

**J O S E P H U S**  
**AND**  
**H I S T E S T I M O N Y**

by

J. Rendel Harris

## JOSEPHUS AND HIS TESTIMONY

J. Rendel Harris, 1931

The controversy over the authenticity of the passage in the eighteenth book of the *Antiquities* (or *Archæologia*) of Josephus concerning Jesus Christ is one of the longest debated of all the disputes in the history of criticism. It is not necessary to recapitulate the points that were said to be conceded by the Jewish historian. They were important for the Christian world as constituting the first evidence of the existence of Christ and the Christian Faith outside the Christian documents properly so called. What strikes the student who goes over the records of the controversy, say from its great revival in the eighteenth century down to the present time, is the singular change which comes over the minds of the critics as they express from time to time the results of their enquiry, and after having positively affirmed that the passage in the *Antiquities* cannot be genuine, because it is too Christian for a Jew to have written, then turn upon themselves and say the very opposite, affirming on the ground of internal evidence and closer scrutiny of words, that it is certainly the language of Josephus, and not the product of a later age nor of a Christian hand. One of the most interesting of these critical repentances was the case of the French scholar Daubuz [his treatise being published in 1706], who, having in the eighteenth century convinced himself and done his best to persuade others that Josephus cannot have been the author, reconsidered his opinion and made a splendid defence of its authenticity; many of his arguments will be found to reappear in recent times, when the genuineness of the Flavian Testimony has been re-affirmed by Harnack, by Professor Burkitt, and by his colleague Professor Emery Barnes. It is an unusual phenomenon to find what is something like a stampede on the part of the critics from one opinion to the opposite, especially when the first opinion was so naturally attractive that it could hardly be resisted except by those who are supposed to be subject to hereditary prejudice.

In all such matters we expect a change of opinion, if opinion has been changed, to arise either from closer reasoning or from the accumulation of further evidence. It is under the second of these heads rather than the former that an acute situation has recently been produced; fresh documentary evidence was said to be forthcoming, had in fact actually been produced, which affects the whole of the controversy and may, perhaps, lead to a final decision. This fresh evidence is the discovery of a Russian version of the *Jewish Wars* of Josephus, which contains the disputed passage in a new form different from what is commonly edited, as well as a good deal of fresh

matter bearing on primitive Christianity, and on the relations of John the Baptist to Jesus and conversely. Thus the *Testimonium* has turned up not only in a new language, but also in what is an earlier documents for while the *Jewish War* was produced almost immediately after the fall of Jerusalem, the *Antiquities* belong to near the close of the first century, when Josephus had been for many years domiciled in Rome, under distinguished patronage and in close touch with the Imperial Household. Did the *Testimonium* really belong to the earlier document, or did it form a part of the narration in the *Antiquities*, and has it been lifted from the latter work into the former by Russian translators or scribes; or perhaps it may have belonged to both?

The new evidence was at once acclaimed as genuine Josephus by Dr Robert Eisler and by Vacher Burch, who followed the first publication of the text in Germany by Berendts and Grass by treatises upon it. In the first instance an attempt was made to show that the ancestry of the Russian text ran back into an Aramaic version of the *Jewish War*, which Josephus tells us that he had made for his compatriots in Northern Mesopotamia, but it soon became evident that the thesis of direct derivation of the Russian text from a lost Aramaic Josephus could not be sustained, and that the Russian text was descended from a Greek original. This original text varied much from what we may call the canonical Josephus. Were its variants trustworthy? Did they go back to Josephus himself? Dr. Eisler studied the whole question afresh in a volume of nearly 1500 pages of astonishing erudition, in which the story of Jesus, now concede to be historical, was re-written in a manner that was startling indeed to the Christian historians, however grateful the latter might be for Eisler's assistance in disposing, perhaps finally, of the theorists who had talked of a mythological Christ. If they had escaped from Scylla, it looked as if they were going to be plunged into Charybdis; for the recovered Jesus was one of a series of unsuccessful revolters against Roman rule, who operated from a pacifist foundation, and finding it untenable, led his followers into an armed rising, which was promptly quelled by the combined forces of the Jewish priesthood and the Roman governor. Eisler found at first a strong supporter, and loyal friend, in our greatest Josephus scholar, St John Thackeray, the editor of Josephus in the texts and translations of the Loeb Library. "You have convinced me," he is reported to have said, "but against my will." From this almost absolute surrender he seems to have receded into a position of suspense of judgment, if we may judge from the Loeb volumes, and from a splendid series of lectures which he delivered in New York before his lamented removal from amongst us. These lectures contain his last and best work. [*Josephus, the Man and the Historian.*] The *Antiquities* are shown to have been reduced to the form in which we have

them by the aid of a number of learned Greek amanuenses, one of whom can be detected by his imitations of the style of Thucydides, and another, more poet than historian or philosopher, borrows terms of speech from Sophocles and Euripides, including under the latter head a loan from Euripides' lost play, the *Ino*.

It is easy to see what a loss has befallen the world of classical and Biblical learning by the migration of this great scholar, whose final opinion upon some of the points at issue would almost have been of the nature of a verdict.

Now let us return for a moment or two to Dr Eisler's treatment of the current text of the Flavian Testimony. It was necessary for Eisler to show that if the Testimony was authentic it had been through Christian hands to make it presentable. The first step in this direction had already been taken many years since, by Heinichen in his edition of Eusebius where Josephus is quoted. The current text tells us that Jesus was a teacher of those who receive the truth with gladness, διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων ἡδονῇ τᾶληθῆ δεχομένων, in which Heinichen detected that ἀληθῆ was a correction of ἀήθη, a favorite term in Josephus for the *disorders* of his time, so that a text was suggested which changed "people who receive the truth with gladness" to "people who gladly take up with innovations." The inference is that a Christian hand has deleted the fondness for disorder and replaced it by a love of truth. It would only mean a change of a single letter. [Eisler gives from Thackeray five instances of the use of ἀήθης.] From this point Eisler proceeds to amend the current text so as to bring it into a form which would consist with a Josephan authorship. He found that the author of the Apocryphal *Acts of Pilate* had made use of the *Testimonium*, and proceeded to restore several missing lines which he thought could have been preserved in that quarter. I do not think that he strengthened his case by his interpolations. Apart from the new discovery of the Russian text, he seems to have made too many changes to secure conviction, and most students will feel that he has handled his text too roughly in turning it back from an almost Christian statement of doctrine into the record of a Jewish historian. If Christian changes have been made, they must surely have been slight, like the one which Heinichen suggested. It may, however, be conceded that Eisler went to work in the right way, apart from any new textual finds, to recover a possible Jewish form which might have been subject to Christian manipulation; for the analysis of the language in the current text certainly suggests Josephus. Let us see if we can assist him in his reconstructions.

We are sketching very rapidly the opening section of Eisler's work, because we

have important additions to make to his argument, which take us away from conventional rivalry. We draw fresh attention to Heinichen's emendation of the text of Josephus, because it gives us the key to Eisler's first arguments, and will equally, in our judgment, supply the necessary clue to the understanding of Josephus himself. If Heinichen is right, Jesus, in Josephus' point of view, takes his place in a series of innovations and revolutionaries whom Josephus wishes to denounce and on whom he lays the blame for all the troubles that befell the Jews in their relations with Rome: it was not only natural for Josephus to take up such an anti-zealot or anti-reform position when writing what was to be read in Rome; he was, as a Pharisee, hostile to the movements among his excitable compatriots which could not be kept within bounds or make to harmonise with the ideas of settled government. That Jesus should be classified with Theudas and Judas and the mad Egyptian, apart from chronological sequence, was natural enough for a historian who was also a champion of public order. "He stirreth up our nation," according to the charge against Jesus in the Gospel, was a sufficient reprobation, apart from the question whether that included a "forbidding to give tribute to Caesar." The emendation, then, of Heinichen, which Eisler rightly adopts, is fundamental to the understanding of the subject, quite apart from the discovery of a Russian Josephus. Jesus was one of the "disorderly"; that is a long step towards the vindication of the authenticity of the great passage. It was what Josephus ought to have said and did say. So much by way of preliminary. We have laid emphasis on the most important word in the current text.

Our next direction of enquiry relates to the Russian text of the *Testimonium*, from which we propose in the first instance to take a single clause, which we shall tentatively add to the canonical text, reserving the rest of the Russian document for future study. If there is anything in that new evidence that is genuine Josephus, it must be the statement that "I will not call him an angel," which falls naturally into sequence with the existing statement "if one must call him a man" or "if indeed it is right to call him a man." The statement as generally interpreted is taken to be Josephus' admission that Jesus was more than a man, or else to be a Christian interpolation qualifying the statement that Jesus was a wise man. The hypothesis that the words "I will not call him an angel" follow on from the previous statement as to calling Jesus a man, excludes the idea of a Christian interpolation. Whatever it means it is Josephus, with a slight margin for Christian modification, but no room for deliberate glossation by an added clause. Josephus says, "I will call him a man but I cannot call him an angel." The origin of this statement, whatever be its primitive form, is what we have to go in search of. In order to make the quest successfully, we must now leave on one side

both Eisler and the Russian text, and take a path which at first will appear to be outside the area of regular criticism and to lead nowhere, as far as the question of the Flavian *Testimonium* is concerned.

Dr. Plooiij has been emphasising the importance of what I have called *Testimony Book* (an early Christian collection of Messianic and other prophecies), for the understanding of the origin and evolution of Christian doctrines and beliefs. I hope that the multiplicity of the illustrations which he gives will not obscure the emphasis which he is desirous of expressing. He carries on the arguments by which I had maintained the antiquity of the earliest collection of Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ, and the evident absorption of certain Testimonies and groups of Testimonies by New Testament writers. It is surprising that this should ever have been doubted, it is regrettable that it has in some quarters been grudgingly conceded. Dr Plooiij shows more than I had imagined to be the case with the primitive *Testimony Book*; he proves that it was *Palestinian in origin, Aramaic in diction, and that it has connecting links with the Targums on the Old Testament*. In some ways this is more important than my own suggestions that Paul was using the Testimonies against the Jews in the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, or that the Epistle to the Hebrews was using it from the first verses onwards. I do not think, as far as I remember, that it had occurred to me to assume or define closely an Aramaic original beyond an occasional suggestion; from such an Aramaic original the priority of the collection of Testimonies to the rest of the New Testament follows almost of necessity; the local origin accentuates the antiquity. We are on Palestinian or Syrian soil for certain. Not only so, but with the proof of Targumic influence before us we are either actually in the Synagogues where Christianity had its origin, or not so far from the doors of the Synagogue that we cannot hear them disputing inside over the meaning and applicability of certain Old Testament passages. The disputes naturally resulted in the transition to the Dialogue form, in which representative leaders on either side discussed the statements contained in the challenging Testimonies; for it is certain that the extant Dialogues between Jew and Christian go back to a very much earlier date than is commonly supposed, even if we do not possess them in Aramaic but only in Greek or Latin. We are indebted to Dr. Plooiij for having brought so much fresh evidence to bear upon the question. The headings of the separate sections under which Testimonies are grouped are shown to be as early as the texts that are actually quoted, and although some changes are made both in the texts and their headlines by the time we come to the age of Cyprian, we are surprised to observe how few are the changes that have actually been made.

Now let us return to Josephus and the Russian version: the statement "for I cannot call him an angel" implies two things; first, that someone has been calling him an angel; second, that he has been called something else, a statement which is the proper antecedent to what we have quoted. This suggests at once a complete statement something like this: "I will call him a man, but I really cannot call him an angel." Where shall we find or to whom shall we refer the statement that Christ was Man and Angel? The answer to this is that it stood so in the *Testimony Book*. We can see this in two ways: first of all Cyprian in his *Testimonies* has a section headed, "that Christ is Angel and God," which is an obvious modification by a Christian hand of an earlier statement that "Christ is Angel and Man." Next we find the very combination "Man and Angel" in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* (ch 128): the language of Justin is as follows:

Θεού υ Christ (or "the Messiah") being Lord and existing as God the Son of God, appeared aforetime in power as Man and Angel: (καὶ ὅτι κύριος ὦν ὁ χριστός, καὶ Θεὸς ἴος ὑπάρχων καὶ δυνάμει φαινόμενος πρότερον ὡς ἀνὴρ καὶ ἄγγελος κτέ.

The πρότερον ("aforetime") refers to the Old Testament from which the evidence comes for the identification of the Messiah under either head. The language of Justin with regard to *Man and Angel* is, then, *Testimony* language. We have recovered the same *Testimony* heading as we suspected to underlie the language of Cyprian. [So in *Dial.* 34 Christ is ἄγγελος καὶ ἄνθρωπος. "Christ as 'angle' occurs many times in Justin.]

This being established, since we have the same combination involved in the language of Josephus, we may say that Josephus has before him a *Testimony Book*, or an extract from the same, with which he is partly in accord and partly in disagreement. As a Jew he had no objection to Christ being called *Man* (whether the statement be buttressed from the Old Testament or not), but he declines to call him *Angel* on any terms.

We may say that in the statement, "A man but not an angel," Josephus is tilting at the *Testimonies*. We can easily reinforce the separate statements for Christ as Man and Christ as Angel; indeed Dr Plooiij has gone far with the proof of both; but without expanding the argument, and perhaps throwing it out of focus, let us observe that Dr Eisler had come to a similar conclusion with ourselves; he had also detected the origin of Josephus' testimony in a group of other testimonies but without perceiving

that there was an actual Testimony heading extant by implication in his test; but here is his very language; we quote it at length, on account of its importance, but as regards Josephus and as regards the *Book of Testimonies*, which are now seen to reinforce one another, the genuineness of one being conceded along with the antiquity of the other:

“The appeal to the fulfilled predictions of the prophets in the mouth of Josephus is not only unprejudiced (*einwandfrei*), but constitutes in fact a Testimony of the first importance for the fact that to him the Christian statements with regard to the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus were known in a form which laid the greatest weight on the fact that every peculiarity in the narration presents itself as the fulfillment of some sort or other of Messianically implied prophecy of the Scripture. To put it somewhat differently, he is tilting (*polemisiert*) against the very same collection of prophetic Testimonies, at which already in the time of Claudius, in the year A.D. 62 [should this not be 52?], the Samaritan chronicler Thallus had been dealing blows - the very same collection in fact to which Papias bore witness, which had been recognised by Gregory, Burkitt, Selwyn and Rendel Harris as a series of *Oracles*, which were the Matthaean *Logia* of the life of Jesus.”

This is a great concession, a great discovery we may say, on his part and on ours, for, as we have seen, we came at it independently; it establishes finally, as one may reasonably suppose, the authenticity of Josephus' *Testimonium* and the antiquity of the collection of Oracles which are implied in the *Testimonium*, to which the writer refers. According to Eisler, and here again he seems to be quite correct, this collection is earlier than the year A.D. 62 (more correctly A.D. 52) when it provoked the criticism of a learned Samaritan, who had migrated, as literary men were wont to do, to Rome, but who was, of course, perfectly familiar with the *Testimonies* even if they should be written in Aramaic or glossed from the Targum. We are in possession, then, through the evidence of Josephus, as rightly interpreted by Eisler, or a series of statements, concerning Christian beliefs at least as early (may we not say?) as the middle of the first century.

To Josephus also it must be conceded that he was dealing with a real person; when he said *Man* he meant man and when he said *Angel* or anything else, he meant *Man*. His Messiah of whom the Christians affected to speak in language borrowed from the prophets, was a real person. The prophets expressly said *Man*.

It is interesting to note in this connection that when Josephus begins by saying that Jesus was "a wise man" (σοφὸς ἄνθρωπος), in which connection the question of "man or angel" arose, he is giving the first place to the idea of Wisdom as the *Testimonies* do, which begin with the heading that "Christ is the Wisdom of God," a term with which we are familiar in St. Paul. We hesitate to correct this as Eisler does to σοφιστῆς ἄνθρωπος "a Sophist man"; σοφιστῆς is not an adjective, and could be written without an explanatory ἄνθρωπος (man): but as we have seen the "Man" is necessary to the argument. Indeed it does not seem that very many changes are necessary to carry back the canonical Josephus to this original form. The mighty works (παράδοξα) must stand, and the prophets who foretold everything cannot be dismissed. A very little change will put the whole text right. We will return later to define more closely what changes are necessary. Meanwhile we reserve the question of the σοφιστῆς.

We have now reached conclusions of the first importance in which, quite independently of Dr Eisler, but concurrently with him, we have vindicated the genuineness of the Testimony of Josephus, with a certain modification by Christian hands, and have shown that Josephus himself has in his eye, with doubtful friendliness, an earlier document which we call the *Testimony Book*. This book is the credential of a real person, who is held to have been the Messiah. *It is unthinkable that Josephus recorded his opinion about a myth or a spectre.* He allows him to be "a man" but denies that he is rightly described as "an angel." So now we must assist him in his scrutiny of the document and see what can be said further about the *Testimony Book* considered as an original source of history, composed in the first instance in Aramaic and circulated in its first form in Palestine. We have established Josephus in the witness box, and we have accepted the Slavonic text of his *Jewish War*, so far as to take its most striking statement about Jesus and to annex it, in its proper place, to the canonical *Testimonium Flavianum*. It is not to be thought that this is all that the Slavonic text has to say; it has many confusions, but cannot be treated as altogether outside history.

Our real concern, in pursuing the investigation from Josephus to the Christian Messianic texts to which he refers, is to see whether we can turn the *Testimonia adversus Judaeos* back into history.

The statement that Christ is both *Man* and *Angel* has been shown to be a primitive combination, attested in part by Cyprian and in completeness by Justin Martyr. It is parallel in its duality to many other statements in the *Testimony Book* and in the New Testament, as for instance in the case which Dr Plooiij threw so much light on, that light on, that Christ is the "Angel and High Priest," or that passage in Hebrews

where Christ is called the "Apostle and High Priest." It is evident, however, that even if the duality of a pair of associated titles is conceded to be early, the separate members of the dual combination must be earlier still. People must have said, *He is the Man* and *He is the Angel* before they could say *He is Man and Angel*. What then did they mean by calling him either the one or the other? Dr Plooiij has shown that the *Angel* comes from a passage in Exodus (c. 23, v. 20) treated Messianically. The other half of the Testimony is more difficult. Where shall we find in the Old Testament and Oracle, or Pseudo-Oracle connecting Jesus as "Man" with the Messiah?

The answer is that when we call him *The Man* we can find him in one of the most strongly accentuated Messianic Oracles in the Prophets. In Zechariah (c. 6) we have the story of the fortunes of Joshua the son of Jozedek the High Priest. To the early Christians and first followers, this Joshua is a Jesus. Concerning him the Lord of Hosts declares, "Behold the man whose name is Branch; it is he who shall build the temple of the Lord." On this great oracle the Targum explains: "This Man, Messiah is his name." In Hebrew this oracle opens with:

הַנְּהִי'א ש' ("Behold the Man"),

in the Aramaic Targum as commonly edited, it is

where we must clearly read            for            i.e., "Behold the Man (gabra = ἀνὴρ) whose name is Messiah.

Here then is the *Man* whom the Testimonies matched with the *Angel* (the Apostle of Hebrew iii.<sup>1</sup>.)

The importance of this identification lies in the fact that we have recovered a Messianic slogan of the time of Jesus Himself; and this is true whether we read the Targum as "He is the Man" or as "Behold the Man." That the latter is the preferable explanation is clear from the fact that it throws light on an obscure passage in the Forth Gospel, and in the exact Biblical form.

It will be remembered (the Gospel in Art will remind us if we have forgotten it) that Pilate brings Jesus out of the Praetorium to the mob and appeals to them with the words

“ECCE HOMO.”

It is difficult, in the ordinary exegesis, to explain what Pilate meant. Was he thinking to move the compassion of the crowd? Would he be likely to do so? Suppose, however, that he had simply repeated the slogan of the followers of Jesus, which we have shown to be itself derived from the prophet Zechariah, we can understand that it was an appeal, away from the priests to the people, something like the suggestion "Your King! Shall I crucify your king?" by which Pilate thought to provoke a reaction on the part of the multitude against the Jewish officials. "Ecce Homo" was, from this point of view, entirely sympathetic. Even the traditional exegesis assumes that; it becomes adroit as well as sympathetic when we know that it meant in the ears of the people.

At this point we may have to move cautiously; we are not only trying to interpret an expression in the *Testimony Book* by putting it against a historical background, but we are bound to ask whether this background can be trusted. The Fourth Gospel is commonly held to be, in parts at least, of an unhistorical character. In the case before us Christ crowned with thorns is Synoptic: it has a parallel in Zechariah where a crown is set on the head of Joshua the High Priest; but there is no reference to the *Ecce Homo* incident in Mark. All that we can say is that the Johannine incident becomes luminous enough, if we read it as parallel to the appeal "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate is speaking in either case sympathetically, not ironically. The Gospels are clear as to the general statement that Pilate was on the side of Jesus. The Slavonic Josephus with its suggestion that Pilate had received thirty Talents to make away with the agitator, appears to be out of court and to be derived from, or connected with, the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas sold his Master. We shall assume then tentatively, that we have recovered a popular slogan of the Messianic party, which they applied to Jesus. It must have been applied to Jesus, for it was derived from the Oracle about Jesus the High Priest in Zechariah.

We shall see the importance of this, and may be sure that we are writing history, if we reflect that a similar title was applied to John the Baptist. If Testimonies about Christ and slogans based on Testimonies were current, to some extent at least, in our Lord's lifetime, it is highly probable that similar Messianic proofs were extant concerning John the Baptist. Jesus was not only possible Messiah, whose marks of identification had to be tested. There was a competitor. "All men mused in their hearts of John whether he were the Messiah or not." One of the things that were disputed concerned this very title of *Angel*. To the followers of Christ this title is his by virtue

of an Oracle in Exodus. One is surprised to find, that what seems an easier proof-text in Malachi ("my Angel") was not applied to Christ. It was, perhaps, so applied. If so, it passed, by Christian concession, to John the Baptist. Either of them, however, was Messianically identified with the "Angel." The same thing appears to have been true of the "Man." Eisler is probably right in this respect also in suggesting that the Baptist, as well as Jesus, had been identified with the *Son of Man* (= *the Man*) in the Vision of Daniel. In the Fourth Gospel we have the Baptist as "a man sent from God." If this could be clearly made out, the competition between Jesus and the Baptist over the titles *Man* and *Angel* would stand out on the first page of their history with fresh suggestiveness. It is reasonable to believe that if the *Testimonies* on behalf of Jesus go back in part at least to his own lifetime, or to the time immediately subsequent to his death, there were similar and rival *Testimonies* in circulation with regard to the Baptist. After, all, as Dr Plooij clearly brings out, they had nothing except the Old Testament out of which to develop history, or by which to illustrate it, until the actual Gospels arrived; and, as we have shown elsewhere, these were supported on the *Testimonies* as their foundation. How far these *Testimonies* will disclose actual historical details in the life of Christ requires further and closer study. Some of them may reduce to mere illustrations. In the same way the Slavonic expansions to the text of Josephus require further and closer study: some of them may turn out to be mere romance, but this can hardly be the complete explanation. The conflict, for instance, between John the Baptist and Simon the Essene has every appearance of being genuine history. Less certain is the story that Jesus had healed Pilate's wife. On all these points we must wait for further illumination. Meanwhile, we have gone a long way with Josephus, and some distance with Dr Eisler. The whole situation has been changed by the intrusion of the *Book of Testimonies*.

#### NOTE ON CHRIST NOT CALLED ANGEL.

Mr. H. G. Wood has drawn my attention to the fact that in the Epistle to the Hebrews there seems to be a definite avoidance of the term *Angel* as applied to Christ.

It is said that "he taketh not on him the nature of angels, but he taketh on him the seed of Abraham." So here we have another writer from an opposite view saying "I will not call him Angel, but I will call him man." It has, however, been clearly proved from many aspects that the *Testimony Book*. If he has dropped the Angel from this text, the natural explanation, is that a Docetic use has been made of the term. That

Hebrews is an anti-Epistle to the Hebrews is following the line of the Docetic document may be seen from its reference to the "strong crying and tears" of the Redeemer when anticipating his suffering and rejection.

It may also be remembered that in another passage of the Epistle, Christ is spoken of as "a little lower than the angels; a passage on which stress could hardly be laid if the writer wished to say that Jesus was the Angel of Jahweh.

#### ON A SUPPOSED FLORILEGIUM EMPLOYED BY ST. PAUL.

In the foregoing enquiry we made our point of departure from the hypothesis of a primitive Christian book of anti-Judaic Testimonies, which hypothesis had received recently remarkable confirmation from researches of Dr Plooi, who showed that the nucleus of such a collection of Old Testament proof-texts was of Palestinian origin, of Aramaic diction, and earlier in date than the canonical Christian Literature. Anticipating the complete statement and publication of Dr Plooi's important results, we went on to show that the much-debated Testimony of Josephus concerning Jesus Christ had just such a collection in view, and was antagonising the same, at least in part, thought the statement of Josephus had undergone some slight modification by Christian hands, before it reached the form in which it has come down to us.

In connection with the foregoing assumption and its important extension and verification by Dr Plooi, a ray of further illumination has recently been cast over the whole question of Judaeo and Christian controversies in a paper published by Professor Cerfaux of the University of Louvain. The title of this paper is, *Vestiges d'un Florilege dans I Cor. 1<sup>18</sup>-3<sup>21</sup>*, to which the writer modestly attaches an unnecessary note of interrogation. [See *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique*, xxvii. 3 (1931)] The origin of this paper and the suggested *Florilegium* is as follows: M. Cerfaux found in the course of his public lectures on the First Epistle to the Corinthians that the Biblical passages cited by St. Paul had an internal nexus which suggested that they were taken from a collection of texts grouped and classified together with the intention of showing the fallaciousness of human wisdom. Such a collection would, according to M. Cerfaux, constitute a broadside of the orthodox Rabbinic school against the importation and the seductions of Greek learning. A protest of this kind, amounting almost to an official denunciation, could hardly be credited to Alexandria, and found its natural home in Jerusalem. The subject of the protest was necessarily early in date and the protest itself referable to the time when Wisdom and Anti-Wisdom were mat-

ters of practical politics. So M. Cerfaux concluded that his supposed *Florilegium* was of Palestinian origin and earlier in date than St. Paul and his letter to the Corinthians. I hope I am summarising his conclusions rightly, and with a due regard to the modesty of his note or interrogation.

The student who will now turn to the marginal references of his New Testament will be able to pick up some, at least, of the threads which M. Cerfaux was spinning into a *Florilegium*. For instance, he will at once detect that in 1 Cor. 1i<sup>18, 19</sup> there was a profusion of Old Testament matter. Isaiah xxix.<sup>14</sup> was quoted for the destruction of the Wisdom of the Wise, and a composite reference followed to Job xii.<sup>17</sup>, Isaiah xix.<sup>12</sup> and xxxiii.<sup>18</sup>. Such composite references are the safest guides one can have for the detection of a *Florilegium*. The references might easily be expanded, and M. Cerfaux makes a careful linguistic study of them, and shows that to some extent his *Florilegium* is independent of the translation of the LXX. The suggestion was natural that we had recovered a fragment of a tract, which might be entitled *Testimonia adversus Sapientes*. At this point I turned to my marginal notes, and found that I had already staked out a claim for the use by St Paul of some of these passages of primitive Christian *Testimonia adversus Judaeos*. First of all it was noted that Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho (ch. 78) had actually quoted Isaiah 29.13, a passage used by Our Lord Himself, as we learn from Mark 7.6 in denunciation of the Jews.

Many references may be given to Justin to show that he is using the anti-sophist texts of Isaiah and elsewhere in an anti-Judaic sense.

The actual text of ch. 78 is as follows:-

“This grace (the Divine grace) has been transferred to us (the Christians), as Isaiah says, speaking on this wise: This people draw nigh to me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; and in vain do they worship, teaching the ordinances and teachings of men. And therefore I will further add to remove *this people*, and I will remove them, and will destroy the wisdom of *their* wise, and the intelligence of the men of understanding I will reject.”

Concerning which extract from Justin I note further that it is not only anti-Judaic in every respect, but that in the last clause the word αὐτῶν ("*their* intelligent men") has dropt from the text. That it belongs there may be seen from the parallel usage of the text in Tertullian, as follows:

auferam, inquit, sapientiam sapientum *illorum*, et prudentiam prodentium  
*eorum* abscondam ... Sapientibus *eorum*, id est scribis, et prudentibus  
*eorum*, id est, pharisaeis - Tert. *adv. Marc.* iii. 6.

It is needless to repeat that these references are conclusive as to the use of the passages quoted by M. Cerfaux. [We shall get the inserted αὐτῶν once in Justin, *Dial.* 23, where again in the same passage the anti-Judaic reference is clear.] His *Florilegium* is the same as our *Liber Testimoniorum*. If further confirmation were desired, it could be found in the fact that when Bar Salibi produces in Syriac a volume of definite Testimonies against the Jews, the crucial passage from Isaiah finds its place among the rest (see Bar Salibi *adv. Jueaeos*, in the edition of de Zwann, 7, 10). We shall conclude, then, provisionally and with every appreciation of M. Cerfaux' work, in the equivalence of the supposed *Florilegium* and the *Book of the Testimonies*. Indeed there was no need to burden St. Paul, who uses the *Book of Testimonies* so freely elsewhere, as in Romans ix., for example, by sending him down the ages with a *Testimony Book* under one arm and a *Florilegium anti-Hellenisticum* under the other.

There is no finality in the problems that we have been discussing. The reader will already have been saying to himself the question, whether the supposed antiquity, Aramaic origin and Palestinian location of the nucleus of the *Testimonies* does not involve the Master Himself in their authorship, especially when we have the definite employment of such passages as the one quoted by Mark, and the oracle of the Rejected Stone, etc. We have long had our attention fixed on such a possibility. If it could be verified, it would give us a new direction for the quest of the Gospel according to Jesus.

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST.

When we examine the story of John the Baptist in the Russian text of the *Jewish War*, we find ourselves in some difficulty. We have now three accounts of the ministry of the Baptist; one is the evangelist's, which is familiar enough; the second is that of Josephus himself who had a good deal to say on John and on the public opinion of him, as well as of his untimely end; and then, last of all, we have the Slavonic story in which the Baptist appears as a wild man clad in skins, a sort of Indian fakir or fanatic fearing the faces of none, whether of prince or priesthood, denouncing sin in high places, and calling for individual and national righteousness and repentance.

This last account differs much from what we find in the canonical Gospels or in the canonical Josephus. It has one striking expansion, which describes a public quarrel between the Baptist and an Essene leader named Simon. The story is so vivid that it must be genuine history. No motive can be assigned for its fabrication. Then there are curious divergences from, and convergences with, the text of the Gospels. For example, the Synoptic statement that, at the preaching of John, "others went out to him all Judea and the county round about Jerusalem, is repeated almost verbatim in the Russian text; this coincidence is held to be a contamination of the Russian text from the Gospels. But then the same account gives a different story both of the dress and the diet of the Baptist from what we find in the Gospels. In the latter we have a coat of camel's hair and a leathern belt, in the former we have a curious statement that the wild man had covered the non-hairy part of his body with skins of beasts.

Similar divergence may be note in the matter of the Baptist's diet. The Gospel tells us that it was "locusts and wild honey": the Russian text makes the Baptist say that "I live on cane (?sugar cane) and roots and fruits of the tree." A further notice says that he would not eat bread; and that he would not allow wine or strong drink to be brought nigh him, and that he abhorred animal food, and that the fruits of trees served him for his needs. Here again we have what looks like a reference to the Gospel of Luke with regard to the Baptist's abstinence from intoxicating liquors. The divergence of the account from the Gospel should be noted as well as the occasional agreement. The Russian diet seems more likely than that in St Mark; but how are we to explain these curious variations?

It is possible that the divergence of the accounts is due to two separate attempts made to write up a history of which the nucleus is common to both. In that case the nucleus must be the hairy integument of the prophet, whether natural or artificial. That takes us at once to the account in the first chapter of the Second Book of Kings, where Elijah the prophet sends to the King of Israel to denounce his disloyalty to the God of Israel and to announce his death. "What kind of a man?" the King asks. The reply was that "he was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins." The Hebrew text is ambiguous, it says "A lord (Baal) of hair. What does this mean? [We may compare the description of Joseph as a dreamer (Gen. xxxvii.<sup>10</sup>), "master of dreams" or "the bird of the air" as a winged creature (Prov. i.<sup>17</sup>), "lord of wing."] The Authorized Version has an alternative rendering "a man with a garment of hair," which is not quite the same thing. Just as the modern divines varied in their explanation of the "lord of hair," so it seems did early interpreters. The Gospel explains by

means of hair from a particular quarter, to wit, the camel; the Russian text has two interpretations involved in it, one that the man was hairy, at least in part; the other that he was covered in skins of beasts, where not already covered by his own hairy skin. All these explanations go back to the Old Testament and are bent on clearing an obscure text. *Their underlying object is to show that John the Baptist is Elijah.* It has been observed that St Mark begins his Gospel on this very note, with a string of Testimonies, from which we infer that the involved *Testimony Book* had a section especially devoted to John the Baptist and his relation to the Elijah of the Old Testament.

We have shown then that the confusion in the Slavonic account is due to an attempt to combine two explanations of the "Lord of Hair" in the Old Testament. We may further note that since there is no reference anywhere in the Old Testament account to a camel's hair garment, that the story in the Gospel is probably correct in this respect, there being no motive for the intrusion of the camel. The reference to the "locusts and wild honey" is also, as far as we can see, without a definite suggestion in the ancient text. The real reason for such an impossible diet is obscure; and if we are to make intelligibility our criterion, the Russian text has the right of way.

Enough has been said to advise caution in the use of these early narratives, and certainly the Russian story must not be relegated *en bloc* to the synagogues of the Middle Ages.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ALTERATIONS IN THE TESTIMONIUM FLAVIANUM.

Assuming, as I think we now may, the substantial accuracy of Thackeray's defence of the Flavian Testimony, we must still ask what further changes are due to a Christian hand, as well as examine further the form which the Testimony takes in the Russian text. For it is clear that even Thackeray's concessions with regard to the actual authorship do not land us in a final text of what Josephus meant to say: and it is further becoming more and more clear that there are some elements in the Russian text which come from an Aramaic original. In the latter case we must allow for the possibility that there is a *Testimonium Flavianum* in the *Jewish War* as well as in the *Antiquities*. It is the Russian text, moreover, which gives us the clue to the changes which Christian hands have made in the text of the *Antiquities*. First of all, we have the description of Jesus, without a name, as the *Wonder-worker*. This is evidently the Greek θαυματουργός, and it involves the favorite Jewish description of Christ's works as due to jugglery or magic. If this word had stood in Josephus' text, no Chris-

tian reviser would have tolerated it; he would have replaced it, to avoid the suspicion of magic, by some such term as ποιήτης παρααδόξων ἔργων, which we actually find in the *Antiquities*, and which is so unlike the speech of Josephus, for whom ποιήτης is always "a poet," that Eisler deletes the word from the text and connects the παρααδόξων ἔργων with the following διδάσκαλος. But this will not do; the Russian text shows that θαυματουργός is necessary. We must delete the whole expression and not merely the first word. It is the regular title of Christ and must be allowed to stand. The "doer of marvellous works" is a Christian emendation.

Further than this, the Russian text shows that the marvellous works were the cause of the hesitation of Josephus, in debating whether to use the term "Man" or "Angel." Was it right to call him a man, whose works were super-human? At all events, says Josephus, I will not call him an Angel.

It is necessary, then, to retain in the *Antiquities* the reference to the "doer of marvellous works" and not to delete, as Eisler does, the word ποιήτης as being offensive to a Josephan vocabulary; the whole of the expression must be linked up with the hesitation about calling him a man, who did such deeds. We notice in passing that Josephus has no doubt about the miracles, whatever hesitation he may have had concerning the worker.

We come, now, to a more difficult point. We have already touched on the use which Eisler has made of a passage in the *Acts of Pilate* in which another Josephus (he of Arimathea) addresses Jesus as "most astonishing of men, if indeed one ought to call thee a man who didst such marvels as ever man hath wrought"; εἰ χρῆμὲν μὲν καὶ ἄνθρωπον ὀνομάζειν σε, τὸν οἶα οὐδέποτε πεποίηκεν ἄνθρωπος θαύματα ἐργασάμενον (Tischendorf: *Acta Pilati*, B. 314).

Now if we assume with Eisler that this is under the influence of Josephus, we must recognise in the language the traces of the θαυματουργός disguised as ἐργασάμενος and also the ποιήτης of the Christian corrector in πεποίηκεν. We restore these words as stated above to the text of the Testimony, without transferring *en bloc* the parallel which Eisler detected in the *Acts of Pilate*.

And now we find ourselves in a serious difficulty. For in the farewell discourse of Jesus in the fifteenth chapter of John, we find as follows: "If I had not *done* among them *the works which none other did*, they would not have had sin" (John 15.14); εἰ τὰ ἔργα μὴ ἐποίησα ἐν αὐτοῖς ἃ οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἐποίησεν ...

The language differs from that in the *Acta Pilati*, but the sense is the same: cf. the *Acta Pilati* as quoted above, τὸν οἶα οὐδέποτε ἐπεποίηκει ἄνθρωπος θαύματα ἐργασάμενον, and the suspicion arises that both these passages depend upon the Flavian Testimony. In that case the Johannine discourse is artificial, and has made Jesus quote Josephus.

The whole section in the Gospel where these words occur is anti-Judaic in character, and supports its statements by means of *Testimonies*. We escaped from Scylla in company with Dr Eisler, and now find ourselves in the grip of Charybdis. Perhaps we have made too many changes in the text of the *Testimonium*. We shall see.

For the rest of the passage the text is fairly sound. We restore λεγόμενος before "Christos," the so-called Messiah, for this is the correct usage of Josephus elsewhere, and it would be natural for Christian readers to delete the word. It does not appear to have been deleted in the time of Origen, who is careful to state that Josephus did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah. On the whole, as we have said, the Christian changes in the text of the Testimony are slight; Josephus is almost a believer, as it used to be said of him, and he remains a credible historian, so far as his Testimony is concerned. Other matters reported in the Russian text are a problem of another colour.

#### A FURTHER NOTE ON JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Before leaving this question of the diet and drink of the Baptist, on which there is certainly room for further research and discovery, we may draw attention to one curious expression in the Russian document.

We are told that John was such a sound and ardent Prohibitionist that he would not allow wine and spirits *to be brought near him*. Now this is certainly queer language. It does not express a natural situation. Who wanted to bring them near him in the woods or wastes that he frequented? It is hardly English or sense to talk that way. What one expects in the connection of the chronicle of John's habits and way of life, is a statement that he himself would not allow himself to touch wine nor spirits. His maxim with regard to them would be "touch not, taste not." When we state the case like that, the Syriac scholar will see at a glance what has happened. The Aramaic root *q r b* means "to come near, to approach, to touch." In the passive form it is "to be brought near, to approach, to touch." So the suggestion arises that, after all, there is an Aramaic element somewhere behind the Russian text; and it is surprising that we should be able to detect it, after the original has passed successively through the me-

dia of translations into Greek, Slavonic, and English. Certainly we must be careful not to conclude hastily that the theory of an Aramaic Josephus can be definitely discarded: on that note of caution we may, for the present, suspend our enquiries as to the Russian story of the Baptist, with the usual petition of more light and further study: for it does not seem that the reference to drinking wine or strong drink came from the Gospel of Luke.

Now let us return to the Flavian Testimony about Christ and the changes which it has undergone.

#### A SEMITIC ELEMENT IN THE FLAVIAN TESTIMONY.

There is still one curious expression in the Testimony of Josephus as contained in the *Antiquities*, which seems to point to an Aramaic original. We refer to the statement near the close that the divine prophets had spoken all these and *ten thousand other marvellous things* concerning him. It is the exaggeration of the statement that attracts our attention. Josephus can hardly be held responsible for an exaggeration of a statement which he had an interest in reducing to modest dimensions. Was he, then, reporting the extravagance of Christians' beliefs that they could find all about their Master in the prophets? Even in that case the "ten thousand other things" could hardly have been gathered from the pages of the *Testimony Book*. It may, conceivably, be scornful, but the explanation does not seem adequate. If, however, we say "many other marvels" instead of "ten thousand other marvels," we have a case similar to that which we unearthed in an article which I wrote some years since on a *Midrash on the Blessings of Isaac*. The paper referred to was an explanation of the story which Papias puts into the mouth of Jesus with regard to the fertility of the earth in the World to Come. Ten thousand branches to the vine, ten thousand twigs to the branch, ten thousand clusters to the twig, ten thousand grapes to the cluster: similar abundance in the ripened grain. We were able to show that this was a Midrash on the "abundance of corn and wine" which Isaac promised prophetically to his son Jacob, the Hebrew word *rob* (abundance) being read as *ribbu* (ten thousand). It is customary to ridicule Papias for telling this tale, because it makes Jesus ridiculous, but as the midrash has since turned up in the *Book of Enoch*, the ridicule is misplaced. [See *Enoch* ch. x, 19.] The story is part of the millennial currency.

If such an explanation cleared up the meaning of an otherwise rather childish story, may it not be that a similar explanation will bring the Flavian Testimony within the bounds of reasonable speech, whether for himself or for the Christians whose

opinion he is quoting? That is to say, Josephus may have meant to say "very many" and been erroneously transcribed as "ten thousand." This would require us to admit that the Testimony in the *Antiquities* goes back, as does the Russian story of the Baptist, to an Aramaic original, viz., to the book which Josephus wrote for his compatriots in Northern Mesopotamia. The argument, however, is not as convincing as in the Russian case, where we are obliged to concede Aramaic elements in the story, quite against our first impressions. So we will leave the "ten thousand" prophetic Testimonies in a measure of uncertainty.

#### JUSTIN MARTYR AND JOSEPHUS.

We now propose to show that Justin Martyr was acquainted with the Flavian Testimony in the form in which Josephus wrote it, and before it had undergone the slight transformation at Christian hands which gave us a canonical text. We have shown that the principle changes were, (i) to get rid of the offensive θαυματουργός or "Magician"; (ii) the deletion of the word λεγόμενος before the name of Christ, although it must be remembered that this is for certain Josephus' term, being attested elsewhere by his reference to James, the brother of the so-called Christ; (iii) we may imagine that before the string of prophetic Testimonies from the prophets, there stood some such words as, "and they say, etc." Now let us turn to Justin Martyr and try to realise the situation in which he found himself, when he proposed to address the Senate of Rome and the Imperial Household on the question of the Christian Faith. It will be remembered that, ever since the war with the Jews, Josephus had found his works officially canonised in the State Library at the Capitol, where they could, of course, be referred to as authoritative. Now Justin Martyr coming to Rome with his *Book of Testimonies*, which he means to throw at the heads of the Roman State, has always had something of an irrational or fanatical appearance, but perhaps he was not quite the fool that some people have taken him to be. Before he took up his parable in dead earnest, to show that the Divine Prophets had foretold the Divine Christ, he asked himself the question what kind of missile was likely to be thrown at him in return. Let us then see how he safeguards himself in his *Apology* and how he unmasks the fire of his battery of Biblical quotations. The matter is so important for the restoration of the environment of the courageous missionary that we must quote one passage at length.

In case any one should oppose us and say "What is to hinder the belief that our so-called Christ (τὸν παρ' ἡμῖν λεγόμενον χριστόν) being a man sprung from the human race, wrought by magic art the might works of

which you speak and on that account appeared to be Son of God?" We will now make our demonstration, not putting our faith in people who are mere talkers, but being persuaded of necessity by those who prophesy of events before they happen, etc. - *Apol.*, I. 30.

Now here we are struck both by the language and by the course of the argument. Jesus is a man who works by magic, whom deeds of power reveal to be Son of God, so they say; but we prefer to follow the prophets who spoke of things before they occurred. This prepares the way for the introduction of the *Testimonies*. The supposed objector refers to the so-called Christ; that is the language of Josephus, uncorrected as yet. He was a man, whose magical powers made him think him to be divine; that is the opening statement of Josephus about the man who was a thaumaturge or wonder-worker, who led people to a false opinion about him; that is the Josephan doctrine uncorrected, as we have seen, which makes the Christ a Magician. Finally, we have the challenge to refer disputed matters to the prophets. It is natural to assume that this section of Justin has its motive in the *Testimonium Flavianum*, which follows that manner of presenting the subject; Justin must have known that the statements of Josephus were officially recognised in Rome as historical verity, just as his account of the Jewish War was accepted. He would have to face Josephus, and does it by the simple method of writing a short section, expressing the thought that "perhaps some one will say," the some one in that case being Josephus himself. The statements about Man, Magic, the so-called Messiah and the prophetic Testimonies are all alluded to, as they occur in Josephus, and show that a Christian hand had not meddled with the historian's statements. Justin goes on to explain to the Senate who these "prophets of God" were, who told things in advance. His eye is on the "divine prophets" of Josephus.

This, however, is not all that we learn as to Justin's knowledge of Josephus. It will be remembered that Eisler, against the judgment of almost all critics, restored to his Josephan text the form σοφιστής "a Sophist" instead of σοφὸς ἄνθρωπος, a "wise man." I must admit that this at first seemed to be a wanton and unnecessary alteration; it was, however, defended by Eisler as a term which Josephus uses elsewhere of people who seem to be wise, and are thought to be so on account of their much speaking. Now it will be remembered (for the passage has often been quoted in debate between the Synoptics and the defenders of the Fourth Gospel), that Justin actually protests against this description of Jesus as a Sophist. "Short and concise," he says, "were all his discourses; for he was not a Sophist, but his discourse was the Power of God" (*Apol.*, i. 14).

We take it that Justin was here replying to the opening word of the statement of Josephus about Christ, just in the same way as elsewhere he protests against the explanation of the works of Christ by making him a Magician.

On this account we withdraw any objection which we might have felt at first to the alteration which Eisler makes in the canonical text of Josephus. The reference in Justin, taken along with the rest of the objections which he refutes, implies that *Sophist* stood in the original Josephan text.

THE TESTIMONY OF JOSEPHUS TO JESUS CHRIST.  
(Thackeray's Translation)

Now about this time arises Jesus, a wise man [*read*, a man, a sophist], if indeed he should be called a man. For he was a doer of marvellous deeds [*read*, a thaumaturge], a teacher of men who receive the truth [*read*, who take up disordres] with pleasure, and he won over to himself many Jews and many also of the Greek (nation). He was the [*add*, so-called] Christ. And when, on indictment of the principle men among us, Pilate had sentenced him to the Cross, those who had loved (or perhaps rather "been content with") him at the first, did not cease, for [they say that] he appeared to them on the third day alive again, the divine prophets having (fore) told these and ten thousand [*read*, many] other wonderful things concerning him. And even now the tribe of Christians, named after him, is not extinct.

The authenticity of the passage, or at least of its nucleus, is strongly supported by the consideration of style to which Thackeray has given such close attention. The argument from style is two-fold.

First of all there is the verification from the other parts of Josephus' writings that almost every word belong to that writer's vocabulary. In this Thackeray has the advantage over other critics that he had made for himself a Concordance to Josephus, and so was able to illustrate words and turns of speech as they recur, to a degree beyond that of previous scholars. Next, and not less important, is the discovery of Thackeray that the *Testimonium* shows occasionally the hand of the Greed reviser whom Josephus employed in the composition and correction of Books XVII, to XIX, of his *Antiquities*. If this is a correct observation, it is vital and final for the question of authenticity. To use Shakespearian language, we have "two justices' hands on it." The passage in the *Antiquities* belongs to the *Antiquities*; *in its present form* it cannot

belong to the *Jewish War*: that supposition is excluded by the joint authorship of the historian and his amanuensis.

Accordingly Thackeray was putting the case reasonably when he says:

The criterion of style, to my mind, turns the scale in favour of the authenticity of the passage considered as a whole, if not in every detail. If the text has been mutilated and modified, there is at least a Josephand basis (Thackeray: *Lectures*, p. 141).

If the reader should ask for further information with regard to the hand of the assisting scribe, the following observation of Thackeray may be useful, over and above the general statement that Josephus' second assistant, whom he employed in this part of his book, was a Greek scholar who affected the style of Thucydides:

The brevity of a passage of under a dozen lines does not give much scope for the mannerisms of the secretary. It does, however, contain one of his characteristic phrases not found in other parts of Josephus - the phrase, "to receive with pleasure." I infer, says Thackeray, that the amanuensis is still lending his aid.

The argument, then, appears to be final. The passage in dispute, allowing for some slight Christian changes, is genuine. It belongs to the eighteenth book of the *Antiquities*, and shows the hand of Josephus and a learned assistant. Whether there was a similar passage in the *Jewish War*, as the Russian text suggest, is another matter.

It requires no violent use of the imagination to suggest the manner in which the *Testimonium* was provoked. Josephus was attached to the Imperial Court, which was in the time of Domitian distracted by the invasion of a new religion. The Christian Faith was openly confessed by two of the heads of the Flavian clan, Titus Flavius Clements and Flavia Domitilla his wife. Both of them paid the penalty of the Christian confession, one by his life, the other by her banishment. May we not then suppose that they had presented the case for Christ to the great Jewish scholar and politician, and could they have done it better than in the style which Paul employed to Agrippa, "Josephus, believest thou the prophets?" The *Testimony Book* is of the prophets and *de Christo*. The situation is made for what Eisler calls the polemics against the *Testimonies*.

Now let us turn back and see if we can get any clearer light on the complication which was introduced into the argument when Dr Eisler detected that the author of

the *Acts of Pilate* had been imitating the Flavian Testimony, and when we observed further that there was a coincidence in thought and to some extent in language between the *Acts of Pilate* and the *Fourth Gospel*.

Three personalities are involved, whom we may call A, B, and C. Of these A (the *Acts of Pilate*), is under the influence of B (the Josephan Testimony); the perplexity arises as to the connection between A and B on the one hand and C (the Fourth Gospel) on the other. Of these three personalities, two are certainly persons of distinction in the theological world; Josephus is eminent both theologically and politically; if Judaism had a political and religious leader in the latter part of the first century, it is Josephus. His religious position is also representative; he declines to admit the Messiahship of Jesus, but is a firm believer in the divine prophets, and is quite persuaded of the miraculous powers of Jesus, though he tries to find an explanation for them as the work of a Magician.

Our second personality is much more obscure. He represents the same doubts as to the real humanity of Jesus as Josephus does, or affects to do, and is equally persuaded with Josephus as to the reality of the miraculous works.

Our third personality is evidently a person of great authority in the early Christian community, whether he be an apostle or not. He is anti-Judaist and uses prophetic Testimonies against the Jews somewhat obscurely at times. His position controversially is one of antagonism to those who do not believe Jesus to be the Messiah, though they have seen marvellous works done such as never man had performed; and he confutes official Judaism which does not believe in the Christ, by means of prophecies in which they profess to believe, and scriptures which they spend their time in investigating, as well by the miracles which they admit to have seen. The complex of opinions which he attacks is precisely that of the Flavian Testimony: and it would seem natural to infer the priority or, at least, the contemporaneity of the two writings. Compare the language of the Gospel, "Ye do not believe that I am (the Messiah)" (8<sup>24</sup>) "though he had done so many miracles before them, they did not believe in him" (12<sup>37</sup>), in spite of a prophetic Testimony on the point; "I did amongst them works such as no other had done" (15.24). No doubt the opinions of Josephus are representative of a general Jewish attitude, but they are grouped together in such a way as to make striking coincidence with the Fourth Gospel. What all parties are agreed on is the Miracles; what they differ on, is the nature of the Miracle-Worker; the final Court of Appeal is to prophetic testimonies. Dr Eisler's quotation from the *Acts of Pilate* is in order, and may affect the final restoration of the *Testimonium* to its non-Christian form.