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The kingdom of God in Old Testament thought

S E N I O R T H E S I S

Boston University School of Theology

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD

in

OLD TESTAMENT THOUGHT

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by
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to
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PREFACE

The Kingdom of God is such an old and supposedly well settled subject that the theological student who uses it for a senior thesis may be charged with intellectual sterility. Its outlines bound the whole field of religious thought, in both its historical and theoretical aspects, thus inviting the efforts of one who would hide his own poverty amid the manifold convolutions of an all-embracing subject.

But the eternal recurrence of this subject testifies primarily to its importance, only incidentally to its old familiarity; moreover it is never settles except as the individual mind thinks through it to a personal conclusion, and each generation has to construct its own particular adaptation of the ancient theological formula. When a young man goes out to preach the Gospel of Christ he begins to recruit citizens for God's Kingdom, and woe to his flock if

he has no clear image of that kingdom. Outside of the person and office of Christ the theological student can find no more important subject.

Today we face special problems. A multitude of inventions and new discoveries has changed the face of nature and given man a vast new world to conquer; the spirit of man is almost smothered with the things of man. Only the strongest assertion of God's primacy in His world will pull us out of a hopeless materialism. Also, a great physical and spiritual conflict has gathered its forces in the past generation, and during the past four years they have met in an epochal battle out of which chagrined and bleeding mankind comes forth with mind and spirit awake, with lips that demand and question. Therefore the Christian minister must meet the new age with a definite teaching on the Kingdom of God.

It has been my hope that the preparation for this thesis would serve to introduce me to the whole subject and give me a firm grasp on the historical beginnings of human thought concerning the Kingdom of God. Therefore the present thesis will look only incidentally at the general subject in order to concentrate intelligently upon one section of the whole field, that

is: "The Kingdom of God in Old Testament Thought".

I

Modern Problems in Relation to Old Testament Teaching

1. Teachings of Jesus.

It is a naive error for anyone to suppose that the followers of Jesus have any uniform or universally accepted conception of the Kingdom of God. Together we pray for it: together we work for it. But we disagree as to its nature, its place, its method of becoming and continuing. We agree only in refering to the teachings of Jesus as our authority.

But Jesus did not write a detailed description of his Father's Kingdom. He spoke of it often. He took it for granted. He expected it to come soon. He prepared for extensive missionary activity before its coming. He said it was very close, that it was even then present. He also said it was not of this world. Evidently the phrase "Kingdom of God" had many meanings in Jesus' time just as it does now. Jesus took this current religious term and filled it with the highest meaning it could carry. It was the shibboleth of his campaign, the center of his teaching.

But it was not wholly new. If we would understand Jesus' use of that term we must go back into the religious history of the Jewish people, not only into the Old Testament canon but also into that vast literature of the period between the Testaments. Jesus put a spiritual interpretation upon it; He gave it vitality and made of it a flaming ideal that has been the refining aspiration of the Christian civilization. But the roots of the thing sink far down into Jewish history. It is these we would examine if we would understand Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom.

2. The Teachings of the Church.

Not only do individuals have different conceptions of the Kingdom of God, but we meet the same diversity intensified in church polity and even in doctrine. Some say the Kingdom has reality only in Heaven. Others say it is purely spiritual but already exists wherever any man is obeying the will of God. Still others say it can be brought to reality only on earth; and of these, one party will maintain that it is being gradually realized while another affirms that only a catastrophic intervention of heavenly powers can establish it. Again certain bodies of the Christian Church hold that the Church is in reality the Kingdom

of God on earth in visible form, but they are combatted by large groups who claim such high honors only for the ideal church. Now are all these differences only mistaken interpretations of one clear original conception? Or, does our phrase,"Kingdom of God", gather up a multitude of ideals in religious thought and thus make room for several different points of emphasis in the same general subject? To settle this most important alternative we can only start on a search through religious history looking for that original, pure, single and sun-clear definition of the Kingdom of God. We have failed to find it in the Christian circles of to-day. Moreover, we can go on back, century after century, through church history only to find the same manifold meanings in every age, and even discover Jesus did not use the term in any circumscribed and unmistakable sense. We, therefore, have ample reason for carrying this whole church question back into the Old Testament to see if the present variations in Christian teaching on the Kingdom find an original harmony there, or if not a harmony, then a justification for each.

3. The Claims of Social Service.

In recent years a new or renewed emphasis has

been placed on the social phases of man's life, resulting in the social service movement and the so-called "Social Gospel". Economic maladjustment was the immediate cause of this movement but its driving power rested in the Christian conception of brotherhood and the Christian recognition of man's obligation to create a God-like Kingdom in the material world. The whole world of thought and history has been combed to secure theoretical foundations and compel intellectual assent to this movement. In this effort much stress is laid on the nature of the early Christian churches and the teachings of Jesus concerning the Kingdom; it is especially significant that all such studies are carried back into a minute examination of the social theories that dominated early Hebrew history. Land ownership is studied. Model laws on wage systems and and payments are discovered there. The rest days and the feast days, and the fallow years are interpreted as part of an advanced system of social cooperation. In total, Hebrew religion is viewed as a system of social justice.

We have no present concern in criticising these socialistic interpretations but only in pointing out that this ephohal movement in our time rests

its case very largely upon the same social and religious facts covered by the subject of this paper. That which is frequently called the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament is referred to by social writers as the social ideal of the Hebrews. For this reason a study of the Kingdom of God in Old Testament thought loses any academic character the subject might formerly have possessed and becomes almost a burning issue of to-day. At all events, no one can deal intelligently with modern social issues until he has developed a clear understanding of the social and religious aspirations that in Israel were welded into a popular belief in the Kingdom of God.

4; Demands made by the War of the Nations.

As already implied in the preface, this war now closing has shaken the whole world from its ancient moorings and men are searching for a social hope. Confidence in the old system of things is destroyed. Autonomous and selfish nationalism can no longer be the object of intelligent Christian patriotism. Those social institutions which have contributed to the unspeakable catastrophe can no longer be the objects of our love. We may venerate their history and admire the valorous accomplishments of their youth, but to

put faith in their future would be but the blindness of madmen.

Humanity will demand something to cling to. And here opens up an opportunity to preach the Gospel of God's Kingdom with a power and persuasion that the Christian minister has never before known. The world will not reform on the basis of communistic materialism if men retain their vision of a spiritual kingdom. The League of Nations can become the centralizing and hope-giving organized body of mankind if we seize the opportunity to give it a spiritual basis in the minds of men; and on no other condition can it attain its purpose. Our hope must be in God and in his Kingdom. Like the prophets of Israel, in the midst of national degeedation and foreign invasion, we will raise our people out of confusion and hopelessness only by holding before them the eternal possibility of a God-like world.

So the whole subject of the Kingdom of God becomes overpowering in its importance for our day; and we are forced to carry our study right down to the beginning of the idea in history, that the edifice we raise before the people may be perfect in plan. and sound in structure.

Thus from many directions the tides of the time rush down into a focus that once again searches the mind and the heart of ancient Israel.

II

The Kingdom of God as Seen in Various Periods of Israel's History.

1. Introduction.

We have a common tendency to speak of the "historical development" of a great ideal such as the Kingdom of God. It is assumed that an idea has a development throughout the centuries much as a plant has a growth during the summer season. Granting that there is some truth in this yet I am not convinced that it is the whole truth. That can easily be true of some academic subjects, around which a literature gradually develops. And it is manifestly true of institutions. But the great catholic concepts of the human mind are like the sap of a tree that perennially wells up into life. The fundamental feelings and heart thoughts of humanity partake of that sameness which exists in the mental and physical nature of all mankind; only each age and people may give a peculiar emphasis to that thought. For these reasons I prefer to study the Kingdom of God as seen in various periods

of Israel's history rather than attempt to force upon the subject an unnatural historical outline.

The Kingdom of God has a number of associate ideas - innumerable indeed. But to further our analysis it is well to say that the Kingdom of God will often be imaged under the form of "The New Age", "Redemption of Israel","Judgment", and the "Messianic Hope".* This is a family of topics, each one of which can bear its particular witness for the broader subject, the Kingdom of God. All through the Old Testament we will find varied references to the Kingdom of God. The above phrases will be used, allusions will abound, and then the Kingdom idea may be most clearly witnessed when it is merely taken for granted.

With the two above considerations in mind as an introduction we can now look into the outstanding periods of Israel's history.

2. The Kingdom Sought by the Patriarchs.

The Kingdom of God idea is latent in that first call to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country - - - into a land that I will show thee - - - and I will bless thee - - - and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3). Note that in each phrase or sentence quoted above, some element

* Knudson - Analysis of Messianic Hope in his "Theology of the Old Testament".

of the Kingdom appears. Abram is commanded to break all home ties in getting out of his present condition of life; the proper place for him is elsewhere and that place is worth an unheard-of sacrifice. But this new country is to be specially designated by Yahweh; the place is to have the stamp of God's approval. In the next place, Abram is promised a blessing that for him amounts to a"new age" or personal"redemption". But the whole world is claimed for Yahweh in the promise that the new nation Abram is to establish is destined to be a source of great good to all peoples. Now, whether Abram existed or not, and whether this was written late or early in Israel's history, we have here the fundamental conception Israel held concerning that Patriarchial age. Then, allowing for a large element of materialism and selfishness in the motives back of these words, we still must grant that they are surcharged with a religious impulse that finds its highest good in a God-like society.

In other places the Kingdom idea is much more explicit. The long story of Abram, Isaac and Jacob always returns to its one central thought - "the Promised Land". When Moses appears on the scene, the promise of a land "flowing with milk and honey" is re-

iterated and a whole people becomes a theocracy and starts on its long journey to God's country. Though a large part of these stories of the Patriarchs may be a reflection of later centuries upon this period, yet we cannot doubt that the account as written embodies a historical framework that is genuine. The objective of the Hebrew migrations was a land of pure delight. This aspiration for an ideal world is so constant in the Patriarchal period that we regard it as the principal fact of that time. Though limited in scope and couched in material forms, we have here a religious ideal that in most respects qualifies as the Kingdom of God.

Thus, it seems clear that the rise of the Hebrew nation resulted from a quest for the Kingdom of God.

3. Prosperous Israel and the Kingdom.

We have ~~here~~ few definite references to God's Kingdom in the period of the United Monarchy in Israel. It would appear that little was left for the people to desire. The promised land was attained; the borders of the nation were pushed out; their king held a position of equality if not of supremacy among the rulers of the East. Apparently the Kingdom as first conceived

of had already been attained. Then began a long period in which religious minds discovered the delusion of a material kingdom. There was a constant warfare against heathen religions. Industrial and political injustices began to appear, calling forth the anathemas of religious leaders. It may be that in this time individuals conceived that faith and spiritual communion that always looks forward to the Divine appearing; and if we may credit some of the Psalms with authorship in this period we have a clear seeking after the spiritual world; but whether the life of the people was absorbed in other interests or simply because we lack historical connectives, scant material on the Kingdom during the period of Israel's Prosperity has come down to us.

Our one great source of information is the Prophets.

4. Amos and Hosea.

When Amos says - "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquties" (Amos 3:2) he opens a window through which we see that this stern prophet thought of his people as favored children of God under obligation to conform to God's will. Likewise,

when Hosea says, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. - - - I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them." (Hosea 11:1,3) we find that same conception in the mind of the prophet. To each of these prophets the fellowship of humankind with God seems so natural and possible that they are moved to the most intense feelings of pity and indignation because the people have departed from the way of their God.

Moreover, they are so confident that the Kingdom of God is the only possible state of continuous organized life on the earth that they say destruction awaits those who will not conform to God. The Kingdom is so inevitable that it will come in spite of all opposition. The people have also been expecting God to come, popularly speaking of that time as the Day of Yahweh. Yes, the Prophets say, that day is coming, but it will be a day of doom. Evidently this Kingdom is not merely material, but spiritual, at least righteous. Amos cries out " Wherefore would ye have the Day of Yahweh? It is darkness and not light."(Amos 5:18), and Hosea uses the following mild but significant words:"It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help." (Hosea

13:9).

But each of these prophets had hopes for the future. The doom was not to be complete. A remnant would be saved. And here appears their great faith in God and the absolute certainity of God-likeness on the earth. Amos says of the land of David, "Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, andthe trader of grapes him that seweth the seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine and all the hills shall melt." (Amos 9:13). And Hosea pens a final song of divine love in the words - I will heal their bachsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." (Hosea 14:4-5).

In summary, we find in Amos and Hosea that the people expected their God to appear among them in the not-distant future. We see that the prophets looked upon the people as part of a potentially divine society, but subject to punishment for not meeting the conditions of that society. Also, they expected God to come in power - that is, the Kingdom was to be an irresistible force that would destroy every opposing object. Again, they had faith that a remnant

would be found who could fulfill the conditions and become citizens in an ideal world. But this Kingdom of God was to be an earthly kingdom. Its only approach toward a heavenly Kingdom was its righteousnass, which apparently was its primary characteristic.

5. Isaiah.

The prophet Isaiah reveals toward the Kingdom of God the same attitude that we found in Amos and Hosea

His thinking evidently begins with the idea that Yahweh and his people have peculiarly sacred bonds of union. There seems to be something in the very nature of religion, in the primary conception of God, that decrees this personal bond of affection and community of purpose. In Isaiah 3:15 we read "what mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? saith the Lord, Yahweh of hosts;" and this is only one of many passages that reveal how Isaiah took for granted that God is the natural ruler and protector of man-kind. He thus implies the existence of a Kingdom of God among men. But Isaiah is, if possible, even more severe than Amos in his pronouncement of doom upon the wicked in the Day of Yahweh. The almost constant refrain of chapter two is: "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall

shall be brought low; and Yahweh alone shall be exalted in that day - - , when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth." Evidently any part of that Kingdom can be sacrificed except its righteousness. On the other hand, Isaiah is equally certain, with Amos and Hosea, that a day of redemption is coming in which the "remnant" will enjoy a new age of prosperity. This is expressed in chapter 11:11-16.

However, in some respects Isaiah transcends the thought of Amos and Hosea concerning the Kingdom. His emphasis on universalism in worship and in the extent of Yahweh's Kingdom is especially noticable. Amos had raised the question of Israel really meant any more to Yahweh than other peoples round about. Isaiah boldly exclaims in 2:2-4 " - - - many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. - - " Again in 11:9 we read, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea." Of course, these two passages, especially the first

one, imply that Yahweh is to conquer all the world; Jerusalem is to be the religious center of the world. Therefore they are subject to the accusation of national egoism. Nevertheless, we are justified in interpreting them as a world-wide extension of the Kingdom idea. This is only another expression of the promise spoken to Abram "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Isaiah has another distinct addition to the Kingdom idea. He has a few Messianic references. There is the famous passage in 11:1-5 "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. - - - And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins." Then this Coming One is closely connected with that promise of a universal world harmony among all creatures, pictured in 11:6-9. This distinct Messianic hope cannot be separated from the coming of that harmonious God-like Kingdom. It differs from the other promise of a New Age only in that a Holy One who bears the spirit of Yahweh is to bring it. The same evidence is furnished by that other outstanding Messianic utterance of chapter 9:1-7 which is centered in the words "For unto us

a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Councellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

One other new element should be noted concerning Isaiah. He introduces us to the subject of personal communion with God. Religion has become personal with him. He knows what it is to listen to the still small voice and gather up the assurance God has placed within the soul of man. "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thy heart be faint." (&:$). "I will wait for Yahweh, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him."(8:17). "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. And ye would not."(30:15). In the religious mind here expressed there is latent that idea of the Kingdom which defines it as spiritual, a state of mind, a matter of the individual heart. It has further importance in the fact that Isaiah steps from this ground up to the place where he can say - "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." (7:9). With this statement Isaiah's doctrine of faith has practically issued into the concept of the Church

as a brotherhood of believers. This of course opens up another view - that of the Church as the visible Kingdom.

6. Jeremiah. [illegible]ah.

Jeremiah almost parallels Isaiah in his thought on the Kingdom. It is probably due to the peculiar conditions under which Jeremiah worked that he has given no striking expression of a feeling of universalism such as comes from Isaiah. But he advances beyond Isaiah in his expression of the inwardness of religion.

Jeremiah stresses the holy ideal relationship that should normally exist between Yahweh and Israel. Like Hosea he thinks all of the sins of the people grow out of their one great sin - their rebellion against Yahweh. Their only true good is in union with Yahweh's purpose for them. "Thus saith Yahweh, I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espuosals: - - - Israel was holiness unto Yahweh, the first fruits of his increase." (Jer. 2:2b -3). In stronger language he voices the same thought " - - they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (2:13). The one

great passage in which Jeremiah gives utterance to his belief in the naturalness of this Godly fellowahip which Israel has so foolishly broken, is to be found in chapter eight, verse seven, - "Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed time; and the turtle-dove and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the law of Yahweh." Jeremiah's love for that ideal relationship is to be measured by his intense sorrow, that constant outpouring of lamentations for the hurt of his people.

We miss in Jeremiah those long utterances of doom against the people. Apparently he is not thinking of a future day when Yahweh will visit the people and by the breath of his righteousness destroy all the wicked that stand in the way of theKingdom. Jeremiah seems to be living in the midst of that very doom. It is a present reality. He wails over the lost opportunities and endeavors to comfort his stricken people; his one ray of hope is on a new covenant.

Jeremiah, therefore, does prophecy concerning a new age. But the material conceptions, those hopes for a restored Israel triumphant over the rest of the world, have withered. His prophecy of the new age grows out of a faith akin to that which inspir-

ed Abram, the father of the nation; but it is a spiritualized faith. Jeremiah is commonly spoken of as the man who discovered the soul. Like Isaiah, he has lived a life of faith, has felt the workings of his own spirit, but unlike Isaiah, he has proceeded to analyze that spirit and discover the problems of his own soul. Therefore Jeremiah demands a radical change of life on the part of the people before the New Age can come in. The only hope he can discover lies in the promise that God will grant to them a new heart. So, he looks forward to a new age, a glorious Kingdom, saying in 13:31-34, "Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah - - I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be my people."

Jeremiah is not entirely lacking in Messianic hopes. It is probably only an incidental part of his hope in a new age with a new covenant, but it is worth noting because it points toward one phase of the Kingdom idea. In 23:5-6, he says, "Behold the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal

wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. - - - he shall be called Yahweh our righteousness."

7. Ezekiel.

How largely the prophecy of Ezekiel centers in fundamental questions of the Kingdom can be seen from a general outline of his book. Chapters one to twenty-four conveniently come under the topic "The Sin of Israel and its Punishment." This is the usual demand that men live according to the law of God. C Chapters thirty-three to thirty-nine dwell largely on "The Restoration of Israel", and thus we see the promise of a new age being introduced. In chapters fourty to fourty-eight we are given Ezekiel's "Vision of the RestoredCity", a marvelous descriptionof the City of God wherein lives the restored humanity with a perfect temple and a perfect law. It is written in language that draws one's mind away from earth and compels it to wander in transcendental realms.

Ezekiel puts the demand for Yahweh's righteousness so strongly that in speaking of the restoration he gives the words of Yahweh saying " I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name." (36:22). Thus it was not pity for humanity

but the demands of divine righteousness that, according to Ezekiel, compels God to make the following promise of future perfection: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you - - and I will give you a heart of flesh." (36:26).

We would suppose that Ezekiel's doctrine of individualism expressed so forcefully in chapter eighteen would lead him to neglect the idea of a Kingdom of God - a society of God's children. It is then a significant fact that this same prophet gives us our most magnificent Old Testament vision of a heavenly city. It is a testimony to the very great inherent demand that human life express itself in social terms and come to a conclusion in a perfect social relationship.

Amid the many strange elements of Ezekiel's prophecy we find one expression of the Kingdom in Messianic terms. We read in 34:23-24, "And I will set up one shepherd over them and he shall feed them, even my servant David; - - and I, Yahweh, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Yahweh have spoken it."

8. Deutero-Isaiah.

It may be said of Deotero- Isaiah, just as

we have said of all the prophets, that the idea of Israel as a chosen servant, a peculiar people, is fundamental and constant with him. Deutero-Isaiah's teaching on the Kingdom can be grouped around a few outstanding passages from his book.

Although this prophecy is largely a word of comfort to a stricken people, nevertheless, the note of doom is sounded. But it is passed over lighty in hastening on to a promise of restoration. These various elements are introduced in chapter 43:22-28 and continued in chapter 44:1-5. A glorious and fruitful time is promised, while Yahweh declares he is the one who will blot out all transgressions, doing it for his own name's sake. The restoration of Israel is given a more specific and spiritual description in 52:7-12. Here there is a song of rejoicing over the entrance of Yahweh into Zion. Every creature is to shout for joy and even the waste places of the city - because in the eyes of all peoples, Yahweh has comforted his people, redeemed Jerusalem, and revealed the power of his salvation.

But Deutero-Isaiah has a Kingdom idea that is bigger than nationalistic and materialistic satisfactions. He has gone far beyond the old conception

that Yahweh is a tribal God contending with the other Gods of other nations. His message from Yahweh speaks for itself. "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is mone else. By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." (Isaiah 45:22-23). We could have no cleared statement of Yahweh's claim to a world-wide extension of his Kingdom. This same thought concerning the Kingdom is given illustrative expression in those well known verses of chapter 55:10-13: "For as the rain cometh domn and thesun from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, - - - and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it - - - Instead of the thorn shall come up th-e fir tree; and instead of the briarsshall come up the myrtle tree;a-"

The four famous "servant" passages in Deutero-Isaiah need no special reference here. They simply reveal the very strong Messianic tendancy in this prophet, by their unexcelled beauty of expression and depth of religious experience lending greater force to

all that Messianism means for the Kingdom of God.

There remains one very remarkable utterance of Deutero-Isaiah - that in chapter 51:4-8. The word righteousness there used has the same meaning as Kingdom. Substituting that word we get the following quotation: " - - My Kingdom is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the poples; and isles shall wait for me, and on mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my Kingdom shakl not be abolished. - - - my Kingdom shall be forever and my salvation unto all generations. " The distinction of these words is that they separate God's Kingdom from material forms. They assert that it is like God in the ability to exist apart from the material earth. This is one of our clearest distinctions between the temporal and the eternal. It is worthy of comparison with some of the great utterances of Jesus on the spiritual nature of His Kingdom.

9. Daniel and the Minor Prophets.

The minor prophets (excepting Amos and Hosea)

are so fragmentary that it would be unfair to draw general conclusions from them. Furthermore they usually contain the same general attitude toward the Kingdom that is found in the prophets already studied. But it is very important to note one point concerning the later prophecies, pseudepigraphs and all fragments of late origin that may be found in these or in Daniel. With the continued political subjugation of Israel came a keener realization of what Deutero-Isaiah expressed, that this Kingdom must be a heavenly kingdom and that man must have an immortal soul that will be resurrected into God's presence. This is only foreshadowed in the Old Testament writings but because of its great influence in the first century before Christ deserves to be considered as one of the definite Old Testament teachings on the Kingdom of God.

10. Summary.

Now what does the Old Testament teach concerning the Kingdom of God? Can we formulate an Old Testament definition of the Kingdom? Our answer is that no such single definition can be made and that no systematized and logically harmonious teaching on the Kingdom is given us by the Old Testament. We have dis-

covered the following implications or direct teachings:

1. The Kingdom is equivalent to the Promised Land - that is, to material well-being.

2. The Israelites are favored children of God; they constitute His Kingdom; they are a chosen people, a Church.

3. This kingdom partakes of the nature of its king; it is righteous. Therefore a day of doom awaits the wicked when God establishes his Kingdom.

4. This kingdom will be established in spite of the wicked in Israel, for a remnant will be saved to enjoy the new kingdom Yahweh establishes. It is not dependent on men, but Yahweh for his name's sake will forgive and restore men.

5. A servant of Yahweh is to come and introduce the Kingdom. This servant may be David, at least a Holy One, a "Suffering Servant". He is the Messiah.

6. God's presence is felt in the inner life of men and there, also, his Kingdom can be built.

7. The Kingdom is independent of temporal forms and though the whole earth be destroyed, yet that Kingdom will remain forever; and there is also the suggestion, become an explicit teaching before the time of Christ, that immortal souls may dwell therein.

So, the Old Testament conceives of the Kingdom as on earth but also as in heaven. It is to bring material blessings, but also a new heart in the lifeo of man. It says that God will come to dwell am ng his people, but also affirms that God's servant will introduce that New Age. It at first claims that all Israel is a chosen people to constitute God's Kingdom, but also affirms that a select body of these, a remnant, an ideal few, will be the only ones to will live to see that New Age.

The one great conclusion to be drawn from this mass of evidence is that the Old Testament does not give us that original and sun-clear definition of the Kingdom of God. MOreover, it reveals that these different conceptions of the Kingdom were the first conceptions. It is significant that a majority of these apparently conflicting views were expressed by each writer. Therefore, it seems that our phrase, "Kingdom of God", gathers up a number of ideals in religious thought, that it is a central suqare into which many highways laad, that it is one large diamond with many facets yielding unlimited color combinations.

III.

Psychological Analysis of the Kingdom

of God Idea.

This thesis cannot be complete without an analysis of the fundamental sources that lie back of that manifold conception of the Kingdom of God revealed in the Old Testament.

It must occur to anyone who studies the recurrence of these ideas in the historyof religious thought and observes their dominance in the consciousness of nearly alliindividuals, that they are not peculiar and superficial but naturaland fundamental in the mind of man. Therefore it must be possible to psychologically group the sources out of which these ideas grow. Of course, almost any groupingcould be made, but the following topics have appealed to my sense of analytical proportion:

1. The Mental Demand for World Unity.

To many people the world is strange unless it is orderly. To some it is a denial of creation if the world is not everywhere self-consistent; and these feelings are in some sense shared by all. Therefore the one great fundamental Being is demanded. Further than that, there is still a conflict in Heaven and Satan is still plotting against the Creator unless the

whole world of creatures is in joyous harmony with the will of God. For this reason many minds demand that earth and heaven meet and man and God unite to form a harmonious society. It is a psychological paradox to posit God as Creator and then assume that any part of the universe is not his kingdom. The Kingdom of God cannot be separated from the creation of God. Therefore, the very moment my mind has groped around to the conclusion that one fundamental Being is the Creator of the universe I must necessarily begin relating that universe in every particular to that divine Being.

2. The Concept of Purpose.

Almost the entire subject could come under this heading, but we can properly limit it to a few items. There is in each man a sense of the beginnings of things. What and when was creation? is a question that loses its startling freshness only as minds become sodden with indigested theories of creation. When a mere lad, I used to lie on my back in the tall grass on a sunny hillside and watch the fleecy clouds float by, trying to get a mental picture of what the world would have looked like had there never been any world at all. The consequent vacuum was terrorizing. Real

mental existence is inseparable from some theory or picture of creation. But a theory of creation is always partial - it always demands its complement in a theory of eschatology. Around and between these two supreme subjects all our ideas must rush about trying to get in line/ One cannot understand creation without purpose. Therefore, many of us have an inherent compulsion to see all of life marching forward to some preconcieved divine goal. Thus we may say that the expectation of a Kingdom of Godis born out of a consciousness of divine purpose in the ongoing of the universde. It is latent in any idea of God - in any monotheism with a God that does things.

3. Idealism in the Distant.

Special emphasis should be placed on that peculiar divine blessing that drops a soft moonlight over all the ugly past and throws the rosy glow of dawn before the coming hours of toil. The golden age is the age of yesterday. But it will return again in the hopeful hours of tomorrow. Thus has the mind of man been blessed from the beginning. The Garden of Eden and the Heavenly Kingdom are the two polesof untrained religious thought; they are the symbols of divine mercy to us all. How can we help thinking that

God is building a Kingdom of perfection? We have to think so if courage is to be strong and mental processes trustworthy. Without that conviction life would be a treadmill in which our only escape from self-pity and despair would be in pity for loved ones in like condition. The positive elements of life point unmistakably to the Kingdom of God.

4. Consciousness of the Nearness of God.

The Kingdom of God would not be very real if we were not sure that God is near. A God outside the universe, an absentee God, would never inspire intense belief in his Kingdom. It is the consciousness that God is at work in the world which gives the Kingdom reality. The Kingdom of God is then one method of expressing the nearness of God. Thus power is gained in religion. Otherwise the Bible would be as dead as any book of ethics. The Kingdom of God is inseparable from that higher spiritual force that makes a man bigger than himself.

The recurrent thought that the Kingdom is temporarally near constitutes one of our main problems. But may it not be that the essence of this thought lies in the consciousness of the ethical nearness

of the Kingdom and the reality of spiritual power - this consciousness finding adequate expression only through the category of time? In the fact of God's nearness we find the chief inspiration for a belief in the righteousness and reality of the Kingdom.

5. The Love Impulse - Loyalty.

It may well be said that the Kingdom idea is spread more by reason of loyalties to God than by any other. The prophets dwelt long and heavily upon loyalty to Yahweh. We first love the Christ and then in loyalty to him seek to spread his Kingdom. Many people will not separate God and his Kingdom; to them God will just be a great "Omnipresent All" and his Kingdom will simply be the universe that obeys his will. In other words, many people will make the Kingdom a personal matter, a triumph of their God; the Kingdom concept will develop in their minds just because they love God.

Conclusion.

The conclusion of this study is that our own conception of the Kingdom of God to-day do not differ greatly from those advanced by the prophets. They have been refined. A coordinate discovery is that the men of the Old Testament had just about as much

complexity in their beliefs as we have. The general conclusion, then, is this: the mind of man in all ages has certain fundamental tendencies that cause it to cream up a belief in a Kingdom of God; the expression of that belief will differ from age to age under varying conditions, but the same demands of the soul call it forth. If Abram saw no farther than the "Promised Land" I will not accuse him of being deficient in the hunger for a spirit world and an immortal soul. If Amos concentrated his attention only on material justice and righteousness I can readily believe that they expressed for him the full orbed thirst for God.

It hasbeen said that God is the ideal of all our ideals. That may be true psychologically. In the same way it is true that the Kingdom of God is a composite of many ideals. The Kingdom of God embraces just about the whole of our religious thought. It is the focus upon which all streams of idealism are always turned; and if it were not rooted in my mind I am sure it would not be rooted in history. But its objective reality can not be denied without denying the validity of our own mental processes. The Divine Spirit is so strong in the heart of humanity

that men have universally held the conviction that a Divine Society is a future certainty and a present possibility. So we have the Kingdom pictured as material prosperity and heavenly perfection, as personal union with God and social idealism. All of these conceptions of the Kingdom are true so long as each is recognized as but part of the whole.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Bruce - - - - - - - The Kingdom

Harnack - - - - - - What is Christianity

Rall - - - - - - - -Teachings of Jesus

Weiss - - - - - - - New Testament Theology

Wendt - - - - - - - Teachings of Jesus

Holtzmann - - - - The Life of Jesus

Sheldon - - - - - History of Christian Doctrine

Allan - - - - - - - I.C.C.

Knudson - - - - - Old Testament Theology

" - - - - - Notes on Prophets

" - - - - - Notes on Teachings of Jesus

Charles - - - - - Eschatology

" - - - - - Between the Testaments

H. P. Smith - - - The Religion of Israel

Farmer- - - - - - Origin and Development of the Messianic Hope.

Orr - - - - - - - - Kingdom of God - in H.B.D.

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