

children of the stock of Abraham and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." (ch. 13: 26.) This direct appeal is satisfactory proof, that while Paul exerted himself to convince his audience that Jesus was the Christ, he kept steadily in view the grand aim of the Gospel which is to induce men to come to Christ that they may be saved.

3. Paul now meets an objection which his hearers might make against his doctrine. He does not, indeed, formally state the objection, but he gives the answer to it. This is very common in the writings of Paul. The objection is, How can the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth be reconciled with the fact, that the Jewish rulers, the highest authority in the country, rejected him and put him to death? The answer to this is as follows: "They that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers—knew him not nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day." (27.) This may seem a strange assertion, and yet it is true; the Jewish rulers did not understand the character of the Messiah as drawn by the prophets, and consequently could not see in him the character of the Messiah when he came into the world. Their minds were blinded by the hope of a temporal Deliverer, and not finding in the prophet of Galilee the qualities of a warrior and a conqueror they would not involve themselves in a quarrel with the Roman government for the sake of one who seemed unfit to emancipate them. They therefore rejected him. The fact stated by Paul that the rulers did not understand the scriptures which were daily read to them need surprise no one. 2. At the very time the Jewish rulers were rejecting Jesus, and putting him to death they were unconsciously fulfilling the predictions of the prophets, "They fulfilled them in condemning him." (27). The whole structure of the emblematic dispensation of Moses, and the predictions of the prophets go to shew that the "Messiah should be cut off" that he should be "wounded for the transgressions of men,"—"bruised for their iniquities," and that he should "die for their sins." The opposition of the rulers was therefore, a part of the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus. 3. As the death of Christ was then, no proof against his Messiahship, so it was no proof against the excellence of his character. "They found no cause of death in him. There was indeed an effort made to criminate him, but it broke down through disagreement in the testimony of the suborned witnesses. Moreover, Pilate, heathen though he was, declared that he found no fault in him; and when prevailed upon by the importunity of the Jews he consented that it should be even as they desired, he washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Mat. 27: 24. 4. To complete the proof of his Messiahship, so far as they could, "they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre;" (29) thereby fulfilling a plain prediction of one of their most eminent prophets, "He made his grave with the rich in his death." Is. 53: 10. Had the Jewish rulers not done all this, it would have been