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The messianic hope in Israel

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"THE MESSIANIC HOPE IN ISRAEL"

for
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THE MESSIANIC HOPE IN ISRAEL.

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THE MESSIANIC HOPE IN ISRAEL.

Chapter I.

We shall use the term "Messianic Hope" in our discussion in its wider sense in which it is now common to include the Old Testament predictions which relate to the idea of God's Kingdom and the spiritual exaltation of His people. In the narrower view the Messianic Hope appears to refer to an ideal King and ruler of God's people. Or to be more concise, in the broader view and to use Professor Knudson's words, "by it we mean not merely the expectation of a Messiah, but the broader and more inclusive belief in the coming of the Kingdom of God".

Critics of whatever view all place a very high estimate on the character and value of the Messianic hope in Israel and on into the world. It is thru the character of the Messiah that the Kingdom of God, a blessed theophany was to be established in Israel; a thought which unfolded thru the minds of the successive prophets, until we find that the hope of a personal deliverer is inseparable from the wider view that obtains in the genuine Old Testament literature on this subject. That people as the Hebrews who were gifted with such spirit-

ual insight as to feel especially called of God is not so remarkable, but that thru the centuries even amid disaster, defeat and exile there should arise a "Messianic Hope" which should finally lead them to victory is tribute enough to the inner spirit of that people who stood alone in splendid isolation. As Paul Sabatier says, "The times of greatest danger are always the times of the greatest hope". It was no less so in Israel.

The source of such a larger hope is based upon Yahweh convenant with the Hebrews. As Peter says, "Foundations of this doctrine were laid in the most ancient period of Hebrew History. In the earliest writings which have come down to us we find a firm belief in a peculiar relation of Yahweh to Israel and Israel to Yahweh". We may take Exodus 6:7 whose import is unmistakable: "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God"; and you shall know that I am your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of Egypt". Other scripture of this sort might be quoted to show Israel's intimate relation to Yahweh, but it is not necessary. It was thru such a basis as this that the prophets sought as "God's ministers to justify Yahweh to Israel and also if possible to

justify Israel to Yahweh. Sometimes thru punishments and defeats and at other times thru blessings" (Farmer's "Dissertation on The Messianic Hope" p. 249). Such a "Messianic Hope was also the means to a large degree of maintaining the "racial and religious identity of Israel, thru the perilous years especially after the exile".

We have said that the "Hope" was a peculiar inheritance of the people of the Hebrew race; but the prophets who spoke as the mouth-piece of Yahweh. They believed that the coming Kingdom depended on ethical and moral considerations, therefore the conduct of the people was all important. The Prophets felt the thrust of this responsibility deeper than anyone else, and so the Messianic era dependent on their message, hence their word was ever one of moral purpose and power.

If in the prophetic message the messianic hope had been lost, very soon there would have entered a moral and religious disintegration with a consequent loss of a great ideal.

In fact this really happened, as Farmer says, "to the Northern ten tribes, and it had already begun in Judea, even before the return of the exiles" (Farmer's Dissertation on the Messianic Hope", p. 249).

We must admit then that the Messianic Hope in Israel more than any other one thing prevented decay and disruption. Further that if this ideal had been lost the religion of Yahewh could not have lasted.

The other nations have had religious fore-gleanings it cannot be denied, and hence it is not surprising to read of Messianic hope in other nations. Any nation worth its salt has a way of looking to a remote past and feeling there some imperishable glories, or else as Israel projecting itself to a mighty future in an age golden. "For a Messianic hope is but the hope of the realization of the ideal" (Farmer's "Dissertation on the Messianic Hope", p. 37). No matter how distressing the conditions and judgments no prophets ever close such without having a word of hope as to the future restoration.

Now such expectations as we have seen admit other nations. Such a claim is brought forth in the religion of Ancient Babylonia some 2,000 years before the Christian era, when after a very noted career of prosperity and power, Hammurabi of codic fame, was expected to return and bring in a much sought for Messianic Age. Again in Babylonia is this age referred to in reference to the god Marduk, in hymns in which he is said to have

all power on earth and in heaven. (Jastrow, "Religion of Babylonia and Assyria")

The most striking example, however, is found in the Egyptian texts. Two papyri dates about 2000 B.C. They appear to have the characteristics of a Messianic hope even before the Hebrew Era. The papyri Golemscherf and Admonitions of Ipuwer are the two most important according to Professor Knudson (Religious Teachings of the Old Testament, p. 354ff.) In the first papyrus we find such a prophecy was written to glorify the reigning Monarch. The arguments rest on certain conceptions of eschatology as are coincident with Old Testament teachings. Such as the catastrophic end of the present order and the return of paradisaical conditions. The same idea prevails in the papyrus Westcar. The admonitions of Ipuwer date from about 1300 B.C. The sage condemns the reigning king, and then by way of contrast describes the ideal King as represented by the Sun God Re. "He is the Shepherd of all men, and there is no evil in his heart". (Farmer's, "Dissertation on the Messianic Hope" p. 46-47) We see the hope at least expressed here. The prophet seems a little impatient when he says, "where is he today? Sleep he perhaps? Behold his might is not seen."

It seems evident then that the Messianic hope was a wide-spread ideal, and many have gone as far as to say that upon the basis of the last text that the Messianic Hope of the Hebrews was derived from the Egyptians. To quote Professor Knudson on Gressman in favor of such a contention, such a "Messianic Hope", "must have its source among a people whose kingdom is rooted in oldest times, even out of mind, who cannot imagine life at all without a king --- therefore this idea must have originated in Egypt. But while it is true that such theories might filter into Canaan and such theories are at best mere possibilities, neither is necessary to account for the Messianic hope of the Israelites. The invincible optimism that lay back of Israel's Messianism could not have been borrowed, it was a native growth".

Another marked feature of this great note was its note of positiveness. Dr. Oesterley would seem to give a wide margin for legendary effect, but there seems to be substantial evidence among scholars in the view taken by Professor Cornill namely, "Israel is the only nation we know of that never had a mythology, the only people who never differentiated the Deity sexually (Cornill's "The Prophets", p. 23). Their future ex-

pectations became as real to them, as Christ the centre of Christian ideals is to us. That psychology plays a large part in its origin there is no doubt, since, "after an heroic age created or dominated by some hero, followed by calamities and misfortunes or even the pettiness strongly contrasting with the heroic achievements and imaginations of the age of glory, the mind goes back with longing to the past, meditating on and enhancing its glory and proportionately minimizing or decrying present conditions. Such living in the past tends to realize it and thus create a hope in its return, which hope, developing into belief, naturally associates itself with that hero to whom glories real and fancied are attributed, and the expectation of the return of those glories becomes an expectation of its return also"(Peters, "The Religion of the Hebrews" p. 428):

There is no reason, of course, for assuming that other nations going thru the normal course of national existence should not have great hopes of historic value. That such existed and influenced other peoples there is no doubt. But such theories as are advanced to make "foreign hopes" the underpinning of Israel's Messianic Hope do not seem to be warranted in the opinion of the majority of scholars. "It was a native growth"

II.

THE ORIGIN OF ISRAEL'S MESSIANIC HOPE

Chapter I.

The Early Conception.

Hope ever springs eternal in the human breast, and when Yahweh called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, we have every reason to believe that He did not leave that pioneer without high and mighty hopes. So we have the record that thru a person Yahweh desired to impart a blessing to the nations of the earth. To Abraham there came the word, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). And also a succession of the prophets who would communicate God's will. "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:18). It is the prophets who bring the new age, but as Cornill says, "Without Moses the prophets would never have existed, and therefore they themselves have the feeling of bringing absolutely nothing new" (Cornill, "The Prophets", p. 36).

"The most important thing about the new age was not the change in the outward conditions of life. In its essential nature the outward change was after all but a symbol of an inward spiritual change", as seen in Jeremiah 31:33f (Knudson, "Religious Teaching of the Old Testament"). Thus early it was, of course, not so clear. The specific element in the new thought was that it was peculiar to Israel as contrasted with other nations as ^{we} have seen.

In the case of the first prophets Elijah and Elisha the hope is scarcely more than a belief, that Yahweh whom they worship will smite their enemies and make them victorious. The record of their work gives no place for a rising insight into the Messianic hope.

At this time there is no evidence that ^{the} hope is to bear fruit in eschatology, and it seems that the new kingdom is to be political in the truest sense. It is only in the prophecy of Amos that we find the religion of Israel breaking thru the national bonds and becoming a universal religion instead of a religion of a single nation. The luxury of Northern Kingdom gave Amos his opportunity for the text of his prophecy. Hosea's prophecy was "directed by the sorest kind of affliction that can come to an upright soul". It was a great plea

of love that Israel would be prosperous when she turned from her idol worship. This work has now not the importance it once had in the eyes of many scholars, who think it belongs to a later period.

The hope just here is rather for national prowess, that Israel alone is to be favored even at its inception, we have already referred to Abraham, Genesis 12:3 and later we find Judah is singled out, "Judah thou art he whom thy brethren whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee" (Gen. 49:8) This sense of a narrow nationalism continues among the Jews even to this day.

The more recent scholars on the Messianic hope have placed its origin at a late date. It is declared that the hope did not as a consistent element in Old Testament religion begin until the exile. And since Ezekiel is termed the prophet of the exile, he is termed, "The father of Messianic expectation." (H. P. Smith, "The Religion of Israel, p. 243) Still others maintain that it had its root in Deutero-Isaiah and that his great insights are of the post-exilic period. The Messianic hope as such is then considered to be an after thought, and not a living prophecy.

However, not a few scholars think that the Messianic hope has its roots far back in the pre-exilic period. This view gives new impetus to the thought Hebrew eschatology, and teaches us that the ethical idealism of these ancient seers and singers of a later period can only be understood in the light of this more or less developed eschatology.

The first reference that we have then in the Old Testament to a hope in this new age of Israel's blessing is found in the book of Amos 5:18-20. "Woe unto you who are earnestly desiring the day of Jehovah. It is darkness, and not light." This passage leads us to conclude that there those who anticipated a day of Yahweh was that of an ideal age of great blessing upon Israel, and a further thought that Amos lays no claim to have originated the idea of the day of Yahweh. Nor indeed does any prophet claim it. If someone suggests Zehpaniah we must ask where is the constructive thinking in his writings to support such a claim? As Reib-mus says, "It is an undeniable fact, and affirmed on every page of the prophetic writings, that the prophets themselves had the clearest and most profound consciousness that they did not utter their own thoughts but God's" (p. 12).

The first impressions of the writing of Amos seems anti-Messianic, but such work is embedded in centuries of reflection. The writings as a whole bear striking testimony to the existence of the "hope" in his day, and especially to the "day of Yahweh" which Yahweh will judge, and destroy and sweep away the enemies and bring his covenant to pass, and they can possess their beloved land, with such an assurance it did not matter to them what happened, they leaned back on Yahweh and allowed Assyria to come on, until Amos was provoked to say, "They lived in a fool's paradise" (Peters, "Religion of the Hebrews").

There are two theories as to the source of the Messianic Hope. The one that it came from within; the other that it was alien. The latter we have discussed and found as a fact in its case that it could come from no one nation direct. And we may add that upon this subject the opinions of scholars are almost as varied as the training of the scholars themselves. Now those who hold to the source as within Israel differ widely as to the time and cause of the rise. But there is agreement among a large number of scholars that we find a more highly type of development of the Messianic Hope in Israel.

The Messianic hope was given impetus by the announcement of the immediacy of it, and again its failure of never being realized. "The failure was an incentive to seek out the cause and this grew the moral sentiment that was the basis of the later prophecies."

The terminus ad quem for this conception of blessing of Jacob, and that the reigns of David and Solomon were too prosperous to have given rise to such a hope, is in accord with the psychological influence of satisfaction and contentment upon the human mind. As we have observed the outbursts of prophecy come in the times of the greatest danger, as for instance in the days of Assyria and Babylonian oppression.

We now come to the thought of the idea of judgment of Yahweh upon Israel and the Old Testament Expectation of it. It is a common opinion that it was Amos who first announced an approaching day of doom. It was a day in which Yahweh would manifest himself in an especial way, and all we can say is that Amos simply popularized the same. We may say, "Amos' great contribution to the development of the Messianic idea was his interpretation of the concept of the day of Yahweh as a judgment, first and foremost upon themselves, a purification of the nation" (Peters, "Re-

ligion of the Hebrews, p 431). AMOS 5:18.

The people's view was that it was to be Israel's day of triumph. This belief grew out of evil conditions surrounding the monarchy. A day of overwhelming victory, indeed it to be a day of light; only to their enemies was it to be a day of darkness. But Amos rudely set this aside. It was to be a day of judgment.

The day of doom was night for Israel's enemies because they had broken the moral law, divine justice was to be meted to all whether alien or Israel. We get a glimpse here of the prophet who looks beyond his own kith and kin.

We have already said that in its earliest places a political conception was held of the Messianic hope which had some historical significance. This view was supposedly current up to the time of Zephaniah, who it is said gave an eschatological basis to the same and first conceived the idea of the doom being a world catastrophe. This view is opposed by Dr. A. C. Knudson, "That the world character of the impending doom was first conceived by Zephaniah seems highly improbable. He was evidently dealing with traditional material, and seems to have vaguely conceived the idea. It appears to be traditional with the 8th century pro-

phets for there seems to be the same indefiniteness as to the forms that the impending judgment will take. There is also the same thought as to the international character of the doom. (Isaiah 2:12; Hosea 4:3; Amos 5:18-20)

It seems to be clear that from a wide view of the utterances of the pre-exilic prophets their conception of the judgment was not simply local and historical in character. "The conclusion is that the idea of a world catastrophe must be carried into pre-prophetic period and that it must be regarded as having formed the background of the earliest group of literary prophets as well as those of a later date". To quote A. C. Welch in History of Israel, "for the truth that the world was one and was governed by one purpose, it stood for the possibility of the emergence of the eternal order within the world of time". Amos gave to it a more distinctly ethical character that was his contribution. (Amos 6:7-14)

The expectation of early Israel of the remnant being left as found in Amos and Isaiah was traditional in their time. Their hope was not of rebirth, but of salvation from death, and such a belief was popular. These prophets emphasized the idea of the remnant, that

in a world catastrophe some would be saved, but others would perish. But in its form in Israel the doom must have been connected with the unlimited supremacy of Yahweh, and if he chose to save a remnant he would do it.

We observe in conclusion that the literary prophets did not create the Messianic idea, their great function was to reinstate the ethical basis over the prevailing ceremonialism, which had grown up between the Davidic reign and the literary prophets. "The earliest people believed in the punishment of sin by Yahweh, if not immediately in the future." As to just how this was to be done was very vaguely conceived, yet at any rate it was to attain finally universality.

In their relation to the heathen the doom took a little different aspect. The ethics of the early prophets meant destruction to all powers hostile to Israel. All were doomed who opposed Yahweh. The doom as some construe it "was not a complete destruction of the people, but a destruction of their power so that they become subject to Israel, and not lords over them nor on an equal standing with them" (Farmer, "Dissertation on the Messianic Hope", p. 132). A certain precedence is given to Israel but in judgment a line of cleavage is to run thru both. But the hope that a remnant

would be saved was all the prophets held out for them.

Chapter II.

The Personal Messiah as an Element in Messianic Hope

The personal Messiahship in the Messianic hope altho an element which is not constant nevertheless is a vital factor in the Old Testament viewpoint. "But the Old Testament view of the new kingdom was not dependent upon the appearance of an ideal king. It might be brought about by Yahweh alone" (Knudson, "Religious Teaching of the Old Testament", p. 371), at least this is the prevailing Old Testament view. Many are the views of scholars on this question and we get a sort of *via média*, which is neither ultra-radical or ultra-conservative, which yet gives to us the results of sound scholarship.

The prevalent view seems to be that the idea of a Messiah did not arise until near the close of the monarchy. Yet others view the same as arising not until after the fall of the house of David. This, of course,

would mean that it arose during the time of the exile. Still other scholars hold that it was of mythical origin and hence had a foreign source coming to Israel thru the Canaanites. Sellin is persuaded that Moses was the dividing line between oriental myth and the hope of a messiah in Israel, while Cesterly holds that the literary prophets and especially Isaiah was the real line of diversion. But these scholars all agree that in Israel there existed that expectation of the coming of Yahweh or his personal representative to rule over them.

It will be admitted that reference to any Messiah is rather limited in pre-prophetic literature. The text in Gen. 3:15 is not considered to be of Messianic importance now, since the writer is speaking in general terms concerning the serpent and the seed of the woman. It is generally thought that Genesis 49:10-12, "The sceptre will not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come;

And unto him shall the obedience of the people be
Binding his foal unto the vine,
And his asses colt unto the choice vine;
He hath washed his garments in wine
And his vesture in the blood of grapes:
His eyes shall be red with wine
And his teeth white with milk."

This passage probably dates from the time of

David. The text unfortunately seems to be a little corrupt here. Professor Knudson in Teachings of the Old Testament, p. 374, says, "Perhaps we should read instead of Shiloh "his king" or "he whose it is". But in any case its reference seems clearly to be to the Messiah." Driver suggests another construction by falling back to the LXX and reading, "Till that which (or he that) is shall come." The people shall be obedient to him, and he is to have the royal dignity of his time - that of riding upon an ass (Judges 10:4; 2 Sam. 19:26). In Zechariah 9:9 it is a sign of meekness. There are other earlier passages in the Old Testament. Numbers 24:17ff. (J), and Deuteronomy 33:13ff (E) but they add nothing of importance to our knowledge concerning it. Now how widely current was the belief in a Messiah in pre-prophetic Israel we do not know, nor are we able to estimate how it affected fully the thought of the religious leaders, but anyhow to it the literary prophets attached their profound message. Isaiah declared that the Messiah would come to the righteous remnant and establish the righteous rule of Yahweh over all the world. "And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness will he

judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins" (Isaiah 11:3-5; also Jeremiah 23:6).

There are many who hold that it was not until the Hebrews were without a king that they longed for the return of David and the building of a Messianic kingdom. This would let in the view of H. P. Smith that Ezekiel is father of the Messianic initiative, and possibly Haggai and Zechariah, would furnish us with the original data concerning the rise of Messiahship. But such a view as this implies the rejection of the Messianic passages in Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah altogether. It would be more natural that such a view should arise immediately following the death of David when the memory concerning him was still fresh, than centuries later. This kind of belief has been quite common as we think of it in the legendary golden age in almost every nation (See Peters, History of Hebrew's Religion, p. 427).

We question, however, whether or not such a hope arose with David, since the later expectation seems

to be only a modified form of the actual return of David himself (Hosea 3:5; Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:33). Then again if it were true more than an actual figure of speech or symbol would be given, since Haggai and Zechariah who wrote nearly a century later, substituted and expected Zerubbabel would become the Messiah.

We would conclude that, such an expectation did not arise with David.

Taking up the well known Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). This is spoken by the prophet against the self-seeking of Ahaz and the royal house. Also as Professor Knudson observes, "This is turned directly against the Davidic dynasty, also it is to be noted that the descriptions of the Messiah and the Messianic era in Isaiah and Micah are such as cannot be inspired by David alone. Divine predicates are used of him, his rule is said to be without limit and his birth is apparently thought of as without limit and his birth is apparently thought of as attended by some remarkable portent". The source therefore in a popular belief in a Messiah was entirely apart from David.

We must conclude then with the facts stated as evidence that the hope of a personal Messiah had its origin in pre prophetic times. It appears also quite clear that the terminus ad quem was before the literary prophets and David, for it seems that even in their writings that the thought and idea was traditional.

III.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISRAEL'S MESSIANIC HOPE.

Chapter 1.

The Wider View and Its Development.

We have seen that Israel's Messianic hope had its source within Israel and also that it had its historical initiative from the deliverance of Israel from hostile enemies, as early perhaps as the dramatic deliverance at the Red Sea. We have seen also, so far as we can learn from consensus of opinion that such a Messianic hope as developed came from sources prior to the literary prophets.

With the literary prophets came the vitalizing of the idea with moral content. Formerly it had been vague in the minds of the people who had a sense of awe concerning it, since it was hoary with tradition to them. With a more and more ethical content in such men as Amos and Hosea the consciousness of sin developed, and so moral responsibility became prominent and gave the hope a new setting for its eschatology.

Judgment and Redemption then came to be prominent in the thought of the people. Before the day of the literary prophets Israel was to escape judgment, in that day the heathen world was to be object of doom.

it is however, with the prophet Amos that a new note is emphasized in that thought Israel might be involved in the doom if she were not loyal to Yahweh. Hosea also speaks in the same strain. We note this in striking passages as Amos 5:2-20, also Hosea 9:15, Isaiah 2:12. Such work is clear in its import as we see for the first time the international spirit of the doom, and Yahweh no more doles out mere special favors at captice. The passages must not be read consecutively in the prophets, since they are separate utterances on doom and hope, if we get this sharp distinction of utterances independent of one another, we shall also get the significance of their bearing on the times in which they were spoken.

It is clear that the pre-exilic prophets accepted the tradition of their day concerning the extent of the Messianic hope. They gave to ~~the~~ the ideal something of their own personality in moral outlook and ethical insight. Their new note is the thought of righteousness, and here Amos and Hosea are prime movers, Amos 3:11; 1:7; 1:14; 7:17; Hosea 8:13; 9:3.

The truth uttered here had great religious significance, "For the truth that the world was one and governed by one purpose. It stood for the possibility of the emergence of the eternal order within the world

of time". (A. C. Welch, "History of Religion of Israel" in A. C. Knudson's "Old Testament Teaching and its Religious Significance, p. 362.) So that we see here the thought not only of restoration from captivity, but also a mighty regeneration or redemption from sin, which should sweep the whole world. The later part being emphasized by the literary prophets naturally spring from an earlier conception of the hope.

Isaiah gives expression in his early work to the ideal of Israel's leadership of a united world, in which peace shall be supreme (Isaiah 2:2-4). He seems also to gather strength and in the sweep of his vision, to include the animals of the field, "and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fattling together; and the little child shall lead them, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den".

Amos and Hosea were the first prophets to teach of restoration from captivity, but they do not show much evidence of the view of a righteous remnant. In this idea of restoration we also have Jeremiah in very deep and spiritual feeling. "Behold, the days come, saith

Jehovah that I will make a new covenant with the House of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which covenant they broke although I was a husband unto them saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: 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. And shall no more teach everyman his brother saying know Jehovah, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith Jehovah; for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin will remember no moreAnd I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good, and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me. Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:40.

The Messianic age, it becomes clear is not restricted to Israel, it portends a universal moral government. It was an ideal in Old Testament thought even as it is an ideal in political thought of our own times. Yet it is

"The one far off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

It was nobly voiced by Isaiah 19:23-25, "In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and they shall worship together. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance."

The element of eschatology entered into the Messianic hope quite definitely since there were some who could not believe that they would live long to see the new age and hoped to receive the blessing. In Ezekiel's prophecies we see the idea in fuller development than those of his predecessors. After the day of Yahweh's visitation upon God, comes the re-establishment of the idealized kingdom. Isaiah taught the inviolability of Jerusalem because of the temple there. Ezekiel exalts the temple still further. The temple planned by God from eternity and concealed in heaven. "Now the expectation of the New Age stands in marked contrast to the ancient oriental beliefs in a series of world cycles"...to continue ad infinitum. "Now by way of contrast with this, the Messianic hope of the Hebrew

introduced the idea of development. This gave an inevitable higher view of history, and was one great contribution of the Hebrew thought to the world's thought. For even the Greeks never broke away from the world cycle idea" (A. C. Knudson, Religious Teaching of the Old Testament p. 377f). The relation then of the Messianic hope to evolution is clearly seen here, it gives us the character of their hope. To Israel the Kingdom becomes imminent. A new era is about to dawn immediately. It was this fact which enabled them for such a long time to dispense with the belief in a personal immortality. Yet even that with time comes out clearly as in Isaiah 25:8, also Isaiah 26:19, becoming a reality in the New Testament era. "Their eschatology constituted the very atmosphere of their religious life. It was their supreme interest...the heart of their message." Thus we have a distinct religious appeal vital and compelling. The hope of forgiveness lay in assurances which they had received in the messages of the prophets. "I will heal their backslidings, I will forgive them freely for mine anger is turned away from them" (Hosea 4:4). The seemingly harsh Amos concludes in a similar way, and even Isaiah has for his promise of hope from Yahweh peace and fruitfulness.

Chapter II.

The Personal Messiah - Concept Developed:

The concept is developed in the manner in which all scholars seem to agree, and falls under three heads. The ideal King; Suffering Servant; the Sone of Man. In these concepts some of the sublimest thoughts of the Prophets and Psalms find utterance.

The nationalistic spirit arose in the youth of Israel with the picture of the ideal King. The early thought was a king of military prowess, but later when Isaiah proclaimed his message it was to be a root from the stock of Jesse, which was a distinct rebuke to Ahaz, this break we may consider to be a place of breaking new ground in thought of a personal Messiah. In Zechariah 9:9 we see the famous Palm Sunday passage, repeated in the New Testament era, showing the ideal shown of military powers, yet having the humility and dignity of a real ruler and judge. A further contrast is recalled in Jeremiah 23:1-6, "Woe unto the Shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture saith Jehovah.....Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, 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. In his days shall Judah

be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness." These conceptions seem to have been due to a lack of harmony between the prophets and the blood royal.

The second aspect is that of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. For us it is not a matter of personal importance whether the servant be understood in the individual or the collective sense. "It suffices for our present discussion that he was regarded as the agent through whom the divine salvation was to be wrought in the world" (Knudson, Religious Teaching of the Old Testament, p. 375). One of the sublimest thoughts in the Old Testament is that redemption was not to be by force, but by vicarious suffering (Isaiah 53:5). A righteous ^{man} is being slain for the redemption of men everywhere. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hands" (Isaiah 53:10). The purport of a message like this is not bound up to one age, and so although it may have been contemporary, we are very sure it influenced profoundly the life and teachings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The third element in the thought of the personal

Messiah in the Old Testament is "The Son of Man". "I saw in the night visions, and, behold there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they bro't him near before him" (Daniel 7:13). There seems to be some diversity of opinion as to whether we should speak of him as an individual or collectively. "What we have here in the idea of the Son of Man, and also in the suffering Servant is an original individual conception, which was later applied to ideal Israel". In Deutero-Isaiah it is the suffering Servant who will give his life "a ransom for many", and in Daniel he will be seen as the Son of Man coming on the clouds with glory and power.

The idea of the interpretation as individual was revived soon after the time of Daniel and became the popular one. The thought was, however, never very popular in Judaism. Yet today it, as Suffering Servant ^{it} takes precedence over the other two aspects. It opens a door thru which humanity may walk into a moral and spiritual relationship with God thru the medium of the Servant. "The Suffering Servant was the counterpart of the afflicted people of the exile" (A. C. Knudson, Religious Teaching of the Old Testament).

CONCLUSION.

Chapter 1.

The Value of Israel's Messianic Hope

The basic idea in regard to religion in Israel was that true religion was righteousness. The prophets began with this idea of righteousness and by their insight gave Israel new concepts of it, and of the proper worship of Yahweh. Their ideas are among the most striking that have ever appeared to grace the genius of religious thought.

The heathen were not righteous. Israel early was exclusive, (a Pilgrim Father type of religion altho not so ethical). Therefore on these the doom would fall heavily. By prophetic teaching Israel saw mirrored her own sin and that they were guilty along with the heathen, and there was a possibility of their receiving double for their sins since to them had been given greater privileges to know God.

The prophetic hope lay in the consistent moral and religious power of Israel. The remedy for doom was righteousness. "Their eschatology afforded them a firmer religious underpinning for their Messianic message. The eternal love between Yahweh and Israel is a result, and Yahweh cannot cast off his people" (Knudson, The Re

ligious Teaching of the Old Testament).

It was this eternal love that caused faith in Yahweh to be kept in the exile, and we have then the astounding miracle that in a time of national decay, there is a steady rising religious hope. This was because of prophetic ideals. If they had lost God in the exile, then the worship of Yahweh as far as Israel was concerned would have gone forever.

We cannot deny that Jesus' advent attaches great significance to the Messianic hope. Though of course the older method of exegesis is not now agreeable to us, that is to see Christ portrayed in every chapter of the Old Testament. It contained much which was good, but its method was wrong. We would not trim to suit socialistic or humanistic teachers, since the eschatological is properly prominent and has a very large part in their religious development. In fact we may say finally "that it was this hope and this hope only that made possible the lofty idealism of the Hebrew seer and Saint" (Knudson, "Rel. Teach. of the O. T.). To

event
"One law, one faith, one element, one far off divine
To which the whole creation moves."

To such a progressive religious thought the Hebrews gave mighty impetus in their conception of the Messianic hope.