

they have become so firmly rooted that to weed them out would result in the uprooting of the Church itself. Let them grow now till the harvest; then there will be a fearful sorting of the crop.\*

Another noticeable Jewish feature of this gospel is that almost everything that occurs happens in order that some "Scripture may be fulfilled." In many instances lamentable misapplication of prophecy is made; but the point to which I wish especially to call attention is that the narrative seems to be made up rather from what the writer considers the requirements of prophecy than from actual occurrences. It is easy to see that this catching at any word of the old Scriptures supposed to refer to the Messiah, would directly engender a circle of myths about Jesus which in a little while would harden into positive assertions. It is unnecessary, for instance, that the child Jesus should be taken to Egypt and brought back on the death of Herod. It is enough that the passage was found in one of the prophets: "Out of Egypt have I called my son." By a strange perversion of the sense this is made to refer to Christ, and "that the Scripture may be fulfilled" the story is told of the flight into Egypt. So of the associated incident of the slaughter of the children of Bethlehem; and so of various other incidents peculiar to this gospel. Only a thorough-going Jew would write in this fashion, and we do not wonder that such a work, even when brought to its present shape, proved unsatisfactory to the churches established by Paul.

\*xiii. 21-30, 36-43.