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The influence of the Apocalyptics and the Apocrypha on the teaching of Jesus

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Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF THE APOCALYPHTICS AND THE APOCRYPHA ON THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Submitted by

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The purpose of this paper is to trace the influence of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic writings on the life and teachings of Jesus. For there can be no doubt that these writings entered vitally into the thought-life of at least an important section of the Judaism of the first century B.C. and carried their influence over into the early centuries of Christian history. And since the life and teachings of Jesus to be fully appreciated must be studied not only with reference to their continuity with the past but also against the background of contemporaneous thought and life, the apocryphal and apocalyptic writings as vital factors of that contemporaneous background must receive their full share of attention.

I. JEWISH LITERATURE IN THE TIME OF JESUS.

The supreme religious literature of Judaism in the time of Christ was of course the Hebrew Scriptures, consisting of the Law the Prophets and the Writings, though the final limits of the Hebrew canon were not fixed until 90 A.D. Alongside of this Hebrew canon we must place the Septuagint, that famous Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which contains also the Apocrypha. This together with some other pseudonymous writings constitute the library bridge that spans the historic gap between the last Old Testament writings and the first of the new. It is this fact that gives to these Inter-Testament writings their peculiar value. And it must be remembered that the New Testament writers quote most frequently from the Septuagint.

The Jewish Apocalypses appeared between 200 B.C. and 100 A.D. when Judaism was passing through a period of crisis and storm and stress, threatened with dissolution by the over-sprading culture and paganism of Greece, and later by the Imperialism of Rome. And since, for the Jews, literature was the only form of aesthetic expression, Apocalypticism combined for them the mythology of Babylonia, the culture of Hellas and their own religious faith. It was a literary means of setting forth the certainty of divine judgment and deliverance. The very word apocalypse means "a revealing", its purpose being to reveal the future and encourage the broken and despondent Jews to preserve their faith in the ultimate triumph of God, and righteousness. Fantastic symbolism was often used, borrowed doubtless from surrounding paganism, by means of which the writers traced the past history of the nation and described the coming Messianic era. Under this device the message would be perfectly plain to a Jew who was familiar with his nation's history.
and in whose heart were the hopes of divine deliverance; but it would be absolutely unintelligible to their enemies.

The authors of this literature were unknown. They kept themselves hidden by assuming the name of some ancient Hebrew seer. The Hebrew canon of prophecy was closed and it was only by assuming the name of one whose authority would not be questioned that the writer could gain an audience for his message.


The Apocryphal books, however, stood nearest in esteem to the Hebrew Scriptures though they were not included in the Canon. "Apocrypha" meant "hidden" and was used to specify writings which were purposely hidden from public use. Later when these books were rejected by the Palestinians, it became a term implying inferiority. Now the name is applied to those books in the Greek Septuagint which are not included in the Hebrew Bible.

The Apocryphal writings served a two fold purpose. First they were apologetic and were intended to strengthen the Jewish mind against heathen religions and philosophy, and to praise the glory of Israel. Second, they were in a measure syncretistic and aimed to show that the best teachings of heathenism were identical with the fundamental teachings of the Old Testament. They attempted to reconcile Judaism with Greek philosophy.

They include the following books:

I. Palestinian Jewish Literature:
   (a) Historical: I. Ezra, I. Maccabees.
   (b) Legendary: I. Baruch, Judith.
   (c) Apocalyptic: II. Ezra.
   (d) Didactic: Sirach, Tobit, Book of Wisdom, Prayer of Manasses, Epistle of Jeremy.

II. Hellenistic Jewish Literature:
   Historical and Legendary
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   Additions to Esther
   II Maccabees.

II. PROPHECY AND APOCALYPTIC.

It may be well at this point to notice the difference between prophecy and apocalyptic. Scholars are not agreed in regard to the relation between them. The prophets were the outstanding religious leaders of Israel, the reformers, the idealists. Jehovah had admitted them into a special intimacy, with Himself. He had given them messages for His people Israel when they were facing great
crises in their history. These men saw a wonderful future in store for the nation chosen of God.

But instead of becoming greater, Israel grew weaker as corruption increased. The warning voices were not heeded by the rulers and disaster followed disaster. Prophecy continued to encourage the righteous remnant to remain true to their God although He had gone back to heaven leaving Jerusalem and His people to the destruction of the foreign enemy. (When all hope of independence was lost, prophecy as such ceased.

The apocalyptists then took up the work of encouraging and furthering the faith and the hopes of broken and afflicted Israel. They utilize in the main the same channels of revelation as the prophets. Both learn the will of God through visions, trances, and spiritual communion with Him. Both warn and encourage their people by means of written message. But apocalyptic literature is in the form of tracts for bad times. They are intended to encourage the godly in a hopeless situation. Worse times are indeed foretold but the oppressors will be destroyed finally when God comes down from heaven to give victory to a repentant people.

Another distinguishing element is the pseudonymity of apocalyptic. The apocalyptist hid his own identity under the name of an ancient Hebrew seer in order that his message might receive a hearing. Charles thinks that Prophecy and Apocalyptic are essentially identical. But there are many striking differences. The visions of the apocalypticists are entirely different from those of the Prophets. The imagery is elaborate and fantastic, imaginative and mysterious. The Prophets describe a triumphant and renewed Israel while the apocalypticists see things hidden from common men. They see the secrets of heaven and describe them under strange symbols. The experiences of the prophets are emotional but the visions of the apocalypticists are in many cases literary devices borrowed from ancient tradition.

In their religious ideas and beliefs the apocalypticists represent both advance and retrogression. The idea of a new heaven and a new earth belongs to theirs. The present world is utterly hopeless. God will have to destroy it by a sudden catastrophe, putting an end to all wickedness and establishing His kingdom over the righteous. This dualistic conception of good and evil powers struggling for the possession of humanity is not as high a conception as the faith of the great prophets in the power of righteousness to transform the earth.

Closely connected with this is the belief in a blessed future life. The Old Testament emphasized the eternal life of the Jewish nation but individual resurrection was merely suggested (Dan. 12:2). Then the idea grew that the faithful who had died before the coming of the kingdom could not be robbed of all reward. Therefore God must resurrect them to enjoy His rule whenever it should come.

The transcendent God of the apocalyptist, from His people, ruling in heaven, surrounded by hosts of angelic beings like a great oriental
monarch and his court was far below the pure monotheism of the
Prophets. To them God was present in His world working with and
for His people.

Again, both prophet and apocalyptic studied the history of
Israel and saw the plan of God reflected in it. The prophet
looked forward to the triumphant rule of Israel as the greatest
of all nations, and recognized because of their knowledge of the
one true God. The apocalyptic on the other hand looked for the
sudden advent of a new kingdom as a consummation of history when
God would destroy the earth and its inhabitants. By interpreting
unfulfilled Prophecy anew, the hope of the Jews in the kingdom of
God was kept alive.

Scholars differ as to which reached a higher development.
Charles believes that apocalyptic was an advance beyond prophecy.
Porter thinks that it represents a decline. Porter’s judgment is
supported by the attitude of centuries of religious people. Many
have been inspired by the great spiritual faith of the prophets.
The apocalyptic writing is scarcely known. The messages were put
in such an artificial, difficult style that they must be studied
in order to find any meaning. The intimacy of the prophets with
God is lacking and the pessimism concerning the present state of
humanity is not pleasing. The just, loving, merciful God of the
prophets has a deeper appeal than the distant, all righteous God
of the apocalyptic.

III. LEGALISM AND APOCALYPTICISM.

And yet, although apocalyptic was a decline from the older
prophecy, it was an advance beyond the legalistic religion of its
day.

Legalistic Judaism and apocalyptic were not essentially an-
tagonistic. They were similar in origin for they were both
based on the Law. "The Law is the light that lighteth every man",
was taught in apocalyptic ethics. Legalism, however, developed a
more sober, stable type of piety. It was more individualistic and
more strictly and legally ethical. Apocalyptic fostered the
element of emotion and enthusiasm. It was against mere formalism
and selfishness. Nevertheless the Law, it held, was eternally
valid.

Legalistic Judaism moreover, had the same ideas of the future
life as apocalyptic; but, as time went on it emphasized the study of
the Law as the only means of salvation, thus driving out the apocal-
yptic and prophetical element and becoming what is called Talmudic
Judaism. At the same time apocalyptic Judaism came to recognize
the inadequacy of the Law and became anti-legalistic, thus pre-
paring it to be the parent of Christianity.

Since the Gospels and the letters of Paul are against legalism
in favor of the apocalyptic hope, it might be inferred that apocalyptic was universal and spiritual. But many scholars think that the apocalyptic hope hampered Christianity. Millenarianism is a survival of the apocalyptic form of faith; and one of the most important struggles of early Christianity was its struggle to free itself from its apocalyptic inheritance.

On the other hand the summons and promises of Christ could appeal only to those who were unhampered by legalism. He could not reach the Pharisees. His disciples were from the region where apocalyptic beliefs were current. They had a forward look, a discontent with themselves and their times. Trust in God and hope for the future prepared them for Jesus' message and gave them faith to keep it. Christianity found continuity with the past largely through the apocalyptic side of Judaism.

IV. FOREIGN INFLUENCE.

In all study of Jewish Apocalypticics it must be borne in mind that this literature was produced during a period of transition. From 586 B.C. to 70 A.D. the Jews passed under the successive sway of Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome. Hellenism moved eastward and Paganism in manifold forms flowed westward. There was mingling and commingling, social, political, religious. That Judaism should have been influenced by these foreign forces was only to have been expected. The philosophy and culture of Greece; the dualism, angelology, eschatology, and personal immortality of Persia; the mythology of symbolism of Babylonia; etc. all are reflected in the later writings of the Jews. Clemens in his "Primitive Christian" and its non-Jewish sources treats ably of this matter. It falls within the scope of this paper, however, to deal merely with the apocalyptic influences upon the four gospels.

V. THE DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS OF APOCALYPTIC.

In its doctrines Apocalyptic literature is often inconsistent. Individualism is much more marked here than in the Old Testament. The worth of the individual is insisted upon especially in the Book of Enoch. Not the nation but righteous men and the elect are to inherit eternal honor and glory.

The mention of Israel as chosen of God, although occurring in practically all the writings, is not usual. The broader view of God as the God of all nations is more common. All men will finally worship Him under the leadership of Israel. The apocalypticists are missionary in spirit. They want to Judaize the world. They do not draw as sharp a distinction between Jew and Gentile as between the righteous and the ungodly. They want to bring all to the knowledge and worship of the one true God.
VI. APOCALYPTIC MESSIANISM.

The most important and influential element in Jewish apocalyptic is its messianism. It represents a decided development, differing though it does from the messianism of the prophets.

The Pharisees wanted a new independent Jewish state to come without revolution or social regeneration. The masses wanted a new kingdom which would end their misery. During the Maccabean period of independence, they were active in politics but the Roman conquest destroyed their hopes. Then they tried to reduce political life to a minimum. They turned for consolation to Jehovah and the Law. They wanted to wait quietly for God to deliver them. They did not see any use in trying to revolt so they urged submission to their rulers. The world was so evil that they would not have to wait long for God to destroy it.

They explained evil by dualism. The world was too wicked for God to be present in it. Their misery was due to their own sins and to the conflicts of angels. Satan was the great opponent of God. A world of demons was ever present struggling with God and His angels for the possession of humanity. God would surely win in the end. When evil reached its height Jehovah would take the world empire from the wicked and give it to His people Israel.

The older sections of I Enoch (1-36; 72-104) held to the nationalistic messianism. After evil had reached its height, there would come "a judgment upon all men" when the earth would be wholly rent in sunder. (En 1:7). Then the messianic era would dawn in which the righteous would receive their reward. They would live five hundred years, "beget thousands of children, and all the days of their youth and their old age would be completed in peace." (En.10:11, 17-22). The earth would be fruitful and joy universal. The heathen would be converted and all the sons of men would worship God.

In another section (En.83-90) called the "dream visions" the course of Hebrew history was followed in terms of symbolic animals. At the end would come the judgment when all the wicked would be cast into the fire (En.90:27). The Old Jerusalem would be replaced by a new and better one (En.90:28, 29). All men would be converted, the righteous dead would be raised and all Israelites would return to form the new community ruled over by the Messiah (En.90:30-39).

In the apocalypse of ten weeks (En.93, 91: 12-17) a period of peace and righteousness followed the overthrow of all enemies. After the judgment of men and the destruction of earth would come a judgment of the angels. Then a new heaven would appear where all would "be in goodness and righteousness forever". (91:17).

The latest section (En.57-71), the Similitudes, taught that
the righteous would become like angels and live forever in companionship with the Elect One (32:6, 7; 62:14-16). The Messiah was a heavenly king and judge ruling over a new earth and a new heaven after the destruction of the wicked. He was before the sun and stars were made (48:3), he was to be the support of the righteous, the light of the heathen, the hope of the distressed, and adored by all (48:4,5). The national kingdom had been given up and a more spiritual hope put in its place. The emphasis was on the righteousness of the members of the new kingdom.

The Psalms of Solomon were written in protest against the corrupt Jewish leaders. The first sixteen psalms described a world subjected to a Pharisaized Israel ruled by God or His representative. God would call the Jews from all corners of the earth (ps.11). The wicked would be destroyed and the righteous rewarded with life (Ps.15:12-15). Psalms 17 and 18 gave a picture of a Messiah from the house of David. He was neither a sufferer, not a teacher. He was not pre-existent nor miraculously born. He was neither a priest nor a warrior; but he was sinless, strong through the Holy Spirit, gaining wisdom from God, conquering the world by the words of his mouth. All the members of his kingdom were sons of God (17:23-48). Blessed would they be in those days when the King, the Son of David, having purged Jerusalem (17:33) and destroyed the heathen by the word of his mouth, would gather together a holy people which He would rule with justice. The tribes would be distributed over the land and no stranger would dwell among them. (17:30).

In the third book of the Sibylline Oracles was an apocalyptic section. The Jewish Sibyl connected the coming of the Messiah with the rebuilding of the temple (III 286-294; V 414-433) and He should come to judge man with blood and fire. All the Jews of the dispersion would be restored and all nations would bring their wealth to the house of God. (III 703-731; 766-783).

The Book of Jubilees written in the time of Jesus was Rabbinic rather than apocalyptic. Nevertheless, it referred to the future. Israel had been scattered because of its wickedness (1:15). But God would gather them all from the midst of the heathen, build among them His Sanctuary (1:17) and dwell with them. The Sanctuary would be forever and ever (1:26) and God would appear to the eye of every one and all would acknowledge that He was the God of Israel, the Father of all the children of Jacob and King upon Mount Zion. Jerusalem would be holy (1:27-29). No reference was made to the Messiah. The nation which obeyed the law would triumph.

The Assumption of Moses was written by a Pharisee. No Messiah was mentioned. The only hope lay in a miraculous intervention on behalf of Israel when God would establish His Kingdom (10:8, 9). Israel would be exalted to heaven while her enemies would be destroyed in Gehenna.

The Secrets of Enoch contained little apocalyptic material.
There was no Messiah and no resurrection formulated. There would be a final judgment of men and angels (40:12, 12; 46:3; 65:6). Followed by an endless blessed age for the righteous (65:8-10).

IV Ezra written during the first century A.D. was affected by Christian doctrines. It was written in the form of visions and in the sixth the future was foretold. The Son was to appear suddenly in the form of a man to deliver them that are upon earth. Wind, fire, and storm would come from his mouth to destroy the wicked. A new city would come down from heaven the ten tribes would be separated from the heathen and restored (13:27-52). The end of a corrupt world was coming and there would be no new nation or new age for Israel but an immortal, invisible world (7:12,12).

II Baruch in one section taught that the Messianic Kingdom was temporary. It was a "golden age" (73:1,2,7). At its close the Messiah would return to heaven and the righteous rise to a blessed life (30:1). In another section the hope of a kingdom of righteousness was abandoned entirely. After every man had received what he deserved, an everlasting, timeless age would begin when the righteous would live in heaven with the angels while the wicked agonized in fiery tortures.

Shailer Matthews finds in apocalyptic Messianism seven distinctive elements.

1. There were to be two ages, one present, one future.
2. The present age was evil, under control of Satan. It was full of misery, disease, pain and death.
3. The good age would be introduced by God or His representative by means of a catastrophe. Sometimes it took the form of a terrific struggle between God's representatives and the enemies of righteousness.
4. Ideas regarding the judgment varied. The decisions of the judgment were always final. The Gentiles were sometimes destroyed in Gehenna and sometimes converted, becoming subjects of the Jewish kingdom. In some writings God was the judge, in others, the Messiah.
5. The introduction of the Kingdom of God was characteristic of the new age. It came as a gift from God. A slight variation was the Messianic Kingdom of four hundred or one thousand years followed by the control of God over all peoples. The Pharisees wanted to leave it all to God.
6. The resurrection of the righteous varied. Some combined the resurrection and the judgment. Some believed in two resurrections, one before the Messianic Kingdom and one which introduced the final reign of God.
7. The personal Messiah was not explicitly described. There was no contrast between a fighting and judging Christ and no reference to a dying or suffering Christ. He might be a man especially anointed or a superhuman character.
VII. THE MESSIANISM OF JESUS.

We turn now to the Life and Labors of Jesus to examine first the specific features of His Messianism.

At the time of His ministry there were two prominent teachings concerning the kingdom of God. The masses looked for a new king of the line of David who would conquer their enemies and bring back independence and prosperity to Israel. Among the Pharisees and educated Jews the apocalyptic ideas prevailed.

Jesus made His attitude toward a political kingdom clear. He repudiated it in the temptation experience (Lk. 4:5-8). He did not believe in the use of force as a revolutionary weapon. When multitudes followed him, He never used His power to arouse them to attempt a messianic revolt. His attitude toward political government was made clear to the Pharisees and Herodians when they questioned Him concerning tribute to Caesar (Mk. 12:13-17). His kingdom was in no way connected with civil government. He definitely warned His followers against trying to establish such a kingdom (Mk. 8:15) and He refused to let the people make Him king (Jn. 6:15). The fact that He rode into Jerusalem as the prophets had described the coming of the Messianic King and then deliberately left the city without making any attempt to seize the throne was the most forceful way of showing men that He would not establish a political kingdom (Mk. 11:11).

In the temptation experience Jesus rejected not only the Davidic kingdom but also the idea of gaining followers by performing the miraculous signs foretold by the apocalypticists. What did He say about the kingdom which He was proclaiming?

He associated it with the idea of growth comparing it to the mustard seed which became a great tree and to leaven which leavened all of the meal (Mt. 13:31-33). The parables of the sower (Mt. 13:1-9) and of the seed (Mt. 13:24-29) described a natural process, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear". The kingdom was subject to the laws of nature.

He announced its approach at the very beginning of His ministry as "at hand" (Mt. 1:15). In the Synagogue at Nazareth He said that the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in Himself (Mt. 4:17-21). He told the teachers and scribes that the kingdom was among them (Mt. 17:20), and He congratulated His disciples because they were seeing the things which kings and prophets had longed to see (Mk. 10:23, 24).

When the Jews accused Him of casting out demons by Beelzebub, He said, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you (Mk. 11:20). The law and the prophets were until John. From that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it. (Mk 16:16).

The kingdom implied social relations. The parable of the net
filled with all kinds of fish (Mt. 13:47-50), that of the supper to which many were invited (Sk 14:15-24), the many workers in the vineyard (Mt. 21:28-32), and the story of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32) all describe the kingdom in terms of society. It was not an affair of the individual alone but it included all sorts of men. The parable of the man who sowed the good seed (Mt. 13:24-30) and its explanation (Mt. 13:37-43) gave Jesus' idea of the kingdom. It was the world in which the Son of Man had planted good seed. The good seed were the members of the kingdom. The bad seed planted by His enemy were the wicked in the world. The good and bad would grow until the harvest, the end of the world, when the evil would be removed and the righteous would remain in the Kingdom of God.

The world was the environment within which and out of which the kingdom would grow. He chose His followers from it and they were to be a light to illumine it and salt to preserve it. There would be the old evil and the new ideal working at the same time but the new order was of God so it would triumph in the end. He believed that in time the new order would embrace the whole earth. The bond of union was the relation of men to God (Mt. 18:20) and their relations to each other would show to outsiders that they were members of the kingdom (Jn. 13:35). The form was not essential but a common spiritual life was the means of membership. Membership was open to all men because all were spiritual. The kingdom had already begun as a divine society. When asked about it by the Pharisees, He answered, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or there! for lo, the kingdom of God is among you" (Lk. 17:20, 21).

There are passages in the Gospels which give an entirely different idea of the kingdom. Jesus warned his disciples to watch and pray for they did not know when the kingdom would come (Lk 13: 33-36). The parable of the ten virgins and of the unfaithful servant both emphasize the sudden unexpected coming of the Lord (Mt. 24:37-25:13).

These sayings do not necessarily exclude the idea of growth. Both parables suggest a long period before the coming of the Son of man when some would grow tired of waiting and would not be ready when the time came.

Matthew 24:29-31 described a miraculous intervention when the Son of Man would come on the clouds of heaven with power and all the members of the kingdom would be gathered together. After the judgment they would inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world (Mt. 25:31-46).

There are other teachings supporting the idea of a future kingdom. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come". He said, "Not everyone shall enter the kingdom" (Mt. 7:21). In the description of the judgment the righteous inherit the kingdom. Closely connected with these sayings are those of the future coming of Jesus.
Jesus spoke of a future coming. The first mention of it in the Synoptic Gospels was in Matthew 10:23 where Jesus predicted His coming before the disciples should visit all the cities of Israel. After Peter's confession all three of the Synoptic Gospels recorded a prediction of Jesus death and resurrection. This was followed by the prophecy that He would return to test the faithfulness of the disciples during the lifetime of some of those to whom He was speaking. (Mt.16:27,28; Mk.8:38-9:1; Lk.9:26,27). His coming was to follow the destruction of Jerusalem, according to Matthew, immediately. (Mt. 24:29,30). The high priest was told that from the very time of speaking he should see Christ coming on the clouds of heaven. The general impression from all these passages was that Jesus would return sometime in the near future.

The idea of a future day of judgment is also reflected in the Gospels. This was supposed to follow the second coming. Matthew connected various sayings with the judgment which the other gospels did not. It was the only gospel to preserve the parable of judgment (Mt.25:31-46).

In the gospel of John the judgment was proceeding at the present time. "Now is the judgment of this world" (Jn.12:31), "for judgment came I into this world" (Jn.9:39). The power of truth compelled decision. "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into this world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil." (Jn.3:19). Men must be divided into those who accept and those who reject light.

Jesus also spoke of a future judging as well as a present one. The continuous judging would finally culminate in a final crisis - in a future judgment. Then men would receive their just reward or penalty according to their deeds. Jesus did not say much about punishment. He thought of it as the logical result of wrong doing. The worst punishment was unfitness for membership in the Kingdom of God.

Mark 13 and Matthew 24 preserve Jesus' eschatological teachings. They are his answer to the questioning of the disciples concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the future coming, and the end of the world.

The terminology of the Gospels was like that of the apocalyptic. Jesus did use the vocabulary current among the people with whom he worked. He spoke of Hell prepared for Satan and his followers, of wealth, as the mammon of unrighteousness, of the approaching redemption, and of thrones in heaven for his followers.

Shailer Mathews summarizes the similarities between apocalyptic messianism and the teachings of Jesus as reflected in the Gospels.

1. There were two ages, one present, one future.
2. The present was evil and under the control of Satan.

Part of Jesus' mission was to destroy the demoniacal kingdom and
bring its members to the fires of hell. Throughout the Gospels Jesus was quoted as referring to Satan as the prince of the world.

3. The Kingdom of God was to come in the future. Repentance was the preparation for membership. The kingdom was a gift from God coming not as a result of social evolution but suddenly. It had been prepared before the foundations of the world. The basis of this was in Matthew 25:31-34.

4. The judgment was present in His teachings. The Son of man would appear in the clouds (Mt. 14:61, 62) to give rewards and punishments. The disciples would sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. (Mt. 19:28).

5. The resurrection was taught as an element of the complete transformation of the individual when evil reached its height and the new messianic age should begin (Mt. 12:18-27). Jesus recognized the coming of Elijah (Mt. 9:11) in John the Baptist.

Thus of the seven fundamental elements of pharisaic messianism five were part of Jesus' teaching. He recognized Himself as the Messiah so the only one He repudiated was the restriction of membership in the Kingdom of Jews.

But Jesus broke utterly with Pharisaism as a system. Eschatological messianism was the property of the Pharisees and Essenes. He had much in common with pharisaic beliefs and although He denounced their practices, He did not repudiate the law. (Mt. 23:2, 3). At first they did not think that Jesus differed from them and they were willing to accept Him, but as He began His positive instruction to His disciples, their suspicions were aroused. Their hostility was the result of definite acts by Jesus. He did not follow their ritual and ceremonial and He modified their messianic conceptions which He had inherited.

There were four things which were the special mark of a Pharisee, (1) elaborate observance of the Sabbath, (2) scrupulous paying of tithes, (3) ceremonial purity, and (4) adherence to the oral law. It was on these that Jesus made His attack. He was a friend of the masses and did not keep Himself apart. He repudiated their teaching concerning the Sabbath (Mt. 12:3-8). He declared nothing a man could eat would defile him (Mt. 15:11). He said that the Pharisees were making the word of God of no avail through their tradition (Mt 15:6). And He censured tithing in place of morality and religion.

Jesus' teachings about God was even more revolutionary. He was not merely a judge and king of the Jews alone. Although Jesus did not give any precise definition, He spoke by analogy. He described His moral character and His attitude toward men. God was like a Father. Jesus tried to make people see the fatherliness of God rather than His severity and bald justice. This modified His conception of the Messiahship. He could not insist on the judgment but He pictured the welcome of the penitent (Lk 15:11-32), the joy over finding that which was lost (Mt. 18:12-14). He did not emphasize the destruction of enemies, but He urged winning them through love and self-sacrifice.
He rejected the current conception of the Christ as the Son of David. He questioned the Pharisees, "How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying

"The Lord said unto my Lord, 
Sit thou on my right hand, 
Till I put thine enemies underneath thy feet?"

If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son?" (Mt. 22:43-45). Jesus implied that the Messiah would be greater than David. He would not gain glory because of His royal descent but from Himself and His work.

He repudiated the idea of a strictly Jewish kingdom. Many would come from the east and west to sit down with Abraham (Mt. 8:11,12). The Jews might be cast out and would be if they were not worthy. The apostles were commanded to go to all nations. The conditions of entrance were not based on obeying the law of Moses alone. The members were the pure in heart, the peace-makers, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the meek (Mt. 5:3-9). The kingdom was less fundamental than the quality of life admitting to membership.

The belief in the necessity of Christ's suffering was even more revolutionary. Such a belief in connection with the Messiah was lacking in Jewish thought. The source of the belief was twofold. The fate of the prophets and Jesus's own experience showed the fatality of hostility by the religious leaders of His People. Scriptural passages like Isaiah 53, the description of the "suffering servant", made Him believe that suffering was part of His work. The conviction of His coming death made Him wish to keep silent about the Messiahship. People could not understand the new meaning. Death was defeat even to the disciples. He could not make them believe in His suffering.

This would help to make plain Jesus' references to the resurrection. He believed that because He was the Christ He would have power to accomplish results even after death. The resurrection of the righteous was part of the pharisaic belief in the kingdom. Jesus believed that He would keep right on with His work and that instead of destroying His influence the resurrection would give Him supreme power. This idea was original with Jesus. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself" (Jn. 12:32).

Thus there were two elements in the teachings of Jesus concerning the kingdom and the Messiahship. One saw the kingdom as present and evolving, the other as future. The first idea was unique in Jewish history, the second came from the apocalyptic beliefs.

How can these different teachings be reconciled? Scholars have offered various solutions. Some emphasize one set of teachings and ignore everything which does not agree with the theory.
they wish to prove. One group think that Jesus expected a political triumph which would result in His being proclaimed King of the Jews. Others think that He meant to establish a new social order, a sort of brotherhood which should live according to the laws which He laid down for the kingdom. Some say that He never had any idea of a present kingdom. He came to proclaim a future kingdom of God and to prepare men to become members. They picture Jesus as a product of His own time, saturated with apocalyptical ideas of a miraculous coming.

McGiffert combines the present and the future. He believes that Jesus had faith in a present kingdom and also in a future one. This would be in a new and changed environment at the end of the present world. His conception of the kingdom was due to Jewish influences and to His own experiences. His conviction of the sonship of men made belief in immortality inevitable. The realization of His own sonship would not be complete until the consummation of the Messianic kingdom. As He preached He discovered that some would not repent and would not be fit to enter the kingdom. When He saw that He would have to die before the nation could be won He still believed that He would return to announce the coming Messianic kingdom. Otherwise He would have to give up faith in His Messiahship.

Shailer Mathews gives a somewhat different interpretation. He thinks the eschatological kingdom was the more fundamental in Jesus' thought. It was the background of His entire earthly ministry. The Messiahship was divided into two periods. In the first He was engaged in prophetic work. In the second He would be the Messianic judge and king in a kingdom prepared by God which would come miraculously in the future.

There have been various attempts to remove or explain the eschatological elements. It is claimed by some that they were the apostolic hopes read back into the teachings of Jesus. They treat the social and religious elements as the norm. They identify the kingdom with the Church as a growing institution. The kingdom was social not apocalyptical.

Some believe that Jesus used the current vocabulary to get in touch with the people of His day, but that He put new meaning into the terms. We have no record that He ever gave different definitions or corrected the impressions of His disciples. It would not be likely that the disciples would mistake all His meanings. They could not have overlooked corrections.

Others claim that Matthew (25:31-46) was an apocalypse of early Christian origin incorporated into the Gospels and that the other eschatological elements in Mark 13 did not come from Jesus. This would not explain Mt. 16: 27 f; 25:29, 64; 10:23; 19:28.

Some say that the expressions of judgment, i.e., the apocalyptical sayings, were only figurative. They were prophecies of
what was to befall the Jewish nation. "As ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven" would refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. Every great crisis would be a judgment of God on the individual or on the nation.

If Jesus talked of a present and future kingdom, He meant it. The two ideas do not need to be inconsistent. He came to show men a way of living and to show them God in His true nature. By making God the Father, He made all men brothers. The love which He taught men to have for God would be expressed in their relations to each other. Those who were willing to live by the light which He had given them were members of the Kingdom of God which He as Messiah had come to proclaim. The kingdom was at hand for any who wanted to accept the responsibility of membership. It was present because some had already accepted it. But the kingdom would not be complete until all men had accepted its teachings and were willing to join. Jesus looked far ahead and saw a time when all men would be so filled with His spirit that the kingdom would come and God's will be done on earth. His implicit faith in God made such a hope possible.

Confusion concerning the second coming is due to the misunderstanding of the disciples. They confused His coming with the end of the world, and the fall of Jerusalem. This is apparent in the great eschatological discourse. Most of the description of the last days refers to the end of the Jewish kingdom and the destruction of their great city. Like the prophets, Jesus could foresee the trend of political affairs and He knew that the end would come soon. Mark 13:30 and 32 are not incompatible. It would be perfectly possible to predict within a generation the fall of Israel but only God could know the exact day and hour.

What did Jesus mean when He said that the Son of Man would come in the clouds with great glory and honor? (These sayings cannot be ignored. They are not restricted to one section of the Gospels but are scattered throughout different portions covering all parts of Jesus's ministry.) The disciples could not have made so many mistakes nor would they intentionally quote Jewish Apocalypses as the words of Jesus.

Various attempts have been made to solve the problem. Some believe that Jesus did expect to return, that He was a product of His own age and limited in knowledge. He accepted the apocalyptic idea of a miraculous coming of the kingdom. The disciples taught it and the Gospel writers believed that Jesus shared it.

The people of Jesus' time expected the coming of the Messiah to be attended by strange physical phenomena and supernatural happenings. Jesus did not fulfill any of these ideas so every time He spoke of any great crisis coming in the future, He was understood to refer to the apocalyptic hope. Some scholars hold that Jesus was misunderstood and that the writers of the Gospels put in the apocalyptic element.
Another group try to explain the coming in a spiritual sense, the various "comings" coinciding with crises in the advance of His kingdom. The Son of Man coming in His kingdom meant the coming of God's kingdom with power. After the destruction of Jerusalem the Gospel advanced to a great extent and thus it was a spiritual coming of Jesus. Then He was condemned to die, He had more power and glory than ever before.

Other results have been obtained by combining parts of these three theories. One way was to say that Jesus believed in an apocalyptic event but that He did not mean that it would come during that generation. He meant race or nation and suddenly rather than immediately. There was no ground for such a position, however. Other scholars say that the eschatological discourse was a composite of genuine sayings of Jesus mixed in with a Christian adaptation of a Jewish apocalypse.

Those who take such sayings literally believe that Jesus expected to come back in a miraculous fashion directly after the fall of Jerusalem. Similar passages place the coming at other times within the generation before the disciples had gone thru all the cities of Israel (Mt. 10:23) or immediately after His death (Mt. 28:64). Those who believe the disciples made a mistake in the time continue to predict when He will return.

The fact that Jesus expressed His faith in the words of the apocalyptic literature is not strange. It was a language and style with which His disciples and followers were familiar. He knew that he had to die but He also knew that He would continue His work with His disciples. His spirit could not die. So He told them in words which they could understand that He was coming back. It is necessary to go back of the words and the form to the meaning underneath. Men have failed to appreciate the beauty and picturesqueness of the language which Jesus used to suggest those ideas which today are difficult to grasp. He stated the truth which He wanted to teach in a way the men of His day could remember. If He had not, it would have been lost and His disciples would not have been prepared for the wonderful experiences they had in the spiritual return of their master.

To summarize - altho there were apocalyptic elements in the teachings of Jesus, the predominant emphasis was on the ethical, social and spiritual. The central and determining element in His message was His thought of God as Father. His attitude toward the world was not pessimistic as was the apocalyptic's. He recognized evil and its source but He knew the triumphant power of goodness. Again, the kingdom was not limited to the Jews. It included the fellowship of all men of good will. The kingdom was the rule of God not only in the future, but also in the present among those who lived as His children. This was the beginning but in the future goodness would finally triumph over evil. Jesus did not explain all of the kingdom of God. Only a fragment of His words have been preserved. Pedagogical considerations demanded that the people be taught as nearly as possible in terms of current
thought, their spiritual and ethical value would be perceived with increasing clearness and they could then be divested of their contemporaneous dress.

VII ETHICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

There is a gap between the ethics of the Old Testament and the New Testament which is bridged by the teachings of the apocrypha and the apocryptics. Charles has made a study of the development of the ideas regarding forgiveness. It was considered perfectly all right for a man to hate his enemy. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth was divine law.

"With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful
With the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure.
And with the perverse Thou wilt show Thyself forward." (Ps. 18:25).

This taught that God would treat men according to their acts and thus was a standard for men to follow.

Proverbs and Job went a little farther and made it wrong to recumpense evil or to curse an enemy. There were a few passages where the command was given to help an enemy in distress. Proverbs gave as the reason for helping an enemy, that by helping him a coal of fire would be heaped on his head. The highest point was reached in Leviticus 19:17,18 - "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. Thou shalt not take vengeance or bear grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love they neighbor as Thyself".

There were other teachings in the Old Testament which showed an unforgiving temper was most common. A man prayed to Jehovah to give him strength to pay back his enemies. David bade Solomon take revenge on Joab and Shimei by killing them. Later the idea of personal revenge was changed. God would avenge their enemies and the Jews prayed vehemently to Him to do it. Some of the Psalms, especially those against Babylon, showed the deepest hatred. Thus a man could find sanction in the scriptures for giving free rein to his worst emotions.

The teaching in the New Testament was very different. "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. --- For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Mt. 6:12,14,15).

"Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that despitefully use you. --- And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. --- And ye shall be sons of
the Most High: for He is kind toward the unthankful and evil" (Lk. 6:27,28,31,35).

"How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times? Jesus saith unto him: 'I say not unto thee until seven times; but until seventy times seven.'" (Mt.18:21,22).

How can the contrast between them be accounted for? The study of the apocalyptic and apocryphal books has showed that there was a steady development in the two centuries before Christ. Sirach contained some teaching on the subject:

"Can cherisheth anger against another
And doth he seek healing from God?
On a man like himself he hath no mercy,
And doth he make supplication for his own sins?"
(Sir. 18:3-5).

"He that taketh vengeance shall find vengeance from the Lord, And his sins He will assuredly keep in remembrance. Forgive thy neighbor the injury done unto thee, And when thou prayest thy sins will be forgiven. — Remember thy last end and cease from enmity, And be not wroth with thy neighbor." (Sir. 18:1,2,6,7).

It is implied that forgiveness is better in itself than vengeance. Thus the development of Jewish thought was advancing along the highest lines in the Old Testament.

The greatest advance was in the ethical teaching in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. "Love ye one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not grudge: and if he confess and repent, forgive him. But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him, lest catching the poison from thee he take to swearing, and so thou sin doubly. And though he deny it and yet have a sense of shame when reproved give over reproving him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee. But if he be shameless and persist in his wrong doing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave to God the avenging". (Test. Gad. 6:3,4,3,7).

This was closely parallell in thought to Jesus's teaching (Lk 17:3 and Mt. 18:15,35) and probably He was familiar with it. The meaning of forgiveness was the restoring of the offender into communion with the one whom he had offended. It was attaining the right attitude, the one which God took toward His children.

This teaching came from Galilee and showed that the highest teaching in the Old Testament had been developed and made clear. Jesus raised it to a still higher plane. He gave two reasons for forgiveness. First, because that was God's attitude toward men, and secondly, because man must have the same spirit if he was to be God's son. Thus Jesus made the duty of forgiveness one of the ideals toward which His followers should work.
There was high ethical teaching concerning care for the poor. "If son, deprive not the poor of his living, and make not the needy eyes to wait long. Make not a hungry soul sorrowful.--And defer not to give to him in need. Reject not a suppliant in his affliction; and turn not away thy face from a poor man.---Be as a father to the fatherless, and instead of a husband unto their mother: so shalt thou be as a son of the Most High. (Sir. 4:1-10).

"Blessed is he who judges a judgment justly to the widow, and orphan and helps everyone that is wronged, clothing the naked with garments and to the hungry giving bread." (II En. 42:7-9).

A close parallel to Sirach is found in Matthew 5:42 "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." In the description of the judgment (Mt. 25:31-46) where the righteous were those who had fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, taken in the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited those in prison Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." They were not only blessed and sons of God but they had been of service to the King Himself. They were ready to become members of the kingdom.

Concerning riches Sirach 4:19 says, "There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching, and this is the portion of his reward: when he saith, I have found rest, and now will I eat of my goods yet he knoweth not what time shall pass, and he shall leave them to others, and die." Jesus put a similar teaching into the parable of the Rich Fool (Lk. 12:20). "Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" But Jesus lifts his lesson up to a higher plane. He taught that real treasure was richness toward God. "Seek ye first his kingdom and these things shall be added unto you." (Lk. 12:31).

The Secrets of Enoch contained teachings similar to those of Jesus. En. 13:7 said, "Blessed is he who executes a just judgment." Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you." (Mt. 7:1, 2). Jesus believed that before one man could judge another justly, he must first remove all blemishes from himself.

"Blessed is he who turns back from the changeable path and walks along the straight path." (II En. 42:10). Jesus went further and told the reason for so doing. "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." (Mt. 7:13, 14).

Jesus expanded into the parable of the sower "Blessed is he who sows the seeds of righteousness for he shall reap sevenfold." (II En. 42:11).

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"Blessed is he who goes and brings together in peace, (II En. 52:11) became "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God." (Mt. 5:9).

The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs had some parallels also to the Sermon on the Mount. A suggestion of Jesus' two great commandments is found in several of the Testaments. "Love the Lord and your neighbor". (Test. Iss. 5:2). "Love the Lord through all your life, and one another with a true heart". (T. Dan. 5:3). Jesus made the teaching much more emphatic. "Hear, O, Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and with all they strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." (Mk 12:29-31). The ideal of service was an expression of the inward ideal of love. It was love in action.

Thus the ethical teaching of Jesus was a continuation of the ethical development of the Hebrews as expressed in their literature. There was no gap between the old and the new law. Jesus did not teach any new law, but He picked out the best of the older teachings and gave them a new emphasis. His originality consisted in discerning what was truly significant and giving it prominence. He separated the true from the false. To summarize his contributions:--

1. He gave unity to the spiritual life in the conception of love as the fulfilling of all righteousness. The obligation of universal love was a contribution to ethics.
2. He made the moral law the will of a personal Father.
3. He opened a whole new realm of morality in the so-called passive virtues of the bestitudes.
4. He brought a new spirit into morality, a spirit of free and joyful obedience.
5. He gave no doctrines which subsequent growth of human knowledge has had to discount.
6. His greatest contribution was Himself. No personality could be compared to His.
7. He had the power to make His moral teachings effective.

CONCLUSIONS.

The apocalyptic and apocryphal writings did not influence the teachings of Jesus directly. That He was familiar with it is apparent from His use of it in the Gospel records. He used the apocalyptic vocabulary freely because it was familiar to the people with whom he worked. He took the apocalyptic idea of the kingdom, repudiated the supernatural elements, and spiritualized it. He
recognized Himself as the Messiah but not the apocalyptic being who was an angelic king. He took the prophetic idea of a suffering Messiah. He brought God close to men. He went far beyond the apocalyptic doctrines.

He used the ethical teachings of the apocrypha and apocalyp- tics as a foundation for His own teaching. But He went beyond even the most advanced ideas of His time. If it had not been for these teachings, He would probably have been unable to go so far. Its opposition to Pharisaic legalism prepared the way for His broad interpretation of the Mosaic law. They prepared the way and made possible the greatest teaching of all time.
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