

A.

The Synagogue and the Dogmatic Basis of the Incarnation, viz., the Trinity.

I.

[37] The Incarnation—that ineffably consoling, unspeakably ennobling, deifying truth which sets the crown of the Deity upon the brow of humanity—the Incarnation postulates the correlative truth of the Trinity, i.e., one God in three hypostases or persons absolutely co-eternal and co-equal, viz., the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. It will not be irrelevant, then, to recall here the antiquity of that heavenly doctrine which was revealed first to the Angels, afterwards to the first man and formed part of the primitive revelation and, subsequently, became integral part of the sacred deposit intrusted to Moses, to the prophets, and to the Synagogue.

Let us for a moment glance at the deep-rooted faith of the ancient Synagogue in the thrice adorable Trinity. Of this historical fact, the Talmud itself, the deadliest enemy of the Christian name, furnishes so many proofs that we must, for brevity's sake, confine ourselves to a mere fraction of them all.

This same historic faith of the Synagogue explains another impressive fact noticed by every attentive reader of the New Testament, viz., the fact, that Our Lord and the Evangelists speak of the Blessed Trinity—not as of a *new* revelation—but as of a truth already known in the Jewish Church. See, v.g., Matt. 28' 19; John 14' 16; 15' 26; Matt. 3' 16; Mark 1' 10; Luke 3' 22.

Nor do the hearers of Our Lord betray any feeling of surprise when they hear Him discourse on the B. Trinity. Some of them are deeply scandalized whenever He asserts his own divinity, but they betray not the least emotion when He speaks of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost. They do not even attempt to contradict Him, for, even the common people had been, in a measure, prepared, by the covert teaching of the Synagogue, to believe in a mysteriously triune God: a belief eagerly accepted in those early days by every Israelite well versed in the traditional or divine interpretation of the Law, of which we at once proceed to adduce a few specimens.

[38] We premise our quotations, however, with the remark that the reader will find the Hebrew or rabbinic text of them all, as well as a French translation of the same, in a work of immense research and value from the pen of a most illustrious