

The Messianic Hope of Israel

Studies in Messianic Prophecy

by

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Author of

SPIRITUAL ALONENESS

THE DEEPER LIFE

HOW LONG? — STUDIES IN

THE PSALMS OF ISRAEL



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FOREWORD

These studies in messianic prophecy were first given as class lectures at a ministers' post-graduate course at the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Ill. The deep interest evinced in the subject by the earnest students there assembled has emboldened me to offer these studies to a wider audience. The subject is, I feel, timely. For a long time rationalistic scholarship has put the Old Testament aside as a trustworthy revelation. The Graf-Wellhausen theory particularly has made many doubt the veracity of the ancient Scriptures. But the turn of the tide has come. The views of that school have been found untenable. The so-called "settled conclusions" of higher criticism have become unsettled, and scholars are re-establishing the earlier faith in the Old Testament; the writings of Moses and the prophets, as the divine Word in literature. Once again we see that One face, which, far from vanishing, stands out in its majesty and beauty from the ancient pages. Messianic prophecy is coming into its own again. The truth of Christianity rests on the dependableness of the Old Testament. The God who in these last days has spoken to us *in* His Son, is the same who in times past spoke *of* His Son by divers manners and in sundry places unto the fathers by the prophets. For He was ever the theme which God delighted to dwell on. As the delights of the creative Wisdom of God — even before its incarnation, were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:31), so God delighted to speak beforehand of Him; the glories of His person, human and divine, and the work for God's glory and man's happiness,

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He would in the fulness of time come to accomplish (Psalm 40:7).

The traditional veil of prejudice still hides from the eye of the Jew, be he never so pious and intelligent, the glory of the Lord in the Old Testament (2 Cor. 3:14-16). But the hour is not far distant when the lonely and hungry heart of Israel will turn to the Lord; and then will the darkening veil of unbelief be taken away, and the vision of Messiah's glory in the ancient Scriptures become the witness of a new-born and sanctified Israel to the ends of the earth.

May these unpretentious pages be used by the Lord to hasten that day!

M. I. REICH

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The Messianic Hope of Israel

THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF ISRAEL

(1) The Messianic Hope

MESSIANIC prophecy is that view of the future which connects the eventual blessing of our suffering world with *a Person* in whom the ideal prophet, priest and king, the three offices with which the name "Messiah," i.e., "anointed," in ancient Israel, is connected, will be realized.

The word *Christ* means the same as *Messiah*, being derived from the Greek "Christos," the one on whom the holy chrism has been poured. The Christian confession is that "Jesus is the Christ" — i.e., that He is the fulfillment of the messianic hope of Israel, the anointed prophet, priest and king, a fulfillment which goes even beyond the terms in which the hope was first expressed.

But while the hopes of the ancient people of God were wrapped up with the appearing of a Person, history, as recorded in the sacred writings of Israel, reveals a messianic purpose running through the ages, gradually unfolding and expanding, until He came who is the solution and key to past history, as He is the Hope of that which is still unborn. Messianic prophecy is of the very web and woof of the history of Israel, as well as the theme of its illuminated seers. Messianic predictions synchronized with the frequent crises in that history. You cannot understand the predictions if you detach them from their historical context. So we must allow to the Jews the right to include the so-called *historical*

books of their holy Book with the *prophets*. They divided the Scriptures into Law, Prophets and Devotional Writings, calling them T'nach — combining the initial letters of the three words *Torah, Nebiim, Chetubim*, a division endorsed by our Lord (See Luke xxiv. 44). The book of Joshua in this way begins the prophetic part of Scripture. It is history written with the perspective which messianic prophecy sets before us.*

To ancient Israel history was more than a sequence of events, moving, as the heathen philosophers imagined, in vast cycles, coming back again and again to where it began. Long before Herodotus, the so-called "father of history," the Hebrews interpreted it spiritually. They saw a divine plan and program in history, a divine goal toward which it moves. They called this "the Day of Jehovah," the day of His vindication and triumph; of judgment on the evil now infesting mankind, and the establishment of righteousness and truth in supremacy. The *idea* is found everywhere in the Old Testament, though the *term* seems to have been first used by the prophet Joel.

Along with this hope of Jehovah's revelation in glorious power, there was the vision of the coming *Man*. The prophets compared the spiritual Zion to a travailing woman about to bring forth a man-child. In Chapter XII of the Apocalypse the idea is transferred to the New Testament. The ideal Israel becomes the mother of the Messiah. And this Man brings about in the visions of the prophets the divine good in which history culminates.

It is this prophetic expectation which distinguishes Israel from other nations of antiquity. Israel had a *Hope*. The apostle rightly spoke of the non-Jewish world as "the Gentiles which have *no hope*." Hence pessimism and despair

* The historical writings are called *Rishonim*—or "earlier prophets"; the prophetic writings *per se*, *Acharonim*, or "later" prophets.

settled down on the ancient civilization. On the other hand, no Hebrew prophet ever gave up hope, however dark and dismal the present, and threatening the immediate future might seem. The ultimate future was lit up with the glory of the Messianic reign.

The predictive element found in the Old Testament is a striking phenomenon in religious history. It was peculiar to Israel. Not that the foretelling the future was the one thing that marked the prophets. The prophets were the divinely appointed guardians of true religion, especially when the *priests*, who were the *official* representatives of institutional religion, had failed to function according to their priestly vocation.

Moreover the prophets were the incarnate conscience of the nation when the *kings* who reigned over them were tempted to adopt the lower idea of kingship prevalent among their pagan neighbors, proved to be a mere caricature of the divine ideal of a king. Prophecy in Israel had an ethical content. The prophets not merely spoke of the future, but interpreted the past and thus afforded guidance for the present. In this way the prophets Samuel, Gad and Nathan wrote history (see I Chron. xxix. 29). We cannot rightly discern our duty in the present, unless we lay to heart the lessons of the past from which it has sprung.

The prophets of Israel were totally unlike the sooth-sayers or mantis among the pagans. Balaam, whom the king of Moab hired to curse Israel, but who was overpowered by the Spirit of the God of Israel, confessed to this difference when he exclaimed, "There is no divination in Jacob and no sooth-saying in Israel" (Num. xxiii. 23). For the divine Law strictly forbade all such practices (see Deut. xviii. 10-12; Lev. xix. 31; xx. 27). The heathen prognosticators were in the service of the unclean spirits which acted in and through the whole system of idolatry. The heathen mantis

had to force on the condition in which inspiration was obtainable. They often made use of intoxicants to produce a state of exhilaration and frenzy that laid them open to impressions from the gods. Thus St. Chrisostom spoke of them: "This is the peculiarity of the mantis: to be beside oneself, to suffer constraint, to be struck, to be stretched, to be dragged like a madman. The prophet, however, is not so, but he speaks everything with calm understanding, and with sound self-possession, and knowing what he proclaims, so that before the result we can from these things distinguish between the mantis and the prophet." (Homily xxix. to the Corinthians.)

(2) The Growth of the Messianic Hope

The Old Testament does not merely contain prophecies. It is from first to last a prophecy. It enshrines the progressive revelation of a wonderful hope. Many of its writers lived in days of confusion and disaster. But they express the unquenchable certainty that the sovereign will of God would finally triumph. The Psalms, particularly, are full of this triumph of faith. Their last note is: "Let everything that hath breath praise Jehovah." This is a prayer begotten of a sure and certain hope.

The nation of Israel was chosen to be the trustee of the divine self-revelation, culminating in the Messiah. The first eleven chapters of Genesis, which cover a longer period than the rest of the Bible, Old and New Testaments put together, give the *reason* for the call of Abraham and the choice of his seed. They speak of a two-fold fall of man, the one in the garden of Eden, and the one after the Flood, the fall into idolatry.

The Bible has for its preface the story of the creative week culminating in the Sabbath. The preface is also the index, for the History of the unfolding purposes of redeem-

ing love is a story of seven periods. The new creation is foreshadowed by the old. And at every crisis and turning point Messianic prophecy spoke to man.

a. *From the Fall to the Flood.*

The messianic prophecy speaks of the Seed of the Woman who should with pierced heel crush the head of the Serpent.

b. *From the covenant with Noah to the tower of Babel.*

A new prophecy! God would become *par excellence* "the God of Shem" and would tabernacle with him. Japhet with all his political aggrandizement would have to go to the tent of Shem to find the true God. This is a foreshadowing of the Incarnation, by which the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men.

c. *From the tower of Babel to the call of Abram.*

Mankind had become a scattered family and divided into rival nationalities. The promise to Abram was that in his seed would the nations be blessed, which includes the hope of mutual reconciliation and peace. It is thus the promise of a warless world.

d. *From Abram to the oppression in Egypt.*

Jacob, the last of the three elected patriarchs, the root of the olive tree of promise and privilege, on his death-bed announced the coming of *Shiloh* out of Judah, the royal tribe, and that the obedience of the peoples would be to Him. Thus was the Abrahamic promise clarified and amplified.

e. *The Exodus.*

The divine intervention through the prophetic personality of Moses covered a period of forty years. As the Mediator-prophet was about to pass away, he left behind the promise of another Mediator-prophet, like unto himself, to whom the people would have to hearken, or forfeit their share in the commonwealth of Israel. The clos-

ing words of Deuteronomy, believed to have been added by Ezra, as prophecy was about to die out in Israel, confess that up to that date, a Moses-like prophet had not yet arisen. The hope points to the Christ, greater than His prophetic predecessors.

f. *The Monarchy.*

When at last the conquest of the land was completed by David, and Zion became the metropolis of a united kingdom, the prophet Nathan was commissioned to reveal the great Messianic pronouncement, that the house of David would not pass till the One who would be David's Lord, as well as son, had appeared, whose kingdom would never be abrogated.

When the monarchy established by David was about to be broken up, and the coming exile began to cast its shadow over Israel and Judah, *the golden age of Messianic prophecy* broke forth. The features of the Coming One were more and more clearly delineated. The place and the manner of His birth, the official, as well as personal glories, that should distinguish Him, and particularly His career of suffering ending in glory.

g. *The Exile and the Restoration.*

All the prophets of this period, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, predict *the very time* of Messiah's coming. It would be during the lifetime of the second temple, and His presence in the rebuilt temple would impart to it a greater glory than Solomon's temple contained.

(3) The Pre-Incarnate Christ

The story of Jesus the Messiah does not begin with the birth at Bethlehem. According to the prologue to the fourth evangelist the Incarnation of the Divine Logos was the climax and not the commencement of the Revelation of the invisible God in Him.

He was in the beginning with God, the only-begotten in His bosom, the object of His ineffable delight.

By Him were all things created, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

He delights being with the sons of men, His life was the light of man. All illumination of intellect, conscience and spirit proceeded from Him as from their central sun.

When in the fulness of time the Word became flesh and pitched His tent among men, it was in the tents of Shem that His glory shone. He came "unto His own," to the vineyard of His own planting in the world His hands had made and which knew Him not. And alas! His own also refused Him — they "received Him not." He was a homeless stranger here.

Let us dwell upon that expression "His own." Israel was that in a very special sense. Israel was the nation which He had redeemed and trained for many centuries. He had been their Leader and Commander from Egypt down the avenues of time. It is true that His earthly descent was from the stock of Abraham, that Israel was the mother that had brought Him forth. We must say more than that if we would grasp the truth concerning Israel's Messiah. Israel was as much His product as He was the product of Israel. As He is both the Root and the Offspring of David, so He is the Origin and Child of His nation. But for Him there would have been no Israel, as He declared through the prophet: "I am the Lord, your Holy One, *the Creator of Israel, your King.*" Isaiah xliii:15.

Before His advent there had existed a threefold relationship between Israel and the Messiah. In Israel His coming has been *heralded*. In Israel His coming *cast shadows* before. In Israel the Coming One was already *the Present One*. He was the unseen Presence in the Midst. Israel was the sphere of His activities and manifestations. These three facts are the great theme of the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

(a) His Proclamation in Israel

The Scriptures held as sacred by the Jews show how carefully the coming of the Messiah was prepared for. The Messianic idea is the central topic of the various parts of the Old Testament. It was more than a dead formula handed down by tradition. It was no magical secret imparted to the initiated. There was a distinct growth in the unfolding of the Messianic Hope. The glories and perfections of His Person were unfolded from age to age.

The opening chapters of Genesis describe the frustration through sin of the divine ideal concerning man, so that he was thrust out of the garden of innocence into a thorny wilderness to enter upon a life of terrific conflict with the powers of evil, symbolized by the serpent. But before starting on this age-long conflict he was assured of final victory through the mysterious Seed of the woman who should, though suffering the piercing of His heel, bruise the serpent's head.

(b) The People of the Messianic Hope

After the emerging of rival nationalities with their confusion of tongues and their corruption through idolatry and Satanic wisdom, God called out a lonely pilgrim for a better country, that is, an heavenly, in order that he might become the father of the people of the Messianic Hope. Abram the Hebrew was the rock out of which that people was hewn. To him was divulged the secret which was never quite lost by his descendants, that through his Seed something wonderful would one day come to all mankind, even through the One whom his grandson Jacob, when on his deathbed, called the "Shiloh," to whom the Gentile nations would yield obedience; recovering their lost unity, and the unspeakable blessing of a just government and a warless world under His leadership. The later prophecies

of Moses and of Balaam confirm the previous hints of this glorious Personality who was to arise in Israel.

And lest we should conclude that these hints were realized in David, we find that this very king looked to One whom he called "Lord," and whom he saw sitting at God's right hand, invested with both royal and priestly dignity, the greater than David, for whose sake David was chosen in his day.

After the breakup of the monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and the rapid decline of their national greatness, a succession of prophets were raised up who added many new features to the conception of the Messiah and to the nature of His Kingdom. Thus *Joel*, by many scholars regarded as the oldest of the prophetic line after the division of the tribes into two kingdoms, foresaw the age of the Messiah, calling it "the Day of Jehovah," and that it would be characterized as the time of the outpouring of the Spirit. We know that afterwards John the Baptist designated the bestowal of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a Messianic function. *Amos*, as the time when the fallen tabernacle of David would be raised up again. *Hoseah*, as the time when the rival Kingdoms of Judah and Israel would be re-united, after their return to Jehovah and to David their king.

The nearer the Exile approached the clearer became the portrait of the Messiah. *Micah* announces His birthplace; *Isaiah*, the miracle of His Virgin-Birth. In the later letter of comfort to the exiles of Judah, whose sufferings among the Gentiles were revealed to him at his inaugural vision, he portrays the character of the ideal Servant of Jehovah, His sufferings and travail, and the glories that should follow. The prophet *Jeremiah*, sitting among the ruins of the old covenant dispensation, foretold the coming of the new and better covenant, while *Ezekiel* describes the pro-

cess of this spiritual renewing, for the Israel of the *New birth* alone can "see the Kingdom of God." Then to the prophet *Daniel* was revealed by the angel Gabriel the *very time* when Messiah the Prince would be manifested to Israel, and making an end of sins, bring in everlasting righteousness.

Thus from Abraham till the coming of the Messiah, a period of some two thousand years, the image of the coming One was progressively unveiled. His Face shone out more and more clearly from the pages of the Holy Book of the Old Testament congregation of Jehovah.

The very conception of God encouraged in Israel by her illuminated prophets must also be classed under the head of Messianic prophecy. For while on the one hand One was spoken of as to come who, though human, would be possessed of Divine names and attributes, such as the royal Babe of Isaiah ix., on the other hand God was conceived of as under decidedly anthropomorphic imagery. The nation was not permitted to make an image of Jehovah, and yet how human is His mental image as projected by the prophets! He possesses every human affection. He puts forth effort like a man. He feels pain. "He is a Warrior, sharing His people's battles," to quote from G. A. Smith: "He is a Mother travailing in pangs for Israel's new birth. In all their afflictions He was afflicted, in His love and in His pity He redeemed them. He is man's fellow-sufferer and acquainted with his woes." G. A. S. proceeds: "These are real Old Testament prophecies of the incarnation; God manifest in the flesh, entering our moral warfare, in our weakness, at our side, tempted in all points as we are, making the shame of our sin and the misery of our estrangement from God His burden, and at the last, as St. Peter says: 'bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.' "

(c) His Foreshadowing in Israel

It is an interesting and profitable study to trace out the way in which the first disciples, the apostles, and the church they founded, read the sacred writings of Israel. It is clear that they saw the Messiah not only in the ancient *prophecies*, but also in the *history* of the people of Israel and in the *institutions* which had been set up in the midst of the chosen people. The epistle to the Hebrews, the oldest *apologia* for the Christian faith, is full of this line of teaching. And it does not stand alone among the early documents of the new covenant faith. The apostle Paul declared that the ancient ritual of the Jewish people was nothing but a *shadow* cast before-hand by *Christ*, the true *Substance* who was about to come. See Colossians ii:17. He calls the first man Adam, the figure of another Adam who was to come. Romans v:17.

He declares that the rock of which the pilgrim hosts in the wilderness drank was Christ, even as another apostle, the writer of the fourth Gospel, saw in the tabernacle and in the temple a prefiguring of the flesh which the Divine Logos had taken into union with Himself. The pre-rabbinic religion of Israel was a shadow-picture of the Messiah. Again, if Personality is the key to history, how significant is the divinely recorded history of the Old Testament! What a noble succession of personal types of the coming One presents itself before our eyes!

(1) Adam, head of a fallen race; Christ, Head of a redeemed race. Romans v:12-21; I Corinthians xv:21, 22.

(2) Melchizedek, priest of Salem; Christ the eternal Priest of a heavenly character. Hebrews vii:1, Psalm cx:4.

(3) Isaac, the only-begotten son, born by an act of divine power, contrary to nature, offered as a burnt-offering, and typically raised from the dead; the Only Begotten of the Father, whose birth was a miraculous event, laid on the

Altar of absolute surrender, obedient unto death, but now highly exalted, far above all heavens.

(4) Joseph, rejected by and separated from his brethren, in the seat of power among Gentiles; Christ rejected by and for a season separated from His Brethren according to the flesh, the exalted One in the Gentile Church.

(5) Moses, Mediator of the covenant of works; Christ, Mediator of the better covenant of Grace. Hebrews iii:1-6.

(6) David, suffering and reigning; Christ, the Man of Sorrows, raised up on high a Prince and a Savior. Ezekiel xxxiv:23, 24.

(7) Solomon, the Temple-Builder; behold, a greater than Solomon is here who is building a greater and an indestructible Temple. Psalm lxxii. Matthew xii:42.

(8) Jonah, passing through a symbolic death and resurrection, preaching repentance to the Gentiles; Christ actually dead and risen, sending the Message of repentance and forgiveness to all nations. Matthew xii:39, 40.

And what shall we say of the outward institutions of Israel? What a rich study awaits us here! Does not the remarkable institution of the *Sabbath* after a week of toil prefigure the rest which only One can offer? Does not the Passover speak of redemption through the blood of the Lamb of God? I Corinthians v:7; John xix:36. How significant the lifting up of *the brazen serpent* in the light of the Savior's own interpretation? Numbers xxi:4-9; John iii:14, 15. How can we contemplate the majestic *altar* ritual of the ancient sanctuary without seeing something of the greater offering of Him who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God? How think of the Jubilee without seeing in it a picture of what He has planned for the weary children of men?

The High Priest in his official raiment of glory and beauty, points to Him who as crowned with glory and honor in

the heavenly sanctuary, exercises a higher Priesthood. Bold indeed are the words of the apostle Paul when he declares emphatically that the entire history of Israel was typical, and written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come. See I Corinthians x:11.

(d) His Manifestations in Israel

When our Lord pointed to the ancient Scriptures of Israel, commending them to our careful study, He affirmed that they testified of Him. These words imply far more than is usually deduced from them. It is generally conceded that the Old Testament contains Messianic Prophecies and Messianic foreshadowings. But I hold that the words of our Lord teach that they also record the works and the manifestations of the Messiah in Israel before He came in the fulness of time in the flesh. Every now and then there appears in the history of the patriarchs and after, at some great crisis in the history of the chosen people, a mysterious Man who is yet more than Man. Suddenly we meet with Him without introduction or subsequent explanation. And His disappearances are as mysterious as His appearances. He bears various names: the Angel of Jehovah; the angel of His Presence; the Angel of the Covenant; the Angel in whom is Jehovah's Name. He not only acts in the name of Jehovah, He is frequently addressed as Jehovah as well as called Jehovah. Divine adoration and reverence are offered unto Him and He receives them. He appears to Abraham, the father of the chosen family (Gen. xviii). He shows Himself to Hagar, Abraham's fugitive hand-maid who called Him Jehovah, the God that seeth me (Gen. xvi. 7-13). He prevents the ultimate sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. xxii. 11-13). He wrestles with Jacob through the night watches, and of Him Jacob declared: "I have seen God face to face" (Gen. xxxii). The dying Jacob invokes the benediction of "the Angel-Redeemer from all evil" on

his grandchildren" (Gen. xlvi. 16). Moses hears his voice out of the burning bush, where He calls Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exod. iii. 2-5). His Presence was in the cloud that led Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea and through the wilderness to the promised land (Exod. xiv. 19, xxiii. 20:23). After their fall into image-worship, in connection with the golden calf, Jehovah threatens to withdraw and instead sends an inferior angel to be their leader (Exod. xxiii). But in answer to the prayer of Moses: "If *Thy* Presence go not up with us carry us not up hence," He places Himself again at the head of the host. Joshua hands over the command to Him and falls in worship at his feet (Joshua v). He appears to the wife of Manoah and says His Name is "Wonderful" (Judges xiii. 3-23). He appears to Gideon and commissions him to deliver Israel (Judges vi). David saw Him at the threshing floor of Ornah the Jebusite, the site of the future temple (I Chron. xxi). Isaiah and Ezekiel saw Him in glory attired on the throne in the heavenly world. The latter declared His appearance was like unto a Son of Man. The prophet Zechariah has a vision of Him as Jerusalem's Intercessor, while Daniel saw Him receiving an everlasting dominion from the Ancient of Days and calls His Name Michael,* declaring that He is the unseen champion of the chosen people. Malachi, the last of the prophets, before the silence of four hundred years of prophetic revelation fell upon Israel, says this mysterious Angel, Israel's unseen and ever present Guardian, would suddenly appear in that very Temple which the returned exiles had

* This may be challenged by some. But I will let it stand, as our Lord is not only "Head of every man" (I Cor. 11:3), in His humanity, He is also "Head of all principality of power" (Col. 2:10); having in His Old Testament manifestation appeared as an Angel; and now, in His present exultation, "Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (I Pet. 3:22). Thus He will descend from heaven not only with a shout, and with the Lamb of God, but also with the voice of the archangel (I Thess. 4:16); He filling these three dignities: human, angelic and divine.

built on the site of the former house. For was He not ever the Angel of Jehovah's Presence, the Savior, who in His love and kindness had redeemed Israel, and had borne the people and sustained them since the days of old (Is. lxiii. 8, 9)? The same Angel whom Zechariah calls Jehovah and who is yet the One *sent* by Jehovah! (Zech. i. 8, 10-13; ii. 8-11; iii. 1-10; vi. 12, 13, 15). Jesus is that Angel in His incarnate life.

(4) History in the Light of the Messianic Hope

We have seen that the Messiah was prophetically proclaimed in Israel, typically foreshadowed, and spiritually manifested. One more point remains to be elucidated. The Messiah was called for by every great crisis in history, both of humanity and of that nation chosen out of humanity to be the light of humanity.

(a) Beginning at the very beginning, the first crisis was the loss of primeval innocence, the awakening to the grim tragedy of existence, the mystery of suffering, the sense of sin, the shadow of death. Then out of the depths of the divine compassion came the Protevangelium, the Hope of ultimate deliverance through the sufferings of the Seed of the Woman.

(b) After the flood came a second fall of man, into idolatry. When he knew God he would not retain Him in his knowledge. This made the call of Abram to be the father of a family of faith obligatory. This faith rested on the Promise concerning the Seed through whom the nations would be blessed, by their recovering the lost knowledge of God, and also in that divine knowledge their lost harmony.

(c) There was a third crisis when the new-born nation, created by a redemptive act of God, divinely taught and led, found itself on the borders of the promised land, about to be bereft of the great prophetic personality through whom

its redemption and education had been mediated. Then was revealed the purpose of God to send a prophet like unto Moses, a new Mediator, a new Interpreter, a new Deliverer.

(d) When after many vicissitudes Israel had at last achieved national unity under a king, and was actually in possession of the territory promised to Abraham, the prophet Nathan announced the Messianic destiny of the Davidic dynasty. The history of his house would culminate in the Messiah, as the history of humanity in the Woman's conquering Seed. Subsequent prophets, who lived in a very different time to that of David, who witnessed the break up of all national hopes, the ruin of throne and temple, the dismemberment and exile of the nation, echo the covenant made with David. It was the anchor of their souls in a dark and stormy day. Thus Amos, Hoseah, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

(e) The post exilic prophets rather cherished the image of the Suffering Servant, first spoken of by Isaiah. The post exilic Zechariah is full of references to this sublime concept, the noblest of all the noble utterances of inspired prophecy. The sufferings of the nation had brought the spiritually sensitive among the people into sympathy with the ideal of suffering and its redemptive consequences, as being nearer the heart of things than that of a political Messiah, setting up Israel in material prosperity.

(f) After the Exile came the holy experiment to create a godly nation, righteous in the Law and separated to Jehovah, with its inevitable disillusionment in view of the fact of the obstinate sinfulness of human nature. This, coupled with the bitter struggle with Hellenistic paganism, its philosophy, and its lower ethical standards, turned the eyes of the saints in Israel to the appearing of the Son of Man out of heaven. He alone could end the beast rule

which had oppressed Israel, He alone could establish the kingdom of heaven in which their aspirations for righteousness could be satisfied.

(g) Finally, when matters had become acute, when the Roman power had succeeded that of Syria, and its hand lay heavy on the little nation, and the time had come for the temple with its sacrifices and priestly ritual to be destroyed, and for Jerusalem to cease to be the capital of a Jewish nation, and the land of Palestine to be its national home, HE came Who is the Bruiser of the serpent; the harmonizer of the divided nations; the final and complete Interpreter of God; the true King of humanity; the Priest whose oblation consists in Himself; the Son of Man, who is the Lord from heaven; Very Light of Very Light, Very God of Very God; the outshining of His glory and the express image of His substance.

“God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us”—and is still speaking unto us—“in His Son”; to whom be glory and dominion forevermore!

(5) The Divine Messiah

While the Old Testament puts in the foreground the essential *Unity* of the Divine Being, it does not teach the *unicity* implied in the modern Jewish doctrine of philosophic monotheism. The unity of the Godhead is too rich in content for that. That the Messiah is to be regarded as other than God must be held, in the light of Old Testament revelation, in conjunction with the fact that He bears divine names, shares divine attributes, and performs divine functions. In other words, the coming of Messiah is the coming of Jehovah also. For an example, see Zechariah ii. 10: “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, *I come*, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, *saith Jehovah*”;

and Chapter ix. 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, *thy King cometh unto thee*; He is just and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

The writers of the New Testament constantly appeal to the Old Testament for proof of the super-human glory of the Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews cites a number of such passages in Chapter 1 in which the Messiah is seen as having "a more excellent name" than the angels who are higher than man, even that of "Son." This shows that the title "Son" as found in Psalm ii as belonging to the Anointed King of the end-time, implies His supra-angelic dignity, One who shares the very nature of God. And this "Son" is addressed as both "God" and "Lord." (Heb. i. 8, quoting Psalm xlv. 6, 7; and verse 10, quoting Psalm cii. 25.)

The Old Testament passage, which more than any other is used in the New to buttress the witness of the Apostles to the supra-human exaltation of Jesus, is Psalm cx. In this they followed the example of the Master Himself, who confuted His critics by deducing from this psalm the truth of a *heavenly* Messiah, more than David's Son, even his divine Lord, rather than the earthly potentate whom they were expecting (See Matthew xxii. 41-45 R.V.). The Messiah transcends, according to the interpretation given on highest authority, the idea of a mere political and military leader. He is One to whom even David paid religious veneration, calling Him "Lord."

The history of Israel as recorded in the Old Testament bears witness to the expectation of a world-Saviour, combined with the revelation of the glory of Jehovah. Thus we have the great "Shiloh" prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10 coupled

with Ps. lxxii. 11; the prophecy of the One born in David's city, whose goings forth have been from eternity and who shall be great "to the ends of the earth" (Micah v. 1-4); Balaam's vision of the One who will sway His sceptre over all nations (Num. xxiv. 17-19); Isaiah, of His Kingdom which has no limits (Isaiah ix. 6) who bears the five fold name: "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," while the name "Immanuel, *God with us*," given to the wonder-child of Isaiah vii seems to be an echo of the great Messianic prophecy of Balaam (Num. xxiii. 21); "*Jehovah his God is with him*," and the shout of a King is among them." All through the Old Testament runs the expression, "*Jovah*"—*He comes!* It was this which gave the forward look to the pious Jew. *Jehovah* is coming to judge and to redeem (Psalm xcvi. 9); and *One like a Son of Man*, who is also "*the ancient of days*," comes in the clouds of heaven to administer an indestructible Kingdom (Dan. vii. 13, 14, 22) of whom another passage declares that "the clouds are the dust of His feet." Sometimes there is before the eyes the Man, who bears the names of Stone, Shepherd, Lion, Prophet like unto Moses, Seed of the Woman, Seed of Abraham, Seed of David, Martyr-Servant, Priest-King, Branch, Son of Man, etc. At other times *Jehovah* Himself fills the entire horizon of the seer. Two stars of first magnitude, appearing distinct, shining in the heaven of Israel's hope of the future — till finally the two stars are seen blended in one glorious luminary, in the Divine human personality of our Lord, "*Jehovah our Righteousness*," as the prophet Jeremiah saluted Him (Jer. xxiii. 6).

Professor F. Godet rightly says: "The idea of the divinity of the Messiah is the soul of the entire Old Testament.

There was in the whole of the Old Testament from the patriarchal theophanies down to the latest prophetic visions, a constant current towards the Incarnation as the goal of all these revelations. The appearance of the Messiah presents itself more and more clearly to the view of the prophets as the perfect Theophany, the final coming of Jehovah.”*

* Commentary on Luke, English text, Vol. II, page 257.

The Hope Raised

II

THE HOPE RAISED

WE WILL have to turn to the book of Genesis to find the hidden source in history of the ever brightening Hope which illuminated the often dark record of Israel's story.

The book of Genesis covers a longer period of time than all the Scriptures put together. And its story emphasizes four distinct prophecies concerning One who was to come: the prophecy made by the Lord God Himself, (Chapter iii); the prophecy of Noah (Chapter ix); the prophecy made to Abram and his family (Chapters xii and xxii), and the death-bed prophecy of Jacob, the last of the three roots of the people from whom the earthly progenitors of the Coming One have sprung (Chapter xlix).

(1) The Proto-Evangelium — the Gospel at the Gates of Eden

The first theophany (or divine self-revelation in visibility) occurred after the Fall of Man when to his undoing he became, as the Lord God said: "The man is become as one of us," that is, his own master. Then the Lord God began His redeeming search. Grace took the initiative, as it always has done. In the plaintive cry: "Where art thou?" we hear the mother call of divine love. And this theophany was

but the first of many more, culminating in the Incarnation, "God manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy iii. 16).

Full of mystery, yet rich in content, are the words pronounced on the serpent, the creature which camouflaged the approach of the world of evil towards man. The curse pronounced on the serpent does not fall on man, though the ground, his material environment, is affected by it. But in the heart of the judgment on the personification of evil gleams the hope of redemption for man. God will not give up His original plan in man's creation. The very woman beguiled by the serpent, would bring forth the One who should bring the reign of sin and death to an end.

May we not see in the cryptic term "the Seed of *the Woman*" an intimation of a Virgin-birth? The Redeemer must be Man, and in manhood win out in the conflict with evil where man has been worsted. But He must be free from the taint generation of sinful seed entails. Hence the necessity of the miraculous divine intervention in the origin and birth of the Emancipator of a fallen race. But this deliverance would cost Him the bruising of His heel. Both the sufferings and the triumphs of the Messiah are thus sketched forth in the first prophecy of Holy Scripture, the root from which the widely branched tree of Messianic prophecy has grown.

The first intimation of the Coming One connects Him with the human race, its representative and Redeemer. Hence the new name which Adam gave to his wife after hearing this prophecy: *Chava*, (Zoe in the Greek Septuagint), that is, she would be "the mother of all living" (Genesis iii. 20), the mystical mother of Him who calls Himself *Ho Zon*, the *Living One*, and the spiritual mother of all those who would obtain through faith "life in His Name," prefiguring "the Jerusalem above which is the Mother of us all."

And it is noteworthy that Adam's faith in the coming Deliverer was accompanied by the Lord God covering Man's nakedness (Genesis iii. 21). Is not the atonement prefigured in this? The word used for *covering* is the same employed for *atonement* in the Hebrew. Our nakedness and sinfulness is not seen when covered by the virtue and value of the atoning sacrifice thus prefigured.

Lamech, the tenth from Adam restricts the fulfillment of the promise to a certain part of the human race, to that of Noah. Noah, the father of Shem, was looked for at his very birth as the one who would bring in the looked-for comfort (Genesis v. 29); and while this was a premature expectation, it nevertheless remained true that Noah was chosen to be the direct ancestor of the Comforter to come, while an initial fulfillment was made in the everlasting covenant established with Noah and his descendants after the Flood.

(2) The Noah Prophecy

In Genesis ix. 25-27 the light of prophecy breaks through the gloom of human ignorance. This remarkable pronouncement is the first recorded prophecy of Holy Scripture by *human* lips (the proto-evangelium was a prophecy uttered by the *divine* mouth directly), and speaks of the Lord God of Shem. It is the first time that God identifies Himself with a particular man. And however late the date modern scholarship assigns to this utterance, history was very slow in justifying it. The children of Ham and not Japhet were the first civilizers and masters of the world. The cradle of culture stood in Egypt, Phenice and Babylon. The day when the sons of Japhet would come to the front was much later. The "enlargement" promised to Japhet did not begin till the Persian Cyrus began his conquering career which started the political and militaristic hegemony of the Aryan race till our day.

Then centuries after came the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning Shem, that the Lord God would be his God in a special sense. He did indeed choose the tents of Shem for His abode,* and the conquering Japhet must needs go to the tents of Shem to find the true God.

The words: "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem" indicate that Shem would be pre-eminent in being the bearer of the Divine Name. The very word *Shem*, i. e. *Name*, points to that. By the "Name" is meant the self-revelation of God in history, as well as in creation and providence. Not military and political glory, but to be the bearer of spiritual values for the good of others would be the mission of Shem.

(3) The Abrahamic Promise

The descendants of Noah soon corrupted themselves. The first chapter of the epistle to the Romans describes the second fall of man after the Flood, as chapter v. 12 goes back to that in the garden of Eden. Idolatry supplanted the knowledge of the true God. The tower of Babel was meant to be an outward sign of man's apostasy, "to make *us* a name," said the Babel builders. Their names have perished, for man's pretentious self-advertizings must always end thus.

Then God did a new thing. He called Abram. He separated one man unto Himself and made him the depositary of Promise. The era of Promise, properly speaking began thus and looks on to the time when all nations shall have found their fullest blessing in Him who is Abraham's Seed, of whom Isaac was a type.

* Note on Gen. ix. 27:

Early Jewish expositors make God the subject of the verb "shall dwell"—God "shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Orelli says (*Old Test. Prophecy*, p. 41): "The ancient book, *Bereshith Rabba*, remarks on this passage: The *Shekinah* dwells only in the tents of Shem." This view is defended by some modern scholars. So Delitzsch: "The *Protevangelium* announced a future salvation in the Seed of the Woman; the language here connects the same with the Name of God, which was to be entrusted to Shem. Shem is to be the preserver of the Name of God, of Jehovah, the preserver of His religion, of His revelation" (*Messianic Prophecies*, p. 30).

The story of Abram begins in the closing verses of Genesis xi. What preceded, and the time covered is greater than the entire period of inspired history, is introduction, to show why the choice and call and discipline of Abram was necessary. It is the story of the two falls of man. But now a new stage is reached in the unfolding of the Messianic Hope. The prophecy concerning the Seed of the Woman, becomes the promise of the Seed of Abraham. The promise that Abraham and Sarah should become the ancestors of *kings* (Genesis xvii. 6, 16), looks on to David and his royal line culminating in David's Messianic son, and the promise that his seed should secure the blessing of all nations (Genesis xxii), points to a Mediator-Priest, beneath whose benediction the restless and competitive nations would find the solution of their age-long problems at last.

The words "shall be blessed" in Him, the Seed of Abraham, should be translated "*shall bless themselves,*" i. e., shall wish themselves the blessings which the Seed of Abraham is the bearer of. Spiritual blessings come to those who desire them and long for them and make them the object of their pursuit.

The history of redemption properly begins with the appearing of the Lord of glory to Abram (Acts vii. 2). The goal is the re-appearing of the glory and the earth being filled with it as the waters cover the sea. The call of Abram was the first step towards this.

God's separating Abram and confining Himself to his family as the centre of His interests was intended to bring about the blessing of all nations. Election has for its ultimate not so much the good of the elect, as that of the non-elect, through the agency of the elect. And for this the elect, like Abraham, have had to go through a severe process of suffering and discipline in order to be vessels meet for the divine use.

(4) The Shiloh Prophecy

The patriarchal age closed with the passing of Jacob. He and his clan had migrated to Egypt by the invitation of Joseph. But ere the curtain falls the voice of prophecy is heard once more, confirming the Messianic Promise and developing its implications.

Jacob must have pondered deeply the truths of which he, as the one to whom "the birth-right" belonged by divine decree, was the custodian, and what he had he held in trust for all mankind.

He foresaw that the Messianic family would develop into twelve tribes. Their having been transplanted into Egypt did not mean the cancelling of God's choice of Shem. But it was a necessary interlude. They were less likely to be amalgamated with their non-semitic environment there. But which of the sons of Jacob would be the head of the chosen line whose end would be that mysterious Being who would be the representative of both God and Man in one personality according to the Proto-evangelium?

Divine choices are never blind and arbitrary. Reuben forfeited his birth-right. He had committed infamy. Simeon and Levi had been confederates in wickedness and cruelty. Joseph received a double portion in his two sons. But Judah, who had so nobly volunteered to be surety for Benjamin, thus exhibiting the spirit of the One who was willing to become our Surety in death, was elevated to the primacy as the royal tribe (I Chron. v. 1, 2).

The Gentile peoples, at war with each other ever since their speech was confused at the tower of Babel, would gather to "Shiloh," a Son of Judah, and render Him obedience (Genesis xlix. 10). The sceptre would not depart from Judah till Shiloh's appearing. God would not allow

his tribal distinction to be wiped out, as has happened to his brethren. The word *Shebet* means both tribe and sceptre. The star of Judah would continue to shine till it would lose itself in the more glorious light of Shiloh, his noblest Son.

And what does "Shiloh" mean? It might mean either *the Sent One; the Peace-bringer; or He Whose right it is*. Probably the last is the true meaning. We get an echo of it in Ezekiel xxi. 27, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is, and I will give it to Him." The nations will not know rest till He takes the government into His own hands.

The indestructibility of the Jewish people, the homeless, scattered and suffering children of Judah, is the miracle of history. The northern kingdom of Israel has disappeared from sight. But Jacob would have been a false prophet if the Assyrian had swallowed up Jerusalem as he had Samaria. If Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Euphianes, Vespasian and Titus, the Spanish Inquisition and the modern Antisemitic atrocities had succeeded in wiping out Judah also as a distinct people, then would the Messianic Hope have proven a superstition. But the Word of our God must stand for ever and human counsels come to nought. The ancient Synagogue did not fail to perceive the Messianic significance of the divine oracle concerning Shiloh, from the lips of the dying Jacob. Thus the Targum of Onkelos has it: "Until the Messiah come, whose is the Kingdom." The Jerusalem Targum has it: "Until the time that the King Messiah shall come, whose is the Kingdom." The Targum of pseudo-Jonathan: "Till the King, the Messiah shall come." The Babylonian Talmud "What is Messiah's Name? His Name is Shiloh, for it is written, 'Until Shiloh come'." And with these interpretations agree

Bereshith Rabba, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, Rashi and other Rabbis of note, such as the famous Rabbi Solomon Yitz-rachi.

NOTE — Hengstenberg points out that the name *Shelomo* (Solomon) comes from the same root as *Shiloh*, and denotes "a man of rest," corresponding to the "Prince of Peace" in Isaiah ix. 5, like the German Friedrich—Frederick, that is, "rich in peace," "the peaceful one."

Elliott says: "We cannot fail to recognize an allusion to Shiloh in those passages of the prophets in which the Messiah is described as the author of rest and peace (Is. ix. 6, 7; Micah iv. 1-4; Is. ii. 2-4; Zech. ix. 10, and many other passages).

The Hope Revived

III

THE HOPE REVIVED

THE story of Moses not only explains the nationality of Israel, but is also the revival of the Hope of which that nation is the custodian. The choicest measure which the patriarchs passed on to their posterity was the Messianic expectation which would be fulfilled among them. But the period of alternate prosperity and adversity in Egypt was fatal to the Hope which is the very reason for which the people sprung from Abraham existed. The Hebrews gradually degenerated in Egypt. But for the bitter oppression which followed the period of prosperity while Joseph and his services to Egypt were still remembered, they would have become thoroughly Egyptianized and ceased to function messianically.

Ezekiel xx tells us that when the God of their fathers lifted up His hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, the people had become idolatrous. They were polluted with all the abominations of Egypt, famous for its pantheism which saw in every object a manifestation of God and thus to be adored. In the delirium of idolatrous fascination the Hebrews had quite forgotten the very Name of the God of their fathers (Exodus iii. 13). Their sacred past had become dim and hazy. Their present offered no testimony to Jehovah. Their future was devoid of the element of hope.

But there must have been a remnant, however small and insignificant. There has always been a remnant in Israel,

or else the people would have perished like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah i. 9). There is such a remnant "at this present time" (Rom. xi. 5). Let the critics of the Jews, please bear this in mind. The existence of such a remnant made a revival always possible, even in the darkest day. There was never lacking seed for a new harvest, left over from the bad harvests of the past, "a handful of corn upon the top of the mountains," which, when sown again, would bear fruit that would "shake like Lebanon" (Psalm lxxii. 16).

How do we know that there was such a remnant among the degraded Hebrews in Egypt? By some of the names that were given to the children born in that dismal day. The name of the father of Moses was Amram. His parents gave him that name, which means: "the people is high," because they believed in the destiny of Israel. They did not develop an inferiority complex on account of the shame put upon them by the Egyptians. Israel has a future. The Seed of the Woman and of Abraham, the dispenser of universal salvation and of peace, would arise from this people. Hold your heads up, ye downtrodden slaves!

And so the name of the mother of Moses: Jochebed. That means: "Jehovah is exalted." Then not Ra or Isis, or the innumerable gods of Egypt, including not only sun, moon and stars, but also cats, dogs, beetles, in whose honor marvellous temples had been erected, were to be worshipped. Jehovah had no temple, or altar, or prophet, or priest in Egypt. But in due time He would execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, as He afterwards declared to Pharaoh. So the grandparents of Moses had faith in the ultimate victory of the God of Israel.

Into such an atmosphere of faith in a dark day Moses was born, miraculously preserved alive that he might be the type and earnest as a Mediator-prophet, of One greater yet.

And little did the King of Egypt dream that he was actually educating the future champion of the people he meant to destroy. But God always makes his enemy look ridiculous. Pharaoh was but the unconscious instrument of Satan who hated the people out of whom his conqueror was to arise. (See Rev. xii. 13). He has always had a special grudge against the national mother of the Messiah.

The personality of Moses towers aloft above all others. As a prophet he had unique relations with Jehovah (Numbers xii. 6-8), and he became the mediator through whom God effected redemption for his oppressed people. "By faith" he had identified himself when their fortunes were at the lowest. *To sight* they must have been most unattractive, but to faith they were God's elect vessel for the bringing in of salvation. God was preparing them to be the channels of salvation to the world, as our Lord said at the well of Sychar: "*Salvation is of the Jews.*" And again "*by faith*" Moses celebrated the first passover. The people observed the rite of the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb. But Moses did it by faith in the greater passover in the precious blood of the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot. For God "shewed His *ways* unto Moses: His *acts* unto the children of Israel" (Psalm ciii). They saw His mighty doings, but Moses had spiritual insight into His counsels. He foresaw the Messiah as Mediator-prophet of Israel in the end-time, to lead them out of the bondage to sin into the fulness of the blessing of His glorious realm of divine good. Hence "the song of Moses and of the Lamb" are properly linked together in Revelation xv.

(1) The Prophet Like Unto Moses

It was as Moses was about to leave the flock which he had tended so wisely and patiently those forty years, knowing that the people would feel bereaved, that he left behind

the wonderful promise concerning another prophet, resembling him, who would be the Mediator between them and Israel. It is recorded in Deut. xviii 15-19.

At Sinai, where God spoke directly from heaven to the people, they could not endure to hear that awful voice. The people asked for a mediator, and God granted them their request (Exodus xx. 19; Deut v. 23-25). Moses predicted that a similar mediator would be granted in the future. It would be a solemn matter to reject His word. The apostle Peter, quoting this prophecy in Acts iii, applies the warning as involving excision from the people of God, from Israel. This terrible judgment has indeed befallen the unbelieving Jewish people. They are like branches cut off from their own olive-tree. They are no longer "the Israel of God."

The attempt has been made to weaken the Messianic application of the prophecy by referring it to a succession of prophetic men who would be divine spokesmen to their generation. But the singular is retained throughout in the prediction. Moses clearly had one special prophetic personality, who would be like unto himself. Moses, we know, was the one chosen mediator of the Thora; the builder of the tabernacle of witness, and by whose ministry Jehovah became "King in Jeshurun" (Deut. xxxiii. 4, 5). Among the successors in the prophetic ministry none were like unto Moses. In the postscript to Deuteronomy, believed to have been added by Ezra, as the spirit of prophecy was about to pass from Israel, it is definitely stated, that a Moses-like prophet had not arisen in Israel (Deut. xxxiv. 10).

The early Christians made much of the parting words of Moses concerning this great prophet to come. Read Peter's comment in Acts iii. 22-24, where this prophet is distinguished from all others since the days of Samuel. Read the words of Stephen when before the Sanhedrin, declaring that

Jesus was that predicted prophet (Acts vii. 39). So we read the testimony of the young convert Philip to Nathaniel (John i. 46), the confession of the woman of Sychar (John iv. 25), and finally our Lord's own use of the prophecy under consideration in John xii. 48, 49.

Reading the prophecy in its connection we find it stands in contrast to the eight ways in which the world of darkness speaks to man. *God* speaks to man by and in a *Man*. Thus we have two voices out of the invisible world in Deut. xviii. 9-22. From the beginning God meant to speak to man (John i. 1). He spoke to man in the days of his primeval innocence. Again He spoke after man fell. But in the meantime man lends his ear to the whisperings of the serpent, the slanderer of God to man, and man has believed his lies, as sweet as honey, but conveying deadly poison to the soul. Now God has spoken in a Man, His Son in manhood: "A prophet . . . of thy brethren" — as Hebrews ii. 17 tells us: "in all things made like to His brethren." We have no need to turn to the mediums of the world of darkness, survivals of pagan delusions. The light of heaven shines for us in the face of Jesus Christ, the One Mediator between God and Man.

(2) The Star and Sceptre From Jacob

We cannot leave the period when Moses was the Mediator of the old covenant without noticing prophecy given under very different circumstances than those already considered, by a Gentile, to whom it was permitted to look into the future of the people of divine choice, and their history in connection with the Messiah.

The deliverance of Israel out of Egypt was more than an historical event. It had religious significance. It placed Israel in opposition to the pagan world from henceforth. What will be most likely the course and the end of this con-

flict? The prophecy of Balaam in Numbers xxiv gives the answer.

Balaam's oracles fall into four groups and in them the future development of the spiritual kingdom of God first established in Israel is foreseen (See Numbers xxiii. 7-10, 18-24; xxiv. 3-9). With his spiritual eyes divinely opened Balaam saw a *Star* come out of Jacob and a *Sceptre* arise from Israel.

This gentile prophet saw Israel finally victorious over the world of pagan nations, Moab, Edom, Amalek, Assur, Eber, the maritime power of Chittim, the last of the gentile conquerors, the Roman empire, come within the range of his vision. "Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion." He has the last word. "*God* shall accomplish this" (verse 23). Not by the sword but by the Word will this Ruler win out. This is an echo of the Shiloh prophecy. The obedience of the peoples to Shiloh is a willing surrender. His methods are peaceable, as His name implies. And it is also an anticipation of the visions of Daniel, which expand this oracle of Balaam. The goal of history is the supplanting of the *beast-Kingdoms* by that of *the Son of Man from heaven* (Daniel vii).

There is a remarkable combination of the earthly and the heavenly natures of the Coming One in Balaam's vision. He saw in Him One who would be both *Star* and *Sceptre*. Our Lord clearly refers to this prophecy when He says of Himself: "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star" (Rev. xxii. 16). The language used by Balaam was that concerning earthly things, but the intention was to show the heavenly and spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God administered by the Divine-Human Christ.

The Hope Re-affirmed

IV

THE HOPE RE-AFFIRMED

THE books of Joshua, Judges and first Samuel, while they do not add much to the elucidation of the Messianic hope, are nevertheless important links in the chain of events which run on till the appearing of the Messiah. Joshua records the conquest of the land by the miraculous aid given to Israel, God using His redeemed people as the executors of the judgment on the corrupt Canaanites, their cup of iniquity having become full, in spite of the warning which the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah had given.

Judges records the failure of the tribes in executing this judgment to the full, which led to their degeneration eventually. As Delitzsch said: "The course of the true seed of the woman went at that time through the mire of great waters." Judah practically lost the leadership which was given to him by a divine oracle in the beginning of the book (Judges i. 2). And the end of the book gives a terrible picture of unspeakable corruption in Judah, with Bethlehem as the centre (Chapters xvii-xxi). We are told that in those days there was "no king in Israel." Anarchy prevailed. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

However, a remnant was preserved. Hence the book of Ruth, which takes you to the very Bethlehem whose shameful record had just been told. And in the book of Ruth,

one hundred years before David, we see how divine providence prepared for the needed King, out of whose loins, in the fulness of time, the Messianic King was to arise.

A further step towards the ultimate fulfillment of the Messianic hope, centered in the Divine-Human King, was the preparation of the one who was qualified to anoint the King out of whose house, according to the flesh, the Hope of Israel was to spring. The first book of Samuel gives us the record of this divine preparation. We read of the lonely exercises of Hannah, at a time when priesthood in the house of Eli had utterly failed. Out of those exercises Samuel was born, and dedicated to Jehovah to serve in the sanctuary. The song of Hannah looks beyond the time then present to the end-time when "the adversaries of Jehovah shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them. Jehovah shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength to His King and exalt the horn of His Messiah" (I Samuel ii. 9, 10).

The ministry of Samuel ushered in a new era, that of monarchy in Israel. He was a descendant of the ill-fated Korah whom the pit swallowed up for his rebellion, and whose descendants, spared in mercy, became the doorkeepers of the sanctuary. And that was indeed Samuel's first occupation (I Samuel iii. 15). But as his mother had prophesied: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory" (I Samuel ii. 9), so the child Samuel became the spokesman of the Word of Jehovah which had become rare in Israel, the restorer of a backslidden people to allegiance to Jehovah, and the instrument for introducing the Messianic house of David. Samuel was the spiritual father of David, who as the man after God's own heart, upon whom Samuel had poured the holy chrism, typified, as well as predicted,

the One whose appearing meant the coming of the longed for Kingdom of God.

* * * *

We see constantly in sacred history that as in creation darkness preceded light, so God's beginnings of a new era are often preceded by false moves on the part of man, ending in disappointment. Thus Cain, the firstborn of Adam, was hailed as the promised one by Eve (Genesis iv. I). Thus Abraham hoped that Ishmael might live before Jehovah as the long expected seed. Thus the misrule of Saul came before the reign of David, the man after God's heart, and the true King had to reach his throne by the way of suffering and renunciation.

David completed the conquest of the land when he became the possessor of Zion, the Jebusite stronghold which had defied Israel since the days of Joshua. And there he set up the religious, as well as the political centre of the nation. The long neglected ark of the covenant was brought out of obscurity and placed in a suited tabernacle in the court of his palace. David's enthusiasm in the execution of this concern marks him as the man who knew the desires of the heart of God and was determined to gratify them. It was when David "sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about" (II Sam vii. 1), that the thought arose in his heart to build a temple for the ark of God. It would seem David had Deuteronomy xii. 10, 11 before him, where the setting up of a central sanctuary, the place where Jehovah would put His name, is connected with the fact that He had given rest to His people from war. Doubtless David felt that time had come and that therefore it was his royal duty to build such a House.

The prophet Nathan, to whom David had confided his concern, gave his endorsement at once. But that night the

word of the Lord commanded him: "Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build Me a house to dwell in?" (II Sam. vii. 3-5). Howbeit, the Lord told David by the lips of Nathan that He would build David an house, and that One should proceed out of his loins who would be the divinely approved temple-builder and that His kingdom would be established forever by the Lord (verses 12, 13).

Now we must not limit this prediction, as Jewish commentators do, to Solomon, who did indeed build the temple. That temple was of *temporal duration*, but the temple which Nathan spoke of in the spirit of prophecy is connected with a *kingdom of endless duration*. When the kingdom which Solomon reigned over came to an end in the days of Jeremiah, the temple was destroyed also. The heart of the prophecy is that the Kingdom of the house of David is inseparably linked with the Kingdom of God. So in Psalm lxxxix, based on the Nathan prophecy, the words "forever" are made synonymous with "the days of heaven" (verse 30).

"Then went King David in and sat before the Lord" (verse 18). The effect on him was to produce adoring worship. He was overwhelmed by the grace revealed to him in the everlasting covenant with his house. That he saw the messianic significance of the communication made to him by the mouth of Nathan is clear from his "last words" recorded in II Samuel xxiii. 1-5. He there looked beyond Solomon or any other descendant to One whose coming shall be "as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth; even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God," was the confession of the founder of the dynasty, which he foresaw would eventually fail as Saul's house, and Eli's house had failed before him, "yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant,

ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although He make it not to grow.”

These words were not just a pious wish of David's. He said of them: “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me and His Word was in my tongue.” It was a further unfolding of the Nathan prophecy, confirming it and connecting its fulfillment with the Messiah of David's royal seed of whom Jehovah had said: “I will be a Father unto Him, and He shall be a Son to Me” (II Samuel vii. 14). So David sings of Him in Psalm ii as the Anointed of Jehovah, the Son whom He has begotten, and as the One who saves those who put their trust in Him.

The Hope Interpreted

V

THE HOPE INTERPRETED

IT IS in the ministry of “the writing prophets” that we find the fullest interpretation of the Messianic Hope. They drew upon the original promise of the Seed of the Woman, mankind’s champion and deliverer from the mischief wrought by the serpent and the unconditional and everlasting covenants made with Abraham and David. These are the hidden springs of that mighty stream of Messianic prophecy in the writings of the anointed men who were Israel’s watchmen during the closing centuries of her national independence. And it is the prophet Isaiah who occupies the place of pre-eminence as the proclaimer and unfold of the glories of the One to come.

(1) The Witness of Hoseah

Following the order in which the writing prophets are placed in the canon, we begin with the prophet who accompanied the northern Kingdom of Israel to its grave, and who was permitted to see the resurrection of the nation in the latter days.

What must have lain as a heavy burden on his heart was the fact that the covenant nation was divided into two rival kingdoms. He dated his prophecy therefore both in the days of the Kings of the house of David, as well as in that of Jeroboam II, under which the northern Kingdom enjoyed its brightest and most prosperous period, just on

the eve of its tragic downfall (Hosea i. 1). His prophecy is divided into four parts, running parallel with each other, covering the same period, and ending with a glory vision of the Messianic age.

Thus Chapter i. forms a complete prophecy, from the downfall of Israel to the final re-gathering. Chapter ii., from the divorce of Israel as an unfaithful wife, to the re-marriage. Chapter iii., the "many days" of Israel's being nationally set aside, till their conversion to the Messiah, whom they will seek in the latter days. Then the fourth section, the largest, from Chapters iv. and xiv., Israel's back-sliding in detail, till the final recovery, when the divine discipline has accomplished its end.

The first vision of the future in the book of Hoseah was that of the re-union of the divided nation, when they "shall appoint themselves one Head," and will under His leadership come out of the land of their exile. That is to say, *they* will choose the One whom Jehovah has already chosen for them. They will at last ratify the divine selection. The other prophets were also concerned along this line. Thus Ezekiel: "I will make them *one* nation . . . and *one* king shall be to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided . . . any more at all . . . and they shall have one Shepherd" (Ezekiel xxxvii. 22-24). God is still waiting for Israel to fall into line with Him respecting the One in and under whom alone unity and harmony is possible, whether for that nation or for His new-covenant people.

Chapter iii. presents a new feature. The tribulated nation will be finally betrothed to Him whom it has sinned against. Jehovah speaks of Himself as Israel's true husband. He has never ceased to love her, and that in her deepest shame. Surely it is the heart of the heavenly Bridegroom of souls who speaks in this chapter!

Chapter iii, brief as it is, composed of only five sentences, covers the entire period of Israel's long exile till the kingdom of the Messiah. He is the true David. Till they turn to Him, they will be without King, prince and sacrifice. Both their political and religious status in a state of suspense. The false gods may have been abandoned, but the true is not yet known. But there is a blessed "afterward." In the latter days the people will seek Jehovah their God and David their King. In the loss of the Messiah, they lost the God of their fathers also. In recovering Him, they will find God also.

Chapter vi is very suggestive. It begins with the spiritual as well as national revival of Israel. Then we see how this revival will be brought about. The Messiah will be apprehended, both in His outward appearing, as bringing in a new day, and by His inward and spiritual appearing, like the rain from heaven, by the coming of His Spirit to indwell the heart that loves Him.

It is a wonderful Messianic picture! The Coming One is spoken of as One whose coming had been *long prepared for* as a new *morning* for humanity as well as for Israel. And that He would also come to man as *the rain* comes from heaven to refresh and fertilize the parched ground, that it might become as a fruitful and fragrant garden unto God.

Thus we see the two stages of the Lord's appearing: His personal and outward coming, which introduced a new day for the world in history; and His spiritual and inward coming, which changes men. In the first He came to be *with* men, Immanuel, "God with us." In the second He comes to be *in* men. In the first He did a mighty work *for* man. In the second he came to apply the benefits of that work *to* man.

These two comings are DIFFERENT and yet SIMILAR:

- a. They have *the same heavenly origin*. The light comes from above, and the rain descends from the sky also.

It is not by man's contrivance. The morning and the rain are entirely by the gift of grace of God.

- b. Both are expressions of the *universality and impartiality* of the divine goodness. The sun shines on evil and good alike. The rain descends on the fields of the thankful and unthankful. See Matthew 5:45.
- c. *Both sun and rain are gentle and silent in their operations.* The thunder and lightning may precede the rain, but the rain itself is a gentle touch. So Christ came outwardly, *all heaven was moved*, but *on earth*, it was *a lone star that guided seekers to the Christ*. So also the Spirit comes. We must find Christ within.
- d. *Both come without money and without price.* And no one has less, because millions of others share the same. "A whole sun for me!" So Christ is abundantly able to save and satisfy. He went to heaven in a cloud, and then that cloud broke in a shower of blessings on the disciples ten days after. Christ thus came back in the clouds of heaven, only spiritually.
- e. *Both have the same end in view, the transformation of death into life; of winter into summer.* The morning sun makes a tremendous change, and the rain transforms nature into loveliness. Light and Life are the results of sunshine and rain.

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE.

- a. The sun comes with a wonderful breadth. The rain comes in drops. So Christ has reconciled the world by His first coming, but He must quicken the individual soul by His personal approach in the Spirit. *He comes to each individual in an individual way.* As on the day of the Spirit's coming every man heard the message told out in his own language, so the Spirit speaks to every man in a way he can understand.
- b. Then again, *the morning is sure*, so the Rev. Version puts it, but *the rain has its own seasons.* So with the

visitations of the Spirit. Woe to him who neglects them when they come!

The fourth section of Hosea makes sad reading; it is a detailed recital, like a succession of sobs, of the moral and religious decadence of Israel, though sovereign mercy will triumph in the end. But in the midst of it we have one more illuminating Messianic reference: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (Chapter xi. 1). That the Messiah is seen in this statement, the New Testament tells in Matthew ii.15. He is seen as One who had identified Himself with the nation in grace, and who lives their history over again in His own person.

Before passing from this, we note that Scripture, like man, is tripartite. It has an *outer*, or letter-meaning. This is the *historical sense*. "Modernists" seldom get beyond this. There is an *inner*, or prophetic sense; this is the *soul* of Scripture. There is also an inmost or *spiritual* sense.

In Hosea xi.1, the letter meaning refers to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt.

The prophetic, as given in Matthew ii.15, refers to the Messiah.

The spiritual, or mystical sense, refers to an "Egypt" in which many are in spiritual bondage, and out of which the Lord would redeem them. See Revelation xi.8.

So, of old, Jehovah *brought* them out (Exodus xii.51). Israel *went* out (Exodus xii.41); and Egypt *thrust* them out (Exodus xii.33). Through the death and resurrection of Christ, we are brought out. Through reckoning ourselves as having died unto sin, baptized into His death, we go out. But in the divine dealings with us, all kinds of difficulties frequently arise, by which we are thrust out.

(2) The Witness of Joel

By many scholars Joel is regarded as the oldest of the writing prophets, and thus the first to use the term "*the day of Jehovah*," so often taken up in the prophetic literature of Israel.

The Messiah is not introduced in person, but in a wonderfully tender way His Spirit speaks in this prophecy. Thus who but the Messiah could speak in Chapter i.6,7, speaking of "*my land*," "*my vine*," "*my fig-tree*"? And do we not hear His intercession in verse 19? "O Jehovah, to Thee do I cry!" Is this not the sympathetic identification of Messiah with the woes of His people?

Again in Chapter ii.28,29, who is it that says: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. . . ."? In John i, the One who is there spoken of as the sin-bearing Lamb of God, is also the baptizer in the Spirit, by virtue of His being "Son of God."

Beautiful is the way in which Joel refers to *Mount Zion* as the resource of God's tribulated people. Zion speaks of the resources of grace established in a risen Christ. Christians, according to Hebrews xii, have come to Mount Zion. They are in the good of the Kingdom of God. Seven times does Joel bring in Zion as God's resource, when the utter failure of man is made evident, as historically Zion does not appear in Scripture till everything established by God and committed to human responsibility had broken down : Priesthood in the house of Eli; the prophet in the evil sons of Samuel; the monarchy in the hands of Saul; the ark in captivity, and then hidden away in Kirjath-Jearim, neglected and forgotten, etc. *Then* Zion became the center of the national and religious life of Israel. So Christ, risen from the dead, is the guarantee that all that God has purposed for His own glory and man's good, will be eternally established. Joel says: "It shall come to

pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be saved, for in Mount Zion shall be deliverance" (ii.32). This passage is applied to our Lord in Romans x.13.

Very significant is the language of Joel in ii.23: "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for He giveth you the former rain in just measure, and He causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month." Now, a large number of scholars translate the words "*the former rain*" with "the Teacher of Righteousness." And in the Hebrew (eth Hamoreh L'tzadaka) can have no other meaning. Is not this the Teacher referred to by Isaiah xxx.20? "Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall not *thy Teacher* (it is a singular word in the Hebrew—*morecho*) be hidden any more, but thine eyes shall see thy Teacher." Our Lord came first as a Teacher before He became Saviour. But Israel has lost her Heaven-sent Teacher, He is "hidden" from sight, and they will not see Him again till they say: "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." Thus Abravanel, the famous Spanish-Jewish commentator of the 15th century, said: "This Teacher of Righteousness, however, is the King-Messiah, who will show the way in which we must walk." This interpretation is in keeping with the great promise concerning the prophet like unto Moses in Deut. xviii.

(3) The Witness of Amos

Though Amos ministered during the prosperous days of Uzziah in Judah and the second Jeroboam in Israel, he clearly perceived the rottenness underneath the outward magnificence which would sooner or later break out and bring about the ruin of the two houses of Israel. God would shake them as with an earthquake.

However, he saw that a remnant would be preserved (iii.12; v.3-14). Israel's *Shepherd* would "deliver" them. And who can this Shepherd be but the One who says: "I am the good Shepherd"?

Again there is a distinct personal type of the Messiah as the *Intercessor* in Chapter vii. 2-10. The Prophets of Israel were no mere lookers on from a distance. The Spirit of Christ was in them, and formed in them Christ-like feelings about the situations revealed to them prophetically. But there is more. Amos saw that beyond the judgments there would be a glorious revival to the fallen tabernacle of David (ix.9-15). Surely that revival could only be fulfilled in the risen Christ! In Him the destinies of the house of David find their goal. Here again the spirit of prophecy harks back to the original charter made with David in II Samuel vii.16. Even though the tree were hewn down and only a stump remained, yet out of it shall yet spring the lowly rod on which the seven-fold Spirit could rest (Isaiah xi.1,2). Hence the ancient synagogue called the Messiah *Bar-Naphlim*, that is: He who springs from the fallen family of David. See for instance the following quotation from "Sanhedrim": R. Nachman said to R. Isaac, Hast thou heard when *Bar-Naphlim* is to come? The latter answered: Who is He? R. Nachman said: The Messiah. R. Isaac: But is the Messiah thus named? R. Nachman: Certainly, in Amos ix.11: "In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen."

(4) The Witness of Jonah

Passing over the brief prophecy of Obadiah, with its veiled reference to the Messiah in "*Saviors*" who will "go up on Mount Zion," under the leadership of the *Jehovah-Saviour*, for "*the kingdom shall be Jehovah's*" (verse 21), we come to the book of the prophet Jonah. Perhaps no

book in the Old Testament has been the target of the attacks of the enemies of revealed truth more than this. Yet its testimony to the Messiah is clear. We know how our Lord made use of Jonah's "three days and three nights" in the deep as typical of His own experience "in the heart of the earth" before resurrection. As Jonah was typically resurrected on "the third day," so our Lord in actuality. No doubt Jonah's three days in the belly of the sea-monster are intended to remind us of the fact that Israel, the runaway prophet-nation, has been swallowed up in the sea of the Gentiles, though miraculously preserved. Israel will yet learn that the Messiah has entered into their sorrows, which they have brought on themselves, for *He* shared them with them in sympathetic grace. Thus like *they*, He also was delivered to the Gentiles, beaten, spat upon, scourged and crucified by them, though He sank down into deeper sorrows, when He who knew no sin, was made sin for us. But He was heard from the horns of the unicorns and brought up out of the depths, where the waterfloods overflowed Him. And in His *resurrection* He, who *in His cross* was a sign spoken against (Luke ii.34), is now God's great sign of salvation to penitents, as Jonah was to the Ninevites, and a sign to the Jews, because the grace they spurned, now goes out into the Gentile world (Luke xii.39-41).

(5) The Witness of Micah

The prophecy of Micah is divided into three sections, and in each of them the Messiah is spoken of. And each of these begins with the word: "Hear!"

SECTION I. Chapters i, ii.

In these chapters where God is seen coming out of His place to deal in judgment with the sins of His people, One is spoken of as the Breaker of their bonds, the remover of obstacles, the One who will make a way for them through

all opposing forces, who is their anointed king and yet also Jehovah at the head of them, in His twofold glory, human and divine (ii.13), the Leader of a regenerated and re-united Israel.

SECTION II. Chapters iii-v.

Here Micah becomes typical of the Christ, for who else could use such language as is found in iii.8? He is seen in contrast to the hireling priests and prophets, and the judges who accept bribes. For their sakes Zion will become a heap of ruins.

But the prophet looks beyond the desolations of Zion to her latter day glory (iv.1-4). It is a glorious vision of the Messianic age, that divine event towards which the whole creation moves, though it still seems so far off in this our day of disturbance and distress.

Then abruptly the prophet brings in the Person who will usher in that latter day blessing both for Israel and the nations. The Judge of Israel, the One who fills heaven with delight, smitten on the cheek! And yet "He shall be the Peace" and "great unto the ends of the earth."

In between, in the second verse, comes a parenthetical prophecy of the birth of this majestic being. In His divine glory "from the days of eternity,"* yet born into conditions of poverty in Bethlehem, the ancestral village of the family from which David sprung. Zion is desolate. It has no palace for her King, and so God reverts to Bethlehem, "little among the thousands of Judah," to make a new start for the house of David.

* It has been alleged that the words "from of old, from everlasting," or "from the days of eternity," do not necessarily teach the pre-existence of the Messiah before time began; that they are synonymous in Hebrew idiom with extreme antiquity, denoting that God planned history from the beginning with a view to the advent of the Messiah. However, in Prov. viii.22,23, where Wisdom is personified, we read of it as existing before "ever the earth was," and exactly the same idiom is used of this premundane Wisdom as is used of the Messianic child born in Bethlehem, i.e., "from everlasting, from the beginning."

And yet, saith Jehovah, He shall come forth *unto Me!* Not yet will Israel say: "*Unto us* a child is born, *unto us* a Son is given." Heaven alone recognizes the significance of this advent in his lowly birth. In the meantime Israel is given up till the pangs of travail seize upon her (verse 3) "the time of Jacob's trouble," Israel's "Peniel" of midnight distress, issuing in millennial day, which they will enter, broken and beaten into the dust, but divinely blessed. Then will Israel's saved remnant be a heavenly dew among the nations and as a lion in kingly majesty (verses 7-9).

SECTION III. Chapters vi, vii.

Again the spirit of Christ is expressed in the prophet taking the burden of the people's condition upon himself. In fact in Chapter vii.6 we get the very words our Lord used with reference to Himself, as the One whose presence in Israel separates His lovers and those who reject Him. But the end is full of comfort. The Abrahamic covenant, culminating in his Messianic Seed, will never be cancelled. The Messianic salvation is sure.

(6) The Witness of Habakkuk

This prophecy of three chapters is in the first two chapters a dialogue between the prophet and Jehovah. He voices his perplexities, as he finds himself in a world where the powers of darkness and of brute force seem to triumph over righteousness and truth. Babylon was the expression of the kingdom of evil hostile to the kingdom of God, but the principle goes beyond the local background and coloring out of which the prophecy sprung. It is for our day also. It is clear that Habakkuk has an apocalyptic and eschatological outlook. And as the name of the prophet means "*one embraced,*" he reminds us of "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and who "leaned on His breast," and from thence reviewed the procession of events in "the last

hour." Chapter i speaks of the apparent triumph of the kingdoms of "this present evil world." Chapter ii of the *Parousia* of the Messiah, a vision sure to be fulfilled, though long delayed. The *Septuagint* translates the fivefold "*it*" with "*Him*," a translation endorsed in Hebrews x.37, shewing that the early Christian saw Christ in that passage in Habakkuk. The end is that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." This passage is found in beautiful connections in II Cor. iv. "The knowledge of the glory of God" is found "in the Face of Jesus Christ," and illuminates our hearts.

No wonder that the third chapter, which celebrates in a psalm the *Parousia* of Jehovah in the end-time, to vindicate His holiness and establish His rights, ends with one of the most sublime expressions of confidence in God in a dark day, illustrating the doctrine learned by Habakkuk when on the watchtower, that "the just shall live by faith" (iii. 17-19). He obtains "hinds' feet" which enable him to leap beyond the confusion and distress of the present into the blessedness of the age to come.

(7) The Witness of Isaiah

It is in the sixty-six chapters of the book of the prophet Isaiah that we find the richest and sublimest unfoldings of the Messianic hope. As we are told in John xii.41, Isaiah "saw His glory," both in humiliation and exaltation, "and spake of Him."

Leaving critical questions as to the composition, authorship, and chronology of the different parts of the book aside, and regarding it for the purpose of Messianic prophecy as a literary unit, we may divide it into *seven* parts, the first chapter being *introductory*.

(a) Isaiah's Early Ministry. Chapters ii-iv.

The Messiah is not directly introduced, but there is a veiled reference to Him in chapter iv.2. Speaking of the

desolating judgments which would come upon Jerusalem, the prophet sees a time when a spared remnant would see and appreciate the beauty and glory of the Branch of Jehovah and the excellency and comeliness of the fruit of the earth (or land).

Thus in the language of symbolism is the Messiah presented in His twofold glories, human and divine. "The branch of Jehovah" speaks of His being Son of God. "The fruit of the earth (or land)" as Israel's and Mankind's representative. As it has been said: "He is God presented to man; and He is Man presented to God." In this passage Isaiah anticipates the conversion of Israel, for first, as is still the case, "when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him," "He shall grow up before Him, as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form or comeliness" (chapter liii). But the veil of unbelief and prejudice will drop from the Jewish heart and the glory of the Messiah will then be apprehended.

(b) Isaiah's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. Chapter vi.

This chapter clearly antedates the preceding messages, as it gives us the story of how Isaiah became a prophet. He had kept it a secret until forced to explain *why* he pronounced the six woes which are found in chapters ii-v. Before he ever uttered a single "woe" on others, he had to pronounce "woe" on himself and then experience the cleansing by altar fire.

What he "saw" was a vision of the Messiah in His pre-incarnate glory — "in the form of God" — a glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and which He has now re-entered as Man (John xvii). He learned from the vision and the adoration of the seraphim that it is the deep and settled purpose of God to exalt the Christ high over all; to fill the earth with His glory; and, that

which led to his personal dedication for service, to accomplish His end with the help of sanctified men who have offered themselves for this work.

(c) **The Messiah the Sanctuary and Support of the Remnant. Chapters v-viii.**

The account of Isaiah's conversion, sanctification and commission comes in parenthetically in a larger section of great beauty and significance. They set forth man's ruin and God's reserve. The Virgin-born of the house of David is God's reserve in a day of utter ruin, which has been graphically shown in chapters v. and vi. In chapter v. man is seen thoroughly bankrupt in the light of privilege and responsibility. God has done everything possible for him and he has brought forth nothing but wild grapes.

Chapter vi. is a deeper test. Man is seen altogether unfit for the divine presence. He cannot stand in the light of His glory.

Chapter vii. brings in God's reserve in grace. "Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and she shall call His name, Immanuel (God with us)." It is the primeval promise concerning the Seed of the Woman connected with the house of David.

Chapter viii.13,14. But God's Man is rejected. Nevertheless He becomes a Sanctuary to those who sanctify Him as Lord in their hearts (I Peter iii.15, Revelation v). The "testimony" will be committed unto such (verse 16) as they patiently wait for the day when the rejected Christ will have His rights (verse 17). They will have divine light in the midst of darkness (verses 19,20). They share His rejection (Hebrews ii.10-13), and are being conducted as sons into the glory where the rejected Messiah is now.

(d) **The Messianic Quest. Chapters ix-xxxi.**

These chapters cover the greater part of the first section in the book of Isaiah. Their background is the Assyrian

invasion in the eighth century and the disturbed condition of the land resulting therefrom. But again and again the prophet turns aside to feast his eyes on the picture of One revealed to him, who would, as far as he then knew, arise after the troubles of his times. His faith leaped over the intervening centuries and lived in the light of His advent.

In chapter ix.1,2, we have the Galilean ministry of the Lord. We read of "Galilee of the nations" (verse 1). a remarkable statement! It did not become this till our Lord's time, many Greek mercenaries and Roman colonists having settled there. In verse 3 Israel is a rejoicing nation once more because the rejected Messiah is seen by faith and appropriated. It is the Millennial Israel, greatly enlarged, celebrating the feast of Tabernacles. But that day will be ushered in by judgments (verses 4,5). In verse 6 we have patient Israel keeping Christmas, celebrating the birth of the Christ-Child. Five names belong to this blessed Babe: (1) "*Wonderful*" (see Judges xiii. 18—it means a *miracle*); (2) "*Counsellor*" — He never needs to ask advice; (3) "*Mighty God*"; (4) "*Everlasting Father*," or Father of a new age — He will make all things new! (5) "*Prince of Peace*," whose kingdom will grow until, not only the uttermost parts of the earth (Psalm ii) but heaven and earth (Matt. xxviii.18) and the entire universe, including those "under the earth" (that is, in the infernal regions) will own His supremacy (Phil. ii.10,11).

Chapter xi is a ravishingly beautiful vision of the Messiah and His spiritual kingdom, the effects of which will reach as far as the renovation of nature and the restoration of Eden.

It begins with the house of David reduced to the smallness and poverty of its beginnings. But it shall renew its youth in the Messianic rod out of the roots of the tree which has been ruthlessly felled. On this unsightly branch

the sevenfold Spirit of Jehovah rests. The word "Netzer," translated "Branch," is the root from which we get "Nazareth" and "Nazarene." This passage is quoted in Romans xv.10, and is there stamped as having its fulfillment in our Lord. While there is a distinct reference to "the rod of His mouth and the breath of His lips" of Isaiah xi.4 in II Thess. ii.8 and Rev. i.16, and xix.15, the sevenfold anointing on His head being alluded to in Rev. i.4; iv.5, and v.6.

Chapters xxviii-xxxi. After the apocalyptic imagery of chapters xxiv to xxvii we find ourselves again in the midst of the historical events of the 8th century B.C. And imbedded in them is the re-assuring prophecy concerning *the Precious Corner Stone* (xxviii.16) and the delightful description of the ideal *Man* who is "*a hiding place* from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (xxxii.2). The conditions prevailing in the land made the prophet long for such a corner stone, steadfast in the midst of disturbances and for such a Rock in the shadow of which men might find security and shelter. Messianic Prophecy was ever the divine answer to the desires He Himself had created in the human heart.

The sure foundation on which faith can build safely amidst all uncertainties, is the echo of the earlier Immanuel prophecy. "God is with us" became the slogan of the believing remnant, and it was with this assurance the proud Assyrian was defied. See Psalm xlvi, written with those exercises as occasion, "the Immanuel Psalm," as we gather from verses 7 and 11, a psalm which will obtain a new and deeper meaning when the hard-pressed remnant of Israel of the end-time will learn to shout "Immanuel" in the midst of their tribulations. Then will they discover the precious corner stone, divinely laid in Zion long ago, for such a time as that.

(e) The New Order. Chapters xxxii-xxxv.

Then will they learn the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh, the Man who has divine attributes and prerogatives. “*God* is our refuge and strength” — a *Man* shall be all this to His defenseless people, as it was a *Man* who wrestled with their ancestor till the break of day, yet declared by the patriarch to have been *God*, whom he had seen face to face.

They will then behold “the King in His beauty” (Isaiah xxxiii.17). the same King whom Micah saw smitten on the cheek (Micah v.1); not some failing representative in past history of the royal line of David, not even good King Hezekiah, but the super human “King” of Psalm xlv, who is “fairer than the children of men,” to whom the words of adoration are addressed: “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever” (verses.1-6).

It is in chapters xl-lxvi of Isaiah that Messianic prophecy reaches its highest heights and plumbs its deepest depths. The *Introduction* of chapter xl is majestic beyond all words. It links on directly with the last chapter of prophetic visions (xxxv). Chapters xxxvi-xxxix are historical and divide between the three visions of judgment, ending with glory visions in the first part, and the three visions of peace ending with a warning of judgment, in the latter. Chapter xl takes up the broken thread of chapter xxxv. The “Highway of Holiness” becomes the cast up way in the wilderness for the return of the glory into Israel’s long desolate house. And the revelation of the glory of Jehovah will be that of a Shepherd carrying the lambs in His bosom.

(f) The Ideal Servant. Chapters xlii-liii.

Chapters xl-lxvi are an epitome of the New Testament, beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, and ending with a preview of the

new heavens and the new earth. The central chapter is the core of the New Testament, *the unveiling of the Cross*.

In chapters xlii -liii the great theme is the *Ideal Servant of Jehovah*.

Israel was meant to be such a Servant. It was her national vocation (Deut. x.12,20).

When *Israel* failed there still remained an indestructible seed which preserved the continuity of her best life. This holy seed alone realizes the spiritual vocation of *Israel* and is the true *Israel*.

But this remnant is feeble and limited in every direction. It needs a Leader, a Centre, one from whom it can derive inspiration and who can command its activities. And so in four songs this individual "Servant" is spoken of, the representative of *Israel*, and called by the name of *Israel*, to whom the genius of *Israel* comes to expression and the life of *Israel* to flower and fruit. These four songs are found in (1) Chapter xlii, (2) xlix, (3) 1, (4) lii.13-liii.1. It is a transcendent personality who comes to view there, distinguished from *Israel* (xlix.5,6) and rejected by that nation, whose true personification He is, fulfilling her God-given destiny on earth. In chapter xlii the ideal Servant is presented. In chapter xlix the ideal is realized. In chapter 1 the nation of *Israel* rejects Him. chapters lii.13-liii show how penitent *Israel* will finally receive the ideal, moved to jealousy by "the fulness of the Gentiles" whose light and salvation the rejected "Servant" has become.

Twenty times we read of the *Servant* of *Jehovah* in chapters xli.8 to liii. After that the term disappears. Another, the "Servants" takes its place some ten times. After the Cross of chapter liii the one Servant works through the many servants who are progressively changed into His image. Historically this is being fulfilled, during the long period of Jewish unbelief, in a new and larger and

catholic Israel. Israel's still unfulfilled prophecy of world-wide service has become the conscience of Christianity. And will not this, when the Church wakes up to her proper calling, provoke Israel to jealousy at last (Rom. xi.11)?*

(g) Summary of the "Servant" Songs

The Songs refer clearly to a Person distinguished from Israel whom He represents. See chapter xlix. 1,5,6. If Israel be the Servant, who is the "*He*," and who are the "*we*"? "Surely, He hath borne *our* griefs and carried *our* sorrows," etc.

1. *The vocation of the Servant.*

The words: "I have put my Spirit upon Him" (xlii.1), mark Him out as the Anointed (i.e. Messiah). He brings forth judgment (i.e. the true religion) to the Gentiles. See also xlix.6: "He is the Salvation of God to the ends of the earth." Thus He establishes a catholic (i.e. a world-wide) religion.

2. *His character.*

In spite of His exalted calling, He is subdued, humble, and of extreme gentleness (xlii. 2,3).

3. *His personal appearance.*

He looked unattractive. Men turned from Him. Appearances were against Him. Yet His innocence was evident. There was neither deceit nor violence in Him. He suffered not for His own sins. "He was wounded for *our* transgressions."

* The ideal Servant presented in Isaiah xl. to lxvi., unites in Himself the threefold concept of the word "Messiah," the three divinely appointed functions in Israel to which the idea of "Messiah" (or "Anointed") was attached, those of Prophet, Priest and King. In chap. xlii. the Servant is the *Prophet* who publishes salvation and establishes judgment, that is true religion, in the world. In chap. liii., He is the *Priest* who offers the perfect sacrifice and who intends to sprinkle many nations. In chaps. xlix.7-9 and lii.13-15, He is the *King* to whom the Kings of the earth will yet render homage in the day of His power.

Another proof that He is the Messiah is that kings and princes fall down before Him. Many nations are sprinkled from their impurity by His priestly ministry (compare xlix.6,7 with lii.15). The suffering Servant is led like a lamb to the slaughter and cut off out of the land of the living. A malefactor's grave is prepared for Him, though finally He is laid in a rich man's tomb. He pours forth His soul unto death, He makes Himself an offering for others' sins. But in resurrection He sees an abundant "seed"; He divides the spoil with the strong, and the pleasure of Jehovah prospers in His hand. It is in resurrection that He accomplishes the great Messianic programme committed to Him.

Chapters lii.13-liii. *The unveiling of the Cross.*

Every New Testament writer, except James and Jude, applies it to our Lord. Its five strophes have three verses each and give in their opening words the key note. Thus:

- (1) "Behold my Servant shall prosper" . . . His certain exaltation.
- (2) "Who hath believed? . . . Israel's unbelief.
- (3) "Surely He hath borne our griefs' . . . The vicarious nature of His sufferings.
- (4) "He was oppressed . . . yet He opened not His mouth." The power of His silent submission.
- (5) "It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him." The divine purpose to vindicate and glorify Him. The poem ends as it began with the counsels of God to exalt the rejected Messiah.

The Man of Divine Selection

The four "Servant" songs bring before us the Man whom God has chosen. They thus give us the very heart of Messianic prophecy, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The prophetic Word points out the

Man of God's purpose, and the kind of Man who will finally rule in God's universe, people it with a generation after His own order.

We see Him as presented to God for His approval and selection, and we see Him too as presented to us for our approval and selection.

For thirty years He lived in obscurity and abject poverty. Then at His baptism, under the opened heavens, God made a public declaration of His irrevocable choice: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Then also was His holy humanity anointed by the Dove-like Spirit. It was an application of both Psalm ii and Isaiah xlii.

But it was a critical moment for the world. If God publicly declared His choice, would men join in it? Alas! Man's choice and God's are not always the same. The fleshly mind has another kind of man in view, and he will yet come into view having many forerunners, the *Anti-Christ*, the *super-man*, the contrast to the *God-Man*. No wonder his number is three times *six* (Rev. xiii). Man's proper number is *five*. Everything about him is in fives: five senses, five fingers, five toes, etc. *Seven* is the number of divine perfection. *Six* is the effort of fallen man to exalt himself above the level of the human, but he cannot reach up to perfection by self-exaltation.

The flesh in true saints has often chosen the wrong man. Thus Abraham pleaded for Ishmael; Isaac would have blessed profane Esau; Joseph would have prevented Ephraim from obtaining the priority; Samuel looked at the outward appearance of the stalwart sons of Jesse, when forgotten David was the man after God's heart.

Israel was always rejecting God's Man for the moment, as Stephen pointed out in his Apologia (Acts vii). Finally they shouted: "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" And later on

they will put themselves under the protection of "the Beast," to their unspeakable sorrow. One came in His Father's Name and they received Him not, another will come in his own name, and him they will receive. So in Isaiah: "When we shall see Him . . . no beauty!" Yet the One "disallowed of men" is "chosen of God" (I Peter ii.4,5). Finally penitent Israel will ratify God's choice.

(h) The Book of Consolation. Chapters xl-lxvi.

It is evident that the ministry of Isaiah had three generations in mind. (1) His own times (chapters i-xxxv); (2) the generations of the Exile (chapters xl-xlvi); (3) The generation living in Israel's darkest hour, at the time of the end, just before the dawn of her brightest day (chapters xlix-lxvi).

Isaiah knew from the beginning that his generation would reject his ministry (chapter vi). In the chapters beginning with xl, his spirit is projected into the future. He beholds the long-drawn exile and the closing agony before divine deliverance. They are in three groups of nine chapters each, in which the threefold controversy with Israel is taken up and settled. (1) Chapters xl-xlvi: How Israel is delivered from idolatry. (2) Chapters xlix-lxvi: How Israel is at last won over to recognize the Messiah. (3) Chapters lxvii-lxvi: Israel's final deliverance from "Judaism" and self-righteousness, in order to take up her world-wide witness to spiritual religion.

(i) The Sure Mercies of David. Chapters liv-lxvi.

In chapter liv. we have the glory of the New Jerusalem and in chapter lv. we have Messiah's appeal to the Gentile world. As chapter liii is the story of His atoning sacrifice, the foundation of all good; chapter liv, the application of His redeeming work to the new and spiritual Israel; chapter lv gives us the overflow of the blessing to the

Gentiles. "Ho! Everyone that thirsteth. . . ." There is "water," "wine," "milk" and "bread" to satisfy the needs of the ends of the earth.

We hear the testimony to the risen Christ in verse three: "Incline your ear and come unto me: hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." That the early Church saw the resurrection of the Messiah in these words is clear from Acts xiii.32-34. If the Messianic representative of the house of David be "cut off out of the land of the living," how could the covenant with that house (II Samuel vii) be fulfilled, except the slain Messiah be raised again? David's name is in the beginning and at the end of the New Testament (Matthew i.1; Rev. xxii.16). And it is part of Paul's gospel that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead (II Timothy ii.8). It is in resurrection that the Davidic covenant, which embraces the Kingdom of God over all nations, is fulfilled, as Peter argued on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.25-36). And it is He, the risen Messiah, who according to Jeremiah xxx.9, is called "David," whom God has given as the Witness, Leader and Commander of the peoples (R.V. of verse 4). This is an echo of the ancient "Shiloh"-prophecy: "Unto Him shall the obedience of the peoples be." The *Septuagint* translates Isaiah lv.4 thus: "A testimony to the Gentiles." Israel cannot exhaust the mercies sworn to David. Hence redeemed Israel is addressed in verse 5: "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run unto thee, because of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for He hath glorified thee." To spread the blessings of the everlasting covenant made with the house of David will be the Millennial ministry of regenerated Israel. Israel will then be "glorified" by the glory-presence of the Messiah in her midst.

(j) The Jubilee Proclaimed

As the jubilee trumpet was sounded after the expiration of the Day of Atonement, the High Priest having resumed his garments of glory and beauty, so after the passion of the cross, the Priest-Messiah resumed His glory (John xvii) and the glad tidings of the jubilee could then be proclaimed. This lies at the heart of chapters lx-lxii of this portion of Isaiah's prophecy.

In chapter lix we have Israel's day of Atonement and national repentance. We can almost hear the High-Priest confessing the "transgressions," "sins," and "iniquities" of the people (lix.12,13). Then, after the penitential wail, a new day dawns for the people.

Our Lord found His message and ministry in Isaiah lxi, and openly declared that He was the fulfillment of those inspired words, in His inaugural sermon at Nazareth (Luke iv). Orthodox Judaism had become mere "Bibli-ism," the *letter of the Book* had become central and all-sufficing, the *living God* was not known. Christianity, on the other hand, is pre-eminently the religion of a Person, but a religion *with* the Book which testifies of Him. It is very significant, that our Lord "closed the Book, and sat down, and the eyes of them all were fastened upon *Him*," while He said: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." The Book is not the end, but a means to the end, and that end is the Divine-Human Christ.

We hear three voices in chapter lxi. In verses 1-3 the Anointed Man Himself speaks. He presents Himself as Prophet and Evangelist, as Physician and Savior of souls. He not only announces spiritual good, He bestows it. He binds up broken hearts. That is a peculiarly divine prerogative. "Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psalm xxiv.18) and again: "He healeth the broken in heart and

bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars and calleth them all by their names. Great is Jehovah and of great power; His understanding is infinite" (Psalm cxlvii.3-5) and again: Majesty and meekness are combined here. The architect of the skies is the surgeon of human souls. And thus we find in the great Messianic pronouncement of Isaiah xli how Deity and humanity unite in the Anointed man.

The second voice is that of the Spirit through the prophet (verses 4-9). The salvation bestowed by the Messiah is described. His people become "priests" and are "a seed which Jehovah has blessed."

Finally, the redeemed themselves speak (verses 10, 11). The joy and gratitude of the new Israel of the end-time (or of the church drawn now from all nations to form one believing family) is expressed. It is adorned with bridal beauty and clothed in a righteousness not her own. It becomes a garden where the fruit of the Spirit is brought forth. It joys in God through the Messiah in whom it has obtained the reconciliation. The spiritual blessing of the year of Jubilee, "the acceptable year of Jehovah," are already imparted, as the fruit of the Atonement, wherever faith welcomes the divine approach in grace, while awaiting a still wider diffusion in that phase of the kingdom of God in which all things shall be subdued under the feet of our Lord.

(8) The Witness of Jeremiah

In some respects Jeremiah is the greatest of the post-Mosaic prophets, as he prepared a remnant for the Exile, making the return from it possible. In his personal experiences he was strangely Jesus-like, a type of Him in an Old Testament setting. He endured a long martyrdom because of his obedience to the heavenly vision. His book is made up to a considerable extent of extracts from the diary of his

inner life; the phases of his secret history with God; his misgivings and sinkings of heart; his doubts and problems. But it was thus he became an iron wall and a brazen pillar against which priests, princes and people dashed themselves in vain for over forty years.

Jeremiah is pre-eminently the prophet of the Spirit of the new covenant, but he has also his own special contribution to make to the unfolding of the Messianic Hope.

There are two outstanding utterances which claim our attention. At the time when things were rapidly nearing the end, after the deportation of King Jehoiachin and the accompanying scattering of the people (chapter xxiii. 3), Jeremiah was permitted to look beyond the dismal present and the still more terrifying future, to behold the arising of that righteous Branch of David in whose days a reunited Israel would be "saved." "And this is the Name whereby He shall be called: Jehovah our Righteousness" (xxiii. 1-6).

This consolatory prediction is repeated in chapter xxxiii. 14-16 during Jeremiah's imprisonment, at the instigation of the princes of Judah in the tenth year of Zedekiah. Again he calls the Messiah the *Zemach Tzaddik* – the righteous Branch; and again he names Him *Jehovah Tzidkeun*, a name which the new and regenerated Jerusalem of the end time will have put upon *her*, as a bride takes on the name of her husband on her wedding day. In that day will Israel renounce her own righteousness and glory in no other righteousness except that which is in Christ.

Thus is the Messiah considered as the Mediator of Salvation and righteousness – righteousness to enable sinful man to stand before *God*, and salvation to deliver him from the fear and oppression of *the enemy*. See Romans x. 9, 10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man be-

lieveth unto *righteousness*, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Thus is "the good word" (xxxiii. 14) which God has promised, "performed," even today to every penitent believer, while the nation of Israel is still at odds with God concerning this matter (See Romans x. 1-4) and must perforce wait for its fulfillment.

(a) Jeremiah and Jesus

Though six centuries separate between Jeremiah and Jesus, the times in which they lived and labored were in many aspects alike. Both lived in the shadow of an impending catastrophe — the fall of Jerusalem. The temple as well as the throne were doomed in the days of Jeremiah, and the Jewish religion as established in glory in Jerusalem, was about to pass away in the days of Jesus. In both instances true religion was buried under a crust of formalism and empty talk.

It is remarkable that the common people, when Jesus was here, saw points of resemblance between Him and Jeremiah (Matthew xvi. 14). Both were men of the country, and the beauties of nature had a powerful appeal to them. Both had the background of a distinguished ancestry and the advantage of having been reared in a pious home.

Both were early conscious of their high destiny. Jesus saw it at the age of twelve. So in Jeremiah i. 17, the word "lad" means a boy of twelve years. And both refused matrimony (Jeremiah xvi. 2). Both had to face the same crisis in their public life. Jeremiah stood in the temple and called it "a den of thieves," as Jesus did afterwards (Jeremiah xxvi. and Matthew xxvii. 11). Both were known for their tears, as their patriotic heart broke over the misfortunes of the people they loved in spite of their sins.

When our Lord partook of the farewell meal with His disciples, the shadow of Jeremiah fell on the occasion (compare Jeremiah xxxi. 31 with Luke xxii. 20).

But in one thing they were miles apart. Our Lord was sweet to the end. Jeremiah broke down (see chapter xviii. 21-23). Never a murmuring word escaped the lips of Jesus. He said: "The cup which my Father hath given, shall I not drink it?" But Jeremiah, like our Lord, intensely lonely on the human side, had an intimate fellowship with God, which was his compensation amidst the heart-breaking experiences that made up his public life.

(b) The New Covenant

It is to the book of Jeremiah we owe the term which is characteristic of Christianity, i.e., "New Covenant." Hence our Lord is spoken of as "the Mediator" of this new covenant (or testament) (Hebrews ix).

According to the letter of Jeremiah xxxi the New covenant belongs to Judah and Israel. But according to the spirit it belongs to Gentiles also (See II Cor. iii. 6).

"After those days," says Jeremiah. This is more than a point in chronology. It is a moral thought. After Israel's long unbelief; breaking the Law; persecuting the prophets; betraying the Messiah and delivering Him over to the Gentiles, who by the hands of lawless men crucified Him; after the long and futile effort to establish a righteousness of their own; the *new* covenant. When human failure and bankruptcy is fully demonstrated, *Grace*.

"*Not according to the old covenant.*" The old turned around the words "*thou shalt.*" The new turns around God's "*I will.*"

The new covenant has three engagements: (1) The Law in both heart and mind, really a new birth, a new nature. (2) They shall all know Me (*know Me in themselves*, J. N. Darby), i.e. conscious knowledge. (3) Sins no more remembered. The conscience purged. How? See Heb. x.

In "the world to come," Israel will have the Law written in their hearts. This is celebrated in Psalm cxix, the language of the new Israel under the new covenant. We, today, have *Christ* written on our hearts. *Then* will "the righteous requirement of the Law" be fulfilled in us (Romans viii. 4 — R.V. margin) And that "righteous requirement" is "love" (see Romans xiii. 9, 10). *Then* also we shall have a first-hand knowledge of God, for "every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God (I John iv. 7). And knowing by the witness of the Spirit that our sins and our iniquities God will remember no more, we have boldness to enter into the holiest of all (Hebrews x. 17-19).

(9) The Witness of Ezekiel

Ezekiel was one of the early captives when King Jehoiachin and the flower of the country were dragged away to Babylon. Five years after he was called to the prophetic office. As he sat among the captives of Judah by the banks of Chebar, entering into their feelings, their mute despair, unable to find suitable words to express their discouragement, the heavens opened over him and he saw how the Shekinah, supported by the heavenly cherubim, had gone into exile with the exiled people, and was actually hovering over their camp, though they knew it not. He saw the majesty of the God of Israel, in human form, in the amber glory, on the throne. And he heard himself addressed, when prostrated in the presence of the glory, with the same name by which he had designed Jehovah on the throne: "Son of Man." The Man in heaven and the stricken man in the dust, had affinity; for is not man made in the image of God?

Out of the opened heavens Ezekiel got his commission. He ate the roll which was handed down to him, sweet to the palate, but bitter when digested. And out of the glory

he heard that though the exiles were deprived of the temple and the externalia of religion, *Jehovah Himself* would be their sanctuary in every place in which they might find themselves, scattered, broken and disjointed captives of war under the chastenings of the government of God.

The Messiah was seen by him as a bright jewel of hope and consolation against the dark background of his times.

(a) In contrast to the evil shepherds of Israel, He would be the one good Shepherd. His name is "My Servant David"; He bears the name "David" because in Him the hopes of the house of David are realized (xxxiv. 23, 24) and through Him will Jehovah negotiate "a covenant of peace" with them. This hoped for sprout of David's felled tree, is also called "a plant of renown" (verse 29), who will invest Israel with glory and splendor again.

(b) The title "my Servant David" occurs again in chapter xxxvii. 24. In Him and under Him shall the divided nation become harmonized again. In His hands the two sticks of Judah and Joseph shall grow together into *one stick*.

(c) Beautiful is the Messianic parable of chapter xvii. The *tender twig* which Jehovah plucks from the cedar of the house of David, doomed to be cut down in judgment, and which is planted on the mountain of Israel, becomes a goodly cedar, beneath whose shelter "all fowl of every wing" will find a home. Jehoiachin, the proud top of the cedar, is carried away to Babylon (verses 3, 4); Zedekiah, the vine, which pined for the waters of the Nile, the river of Egypt, is uprooted and withers away. But the tender one of his young twigs (verse 22), reminding us of Isaiah xi. 1; liii. 27 will re-establish the dignity of the fallen dynasty of David.

(d) In chapter xxi. 25-27, the last king of Judah is addressed as a profane, wicked prince, whose day is come,

whose iniquity will have an end. The diadem will fall from his head. But after the overturnings comes *One* whose right it is to wear the royal crown dashed from the unworthy head of Zedekiah. And indeed, the universe will join the chorus: "Crown Him, Crown Him, Lord of all!"

"He whose right it is," are words which are wrapped up in the Hebrew "Shiloh," and are thus an echo of the ancient prophecy concerning the Messiah (Genesis xlix), God's resource in the face of the breakdown of everything committed in responsibility to man, whether as prophet, priest or king.

The Hope Scheduled

VI

THE HOPE SCHEDULED

THE EXILE cut a deep notch in the history of the covenant-people. To the mass it was an unexplainable mystery, but to an exercised remnant a discipline and an education.

To the prophets raised up from this time too, the exile appeared as a necessary prelude to the re-establishment of a holy community in the city and land of their fathers. And it is clear they expected the Messiah to appear during the life-time of the restored Jerusalem and of the new order set up by the exiles who had returned from Babylon.

The prophets we have in mind are Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, and we will now briefly consider their testimony to *the time* of the appearing of the expected One.

(1) The Witness of Daniel

(a) The Seventy "Weeks" or Sabbatical Years.

Chapter ix.

If in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the world-empires under the figure of a colossal image of a man, the coming of the universal Kingdom of God takes place after the destruction of Gentile military imperialism (Daniel ii) ; and if in chapter vii the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, ends the rule of the beast-empires; then in chapter ix, we see *a messianic appearing previous*

to this glorious display of power. It was the angel Gabriel, who afterwards announced the birth of the Messiah to His virgin-mother, who imparted to Daniel His coming to suffer before His appearing in kingly majesty.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy.”

These seventy weeks (or sabbatic years) are then subdivided as follows:

“Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem *unto the Messiah the Prince* shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous times.”

Here are sixty-nine weeks of years — broken up into *seven* and *sixty-two*. Why that? Because from Nehemiah to Malachi, who closes the Old Testament canon, were forty-nine years. Then came the long silence of sixty-two weeks of years — which ran out on the very day our Lord was presented to Jerusalem and officially announced as Messiah, according to the prophecy of Zechariah ix. Sixty-nine weeks of years after Nehemiah was commanded to set up again the walls of Jerusalem the scheduled arrival of the Messiah took place. (Matthew xxi.)

One more “week” remains, and during that week a terrible tragedy took place. “After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and shall have nothing” (R.V.). It was only a few days after the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday, that our Lord was hounded to His death.

And the result? “The people of a prince that shall come [it should be *a* prince, not *the* prince] shall destroy the city

and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”

(b) The Jewish War

This war is not yet ended. The longest and most cruel war in history, the war with the people guilty of Messiah's death. The reason that this war is still going on is because the Jewish people have not yet accepted the divinely offered terms of peace. They will remain, till then, wanderers among the nations.

Again a long gap, before the final seventieth week. God does not count time when Israel is outside of her inheritance. But returned in unbelief, they will put themselves under the protection of the prince whose people destroyed city and sanctuary in A.D. 70 – the last representative of the Roman Empire, under which our Lord was crucified. “He shall confirm [or make strong] the covenant with [the] many for one week.” Will he confirm and strengthen the Mandate given by the League of Nations to make it possible for the Jewish people to re-establish their ancient homeland in Palestine? We know it has lapsed in execution. Howbeit, he will prove a treacherous friend. “In the midst of the week,” he will break his covenant with the Jews and put a stop to the temple ritual with its daily sacrifice. And that will be the end. The treacherous “prince,” known in Revelation xiii as “the Beast,” will want to set up his image in the temple as an object of adoration, and put the worship of the true God under an interdict. But that will be the hour when the heavens will open and the Lord will be revealed in flaming fire to vindicate the rights of God.



We have seen from chapter ix. 25, 26 that Messiah's being “cut off” results in “war,” “desolations,” and the destruc-

tion of both city and sanctuary. We know that this took place at A.D. 70. Ever since then the Jewish people have been captives of war among all nations. Their seasons of prosperity have always been rudely interrupted by fresh outbreaks of anti-Jewish animosity. They have no security of tenure anywhere.

But in verse 27 they are seen worshipping in Jerusalem in a sanctuary. But alas! they will still be in unbelief. There is a long gap between the temple destroyed in verse 26, and the building of another temple and the resumption of sacrifices in verse 27. The calling out of the Gentiles fills that gap. See Romans xi. 11. When "the fulness of the Gentiles" has been brought in, then will the Redeemer come again to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. The treading down of Jerusalem will be ended then. Her warfare is accomplished at last. (Isaiah xl:1.)

(2) The Witness of Haggai

The restoration from Babylon was a necessity for the fulfillment of the purposes of God. The little flock that gathered in weakness, in poverty and reproach, amidst the ruins of their ancient home, and set up an House for Jehovah's Name, built better than they knew. There had to be a Home into which in the fulness of time the blessed Babe of Bethlehem could be welcomed.

And as it was under a Joshua that the people of Israel first took possession of the land, so now, it was under another Joshua — the High Priest, that they made a fresh start, and that as a congregation devoted to Jehovah, and not as an independent state.

The priest-prophet Haggai delivered four addresses. It would appear that his prophetic ministry was committed to him in his old age, and it brought about a revival of religious fervor among the discouraged people, who had en-

thusiastically laid the foundation of the temple, but allowed themselves to be intimidated by their enemies and so had put off the work of completing the temple. The messages of Haggai proved electric, and the people began with fresh zeal to finish the work of temple building (Ezra v. 1, 2; vi. 14).

It is in his second and fourth messages that Haggai brings in the Messianic expectation. He predicted that the hopes of the people for glory would be connected with the second temple, so insignificant in comparison with the first. So chapter ii. 6-9 predicts the shaking of heaven and earth, and of all nations, and that the Desire of all nations would come and the house would be filled with glory. The shaking of all nations would result in their awakening to the recognition of spiritual values — and the poverty stricken appearance of the latter house would give place to a glory which Solomon's temple never knew. "And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

"The Desire of all nations shall come," proclaimed Haggai. In the Hebrew the word for "desire" is in the plural, which gives the value of the superlative to the idea conveyed. The reference is undoubtedly to Christ. What the nations only hope for and seek after, blindly groping after it, finds its true goal in Him. Whether it be a warless world, based on justice and fair dealing among all nations and races; a government which does not oppress, but seeks the weal of all classes alike; a fair opportunity for every man, so that there shall be no underprivileged classes any more; *He alone* can bring about such a social, economic and political order. Neither legislation, education, science or philosophy can give to the weary nations the desire of their hearts. The malady lies too deep to be healed thus. The Christ is the One who alone can bind up the wounds of this distracted world.

Haggai closes with one more message (ii. 21-23), which, in its brevity, is an epitome of the Apocalypse. Zerubbabel, the royal prince of the house of David, is addressed. He is clearly regarded as a figure of the Messiah, for the promise could only be fulfilled in Him.

It speaks of a day of universal shaking, when kingdoms and armies shall be overthrown. In that day God will put honor upon the One whom He has selected as the Man of His counsels, to fulfill all His pleasure. He will come into His rights then.

He is now at God's right hand biding His time. His day is about to dawn. The shakings and overturnings of our times may be the prelude to the Day of Christ!

"I will make thee as a signet, for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of Hosts." Grace here reverses the sentence passed upon Jeconiah (Jeremiah xxii. 24). It looks beyond Zerubbabel to his son and anti-type — the Messiah. He is the express Image of the Substance of the Father (Hebrews i. 3), His "signet" in His Manhood. And all who belong to Him whom He calls "His own," are stamped with this signet (I Cor. xv. 49). Thus Christ is the true Zerubbabel, as He is the true David (Ezekiel xxxvii. 24).

(3) The Witness of Zechariah

Zechariah, Haggai's younger colleague, has a peculiarly rich testimony to bear to both the sufferings and glories of the Messiah. His book divides itself into two main parts. Chapters i-vi: The prophetic visions here partake of an apocalyptic nature. Chapters vii-xiv, contain more direct utterances. The entire book has for its background, chapters i-viii, the Persian era; chapters ix-x, the Grecian era; chapter xi the Roman era; chapters xii-xiv take us to the time of the end.

In the first group of visions (chapters i-vi), the Messiah stands forth as "the Branch" (iii. 8-vi. 12). He is the one God falls back upon in the face of the failure of Israel. Out of the dead and barren condition of Judaism springs this fruitful Branch. But He is also the *Foundation* and *Top-Stone* (iii. 9; iv. 7). God works *from* Christ and *to* Christ. All the counsels of God centre in Him.

The second group of prophecies (vii-xiv) bring before us in a wonderful way the ministry of the Messiah as recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew. He is seen as *the true Shepherd* (chapters xi. 7, 10, 11). The flock is exploited by false and hireling shepherds. The poor of the flock, however, who waited upon God, recognized the One who was the shepherd to be hearkened to.

In chapter ix we have the official presentation of the Messiah to Jerusalem on the day called: "Palm Sunday." All the four evangelists give space to it. It was the beginning of the Passion week.

The Jerusalem rebuilt by the remnant returned from exile would witness this royal entry. He would come as king of Peace, not riding on a war-horse, but on a peaceable ass. As Professor F. Delitzsch has pointed out, the language of chapter ix. 9 implies that "the royal glory rises upon the dark ground of suffering. The coming King is *Tsadik* and *Nosha*, a righteous one whom God has helped out of tribulation and struggle to salvation and victory; hence He is also called *ani*, that is, bowed, pressed down through sorrow. We still see Him as the Sufferer. His lowliness is not yet transformed into pure and full glory. Therefore He does not come loftily on a noble steed or in a grand coach of state like the kings of this world, but upon a peaceful animal; not upon one belonging to another, but upon a colt which has never been ridden (compare Matthew xxi. 2), for He is a King of humble mind, of tender heart, and whose final object is peace" (verse 10).

However, in chapter xi. 12, 13, He is valued the price of a slave (Exodus xxi 32)! It is the story of His base betrayal. Deep were His sorrows, but deeper still awaited Him!

In chapter xiii. 5, 6, we see Him wounded in the house of His friends, those for whose sake He had been a bondman (see verse 6 R.V.).

But the One who was wounded in the house of His friends, was also smitten by the sword of Jehovah. He was Jehovah's Shepherd and the Man, His Fellow (xiii. 7). He is thus very God of very God, and very Man of very Man. During the night of His betrayal our Lord claimed to be the One spoken of here (Matthew xxvi. 30, 31). The sword of Jehovah is His judicial stroke (see Jeremiah xlvi. 7). It speaks of *God's action* when He died. At the hand of man Christ suffered for righteousness. But being "made sin" for us He Himself "knew no sin," He made expiation for sin. He was made to feel all that sin is, all that sin deserves, in the sight of a holy, sin-hating God. Psalm lxix speaks of the first; Psalm xxii, of the second.

Jehovah says of Him, when in His deepest humiliation: "My Fellow." The Spirit addressing Him in Psalm xlv and Hebrews i. speaks of "Thy fellows." He took their place with all its consequences that they might share His place with all its consequences.

In chapter xii we see Israel's final conversion. In that day they will recognize that in piercing Jesus they pierced the very heart of Jehovah — as He says: "They shall look upon *Me* (i.e. Jehovah) whom they have pierced and shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one is in bitterness for His first-born." Then will Israel experience a threefold cleansing.

(1) The sight of the wounds of Jesus will purge *the conscience*. The Blood of Jesus has made expiation. (2) The fountain there opened for sin and uncleanness cleanses the

walk and the *state* by the washing of water by the Word (xiii. 1). (3) But there is besides the *fire-baptism* (xiii. 9). We need the *discipline* which helps us to practically turn from the things which we have judged. The Father chastens us to make us partakers of His holiness (Hebrews xii). For there is but one way of salvation and sanctification, for this age and for that which is to come, for Jew or Gentile, i.e. through repentance and faith, apprehending the atoning sacrifice, and experiencing the power of the Word and Spirit, and submitting to the disciplinary dealings of the guiding and chastening hand of God.

Recapitulation

a. *The Man among the myrtles* (Chapter i.)

Though Israel may be like a valley of myrtles, signifying a depressed condition, the theophanic Angel (the Messiah) is in the midst of the myrtles in the valley. The hosts of the Lord are at His disposal. He is the Intercessor on behalf of the tribulated people, for Israel, and now for the church, for she too is often in the valley of depression.

b. *Jehovah's Servant, the Branch* (Chapter iii. 8)

This is an echo of Isaiah iv. 2. When He is brought forth Truth will be despised no more. Israel's land will have been atoned for (verse 10). Universal peace and brotherhood will prevail; conditions of Eden-like fertility will return.

c. *The Stone with the seven eyes upon it* (Chapter iii. 9)

If the prophecy concerning the Branch looks on to the future, when Messiah will be revealed in glory, the Stone-prophecy has a present application. The Stone has already been laid as a divine foundation (see I Peter ii. 7). And the preciousness of this Stone attaches to all who build upon it. It is an immovable foundation. The floods cannot over-

throw it. The gates of hell will never prevail against it, nor upon that divinely built on it.

And that Stone is sovereign. It has seven eyes, the eyes of divine omniscience. The Messiah has all authority in heaven and on earth (see Zechariah iv. 10). All power is in His hands, and the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily.

d. *The first coming of the Messiah* (Chapters ix-x)

These chapters fill up the gap prophetically between the Testaments, as they cover the period of the Grecian and Syrian domination over Jerusalem. Thus verses 1-10 give us the victorious inroads of the armies of Alexander the Great, by which the coast line of Palestine was subjugated. But he was not allowed to tamper with the city and the temple of Jerusalem.

The reason for this is given in verse 9. The Messiah will have to enter that city. Between verses 9 and 10 runs the Christian dispensation. The prophetic forecast of Jewish history in the days of the Maccabees is resumed in verses 13-17.

e. *The Betrayal* (Chapter xi. 12, 13)

"A goodly price!" was given for Him!

f. *His crucifixion* (Chapter xiii. 5, 6)

"He shall say": It is Messiah speaking (verse 5), the true Prophet (Deut. xviii), the One who was here in bondsman's form from His youth (verse 6 R.V.). Being rejected He became a Husbandman—a "Sower" (Matthew xiii), a Vine-dresser (Luke xiii), and wounded in the house He had come to serve in love.

g. *Smitten of God* (Chapter xiii. 7)

Jehovah bruised Him (Isaiah liii. 10). *God* brought Him into the dust of death (Psalm xxii. 15). These are more than martyr sufferings.

- h. *His glorious Coming again* (Chapter xiv. 1-3, 5)
When Jerusalem will suffer her last and worst siege. "All nations" against the Jewish people!
- i. *Standing on Olivet* (Chapter xiv. 4, 5)
The very spot from which He ascended.
- j. *Israel's recognition of Him* (Chapter xii. 10)
- k. *His universal reign* (Chapter xiv. 9)
- l. *His royal Priesthood* (Chapter vi. 13)

(4) The Witness of Malachi

We come now to the close of the prophetic period in Israel. The anointed seer, speaking directly from the mouth of Jehovah, saying: "Thus saith Jehovah," is about to be displaced by the learned scribe and doctor of the law, whose authority consisted in their being in harmony with the recognized rabbis who had preceded them. But before the living voice of prophecy is silenced by dead tradition, a messenger utters the divine Word once more.

The anonymous prophet (for Malachi means: "My messenger," and is clearly an appellation and not a name) evidently appeared during the absence of Nehemiah in Persia, before his return. The abuses which he dealt with are the same denounced in this book.

It is the last prophetic communication to Israel and is of the nature of a dialogue between Jehovah and the people who had so sadly degenerated. See chapter i. 2, 6, 7; ii. 14, 17; iii. 7, 8, 13.

Judges and the two books of Samuel contemplate the failure of the *nation*. First and Second Kings, and First and Second Chronicles, the failure of the *kingdom*; but Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi, witness against *the community of restored exiles*.

The sevenfold “*wherein?*” of the people (i. 2, 6, 7; ii. 17; iii. 7, 8, 13) is answered by a *fourfold indictment*.

- (a) Their religion was profane (Chapter i. 7-10)
- (b) Their morality was corrupt. They practiced sorcery, committed adultery, were given to perjury, oppressed the weaker (Chapter iii. 5).
- (c) Their social relations were in utter confusion. Intermarriage with heathens was rife (Chapter ii. 11).
- (d) They robbed God in not paying the income tax in the form of “tithes” (Chapter iii. 8).

The priests were guilty of profaning the temple, so that God could take no pleasure in them. He refused to accept a Meat-offering at their hands (i. 10).

But they were told that there would be a calling out of a new people of God from among the Gentiles:

“For from the rising of the sun even to its going down, great is my Name among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to my Name, a pure meat-offering, for great is my Name among the Gentiles, saith Jehovah Zebaoth” (i. 11). The prophet uses the present tense—it is the prophetic vision of the future as already present. And while the thought-forms (incense and meat-offering) are borrowed from the ritual of the Jewish temple, the spiritual message is that the Kingdom of God would be taken from the covenant-people and be found among the Gentiles, as has come to pass. Jerusalem has ceased to be God’s religious center, as our Lord pointed out to the woman of Samaria (John iv. 23) as about to happen. Thus is the present dispensation clearly foretold in this book.

The Angel of the Covenant

Before the close of Malachi a very wonderful Messianic promise shines out in celestial splendor. “Behold, I send

my messenger, and he prepares the way before Me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His Temple, and the Angel of the Covenant whom ye delight in (or for whom ye long). Behold! He cometh, saith Jehovah Zebaoth" (Chapter iii. 1).

The messenger (or angel) who prepares the way of Jehovah is explained as a second Elijah (Chapter iv. 5). "suddenly," i.e. immediately following him, the herald, the Lord Himself (Hebrew *Ha-Adon*, proprietor of the temple) will come. He is also called *Malach Ha-Berith*, i.e. the angel of the Covenant. It is the same Angel-Presence that connected Himself with the patriarchs and was with their descendants throughout their history. He would once again appear. Jehovah is in this Angel. He is called "the Angel of His Presence" (or Face). The word "covenant" links Him with "the Servant" of Isaiah lii. 6 and lxix. 8, where the servant of Jehovah is made *L'berith Am*, i.e. a "covenant of the people." He is the Messianic Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant of grace. The Elijah-like ministry of John, calling to repentance, prepared His way, Israel having broken the old covenant; and so He comes to establish the new and better covenant, established on *grace* and not on human merit, and ratified in His Blood.

The Son of Righteousness

But for Israel fierce judgments are appointed before the terms of the new covenant can be made good (Chapter iv. 1). Out of this fiery oven a new and purified nation will emerge. In fact, it will only be a remnant which will be the nucleus of a holy people of God. Those who in Malachi's day feared the Lord and spake often one to another of Him, were despised by the mass (Chapter iii. 16-18). They were but a remnant of the remnant escaped from Babylon. But they will be as precious jewels to the Lord in the day of

His public manifestation. The Sun of Righteousness will arise upon them with heavenly healing (Chapter iv. 2). They have loved His appearing during the long night of His absence. His coming will bring in everlasting day.

Thus does Old Testament prophecy close. The prophets were shining stars, but the Messiah is the Sun. The whole Old Testament is waiting for the sunrise. The key to the entire Scriptures of Israel is the word: Yovah, i.e. *He comes!*

The Hope Misunderstood

VII

THE HOPE MISUNDERSTOOD

WHEN our Lord was here the Messianic hope had become a subject of speculation and the extraordinary disturbance in the mind of the populace, which the astonishing teaching and miracles of our Lord provoked, were caused by the conflicting ideas about the Messiah which had arisen during the so-called "silent centuries" between the Testaments. The fourth Gospel from Chapter vii to x records the confusion in the thoughts of the people. These chapters explain why the last and greatest divine self-revelation to Israel met with rejection on the part of the mass. The leaders of Jewry felt that Jesus was an irritant, which had to be got rid of at any cost.

The Talmud, which though written centuries after the beginning of an era, yet mirrors the confusion in the minds of Jews in the times of Jesus about the Messianic hope. Some thought that He would make His appearance in Rome; others that Babylon would see His advent first; again others that He would be born in Zion, basing their assertion on Psalm lxxxvii. 5. The sublime delineation of the suffering Servant of Jehovah of the book of Isaiah, and of the smitten Shepherd, the Man, Jehovah's Fellow, of Zechariah, had receded into the background, and a military leader supplanted it.

The four centuries between the Testaments were very important in the development of events that had the com-

ing of the Messiah as their terminus. For the Jews it was a time when they attempted the noble experiment of being a holy community devoted entirely to the service of Jehovah, even though they failed in realizing their ideal. Then they had to enter into the life and death struggle with Hellenism. It was an heroic conflict, as the books of the Maccabees record, and Judaism was almost strangled to death by it, but the after history of the kingdom of God would have pursued a very different course if the candle lit in Jerusalem had been put out by Hellenistic culture and paganism. The idea of the Messiah underwent a disastrous change in the process. The outstanding characteristic of the Messiah then cherished was no longer the Prophet and the Priest, but that of a Man, a Hero, a Soldier. At least that was the Palestinian concept to the more or less Hellenized Jews who had taken root in Egypt, and to whom we owe indeed the *Septuagint*, and the writings of Philo; the Messiah was dissolved into an allegory, an idea, into anything but a reality.

The Book of Wisdom, which is tinctured with Alexandrian philosophy, while it has in it much that is beautiful and worthy of praise, reveals the tendency to bring into agreement the revelation of the Old Testament with the pantheistic philosophy of Greece. It teaches the eternity of matter, that creation is but the re-forming of the material already existing in a state of chaotic shapelessness; that the human soul preexisted before birth into its earthy course; the Platonic antithesis between matter and spirit; that matter is inherently evil; that the body is the prison-house of the soul, and not a potential temple for the indwelling. The divine *Sophia* (or Wisdom) is not as Proverbs viii teaches the Creator and Friend of man, antedating the universe, really the Messiah, the *Logos* (or Word) that was with God and was God, according to the prologue of the

fourth Gospel, but only a pantheistic speculation, the universal life-force, which has no personal existence of its own.

The book of Ecclesiasticus with its lofty ethics is nevertheless the print of Sadducean rationalism. It offers no consolation in the hour of death, as it has no hope for an after life. There are neither angels or spirits, only two beings: God and Man. But the Messiah is ignored. It has no place for Him. Hence the Sadducean hostility to the preaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus in the early chapters of the Acts. The other apocryphal books, the Fourth book of the Maccabees and the Sybilline Oracles, are far removed from the prophetic concepts of the Messiah. He was to them a phantom, an abstraction. Instead of a *divine* redemption, mediated by the One whose Name is "*The Lord our Righteousness,*" self-redemption is taught. We are delivered solely by our own virtues and achievements.

However, other voices were also heard. There was "*the book of Enoch.*" True religion in it is not a mere matter of ceremonial externalia, but of mercy, purity, love, and truth in the inward parts. The book of Enoch harks back to the sublime figure of the *Son of Man* coming in the clouds of heaven, delineated in Daniel vii. He is "the Elect," "the Anointed," and "the Son of God." He is even called "the Son of Woman," and "The Light of the Gentiles," the Comforter and Healer of the wounded in heart. He is also the Judge before whose throne both men and fallen angels must stand.

Mention might also be made of "the Psalter of Solomon," consisting of eighteen spiritual poems, written in the face of the harsh treatment inflicted on the Jews by Pompey, after Jerusalem had of its own accord opened its gates. The writer seeks comfort in the hoped for Messiah who would take up the cause of His afflicted saints. Once upon a time

this poetical work was much valued by Christians, and was the only specimen of Jewish apocalyptic literature, added as an appendix to the New Testament in the *Codex Alexandrinus*.

The Targums

The Targums are ancient paraphrases on the Hebrew text of the Scriptures and are very revealing as to the ideas current among the Jews when Christianity arose. We can see from them, amidst some illuminating views, much that is very puerile. Thus while the "Servant" passages in Isaiah xlii-liii are referred to the Messiah, the *sufferings* of the Servant are applied to the Jewish people. The Messiah remains only as a victorious Warrior. Hence we cannot wonder that the people, goaded into rebellion by Roman injustice, flocked to the standard of Bar Cochba, as before they were ready to espouse Theudas and Judas of Galilee. *Uninspired* Jewish thought never could have evolved the idea of the Messiah set forth in Jesus of Nazareth. The pious remnant found in Malachi iii. 16, and re-appearing in Luke i and ii, alone cherished the deeply spiritual hopes founded on the ancient prophecies. And this hidden remnant proved to be the secret source of that blessed movement, called Christianity, in which the best of Judaism comes into blossom and fruit.

The Messiah in the Psalms

VIII

THE MESSIAH IN THE PSALMS

THE Psalms are the response of the inner Israel, the remnant loyal to Jehovah and His prophets, to the divine revelation, whether in Creation, History, Law or Prophecy. And as the history of the chosen people culminates in the Messiah as its divine goal; and as the prophetic word has for its objective the One who is to accomplish the purposes of God for the deliverance of man from the thralldom of evil; this Hope would naturally have a prominent place in the Psalms. And so we shall find that the Psalms are shot through and through with the expectation of the Coming One.

The inner Israel whose language we hear in the Psalms was a people with a threefold quest. There was the *mystical* quest for the vision of the Face of God (Psalm xxvii. 4). There was the *ethical* quest for righteousness (Psalm xv and xxiv). There was besides the *Messianic* quest: the cry for *a Man*, of whom Israel would be the mother, who should bring in the triumph of truth and righteousness and fill the earth with the glory of God (Psalm lxxx. 17).

These longings, unsatisfied from century to century, are told out in the Psalms and are in themselves prophecies of our Lord, who is the Divine answer to the need of the human soul, as the light is adapted to the eye and the sound-waves in the ether to the ear.

In Him we see the Father. The glory of God shines in His face. (John xiv. 8, 9; II Cor. iv. 6). He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. We are made the righteousness of God in Him (Rom. x. 4; II Cor. v. 21). He is the man in whom God can rest, and in whom we can rest in undisturbed repose (Matt. xi. 27-30).

The Messianic Hope celebrated in the Psalms is a diamond with many facets. He is not only prophetically foretold and spiritually longed for, He is also typically foreshadowed in the sufferings of the "Chassid," the ideal righteous man in the psalms, and already mystically experienced, for the spiritual experiences recorded in the psalms were foretastes of the blessings dispensed in the day of the Messiah, whose *Spirit* wrought in the psalmist, before His appearing in *the flesh*.

(1) The Introduction to the Psalms

The first and second Psalms, which originally formed one psalm in the Hebrew, are the introduction to the entire collection of psalms, and give us the history of the Messiah from His earthly experiences till He comes in manifested glory to enter into His kingdom rights.

If Psalm I describes the blessedness of the man who measures up to the Law of Jehovah, He alone fulfilled the contents of this psalm as "made under the Law." The keynote of His human life was: "That the Scripture might be fulfilled." Thus in His present heavenly life He has become "the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Psalm i. 3). Then after a glance at the world and the saints in it (i. 4-6), we have in Psalm ii. 1-3, the world's antagonism to Him, which began to be fulfilled at His crucifixion (see Acts iv. 24-28) and which still casts its shadow on the world, and which will culminate in the open apostasy of Christendom and the joint-worship by Jew and Gentile

apostates of "the Man of Sin," the glorification of the principle of human self-deification, fallen Adam fully developed.

In verses 2 to 6 we have heaven's view of this antagonism to the Anointed King, the One whom He calls His Son. Verses 7-9 declare the new dispensation, when the long silence of God will be broken in judgment, while verses 10-12 press home the present responsibility of man in the light of these coming events.

(2) The First Man and the Second

One of the outstanding features of the Messianic doctrine of the Psalms is the repeated contrast between two types of man, the first man who fell and the second Man who overcame. This contrast between Adam and Christ, the rejected man and the Man of Jehovah's choice, is very striking.

Thus Psalms xc and xci which open the fourth book of Psalms bring before us first, the tragic story of the defeated man, who is under sentence of death in Psalm xc and the glad tidings of the triumphant Man, the Messiah, in Psalm xci.

Psalm xci gives us the human rights of One, originally in the form of God (Philippians ii), which He surrendered in His obedience unto death. As God he "emptied Himself"; as man "He humbled Himself." He gave up His human rights, the experience of Psalm xci, when He stooped to the shame of the Cross.

As every human being is a reproduction of the defeated "first man," he repeats his history of failure and ruin. But "the Second Man" has taken up in His Manhood the cause of "His brethren," to whom He was in His incarnation made like in all things, except sin, and has glorified God in the scene of their failure. He goes into death for them; but, as Psalm xci shows in the final passage, He is vindicated and rewarded in resurrection.

(3) The Psalm of the Inner Life of Jesus as a Man on Earth

The 16th Psalm shows us the ideal life lived by the Messiah as an answer to the challenge of the preceding psalm. (See also Rev. v) "Who is worthy?" The answer is, the slain Lamb.

The 15th Psalm calls for the man who shall never be moved.

The 16th Psalm, for One who lives His life joyously, calmly, and unmoved, even though threatened with death. It is the inner life of the Man Christ Jesus. Neither poverty, rejection, loneliness, nor death could move Him.

v. 1: DEPENDENCE — Filial dependence. Jehovah His only asylum.

v. 2: HAPPINESS — Jehovah His only good. His fountain of happiness.

The opening clause reveals the "Michtam," or golden secret, of the psalm. It is the secret of contentment though bereft of outward good.

This is the Old Testament forecast of the *Kenosis* (Phil. ii). The Lord of glory takes the place of a man, of a servant, obedient and dependent every step of the way.

v. 3: COMPANIONSHIP — After thus describing the world of heavenly harmony and blessedness, the true country of the soul, the world of the beatitudes, he turns to earth. And what does he find there? The *saints*. They are all His delight. (See John xiii.1.)

v. 4: APOSTATES — The apostates are contrasted with the saints. "Let their gains increase," etc. (Jewish translation). The saints are a poor people.

v. 5: HOLY POVERTY — Psalmist will not hear of any other God. Why not? Because you cannot offer him anything

better. He lives the Levite life of holy poverty (Num. xviii.20; Deut. x.9).

v. 6: PARADISE — “The measuring lines have fallen to him in a delightful district, viz., in the fellowship with God which is so rich in enjoyment; this most blessed domain of love has become his paradisaic possession” (Prof. F. Delitzsch).

v. 7: COUNSEL — God has counselled him thus to choose the good part, not the ephemeral and unsubstantial things of earth. Abraham had God for his adviser, and was thus kept out of the foolish speculations of his nephew Lot.

v. 8: PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE — The practice of the presence of God. I Thess. v.23. Heart, glory (soul), flesh.

vv. 9, 10: HOPE IN DEATH — Such a life triumphs over death. God is trusted for the life to come as for this present life. In the days of the psalmist it was easy to trust God for the life that now is, and difficult to have faith for the life beyond the veil. Now it is the very opposite.

v. 10: THE HOPE NEGATIVELY PRESENTED — NOT sheol. NOT corruption.

v. 11: GOD’S RIGHT HAND — The positive side of the hope of the resurrection life. Life, joy, pleasure, and that for evermore, in Thy presence, that is to say, in the beholding of Thy face, and in Thy right hand. That hand has pleasures for ever more, and is never empty through giving.

Acts ii and xiii point out the fact that David did not fully realize all that the psalmist hoped for. The psalm was fulfilled in Jesus.

(4) The Psalm of the Cross

Psalm xxii is an inspired photograph and prophecy of our Lord’s saddest hours. But glory as well as gloom are found there. It begins with a shriek of anguish; goes on to a cry for help, full of trust, and ends with thanksgiving and the

vision of the world-wide kingdom of God, resulting from the sufferings of the One whose language is here heard. He believes that the story of His woes will provide a gospel to generations yet unborn.

The piety of this psalm is that of the meek and silent Lamb of God. He meets the accumulated griefs, mental, physical, and spiritual, of that hour without murmuring or reproaching the causers of His pain.

He looks beyond them to *God*, who brought Him into the dust of death, even though *human* hands crucified Him — dogs without shame and conscience; bulls of Bashan, without feeling, staring at Him in His nakedness. They cast dice over His garments. They laugh Him to scorn. But He looks to Jehovah.

At first all is dark. He is alone with God, personally sinless, but as One “made sin for us.” He justifies the holiness that smites Him in that hour. Verse 21 is the turning point. He looks to be vindicated in resurrection. Then He will declare the Father’s name to His brethren. This He did by means of Mary Magdalene (John xx) and when He came into the midst of their assembling themselves together, and sang the Father’s praises, having proclaimed peace unto them. The godly remnant of Israel will come into view in the latter days; then the great millennial congregation; then “all the ends of the earth.”

In the meantime “a seed serves him,” a people born out of His death, and marked by His features.

John xii.32 is the New Testament epitome of this psalm.

(5) The Priest-King at God’s Right Hand

No psalm is oftener quoted in the New Testament than Psalm cx.

Our Lord used it to prove that Messiah, while human, is also superhuman and heavenly (Matt. xxii.42, 43). The entire Epistle to the Hebrews is a commentary on this psalm.

Perhaps the historical occasion for the psalm was the taking of the ark by David to Zion. It meant that Jehovah's throne was now once more in the midst of Israel. David would, as king, sit at the right hand of God. But David looks beyond to One greater, whom he calls "*my Lord*." He lays his crown at the feet of a more glorious King, who is priest as well as king, which no earthly king could ever be under the old covenant.

The Structure of the Psalm

The psalm is divided into *seven stanzas*. In these the majestic name of Jehovah occurs three times (verses 1, 2, 4).

The subject is *the spiritual interpretation of history*. It begins with the session of the Messiah at God's right hand and ends with "the day of the Lord," when His enemies are made His footstool. (The Christian dispensation comes between these two events.)

v. 1 *The humanity shares the Deity-glory*. All things must become the "*footstool*" of the divine-human Christ.

v. 2 *As Zion will be His earthly metropolis, so there is a spiritual Zion now* (see Hebrews xii.22). Pentecost was the first installment of the fulfillment of this verse. "The rod of thy strength" is "the rod of his mouth" (Isaiah xi.4).

v. 3 *The King's spiritual army*. They are all volunteers, not mercenaries or conscripts. They are priest-warriors. Their uniform is holiness. A youthful army — being constantly replenished by fresh recruits. They are as bright as the sparkling dew.

v. 4 *Christ is God's last word*. Our Melchizedek was before Aaron and lives on after him. And as Abraham paid the typical Melchizedek tithes, so must the *children* of Abraham recognize the greatness of this priest (see Acts xv.11).

vv. 5, 6 *The day of wrath will end the day of grace.*

v. 7 *A review over the past.* His humiliation led to His exaltation. He has brought His glory out of the depths.

(6) Summary of the Messianic Hope in the Psalms

1. We see Him in connection with His sufferings and death.
2. We behold Him at the right hand of God.
3. We celebrate before-hand His coming in manifested glory to reign over a renovated earth.
4. We catch glimpses of His inner life in the days of His flesh.
5. We trace unfoldings of the mystery of His Person, both human and divine.

*The Atonement in the Religion
of the Old Testament*

IX

THE ATONEMENT IN THE RELIGION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE heart of the spiritual message of the sacred Scriptures of Israel, i.e. the Old Testament, is that divine love is sacrificial in its nature. The prophet Isaiah speaks of Jehovah as One who in all our afflictions is Himself afflicted (Chap. lxiii.9). His love is a suffering love bearing on its heart the sufferings of man. He is sensitive to human pain; He is no mere glorified Buddha in the sky, passively looking down from His sublime elevation on the distressed conditions below, while Himself outside of it.

The 53rd chapter of Isaiah is felt universally to be the highest peak of Old Testament prophecy. It speaks of One arising out of Israel in whom this sacrificial principle, embedded deep in the love of God, would be expressed. And this incarnation of the vicarious love of God would bring healing and redemption to others, those who come to it in penitence and faith. We know that the ancient Synagogue saw the Messiah in this chapter, whatever modern Jews might say about it.

For some one thousand and five hundred years Israel offered daily sacrifices unto Jehovah. These pointed to the coming of One who would fulfill their intention. They were not an end in themselves, but a means to an end. This is clearly the message of Psalm 40, where we hear the lan-

guage of One of whom it had been written "in the volume of the Book," that the will of God would be accomplished by Him, and that this would mean the ending up of the sacrificial types which had preceded Him. And so the prophet Daniel also, speaking of the cutting off in death of Messiah, connects His work with the finishing of transgression, the making an end of sin, the making reconciliation for iniquity and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness (Chap. ix.24-26). The outward sacrifices never accomplished these results. They were more of the nature of promissory notes looking to the future for the fulfillment of the promise.

As we study the ancient sacrifices we find that they are divided into two groups. The first being of the nature of "sweet savor" offerings, the second have to do with God's judgment on sin. These two groups are again subdivided. The "sweet-savor" offerings into burnt-offerings, meat (or "meal") offerings, and peace-offerings. The second into sin-offerings and trespass-offerings. The sin-offerings had reference to sin as being chiefly against God, and provocative of His holy horror, elsewhere called "the wrath of God." The second, added to this the injury done to man, for which reparation was due.

I believe it a mistaken view that the sacrificial system of ancient Israel was merely ritual. The sacrifices had an ethical content, and were profoundly educational. Alas! they frequently degenerated from this ideal into mere external performances. Then God expressed His repudiation of them. See I Sam. xv.8; Isaiah i.11; Amos v.21-24; Proverbs xv.8, etc. They were a positive offence to God if taken by themselves and apart from the state of the offerer.

The doctrine of the remnant also stands out very prominently in the Old Testament. The entire history of Israel illustrates the truth that the mass was blessed through the

piety, the service, and the suffering of the godly remnant. Thus Isaiah i:9 shows that Israel escaped the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah because Jehovah found "a very small remnant" in her midst. This remnant was despised by the apostate mass. Yet did this remnant take the blame and shame of their people's condition on itself, confessing their sins as its own, (Read Dan. lx, Ezra ix, Nehemiah ix). The penitence of the godly remnant was vicarious in its character. Did not Moses express this spirit when he offered himself to be blotted out of God's book, when he went "to make atonement," after the setting up of the golden calf? See Exodus xxxii.30-32. Israel often owed her very continuance to the sacrificial service of her noblest sons. The Spirit of Christ was in them (I Pet. i:11) and made them not only heralds, but, in some degree, types of the coming One.

The Messiah, as the Anointed of Jehovah, bore a three-fold mark in the Old Testament — prophetic, royal and priestly. Jesus, according to the record in the New Testament, bore those marks.

(1) Prophet. His word was with authority. It dropped like the manna from heaven, like refreshing rain from the clouds. Never man spake like this man. The woman of Sychar said to him: "Sir, I perceive Thou art a Prophet," after He had revealed her secret life to her by His word.

(2) King. Though His Kingly rights were denied Him, and though "Immanuel" had nowhere to lay His head in "Immanuel's land," He ever acted as a King, in a Kingly way. He was truly Master of every situation. He was never baffled or put off His balance. He was always in victory. He overcame the world. Sickness, demon power, stormy waves, an unbroken ass's colt, yea, death itself, obeyed His royal command.

(3) Priest. His final act was to die on the altar of the cross. It was His being a willing sacrifice that transfigured the tree of the curse and shame into glory. "His decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem" was His greatest accomplishment. It was the fulfillment of Isaiah liii, to lay in death the foundation of His own exaltation, and of the salvation of His people Israel, and of the nations, whose kings shall shut their mouths before Him in the day of His power.

The Future Salvation of Israel

X

THE FUTURE SALVATION OF ISRAEL

In Isaiah lxii.11 we find a remarkable passage: "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh."

The ends of the world where the people of Israel are now found scattered, far from their home, are thus called upon to make the exiled children of Zion among them acquainted with their coming salvation. Then the end of the world must have already experienced this salvation in order to be in a position to make it known to the daughter of Zion, who is still waiting for it, so that she too might get the benefit of that salvation which has brought blessing to the uttermost parts of the earth.

And this remarkable fact is also the subject of prophecy in the book of Isaiah. In Chapter xlix the Messiah is heard addressing the Gentile world:

"Listen, O isles unto Me, and hearken ye peoples from far: Jehovah called Me from the womb: from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of My Name." This refers to His mysterious birth as the "Seed of the Woman," the Virgin-born. "And He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid me: and He hath made Me a polished shaft: in His quiver hath He kept me close." This refers to the thirty silent years of His preparation for His public ministry. "And He said

unto Me, Thou art my Servant; Israel, in whom I will be glorified." He bears the name "Israel," because He is all that Israel should have been but never was. The genius of Israel is personified in the Messiah. "But I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and vanity, yet surely the justice due to me is with Jehovah, and my recompense with my God." This refers to the fact that Messiah was rejected by His generation. He had spent Himself on Israel in vain. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not."

But now comes a remarkable turn of affairs. "Now saith Jehovah that formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him and that Israel be gathered unto Him . . . yea, He saith, It is too light a thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: *I will also give Thee for a Light to the Gentiles*, that Thou mayest be My Salvation to the end of the earth." And so it has come to pass. The salvation refused by the Jewish people has gone out and is still going forth to the Gentiles. The river of blessing has found new river beds for its beneficent flow in the erstwhile heathen world, transforming desert wastes into fruitful gardens.

And the end is not yet; for devoted Gentile disciples of the Messiah who was born of a Jewish mother; raised in a Jewish home; who never repudiated His Jewish brethren, though denied by them; bewailing with tears the doom that was to fall on Jerusalem; are today carrying His message to China, India, Japan, Korea, Siam, Africa, and the islands of the sea; and multitudes are being lifted into newness of life, out of shame and corruption, by faith in His blessed Name.

But what about the children of Zion? God has not forgotten them, but has given commandment to the end of the

world to restore to them their long lost treasures, to say: "Behold, Thy Salvation cometh!" How does it come? In the person of Him of whom God has said: "Behold, My Servant whom I uphold, my Chosen in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry, nor lift up His voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will He not break, and a dimly burning wick will He not quench; He will bring forth justice in truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law" (Isa. xlii.1-4).

All that had been predicted before of the Seed of the Woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David, is realized in this Messianic Servant of God. The *Aramaic Targum* reads the first verse of Isaiah xlii. thus: "Behold, my Servant, the Messiah." He is the Mediator of this great salvation, first to the end of the world and then to the daughter of Zion, in the fulness of time, when her warfare is accomplished, and her national sin is pardoned at last.

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