

**THE CERTAINTY OF
CHRISTIANITY,
A SKETCH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649260720

The certainty of Christianity, a sketch by Layman

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

LAYMAN

**THE CERTAINTY OF
CHRISTIANITY,
A SKETCH**

THE CERTAINTY OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE CERTAINTY
OF
CHRISTIANITY;

A SKETCH.

BY A LAYMAN.

“En illa, illa, quam sæpe sperastis, libertas.”—SALLUST.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.

JAMES M'GLASHAN, DUBLIN.

MDCCLIV.

109. a. 40.

THE CERTAINTY OF CHRISTIANITY.

It has been a difficulty with authors treating of the evidences of Christianity, to know how far they were fairly entitled to refer to the writings of the New Testament.¹ On the one hand, it might be said that this would be to reason in a circle, since possibly to some extent, now inappreciable, partisanship may have affected them. Yet, on the other hand, it would seem to be a very unreasonable thing to discard the testimony of those whose own conversion gave the strongest of all proofs of their convictions; the more so, as their evidence has since been corroborated in a number of minute particulars, and to a degree altogether unprecedented.

The object of this little sketch is to present to the reader a view of the Evidences which steers quite clear of this difficulty,—and, so far, it may claim the praise perhaps of some novelty.

We would premise that few points are so clear

and full of proof, as the high antiquity of the Books of the Old Testament. They were known to Ptolemy Philometor,² who died 146 years before Christ, and probably to Alexander the Great;³ and many years afterwards, we find the Books of Moses mentioned by Juvenal.⁴ But a simpler, and, at the same time, quite as satisfactory an evidence of their great antiquity, is the reverence which they command even to this day, alike with Jew and Christian. They must have existed, therefore, before those two great sects parted company; or, in other words, before the time of our Saviour. For, if we were to suppose them penned at any later period, when Jew and Christian had come to have little in common but their deep-rooted enmities, it is plain that if they had found acceptance with the one sect, it must have been to be rejected by the other. So, by the admission of both the parties, we have the Jewish prophecies extant at a period preceding, to say the least, the date of Christianity. Then years roll by—centuries, we might say,—when there appears, in another land, another class of writings of a different kind entirely—the Roman Classics. Now, we hope to shew, that if on the one hand the Jewish writings were to be perused now by any intelligent reader, and he should turn next to the pages of the heathen authors of Rome, he would find an accordance between the predictions of the one, and the events recorded in the other, altogether wonderful; and when he reflected on the necessarily undesigned character of this ac-

cordance, seeing that both the predictions and the fulfilment come from the enemies of our religion, it is difficult to say where his convictions might stop. Probably not before believing that the story of Christ's life, however marvellous, must be true, and that He was indeed the Son of God, visiting our earth on a mission of peace and love, to confirm the hope of eternal life to all who should, in after ages, become His friends and followers.

What is new in this view of the Christian evidences is, that it appeals to the enemies alone of Christianity, as the authorities, and rests no more upon the New Testament than if it did not exist. Doubtless, our knowledge of the details of Christ's life and teaching, would be scanty enough without the New Testament to refer to ; yet we hope to shew, that for all the great outlines of His history—the *scene* of His labours, the *time* of His appearance, *His violent end*, *His Divinity*, and *the doom that overtook His persecutors*—we need no other testimony than the Jewish writings on the one hand, which sounded the note of prophecy to the world ages before He came, and the Pagan authors of Rome on the other, who quite unconsciously have given us, as we shall find, its fulfilment.

I. The first prediction we would consider under this point of view, regards *the place* of Christ's appearing in.

That place was Judea. We read in Isaiah ii. 3, 4.—“ *Out of Zion* shall go forth the law and

the word of the Lord *from Jerusalem*, and *He* shall judge among the nations." Again, we read in Isaiah ix. 5, 6,—repeated or rather expanded in xi. 1-10—"For unto us (we quote from Lowth's Translation) a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David *and upon his kingdom*; to fix it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, henceforth and for ever: the zeal of Jehovah, God of hosts, will do this." Again, in the noble verses of the fifty-ninth chapter, we read once more—"And the Redeemer shall come *to Zion*." In Micah, too, iv. 2, we read that "the law shall go forth *of Zion*, and the word of the Lord *from Jerusalem*." And in the succeeding chapter, v. 2, the prediction is a little more specific, in as much as it names "Bethlehem Ephraïta," as the place of the Saviour's birth, little though it was "among the thousands of *Judah*." We might further refer to Joel ii. 32, and to Zechariah xiv. 8, where it is said that "living waters shall go out *from Jerusalem*,"—but perhaps we have done enough.

Here, then, we have it predicted in the ancient books of the Jews, that one to whom all eyes were turned as the Prince of Peace was to appear in Judea.

It would be to deviate from the line of our