

EARLY JUDAISM

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Early Judaism by Laurence E. Browne

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EARLY JUDAISM

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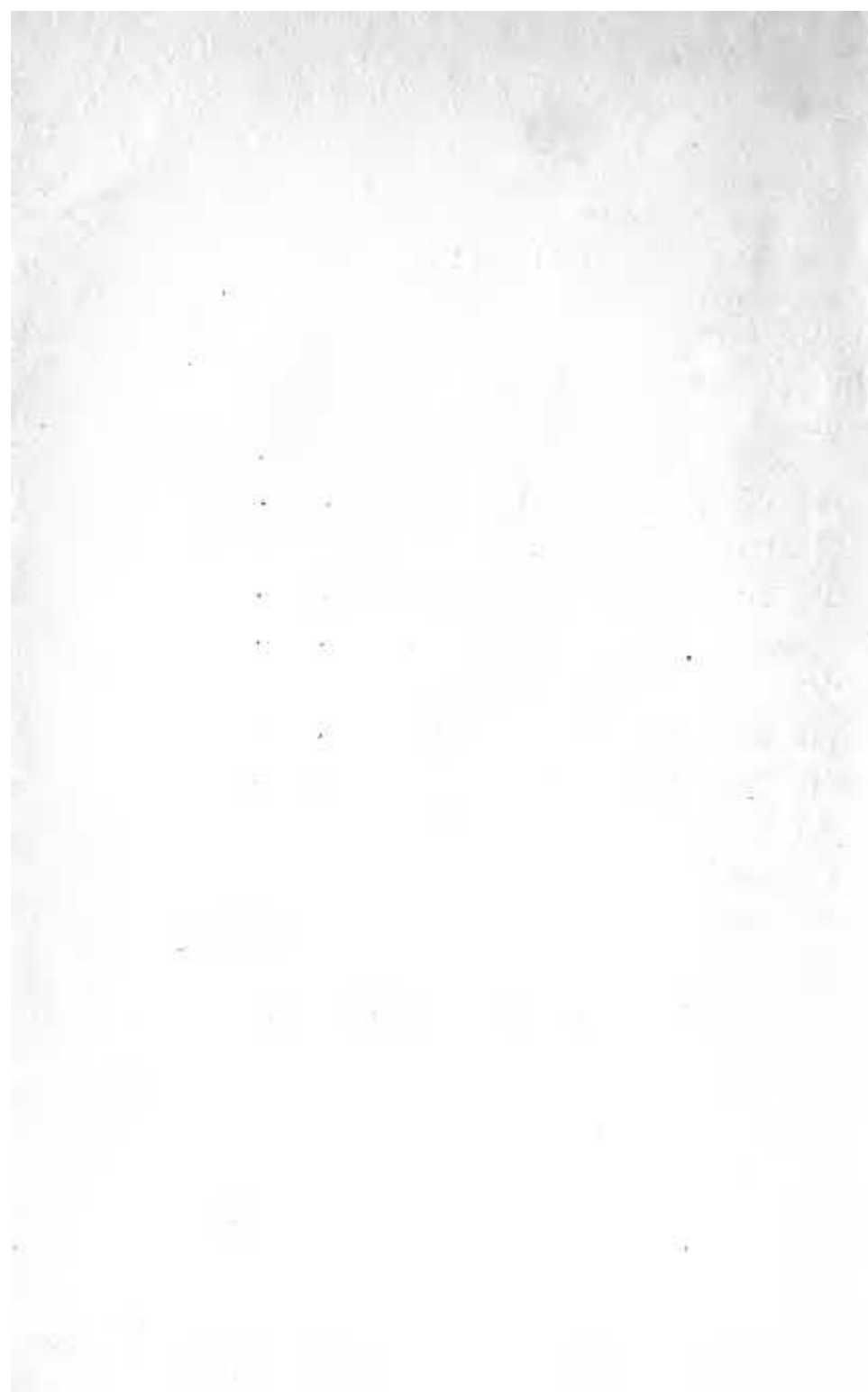
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INTRODUCTION

THE history of the Children of Israel is marked by three great interventions of the Lord for their salvation: first, the salvation of Israel from bondage in Egypt, secondly the salvation of the tribe of Judah from captivity in Babylon, and thirdly the salvation of both Jew and Gentile from the power of sin by the Messiah, our Lord Jesus. The first deliverance was in the main material, a deliverance from physical bondage, and it affected, as far as we know, every member of the Israelite race. The second deliverance was partly material and partly spiritual, because it was not only a political or social deliverance, but it also gave liberty for the practice of their religion. It only affected a certain proportion of the Jews, for the more materialistic among them preferred to abide in Babylon. The third deliverance was entirely spiritual, and affected only a small proportion of the Jews: it was only a small 'remnant' who accepted Jesus as the Messiah. For us who believe in Him it is one of the most striking facts of all history that He, the Saviour of the world, came of the Jews, and that yet to the Jews as a whole He proved a stumbling-block rather than a Saviour. It is unquestionable that the Jewish birth of our Lord ought to have been an advantage to the Jews, ought to have brought salvation very near to their doors. And as we do not believe in a God who acts by mere caprice, we must believe that His choice of Judaism as the earthly home of His incarnate Son was in accordance with a plan of salvation for the world in which Judaism was destined to play an important part. It is not here disputed that the doctrines of Judaism were made to a large extent the basis of the doctrines of Christianity.