

prediction, beyond which it is not safe to go. According to this writer, we find in prophecy three great forecasts—a forecast of a *universal* religion, a forecast of the *Messiah*, and a forecast of a *spiritual* religion. He accepts the concession of the great rationalist writer, de Wette, that “the entire Old Testament is a great prophecy, a great type of Him who was to come, and is come.” But how can we accept broad general views unless we accept the specific facts on which they rest? How can we rear a solid superstructure unless, stone by stone, we have laid for it a solid foundation? And even supposing that the Old Testament prophecy is merely a collection of forecasts, must it not be a defective enumeration that leaves out from these forecasts the remarkable destiny of the Jewish people—that wonderful prophetic picture which has been, and will continue to be, one of the strongest evidences of the inspiration of the prophets? Men have not yet forgotten the answer which Frederick the Great of Prussia received from his chaplain, when he asked him to give him in one word a reason for believing in the truth of the Bible: “THE JEWS, your Majesty.”

The idea of the literal fulfilment of a great part of prophecy must not, therefore, be given up. But some allowance may be made for the play of the *dramatic faculty* in the prophetic delineation of future events. And more especially when we consider that it was in the form of visions that most of the prophetic revelations were communicated. We are not therefore necessarily tied down to a liberal interpretation of every prediction. But this does not throw everything loose. We may find rules that will guide us in determining whether a prediction is to be taken literally. Our space prevents us from doing more than barely specifying a few of these. Some predictions must be taken literally—1. *From their very nature, e.g.*, the promise to Abraham: “To thee and to thy seed will I give the land which thou seest forever” (Gen. xiii. 15). 2. *From announced analogies to literal facts, e.g.*, “Destroy the temple and in three days I will raise it up. . . . But he spake of the temple of his body.” 3. When several prophets *utter the same prediction* in a *prima facie* literal sense, *e.g.*, predictions against Babylon. 4. When *numerous specific details* are given, *e.g.*, in Deut. xxviii. against the Jews. 5. When the fulfilment agrees with the prediction in a *great variety of particulars*. In regard to this last, rationalists lay great stress on “casual coincidence,” and draw largely upon its aid. But it is an admitted principle (*e.g.*, in the design argument) that while one or even more coincidences may be regarded as casual, on the other hand, when the coincidences are very numerous, there must have been design. So when the coincidences between prophecy and fulfilment are very numerous, as in the case of the prophecies of the Messiah or of the Jews, reason itself compels us to call in a supernatural cause.

In his elaborate work on the prophets of Israel, Kuenen makes a great effort to show that fulfilled prophecy is of no value, and that