

catholic Church, and concludes by showing from Luther how and in what sense the Reformation has accepted and vindicated the primitive rule of faith, and therewith the Apostles' Creed and the New Testament Canon. The fundamental positions of Harnack's *History of Dogma* are subjected to careful examination, and, with the help of Harnack's results, Professor Kunze endeavours to reach a new view of the development of dogma, and more especially to break the ban of Rome, which to some considerable extent still lies upon Protestant theology. The practical issue for the theology of

to-day is that Luther's doctrine of Scripture must be revived in a purified form, free from all taint of Catholicism.

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*Kirkliston.*

### Cheyne's 'Jewish Religious Life.'

A GERMAN translation of Professor Cheyne's latest book, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, has been published by Ricker of Giessen. It contains a few modifications and additions.

## The Temptation of Christ.

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### IV.

THE results of our third inquiry are that the three temptations relate to the nature of the Messianic kingdom, and we are now compelled to ask the source of these temptations, not their historical significance, but their psychological origin. If, as those hold who interpret the narrative literally, the temptations were suggested by an external, visible, personal tempter, then no further inquiry need be made; but it has already been shown that the literal interpretation is incredible. If, then, we are compelled to assume that the temptations presented themselves within the consciousness of Jesus, we must try and discover how they came there. But, before doing this, let us note that when these ideas and purposes regarding the kingdom of God first emerged in the consciousness of Jesus they cannot have at once appeared as evil suggestions. At first they might appear innocent and commendable even, and it was only by the vivid consciousness and vigorous conscience of Jesus that the disguise was gradually removed, and they stood exposed for rejection. In His account of His temptations Jesus gave His followers, in symbolic form, only the last stage of a moral process, the result of what was the gradual recognition and the decisive rejection of an evil suggestion, at first presenting itself as morally neutral. It must be remembered that every soul has a certain content, ideas, emotions, purposes,

which are morally neutral, until made, when the necessary occasion arises, the material for moral decision. The appetite of hunger, for instance, is morally neutral until it is brought into comparison with the emotion of compassion for the needs of another. A man may innocently entertain plans, wishes, hopes, without moral praise or blame, until they are shown to be a furtherance of, or a hinderance to, his life-calling. Accordingly the sinlessness of Jesus is not called in question by admitting that there were in his mind thoughts and aims regarding the kingdom, which were afterwards proved to be inconsistent with, contradictory to, His vocation, and so, for Him, temptations to sin. Jesus had not lived in Nazareth in isolation. Doubtless, none would know His inner life; yet He lived among men; shared the piety and the patriotism of His countrymen; talked with them, surely, not only about their home cares and daily toil, but, when he met a thoughtful and earnest man, about the moral state and the political position of the nation; studied the Old Testament Scriptures; now and then heard a learned Rabbi from Jerusalem give the current interpretations of precepts and promises, and became familiar with the doctrines of the schools regarding the Messiah, and also the popular expectations. When Jesus went into the wilderness, He took with Him not only His lonely musings on truths learned in the

Scriptures, but also the common thoughts that He had heard from the lips of men. Here was material enough for temptation.

1. It is often taken for granted that the current popular Messianic expectations were the source of Jesus' temptations, and some hold even that Jesus was familiar with the development of the Messianic hope which had found expression in contemporary apocalyptic literature. Until more convincing evidence of Jesus' familiarity with this apocalyptic literature is produced, than is at present available, doubt may be entertained whether He, a poor working man in Nazareth, had access thereto; or, if He had, whether He allowed Himself to be much influenced thereby. So far as I can form a judgment upon the question, even His use of the title, Son of Man, can be explained without assuming any reference to the Book of Enoch. That the popular expectations were familiar to Him can be unhesitatingly conceded; that even at the beginning of His ministry He foresaw that these popular expectations must be reckoned with, and a definite attitude towards them assumed, must be assuredly maintained; but that these popular expectations formed the sole source of his temptations may with good reason, as I shall endeavour afterwards to show, be doubted.

The Messianic hope of the age may be very briefly sketched. As compared with the hope as it meets us in the prophets, the idea of the Messianic age had undergone the following changes:—It had been *universalized*; all the world was included. It had been *individualized*; each Israelite was represented as having a share in it. It had been *supernaturalized*; the miraculous aspects had been more and more emphasized. It had been *dogmatized*; the poetical language of the prophets was taken literally, harmonized, systematized, and where necessary supplemented. The prominent features of the doctrine of the Messianic age were these: After 'a last tribulation and perplexity' the Messiah was to appear, heralded by Elijah. An attack of the hostile powers was to result in their destruction. After the renovation of Jerusalem, and the gathering together of the dispersed, the kingdom of glory would be set up in Palestine, but extend beyond to other nations. Then, according to many exponents of the doctrine, there would follow a renovation of the world, and a general resurrection of the dead, preparatory to a last judgment, the issue of which for each man

would be eternal salvation or eternal condemnation. (The details may be found in Schürer, *The Jewish People in the Times of Christ*, div. ii. vol. ii. p. 126 ff.) Of these features of the Messianic age, the three which present the greatest resemblance to the three temptations are the renovation of the earth, the destruction of the hostile powers after their attack on the Messiah, and the establishment of the kingdom of glory in Palestine. To the people the details of the doctrine might be unfamiliar, but it is certain that all hoped for earthly happiness, for deliverance from their bondage to Rome, and for a worldly kingdom under a Davidic king in Jerusalem. Was He to fulfil these hopes? This was a question that Jesus had to face.

2. Had these hopes presented themselves to Jesus simply as popular expectations, however vehement and urgent, they would not have had for Him at first sight that reasonableness and rightness which gave to the moral test He had to undergo its extreme severity. It must not be forgotten that the Messianic hope was not a work of the age, it was an inheritance from the past history of the people. The doctrine of the schools was a development of prophetic teaching; and the people believed that the fulfilment of their hopes was guaranteed to them by the faithfulness of God. As has already been shown, the hope of the prophets had undergone change; but not a change so thorough as to destroy its essential features, or to introduce altogether contradictory elements. Much had been exaggerated, much had been neglected, the temporal aspects of the hope had usurped the place of the ethical aspects. Yet not so great was the change, that the popular expectations appeared altogether without the sanction of the Holy Scriptures.

It is certain that Jesus was a constant and a careful student of the Holy Scriptures, acknowledged their value and their authority, appealed to them for illustration in argument, and as putting an end to all dispute. His method of interpreting the Scriptures shows a moral insight and a spiritual elevation that defy all comparison; but He did not put Himself in opposition to contemporary modes of exegesis. It was by religious intuitions, not critical principles, that He outstripped all His contemporaries. His perfection as an interpreter was surely not a sudden discovery, but a gradual acquirement. His moral and

spiritual development had been fostered and guided by His study of the Scriptures, and His advancement in wisdom and in virtue in turn made Him ever more capable of understanding the deepest truths of the Scriptures. It is the brightest glory of the Old Testament that therein this sinless, perfect personality found moral support and spiritual nourishment.

Whatever was found in the Scriptures came to Jesus with authority; and although as His consciousness of His filial relation to God and of His Messianic vocation gained content and certainty He took up a more independent attitude towards even the Old Testament Scriptures, yet we may be sure He did not, without earnest inquiry and serious struggle between the habit of obedience and the sense of independent authority, dismiss any idea that the Holy Scriptures offered to His acceptance. Now it is certain that the Old Testament in its promises regarding the future contains predictions which, taken literally, as they were in the time of Christ taken, Jesus did not attempt to fulfil, and could not consistently with His moral and spiritual ideal fulfil. The essential features of the Davidic kingship were altogether absent from His ministry. To harmonize prophecy and fulfilment in this case, it is needful to have recourse to allegorizing and spiritualizing; but that is only an artificial expedient to get rid of a difficulty which is removed only by a recognition of the progressive character of revelation, the permanent developing element being exhibited in a series of inadequate temporary forms. With this problem Jesus was not concerned speculatively, but practically, and He solved it by rejecting all the elements of the Messianic hope inconsistent with or contradictory to the moral and spiritual ideal, which rose out of the depths of His own perfect human-divine personality. In the story of the temptation in the wilderness we have instances of such a rejection, which must be looked at more closely.

The Messianic age is in the prophets depicted as a time of temporal prosperity, of natural fertility, and beauty. 'The wilderness shall be a fruitful field; and the fruitful field be counted for a forest' (Isa. xxxii. 15). 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall

be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose' (xxxv. 1). In the Messianic age, Israel is to hold a place of peculiar privilege. It is to inherit the earth. 'Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles.' Jerusalem is to be the spiritual centre of the world. 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.'—'Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' (Isa. ii. 2, 3). Strangers shall attach themselves to Israel, that they may become sharers in its peculiar privileges. 'And the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.' Israel is to be the mediator of blessing between God and man. 'The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising' (Isa. lxx. 3). In the Messianic age Israel will enjoy political supremacy: 'and the house of Israel shall possess the strangers in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors' (Isa. xiv. 2). Other instances might be given to prove that temporal prosperity, exclusive religious privilege, and political supremacy were features in the Messianic hope of the prophets (a full treatment of this subject may be found in Schültz's *Old Testament Theology*, vol. ii. chap. xx.); and surely it is features such as these that are represented symbolically in turning stones into bread, casting oneself headlong from the pinnacle of the temple, and becoming lord of the world by bowing down to Satan. It was the elevation of His ideal above the noblest prophetic aspiration, the transcendence of His personality as the Word of God become flesh beyond all former bearers of revelation, that enabled Jesus to pronounce judgment on the expectations of prophets as defective and inferior; and consequently led Him to regard them as temptations to Himself to aim at lower than the highest that His own soul saw. But by how rugged and steep a path of inward struggle He reached the loneliness of His greatness the story of the temptation shows us in broken gleams.