**Art thou the prophet?]** From the  
prophecy of Moses, Deut.xviii.15,18, the  
Jews expected some particular prophet to  
arise,—distinct from the Messiah (this distinction however was not held by all, see  
ch. vi. 14),—whose coming was, like that  
of Elias, intimately connected with that of  
the Messiah Himself: see ch. vii. 40, 41.  
In Matt. xvi. 14 we have ‘*Jeremiah, or  
one of the prophets*,’ apparently spoken as  
representing this expected prophet. There  
seem to have been various opinions about  
him ;—all however agreeing in this, that  
he was to be *one of the old prophets raised  
from the dead* (see also 2 Macc.ii.1–8).  
This John was not: and he therefore  
answers this also in the negative.

**22.]** Notice—they ever ask about his *person*: he ever refers them to his *office*.  
He is no one—a *voice* merely: it is the  
work of God, the testimony to Christ,  
which is every thing. So the formalist  
ever in the church asks concerning any  
one who appears, *Who is he*? while the  
witness for Christ only exalts, only cares  
for Christ’s work.

**23.]** These words,  
which by the other Evangelists are spoken  
of John as the fulfilment of the prophecy,appear from this place to have been first so  
used by *himself*. They introduce the great  
closing section of the prophecy of Isaiah (ch.xl.–lxvi.) so full of the rich promises” and revelations of the Messiah and His  
kingdom.

**Make straight (straighten)**is used as compendiously expressing the  
commands in the prophecy.

By implication, the Baptist, quoting this opening prophecy of himself, announces the  
approaching fulfilment of the whole section.

**24. Now they had been sent  
by the Pharisees]** The reason of this  
explanation being added is not very clear.   
Lücke refers it to the apparent hostility of  
the next enquiry: but I confess I cannot  
see that it is more hostile than the preceding. Luthardt thinks that it imports,  
there were some of the deputation present,  
who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees,  
which the words will hardly bear. Might it  
not be to throw light on their question about  
*baptizing*, as the Pharisees were the most  
precise about all ceremonies, lustrations,  
&c.? Thus the explanation will refer to the  
nature of the following question.

**25.]** This question shews probably that they did  
not interpret Isa. xl. 3 of any herald of the  
Messiah. They regarded baptism as a significant token of the approach of the Messianic Kingdom, and they asked, ‘Why  
baptizest thou, if thou art no forerunner of  
the Messiah?”

**26,27.] {26}** The latter part of ver. 26 and beginning of ver. 27, as  
read in our oldest and best authorities,  
runs, as in the corrected text, **There standeth one among you whom ye know not, He that cometh after me.**

{27} The insertions, “*it is*,” and “*is preferred before  
me*,” have been made by some one not  
aware of the meaning, and wishing to  
square the verse with vv. 15, 30.  
The answer of the Baptist seems not to  
correspond to the question in ver. 25. This  
was noticed as early as Heracleon (Century  
II), who said, *John answers the deputation from the Pharisees not with reference to what they asked, but what he himself  
chose.* This however is impugned at some  
length by Origen, but not on very