence that comes up before our minds in confirmation of this truth, we are constrained to blend our voices with that of the Apostle who was once a persecutor of the Christian flock (Rom. xi. 33 ff.): "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! . . . To Him be glory for ever!"

ED. KÖNIG.