

**JESUS THE MESSIAH IN
PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT: A
REVIEW AND REFUTATION OF
THE NEGATIVE THEORY OF
MESSIANIC PROPHECY**

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Jesus the Messiah in prophecy and fulfilment: a review and refutation of the negative theory of messianic prophecy by Edward Hartley Dewart

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EDWARD HARTLEY DEWART

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JESUS THE MESSIAH

IN PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT.

*A REVIEW AND REFUTATION OF THE NEGATIVE
THEORY OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.*

BY

EDWARD HARTLEY DEWART, D.D.,

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IT may be frankly avowed that the occasion which has called forth this volume was the delivery and publication of a lecture on Messianic Prophecy, by Prof. G. C. Workman, Ph.D., of Victoria University, in which he maintains that there is no original predictive reference to Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and no actual fulfilment of predictions referring to Him, by the events of the New Testament. I regret that it has been found necessary to refer so frequently to this lecture, but this could not well be avoided. It was expedient to deal with this particular form of negative teaching, not only because it was being taught by a Methodist Professor, but because it appealed for acceptance to evangelical Christians, as being consistent with the highest orthodoxy. I trust, however, that what I have written will be found more than a mere reply to the points in this lecture; and that it will contribute something towards a right understanding of this great subject, and strengthen Christian faith in the reality of prophecy and the divine authority of Revelation.

I would like, by a few words, to prevent any miscon-

ception respecting the purpose and standpoint of this essay ; but this is something of which each reader must judge, after a careful and candid reading. There are, however, a few things which I may be permitted to say, by way of defining my attitude towards some phases of current thought.

We live in times of great mental unrest. The spirit of inquiry which has distinguished modern research in physical science, has made itself felt in all departments of thought. This is notably the case in regard to Biblical and theological subjects. The time of silencing doubt and settling questions of belief by the authority of great names has passed away. Nothing that has come down to us from former times is deemed too sacred to be subjected to the scrutiny of modern criticism. Creeds and interpretations that for generations have been accepted as undoubtedly true are boldly questioned. The conception of the Bible, which has been generally accepted by the Reformed Churches, has been placed in the crucible of the "higher criticism." Our age has taken upon itself the task of reviewing and pronouncing judgment upon the work and conclusions of all former ages. A spirit of doubt and questioning seems to pervade the intellectual atmosphere. Not only the doctrines believed, but the foundations of faith are tried in a furnace heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated." To determine what should be the attitude of the Christian Church

towards the conclusions of scientific inquiry and Biblical criticism, is one of the most serious and pressing problems of our times.

Without expressing any opinion on the burning questions which divide the leaders of current thought, I may say that this essay is not written in any spirit of antagonism to independent investigation, or free criticism. The questioning of honest doubt is better than the unthinking credulity of superstitious belief. Dogmas and theories whose truth cannot be proved by proper evidence, must give place to something better. Age cannot justify what is false. Whatever fairly vindicates its right to be accepted as true, must find room in our systems of belief, however novel it may be. Neither antiquity nor novelty is of itself a sufficient credential of the truth of any teaching. Yet, the presumption of truth is on the side of what has been believed in the past. Anything that has for a length of time been accepted as true, by large numbers of people, is more likely to be true than something that is newly demanding recognition. The old theory, or teaching, which has possession of the field, must have had something effective to say for itself, or it could not have won the ground which it occupies. The new ideas may be right, but they have to vindicate their claims before they can be accepted. The true rule of action is the apostolic principle: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."