

Hans Lassen Martensen's Doctrine of Incarnation examined
in relation to Kierkegaard's Understanding of History in
Philosophical Fragments

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Kierkegaard's relation to Martensen is often discussed in the secondary literature. Especially regarding Kierkegaard's criticism against speculative and systematic thinking, Martensen is regarded as one of its main targets. Jon Stewart, for example, demonstrates that what Kierkegaard argues in *Philosophical Fragments* is against Martensen's doctrine of Incarnation, and in particular Stewart successfully shows that Kierkegaard's concept of absolute paradox is to criticize it. However he does not scrutinize Martensen's doctrine of Incarnation enough. Since the concept has a close connection with the doctrine of creation and God's kingdom, the aim of the present paper, therefore, is to examine Martensen's doctrine of Incarnation in relation to these doctrines.

First, the paper examines Martensen's purpose and his concept of conscience. According to him, conscience means God's work in human, and it also constitutes human's consciousness. Since Martensen regards the human consciousness and doctrine as corresponding to each other like Hegel's interpretation of philosophy, religion, and art, it is important to analyze the structure of consciousness in order to better understand the doctrine. Then the paper examines the doctrine of Incarnation in relation to the doctrines of creation and of God's kingdom. These teachings together constitute distinct moments of Martensen's doctrine of God's revelation. Furthermore, since they also exhibit the same movement as consciousness, the paper compares them with the movements of consciousness. Finally, the paper examines Kierkegaard's critique of Martensen's thought in *Philosophical Fragments* on the basis of Stewart's analysis in order to show that Kierkegaard's understanding of history is a criticism against Martensen's doctrine of Incarnation and of God's kingdom.