

Messianic Series Volume Two

**Messiah: His Nature and Person**

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Bible Teacher

To

DR. JOHN R. SAMPEY

Whose instruction in the Hebrew language caused  
me to thirst for the satisfying waters flowing  
from the perennial fountain of the Tenach  
is this volume dedicated

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## PREFACE

IN the bowels of the earth a great wealth of mineral deposits, which are essential to man's comfort, well-being, and very existence in the busy whirl of modern life, has been stored away and carefully preserved by the loving kindness of the Almighty. Also nuggets of the precious metals and limited quantities of radiant, valuable gems are tucked away in the strata of the earth. It is only by means of the latest and most efficient mechanical devices, which present-day science can produce, that these great hidden treasures can be located and procured. Furthermore, man's intellect, energy, and patience are often taxed to the limit in his efforts to obtain them. In fact, all things that are of real value demand sacrificial and pains-taking labor on the part of those who are serving humanity by producing and putting them in a form ready for man's appropriation and comfort. Hence to these indefatigable toilers the world owes a debt of appreciation.

The principles set forth above are also applicable to the spiritual and intellectual realms. Taking hold of the promise of God found in Proverbs 2:1-8, Dr. David L. Cooper in faith set himself to the task of entering the rich mines of Tenach (Old Testament) in order that he might discover the rare gems of messianic predictions and bring them forth for our edification and joy. Beginning with the primeval promise recorded in Genesis 3:15 and carefully tracing throughout the entire volume the development of this precious hope, that has sustained Israel during her centuries of sufferings, he has given us the essential facts concerning the nature and the person of Israel's long-expected Messiah. In order to do this thing, he has carried us back into the dark recesses of Hebrew etymology, lexicography, and scientific exegesis and has shown us from whence he has brought forth these precious gems of radiant, messianic glory.

A perusal of these pages confirms my conviction relative to a number of facts: first, that the truth of God necessary to the eternal salvation and joy of a soul is to be found on the surface of the Holy Scriptures and may be readily discovered by the honest truth-seeker; secondly, that the deeper truths of the Word are to be discovered by a prayerful, honest, conscientious, and scientific investigation of the Scriptures themselves, thirdly, that light from a sane and rational interpretation of

archaeological and historical facts often enables the scholar to arrive at a clearer understanding of certain passages that otherwise would be difficult; fourthly, that the evident unity of the Holy Writings as seen in the messianic hope is positive proof of their divine inspiration; and fifthly, that the Scriptures afford not only comfort and hope to the humble and lowly who are thirsting for God but also the profoundest and only true philosophy of life which challenges the greatest intellects of the ages.

It soon becomes evident to the reader, as he peruses these pages, that the welfare of the Hebrew race is bound inextricably with the messianic hope. Our author shows from the original text of Tenach that Israel can never hope for a cessation of her age-long distress until she turns and accepts her divine-human Messiah and Saviour. May her God own and use these pages in bringing the truth to the hearts and lives of countless numbers not only of the Chosen Race but also of all nations.

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## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

THIS book is the second in the Messianic Series. The first is entitled *The God of Israel*; the third, *Messiah: His Redemptive Career*; the fourth, *Messiah: His First Coming Scheduled*; the fifth, *Messiah: His Historical Appearance*; the sixth, *Messiah: His Glorious Appearance Imminent*; and the seventh *Messiah: His Final Call to Israel*.

In this Series I endeavor to show, within the narrow limits of the allotted space, the general teaching, at least, of the Tenach concerning God and His Messiah.

The basis of the expositions of the first four books of this series is the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Scriptures. Believing as I do that the original text of the Tenach is the inspired Word of God, I unhesitatingly accept the statements therein as the declarations of the omniscient God. This faith is not a blind acceptance of traditional teaching received from my forefathers but is the result of an honest and conscientious investigation of the evidence, both internal and external, which bears unimpeachable testimony to the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures.

There are two facts which, on account of their great simplicity, are usually overlooked and which present unassailable testimony to the divine origin of the Scriptures. The first may be expressed in the forceful language of one of my seminary professors: "I know that the Scriptures are true because they have survived so very much poor preaching." The Bible, as no other book in all the world, has suffered, in the house of its friends, from the unskillful treatment given it by the unlearned and from the manipulation of the historical facts and the forcing of an unscientific exegesis upon it, in the interest of a popular theory, by some of the learned. It has likewise suffered from its enemies. The attacks of its foes have been unrelenting and powerful—even to the 'nth degree. Notwithstanding this treatment, which would have silenced all other books forever, the sacred volume has survived this acid test and has a larger circulation today than ever before. According to the doctrine of "the survival of the fittest," the sacred Scriptures, having survived the ordeal described above, must be acknowledged to be of divine origin.

The second fact may be stated in the homely expression, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." Wherever the Scriptures have been placed in the hands of the masses, without the restraining and blighting influence of a self-appointed dictatorship over the minds and the souls of men, the people have been lifted to higher plains of morals and living.

In view of these facts, I ask the reader to weigh the evidence presented in these volumes with an unbiased mind and to act accordingly.

Los Angeles, California.

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*David L. Cooper*

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## CHAPTER ONE

## CURRENT JEWISH CONCEPTION OF MESSIAH

## I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As an introduction to the study of the nature and the person of the Hebrew Messiah, it is fitting to begin with an examination of the background to the present Jewish messianic hope. This short survey should be followed by a brief statement of current Jewish opinion relative to this great national hope that has been the most formative power in Jewry through the centuries.

Whence the idea of a messiah? This question can be answered only by a rapid glance at the early promises that are recorded in the oldest Hebrew documents. The beginning of this doctrine is found in the Torah. In Genesis 3:15 appears a prediction of the seed of the woman who shall deal a crushing blow to the great adversary of the race. From the ejaculation of Eve at the birth of her first child, it is evident that she was expecting the Redeemer to enter the world as a child. Lamech with prophetic vision saw the coming of this future Deliverer and blended the description of the work that his son Noah would do with that of the Redeemer. Abraham was granted a glimpse into the distant future and saw one of his seed through whom all families of the earth would be blessed. Jacob at the time of his death saw the situation of "the latter days" and foretold the rise of one from Judah who would receive the obedience of all nations. Balaam, notwithstanding his greed for gain, was given a clear forecast of the earth's redemption from the curse and of the star rising out of Jacob to whom world dominion would be given. Moses, the great lawgiver, in transports of delight foresaw the rise of a prophet out of Israel for whom perfect obedience would be demanded. In response to her thanksgiving, Hannah was granted a vision of the future. In her song of praise she revealed the fact that all of the early predictions would be fulfilled in one who, for the first time, is called "the Messiah." Concluding her song, she showed that he would reign over the world and restore peace.

When Israel became tired of the Lord's special guidance and protection and preferred to be like the nations around her, she clamored for a king. Reluctantly the Lord granted the request, nevertheless, He warned her of the mistake which she was making. In due time the prophet Samuel anointed Saul, of the house of Kish, to become the messiah\* of the nation. From that time onward the people associated the hopes of the former predictions with him. Hence the messianic ideal settled down around his personality. Finally, he rebelled against the Lord and was rejected. At that time God withdrew His lovingkindness from Saul and in his stead chose David whom Samuel anointed. In the popular mind the messianic ideal immediately settled down upon the newly chosen monarch. He continued to be thought of as the messiah of God until he committed his awful sin with Bath-sheba and the series of iniquitous acts following. Finally, he confessed his failure as a messiah of Israel. At the close of his life he clearly stated, by the power and insight of the Divine Spirit, that he had failed but that the righteous Ruler would come and bring peace to a war-torn world. Notwithstanding the unmistakable character of the prediction, the people soon forgot and allowed the messianic ideal to settle down upon Solomon, his son and successor.

Although the prophets of Israel constantly foretold the nature and the person of the future Messiah, the people did not seem to grasp their teaching. In the popular mind, the messianic ideal never was properly detached from the Davidic dynasty, that is, the people did not clearly see the twofold nature of Messiah. During and after the Maccabean period a type of literature that is known as apocalyptic sprang up. In these writings various positions relative to Messiah find expression. In some connections he is presented as a superhuman being; in others his purely human character is set forth. Therefore in the literature of the period a medley of opinions concerning him is to be found.

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\*The following passages should be consulted for full information concerning the anointing of kings and others: I Sam. 2:10,35; 12:3,5; 16:6; 26:9,11,16,23; II Sam. 1:14,16; 19:21; II Chron. 6:42; Ps. 18:51; 20:7; 132:17; Lam. 4:20.



After the destruction of the national shrine and the fall of Jerusalem, many in Israel, led by Rabbi Akiba, followed the false messiah, Bar Kokba, whose revolt was finally quelled by the Romans in 135 of the Common Era. During the succeeding centuries not a few false claimants of messianic honors have arisen and led movements that have ended in disaster. These facts show that Israel as a nation has in the past been looking for a human leader. Otherwise the people would not have followed these pretenders.

## II. CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOX CONCEPTION OF MESSIAH

As stated in the last paragraph, many of Israel in the past have followed different false messiahs and have been sadly disappointed. Today in orthodox Jewry the messianic hope is still alive. In making this statement I am not unmindful of the fact that indifference, unbelief, and atheism have made great inroads toward the very heart of the nation. Notwithstanding the disastrous effects of this great falling away from the synagogue, there yet remains imbedded in the Jewish heart a longing for the coming of the Messiah. In many quarters the ancient hope still burns as brightly as ever. There is an earnest desire for the coming of the long expected Deliverer. This fact is in evidence especially in Europe where the people have not broken away from the traditions of the fathers as in certain other parts of the world. Among the faithful the messianic hope burns brightly.

When a boy is born into a strictly orthodox Jewish home, the pious parents earnestly pray that their child may become the messiah who shall deliver the nation. This conception of messiah is grounded upon the data found in the historical books of Tenach concerning the kings of Judah—especially Saul, David, and Solomon—who were called the Lord's anointed. These anointed ones, or messiahs, were simply men. They entered the world by ordinary generation, were subject to human frailties, served their day, and finally were gathered to their fathers.

Some people in Jewry considered Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the late president of the Zionistic organization, a messiah and spoke of him as such. There are others who did not go so far. Should another leader loom before the public and give rise

to the hope of becoming the nation's deliverer, doubtless many would hail him as the long expected messiah.

In strictly religious circles the messianic hope coming from the past is still the dominant one. Some Jewish sources indicate that there are to be two messiahs. On this point I wish to quote a paragraph from the article *Messiah* in the Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 511b.

"Finally, there must be mentioned a Messianic figure peculiar to the rabbinical apocalyptic literature—that of Messiah ben Joseph. The earliest mention of him is in Suk. 52a, b, where three statements occur in regard to him, for the first of which R. Dosa (c. 250) is given as authority. In the last of these statements only his name is mentioned, but the first two speak of the fate which he is to meet, namely, to fall in battle (as if alluding to a well-known tradition). Details about him are not found until much later, but he has an established place in the apocalypses of later centuries and in the midrash literature—in Saadia's description of the future ('Emunot we-De'ot,' ch. viii.) and in that of Hai Gaon ('Ta'am Zekenim,' p. 59). According to these, Messiah b. Joseph will appear prior to the coming of Messiah b. David; he will gather the children of Israel around him, march to Jerusalem, and there, after overcoming the hostile powers, reestablish the Temple-worship and set up his own dominion. Thereupon Armilus, according to one group of sources, or Gog and Magog, according to the other, will appear with their hosts before Jerusalem, wage war against Messiah b. Joseph, and slay him. His corpse, according to one group, will lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem; according to the other, it will be hidden by the angels with the bodies of the Patriarchs, until Messiah b. David comes and resurrects him (comp. Jew. Encyc. i. 682, 684 [§§8 and 13]; comp. Also Midr. Wayosha' and Agadat ha-Mashiah in Jellinek, 'B. H.' i. 55 *et seq.*, iii. 141 *et seq.*)."

According to certain traditions, Elijah will come as a forerunner of Messiah ben David and will engage in a most important ministry. These sources of our information teach that he will perform many and sundry duties in preparation for the advent of Messiah. The article Elijah in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* is illuminating on this point.

All in Jewry who accept the thirteen principles of the faith believe, according to their confession, that there shall be a personal Messiah who will come and for whom the nation should wait. Article 12 affirms: "I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming." In

accordance with the teaching of this confession, Messiah will come and deliver the nation. He will reestablish the throne of David and introduce an era of peace and prosperity. During his reign Israel shall be exalted to her divinely appointed place at the head of the nations. According to the earnest expectation of the godly, when Messiah makes his advent or his presence becomes known, the nation's long period of sufferings will end. This hope has been and continues to be the source of great comfort and satisfaction to those in Israel looking for her redemption.

### III. CONTEMPORARY REFORMED CONCEPTION OF MESSIAH

Though no sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between orthodox and reformed Jewry in regard to theological questions in general, it may be held as true that the latter has largely given up its hope in the coming of a personal messiah such as the orthodox element expects. The trend of thought today in reformed circles seems to be headed toward the point of abandoning the ancient faith and of adopting a humanitarian program. Thus the promises of a personal messiah are no longer accepted as literal but are rather interpreted as pictorial representations of a future age when peace shall prevail throughout the earth. This reign of blessedness, of course, is not attributed to supernatural intervention but to the efforts of man to better his condition. Hence the program of the leaders of this advanced movement is to devise ways and means whereby the ends in view may be accomplished.

In view of these two positions, that are diametrically opposed, I shall endeavor in an impartial manner to investigate the evidence which is furnished by the Tenach to ascertain if possible the truth concerning the matter. This study should be of the greatest interest to everyone alike, since at the present time it seems as if our civilization is doomed to a terrible collapse. The existing conditions do not seem to improve but rather to grow worse. Voices are heard in all quarters clamoring for an improvement of our social, industrial, and economic situation. Will man's efforts solve the problem? Or must we await the birth of some ideal scheme for world improvement? A further question may be asked: Were the old prophets right in speaking of a personal Messiah who would come and adjust all

differences, stabilize conditions, and introduce the era of peace? The answer to these questions may be found when we have ascertained from the Scriptures the truth concerning the nature and the person of Messiah. To this investigation we now address ourselves in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

I. THE EXPRESSION **מְלַאךְ יְהוָה** A PROPER NAME

IN the preceding chapter we examined a cross section of contemporary Jewish opinion relative to the messianic hope. In the present chapter it is fitting to begin the Scriptural study of the nature and person of Messiah with an investigation of the significance of **מְלַאךְ יְהוָה** *angel of the Lord*. Is this term specific or general?

The word **מְלַאךְ** is used to designate both a heavenly being and a human messenger. In Genesis 32:1 we read, "And Jacob went on his way, and **מְלַאכֵי אֱלֹהִים** the angels of God met him," but in the second verse below we see the statement that Jacob sent **מְלַאכֵים** *messengers* ahead to Esau. In view of the double significance of this word, it becomes necessary to examine the context of any specific occurrence in order to ascertain its meaning. After we have learned from the connection that a given case refers to a heavenly messenger, we must press our investigation further to determine the order of celestial beings to which the one mentioned belongs, since there are not only cherubim but also seraphim and others to whom no special names are given.

Some interpreters claim that the expression **מְלַאךְ יְהוָה** should be rendered "the angel the Lord." If **יְהוָה** is to be understood as being in apposition with **מְלַאךְ** without regard to the Masoretic pointing, the phrase must be rendered "an angel or messenger, the Lord." Furthermore, if **מְלַאךְ** is in the absolute state, we should expect **יְהוָה** to have the article and to be written **הַיְהוָה** as is always the case with **אֲדֹנָי** *Lord*. In such instances it is always written **הַאֲדֹנָי**. Whenever this form is used, reference is made to the Lord and never to a created being. Upon the same principle we would expect to see the article prefixed to **יְהוָה**. But it never is. Since in Malachi 2:7 we have the following statement: "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; **כִּי מְלַאךְ יְהוָה-צְבָאוֹת הוּא**; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts," we see that **מְלַאךְ** followed by **יְהוָה**

may be in the genitive case. This quotation may serve as a hint in directing us to the solution of the problem.

Some modern versions, on the other hand, translate our phrase "an angel of the Lord." For instance, Isaac Leeser renders Judges 6:11: "And there came **יְהוָה מְלָאךְ** an angel of the Lord, and sat down under the oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash," etc. This phrase can with equal propriety be translated "the angel of the Lord," for such a construction is found in the passage quoted above from Malachi. Against this translation it cannot be urged that **מְלָאךְ** is used without the definite article, for nouns in the *construct state* never have the article. According to Hebrew grammar, the article is attached to the following noun to make the phrase definite. In conformity to the rule is the phrase **הַר הַבַּיִת** "the mountain of the house." To this rule, however, there are a few exceptions. For instance, the phrase **אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** "the God of Israel" is indeed specific. In this case no article is needed to make the phrase definite. But the phrase **הַיְכָל יְהוָה** "the temple of the Lord" is also by all scholars recognized as definite, though the article does not occur in the expression. The sacred name of God **יְהוָה** is considered throughout the Tenach sufficiently definite so that the article is never used with it. No Hebrew scholar will call this statement in question. Consequently the phrase is rendered definite by the specific nature of God's memorial Name.

In order to investigate the question further, we will, for the present, dismiss from our minds the fact that the sacred name of God **יְהוָה** is definite. Therefore we will suppose that the Biblical writers desired to make the expression **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה** "angel of the Lord" the most definite possible. How would they proceed? If they prefixed the article to **מְלָאךְ** they would say "the Angel the Lord," whereas they desired to say "the angel of the Lord." They could not prefix the article to **יְהוָה**, for that name does not admit of such treatment. Only one course was left to them. On this point hear Doctor McCaul.

"There remained one other course possible, and that was, never to use the expression in the plural of angels, but always in the singular so as to indicate that one person, and one only, is

intended. But have they done this? Yes uniformly: in the whole Bible, and in the great variety of styles which occurs we never once find the expression **מְלַאכֵי יְהוָה** 'Angels of the Lord,' but uniformly the singular, **מְלַאךְ יְהוָה** to point out that there is only one of heavenly beings to whom this title belongs. It would be folly, or something worse, to say that this is fortuitous. The uniformity of the practice by all the sacred writers implies design, and teaches that there is but one person thus called, and that therefore the true translation is, The angel of the Lord.' "— Alexander McCaul in *Kimchi's Commentary on Zechariah*.

An objection sometimes brought against the position taken in the last paragraph is based upon the fact that, though we do not find the expression, "angels of the Lord," twice we see a kindred phrase, "angels of God." In reply, one may call attention to the fact that **אֱלֹהִים** is a general term applying to both the true God and the false ones, whereas **יְהוָה**, is the proper name for the one God, the God of Israel. Furthermore, we have already seen that a word in the construct state cannot have the article. If, however, it is desirable to make the phrase definite, the article must be prefixed to the following word, provided it admits of this modification. In the case of **אֱלֹהִים**, the article sometimes is used. For example, in Genesis 31:11 we have this statement: "And **מְלַאךְ הָאֱלֹהִים** the angel of God said unto me in the dream." Thus **אֱלֹהִים** *God* is made definite by prefixing the article. Again, we see the same usage in Exodus 14:19: "And **מְלַאךְ הָאֱלֹהִים** the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them." Since **אֱלֹהִים** may take the article, the sacred writers could, by prefixing it, make a phrase definite regardless of whether the preceding genitive was singular or plural. Since **אֱלֹהִים** can take the article, and since it was used by the sacred writers with both **מְלַאךְ** *angel* and **מְלַאכִים** *angels*, it is clear that they could have used the phrase **מְלַאכֵי הָאֱלֹהִים** *the angels of God*, had they so desired. Note, however, this most significant fact—they never did. At the same time they did use **מְלַאכֵי אֱלֹהִים** *angels of God* twice (Gen. 28:12; 32:1) and also **מְלַאךְ הָאֱלֹהִים** *the angel of God*. These linguistic phenomena are not accidental. The data show that they were designed. In view of the facts which we have thus far seen, there is but one conclusion to be reached, namely, that the phrase **מְלַאךְ הָאֱלֹהִים** "the angel of God"

was used to designate a special heavenly being, whereas the expression **מְלָאכִי** "angels of God" was employed as a comprehensive term to indicate the angels of God in general.

## II. THE IDENTITY OF **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה** WITH **מְלָאךְ הַאֱלֹהִים**

In the preceding section we saw that the expression **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה** was a specific term referring to a single heavenly being. The same thing is true concerning **מְלָאךְ הַאֱלֹהִים**. The question arising at this point is whether or not these two phrases refer to the same celestial being. In Judges 6:20,21 we find them used synonymously. "And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there went up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight." He who is called **מְלָאךְ הַאֱלֹהִים** in verse 20 is spoken of in the next verse as **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה**. Since the two specific terms are applied to the same heavenly being, it is certain that they are used interchangeably. Another example of the synonymous character of these two expressions is found in Judges 13. In verse 3 the statement is made that "the angel of the Lord" appeared to Manoah's wife. In verse 9 this same angel is called "the angel of God." Therefore it is evident that these two names are applied to one heavenly being.

## III. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה** A DIVINE PERSONALITY

It is now proper for us to press our investigation a step further to ascertain the nature of this heavenly visitor who is honored with the distinguishing names studied above. The first appearance of *the angel of the Lord* in the Biblical record is found in Genesis 16. In this passage we find an account of Hagar's being persecuted and driven away from home by Sarai. As she wandered around in the



wilderness, **מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה** *the angel of the Lord* appeared to her and instructed her to return to her mistress. During the conversation, the angel informed her that mighty nations would spring from her yet unborn son. Recognizing who was talking with her, Hagar called the angel's name **אֵתָהּ אֱלֹהֵי רְאִי** "Thou art a God that seeth." Hagar recognized that this Angel was God; hence she called Him *a God that seeth*.

In recording the event, the inspired historian said that she "called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou art a God that seeth." Some interpreters have thought that Hagar was the one who called this angel by the name **יְהוָה**, *Lord*, but this view is erroneous, for it was the sacred historian who said that the Lord talked with her. Hence both Hagar and the inspired writer recognized that this Angel was the Lord Himself.

It is unfortunate that such outstanding commentators as Rashi, Aben Ezra, Solomon ben Melech, and Nachmanides pass over this fact in silence. Abarbanel, however, comments upon this passage and states that it is exceedingly difficult, particularly, "Because the peculiar name of God is employed, 'She called the name of the Lord who spake with her;' and how can it possibly be, that the First Cause, blessed be He, should speak with Hagar; when the law itself testifies and says, that it was the angel of the Lord who appeared unto her, and not the Lord himself?" He cuts the Gordian knot in the following statement: "The right answer here is, that all prophetic vision, whether mediate or immediate, is always attributed to God, blessed be He, for it is from Him and by His will, and on this account also the Messenger is sometimes called by the name of Him that sends him. In this point of view it is that the Scripture here says, 'And she called the name of the Lord that spake to her'" (*Abarbanel in loc.*). This explanation is unsatisfactory, because it clashes with many other plain facts presented in the sacred narrative. For the present I shall pass by this objection and return to it in a later connection.

Another excellent example throwing light upon this question is found in Judges 6. The inspired historian states that "**מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה** the angel of the Lord appeared unto" Gideon (vs. 12); that "the Lord **יְהוָה** looked upon him" (Gideon) (vs. 14); and that "the Lord **יְהוָה** said unto him, Surely I will be with thee" (vs. 16). It is to be remembered that the Biblical writer made these statements. The entire narrative

shows that the one who is called the Angel of the Lord at the beginning of the account is later called the Lord Himself. Unmistakably the Angel of the Lord is none other than the Lord, who for the purpose of communicating with man assumed for the occasion a human form.

In vision Zechariah (3:1-6) saw Satan opposing Israel. In it Joshua, the high priest, was standing before the Angel of the Lord and Satan stood at His side. He who is called in verse 1 the Angel of the Lord is in the second referred to as the Lord Himself. "And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" The Angel of the Lord is identified as the Lord Himself.

From the passages examined above, which are taken from the Torah and the Prophets, we see that the Angel of the Lord is recognized as the Lord Himself. Notwithstanding this positive evidence, some writers still claim that this angel is but a messenger of the Lord and that only in an accommodated sense is he called by the sacred memorial name of God. One states his position in the following words: "The messenger is called by the name of Him that sends him." Do the facts justify this conclusion?

The dictum, "the messenger is called by the name of Him that sends him," must be examined minutely in the light of all facts bearing upon the subject. In the eighth and ninth chapters of the book of Daniel, the account of the appearance of the angel Gabriel to the prophet is recorded. This mighty messenger is not "called by the name of Him that sends him." In the vision of Zechariah (1:7-11) we read of many angels who were commissioned to execute the Lord's will upon earth. Concerning these it is said: "These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth" (vs. 10). None of these was "called by the name of the Lord who sends them." Again, we see an account of the angel who was sent to Isaiah in order to remove his iniquity (Isa. 6:6,7). This one likewise was not called by the name of Him who sent him but, on the contrary, was described as one of the seraphim. According to Tenach, often angels appeared to men but seldom were named. In view of these facts, why was this particular angel given the memorial

name of God Himself? Here let us remember that this name was given only to this angel.\*

The answer to the foregoing query doubtless is to be found by a close examination of two declarations of the Scriptures. First, let us note the significance of the statement: **אֲנִי יְהוָה הוּא שְׁמִי וְכְבוֹדִי לֹא אֶחָד לְאֲחֵר וְתַהֲלֵתִי לְפָסִילִים** "I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise unto graven images" (Isa. 42:8). On this verse Kimchi makes a very excellent comment: "That is my name, which is appropriated to myself alone, not like the name of the graven images; for although their worshippers associate them with me in the application of the name **אֱלֹהִים** God, they can not associate them with me in this name; for I am Lord over all." In this he is right.

A second passage throwing light upon this question is Hosea 12:5. **וַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַצְּבָאוֹת יְהוָה זְכָרוֹ:** "even the Lord, the God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial name." Rabbi David Kimchi likewise gives an illuminating comment upon this passage. "Although he was revealed to your fathers in the name God Almighty, saying to him, 'I am God Almighty, increase and multiply' (Gen. xxxv. 11); yet to Moses he renewed his fearful name, and all this for your sakes, by means of it to renew signs and wonders, to bring you forth from slavery to liberty, and this new name is the Lord, **יְהוָה**, and he is the God of Hosts. God of Hosts expresses that degree, in which stand the angels, and the orbs with their stars, for in the names **אֱל** and **אֱלֹהִים**, he (God) is associated with them; but in this name He is associated with none but himself."

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\*The Talmud recognizes the fact that there is but one angel who was called by this sacred name. From Tractate Sanhedrin Dr. Alexander McCaul quotes the following: "The same heretic said to Rav Idith, It is written, 'And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord' (Exod. xxiv. 1), but it ought to have been written, 'Come up unto me.' The rabbi answered, The speaker here is Metatron, whose name is the same as that of his master, for it is written, 'For my name is in him.' (Exod. xxiii. 21)" Sanhedrim, fol. col. 2. Dr. McCaul makes the following observation concerning this position: "This passage is obviously the source whence Kimchi and Abarbanel borrowed that above explanation, but here the explanation is not general, applying to all angels, but only to one, whose name is Metatron. And the occasion of this reply plainly shows that the other opinion, that the name Jehovah is ascribed indiscriminately to all angels was then unknown, for, if it had been, it would have been a more plausible answer to the heretic's objection. The real difficulty, therefore, remains in all its force, why is the peculiar and proper name of God applied to the angel of the Lord?" Rabbi David Kimchi's *Commentary upon the Prophecies of Zechariah* (1837), pp. 17, 18.

In this he is correct. Therefore, since his other statement, "The messenger is called by the name of Him that sends him," is at variance with this excellent comment on Hosea's declaration, we must reject this unwarranted statement as contradicting the facts. According to Kimchi's quotation above, the Lord God has no partner in the name **יהוה**. This interpretation is ancient, for it is found in the Talmud in connection with a comment on the verse, "On this wise shall ye bless the children of Israel." Here it is stated: "that is, with the name Jehovah. If you object, that it may be with the name Jehovah, or it may not be, but with the cognomen Lord; the objection is answered by the following words, 'And they shall put my name.' (Num. vi. 27.) My name, the name that is appropriated to me alone."—*Sotah*. fol. 38.1. Maimonides likewise is clear on this point. Hear him. "All the names of God which occur in Scripture are all derived from the works, as is well known, except one name, and that is, **יהוה**, which is the name appropriated to God alone. And this is called the plain name (Shem Hammephorash), because it teaches plainly and unequivocally of the substance of God." Again, he declares, "The sum of the whole matter is, the dignity of this name, and the prohibition to read it, is to be ascribed to this, that it points directly to the substance of God, and on this account, not one of the creatures has a share in the teaching of this name, as our rabbies of blessed memory have said: 'My name, the name that is appropriated to me alone.'" The quotations from these rabbinical scholars show that it is improper to ascribe the name of the Lord to anyone except the Lord God of Israel Himself. Since, however, the Biblical writers did call this Angel by the sacred memorial name of **יהוה**, it is certain that He was not an ordinary angel but the Lord Himself who appeared to certain ones of the patriarchs.

Not only is this Angel called **יהוה**, the incommunicable name of God, but also He is recognized as possessing the divine nature, for He was worshiped as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Proof of this fact is found in the record of Jacob's vision at Bethel (Gen. 28:10-22). In this divinely inspired dream he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and at the top of the ladder stood **יהוה** the Lord, who declared, "I am **יהוה** the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." At the conclusion of the message Jacob arose, erected a pillar, and worshiped, making a

vow to the Lord. Later Jacob in explaining to his wives the reasons for returning to his native land referred to his experience at Bethel. He declared to them that "the angel of God" had appeared to him, instructing him to return to his native land. He affirmed that this Angel stated that He was the one who appeared to him at Bethel: "I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst a pillar, where thou vowedst a vow unto me" (Gen. 31:13). This Angel declared that He was God and that Jacob had rendered worship to him formerly at Bethel. "Then beyond all doubt He was God, the true object of worship, for if Jacob had made a mistake, neither the angel nor the sacred historian would have passed by the sin of idolatry unnoticed and unreprieved." When the historical narrative is allowed to give its message unmodified and the words are taken at their plain grammatical sense, we are forced to one conclusion, namely, that "this angel was the God of Beth-el, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and the God whom Jacob worshiped, and to whom he vowed the vow."

Thus far we see that God, for the purpose of communicating His will to certain servants of His in primitive times, assumed a visible form. By the sacred penmen He is called both the Angel of the Lord and the Lord Himself.

Such manifestations are credible since the Creator can, for the purpose of communicating with His creatures, assume the form of man. In order to set this truth in bold relief, I may be allowed to use a borrowed illustration. If I were the omnipotent God who had created a universe and had peopled it with creatures of free choice, I would have to approach them by assuming the form in which they existed and to speak to them in their own language. Upon the same principle the true God temporarily assumed an angelic-human form to communicate with man. These theophanies were but brief visits. Since the Deity, consistent with His purposes, made such short visits as these, it is reasonable to think of His making a more extended stay upon earth if the fulfilling of His holy purposes so demands. We may now advance a step further by examining the promises of redemption.

## CHAPTER THREE

## EARLY RAYS OF MESSIANIC GLORY

## I. THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

The revelation of God begins with a glorious statement, sublime beyond human comprehension, concerning the creation of the universe by the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and eternal God (Gen. 1:1). That the earth was in a perfect condition when created is evident from the following passage of Isaiah: "The God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste, that formed it to be inhabited." But according to Genesis 1:2 it became a desolation and a waste. Evidently some great calamity overtook it. The account of its being reconstructed by the Lord during a period of six days is graphically described in the first chapter of Genesis.

After it had been prepared as a fit habitation, the Lord created\* man to have dominion over it. This history is recorded in the second chapter of this marvelous book of beginnings.

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\* Dr. Ira M. Price, in *The Monuments and the Old Testament* (new edition), says, "Most of the great nations of antiquity have preserved legends or traditions of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, of the fall, and of the deluge." *The Seven Tablets of Creation* constitute the Babylonian recension of the primitive creation narrative and, when stripped of their grossly heathen elements and polytheism, correspond with fair accuracy to the inspired Biblical record. The Sumerians, the aborigines of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, likewise have preserved to us an account of creation, which also confirms the Scriptural narration. These traditions are universal among primitive races.

When these primitive legends are properly deleted of all evident heathen excrescences and scientifically evaluated, the imperishable elements common to all are found to bear unimpeachable testimony to the accuracy and the reliability of the Biblical accounts.

There evidently lie behind these early traditions, distorted and corrupted as they are, the actual historical facts. The Biblical account, free from all irrational legendary elements and stated in universal language which is easily and readily understood by all peoples regardless of their state of civilization and the peculiar superstitions and conflicting scientific theories in vogue, commends itself to the thinking, truth-loving people as an absolutely accurate and infallible account of what actually did occur.

After man's creation and his being placed in control of the earth, according to the Biblical account, the great enemy of both God and man, **הַשָּׂטָן**, by craftiness and lying deceived him and thus wrenched him from this great heritage. With this turn of affairs came the blackness of darkness over this primeval couple, the crown and glory of the Almighty's creative activity. They with a vivid consciousness of their sin and the awful consequences were driven from the presence of God to pursue their course without the previous daily communion and fellowship with their Creator.

The Lord in His mercy and goodness, however, did not leave them without hope of deliverance from this fallen and degraded state. In the pronouncement of the judgment upon Satan and the human race there also appears the cheering promise that the conflict, just begun, will eventually result in the triumph of mankind over Satan because "he (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" \* (Gen. 3:15).

After due allowance has been made for figurative language and the so-called oriental embellishment in the narration of the fall, there remain, as Professor Delitzsch points out, in the history of paradise the following bed-rock facts: (1) "that there was a demoniacal evil one, before evil had taken possession of man; (2) that this demoniacal evil one was the power of temptation before which man fell; (3) that God after mankind had fallen punished them, but at the same time opened a way of salvation, by which they could again secure communion with God; (4) that He placed before them in prospect the victory over that power of temptation through which they had lost the communion with God in Paradise."

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\* The Scriptural account of the fall of man received extraordinary confirmation in the *Myth of Adapa* which is found in four Babylonian fragments. Three of these clay tablets are from the library of Ashurbanipal of Nineveh and one from the archives of King Amenhotep IV of Egypt at Tel el Amarna.

Additional confirmation of the fall of man is found in the famous *Temptation* cylinder-seal. In the center of this picture is a tree on which fruit is hanging. On opposite sides of the tree two persons are seated and behind one of them stands the upright crooked form of a serpent. This primitive piece of art is a silent witness to the truthfulness of the Biblical narrative.

Any theology that does not recognize these indisputable facts cannot, in a satisfactory manner, account for the simple daily experiences of the race. These facts constitute the dark background to all human history.

Since man was driven from the garden of Eden, he has realized that there exists between him and his Maker an impassable gulf. To this grim, ghastly fact the legends of all the nations of antiquity supply unimpeachable evidence. Our own souls yield indisputable corroborative testimony. The universal cry of humanity is for the bridging of the gap, the removal of the barrier between us and our Creator, and the reconciliation of the race to God. The divine response to this heart-yearning is found in the original promise that the seed of the woman will eventually crush the serpent's head—the promise of victory over the enemy of the race.

The expression, "the seed of the woman," is very striking, in that it never occurs elsewhere. According to the Biblical narrative, posterity is never reckoned after the female but always after the male. A glance at the many genealogies in the Scriptures confirms this fact. But here the conqueror of man's great enemy is to be "the seed of the woman." The fact that he is thus designated is a clear indication that there is something about his personality that makes him "the seed of the woman" in a peculiar sense that can be said of no other one.

Upon the serpent and his master, to whom he yielded himself a ready tool, the curse fell. That there is a spirit so very sinister and evil who conceals his identity, decoys the unsuspecting into his traps, and uses them in his deceptive designs is abundantly proved by the Scriptures. (See Job 1, 2; Zech. 3:1-5.)

The outcome of the struggle and the character of the defeat which "the seed of the woman" will inflict upon His adversary is represented as a crushing blow upon the head, whereas that which the adversary does to Him is as a slight wound upon the heel. **שׁוּף** is the verb used and, unlike **שָׁאַף**, takes a double accusative. Its evident force is seen by the fact that the Targum uses it for **דָּכַן** *to crush*; **טָחַן** *to grind to powder*; and **שָׁחַק** *to pulverize*. This prophecy, the first in the revelation of God, graphically sets before us the outcome of the age-long conflict: the enemy of man lying prostrate upon the ground, having received a crushing blow upon his



head, and the victor standing above him with only a flesh wound upon his heel. Professor Delitzsch correctly declares: "only when we translate it: 'He (the seed of the woman) shall crush thee on the head'..., does the sentence include the definite promise of victory over the serpent, which, because it suffers the deadly tread, seeks to defend itself, and sinking under the treader is mortally wounded (Gen. 49:17)." The goal toward which all history is moving is here announced in this graphic, cryptic oracle.

That the ancient synagogue interpreted this passage as a messianic prediction is clear from the Palestinian Targum which testifies that in Genesis 3:15 is the promise of the healing of the serpent's bite "at the end of the days, in the days of King Messiah."

"And I will put enmity between thee and the WOMAN, and between the seed of thy sons, and between the SEED of her sons; and it shall be when the sons of the WOMAN keep the commandments of the LAW, they will be prepared to smite thee on thy HEAD; but if they forsake the commandments of the LAW, thou wilt be prepared to wound them in the heel. Nevertheless for them there shall be a MEDICINE; and they shall make a REMEDY for the heel in the days of the King MESHIHA."—*Targum Palestine* (or Jerusalem).

The Palestinian Midrash (*Bereshith rabba* XII) declares, "The things which God created perfect since man sinned have become corrupt (נתקלקלו) and do not return to their proper condition until the son of Perez (i.e. according to Gen. xxxviii: 29; Ruth iv: 18ff, the Messiah out of the tribe of Judah) comes." This interpretation correctly makes Messiah the restorer of the primitive order and the reconciler of the estranged world to God. Onkelos together with others translate as follows:

"And I will put enmity between thy son and her SON; HE will remember thee and what thou didst to HIM from (at) the beginning, and thou shalt be observant unto HIM at the end."—*Targum Onkelos*.

"When Adam saw the darkness it is added, he was greatly afraid, saying, 'Perhaps HE of whom it is written, "HE shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise HIS HEEL," cometh to molest and attack me,' and he said: 'Surely the darkness shall cover me.'"—*Shemoth Rabbah*, 12 (ed. Warsh. p. 24b).

"As thou wentest forth for the SALVATION OF THY PEOPLE by the hands of the MESHIHA the SON OF DAVID, who shall WOUND SATAN who is the head, the King and Prince of the house of the wicked, and shall ... (overturn) all his strength, power, policy and dominion." —R. David Kimchi.

## II. FIRST ECHOES OF THE PROMISE

### A. Adam's Naming His Wife

God warned man that on the day he partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **מוֹת תָּמוּת** "dying thou shalt surely die" (literal tr. of Gen. 2:17). Adam thoroughly understood the significance of the warning, for God always makes Himself clear and easily intelligible in all matters that refer to conduct and the consequences of disobedience. When, however, he disregarded the sacred prohibition and ate of the forbidden fruit, a new revelation was given him which did not make void the sentence of death, but which opened before his bewildered gaze a great vista of hope of final and complete deliverance through the seed of the woman. His faith in this promise took on its first recorded concrete form in his selection of a name for his wife—**חַוָּה** *Eve* "because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). Therefore, in spite of the sentence of death, Adam's choice of this name is evidence of his conviction that Eve was to become the mother of the human race which should live and to which ultimate victory should be given by "the seed of the woman" when He crushes the head of the serpent—the adversary.

On this point Delitzsch declares:

"The creative promise of the propagation of the race is not to be abolished by the fall, but on the contrary to subserve the deliverance of man, the victory over the power of evil being promised to the seed of the woman. Consequently, in the presence of the death with which he is threatened, the woman has become to Adam the pledges of both the continuance and the victory of the race. It is therefore an act of faith, an embracing of the promise interwoven in the decree of wrath, that he calls his wife's name **חַוָּה**. This **חַוָּה=חַיָּה** (according to the formations **חַיָּה, עַוְיָה**) means life, LXX. ζωή, not preserver (comp. **חַיָּה** xix. 32, 34), *i.e.* propagator of life, Symm. ζωογόνοϛ, for the rejection of the **ג**, in the *part.* of *Piel*, is unusual, and only occurs in the *part.* of *Pual*, and perhaps in the *part.* *Phil. of verbs* **עוּ**. The woman is called life, as a fountain of life from which the life of the human race is continually renewed, just as Noah, **נֹחַ**, is called rest as the bringer of rest (Kohler). The name **חַוָּה** is not a name like the God-given one **γυνή** = *genetrix* and *femina*, which Corssen derives from *feo* (*fuo*, φῶ), Curtius from *fe-lare* to suckle, but a proper name which, as *mnemosynon gratiae promissae* (Melanchthon), declares the special importance of this first of women to the human race and its history. Hence it is explained, retrospectively from its fulfilment: for she became **אֵם כָּל-יְהוּדָיִם**, a mother (ancestress) of every

individual in whom the race lives on; the life of the race which proceeded from her is, in the midst of the death of individuals, ever reoriginating, and fulfilment has thus sealed the meaning of this name of faith and hope."—*New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. I, pp. 169, 170.

This interpretation is confirmed by the ancient synagogue.

"And Adam knew his wife which DESIRED THE ANGEL, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, 'I have obtained THE MAN, the ANGEL OF THE LORD.' "—*Targum Jonathan*.

"And Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, 'I have acquired THE MAN from before the Lord' "—*Targum Palestine*.

"And Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said 'I have acquired THE MAN from before the Lord.' " *Targum Onkelos*. "R. Tanhuma said in the name of R. Samuel: 'Eve had respect to that "SEED" which is coming from another place. And who is this? This is the Messiah, the King.'"—*Ber. Rabbah* (23 ed. Warsh. p. 45b).

"It is not written that we may preserve a Son from our father, but SEED from our Father.' This is the SEED that is coming from another place. And who is this? This is the KING MESSIAH."—*Ber. Rabbah* (51 ed. Warsh. p. 95a) on Gen. 19:32.

### B. *Eve's Ejaculation*

The second echo is found in the expression of ecstasy voiced by Eve concerning the birth of her first child. Moses informs us that she exclaimed **קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת־יְהוָה** "I have gotten a man with *the help of* the Lord" (Gen. 4:1 American Revised Version). The words, the help of, are not in the original text. The sentence literally rendered is: "I have gotten a man, the Lord" or "I have gotten a man, even the Lord." The force of the words and the construction are so very strong that the Jerusalem Targum renders them: "I have gotten a man, the Angel of the Lord."

An objection is brought against this translation, in that it inserts the expression *Angel*, whereas this heavenly visitor is not introduced into the patriarchal history until later. This position is based upon the argument from silence, which reasoning is, as admitted by all logicians, very unreliable and often fallacious.

The Scriptures do not claim to record every event, but to preserve the history of redemption and those things vital to the development of its theme; hence it is possible that this Angel of the Lord could have appeared without any record of the event.\*

An objection urged against the plain, literal translation of Eve's statement is that "the terms of the primitive promise do not give any occasion for such an expression" as that which she voiced. This objection, like the one just examined, is based upon the argument from silence. It is not to be supposed that Moses in this brief account has recorded every word that was spoken by the Lord on this occasion. No written account of a conversation is so full as the original, spoken language. The recorded discourse is of necessity greatly condensed and expressed, comparatively speaking, in few words.

Her outburst of joy and hope, when her first-born arrived, shows clearly her interpretation of the original promise. Hence we are to examine it closely and allow it to give its natural, normal meaning.

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\* The critical analysis of the Torah assumes that the sacred name of the Lord יהוה was never known until the time of the exodus. This presumption is based upon a failure to note carefully what Exodus 6:2,3 says: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as אֱלֹהֵי שָׂדֵי God Almighty; but by my name יהוה the Lord I was not known to them." This statement does not say that God did not in primitive times reveal himself as יהוה but simply affirms that he did not make himself known to these three patriarchs by this, His memorial name. There was a revelation of God communicated to the race before the time of Moses, for Genesis 26:5 quotes the Lord as saying: "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. ..." A number of divine laws are quoted and referred to in the book of Genesis which gives an historical account of events antedating the giving of the law at Sinai. It seems from Genesis 14 that the knowledge of the true God was kept alive in the little kingdom over which Melchizedek reigned. Throughout the rest of the world this knowledge seems to have faded gradually from the minds of the people. It is likely, and even probable, that in the primitive revelation God made Himself known by His memorial name, since it occurs in the earliest chapters of the Torah. When the Lord called Abraham, he lived in a heathen environment. To him, under these conditions, God revealed Himself as God Almighty. Also to his son and grandson He revealed Himself as such and awaited the time when He would enter into covenant with all of their descendants to disclose Himself by His holy memorial name.

In order to verify the rendering, we shall compare it with other parallel statements. The sentence following Eve's exclamation throws light upon its syntax. **וַתֵּלֶד** "And again she bear his brother Abel" (Gen. 4:2). Here Abel is in apposition with brother, the object of the verb. Thus it is with our sentence. **אִישׁ** *man* is the direct object of the verb and in apposition with it is the word **יְהוָה**. Just as Abel identifies the brother whose birth is mentioned, the sacred name of God identifies the person who is born. A parallel to this sentence is found in Genesis 6:10: **וַיֹּלֶד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת׃** "And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth." In this sentence sons is the object of the verb though **אֶת** the sign of the direct object, is not prefixed to it, as is the case with our sentence, but this sign is joined to each of the names of the *sons* and shows that these are their names. Another excellent example is found in Genesis 26:34: **וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו בֶן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה אֶת־יְהוּדִית בַּת־בְּעֻרֵי הַחִתִּי** "And when Esau was forty years old he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite." **אִשָּׁה** is the direct object of the verb without the ordinary sign of the accusative case and *Judith* is in apposition with it and is prefixed with the sign of the object. Hence this is the normal, natural way of rendering the statement in the light of the context. No other translation is possible. This passage is an exact parallel to the statement made by Eve. The syntax being similar, only for theological reasons have objections been brought against taking the normal meaning of her words. Inasmuch as these objections are based upon pure speculation, theological and philosophical, which in turn rests upon the precarious argument from silence, they can have no logical force against the normal, natural, and grammatical meaning of the sentence. Therefore to render her words, "I have gotten a man, even the Lord," is the only course open to us.

The conclusion reached in the last paragraph shows us that Eve understood the promise made to her as including the supernatural entrance of the Lord into the human sphere. As noted above, the peculiar expression, "the seed of the woman," implies something above the natural. Eve's expression, though incorrect when applied to Cain, harmonizes with the plain meaning of this unique promise and

throws further light upon it. When one considers thoughtfully the promise and Eve's language with their implications, he is led to the conclusion that the original promise as spoken to Eve and as understood by her involved the entrance of the Lord into the human realm by His assuming the form of a child and by His being born of a woman. From this conclusion there can be no escape. The facts in general are stated or clearly implied but the details are withheld—awaiting a time of further revelation.

### *C. The Beginning of Public Worship*

It has been aptly said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the kingdom. Abel, the faithful servant of God whom his brother slew, did more in perpetuating the truth concerning the coming of the world Redeemer by his death than by his life. Hence in the days of Seth, the seed appointed of the Lord instead of Abel (Gen. 4:25), men began to gather around the promise of the coming Redeemer and to call upon the name of the Lord **יְהוָה** (Gen. 4:26), who by His promise of the seed of the woman had inspired faith in their hearts. The religious community was in those days a silent yet effective testimony to the messianic hope.

Men in their present condition long to be delivered not only from the bondage of sin and wickedness but also from the curse of death. The perpetual question that will not be downed is whether or not there is a life of happiness and bliss beyond this one. To answer this question once for all the Lord removed His faithful servant, Enoch the seventh from Adam, from this sinful world—not through the usual exit of death but by translation. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24). **וַיִּתְּהַלֵּךְ עֵנוֹךְ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיָנֹנּוּ כִּי־לָקַח אֹתוֹ: אֱלֹהִים:** Death, since the Fall, is the law of nature; but God who is the author of all nature can hold any or all laws in abeyance and render them inoperative, if it please Him, in order to forward His plans. The miraculous removal of Enoch from this realm of the curse shows that, had man "proved true in the probation of free will," he could have passed from this life into the higher and eternal realm of existence and bliss. The translation of both Enoch and Elijah so that they did not

see death is a prophecy in act of the final removal of God's faithful servants into the higher realm when it pleases Him.

The messianic hope was kept alive in the little religious community of the faithful and was fanned into a bright and shining light by the fervent lives of such men as Enoch whose persevering, consistent life and marvelous end stirred the hearts of all the servants of God.

#### *D. Noah a Type of the Expected Comforter*

In Lamech, the seventh from Adam in the line of Cain, the worldly tendency and ungodliness rose to the heights of blasphemous arrogance and total disregard for God and man. Under such conditions religious indifference held high carnival. In amazing contrast with this group of worldly, irreligious people, the descendants of Adam through Seth stand out as bold witnesses to the truth of God. Especially is this statement true with reference to Enosh, Enoch, and Lamech, the third, the seventh, and the ninth from Adam. Lamech in the Sethitic line hoped that in his son Noah, the tenth from Adam, would be fulfilled and realized the deliverance promised at the time of the Fall. This fact shines forth through the name Noah which he chose for the child, and which indicates his hope that "the period of the curse would come to a comforting conclusion" through this son. "And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, *which cometh* from (or because of) the ground which the Lord hath cursed." The name Noah is a substantive form derived from **נִיחָה** which primarily means *to rest, to settle down and remain*. God rested after His toil (Ex. 20:11); cattle were to be allowed to rest from their toil on the Sabbath (Ex. 23:12); and the Jews in the days of Esther opposed their enemies and then had rest from them (Esther 9:16). From these and many other examples that might be given it is clear that **נִיחָה** means *to enjoy rest* by being freed from exhausting labors, irksome duties, and unpleasant conditions, and, as in the present case, by being delivered from the wearisomeness of toil entailed by the curse.

In naming his son, Lamech stated that he had chosen this special word because "this same shall comfort us from our work," etc. Thus the father connected the

hope of comfort expressed by **מְנַחֵם** with the word **נִחָה**. The former of these words means *to comfort or console*; the latter, *to repose, be quiet, have rest*. In the nature of the case, the comfort comes only after cessation from the toil caused by the curse is granted. By some means or agency, which the Lord did not see fit to record, Lamech knew that his son would comfort the human race, not with words, but by delivering it from the curse. A comparison of his language with that spoken by the Lord in the original promise concerning "the seed of the woman" shows that the former is an unmistakable echo of the latter. Such a study also proves positively that the patriarchs understood "the seed of the woman" as indicating a man who would bring the desired deliverance from the curse.

The sacred record shows that Noah wrought, by preparing the ark, a deliverance for the race but not the salvation promised originally. But what he did was a type and a shadow of the great deliverance that "the seed of the woman" would bring to the human family. This fact is clearly seen in one of the names applied to Messiah by the ancient synagogue. The venerable rabbinic designation of Messiah as **מְנַחֵם** *M'nahem* is doubtless based upon its use in Lamentations 1:2, 9, 17, 21. The prophet in these verses laments the fact that Zion is lying in waste and that there is no one to comfort her, that is, to comfort her by bringing deliverance. In verse 16 of this same chapter there seems to be a very definite reference to one who can properly be called the Comforter of Zion and who is to refresh her soul. Here the complaint is that this one is far from her while she is lying, as it were, prostrate. This passage in the midst of a poem lamenting her hopeless state is undoubtedly an echo of the language of Lamech concerning Noah and depends upon the meaning which it there has for its force in this passage. As has already been seen, Lamech's statement shows that he who brings the comfort does so by delivering the servants of God from the curse upon the ground. Hence, since Noah did not fulfill the expectations aroused by his father's language, it is certain that he was simply a type of the great Comforter of the race and that what he did was only a shadow of the final and complete deliverance by the Comforter. In view of the partial and imperfect fulfillment of the expectations of this passage in the past, we may be



bold in asserting that the language will be fulfilled literally and completely when the great Comforter, whom Noah foreshadowed, comes.

Since the curse was placed upon the ground by the decree of the Almighty God, it is certain that an ordinary man cannot lift it. Only God Himself or one whom He especially empowers can remove this universal judgment. Confirmation of this position is found and further light is thrown upon this general subject in the predictions of Isaiah. In chapters 51 and 52 the prophet discusses the time when Israel shall be restored to fellowship with her God and shall become the head of the nations (Deut. 28:13). At that time "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; *and* sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isa. 51:11). Such a condition as here described presupposes the lifting of the curse. This quotation is immediately followed by the words of the Lord: **אָנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי הוּא** **מִנְחָמָה** "I, even I, am he that comforteth you." Here **מִנְחָמָה** is an echo of the prediction of Lamech concerning Noah and not only has the force of the original statement, which it graphically reproduces, but also completes the picture of Messiah and His redemptive work, which is roughly sketched in the Torah. As has already been seen, Lamech's portrait melts away and gives place to that of the great Comforter whom Noah typified.

It is to be noted the prophet declared that God Himself is the one who will comfort Zion. The repetition of the Words, I, *even* I, is employed for the express purpose of calling attention to the fact that it is the Lord, and not some prophet or representative of His, who brings the long-desired comfort, not only to Zion, but also to the entire human race. His work, as set forth in this passage, was clearly reflected in the language of Lamech.

Noah, the early type of the great Comforter of the race, was granted a view into the future and accurately foretold the three great sections of the human race into which it subsequently divided, the special sphere of each, and its contribution to the world. Upon Canaan is pronounced the curse of servitude; to Japheth is given far-flung political power and dominance; and to Shem is granted preeminence in spiritual affairs. True to this prophetic outline, the descendants of Ham have been

the slave nations of earth, the posterity of Japheth has held and wielded the sceptre of political preeminence and power over the peoples of the globe, and the offspring of Shem has made its contribution to the world in the moral, spiritual, and religious realms. As we shall see in the following section, it was from the Semitic branch of the race that Abraham, the father of the Hebrew people, sprang. To him God gave the promise that all families of the earth should be blessed in his seed. In perfect alignment with this announced plan, all that has really blessed the peoples of earth has come through the Hebrew people.

### III. THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

When Abraham lived in the midst of a pagan environment, God called him forth and commanded him to leave relatives, friends, and the land of his nativity with all of its cherished memories and associations and to journey to a land which He would show him. The call of God frequently involves separations, privations, and even persecutions. At first he failed to follow the Lord implicitly, in that he took his father and his nephew Lot along. Because of this failure he was not permitted to enter the Promised Land until after his father's death. Disobedience always hinders or prevents the bestowal of the blessings of God. After his father's home-going when he was dwelling in Haran, the Lord called him again. At this time He entered into a sevenfold covenant with him.

"Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

The heart and soul of this call and covenant are God's yearning desire to bless all families of the earth. In fact, no man is blessed simply and solely for his own enjoyment. On the contrary the Lord bestows His blessings upon men in order that they may pass on to others the good things received.

This promise is made three times to Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18), confirmed to Isaac (Gen. 26:4), and reaffirmed to Jacob (Gen. 28:14). Three times (12:3; 18:18; 28:14) it is given in the *Niphal* וְנִבְרַכְוּ (simple passive or reflexive stem) and twice (22:18; 26:4) in the *Hithpael* וְהִתְבְּרַכְוּ (intensive reflexive form). The first form is usually rendered "they shall be blessed," whereas the latter is generally translated "they shall bless themselves." It matters little which way we render these passages since in the last analysis they amount to the same thing. The nations bless themselves by accepting the will and plan of God; hence it is also proper to say that they are blessed in the Lord.

Since the prediction is that all families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham's seed, it is of the utmost importance to ascertain the significance of זָרַע *seed* in this promise. This word is derived from the verb which literally means *to sow*, or *scatter seed*. Hence in the primary sense it refers to the seed of plants (see Gen. 1:11; 47:19); in a secondary use it refers to the *offspring* or *posterity* of men. Like the English word *seed*, זָרַע, though a singular noun, is frequently used in a collective sense. For instance, this usage appears in the statements, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth" (Gen. 13:16), "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs" (Gen. 15:13), and "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens" (Gen. 22:17). In these and many other passages *seed* unmistakably refers to the literal descendants of Abraham. On the other hand, many contexts where this same word is used in the singular show most clearly that it refers to a single individual. For example, in Adam's statement, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel," the context shows that he is speaking specifically of Seth. Again, the same use appears in Hannah's prayer (I Sam. 1:11): "If thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give unto thy handmaid a man-child" (זָרַע אֲנָשִׁים literally "seed of men"). The facts show that Hannah was asking for a son, which petition was fulfilled in the birth of Samuel. The same usage is found in I Samuel 2:20. In many other passages this same individual meaning appears.

Inasmuch as this word has both the individual and collective meanings, it is necessary to examine each context to ascertain its significance in any given case. What, therefore, is its meaning in the promise made to Abraham and reaffirmed to his son and grandson? The context must decide, if possible, and then the conclusion must be tested by other plain declarations of God's Word. In the original promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:3) and the restatement of it (Gen. 18:18) the Lord said that He purposed to bless the nations of earth in that patriarch. After he by faith attempted to sacrifice Isaac, God revealed more specifically the way in which He would bless the world in him, namely, in his seed: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). To Isaac (Gen. 26:4) and to Jacob (Gen. 28:14) God gave the same assurances.

In order to determine its specific meaning in this wonderful and far-reaching promise, we must examine two predictions made in connection with it. First, the Lord affirms that He will bless all nations through Abraham's seed. The question arises at once: Has the world been blessed, in the way and to the extent contemplated in this promise, through the literal descendants of Abraham? Undoubtedly a blessing has flowed out to the world through the Hebrew people. No intelligent, informed person will question this statement. Israel has been used mightily during the past in keeping alive the knowledge of the true God. But the promise is that all nations shall be blessed in this seed, that is, all nations shall receive the blessing of God through the seed. No one acquainted with history and present conditions will affirm that the world has been signally blessed as pledged in these passages. The promise includes the acceptance and appropriation of the blessing as well as the offer of it. Since such is not the case, we may be sure that the promise has not yet been realized through Israel.

In the second place, the Lord assured Abraham, "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen. 22:17). A slight knowledge of the past and the present proves that in no sense have the Hebrew people enjoyed the realization of this prediction. To the contrary, we see that the nations of earth have greatly mistreated the Chosen People. Israel has been properly called *the football of the nations*. Her history for nearly three thousand five hundred years, with short respites now and

then, has been written in blood. In no sense have the Hebrew people possessed the gate of their enemies. For the reasons discussed in this paragraph and the preceding one, therefore, we cannot believe that seed in these passages primarily refers to Abraham's literal descendants. It may, and doubtless does, include them but its primary meaning, unquestionably is that of an individual of the race who shall bring this universal blessing and relief from the curse.

In our study thus far we have seen that deliverance from the curse is to come through an individual, "the seed of the woman" (Gen. 3:15). Since men cannot be blessed and enjoy life so long as sin, sickness, and sorrow prevail and the curse remains, and since these evils will be banished only when "the seed of the woman" triumphs over the great enemy of mankind, it follows that the blessing of the nations will come as a result of His conquest of **הַשָּׂטָן** *the adversary*. When, therefore, the Abrahamic covenant is studied in the light of these early predictions, it becomes clear that He who is called "the seed of the woman" is here called "thy (Abraham's) seed."

The conclusion just reached may be further tested by comparing it with predictions made by Moses and the prophets. According to the statement to Abraham (Gen. 22:18), his seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. According to Moses, the Lord God Himself whets His sharp sword and goes forth into battle against His enemies and brings final and complete deliverance to His land and His people.

"See now that I, even I, am he,  
 And there is no god with me:  
 I kill, and I make alive;  
 I wound, and I heal;  
 And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.  
 For I lift up my hand to heaven,  
 And say, As I live for ever,  
 If I whet my glittering sword,  
 And my hand take hold on judgment;  
 I will render vengeance to mine adversaries,  
 And will recompense them that hate me.

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood,  
 And my sword shall devour flesh;  
 With the blood of the slain and the captives,  
 From the head of the leaders of the enemy.  
 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people:  
 For he will avenge the blood of his servants,  
 And will render vengeance to his adversaries,  
 And will make expiation for his land, for his people."  
 (Deut. 32:39-43.)

The testimony of Isaiah is to the same effect.

"And the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it upheld him. And he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a mantle. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun; for he will come as a rushing stream, which the breath of the Lord driveth. And a Redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. And as for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 59:15b-60:3).

On this same point again the prophet makes a like declaration.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon

my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth" (Isa. 63:1-6).

Habakkuk portrays very graphically the conquest of the Lord when He comes as a mighty warrior. (See Hab. 3:1-15.) The inspired psalmist likewise gave a vivid picture of the conquests of the King concerning whom he sang in Psalm 45. In fact, most of the prophets delivered messages of the final triumphs of this same one.

In the light of all the facts one logically concludes that the seed of Abraham in these passages does not primarily refer to the nation of Israel, though she doubtless is included in the prediction, but to an individual of the race who can properly be called *the seed* of Abraham.

The primeval prediction simply foretold the coming of one who should be in a special and peculiar sense *the seed of the woman*. The oracle affirms that this future world deliverer, though more than man according to the necessary inferences of the forecast, is nevertheless a man—the man *par excellence*. In the prophecy of Noah the statement relative to the deliverer becomes more specific in that it is narrowed to the Semitic world. The Abrahamic covenant limits it still more by restricting the promise to the seed of Abraham. Therefore the descendants of Abraham have correctly contended that the Prince of Peace will come to the world through the Hebrew race.

#### IV. JUDAH THE ROYAL AND MESSIANIC TRIBE

In the line of promise, after Abraham comes Isaac whose birth was the result of a miracle. The Lord passed by Ishmael and chose Isaac. It doubtless was because of the miracle connected with his birth that Isaac was chosen. By this manifestation of divine power new life and vitality were injected into the bloodstream of his descendants. This biological fact accounts fully for many superior qualities seen in his posterity. Contrary to custom, God chose Jacob, the younger child, in

preference to his older brother Esau. Herein is another example of God's exercising His sovereignty. Just before his death Isaac by the prophetic Spirit conferred upon Jacob a blessing greatly superior to that given to Esau.

Upon his death bed the aged Jacob caught a glimpse into the future and by the same prophetic Spirit gave in a general way the condition of the tribes which would spring from his twelve sons in the latter days. In this forecast God acted upon the same principle of His electing, sovereign grace as in the cases given above. Hence He caused Jacob to pass by the three older sons and to select Judah, the fourth, as the tribe through which the promised Messiah would come.

יְהוּדָה אַתָּה יוֹדוּךָ אֶתִּיךָ יְדָךְ בְּעֵרְךָ אִיבֶיךָ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ: גֹּוֹר אַרְיֵה יְהוּדָה  
 מִטָּרְךָ בְּנֵי עֲלִיתָ פָּרַע רַבִּץ פְּאַרְיָה וּבְלָבִיא מִי יְקִימֵנוּ: לֹא־יָסוּר שָׁבֵט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחֲקֶק  
 מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד פִּי־יָבֹא שִׁילָה וְלוֹ יִקְהַת עַמִּים: אֶסְרִי לְגֶפֶן עֵירָה וְלִשְׂרָקָה בְּנֵי אֶתְנֹו  
 כַּבֵּס בִּינֵן לְבָשׁוּ וּבָדָם־עֲנָבִים סוּתָה: חֲכָלִילִי עֵינַיִם מִיָּוִן וּלְבָן־שָׁנַיִם מִחֶלֶב:

"Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise:  
 Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies;  
 Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee.  
 Judah is a lion's whelp;  
 From the prey, my son, thou art gone up:  
 He stooped down, he couched as a lion,  
 And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?  
 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
 Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,  
 Until Shiloh come;  
 And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.  
 Binding his foal unto the vine,  
 And his ass's 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" (Gen. 49:8-12).



That this passage was interpreted messianically by the ancient rabbis is clear from the following quotations:

"He who exerciseth dominion shall not pass away from the house of Jehuda, nor the Saphra from his children's children until the MESSIAH Come."—*Targum Onkelos*.

"Kings shall not cease, nor rulers from the house of Judah, nor sapherim teaching the Law from his seed, till the time that the King THE MESSIAH shall come, who will arise from Judah. How beauteous is the KING, THE MESSIAH, who will arise from Jehuda."—*Targum Palestine*.

But we must now examine the text carefully to arrive at the heart of the prediction. The words **עַד כִּי־יָבֹא שִׁילָה** have been translated in various ways. In view of this great diversity of opinion it behooves us to investigate each suggestion thoughtfully and thoroughly. Having discarded the various opinions and speculations, we then shall weigh the facts and interpret them in the light of both the immediate context and the larger sweep of Scripture.

The chief difficulty lies in the correct meaning of **שִׁילָה**. In the first place, the י is wanting in the Samaritan Torah, the oldest copy of the Law extant today. According to Rabbi Joseph Hertz, the *yod* is also lacking in the older Jewish versions and commentaries. Other ancient translations likewise presuppose the omission of this letter and take **שָׁלָה** in the sense of **שָׁלוֹ**. In the second place, the origin of this word is very uncertain. Is it derived from some lost root or is it a composition of two pronouns? A third difficulty is encountered in ascertaining the significance of **עַד כִּי** in this context. In spite of these difficult problems, we will face the issues with an open mind and a heart receptive to the truth of God.

#### *A. Till Tranquillity Comes*

The translation, "till tranquillity comes," as a noted writer declares, "assumes the existence of a very possible **שָׁלָה** or **שָׁלָה** peace." But since this rendering assumes that which cannot be proved, it is impossible to accept it. We cannot afford to base the translation of a fundamental passage upon mere supposition. A

further objection is that it does not harmonize with the statement following it, together with which it forms a "parallelism." Therefore it must be rejected.

#### B. *Till He Comes to Peacefulness or a Place of Rest*

The rendering, "till he comes to peacefulness or a place of rest," likewise is based upon an assumption, the existence of **שְׁלֵה** as an abstract noun, for which position there is no proof. Inasmuch as the argument from silence is a very treacherous one, we will pass this rendering as indecisive.

#### C. *Till He Comes to That Which is His Own*

Some scholars, for instance Orelli, render this difficult clause, "till he comes to that which is his own." If the pronoun *he* refers to *Judah*, "that which is his own" evidently indicates the position of preëminence among the tribes or the nations of the world, as is clear from the following parallel line. According to this interpretation, governmental powers and preëminence were to continue with Judah until such a time as she enjoyed the supremacy among the nations. History shows the opposite. Hence it must be rejected. If, on the other hand, we consider *he* as a reference to the Messiah, the interpretation is an entirely different proposition. This phase of the question will be discussed below.

#### D. *Till His Desired One Comes*

A few scholars, as Lagarde and Matthew Hiller, think that this clause should be rendered "till his desired one comes." This suggestion is based upon the assumption that **שִׁילָה** is derived from the verb **שָׁאַל** and should be rendered *his desired one*. This conclusion is reached by comparing Genesis 49:10 with Malachi 3:1—"and the Lord, whom ye seek." This version is untenable because there is nothing in the original text or any of the ancient translations indicating the possibility that **שָׁאַלָה** was in the original statement. There must be positive proof that the text has been corrupted before one can consider a reading other than that of the Masoretic text. In view of the present well-preserved text, one must reject this suggestion.

*E. Till He Comes to Whom is the Obedience*

Wellhausen threw out the suggestion that וְלוֹ was "a gloss explanatory of שְׁלֵה." Hence he rendered the clause "till he comes to whom is the obedience." In order to make this reading possible, the text must be altered. Since there is no positive evidence of corruption in the original, there is no justification for such unwarranted emendation of this verse. In addition to this objection, a further consideration against such treatment is that by expunging this one word the evident parallelism is destroyed and the symmetry of the verse is marred. Hence this rendering is inadmissible.

Other exegetes propose different emendations of the text and then render the verse according to their alterations. For instance, Cheyne suggests that the text originally was fuller than the present reading and offers certain emendations.

Neubauer likewise would change שְׁלֵה to שָׁלֵם and would render the line, "until he come to Salem." It is needless to say that these suggestions are unworthy of serious consideration, since even some critics of the advanced type reject them as groundless.\*

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\* Notwithstanding the almost superhuman patience and diligence of the ancient copyists in their efforts to preserve the Word of God in its original purity, some inadvertent scribal errors have naturally crept into the sacred text, both in the original and in the translations. But a careful application of the laws of textual criticism has enabled modern scholarship, in a very marked degree, to detect most of the errors and to restore the original text. But rationalism under the guise of the honorable science of Literary Criticism has endeavored to destroy faith in the sacred Word by casting doubt upon its accuracy. A pure literary criticism confining its labors to its own field and using its legitimate tools has done and can do a great work which is much needed to throw light upon obscure and difficult points. But the thinking man and the scholar cannot and will not countenance a lawless, reckless rationalism which arbitrarily, in the interest of a favorite theory, takes unjustifiable liberties with the text of Holy Writ in the name of "scientific criticism."

### F. *Till Peace Cometh*

M. Friedländer translates the words under consideration, "till peace cometh." This rendering is based upon the supposition that **שִׁלְהָ** means *peace*. Nothing historical is sufficiently clear and positive on this point to warrant such translation. Hence we pass by this version as untenable.

### G. *Till He of Shiloh Cometh*

Herman Hertz, Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, states and satisfactorily refutes the translation appearing as the heading of this section. Hear him.

" 'Till he of Shiloh cometh,' and the obedience of the peoples be turned to him. Mendelssohn and Zunz see in the verse a prediction of the event described in I Kings, XI, 29f. Ahijah, the Prophet of Shiloh, foretold to Jeroboam that a part of the Kingdom would be taken from Solomon and transferred to him; that ten tribes of Israel (here called 'peoples,' see Gen. XLVIII, 4) would break away from the House of David, and submit to his rule. This ingenious explanation fails to satisfy for various reasons. 'He of Shiloh' would be in Heb. Not **שִׁלְהָ** but **הַשִּׁילוֹנִי**." The tribes were not turned to the Prophet of Shiloh but to Jeroboam; and the utterance would have been quite unintelligible to Judah."—*Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, Genesis, p. 416, II (b).

### H. *Until He Come to Shiloh*

The rendering, "until he come to Shiloh," is adopted by a number of outstanding scholars. This position has much in its favor. For instance, in Joshua 18:9 appears: **וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה שִׁלְהָ**: "And they came to Joshua unto the camp at Shiloh." In I Samuel 4:12 the statement **וַיָּבֹא שִׁלְהָ**, "and came to Shiloh," is to the point. **שִׁלְהָ** is the usual way of spelling this name, but it is spelled eight times **שִׁלוֹ** and three times **שִׁילוֹ**. In Genesis 49:10 only is the spelling **שִׁלְהָ** found. The difference in spelling may indicate the fact that Genesis 49:10 does not refer to the city of Shiloh which is variously spelled as indicated above. This fact, however, is not conclusive but must be supported by other and unquestioned evidence.

*Shiloh* as a place name appears for the first time in the Biblical record in Joshua 18:1. At this place the children of Israel assembled after the conquest of the land

and set up the tent of meeting. Some scholars have inferred that this place was never known by the name *Shiloh* until the time of this meeting. This inference, according to the theory, is supported by Psalm 132:8: "Arise, O Lord, into thy resting-place: Thou, and the ark of thy strength." The idea of resting, in this passage, is connected with that of depositing the ark in a permanent place. Since such was the case recorded in Joshua 18:1, the conclusion is drawn that the name Shiloh was given to the place at this time.

It is a well-known fact that places are frequently given new names, especially in the Scripture narrative, to commemorate some epochal event or historical fact. Without doubt the selection of this central place as the location for the national worship was such an event. In view of the fact that there is not the slightest evidence that any place in Palestine was known as Shiloh prior to this date, it is exceedingly doubtful that such is its significance in Genesis 49:10. Those who insist that *Shiloh* is a place name in Genesis 49:10 are logically bound to prove that there was such a city when Jacob pronounced his blessing upon his sons. But the proof is lacking. Therefore this translation is inadmissible.

### I. *As Long As Men Come to Shiloh*

The translation, "as long as men come to Shiloh," appears in the American Jewish Version. As stated above, evidence is lacking that any such city existed in the days of Jacob. Hence this position is to be rejected. Another objection is brought against it by Rabbi Hertz: "As the outstanding superiority of the tribe of Judah only began after the Temple was built at Jerusalem, this interpretation is unsatisfactory." A third objection is that **עַד כִּי** does not have the significance of *as long as*. Only by forced exegesis can it be made to yield such a meaning.

### J. *Until That Which Is His Shall Come*

A tenth rendering of this most difficult clause is "until that which is his shall come." It appears as the marginal reading of the English Revised Version. "This follows the reading **שְׁלֵה** a poetical equivalent of **אֲשֶׁר לוֹ**. It was presumably the reading of the LXX (and Theod.), who render ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα, 'till the

things reserved for him come." In view of the probable correctness of the etymology of this Hebrew word suggested in the quotation, of the Septuagint translation, and of the drift of thought, this interpretation is possible, though the evidence is not positive.

#### K. *Until Shiloh Come*

The text reading of the American Revised Version is, "until Shiloh come." *Shiloh* is a Hebrew word transliterated into the English. By anglicizing this word it becomes a proper name. It was always translated until Sebastian Munster brought out his German version of the Scriptures in 1534. Since then others have followed his method of considering this word as a messianic title and of transliterating it. Inasmuch as it occurs in no other passage as a messianic title, it is quite improbable that such is its use here.\*

The context makes clear that this oracle is a messianic prophecy. In view of the etymology of *Shiloh* and its never being used elsewhere in the Scriptures as a messianic title, the correctness of considering it as one of Messiah's names is doubtful.

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\* "The difficulty in the way of this rendering is to find a meaning for *Shiloh* as a designation of the Messiah. The only indication of a desire to make it a *proper* name appears in the Talm. passage alluded to above, Sanh. 98b; 'Rab said, The world was created only for the sake of David; Samuel said, It was for the sake of Moses; R. Yochanan said, It was only for the sake of the Messiah. What is his name? Those of the school of R. Shila say, Shiloh is his name, as it is said 'Until Shiloh come.' Those of the school of R. Yannai say, Yinnon is his name, as it is said (Ps. 72), Before the sun let his name be propagated (*yinnōn*). Those of the school of R. Chaninah say, Chaninah is his name, as it is said (Jer. 16), For I will give you no favour (*hanina*).' This attempt to connect the Messiah's name with that of some favorite teacher of course renders the passage worthless as an authority."—Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. IV, p. 500.

### L. *Until He Come Whose It Is*

Still another possible rendering is, "until he come whose it is." This translation follows a variant reading of the Septuagint which has ὤ ἀπόκειται. The Greek versions current in the early centuries of the present dispensation had this reading, or a variant of it, as is evident from quotations of the writers of the period. See chapter 9 of the *Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians* (longer form) and chapter 32 of the *First Apology of Justin Martyr*. The Targum of Onkelos gives, "the Messiah, whose is the kingdom," as a paraphrase of this passage. The well known passage of Ezekiel 21:27 undoubtedly is an echo of these words, if we accept the Septuagint translation as a faithful reflection of the original. The prophet's statement is עַד-בֹּא אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הַמְּשִׁפֵּט "until he come whose right it is." Ezekiel's referring to this one in so familiar and so brief a manner without any explanation proves that he assumed, on the part of his audience, a general knowledge and common expectation of the coming of this great Autocrat. A parallel to this case is found in the expression "the day of the Lord." The prophets frequently spoke of it, giving no explanation. Their audiences without further details understood the reference. In the same way the mention of the coming of this future Ruler in the general statement, "until he come whose right it is," shows that this clause was a household expression understood generally. It is undoubtedly an echo of Jacob's prediction, since there is no other passage to which it can point.

The context of Ezekiel's statement proves that he is talking about the Messiah of Israel concerning whom the prophets constantly spoke.

"And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the mitre, and take off the crown; this *shall be* no more the same; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it *him* (Ezek. 21:25-27).

A casual glance at this quotation shows that the prophet, looking into the future, saw the course of Israel's history. As will be seen in Chapter V, the blending of the present with the future constantly appears in the prophets. This practice is largely

due to the fact that the Hebrew verb does not express the time element. In these verses the principal political actors of Israel's future appear upon the stage. Ezekiel's language shows that abortive efforts would be made at various times to place the royal crown and priestly mitre upon the brows of these political aspirants to prestige and power. The statement, "I will overthrow," etc., is the divine decree which announces the judgment that shall fall upon all such efforts. The last one attempting to seize these honors is addressed by the prophet: "And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the mitre, and take off the crown; this shall be no more the same." According to these verses, this last tyrant is a prince of Israel who seizes power in the time of the iniquity of the end but in some way is wounded with a deadly stroke. The prophet's words commanding this wicked prince to remove the crown and the mitre and informing him that such a thing shall be no more "until he come whose right it is" shows that this future one for whom both the royal and priestly dignities are reserved is a king and a priest at the same time. From these facts it is evident that the Messiah of Israel is referred to by the clause, "whose right it is." Since these words in Ezekiel's passage clearly refer to Israel's future king, and since they unmistakably point backward to Genesis 49:10, it is evident that the similar phrase in Jacob's prediction also refers to her Messiah.

In the preceding paragraphs it has been seen that the clause, "until he come whose right it is," had the definite messianic import in the days of Ezekiel and was a clear echo of Jacob's language. Inasmuch as he used words almost identical with those of Ezekiel without any explanation, it follows that he too assumed on the part of his sons a common knowledge of the coming deliverer. Therefore this statement in his mouth points backward to former predictions—those which we have already studied.

The conclusions reached in the discussion of this last translation are confirmed by the statement of Jacob when he summoned his sons to him and pronounced his blessings upon them: "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell that which shall befall you in the latter days." This view is confirmed by a statement of Rabbi



David Kimchi who, in his commentary on Isaiah 2:2, says, "Wherever it is said, 'in the last days,' it means the days of the Messiah." A careful study of the following passages in the light of their contexts establishes this conclusion: Isa. 2:2f; Mic. 4:1f; Hos. 3:5; and Joel 2. In view of all the facts we are confident that Genesis 49:10 is a definite prediction of the coming of the Hebrew Messiah who will triumph over all enemies.

Some scholars have objected to the interpretation just given on the grounds that Judah is the subject of the clauses found in the preceding and following verses—Genesis 49:9 and 11. This contention at first sight seems plausible but a more careful study of the passage clears away the difficulty. Undoubtedly *Judah* is the subject of the verse preceding and that following the one under consideration. The words **שֵׁבֶט** and **מִזְחָקָה** form the key to the understanding of this point. The primary meaning of **שֵׁבֶט** is *rod, staff, sceptre*; a secondary definition, *tribe* (see Gen. 49:16). It is clear from the statements, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet," that governmental authority and power as represented in the chief executive shall continue with the tribe of Judah until the one "whose right it is" comes. Hence in these lines is the promise that an unbroken line of rulers will continue in Judah and reach its climax in the coming of the world deliverer or redeemer for the promise is that all nations shall obey Him. Judah, of course, will come into her own under the reign of this great King. From the facts just presented it is certain that King Messiah occupies the central position of the stage in verse 10.

The late David Baron summarizes the consensus of scholars concerning Genesis 49:10 as reflected in the earliest versions and commentaries of the Hebrew people:

"With regard to this prophecy, the first thing I want to point out is that all antiquity agrees in interpreting it of a personal Messiah. This is the view of the LXX. version; the Targumim of Onkelos, Yonathan, and Jerusalem; the Talmud; the Sohar; the ancient book of 'Bereshith Rabba'; and among modern Jewish commentators, even of Rashi, who says, 'Until Shiloh come that is King Messiah, Whose is the kingdom.'"—*Rays of Messianic Glory*, p. 258.

The conclusions that have been reached concerning the messianic elements in this passage are also confirmed by the data set forth by the late Dr. Delitzsch in the following statement:

"Considering that **מַחֲקֶק** has no less frequently the meaning ruler's staff, suggested by the parallel **שֶׁבֶט** (Num. xxi. 18, Ps. lx. 7), than the personal meaning ruler; secondly, that a long staff held by the upper end is the insignum of the Assyrian kings, and that the Persian king represented in a sitting posture upon the monuments of Persepolis holds it between his feet and thirdly, that the choice of more dignified expressions than the objectionable **מִבֵּיַן רִגְלָיו** (especially so as a declaration concerning an ancestor) were furnished by the language (see xlvi. 26, xxxv. 11, Jer. xxxiii. 26, Ps. cxxxii. 11), on which account the Hebraeo-Samar. writes **מִבֵּיַן רִגְלָיו** (from his banners), it must be explained: Judah will ever bear the sceptre, and the ruler's staff ever rest between his feet."—*New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. II, p. 376

Again, Dr. Delitzsch gives some most illuminating statistical data that corroborate our conclusions. Hear him.

"**יְקָהָה** is neither equivalent to **תְּקֹנָה** (LXX, Syr. Vulg.) nor to the Talmudic **קְהֵיָה** assembly (both Arabic translations), but as at Prov. xxx. 17, obedience, from **יְקָה** (for which also **יְקָה** whence the *nom. pers.* **יְקָה** the obedient, the pious); here, as at Prov. xxx. 17 with *Dagesh dirimens* a connective form, not of **יְקָהָה** but **יְקָהָה**, like **קָרְבָה** the approach and **נִצְרָה** (parallel **שְׁמָרָה**) the watch, Ps. cxli. 3. **עַמִּים** might mean the Israelitish tribes, as at Deut. xxxiii. 3, Hos. x. 14 and frequently. But the leadership of the tribes was already awarded to Judah in **יְסוּר וְגוֹי לֹא**, and the question as to whether he would maintain this with respect to the peoples around was pressing; hence **עַמִּים** will not have the meaning of Deut. xxxiii. 3, but of Deut. xxx. 17. But if the nations of the world are intended, this suggests taking **שִׁילָה** (such is the Masoretic writing, see Frensdorff, *Masora magna*, p. 322 sq., besides which however **שִׁלָה** and **שָׁלוּ** occur in the MSS.) as a name of the Messiah. Jacob has before him in his sons the twelve-tribed nation. A nation however needs a single leader. This suggests taking **שִׁילָה** personally. The king of the latter days exalted above the heathen might be meant as at Num. xxiv, 15 sqq.; moreover, the Messianic interpretation of **שִׁילָה** has the recommendation of being ancient (*Sanhedrin 98b*). But it rests in its traditional form upon an explanation of the word which cannot be accepted. When the Samar. texts write **שִׁלָה**, and Onkelos, Targ. Jer. II. Syr., whom Aphraates, Ephrem, Bar—Hebraeus (see his Scholia published by R. Schroter in *DMZ*. xxiv.) and Saadia follow, translate: *donec veniat Messias cujus est regnum*, Aquila and Symmachus (comp. *Constitut.* apost. 6. 11): ὃ ἀπόκειται (whom it is reserved for and belongs to, viz., ἡ βασιλεία), Peshitto: *is cujus illud* (sc. regnum) *est*, all these proceed upon the assumption that **שִׁילָה** (the Masor. reading) or **שִׁלָה** (an ancient

variation) is equivalent אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ=שָׁלוֹ . The translation also of the LXX (Theod) ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ (continuing: και αὐτος προσδοκία εθνων) proceeds from the reading שָׁלוֹ ה', only it does not directly make the person of the Messiah the subject, on which account Justin, *Dial.* c. 120, would willingly stamp the ὧ ἀπόκειται of Aq. and Symm. as the original reading of the Alexandrine translation."— *New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. 11, pp. 377, 378.

The historical and linguistic facts presented in these quotations prove that the great world redeemer and deliverer stood in vision before the venerable patriarch when he pronounced this prediction relative to the descendants of Judah in the end time.\*

Some have incorrectly concluded that the forecast here presented indicates that, when this great ruler comes, Judah loses her position of preeminence and power. This reasoning is based upon the understanding that עַד *till* is here used in the exclusive sense. Though it may have this significance in certain passages that so indicate, it cannot in this instance, for there is nothing in the context to give that idea. It is true that עַד שׁ (Cant. 1:12) and עַד with a following infinitive (Ex. 33:22; Judg. 3:26; Jonah 4:2) may have the meaning as long as, but עַד כִּי never indicates limited duration but the *terminus ad quem*. Professor Delitzsch has cogently stated the facts and the conclusion to be drawn there from in the following quotation:

"עַד-כִּי with the *impf.* following has the same temporal sense as עַד אֲשֶׁר 'until that' (elsewhere followed by a *perf.* of gradative meaning, xxvi. 13, xli. 49, 2 Sam. xxiii. 10, 2 Chron. xxvi. 15), and here denotes the turning point to which Judah's greatness lasts, not then to cease, but to be enlarged to sovereignty over the peoples, comp. on this use of עַד xxvi. 13, xxviii. 15, Ps. cx. 1, cxii. 8."—*New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. II, p. 377.

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\* Dr Delitzsch saw clearly the messianic import of this passage but incorrectly applied the term שִׁילֹה to the place which later was called by that name. He, therefore, was correct in his general understanding of the prediction but misinterpreted the meaning of *Shiloh*.

In this quotation Delitzsch correctly discerned the force of **עַד כִּי** but did not call our attention to the application of the principle of the double or manifold fulfillment of prophecy in this particular passage. Hence his application is misleading. A failure to recognize, in a given case, this most important law, peculiar to Hebrew prophecy, will lead the most thorough and scholarly exegete to form wrong conclusions. For a full discussion of this principle see pages 150-161; [pdf. page 159] section 7.

In his foreview of the future Jacob saw this prince who would rise out of Judah receiving homage and obedience from all nations. But some have understood that **עַמִּים** refers to the tribes of Israel. Such significance is not its usual and primary meaning. Inasmuch as each word is to be taken at its original import unless the context indicates otherwise, we must not choose a definition for this word other than its customary meaning, since nothing in the passage warrants a departure from the ordinary usage. Hence we are to understand the oracle as a prediction that all nations will render willing obedience to this great descendant of Judah. Willing obedience, we conclude, is here foretold since **יִקְהֶת** carries the element of *piety* and *desire* along with that of obedience. In a figure, this one will be the lodestone of the nations, the magnetic pole which will draw all peoples unto Himself in loving obedience.

All conquerors who have ruled any considerable portion of the peoples have done so by sheer physical force and power. Their administrations have been marred by imperfections and injustices. Never has there been one king who has reigned in equity, justice, and impartiality. This future king of the tribe of Judah, on the contrary, evidently will administer world affairs in such a way as to gain the confidence and love of all. The fact that he will be able to solve all problems to the satisfaction of the nations and have their love and hearty cooperation is proof that he will be an extraordinary person—a superman such as the world at this hour apparently needs.

In our study of the primitive promise we saw that *the seed of the woman* is to be the world deliverer. The study of the Abrahamic covenant convinced us that this great Saviour of the world is to come from the seed of the progenitor of the

Hebrew race. The facts revealed by a further study of this covenant as it was reaffirmed to Isaac and then to Jacob show that the expected redeemer was to come through these patriarchs. Our investigation of Jacob's blessing upon Judah indicates that this original promise of hope was further limited to the tribe of Judah.

## V. THE PREDICTIONS OF BALAAM

After Jacob's prediction, the next messianic prophecy, chronologically\* considered, is found in the oracles of Balaam (Num. 23,24). In answer to the summons of Balak, king of Moab, the disobedient prophet, overpowered by his love for money, responded to the call of pronouncing a curse upon Israel who at the time was encamped along the borders of the king's country.

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\* I am perfectly familiar with the rationalistic dissection of the Torah. An investigation of the guiding principles followed by the destructive critics reveals the fact that there is not a scintilla of evidence to justify such a course. On the contrary, the chronology and the arrangement of the various elements entering into the Scripture narrative and legislation are supported and confirmed by the discoveries of archaeology. A slight acquaintance with the "assured results" of this invaluable science proves that in the Torah is reflected a faithful image of the political situation of the day, the life, and the customs of the peoples mentioned therein, and the continual struggles of the nations with the consequent shifting of the center of political gravity. For instance, in Genesis, chaps. 1 to 11 and 14, the entire picture is tinted with Semitic hues, whereas the one appearing in chaps. 37 to 50 is painted in the bright colors of Egyptian art with the harsh and rigid outlines of portraiture of the Nile valley. The same Egyptian art is seen throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and the first chapters of Numbers. In the major part of this last-mentioned book appears a correct representation of the topographical and geographical situation of the country lying between Egypt and Canaan. The outlook of the book of Deuteronomy is that of Israel on the east side of the Jordan with the forty years of wanderings behind her and with an eager expectation of entering the Promised Land.

If the critical analysis of the Torah were true, these pictures and colors would be entirely different. To be more specific, if the Torah is not from the pen of Moses but is the work of a number of *redactors* during and after the Babylonian captivity who collected floating legends and fragmentary sketches of unreliable history and welded them together into the form in which they now appear, such a faithful reflection of the conditions which we know from archaeology obtained in Egypt at the time of the exodus could not be preserved in such a literary hotchpotch as the critics claim the Torah is.

All scholars agree that it is impossible for an author, regardless of his abilities, to portray in an accurate and vivid manner a country which he has never visited. Even though one should reside in a given land for a time, it is impossible for him to present graphically his picture

without inaccuracies and contradictions unless he makes a special effort to ascertain the facts and to state them clearly. A study of some of the forgeries of the past gives a positive answer on this point. Since the greater part of the Torah reflects the exact situation that is known today to have existed in Egypt in the 16th century before the common era, it is absolutely certain that a group of Jewish literary geniuses living in Babylon a thousand years later could not have represented accurately the life and customs of Egypt at the time of the exodus. Had there been such literary activity and editorial work carried on in Babylon or Palestine at the time of the exile as the critics claim, the civilization of these two countries would have constituted the background of the Torah instead of that of Egypt.

If one of the destructive critics calls in question the accuracy of these observations, let him do all the literary, research work necessary in regard to a country which he has never visited and then let him produce a work dealing with a certain phase of the life of that land. Such a volume will abound in misconceptions, inaccuracies, and evident contradictions. Furthermore, it will lack the vividness of an eye-witness—which characteristic always enables one to detect the false from the genuine.

The fallacy of the critical analysis of the Torah has been exposed thoroughly by such works as *The Problem of the Old Testament* by James Orr, *The Unity of the Pentateuch* by Finn, *The Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament* by Wilson, etc. Therefore the facts and logic demand that we accept the Torah in its present arrangement as coming from the pen of Moses, the great Lawgiver of Israel.

### A. First Oracle

In giving the willful prophet permission to answer the call of the insistent king, God forbade his cursing Israel and demanded that he speak only those things concerning which He instructed him. After the proper sacrifices had been offered, according to the ritual of the Moabites, Balaam went forth from his position near the king, looked toward the camp of Israel, and then pronounced his oracle. In his first prophecy he foretold the great increase of the people of Israel and her separation from the nations. The final blessed and happy condition of the Chosen People called forth from the prophet's soul the following ejaculation: "Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my last end be like his!"

### B. Second Oracle

Being disappointed by the pronouncement of this blessing upon his enemies, Balak took Balaam to another position and insisted that the latter should then curse Israel. After the customary ritualistic ceremonies had been observed, Balaam made his second attempt to prophesy against the Chosen People. He prefaced his oracle by stating that God does not change His mind and that he himself could not speak anything other than what God had commanded. The following verses constitute this oracle:

לֹא־הִבִּיט אֲנִי בִּינְעֻקֵּב וְלֹא־רָאָה עֲמֹל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וְתַרְוַעַת מְלֶךְ בּוֹ: אֵל  
 מוֹצִיאָם מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּתוֹעַפֹת רָאִם לוֹ: כִּי לֹא־נִחַשׁ בִּינְעֻקֵּב וְלֹא־קִסֵּם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּעַת יֹאמֶר  
 לִינְעֻקֵּב וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִה־פָּעַל אֵל: הֵן־עָם כְּלָבִיא יְקוּם וְכֹאֲרֵי יִתְנַשָּׂא לֹא יִשְׁכַּב  
 עַד־יֵאכֹל טָרֵף וְדַם־חֲלָלִים יִשְׁתֶּה:

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob;  
 Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel:  
 The Lord his God is with him,  
 And the shout of a king is among them.  
 God bringeth them forth out of Egypt;  
 He hath as it were the strength of the wild-ox,  
 Surely there is no enchantment with Jacob;  
 Neither is there any divination with Israel:

Now shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel,  
 What hath God wrought!  
 Behold, the people riseth up as a lioness,  
 And as a lion doth he lift himself up:  
 He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey,  
 And drink the blood of the slain" (Num. 23:21-24).

The first couplet, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob; Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel," foretells a condition which has never existed among the Jewish people even to the present day. Since the Word of God has indeed a sure fulfillment, we may confidently expect the time to come when this prediction shall materialize in an actual sinless condition of the nation. In the garden of Eden man lived a pure, sinless life. During that state of innocency he had continual blessed fellowship with his God. Therefore we see from this historical fact that it is possible for man to live a sinless, holy life not in his own strength but in the presence of God and by His strength.

The next two lines, "The Lord his God is with him, And the shout of a king is among them," form another couplet which clarifies the prediction. These two lines constitute another Hebrew parallelism. The first sentence affirms that God is with Jacob, but it does not specify in what way—whether by providentially protecting him or by being with him in person. The language, taken by itself, could mean either. The second line, however, removes the doubt in that it specifies the manner, namely, by appearing in his midst as his King. This interpretation is the only possible one since by construction these lines are parallel and since *God* in the first statement corresponds to *King* in the second.

One may reply to this position: Do not the Scriptures affirm that God is King, has been, and will always continue to be? Therefore the oracle simply is speaking of the fact: "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Ex. 15:18); "The Lord sat as King at the Flood; Yea, the Lord sitteth as King for ever" (Ps. 29:10). (Compare Ps. 103:19-22.) In answering this argument one may call attention to the fact that, since the prophet in making this prediction was forecasting the future of Israel, he was not speaking of God's being King of the universe or of His providential care of



the nation—well-known truths—but of His reigning in Israel in a new way. Therefore in these lines the prophet foresees the Lord God in the midst of Israel as her King.

Since we are to take every word at its literal meaning if permitted by the context, we must understand this oracle as a prediction of God's assuming the form of man and of His reigning as King in Israel. The facts of the passage demand this literal interpretation.

In the first couplet we see a definite forecast of the time when all Israel shall be purified from sin and iniquity; in the second we behold God Himself reigning in person in the midst of the nation. This second couplet completes the thought set forth in the first and explains how it is that Israel is freed from sin and iniquity. The similarity between the edenic conditions as seen in Genesis 2 and this oracle of Balaam suggests the thought that probably the tempter will be banished so that he cannot lead man into disobedience and sin. Hence it is by the personal presence of God as King of Israel that she shall be freed from sin and iniquity.

### *C. Third Oracle*

Being baffled the second time by Balaam's blessing Israel instead of cursing her, Balak had the prophet to make the third attempt. This time the prediction likewise proved to be a blessing.

מה־טבו אהליך יעקב משפנתיה ישראל: פנהלים נטיו פגנת עלי נהר פאהלים נטע  
 יהוה פארזים עלי־מים: יזל־מים מדליו וזרעו במים רבים וירם מאנג מלכו ותנשא  
 מלכתו: אל מוציא ממצרים פתועפת ראם לו יאכל גוים צריו ועצמתיקה יגרם ותציו  
 ימחץ: פרע שכת פארי וכלביא מי יקימונו מברכיה ברוך וארריך ארור:

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, Thy tabernacles, O Israel!

As valleys are they spread forth,

As gardens by the river-side,

As lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted,

As cedar-trees beside the waters.

Water shall flow from his buckets,

And his seed shall be in many waters,  
 And his king shall be higher than Agag,  
 And his kingdom shall be exalted.  
 God bringeth him forth out of Egypt,  
 He hath as it were the strength of the wild-ox:  
 He shall eat up the nations his adversaries,  
 And shall break their bones in pieces,  
 And smite them through with his arrows  
 He couched, he lay down as a lion,  
 And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?  
 Blessed be every one that blesseth thee,  
 And cursed be every one that curseth thee" (Num. 24:5-9).

In this oracle Israel's future condition is graphically painted. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, Thy tabernacles, O Israel" (vs. 5). This verse is an exclamation of ecstasy over the future blessed and happy state of the nation. The following verse, continuing this exalted strain, compares Israel to valleys spread abroad in peacefulness, to fruitful gardens planted beside streams of water, and to lign-aloes groves planted by the Lord. In verse 7 her king is presented as being higher than Agag, the most powerful of her enemies, and his kingdom as being exalted. In the following verse her strength and power under this great king are presented as invincible: "He shall eat up the nations his adversaries, And shall break their bones in pieces, And smite them through with his arrows." This language read in the light of the preceding prediction is intelligible. As seen in the former forecast, God appears in her midst as her King. Hence under His leadership she is invincible.

#### *D. Fourth Oracle*

Enraged by Balaam's blessing Israel three times, Balak ordered him to return home. In reply he asserted that, should the king give him a house full of silver and gold, he could not speak otherwise than as God instructed him. Then without any further ceremonies the prophet proposed to tell the king what would occur to his people in the latter days.

"I see him, but not now;  
 I behold him, but not nigh:  
 There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,  
 And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel,  
 And shall smite through the corners of Moab,  
 And break down all the sons of tumult.  
 And Edom shall be a possession,  
 Seir also shall be a possession, who were his enemies;  
 While Israel doeth valiantly.  
 And out of Jacob shall one have dominion,  
 And shall destroy the remnant from the city" (Num. 24:17-19).

The ancient synagogue interpreted this prediction as a forecast of King Messiah.

"He who exerciseth dominion shall not pass away from the house of Jehuda, nor the Saphra from his children's children until the MESSIAH come."—Targum, *Onkelos*.

"Kings shall not cease, nor rulers from the house of Judah, nor sapherim teaching the Law from his seed, till the time that the King THE MESSIAH shall come, who will arise from Judah. How beauteous is the KING, THE MESSIAH, who will arise from Jehuda."—*Targum Palestine*.

Rabbi Akiba called Simeon, who led the revolt of the Jews against the Roman authority under Hadrian, **בֶּר פּוֹכְבָּא** *son of the star*—an evident echo of Numbers 24:17. This fact shows that this leading rabbi interpreted the passage messianically. We have already seen that *the latter days* were understood by the ancient synagogue as a reference to the time of Messiah. Since Balaam states in unmistakable language that his vision is of the latter days, from this standpoint it is certain that the king was consistent in thus interpreting the vision.

The prophet declared, "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh." These statements assume on the part of Balak an acquaintance with the one whom the prophet saw in the distant future, otherwise he would have given additional and more definite information concerning him. This fourth oracle presupposes the information of the foregoing predictions. In fact, each utterance of this prophet is built upon the knowledge found in the preceding ones. Speaking in terms of the portrait painter, we may say that in the first prediction Balaam simply blocked out his picture and in each succeeding utterance he developed it and brought it to

completion in the fourth and last statement. Since Balaam spoke all four oracles to Balak, since in the second and third predictions he had spoken of this future king of Israel who would rid the nation of sin and who would be higher and mightier than its most powerful foe, and since he in this fourth message assumed a thorough knowledge of the one whom he saw in the distant future, it is absolutely certain that here he is speaking of the same one. As we saw in our investigation of the second oracle, the description of Israel's coming King lays emphasis upon His being God in the midst of the nation, who cleanses it from all sin. In the third passage the emphasis is upon his human nature, in that he is compared with a human king, though mightier and more powerful. Under His leadership Israel becomes the most powerful nation upon earth. In the fourth oracle the seer stresses the time element of the prediction by stating that it pertains to the latter days and by informing us that he sees this great King in the distant future. Therefore it is certain that the same person is in view in the last three messages.

The conclusions just reached are confirmed by the further fact that the same picture of Israel's conquest of the nations and of her preëminence among them is described in the last three oracles. One who is familiar with the history of the struggles of the past and with the present tangled conditions of the world knows that it will take one who is mightier than man and who is more righteous and wiser than any mere human ruler to bring about the blessed and happy conditions described in these oracles. The pictures of blessedness being the same in these passages, it is certain that the Ruler seen in the last message is the same one appearing in the two preceding oracles.

The couplet, "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob, And a sceptre shall rise out of Judah," forms a parallel to the two preceding lines. *Star* is used as a synonym of *sceptre*. Metonymically, the sceptre stands for the one who wields it—a king. These facts strengthen the conclusions reached concerning this future King already described.

Verses 17 to 19 describe the complete conquest of this coming King over Moab and Edom. Some have concluded that the prediction ends here and that, since Saul and especially David won certain victories over these nations (I Sam. 14:47; 2

Sam. 8), it is the latter whom the prophet foresees. This view is indeed superficial. Balaam prefaced his utterance with the statement that it pertained to the *latter days*—the days of Messiah. This fact alone discredits this superficial interpretation. Looking toward Amalek (vs. 20) the prophet foretold the destruction, in the endtime, of this once powerful foe of Israel. Next he spoke of the conquest of the Kenites by Asshur, the great eastern world power in those ancient days. Looking westward he likewise predicted the final clash of Asshur with the great western empire (Rome) in the time of the end and the latter's complete overthrow. The trend of thought shows that this overthrow of the nations is to be brought about by the King who is to rise out of Israel. Therefore this future Ruler is to be the conqueror of the great and mighty nations of earth at the conclusion of this present age. As seen above, he is declared to be the one who overthrows both Moab and Edom. In verse 19, however, the political horizon enlarges until it includes the conquest and dominion of the world by Israel's Messiah. Verses 20-24 are but the detailed account of His triumphs over various peoples. But in verse 23 these conquests are attributed to God Himself: "Alas, who shall live when God doeth this?"

In what sense does God accomplish these great exploits? Directly or by using human agencies? Bible students know that He can and does act in both ways. The context is to decide in each case. In the second oracle we saw that at some time in the future God would appear in the midst of Israel as her King. Therefore, since He will appear as her King, and since in the fourth message the overthrow of the nations is attributed to Israel's Messiah and at the same time to God Himself, the only conclusion is that in the fourth oracle the prophet recognized the Messiah as God in human form, who conquers the world and who reigns in righteousness. This interpretation is confirmed by voices from the ancient synagogue.

"When the mighty KING of Jacob's house shall reign, and the MESHIIHA the power-Sceptre of Israel be anointed, HE shall slay the Princes of Moab. . . . From them their King shall arise and their Redeemer be of them."—*Targum Palestine and Jerusalem*.

"KINGS shall arise out JAKOB, and the MESHIIHA be anointed from Israel, and reign over all nations."—*Targum Onkelos*.

"At that time they shall blow a great trumpet, and then shall be fulfilled what is written, Num. 24:17: 'A STAR shall arise out of Jacob.'"—*Pesikta*.

"'I SHALL SEE HIM' refers to the Redemption which will be the fourth, 'BUT NOT NOW.'"—*Sohar Chadasch*.

"God has decreed to build up Jerusalem and show a STAR.... This STAR IS THE MESSIAH."—*Sohar* (Num. fol. 85, c340).

The ancient rabbis were correct in interpreting this oracle as one which foretells the advent of Israel's Messiah. A study of the facts which we have gleaned from the predictions of Balaam and a careful comparison of them with the messianic passages which we have thus far studied prove that this prophet was speaking of the same one—the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the one of the tribe of Judah whose right it (world dominion) is.

## VI. THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well said that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18:15-19).

This passage was generally interpreted messianically by the ancient synagogue.\*

"A PROPHET from among thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, will the Lord thy God raise up unto thee, to Him shall ye hearken."—*Targum Onkelos*.

"And a RIGHT PROPHET (Prophet of Righteousness) will the Lord your God give you a PROPHET from among you, of your brethren LIKE UNTO ME with the HOLY SPIRIT, will the Lord your God raise up unto you; to Him shall ye be obedient."—*Targum Palestine* (Jerusalem).

"In fact the MESSIAH IS SUCH A PROPHET as it is stated in the Midrash on the verse, 'Behold my servant shall prosper ...' Moses by the miracles which he wrought drew but a single nation to the worship of God but the MESSIAH will draw ALL NATIONS to the worship of God." —R. Levi ben Gershom.

"The King Messiah shall be exalted above Abraham, be high ABOVE MOSES.—*Neve Shalom*.

\* "The Rabbis and Jewish commentators are divided in their application of this passage, which shows that they have no authoritative interpretation, but that each one utters only his own private opinion.

"Abarbanel suggests that *Jeremiah* was the prophet like unto Moses, and gives fourteen points of resemblance, which, however, are not at all distinctive. He says, for instance, 'Moses often reprov'd Israel for their sins, and so did Jeremiah.' Yes; and so did Isaiah, Ezekiel, and all the other prophets. Again, he says, 'Moses told Israel respecting their captivity and their deliverance there from, and so did Jeremiah'; but did not Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and almost all the other prophets, do the same? The fact is, Abarbanel was very unfortunate in his choice of a prophet to whom to apply this passage. *Moses* was a deliverer, the beginner of Israel's national independence, the author of the song of triumph, and, under God, supreme governor. *Jeremiah* was involved in the calamities of his people a witness of national ruin, the author of the Lamentations, and the helpless victim of oppression. He is, therefore, not the prophet like unto Moses.'

"Aben Ezra, and Bechai, and others, apply this passage to Joshua, but Joshua was not like Moses. He was not mediator, he was not the revealer of the will of God, neither had he any direct vision of the Almighty.

"Rashi, Kimchi, and Alshech say that the prophet like unto Moses implies a succession of prophets, one after the other. They acknowledge, therefore, that they could not find any individual to whom similarity to Moses could be ascribed. But against this interpretation we have, first, the fact that נביא (prophet) is singular—God says not prophets, but 'a Prophet'—secondly, that this word נביא is never taken collectively, nor are the prophets elsewhere spoken of collectively; thirdly, that sacred history points out no such succession of one prophet; and fourthly, this and the preceding interpretations are all contrary to two plain passages of Scripture: Numbers xii. 6-8 asserts distinctly that Moses was a prophet unlike the generality of prophets, and Deuteronomy xxxiv. 10-12, a passage inserted probably by Ezra, asserts that 'there arose no prophet like unto Moses. —*Dr. Alexander McCaul*.

Some commentators have seen in Joshua the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18:15-19. As we shall see from the following discussion, this position cannot be sustained because he in nowise played the role of Moses. Furthermore, after Joshua had been installed in office and had received the infilling of the Spirit of God, the statement is made, "And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face," etc. (Deut. 34:10). Therefore it is impossible to consider Joshua as the prophet foretold in this passage.

#### A. *The Occasion of the Prophecy*

At the giving of the Sinaitic law, the children of Israel were terrified by the manifestation of the presence of God and pled with Moses to act as a mediator lest, seeing such demonstrations as those they had just observed and hearing a similar voice, they should die (Ex. 20:19; Deut. 5:23-28). This feeling of fear and dread and the anxious request for a go-between to deliver the Word of God to them determined the phraseology of the divine answer. The most suitable term to meet the need was **נָבִיא** *prophet*, one who speaks to men in behalf of God. Since there was no other occasion in the history of Israel similar to this one, naturally the Messiah is nowhere else given the designation of *prophet*. The choice of the messianic title used on a given occasion was determined by the circumstance which called forth the divine utterance. This same principle is seen in operation in everyday life. One's choice of words and figures is largely influenced by that which gives rise to his expression, by that which has immediately preceded, and by his own environment. In view of the historical circumstances and the psychological principle just noted, the fact that in no other passage is the Messiah called a prophet does not militate, as some critics assert, against the messianic import of this prediction. On the contrary, a careful and comprehensive study of these verses demonstrates the fact that the one appearing here is none other than the one seen in undisputed messianic passages.



## B. *The Official Capacities Filled by Moses*

### 1. PROPHET

The prophet is a spokesman for God—a representative of the Lord to the people to whom he is sent. He is called, commissioned, and filled by the Spirit who infallibly inspires him with the message of the Lord.

Under the term *prophet* there are included three different functions, all of which were performed by Moses. First, the prophet was a *teacher* (Deut. 4:5; 31:22) who not only communicated the revelation of God to the people but also showed them how to conform their lives to the divine pattern. Second, he was *revealer of the future*. In this capacity Moses functioned as is seen by his outline of Jewish history from the time of the exodus to the present. (See Lev. 26; Deut. 28; 29; 30.) Third, he was a *judge*, who rendered decisions between a man and his neighbor (Ex. 18:15; Judg. 4:4,5).

Though Moses was a prophet, he was not an ordinary one. His superiority to all other spokesmen of God appears in the Lord's statement to Aaron and Miriam:

"And he said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, I will speak with him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all my house: with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches; and the form of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?" (Num. 12:6-8).

This passage shows that Moses occupied a unique position with the Lord. The sacred penman in writing the appendix to Deuteronomy, the last book of Moses, stated that there had not, even to his day, arisen a prophet like this great lawgiver and leader. The exalted position of Moses is a powerful testimony concerning the superiority of the prophet of whom he was the type. Since the type—whether man, beast, or institution—does not approximate the one or thing foreshadowed, it is absolutely certain that the prophet whom Moses saw in vision is far superior to him.

This fact immediately raises the coming prophet to an eminence of authority and prowess reached by none other.\*

A study of predictions concerning Messiah shows that He is to function in the three regular capacities of a prophet—first, as *teacher*: "And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths" (Isa. 2:3a); secondly, as a *revealer of the future*: "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3b); and thirdly, as *judge*: "And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples" (Isa. 2:4b). Other passages present the same truths but these suffice to illustrate the point.

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\* "The Lord distinctly maintains the supremacy of Moses, and traces that to His own sovereign appointment. It was true that the prophets among them spake as the Lord had instructed them, but there were particularly three things in which the pre-eminence of Moses was conspicuous. That which was exceptional and ecstatic with them was ordinary and on the level of his common experience with him. The prophets needed a special preparation for the reception of God's communications. They needed, as Kurtz has expressed it, 'to pass out of the sphere of the senses, and that of intelligent consciousness, into a state of supersensual perception.' The Lord made Himself known to them in visions and dreams. But He spoke to Moses in his ordinary every-day condition. The great lawgiver received the Divine communications, not when he was in a trance, or when he was asleep, but in his usual intelligent consciousness; and so it came to pass that the partial obscurity which was necessarily connected with the revelations that came through others was conspicuously absent in those which were made by Moses. Again, Moses saw the similitude of the Lord; and although this cannot mean that he beheld the unveiled glory of the Lord, it must denote that there was before him some visible and objective reality, which symbolised for him the presence of the Lord and from which, as from the mouth of a confidential friend, he received, not in dark and mysterious utterances, but in plain and unmistakable terms, the messages which he was to convey to his fellow-men. There was thus a difference, if not in the kind of inspiration which he enjoyed, at least in the nature of the revelations which were made to him; for as the mind of a man takes clearly in that which is only as a wonder or a dream to child, so Moses distinctly perceived that which to other prophets was little better than a vague and incoherent vision."—*Moses the Lawgiver* by W. M. Taylor.

## 2. REDEEMER

In love and mercy God allowed the reigning Pharaoh of Egypt to subject Israel to the galling yoke of slavery. Thus he "made them to serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." Israel in this condition was unable to throw off her yoke of bondage. Hence God spoke to Moses who was not subject to bondage like his kinsmen but who was enjoying full liberty and life by the royal favor: "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:10).

Messiah likewise is, according to many predictions, to deliver His people from bondage. This fact is clearly seen in the following quotation: "And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, and that Israel be gathered unto him (for I am honorable in the eyes of the Lord, and my God is become my strength); yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isa. 49:5,6). From this passage it is evident that the mission of Messiah, while it includes the national rehabilitation of Israel in the land of the fathers, is indeed more comprehensive. A moment's consideration of it in the light of other passages shows that a moral and spiritual restoration not only of Israel but also of the Gentile world is foretold. This spiritual revival is to be brought about by King Messiah. Such an awakening is frequently mentioned by the prophets.

Both Jews and Gentiles are alike in need of this same quickening. They themselves cannot bring it about. A man cannot lift himself by his own boot straps. This thought is also expressed in the familiar saying that water cannot rise above its level. These statements being true, it is certain that Messiah, though a man in the real sense of the word, is not on a level with humanity. Were he in the same spiritual bondage, he could not liberate the race. Since Moses, the great deliverer of Israel from her Egyptian bondage, was not in the throes of slavery, as were his brethren, and since the antitype must correspond in general to the type, we may be

sure that the Messiah is not in the grip of this universal spiritual bondage. This great truth is forcefully and beautifully expressed in the following quotation from *Rays of Messiah's Glory* by the late David Baron.

"But the same God Who promised redemption to the family of Abraham (Gen. xv. 13,14) also promised redemption to the family of man (Gen. iii. 15). And just as Israel's redemption from Egypt was accomplished by one 'from the midst of them,' who was in all things like themselves, except that he was *not like them in a state of servitude*, so He that should be the Redeemer of mankind was to be the 'Seed of the woman' (Gen. iii. 15), 'like unto Moses' (Deut. xviii. 18), *real man, except* that He was to be free from servitude to Satan, or, in other words, 'without sin'; for He *could not*, if He were Himself a slave to sin, ransom others from the power of it. And, since the redemption He was to accomplish was to be effected, as we shall see farther on, by being 'cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due,' He could only do so on the supposition that His life was not already forfeited through sin; for the decree of the Eternal is, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die'; so that, supposing the Messiah were even more righteous than Abraham, Moses, or any of the prophets, and only committed one single sin in His life, His life would have been lost for that sin (Ezek. xviii. 24), so that He could not even be His *own* Redeemer, and how much less the Redeemer of the world!" (pp. 193,194).

In order for Messiah to accomplish the redemption of the world, He of necessity is free from sin and iniquity in spirit, soul, body, and life. Confirmation of this position is found in the statement of the psalmist: "None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him (For the redemption of their life is costly, And it faileth for ever), That he should still live alway, That he should not see corruption" (Ps. 49:7-9). But Messiah, according to Isaiah 53, will redeem the nation of Israel.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation,

who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:4-12).

Since no man can redeem another man, and since Messiah does redeem the nation of Israel, we must conclude that, though he is a man, he is more than a man. A further inference is that he is different from men in that he is free from sin. Therefore Messiah will be able to bring about the complete liberation of the race by the atoning sacrifice of Himself.

### 3. MEDIATOR

Moses was the mediator who went between God and Israel. At the time of the exodus the children of Israel realized the necessity of a mediator. The late David Baron has forcefully stated the case.

"As an evidence of the *necessity* of a mediator between God and man, I might point to the universal consciousness of mankind as betrayed in the different religious systems; for there has never been a form of religion known, even among the savages and heathen nations, without the idea of mediation forming a part of that religion. The sense of God's incomparable holiness and supremacy, and the consciousness of both his own unworthiness and of having offended the Most High, has always prevailed with man (Josh. xxiv. 19; Amos iii, 3), which has made him long for a daysman (Job ix. 33) who should be the medium of reconciliation between God and him, or for 'a man who should make up the hedge and stand in the gap' (Ezek. xxii. 30) between the ineffable and holy Lord and finite, sinful man. Behold yon solemn assembly round Mount Sinai! The people, after careful preparation and cleansing, seek to draw nigh to their God. Here they are, 'brought forth by Moses out of the camp to meet with God,' and here, at the nether part of the mount, they await with fear and trembling an interview with the God Who had brought them out, by His almighty power, from the bondage of Egypt. God descended, but lo! it was in

fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, ... and there were thunders and lightnings, and the noise of a tempest, and the mountain smoking, and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, *Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* Now, therefore, why should we die? for this great fire will consume us. ... Go thou near and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear and do (Exod. xix. 16, 18, xx. 16-20; Deut. v. 25,27). Here is an emphatic testimony proclaimed aloud by a whole nation, and endorsed by God Himself (Deut. v. 28), that there is a necessity for a mediator between God and man. Who is there who, in the light of this truth, will dare take it upon himself to approach God by himself? I tell him that the flames of the Almighty will devour him, 'for our God is a consuming fire.'"—*Rays of Messiah's Glory*, pp. 199, 200.

The Messiah is likewise to act in the capacity of Mediator. Israel did not desire to listen to the voice of God again after He spoke from the heights of Mt. Sinai and requested that Moses play the role of mediator. In answer to this petition the Lord assured the people that He would raise up this great Mediator-messiah who would speak the message of God to them.

#### 4. INTERCESSOR

Moses was a great intercessor. Had it not been for this fact Israel would have been blotted out of the land of the living.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, that thou broughtest up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed unto it, and said, These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, that thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, saying, For evil did he bring them forth, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this

land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he said he would do unto his people" (Ex. 32:7-14).

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Ex. 32:33).

"And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have wrought among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a nation greater and mightier than they. And Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians will hear it; for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them; and they will tell to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that thou Lord art in the midst of this people; for thou Lord art seen face to face, and thy cloud standeth over them and thou goest before them, in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I pray thee, let the power of the Lord be great according as Thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; and that will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation. Pardon, I pray thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy lovingkindness, and according as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word (Num. 14:11-20).

"Therefore he said that he would destroy them,  
Had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach,  
To turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them* (Ps. 106:23).

From these quotations we see that Israel owes her very existence to the intercessory ministry of the man Moses.

In the great servant prediction (Isa. 53:12) we see that Messiah will make fervent prayer in behalf of transgressors. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). As Israel owed her life to the intercession of Moses, so, according to this verse, she will owe her continued existence and blessing to Messiah.

## 5. LEADER

A people without a competent leader is like sheep without a shepherd. In order to prepare a leader, the Lord providentially placed Moses in the royal palace of Pharaoh where he had every advantage of the day. But he needed additional training; hence in the same providential manner the Lord brought it about that Moses had to care for the sheep of his father-in-law for forty years. Such an experience was of inestimable value to him in preparing him to be the leader of Israel. He not only became acquainted with the geography of the Sinaitic peninsula but had the time to meditate and commune with his God. His duties with the sheep developed characteristics that were indispensable to his great life's work of leading his people out of bondage.

Though the record states that the Lord led Israel, He did it by causing "his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses" (Isa. 63:12). In fact, in giving him his call the Lord said, "And now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee."

Messiah likewise is to be leader of Israel. Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord pled with His people saying, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples" (Isa. 55:3,4).

In the discussion of the five outstanding points given above, I have briefly called attention to the more important analogies between Moses and Messiah. One writer has listed as many as twenty-four points of similarity. But these facts are sufficient to show that the prediction was not fulfilled by any of Israel's prophets of whom we read in Tenach. Nevertheless we may be certain that the oracle will be fulfilled to the very letter.

An objection has been raised against the individual interpretation of this passage by certain ones who see this forecast as a succession of prophets. To place such a construction upon the language is to force upon it a strained and unnatural meaning. Since *prophet* is in the singular number, one should accept its primary meaning unless the context demands a figurative or secondary signification. Since,



as has been seen, Moses occupied a unique position approximated by none other, we are forced to accept the individual interpretation of the oracle.

The ancient rabbis interpreted this passage personally and messianically, as we have already seen from the rabbinical quotations at the beginning of this section.

## VII. HANNAH'S SONG OF PRAISE

The next advance in the development of the messianic idea is found in Hannah's song of praise spoken when she dedicated her God-given son Samuel to the Lord.

"And Hannah prayed, and said:  
 My heart exulteth in the Lord,  
 My horn is exalted in the Lord;  
 My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;  
 Because I rejoice in thy salvation.  
 There is none holy as the Lord;  
 For there is none besides thee,  
 Neither is there any rock like our God.  
 Talk no more so exceeding proudly;  
 Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth;  
 For the Lord is a God of knowledge,  
 And by him actions are weighed.  
 The bows of the mighty men are broken;  
 And they that stumbled are girded with strength.  
 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread,  
 And they that were hungry have ceased to hunger:  
 Yea, the barren hath borne seven;  
 And she that hath many children languished.  
 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:  
 He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up.  
 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:  
 He bringeth low, he also lifteth up.  
 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
 He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill,  
 To make them sit with princes,

And inherit the throne of glory:  
 For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,  
 And he hath set the world upon them.  
 He will keep the feet of his holy ones;  
 But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness;  
 For by strength shall no man prevail.  
 They that strive with the Lord shall be broken to pieces;  
 Against them will he thunder in heaven:  
 The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;  
 And he will give strength unto his king,  
 And exalt the horn of his anointed (I Sam. 2:1-10)

By the Spirit of God Hannah\* was enabled to discern in her own experience an application of the great principles of God's government of the world. Professor Delitzsch has most accurately stated the case in the following words: "She sees in her elevation from disgrace to honour the wonderful power of God, which humbles the high and exalts the lowly; for that is the manner of the true poet, to idealize his experiences, that is, to place them under a universal point of view, and to behold the great in the small, the whole in the individual, the essential in the accidental."—*Messianic Prophecies*, p. 75.

Hannah's own experience was only the starting point from which the Spirit led her through the entire course of human history to the final consummation of the present age. As she in vision was escorted through the centuries, she beheld the mighty workings of God among men, who humbles the proud, dethrones the wicked, and raises up the lowly. Her vision closed with the final and complete overthrow of the wicked and the permanent establishment of the messianic kingdom. This panoramic view of history, especially as it relates to Israel, is most beautifully expressed in Keil's *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*.

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\*Upon a *priori* grounds alone the destructive critic has denied to Hannah this song and has tried to find an historical niche of a later date in which to place it. Since there is neither internal nor external evidence indicating that it should be denied to her and assigned to a later author who composed it in celebration of an entirely different occasion, we are logically bound to accept the *prima facie* testimony of the context and to recognize her as the human authoress.

"This psalm is the mature fruit of the Spirit of God. The pious woman, who had gone with all the earnest longings of a mother's heart to pray to the Lord God of Israel for a son, that she might consecrate him to the lifelong service of the Lord, 'discovered in her own individual experience the general laws of the divine economy, and its signification in relation to the whole history of the kingdom of God' (Auberlen, p. 564). The experience which she, bowed down and oppressed as she was, had had of the gracious government of the omniscient and holy covenant God, was a pledge to her of the gracious way in which the nation itself was led by God, and a sign by which she discerned how God not only delivered at all times the poor and wretched who trusted in Him out of their poverty and distress, and set them up, but would also lift up and glorify His whole nation, which was at that time so deeply bowed down and oppressed by its foes. Acquainted as she was with the destination of Israel to be a *kingdom*, from the promises which God had given to the patriarchs, and filled as she was with the longing that had been awakened in the nation for the realization of these promises, she could see in spirit, and through the inspiration of God, the *king* whom the Lord was about to give to His people, and through whom He would raise it up to might and dominion" (p. 29).

A casual glance at the facts concerning the private life of Hannah (I Sam. 1:1-28) indicates that she was bowed down with sorrow because of the taunts and persecutions of Peninnah together with the reproach which she endured at the hands of her neighbors. With an undaunted faith she went to the sanctuary of God at Shiloh and poured out her bitter complaint to her Lord. In answer to her earnest petition He gave her a son whom she in turn presented to Him for life service. On this occasion her heart overflowed with joy as she dedicated the darling of her heart to the Lord.

The following study of this hymn of praise will reveal the fact that Hannah with her long, bitter experience of barrenness and reproach, which finally terminated in the joys of deliverance, typified Israel whose age-long persecutions will culminate in "the day of Jacob's trouble" from the throes of which Messiah will deliver her. This principle finds many applications throughout the Tenach. One may verify this conclusion by investigating the lives of many of the outstanding leaders of Israel. In fact, the entire history of the Chosen People is but a great fabric of providential circumstances into which the Lord constantly wove the events of the lives of His faithful heroes in order to typify the future course and final deliverance of His people.

### *A. Strophe One*

The poem naturally divides into four strophes. The first consists of verse 1:

"And Hannah prayed, and said:  
My heart exulteth in the Lord;  
My horn is exalted in the Lord;  
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;  
Because I rejoice in thy salvation."

This passage is an outburst of Hannah's thanksgiving and joy for the wonderful way in which the Lord had answered her petition. She was especially careful to give unstinted praise to God for what He had done in her behalf. In fact, she fully realized that salvation is of the Lord.

The antitypical fulfillment of this episode will be realized when Israel, like Hannah, in her distress turns to God and implores Him for deliverance. She must be brought to the point that she no longer depends upon her own efforts or those of the peoples to achieve her national hopes. Then she will turn in her extremity to the Lord with all her heart and in faith look for His salvation. The Lord never disappoints genuine faith. Hence we confidently expect the deliverance to come when the nation turns to God.

### *B. Strophe Two*

"There is none holy as the Lord;  
For there is none besides thee,  
Neither is there any rock like our God.  
Talk no more so exceeding proudly;  
Let not arrogance come out of your mouth;  
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,  
And by him actions are weighed" (vss. 2, 3).

"God manifests Himself as holy in the government of the kingdom of His grace by His guidance of the righteous to salvation (see Ex. 19:6). But holiness is simply the moral reflection of the glory of the one absolute God." The God of Israel is the only true God—beside Him there is none other (2 Sam. 22:32).

He is **צור** *Rock*. Throughout the Tenach the Lord constantly used this symbol in referring to Himself. Among all peoples a rock is thought of as firm, unchanging, and enduring. Hence it is natural that they should use this symbol to express the idea of His immutability. Among the many places where this symbol appears, the following passages may be mentioned: Deuteronomy 32:4,15; Psalms 18:2.

Several times **אֶבֶן** *stone* occurs. What is its significance? In Isaiah 8:13,14 the following quotation is found: "The Lord of hosts, him shall ye sanctify; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." In this statement the Lord specifically calls Himself both **אֶבֶן** *a stone* and **צור** *a rock*. Since He does not mix His figures and symbols, we may be positive that *stone אֶבֶן* likewise is a symbol of God in those passages where it occurs without *rock צור*. For instance, it appears alone in Psalm 118:22, "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner," and in Isaiah 28:15,16, "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol are we at agreement; ... therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-*stone* of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste."

In verse 3 Hannah exhorted those exulting over her humble condition and persecuting her to cease their arrogancy and proud boasting. She knew that one's attitude toward God and man together with his conduct determines the Lord's attitude and actions toward him. "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; With the perfect man thou wilt show thyself perfect; With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; And with the perverse thou wilt show thyself froward" (Ps. 18:25,26). God can and does brook a certain amount of boastfulness. Nevertheless the limit of His endurance is finally reached. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth; keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation" (Ex. 34:6,7). When,

however, His indignation is aroused, He takes things into His own hands and deals with those involved upon the basis of their just deserts. At the same time, He knows who are His faithful servants and how to protect them during the outpouring of His wrath.

"The Lord is a jealous God and avengeth; the Lord avengeth and is full of wrath; the Lord taketh vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will by no means clear *the guilty*: the Lord hath his way in the whirl-wind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel; and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt; and the earth is upheaved at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder by him. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that take refuge in him. But with an over-running flood he will make a full end of her place, and will pursue his enemies into darkness" (Nahum 1:2-8).

The passage just quoted is a statement of the general principles upon which the Lord acts in His dealings with humanity. But when the arrogance of man reaches the point of a general disregard for the Lord and His holy Word and of a prevailing blasphemous attitude such as is foretold in Psalm 2, "The Lord will go forth as a mighty man; he will stir up his zeal like a man of war: he will cry, yea, he will shout aloud; he will do mightily against his enemies" (Isa. 42:13). The result of His warfare against the proud sinners of earth is seen in the following graphic description.

"Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For there shall be a day of the Lord of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and it shall be brought low; and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every lofty tower, and upon every fortified wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant imagery. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols shall utterly pass away. And men shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth. In that day men shall cast away their idols of silver, and their idols of gold,

which have been made for them to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the caverns of the rocks, and into the clefts of the ragged rocks, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of ?" (Isa. 2:10-22).

In the third line of verse 3 Hannah declared that the Lord is a God of knowledge, **דְּעוֹת**, *knowledge*, is in the plural number and conveys the idea that the Lord is omniscient. This fact is clearly taught in Psalm 139. Isaiah had to remind his fellow countrymen constantly that their innermost thoughts and their lives were like an open book before the Lord. "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and the justice *due* to me is passed away from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding" (Isa. 40:26-28).

### *C. Strophe Three*

"The bows of the mighty men are broken;  
 And they that stumbled are girded with strength.  
 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread;  
 And they that were hungry have ceased to hunger:  
 Yea, the barren hath borne seven;  
 And she that hath many children languisheth.  
 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:  
 He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up.  
 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:  
 He bringeth low, he also lifteth up.  
 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
 He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill,  
 To make them sit with princes,  
 And inherit the throne of glory:  
 For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,  
 And he hath set the world upon them" (I Sam. 2:4-8).

In the first part of this strophe Hannah (vss. 4,5) states concisely the results of God's providential working among men, whereas in the latter part (vss. 6-8) she enumerates some of the great principles of His government of the world. Truly He "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

The statement, "The bows of the mighty men are broken," shows that the Lord is victor over the mighty. The second line of this contrasting parallelism, "And they that stumbled are girded with strength," indicates that the Lord at the same time assists the weak ones who look to Him for strength. (See Isaiah 40:29-31.)

The fifth verse affirms that the rich, who evidently procured their wealth by wickedness, are by the Lord reduced to a state of want, while the poor and humble who trust in Him are given a sufficiency. An application of the principle of the Lord's punishing the wicked and arrogant and of His assisting the needy and faithful is seen in His blessing the barren with a household and in His bereaving the proud mother of her children.

"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:  
 He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up.  
 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:  
 He bringeth low, he also lifteth up.  
 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
 He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill,  
 To make them sit with princes,  
 And inherit the throne of glory:  
 For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,  
 And he hath set the world upon them" (vss. 6-8).

In the Lord's hands are the issues of life and death, of prosperity and adversity. The pages of history verify this statement. Job was sorely tried and finally by the Lord's grace restored to prosperity; David was taken from herding sheep to become king in Israel; Hezekiah was, so to speak, called back from the gates of Sheol;



Nebuchadnezzar was debased by the Lord to the level of the beast; Haman was degraded and finally hanged, whereas Mordecai, his intended victim, was promoted to honor; and of Israel's Messiah it is written: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, *even* the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee" (Isa. 49:7).

"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:  
He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up" (vs. 6).

This verse of our passage is also to be taken literally as well as in the sense presented above. A number of examples occur in the sacred Tenach. For instance, the judgment of God fell upon Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and others because of their rebellion. The slaying of 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army also illustrates this statement. The second part of the line, "He maketh alive," may be illustrated by those whom Elijah and Elisha restored to life. A further illustration is seen in the case of Hezekiah to whom the Lord granted an extension of fifteen years of life beyond his allotted time. The second line of this couplet, "He bringeth down to Sheol<sup>1</sup> and bringeth up," forms a commentary on the first. In many instances the judgment of God fell upon the disobedient and rebellious and swept them down into Sheol. In a few cases the Lord brought certain ones up from Sheol. Samuel's coming up to rebuke Saul is an illustration of this statement. Those whom Elijah and Elisha raised from the dead also corroborate this doctrine. Their restoration to life was and is a pledge and guarantee of the great future resurrection. Isaiah sounded the same glorious note: "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs,

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<sup>1</sup> In the Tenach the place to which the soul went upon death is uniformly called Sheol. Among the many instances of its mention the reader may note the following: Gen. 37:35; Num. 16:20; Deut. 32:22, Job 3:1-19; Isa. 14:3-11.

and the earth shall cast forth the dead" (Isa. 26:19). Daniel gave us some additional information on this point. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2). This passage shows that in the resurrection the dead come forth; some to everlasting salvation; others to eternal condemnation.

"The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:  
He bringeth low, he also lifteth up" (vs. 7).

Verse 7 affirms that the destiny of man is not in his own hand but in the Lord's. In the final analysis of human affairs it is seen that man is very frail and impotent. Frequently he feels that he can carry out his plans of accomplishing great things but little does he realize that he is wholly dependent upon God every moment of his life. The Lord through Moses warned Israel not to think that she of herself had the ability to make money, saying, "remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day" (Deut. 8:18). The Lord warned us not to put our trust in man because of his frailty and inability to carry out his plans:

"Put not your trust in princes,  
Nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.  
His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;  
In that very day his thoughts perish.  
Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,  
Whose hope is in the Lord his God:  
Who made heaven and earth," etc. (Ps. 146:3-6a).

In verse 8 Hannah continued the thought concerning the Lord's overruling providence in abasing the proud and in exalting the humble. He sometimes elevates the lowly to positions of trust and responsibility. Acting on this principle, He took Saul from the humble walks of life and made him king of His people. The same thing He did for David. Others He exalted to positions of trust and power in association with monarchs. Even in the heathen world the Lord overrules and

brings certain ones into positions of authority in order to carry out His plans in regard to the world.

The statement, "To make them sit with princes, And inherit the throne of glory," calls for special attention. As seen in the preceding paragraph, Hannah called attention to the fact that the Lord raises up from time to time those whom He will. In the lines just quoted she states the object of His acting thus. The phrase, "To make them sit with princes," signifies that those whom He elevates are raised to regal honor and power. The following phrase, "And inherit the throne of glory," is parallel to the preceding line and explains its significance, namely, the establishment of a dynasty in Israel that should occupy the throne of glory. The drift of thought of the entire poem confirms this position by showing that there loomed before the mind of the prophetess not only the Lord's general activity and overruling providence among the nations but also His special control of Israel which would soon assume the concrete form of an earthly kingdom with all of its outward grandeur and power.\*

What throne may be correctly called the *throne of glory*? To think of the throne of any heathen monarch is absolutely out of the question since all of the world,

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\* The mention of a king and the throne of glory in this poem has led certain rationalistic critics to conclude that it is of later origin. The assumption underlying this objection is that such an idea as a kingdom had not arisen in Israel at that time. This theory overlooks the fact that the Lord had promised Israel that she should constitute a kingdom of priests unto Himself—if only she would obey Him (Ex. 19:5,6). The idea of a king in Israel dates back to the call of Abraham and continued to be cherished as a hopeful possibility until the desire materialized in the establishment of the monarchy under Saul. A. F. Kirkpatrick in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, Volume on I Samuel summarizes the evidence in the following statement: "It has been alleged that the mention of the king stamps the song as of later date, posterior to the establishment of the monarchy. This is by no means the case. The idea of a king was not altogether novel to the Israelite mind. The promise to Abraham spoke of kings among his posterity (Gen. xvii. 6): the Mosaic legislation prescribes the method of election and the duty of the king (Deut. xvii. 14-20): Gideon had been invited to establish a hereditary monarchy (Jud. viii. 22). Anointing, too, was recognized as the regular rite of admission to the office (Jud. ix. 8). Amid the prevalent anarchy and growing disintegration of the nation, amid internal corruption and external attack, the desire for a king was probably taking definite shape in the popular mind. The prophet who came to Eli speaks again of 'the Lords anointed' (ii. 35). But who so worthy to be first chosen to anticipate the future as the mother of him who was destined to guide the chosen nation through this critical epoch of its existence, and superintend the foundation of the Davidic-Messianic kingdom?" (pp. 55, 56).

except Israel, was lying in heathen darkness and sin. As seen above, the Lord intended that Israel should be a holy people unto Himself and should constitute the kingdom of God upon earth. This fact immediately identifies Israel as the nation which should, in accordance with the divine will, constitute the kingdom of God upon earth and her throne as the throne of glory referred to in this passage. This position is confirmed by two passages in I Chronicles. Addressing the assembled officials of his government, David in his final speech called attention to the Lord's having selected him in accordance with His previously announced plan of sending the world Redeemer through the tribe of Judah. In his statement David informed us that the kingdom of Israel was the kingdom of God and his throne, the throne of the Lord. "Howbeit the Lord, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be prince; and in the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel; and of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons), he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel" (I Chron. 28:4,5).

The chronicler in recording the fact that Solomon succeeded David on the throne said: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him" (I Chron. 29:23). From the two quotations given above it is evident that the kingdom of Israel was recognized by both David and the inspired historian as the kingdom of God and David's throne as the throne of God upon earth. In the days of Jeremiah the prophet a great drought throughout the land of Israel caused much suffering and distress. The prophet with a great burden on his heart for his people pled with the Lord to show mercy, saying, "Do not abhor *us*, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us" (Jer. 14:21). The context makes it clear that the throne of David is here called the throne of glory. The same usage appears in Jeremiah 17:12. In looking into the future this same prophet foretold the time when Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord.

**בַּעַת הַהֵיא יִקְרָאוּ לִירוּשָׁלַיִם כְּסֵא יְהוָה וְנִקְוּוּ אֵלֶיהָ כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם לְשֵׁם יְהוָה לִירוּשָׁלַיִם  
וְלֹא־יִלְכוּ עוֹד אַחֲרֵי שָׁרְרוֹת לְבָבָם הָרָע:**

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:17).

In view of the facts presented in the last paragraph, it is evident that the throne of David was called both "the throne of glory" and "the throne of the Lord." The kings of Judah were to sit thereon occupying it "until he come whose right it is" (Ezek. 21:27). The expression, "throne of the Lord," may be taken either in its primary meaning or in a secondary sense. In the latter case, the throne is the Lord's in that He chose Israel to be His peculiar people and entered into an everlasting covenant with David and his seed. In its *primary* import, it signifies that the Lord Himself will eventually mount it and reign over Israel and the world. In order to determine what is its meaning we will be guided by the rule which says that every word must be taken at its primary, ordinary, and literal meaning unless the context indicates otherwise. The contexts of the two chronicles passages will allow either interpretation. The statement of Jeremiah (3:17), however, allows only the primary significance. This prophet lived during the declining days of the Davidic kingdom and after the collapse of the nation at the hands of the Babylonians. The overthrow had not come when he uttered the wonderful prophecy recorded in the third chapter of his book. In verse 16 he foretold the time when the memory of the ark of the covenant would cease in Israel. At that time Jerusalem will be called the throne of the Lord. Since at the time of the prophet's making this prediction the throne of Judah was the throne of the Lord in the secondary sense, it is evident that the prophecy must be understood in its primary significance. Therefore we may confidently look forward to the time when the Lord in person comes to Zion and makes it His capital.

The literal interpretation of this phrase is confirmed by the clear declarations of Isaiah and Zephaniah.

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold a land that reacheth afar. Thy heart shall muse on the terror: Where is he that counted, where is he that weighed *the tribute*? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see the fierce people, a people of a deep speech that thou canst not comprehend, of a strange tongue that thou canst not understand. Look

upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the Lord will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not strengthen the foot of their mast, they could not spread the sail: then was the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame took the prey" (Isa. 33:17-23).

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of thee; *to whom* the burden upon her was a reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and I will save that which is lame, and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth. At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord" (Zeph. 3:14-20).

The facts given above together with many others that might be mentioned make it clear that "the throne of glory" foreseen by Hannah was indeed the throne of David which was occupied by the Davidic dynasty and which will ultimately be mounted by "him whose right it is" when He comes. The kings of Judah were types, though imperfect, of this great future Ruler of Israel whose presence will truly make it a throne of glory. From many other passages we learn that this King will reign from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

The statements, "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And he hath set the world upon them," speak of the Lord's creative activity in terms of carpentry. Since He is the creator, He is rightfully the one to control the world.

"Put not your trust in princes,  
Nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.  
His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;  
In that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,  
 Whose hope is in the Lord his God:  
 Who made heaven and earth,  
 The sea, and all that in them is;  
 Who keepeth truth for ever;  
 Who executeth justice for the oppressed;  
 Who giveth food to the hungry.  
 The Lord looseth the prisoners;  
 The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind;  
 The Lord raiseth up them that are bowed down;  
 The Lord loveth the righteous;  
 The Lord preserveth the sojourners;  
 He upholdeth the fatherless and widow;  
 But the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.  
 The Lord will reign for ever,  
 Thy God, O Zion, unto all generations.  
 Praise ye the Lord" (Ps. 146:3-10).

#### D. Strophe Four

רַגְלֵי תְּסִידּוֹ יִשְׁמַר וְרַשָּׁעִים בְּחֹשֶׁךְ יִדְמּוּ כִּי-לֹא בִכְחַת יִגְבֵּר-אִישׁ: ?הָיָה יַחַתּוֹ מְרִיבּוֹ  
 עָלּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם יְרָעַם ?הָיָה דִּין אֶפְסֵי-אָרֶץ וַיִּתֶּן-עֹז לְמַלְכוֹ וַיְרַם קֶרֶן מִשִּׁיחּוֹ:

"He will keep the feet of his holy ones;  
 But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness;  
 For by strength shall no man prevail.  
 They that strive with the Lord shall be broken to pieces;  
 Against them will he thunder in heaven:  
 The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;  
 And he will give strength unto his king,  
 And exalt the horn of his anointed" (I Sam. 2:9,10).

This strophe begins with the assurance that the Lord will keep and protect His people during times of judgment and calamity. The first two lines, though forming a parallelism, contrast God's protection of His people with His judgments upon the wicked during the period of darkness, the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7).

The holy or godly ones **קְדוֹשִׁים** are those who are in covenant relations with the Lord. The fact that they are called "holy ones" does not imply anything as to their real character. This word simply means *one who has obtained favor*. It is not to be inferred that they gain the Lord's favor by their good works for such a supposition is impossible. The psalmist gives us the truth on this point: "Gather my saints together unto me, Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Ps. 50:5). The context of this quotation shows that the writer is talking about the same time and the very judgments which Hannah saw in her vision. Hence it is certain that those called *holy ones* in Hannah's song are called saints by the psalmist, for in the original the same word occurs in both passages. They obtain favor not by good works but by entering into covenant relations with God by sacrifice. This principle may be illustrated by the ceremony of the Passover. The night Israel left Egypt she screened herself, in accordance with the divine command, behind the blood of the Passover lamb and escaped the judgment which fell upon the Egyptians.

"For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:12,13).

It is evident from the historical record that Israel was not spared the judgment of God because of her goodness or her works but because of her screening herself behind the blood of the appointed sacrifice.

The prophets constantly promised the faithful remnant that God would protect it during the time of His judgments in the earth. For instance, see Isaiah 33:13-16, noting especially the last verse. Also examine the promise found in Isaiah 26:20: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Again note the language of Zephaniah: "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of the Lord's anger" (2:3b).

The last statement of verse 9 of our poem calls attention to a most important truth: "For by strength shall no man prevail." The Lord through Zechariah impressed this same thought upon the heart of Zerubbabel: "This is the word of the



Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, **לֹא בְחַיִל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אֶמְבְּרוּחִי** Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of Grace, grace, unto it" (Zech. 4:6,7). Truly "man proposes, but God disposes."

"They that strive with the Lord shall be broken to pieces;  
 Against them will he thunder in heaven:  
 The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;  
 And he will give strength unto his king,  
 And exalt the horn of his anointed" (vs. 10).

The first statement of this verse implies that the time will come when men will strive against God. In the vernacular of today, we would say that this prophecy indicates a time when men either in general or in controlling numbers will take an atheistic, hostile attitude against God and will blaspheme His name. The seed thought suggested in this statement is expanded into a definite oracle in the second Psalm: "Why do the nations rage (tumultuously assemble). And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord, and against his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us" (vss. 1-3). The first verse of this prediction foretells the general spread of atheism and its momentary triumph throughout the world, whereas verse 2 apprises us of the fact that at some time the rulers of the world will meet in convention for the express purpose of banishing the idea of God and His Messiah from the minds of men. This hostile attitude against God and His Messiah will enjoy only a temporary victory, for, when they will have filled with their blasphemies the cup of their iniquity to overflowing (cf. Gen. 15:16), the Lord will "speak unto them in his wrath. And vex them in his sore displeasure" (Ps. 2:5). The result of His sending His judgments upon a world flinging defiance into His face is that "they that strive with the Lord shall be broken to pieces; Against them will he thunder in heaven: The Lord will judge the ends of the earth."

In the final conflict with the rebellious of earth, the Lord "will give strength unto his king, And exalt the horn of his anointed." The Lord subdues the nations unto the ends of the earth but does it through Messiah. This fact is presented in various passages of the Prophets and the Psalms. (See Psalms 2, 45, and 110.)

When Messiah accomplishes His conquests, He mounts the throne of David and reigns from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. Amos paints the picture.

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof, they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God (Amos 9:11-15).

In the discussion of verse 8 we saw that the Davidic dynasty was in view; but at the conclusion of the hymn the dynasty has vanished and we see only one individual, King Messiah. He appears at the time when iniquity is flourishing but by God's strength he conquers the world and reigns.

This passage is the first one to designate a king of Israel as Messiah. It is upon the authority of this verse that Israel's great sages called her future deliverer King Messiah. The last couplet shows that this position is correct. *King* in the first line corresponds to Messiah in the second. Therefore the ancient synagogue was correct in expecting Messiah to come, to subdue Israel's enemies, and to establish a reign of righteousness upon the earth. Thus in this poem our inspired singer has shown the stately march of our God through the centuries to the final consummation.

## SUMMARY

In our investigation of the early predictions concerning Messiah, we found that He is presented to us under differing circumstances which of necessity determine the phraseology and the imagery used. Upon close study of each oracle we

discovered that the same individual, notwithstanding the variety of presentations, stood before the mind of the inspired writer. The first promise (Gen. 3:15) presents, with a few master strokes of the inspired artist, a perfect yet a designedly obscure outline of the Redeemer's portrait. In each succeeding prediction the prophets added new strokes, each of which brought out more clearly the real features of this superman, the divine-human Saviour.

He who, in the first oracle, is called *the seed of the woman* immediately became the object of the most ardent hopes. Echoes of this promise are heard in Adam's naming his wife and in her ejaculation at the birth of her first child. The same hope found expression in the prediction of Lamech concerning the Comforter who should give rest to humanity by His lifting the curse from the ground. The Comforter is identified as *the seed of Abraham* in whom all families of the earth shall be blessed. He is also the Ruler from the tribe of Judah who shall have the obedience of all nations and the Star out of Jacob who shall subdue all peoples. In Hannah's Song of Praise these ancient rays of hope are focused upon Him and from that time onward He is known as Israel's Messiah. Hence at the threshold of the monarchy in Israel He stands forth in full stature as the divine-human Messiah of Israel and King of the world.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## MESSIAH A DESCENDANT OF DAVID

In the preceding chapter we traced the unfolding of the messianic idea through the Torah, concluding, however, with Hannah's Song of Praise. When David became established as king in Israel, the messianic ideal settled down upon him. This definite advance in the development of the doctrine was the result of the covenant which the Lord made with him and his seed.

## I. THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

Having been securely established as king over the twelve tribes and having taken up his residence in his newly built royal palace, David, with a sense of propriety and the fitness of things, felt that it was improper for him thus to dwell in luxury and splendor while the ark of his God remained in a tent. Therefore having purposed to build a temple for the glory of God, in which the ark should be deposited, he divulged his plans to the prophet Nathan. The royal design appealed to him greatly, and immediately he encouraged the king to proceed with the proposed construction. That night, however, the word of the Lord came to the prophet, rebuking him for his hasty approval of his master's plans, making known to him the divine decree which cancelled\* the royal proposal, and making a special revelation concerning the permanent establishment of Israel in the Promised Land and the perpetuity of the Davidic dynasty.

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\* Nathan in acquiescing with the king's proposal was not speaking as a prophet but simply as a man to his friend. During the following night the Spirit of God showed him the mistake he had made and required him to deliver the divine revelation making void his advice humanly given and unfolding further the eternal purposes of God concerning Israel and her future King. When a prophet spoke as God's representative, his message was infallible. Every word either has been or shall be fulfilled to the very letter. For absolute proof of this proposition see Urquhart's *Wonders of Prophecy*. History confirms this verdict. Hence when God makes a statement, it shall be even as it has been spoken.

### *A. Reaffirmation of the Land Promise*

To the call of God Abraham immediately responded (Gen. 12:1-8). At this time the Lord made a sevenfold promise.

"Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

Not one item of this divine guarantee of future greatness and blessing has been realized to the degree contemplated in the passage. It is certain, however, that each has had a limited and imperfect fulfillment. But since God is faithful and will redeem His every pledge, we may confidently expect to see the accomplishment of the promise in each detail and in the degree indicated. A careful reading of Israel's history reveals the fact that the full enjoyment of the promises and the blessings of God is conditioned upon an unswerving faith in Him and absolute obedience to His Word. Such a study emphasizes the further fact that at no time in the past, nor at present, has she been true and faithful to her God. Her failure fully accounts for the non-realization of this covenant.

In the 26th chapter of Leviticus, spoken at Sinai at the time of the exodus, appears a graphic outline of Israel's checkered history from that date to the time when God shall remember His covenant made with Abraham, confirmed to Isaac, and reaffirmed to Jacob.

"And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected mine ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject

them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord" (Lev. 26:40-45).

Israel's history from the deliverance of the nation out of Egyptian bondage to the present moment corresponds accurately to the divinely inspired forecast. Since her tortuous past is an exact replica of the prediction, we may logically conclude that the future will likewise vindicate the prophecy by a literal fulfillment. Hence a full enjoyment and an entering into the realization of the covenant blessings are contingent upon the acknowledgment which Moses says the nation shall make. This confession consists of two parts: first, acknowledgment of the national sin, "And they shall confess their (the generation making the confession) iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers (the ancestors of the penitential generation), in their (*fathers* is antecedent of *their*) trespass which they trespassed against me"; secondly, acknowledgment of the penalty of the sin, "and also that, because they (the fathers) walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies." When the nation shall have repented of and confessed this national sin committed by the fathers while in the land and shared by their descendants in the lands of enemies, God will remember the covenant and the land promise. Then the Lord will fulfill to the letter every item of the sevenfold blessing vouchsafed. Israel in the land has always enjoyed these blessings to the extent of her obedience, full participation being hindered by her frequent unfaithfulness.

From the study of the passage examined above and a comparison of it with the land promise made by Nathan to David, it is evident that Nathan was speaking of this very promise the fulfillment of which will immediately follow this national humiliation and repentance. The natural import of the language of Leviticus 26:40-45 is that the final and permanent establishment of the children of Israel in the land of their fathers is definitely foretold. A comparison of these verses with Nathan's prediction is conclusive on this point. "And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be moved

no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first, and as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel; and I will cause thee to rest from all thine enemies" (2 Sam. 7:10,11a). A comparison of this promise with many others shows that the land in which the Jewish people will be settled permanently is Palestine—"in their own place." This land is by divine decree the property of Israel. When she is thus established in the home of the fathers, she shall "be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first, and as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel." Therefore we see that the great final restoration and permanent establishment of Israel in the land of the fathers form the first part of Nathan's prediction.

### *B. The Perpetuity of the Davidic Dynasty*

"When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

Since the land promise and the guarantee of Israel's future permanent possession of it precede the prediction concerning the Davidic dynasty, throne, and kingdom, and since, as we see from the quotation above, they are to continue "for ever," we may be absolutely certain that this oracle reaches into the future and includes the time when Israel, after her confession, is established in her land permanently and peacefully enjoys the fruit of her labors.

Inasmuch as she will never be moved from it when the prophecy is fulfilled and the dynasty, throne, and kingdom of David are to continue "for ever" (nothing in this context nor in any parallel passage limits the expression *for ever*), one must understand that this prediction sweeps out into the future to the end of all earthly affairs.\*

Special attention must be given to verses 14-16. That Solomon stands in the foreground of verse 14 is evident from the details of the preceding verse, which mentions David's seed that should proceed out of his loins. Upon the death of his father, Solomon ascended the throne. Against the machinations of Adonijah (I Kings 2:13f) the Lord protected him so that he was able to say, "The Lord hath established his word that he spake; for I am risen up in the room of David my father" (I Kings 8:20). He built the temple as the Lord had foretold (I Kings 6:1; 8:15ff). In his old age he fell into gross idolatry, importing the foreign gods worshiped by his wives and building sanctuaries for them in the environs of Jerusalem. After his death the punishment came in the form of the rending of the kingdom by the revolt of the ten northern tribes. Thus the Lord punished him with the rods of men but did not withdraw His grace from him.

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\* The Hebrew language has no word that corresponds exactly to the English forever, or everlasting. The word עולם, 'olam' and various combinations of it together with some other expressions do indicate indefinite continuity unless something in the context limits its meaning or unless its significance is prescribed and conditioned by the thing with which it is bound. For instance, in Isaiah 32:14 the desolation of the land of Palestine and of the city of Jerusalem are said to be *for ever*. The next verse however, limits *for ever* by the word *until*. On the other hand, since the continuance of Israel in the land of the fathers and the perpetuity of the Davidic house, throne, and kingdom are conditioned by the duration of the earth, we logically conclude that the fulfillment of this promise continues to the end of the existence of the earth.



Notwithstanding the unmistakable reference to Solomon in these verses, the promises sweep out far beyond the life and times of this monarch. As evidence of this fact, note the threefold repetition of *forever*, the eternal duration of the seed of David, and the promise of the establishment of the throne and kingdom *forever*, which predictions incontrovertibly point beyond the time of Solomon.

The word *seed* refers to one's posterity and may indicate a single son, several children, or a succession of generations. The thought of its referring to several persons of the same generation is precluded by the fact that only one of David's descendants could sit upon the throne at a given time. Furthermore the idea of a succession of descendants is contained in the promise that the Lord would not withdraw His favor from David's posterity as He had taken it from Saul. The Lord declared that in case any of his sons should commit iniquity He would punish the disobedience but would continue His favor, transmitting it from father to son.

In this connection it becomes necessary to reemphasize the force of *forever*. As seen in the preceding footnote, *forever* is limited by the data supplied in the context. In some instances it signifies eternal duration whereas in other passages it indicates a limited time. In Psalm 89:29, a passage dealing with this very promise, the Lord declared concerning David that, "His seed also will I make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven." The parallel structure of this verse defines the meaning of *forever*, namely, as the days of heaven. Therefore the original promise relative to the continuance of David's seed guarantees the perpetuity of his dynasty as long as day and night continue. Since the throne and kingdom along with the seed of David are, according to this promise, to continue forever, we may be certain that they will continue as long as time on this earth lasts. "His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me" (Ps. 89:36).

Dr. C. F. Keil, in his excellent commentary on II Samuel, thoroughly discussed the meaning of the promise relative to the perpetuity of the Davidic dynasty and throne. "No earthly kingdom, and no posterity of any single man, has eternal duration like the heaven and the earth; but the different families of men become extinct, as the different earthly kingdoms perish, and other families and kingdoms

take their place. The posterity of David, therefore, could only last forever by running out in a person who lives for ever, *i.e.*, by culminating in the Messiah, who lives for ever, and of whose kingdom there is no end." History verifies Dr. Keil's contention. For instance, look at the table of nations given in the Torah (Gen. 10). Nearly every one of these peoples has passed into oblivion. Even the few which have survived to the present have undergone many changes by the introduction of new blood, by political upheavals, by conquests, and by changes in general. These changes and modifications have been so very great in the few cases surviving that they can hardly be recognized as the descendants of their ancient progenitors. And even among those which by a great stretch of the imagination may lay claim to a shadowy and doubtful identity with the past, there is not a single nation in which the royal house has continued to the present in unbroken succession.

Israel though a nation is not to be numbered with other peoples (Num. 23:9). She is not amenable\* to the inviolable laws governing other nations. Her history from the call of Abraham to the present has constituted the abiding miracle in the presence of the peoples of earth. Laws higher than those operating among the Gentiles have kept and preserved the Chosen People to the present hour. Had this nation not been protected by the special providence of the Almighty, it would be but a memory. But in order that all families of the earth may be blessed, God has preserved it to the present and will continue to do so as long as time lasts.

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\* In the worldwide depression Palestine alone is not affected. On the contrary, the period of international, economic distress and business chaos has proved to be an era of prosperity for the Holy Land under Zionistic leadership. The remarkable development in Palestine calls forth an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, a conservative sheet, under date of April 14, 1933, entitled "New Phoenicia Arising. Huge Oil Pipe Lines Bring Boom to Cities in Palestine." Under this caption the remarkable growth of Palestine is given.

William Zuckerman in *Harper's Magazine* speaks of the Palestinian boom as a modern miracle. Truly Israel's time is at hand.

The God of Israel, the author of the special providences preserving the nation, promises, in the passage under review, the same protection to, preservation and perpetuity of the royal house of David. The fulfillment of this promise immediately becomes evident by comparing the history of the changing dynasties in Samaria with the unbroken succession of the Davidic house in Jerusalem. The same political storms and military gales that constantly wrecked the kingdom of Ephraim and brought about a change of dynasty beat with equal force against the little kingdom of Judah and the royal house of David, yet during all that time this divinely chosen dynasty remained intact. Even the collapse of Judah at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the consequent Babylonian exile were not infractions of the inviolability of the covenant with David. They constituted chastisement for iniquity but not the withdrawal of favor from the reigning house. Zerubbabel who led the captives back from Babylon and supervised the restoration of the Davidic kingdom was a prince of the house of David, the rightful heir to the throne. Though restored to national life under Cyrus the Persian, Judah never again enjoyed political independence except for a very brief time under the leadership of the Maccabees. During the supremacy of Persia, Greece, and Rome, even to the destruction of the national life by Titus, Judah remained, in succession, a subject of each of these great powers. This foreign domination constituted the chastisement mentioned in the promise, yet the house of David continued even to the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 of the common era, as is evident from the genealogical tables. Therefore the covenant remains unbroken and continues intact.

Dr. Keil has shown us in the quotation above that the only way in which the house of David can continue forever is by its ending in a single person who lives forever. The only one in which the line can thus culminate is Messiah whose nature and person, as we have already seen, make His living forever possible. Hence we must conclude that, though Solomon stood in the foreground of this prophetic picture, Messiah in His glory and power appeared on the distant horizon. Between them, however, was seen the succession of Davidic princes who in an imperfect manner typified Him and above whom He towered in grandeur and excellence.

### *C. An Inspired Interpretation of the Davidic Covenant*

In the preceding section we learned that the covenant made by the Lord with David vouchsafed to him the perpetuity of his house and that this continuity is accomplished by the running out of the royal line in a person who lives forever, that is, "by culminating in the Messiah, who lives for ever, and of whose kingdom there is no end." In thus interpreting this passage I endeavored to ascertain only the facts of the context and their implications. It is now proper to test the conclusions reached by comparing them with the inspired interpretation given by the sacred historian in I Chronicles 17.

All of the facts preserved to us indicate that the chronicler wrote his history after the Babylonian captivity. (See II Chronicles 36:22,23.) Therefore approximately five hundred years intervened between the making of the covenant and the writing of Chronicles. Some of the details given in the original of II Samuel 7 are omitted from the Chronicles account. This phenomenon is to be expected. According to the laws of evidence, which may be examined in any standard work on the subject, the testimony of witnesses which agrees in the main but differs in details is of the highest order. The agreement is due to the sameness of the person or thing to which testimony is borne, whereas the differences are traceable to the individualities and experiences of the witnesses. A recognition of this fact and an application of the laws of evidence bearing on the points involved satisfactorily explain the seeming discrepancies.

One of the basic principles of the gradual unfolding of the revelation of God throws additional light upon the differences between the original covenant and the chronicler's version of it. The Lord, our maker, understands psychology and the best method of presenting His truth to us. According to the fundamentals of this science, the efficient teacher advances from the simple to the complex, from the near to the remote, and from the general to the specific. Thus the divine Spirit in the original statement of the covenant laid the emphasis upon the simple, the near, and the general (II Sam. 7), but in His later utterance (I Chron. 17), which assumes the development we know took place during the five hundred intervening years, He dealt with the complex, the remote, and the specific. As we shall see in the

discussion of the predictions of Isaiah, an advance was made during the monarchal period of Israel's history toward the completion of the portrait of Messiah. Hence the definiteness of the revelations made concerning Him in this intervening period should appear in the chronicler's version. We should be disappointed indeed had he lagged behind the development and presented the exact portrait found in Samuel's account. On the contrary, as we shall presently see, the divine Spirit presented through him a portrait of Messiah in keeping with the development of his day.

## 1. DISCUSSION OF VITAL VARIATIONS

II Sam. 7:12-16

When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with they fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kindom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”

כי | ימלאו ימיך ושכבת את־אבותיך והקימתי את־נרעך אחר־יך אשר יצא ממעיך  
והכינתי את־ממלכתו: הוא יבנה־בית לשמי וכוננתי את־כסא ממלכתו עד־עולם: אני  
אהיה־לו לאב והוא יהיה־לי לבן אשר בהעותו והכחתי בשבט אנשים ובנגעי בני  
אדם: ותסדי לא־יסור ממנו כאשר הסרתי מעם שאול אשר הסרתי מלפניך: ונאמן  
ביתך וממלכתך עד־עולם לפניך כסאך יהיה נכון עד־עולם:

## I Chron. 17:11-14

"And it shall come to pass, when thy days are fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will set up thy seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father and he shall be my son: and I will not take my lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee; but I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever."

וְהָיָה כִּי־מָלְאוּ יָמֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת עִם־אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְהִקִּימוּתִי אֶת־זַרְעֶךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה מִבְּנֶיךָ  
וְהִכִּינוּתִי אֶת־מַלְכוּתוֹ: הוּא יִבְנֶה־לִּי בַּיִת וְכִנְנֹתִי אֶת־פְּסָאוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם. אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה־לוֹ  
לְאָב וְהוּא יִהְיֶה־לִּי לְבֵן וְחִסְדִּי לֹא־אֶסִּיר מֵעַמּוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר הִסִּירוּתִי מֵאֲשֶׁר הָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ:  
וְהִעֲמַדְתִּיהוּ בְּבֵיתִי וּבְמַלְכוּתִי עַד־הָעוֹלָם וְכִסְאוֹ יִהְיֶה נָכוֹן עַד־עוֹלָם.

Omitting minor and unimportant differences in phraseology which do not affect the interpretation and which I pass by as having no bearing upon the subject in hand, I will endeavor to examine those that are vital. The first variation to be noted relates to the one who is to sit upon the throne of David forever. In Samuel the Lord identified him as the one **אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמְעֵיךָ** "that shall proceed out of thy bowels"; but in the Chronicles account He described him to David as the one **אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה מִבְּנֶיךָ** "who shall be of thy sons." The Samuel account without doubt refers primarily to one of David's own sons, Solomon. But as we have already seen, the description sweeps out into the distant future so that it cannot be limited to Solomon though he appears in the immediate foreground. The chronicler used an expression that eliminated Solomon from the picture, for in his day the messianic ideal had advanced far beyond the doctrinal development of Samuel's time. Had he desired to say, as some contend, "thy seed, which shall be among thy sons," he would have said **זַרְעֶךָ אֲשֶׁר מִבְּנֶיךָ**. On the contrary, he used the following words **זַרְעֶךָ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה מִבְּנֶיךָ** which are properly translated "thy seed, which will come out of (from) thy sons." "For **הָיָה מִן** does not denote to be of one, *i.e.*, to belong to him, but to arise, be born, or go forth, from one: cf. Gen. 17:16, Eccles. 3:20." This

position becomes still more apparent when we examine the word **מִבְּנֵיךָ** "from thy sons." The context indicates that **זָרְעֶךָ** should be understood as a singular noun referring to one person. Also the facts under consideration confirm this interpretation since only one person could sit upon the throne at a given time. If we should understand *thy sons* to refer to David's own children and not to his descendants after the first generation, we would understand that the Lord was speaking of one individual as begotten by David's sons. This position is preposterous. Therefore **מִבְּנֵיךָ** can refer only to the line of the princes of Judah. Since this one who is called David's seed *par excellence* is in the princely line, and since He mounts the throne in proper succession and remains there forever, it follows that with Him the Davidic dynasty runs out. These facts show beyond a peradventure that the inspired writer of Chronicles interpreted the original promise as messianic.

Dr. Keil confirms the conclusions just reached.

"According to this, the linguistically correct translation, the words cannot be referred to Solomon at all, because Solomon was not a descendant of David's sons, but of David himself. The author of the Chronicle has interpreted **אֶת־זָרְעֶךָ אֶחָדֶיךָ** theologically, or rather set forth the Messianic contents of this conception more clearly than it was expressed in **אִשָּׁר יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֵיךָ**. The seed after David, which will arise from his sons, is the Messiah, whom the prophets announced as the Son of David, whose throne God will establish for ever (ver. 12). This Messianic interpretation of David's **זָרַע** explains the divergence of the chronicler's text in vers. 13 and 14 from 2 Sam. vii. 14-16. For instance, the omission of the words after **בָּרַךְ** in ver. 13, 'If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men' (II Sam. 7:14), is the result of the Messianic interpretation of **זָרְעֶךָ**, since the reference to the chastisement would of course be important for the earthly sons of David and the kings of Judah, but could not well find place in the case of the Messiah. The only thing said of this son of David is, that God will not withdraw His grace from him."—*Commentary on Chronicles*, p. 223.

The second variation to be noted is found by a comparison of II Samuel 7:16 and I Chronicles 17:14. The original statement, "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever," is limited and narrowed down by the chronicler to the Messiah: "But I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for

ever." The original statement is general; the later one is specific. The words quoted from the Samuel passage were spoken to David; those in the Chronicles refer to the seed of David, the Messiah, and "promise to Him His establishment for ever in the house and kingdom of God, and the duration of His throne for ever."

According to this promise, God will establish Messiah in His house. What is meant by *בֵּית ה' house*? It cannot, as some contend, refer to the kingdom of Israel for this significance was never in Tenach attached to it. The context must decide. In verse 12 *house* refers to the temple of the Lord. Since there is nothing in either verse 13 or 14 to indicate a change of meaning, we must understand it to have the same signification.

The temple in Jerusalem stood related to the kingdom of God as the king's palace to his realm. The house which the Messiah will build will stand in the same relation to the great kingdom of God of the future; hence it will be the house of the Lord in His kingdom. In this house and kingdom the Lord God will establish Messiah forever. His throne shall never topple; His reign shall never cease, because He Himself shall live forever. These words are applicable to none other than King Messiah. I will now close this phase of the investigation by quoting once more from Dr. Keil.

"The words are therefore merely a further development of the saying, 'I will be to him a Father, and I will not take my mercy away from him, and will establish his kingdom for ever,' and tell us clearly and definitely what is simplicity contained in the promise, that David's house, kingdom, and throne will endure for ever (Sam.), viz. that the house and kingdom of David will be established for ever only under the Messiah. That this interpretation is correct is proved by the fact that the divergences of the text of the chronicler from the parallel narrative cannot otherwise be explained."

Another remarkable variation is the omission of the clause, "if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." Why this striking literary phenomenon? Was the dropping of these words accidental or intentional? Since the chronicler erased the Davidic dynasty from the picture in the Samuel account and left only that of King Messiah, and since he gave a distinct picture of Him, one naturally concludes that the removal of this



clause was intentional. As we shall learn later, Messiah shall be called "the Lord our righteousness" when He mounts the throne of David. In the light of this prophecy and many others it is evident that He is righteous in the absolute sense of the term. Hence the omission of this conditional clause from the statements relative to the Messiah alone is intentional. This fact also is strong evidence of His sinless nature.

The final variation to which I wish to call attention is found in verse 19 in the Samuel passage which corresponds to verse 17 of the Chronicles prediction. The words of the original, "And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come; and this *too* after the manner of men, O Lord God," are interpreted by the chronicler as follows: "And this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; but thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God." The clause with which we are concerned is in the original statement וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם "And this too after the manner of men" but rendered by the later writer וּרְאִיתִנִּי כְּתוֹר הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה יְהוָה "And hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God." These statements have been variously translated. Much confusion, therefore, has arisen as a result.

David was overwhelmed by the grandeur of the revelation and hardly knew how to respond to the Lord's goodness. The Samuel statement is not difficult to understand. Another has expressed the meaning admirably: "This—namely, the love and condescension manifested in Thy treatment of Thy servant—is the law which applies to man, or is conformed to the law which men are to observe towards men, *i.e.* to the law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Lev. 19:18, compare Micah 6:8)." The Chronicles version of the case is not so easy. הַמַּעֲלָה is the word giving the difficulty. Keil tells us that "elsewhere it occurs only as a substantive, in the significations, 'the act of going up' (drawing up) (Ezra 7:9), 'that which goes up' (Ezek. 11:5), 'the step;' while for the signification 'height' (locus superior) only this passage is adduced by Gesenius in Thes." It is obvious from the

parallel structure of the sentences that the phrase, "for a great while to come," corresponds to "of high degree." David saw the Messiah in the distant future as expressed by the first adverbial phrase. In his parallel statement he speaks of the man of high degree or the one "going up." In other words, David told the Lord that He had condescended to deal with him in loving-kindness and grace in that He had visited him in elevating his house by sending the Messiah who will fulfill the vision of glory.

## 2. THE THRONE OF GOD UPON THE EARTH

The throne of Judah was called the throne of David because he was the founder of the reigning dynasty. Today we speak of the English throne as that of the reigning sovereign because he exercises the regal functions of the realm. He does not rule by proxy but in person. Thus did David. But this same throne is said to be the throne of God. We know, however, that the throne of God is in heaven and that His kingdom embraces the entire universe. In what sense then can the throne of David be called the throne of God? Can it be that this language is an adaptation to human understanding? Or is it to be taken literally? It should, according to the recognized rule of interpretation, be understood in the ordinary and literal sense if the context and the facts of Scripture warrant such a meaning.

At Mt. Sinai the Lord proposed that Israel yield loving and faithful obedience to Him and become a holy nation of priests. On this point she failed. The Lord God wished to be her King and to provide her with everything in order that the nations might see the blessedness of serving and worshipping the true God. But by her disobedience, unfaithfulness, and stubbornness the Lord could never thus bless her. During the pre-monarchal times God had prophets who communicated His will to the people and judges who delivered them in times of crises when they called upon Him. Eventually she clamored for a king because she wished to be like the nations about her. In desiring an earthly king she rejected God as her sovereign. Throughout the period of the monarchy of Judah, there never sat a righteous king upon the throne of David who administered justice and equity in the correct sense

of those terms—not even David, Israel's ideal king. All of Judah's kings were poor reflections of divine justice and righteousness. In view of the imperfections, the failures, and the gross sins on the part of the Davidic house, one should look closely to ascertain the exact reason why this throne was called the throne of the Lord.

In the light of the facts just presented, one can hardly see how, even in a secondary sense, the throne of David could be called the throne of God since all of the kings of his line, with the possible exception of four, were indeed poor specimens of divine justice and righteousness. (In passing this judgment upon them, I am not unmindful of the fact that all of us are but creatures of the dust and are prone to do wrong.) The heathen were never attracted to the worship of God by them, as should have been the case; on the contrary, they with their people were constantly being lured into idolatrous customs and ways. Therefore it seems highly improbable that the expression is used in a secondary sense. But how can the primary meaning fit the case since God Himself never did come to earth and mount the throne? The clue to the solution of this most important question probably is to be found in the chronicler's interpretation of the Davidic covenant, which we have been examining. This inspired author has shown us that He who is called *the seed* of David is to mount the throne and remain there *forever*. But in reply to this position, one may call attention to the fact that *forever* is sometimes used in a limited sense as is evidently the case in David's statement: "Howbeit the Lord, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever" (I Chron. 28:4). The context of this statement most clearly limits the duration of *forever* to the natural lifetime of the king. But the case is entirely different with David's *seed*. As we have already seen, the seed, the throne, and the kingdom of this seed are each said to have eternal duration. To remove any doubt, the inspired psalmist has shown that the seed and the throne of David are to continue forever, that is, so long as the sun and the moon endure (Ps. 89:36,37). Therefore this *seed* lives after He mounts the throne as long as the sun and the moon continue. This

fact shows that there is something extraordinary about His person, for no merely human being could live and reign forever.

Since this promised one is the seed of David, He evidently is a man, nevertheless there is something about Him that enables Him to live and reign forever. Inasmuch as ordinary men do not live beyond the allotted time, we can be certain that there is something unusual about this one. The prophets promise everlasting life in bliss to the righteous, who will be raised from the dead at the conclusion of Jacob's trouble (Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19). Are death and such a resurrection presupposed by this passage, or is this great King of Israel of such a nature that He never dies, or are both possibilities true in His case? The answer to this question may be found in such a passage as Psalm 16:10, in which the speaker declares, "כִּי | לֹא־תֵעָזֵב נַפְשִׁי לְשֵׂאוֹל לֹא־תִתֶּן חַסִּידֶיךָ לְרְאוֹת שְׁחַת:" "For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption." In our text חַסִּידֶיךָ *holy ones* appears; but R. Kittel in his *Biblia Hebraica*, a most scholarly critical work, calls our attention to the fact that many of the manuscripts and versions have חַסִּידֶיךָ *Holy One*. Rabbi Isaac Leeser in his translation of the Tenach renders this verse, "For thou wilt not abandon my soul to the grave: thou wilt not suffer thy pious (servant) to see corruption." This translator evidently considered that the singular form was the correct reading. But who is the pious or holy servant? Certainly not any ordinary person, for when this one dies, His spirit goes to שֵׂאוֹל *Sheol*. Though His body is lifeless for the time being, it is not subject to decomposition and decay but is preserved from corruption, awaiting the return of the soul from Sheol to take up its abode once more in its former earthly dwelling. The bodies of all the saints of God decompose after death, but the body of this one is immune to this universal law. Hence He is in a category by Himself. According to the prediction, this holy one lives forever after He rises from the dead. Since God is impartial, loves all of His people alike, and deals with each upon the same principles, it is certain that this holy one is not in the category of ordinary men. Though He is a man, he is *more* than a man. Hence He enjoys special consideration. Since, as we have learned in our study of the predictions of

Balaam and of Hannah's Song of Praise, Messiah is God who appears in human form as Israel's King and reigns over the conquered world, we may reasonably conclude that it is He who mounts the throne of David in His resurrection body and reigns over the world. (This point will be taken up in the third book of this *Messianic Series*)

Since the human-divine Messiah is to sit upon the throne of Israel, we can easily see why this throne is called the throne of God and the kingdom over which He rules, the kingdom of God. Hence those expressions which call the throne and kingdom of Judah the throne and the kingdom of God are used by way of anticipation. When Israel is purged of all sin, which cleansing process will be accomplished by the fires of the great Day of the Lord, she will be in a condition so that her Messiah may come and dwell in the midst of the Chosen People and reign over the world. This vision Jeremiah saw in chapter 3 of his prediction:

"And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jer. 3:16-18).

### 3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD UPON THE EARTH

According to this covenant made with David, the kingdom of God is to be established upon earth forever, that is, when it is once set up, it will continue as long as the sun and the moon endure. We see from various statements of the prophets that it will have a small beginning and increase until it covers the earth. For instance, in Isaiah 9:6,9, it is said to be set up in Judah and to increase until it encircles the globe. In Isaiah eleven a beautiful picture of conditions upon the earth during Messiah's reign is given: the curse lifted, the animal kingdom restored to its

primitive harmlessness, Israel secure in her own land, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord encircling the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall 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.

"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 fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. And they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines on the west; together shall they despoil the children of the east: they shall put forth their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his scorching wind will he wave his hand over the River, and will smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria; like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

"And in that day thou shalt say, I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid: for the Lord, *even* the Lord, is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And

in that day shall ye say, Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the peoples, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: let this be known in all the earth. Cry aloud and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 11,12).

## II. DAVID'S FINAL GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

וְאַלֶּה דְבָרֵי דָוִד הָאֲחֻרָיִם נֶאֱמַר דָּוִד בֶּן־יִשָּׁי וַיֵּאמֶר הַגִּבּוֹר הַקָּדֵם עַל מְשִׁיחַ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב  
 וַיִּנְעִים זְמֵרוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל: רוּחַ יְהוָה דִּבְרָבִי וּמִלְתּוֹ עַל־לְשׁוֹנִי: אָמַר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִי  
 דְבַר צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹשֵׁל בְּאָדָם צַדִּיק מוֹשֵׁל יְרֵאת אֱלֹהִים: וּכְאוּר בְּקָר יִזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ בְּקָר  
 לֹא עֲבוֹת מִנְגַּה מִמָּטָר דָּשָׂא מֵאֶרֶץ: כִּי־לֹא־כֵן בֵּיתִי עַם־אֵל כִּי בְרִית עוֹלָם שָׁם לִי  
 עָרוּכָה בְּכַל וּשְׁמֵרָה כִּי־כָל־יִשְׁעֵי וְכָל־חַפְצֵי כִּי־לֹא יִצְמִיחַ: וּבְלִיעַל כְּקוֹץ מִנֵּד כָּלֵהֶם  
 כִּי־לֹא בִיד יִקְחוּ: וְאִישׁ יִגַע בָּהֶם וּמְלֹא בְרָזֵל וְעֵץ חֲגִית וּבְאֵשׁ שָׂרוּף יִשְׂרָפוּ בַשָּׂבֶת:

"Now these are the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse saith,

And the man who was raised on high saith,

The anointed of the God of Jacob,

And the sweet psalmist of Israel:

The Spirit of the Lord spake by me,

And his word was upon my tongue.

The God of Israel said,

The Rock of Israel spake to me:

One that ruleth over men righteously,

That ruleth in the fear of God,

*He shall be* as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,

A morning without clouds,

*When* the tender grass *springeth* out of the earth,

Through clear shining after rain.

Verily my house is not so with God;

Yet he hath, made with me an everlasting covenant,

Ordered, in all things, and sure:

For it is all my salvation, and all *my* desire,

Although he maketh it not to grow.  
 But the ungodly shall be all of them as thorns to be thrust away,  
 Because they cannot be taken with the hand;  
 But the man that toucheth them  
 Must be armed with iron and the staff of a spear:  
 And they shall be utterly burned with fire in their place."  
 (II Sam. 23:1-7.)

### A. Preliminary Considerations

In the preceding chapter we examined the early rays of messianic expectation as they appear in the Torah and in Hannah's Song of Praise (I Sam. 2:1-10). We learned that the community of the godly was through those early centuries animated and spurred onward by this divinely inspired hope. These predictions unfolded the truth that this coming world Ruler would be the seed of the woman in a special sense and that also He would be God in human form. Furthermore, we saw in Hannah's prediction that He for the first time was called *Anointed* or *Messiah*. When Samuel anointed Saul as king, immediately the people saw in him the realization of these ancient hopes. In their eyes he became the anointed of God. On account of his rebellion the Lord rejected him and chose David in his stead, whom Samuel anointed.

From that time to the death of Saul, David was constantly pursued and persecuted by the former. Upon the death of Saul David came forth from his haunts and began his rule in Hebron where he reigned for seven and one-half years. During this time there was continual war between the houses of Saul and of David. All the time David was waxing stronger and stronger, whereas Saul's house was becoming weaker and weaker. Finally, Abner, the famous general of the house of Saul, won for David the allegiance of the tribes that had been following the house of Saul. Then David became king of the nation. For the first time the tribes of the children of Israel could really be called a kingdom. Being intrenched in his own realm David began an aggressive campaign against his enemies. His conquests



carried his standard to the banks of the Euphrates on the north and the River of Egypt on the south.

Since the divine Spirit had in David's early reign unfolded, without giving the particulars, the plan of God concerning the kingdom—only to the point of Messiah's complete conquests and reign over the nations, since he was the messiah from whom God had sworn that He would not withdraw His favor as He had done in the case of Saul, and since his statesmanship and decisive victories gave promise of far-reaching conquests, the king, together with his enthusiastic subjects, saw in himself the realization of the former messianic predictions. All in loving admiration gazed upon this anointed one as he swept onward from victory to victory. His kingdom was growing mightily. Commerce was thriving. Israel was rapidly taking her place beside the mighty empires of the world. Her king was becoming known as one of the great monarchs of the age. The eyes of his loyal subjects were dazzled by the radiance of his full-orbed glory.

Under such auspicious conditions and with only that portion of the revelation of God which had been given up to that time, what other conclusion could the average man draw than that David was the promised Messiah? The unfolding messianic ideal, like a magnificent building in the process of construction almost hidden by scaffolds, could not be clearly seen and properly evaluated. One cannot appreciate the beauty of a forest when he is in its depths. He must view it as a whole from some point of vantage in order to have the proper perspective. From such an eminence he can see clearly and enjoy fully its grandeur and its beauty. To judge David and his contemporaries by the full and complete revelation which we have today is to be illogical and to do them an injustice. Had we been in their position, we would have thought and acted as they did in regard to this matter.

In this connection one might wonder why God had not given sufficient details relative to this most important doctrine in order that no one might draw erroneous conclusions. In reply I wish to call attention to several facts. In the first place, the early predictions made to the patriarchs were, as we have already seen, clear and definite. Had the fathers in Israel read, as the Lord instructed them to do, the Torah

to their families night and morning with an eye focused upon knowing and doing the will of God, they never would have drawn false conclusions. In the second place, Israel constantly lapsed into idolatry and departed from the pure worship of God. Sin, like a cataract, always blinds the eyes. In the third place, to drift from the past and to desire something new is human. To this rule Israel was no exception. Someone has well said that each generation needs a reformation. All peoples are prone to follow traditions. In all probability the real meaning of those predictions had, by David's time, become obscure under the accumulated dust of traditions. In the fourth place, David's phenomenal rise to power was so very spectacular that his contemporaries were, even by his quickly fading glory, blinded to the former predictions. Thus the earlier prophecies ceased to grip the heart of the nation whose interest had been drawn largely to the material things of the moment. To forget the past and to become totally absorbed with the present is a dominant human trait. Finally, the messianic ideal, which had been transferred from Saul to David, had not as yet been detached from his person. Hence to his contemporaries under the peculiar and gripping circumstances of the time, he appeared to be the fulfillment of the messianic hope.

Closely associated with the question discussed in the preceding paragraph is one concerning David's understanding of his position and relation to the future Messiah. Did he think that he was the fulfillment of the former predictions and that he would establish a universal empire and bring peace to a war-ridden world? It will be impossible to give a dogmatic answer; nevertheless there are several considerations which make *probability* advance appreciably toward *certainty*. In the first place, let us recognize the fact that the prophets were inspired only on those occasions when the Lord wished to communicate a message to His people. When they desired, however, to know the will of God on some point, they would go to Him in prayer. He always answered. Apart from such occasions they had to rely upon their normal faculties. Hence they, like other men, could make mistakes. We have already seen an illustration of this fact in the case of Nathan who at first advised David to build the house of the Lord but later had to correct his humanly

given advice. It is quite possible that David, when the divine Spirit was not inspiring him, may have shared the popular opinion concerning himself. On the other hand, when he was inspired, he spoke as the representative of God. Frequently the prophets impersonated the Lord and spoke as if they were He. For example, see Isaiah 48:12-16.

In the second place, David was a type of the Messiah. This fact is an application of a generally recognized pedagogical law. According to psychologists, a large amount of our information is received through the eye,—some estimates running as high as eighty-five or ninety per cent. Visual education is coming more and more into general recognition. Especially is this method adapted to the education of children. It is not surprising that the Lord used it in teaching His ancient people concerning Him who is the goal of their history. A glance at his psalms in general shows that David spoke of himself as if he were the Messiah. Upon closer examination of many of them it becomes apparent that he gave expression to quite a few utterances which in no sense could apply to himself but only to Messiah. Therefore David in his early sufferings and later in his sweeping conquests and glory served as a type or model of Messiah's sufferings and glory. His life and reign were pictures, though often exceedingly marred by sins and human failures, of Messiah and His kingdom from which Israel could gather some definite idea of her future great King. This picture method was used by the Lord in instructing His people and in preparing them for the more advanced teachings which He later gave through the prophets. Therefore we can see the Lord's wisdom in allowing the messianic ideal to settle down temporarily upon the person of David.

During the period before the messianic ideal was detached from David's person, he composed quite a number of psalms in which he spoke of himself as the Messiah and of his doing the things that Messiah alone can do. For example, in Psalm 22 he started with his own experiences and in a very short time began to relate certain events which by far surpassed anything that had come into his life. Thus from his greatly circumscribed experiences he swept out into a large circle of life which only Messiah, whom he typified, can traverse. The same thing is true of

Psalm 20 with its complement, Psalm 21. The situation presupposed in these two poems is similar to that of II Chronicles 20. Psalm 69 is another fine illustration of this type of composition.\* These will suffice to clarify the point.

In the third place, let it be recognized that God chose a man after His own heart to become the type of Messiah. David was doubtless one of the most righteous and best men of his day, if not the best. He longed for God as few people have ever done. His whole desire was to please God. Hence he was a fitting type of Messiah. Nevertheless he made certain very great blunders and committed a series of diabolical sins. Consequently he was the target of Satan's special attacks. His reign was marred by grave imperfections. Divine wisdom chose such a righteous character as he was to demonstrate to the world that even the best man fails and that, if he comes short of administering justice and righteousness, it is certain that there can be no such thing as an ideal and righteous government administered by man. Human nature is frail and cannot be relied upon. By David's miserable failure in the moral realm the Lord showed that the heart is deceitful above all things and that there is no foretelling what man may do under certain conditions (Jer. 17:9). Hence in allowing the messianic ideal to be associated with the person of David the Lord not only gave Israel a limited and imperfect illustration of the messianic kingdom but also demonstrated the absolute necessity for a Messiah and a Deliverer who is man but more than man, namely, the God-man.

After God had thoroughly taught Israel her object lesson concerning the future kingdom, the time came for Him to enlighten the people by revealing the typical character of David's reign. The occasion of His making this further disclosure was the king's sin with Bath-sheba and his series of wicked attempts to conceal his iniquity. These outrageous crimes awakened in the king's soul a consciousness of

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\* If the higher destructive critics would only recognize this type of psalm and place such writings in the time before the messianic ideal was torn from the person of David, they would see that the superscriptions connected with certain ones tell the correct story. When the facts are allowed an opportunity of giving their testimony, it is seen they give a truthful answer.

his utter failure as a true representative of God and as the under-shepherd of Israel, foreshadowing her Great Shepherd. By his sins the nation was rudely shocked and was brought to a realization of the impotence of its beloved ruler. Professor Delitzsch, in commenting on Psalm 110, has put this truth in so forceful a manner that I wish to give the same quotation which I have used elsewhere.

"The war with the Ammonites and their allies, the greatest, longest and most glorious of David's wars, ended in the second year, when David himself joined the army, with the conquest of Rabbah. This typical back-ground of the prophetic purport of the Psalm is to be recognized. The spirit of prophecy makes David behold from the brighter aspects of his own kingship the glory of the second David. In relation to this King of the future David is not king, but subject. He gives Him the same name as the people give himself, viz. **יְהוָה**. Having come down from his throne, he looks up to the coming One. He too sits enthroned on Zion. He too is victorious from out of it. But His fellowship with God is the closest conceivable, and even the last enemy is laid at His feet. And He is not merely a king, who in priestly fashion provides for the salvation of His people; He is an eternal priest in virtue of a sworn promise. The Psalm is therefore future-historical upon a typical background. We can also explain why it is that the victory gained over Ammon and the image of the Messiah have thus for David detached themselves from his person. In the midst of that war occurs the sin of David, which embittered the whole of his after life and which laid his typical glory in ashes. Out of these ashes the phoenix of Messianic prophecy here arises. The type, come to the consciousness of himself, here lays down his crown at the feet of the Antitype."—*Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. III, p. 164*

After the messianic ideal had been detached from the person of David, the Spirit of God gave a fuller revelation through the psalmist concerning this great future Messiah. This oracle is found in Psalm 110. In it David clearly distinguished between himself and Messiah. He recognized that this one was his superior and spoke of Him as Lord.

In the evening of his life David took a retrospective view of his stormy career and was led to give all praise to the Lord for having delivered him from both internal and external foes. The Spirit of God came upon him and inspired him to commit to writing his gratitude and his thanksgiving.

The record is preserved in II Samuel 22 and in Psalm 18.\*

At the conclusion of his song of praise, the Spirit of God led David to make his final will and testament in the form of a revelation concerning the Messiah (II Sam. 23:1-7). In it he unmistakably differentiated between himself and King Messiah. I can find no better introduction to a study of this great oracle than the following quotation from Keil's *Commentary on the Books of Samuel*.

"The psalm of thanksgiving, in which David praised the Lord for all the deliverances and benefits that he had experienced throughout the whole of his life, is followed by the prophetic will and testament of the great king, unfolding the importance of his rule in relation to the sacred history of the future. And whilst the psalm may be regarded (ch. xxii.) as a great hallelujah, with which David passed away from the stage of life, these 'last words' contain the divine seal of all that he has sung and prophesied in several psalms concerning the eternal dominion of his seed, on the strength of the divine promise which he received through the prophet Nathan, that his throne should be established for ever (ch. vii.). These words are not merely a lyrical expansion of that promise, but a prophetic declaration uttered by David at the close of his life and by divine inspiration, concerning the true King of the kingdom of God. 'The aged monarch, who was not generally endowed with the gift of prophecy, was moved by the Spirit of God at the close of his life, and beheld a just Ruler in the fear of God, under whose reign blessing and salvation sprang up for the righteous, and all the wicked were overcome. The pledge of this was the eternal covenant which God had concluded with him' (Tholuck: *die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen*, p. 166)" pp. 484, 485.

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\* The few verbal variations found in these two poems may be fully accounted for upon the basis that the Samuel passage is the original, whereas the one in the book of Psalms is a duplicate, changed by the Spirit to yield itself more readily to liturgical purposes.

### B. *The Introduction* (vss. 1,2)

In verses 1 and 2 "the aged monarch" shows a striking acquaintance with the prophecies of Balaam, which we have already studied. Both the poetical form and the substance of these verses are distinct echoes of those of the former seer. The fact that the inspired writer chose the fourth oracle of Balaam (Num. 24:15-24) as a model and followed it very closely in both particulars is proof that this revelation is a divine explanation of "the star out of Jacob" and "the sceptre out of Israel" and an expansion of the original prediction.

Like Balaam, David declared that his poem was **נִאֲמַר** *a divine revelation*. In the second verse he reiterated this assertion by stating that the Spirit of God spoke through Him and that God's word was upon his tongue. The messages which the Biblical writers delivered were not their own but were those of the Spirit of God. Hence we can rely upon whatever they have said. The test of the centuries has proved that the Bible is infallibly inspired. Archaeology likewise confirms this conclusion.

In the first verse David called himself "the anointed of the God of Jacob." As has already been seen in Hannah's song, the ruler of Israel is, by way of anticipation, called "the anointed" or "Messiah." Here David speaks of himself by this official title. He also speaks of himself as the one who was raised up on high, that is, the one who had been exalted to the position of authority over the nation.

### C. *The King and His Kingdom* (vss. 3, 4, 5)

In verses 3-5 the poet describes the vision of the King and His kingdom and at the same time acknowledges his own failure. In transports of ecstasy at the sight of this future Messiah David exclaimed, **מוֹשֵׁל בְּאֲדָם צְדִיק מוֹשֵׁל יִרְאֵת אֱלֹהִים:** "One that ruleth over men righteously, That ruleth in the fear of God." These statements may be rendered: "One ruling over men, a righteous one, One ruling in the fear of God." Of course, these utterances are elliptical. They are ejaculations, spontaneous outbursts of enthusiasm over the vision of the future world Ruler. We may fancy the aged king standing in the presence of his courtiers, who are eagerly listening to

him as he talks of affairs of state. The Spirit of God comes upon him. In poetical strains he recounts the goodness of God in preserving his life through the storms of the past. With rapt attention they listen to his rehearsal of the soul-thrilling experiences through which he had passed and from which the Lord had graciously delivered him.

But what of the future? This query is stamped upon the countenances of all. Immediately the Spirit presents before the mind of this great ruler, beloved of his people, a vision of Him who will rule the world in righteousness. Overcome by the glory of His person, the righteousness of His administration, and the blessedness of His reign, the prophet-king at first can speak in ejaculatory utterances only. In my imagination I see David leaning forward as if scrutinizing an object or person in the distance and exclaiming, "A ruler over men, a righteous one; A ruler in the fear of God." Expressed in the language of calm deliberation the statement would be: "A ruler over men shall arise, a righteous One: A Ruler who administers affairs in the fear of God."

That this prediction is modeled after the style of Balaam's prophecies is self-evident. Especially are the words under consideration echoes of his oracle concerning the star out of Jacob and the sceptre out of Israel. In Balaam's statement this king is presented as the ruler of Jacob; but in David's forecast He is not only the King of Israel but also the Ruler over men, that is, He is to exercise the sovereignty over the *race*.

This future Ruler is צַדִּיק *righteous*, or *just*. Many of the servants of God are said to have been righteous. For instance, Noah is called צַדִּיק a *righteous* man. But we see that he was not just in the absolute sense of the term, for on one occasion he became drunk. This interpretation is confirmed by a statement of Ezekiel: "When the righteous צַדִּיק turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity ... in his iniquity that he hath done shall he die" (Ezek. 18:26). Hence when this term is applied to men, it is used in a relative sense. A survey of every occurrence of this word when applied to man shows that it is used with the same limited meaning.



The same term is applied to God. For example, the psalmist declared; "For the Lord is righteous; he loveth righteousness" (Ps. 11:7). Again, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous" (Ps. 116:5). Various inspired writers declared the same truth concerning God's character. When applied to the Lord, it is obviously used in the absolute sense.

Since both God and men are said to be צדיק, *righteous*, the context must decide the meaning of this word, if possible. Can anything be learned from the parallel structure? צדיק in the first line corresponds to יראת אלהים "the fear of God" in the second. But even this latter expression is sometimes used of godly men. Hence the parallel structure is not decisive on this point, though it does emphasize the excellent character of this ruler. As we shall presently see, the following verse compares the excellence of this future administration to the dawn of a cloudless and perfect day. Immediately after making this statement, the prophet confessed that his reign had been a failure in comparison with this new regime. Again, in the following verse David in describing the person and the government of this righteous Ruler exclaimed, "It is all my salvation, and all *my* desire." The cumulative effect of these facts shows that this one is not simply a righteous man but, though a man (being of the seed of David), He is more than man—He is God in human form.

Jeremiah and Zechariah undoubtedly had this verse in mind when they by the Spirit uttered the following predictions:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 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 Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called: the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. 23:5,6).

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:9,10).

The glorious forecast of the reign of Messiah (Isa. 11:2,3) is also a reflection of 2 Samuel 23:3.

"And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears" (Isa. 11:2,3).

In view of all the facts Dr. Keil freely translated this verse: "A ruler over the human race will arise, a just ruler, and will exercise his dominion in the spirit of the fear of God."

Some have tried to connect verse 4 with the preceding one so as to render the meaning, "When one rules justly over men (as I do), it is as when a morning becomes clear." This interpretation entirely overlooks the significance of Nathan's promise recorded in 2 Samuel 7 and "weakens the force of the saying so solemnly introduced as the word of God." In answer to this position I wish to quote Dr. Keil once more.

"The ruler over men whom David sees in spirit is not any one who rules righteously over men; nor is the seed of David to be regarded as a collective expression indicating a merely ideal personality, but, according to the Chaldee rendering, the Messiah himself, the righteous Shoot whom the Lord would raise up to David (Jer. 23:5), and who would execute righteousness and judgment upon earth" (Jer. 33:15).

A glance at verses 3 and 4 shows that they are separate grammatical entities even though the connection is very close. The continuity of thought is evident. The appearance of this Ruler and the blessed effects of His coming are compared to the rising of the sun on a cloudless morning after a season of refreshing showers which have caused vegetation to shoot forth. Though the statement of the fourth verse is elliptical, the omitted part can easily be supplied from the context. As stated by Dr. Keil, the Messiah is not compared to the rising of the sun, but His appearance is likened to the dawning of the morning when the sun rises and floods the earth with its vivifying rays. The phrase, "morning without clouds," is parallel with the preceding one and describes more fully the kind of morning before the prophet's mind. The dawning light dispels the darkness and awakens "the germs of life in the bosom of nature." "The state of things before the coming of the ruler resembles the

darkness of night" (Hengstenberg). On the last statement of this verse Dr. Keil has the following comment:

"The rays of the sun, as it rises after a night of rain, strengthen the fresh green of the plants. The rain is therefore a figurative representation of blessing generally (cf. Isa. 44:3), and the green grass which springs up from the earth after the rain is an image of the blessings of the Messianic salvation" (Isa. 44:4; 45:8).

An echo of this verse is heard in Psalm 72: "He (the Messiah) will come down like rain upon the mown grass, As showers that water the earth" (vs. 6).

Verse 5 gives some difficulty to translators. That we may have the facts before our minds, I will quote this verse first in Hebrew and then in three English versions,

כִּי־לֹא־יֵכֵן בֵּיתִי עִם־אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְרִית עוֹלָם שָׁם לִי עָרוּכָה בְּכֹל וְשִׁמְרָה כִּי־כָל־יִשְׁעַי  
וְכָל־חֲפֶזִי כִּי־לֹא יִצְמִיחַ:

"Truly is not so my house with God? since he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, firm in all, and sure? yea, will he not cause to grow all my salvation, and all my desire?"—Isaac Leeser.

"Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."—Authorized Version.

"Verily my house is not so with God; Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things, and sure: For it is all my salvation, and all my desire, Although he maketh it not to grow."—American Revised Version.

The marginal rendering of this last translation is as follows:

"For is not my house so with God? for he hath made with me an everlasting covenant. Ordered in all things, and sure: for all my salvation, and all my desire, will he not make it to grow?"

Thus in these translations there is a medley of opinions. Are all justifiable? Or is but one correct?

Let the reader note that Isaac Leeser's rendering and the marginal note of the Revised Version interpret the first and last sentences as questions, whereas the Authorized translation and the text of the Revised Version render these clauses as simple declarative statements. Why then are they by others translated as questions?

Can they be correctly rendered as both types of sentences? It is to be noted that ׀, the regular sign of interrogation, is wanting from this sentence. Why then can they for a moment be considered as questions? On this point Dr. Keil remarks, "The question is only indicated by the tone (כִּי לֹא = כִּי הָלֹא ch. 19:23), as is frequently the case, even before clauses commencing with לֹא (e.g. Hos. 11:5; Mal. 2:15: cf. Ewald, No. 324, a), לֹא-כִּי (not so) is explained by the following clause, though the כִּי which follows is not to be taken in the sense of *'that'*. Each of the two clauses contains a distinct thought. That of the first is, 'Does not my house stand in such a relation to God, that the righteous ruler will spring from it?' This is then explained in the second: 'for He hath made an everlasting covenant with me.' David calls the promise in ch. vii. 12, sqq., that God would establish his kingdom to his seed for ever, a covenant, because it involved a reciprocal relation,—namely, that the Lord would first of all found for David a permanent house, and then that the seed of David was to build the house of the Lord." The rendering advocated and the reasons assigned therefore are grammatical, though not conclusive.

On the other hand, the rendering of the two clauses in question as declarative statements is also grammatical. In view of the fact that, as a rule, ׀ is used when a question is intended, and that it does not occur in this context, one is inclined to read these clauses in the ordinary way unless other factors indicate differently. Since such corroborative evidence is lacking, one must favor the normal rendering. Hence the text of the Revised Version seems to meet all conditions.

Having ascertained the most likely rendering, let us now attempt to study the verse microscopically. The statement, "Verily my house is not so with God," is a confession of failure. In the clear light of the holiness of this future Sovereign, David saw himself as the Lord sees him and then made this clean-cut confession. Notwithstanding his failures, he realized that he was standing upon the basis of the pure grace of God; hence he with confidence referred to the covenant into which the Lord had entered with him: "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant." The king knew that the promises founded upon the favor of God and the

everlasting purposes of the Almighty could not be changed by his own failures. It must indeed have been humiliating for David to make this full-breasted confession; nevertheless he, like all of us, could only enjoy the free grace of God to the fullest extent by "coming clean with the Lord."

The everlasting covenant to which the king referred is recorded in 2 Samuel 7, which we have already studied. In the investigation we saw that this promise included the coming of one who would mount the throne forever, because he lives forever. This covenant is "ordered in all things, and sure." Everything that is necessary has been provided by the Lord who knows the end from the beginning. Since there are no events unforeseen by Him that can arise, every need has been graciously and bountifully met. Inasmuch as this covenant is made by the omnipotent God, it is sure.

Understanding the nature, the scope, and the certainty of the covenant, David joyfully and confidently declared, "it is all my salvation, and all *my* desire." In the previous study of this covenant we saw that all the hopes of Israel were centered in this great King. Therefore David correctly said that this covenant was all his salvation and his desire. He clearly discerned that this future, righteous Ruler who would reign over the human family was also the Deliverer of the faithful. Hence the statement that all his salvation and his desire were bound up in this covenant is but another way of saying that his hope of salvation in the future world would be accomplished by this Ruler of men.

David, like Abraham, was a man of faith. What God said he believed. Although there were no indications in his day that the promise would be fulfilled, his confidence in God was so very strong that he by faith saw the promises as an accomplished reality. Hence he said, "For it is all my salvation, and all my desire, Although he maketh it not to grow." The context shows clearly that, notwithstanding the indications of his day, the promise would spring forth and become fruitful. Hence we might paraphrase the last statement: "Although he maketh it not to grow now, He will surely cause it to develop into most bountiful fruition."

In the last two verses of this oracle the wicked are compared to thorns and briars which are for the burning. In harmony with this thought is that found in Psalm 11:6.

In this oracle David saw one of his descendants ruling the world in righteousness. His government is compared to a cloudless, perfect day. By faith David saw his hopes for eternity centered in this great coming one. At His appearing the wicked will be destroyed. Then peace, the peace for which the world today is yearning, shall be established. "O Lord, hasten that day," is the prayer ascending from trusting hearts throughout the world.

We shall now leave the study of the promises made to David for an investigation of our theme as presented by the prophets, especially those living in the period of Assyrian supremacy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## THE NOONDAY RADIANCE OF MESSIANIC GLORY

## I. IN THE BOOK OF IMMANUEL

*A. The Historical Background*

THE investigation thus far has led us through the delightful study of "The Early Rays of Messianic Glory" and "The Davidic Covenant." It is now our privilege to pursue this subject further by an investigation of the outstanding passages from the golden age of messianic prediction—the eighth and seventh centuries before the Common Era. On account of the abundance of the material, however, I shall confine myself to the most important passages that bear directly on the subject in hand. By unanimous consent Isaiah, the statesman-prophet, stands foremost as the exponent of the messianic teaching during the period.

In order to evaluate and appreciate the significance of the wonderful prophecies of the Book of Immanuel, Isaiah 7-12, one must have a fairly comprehensive understanding of the political background. Hence we shall now briefly view the international situation of that day.

During the period 900-600 before the common era, the stability of the center of political gravity in the Semitic world was often threatened, and frequently the outcome of a movement, a national upheaval, or a combination of peoples intriguing against others became a very uncertain quantity. In fact, the equilibrium of all western Asia frequently was placed in the balances by the ambitious designs of some conniving ruler or politician. In the reign of Shalmanezer III (860-825) Assyrian dreams of conquest and empire threatened the overthrow of all the smaller nations of the coastland. In the historic yet indecisive battle of Karkar (854 B.C.) we see the majority of the western Asiatic nations in a defensive alliance fighting against this haughty and ambitious monarch. In 846 and again in 842 Shalmanezer fought against the western allies and boasted of his conquests. From the monuments it is uncertain whether or not the coalition of 854 remained intact.

In recording his campaign of 842, which was directed primarily against Hazael of Damascus, he claims to have received tribute of the Tyrians, Sidonians, and of Jehu, son of Omri. It is altogether possible that Israel had withdrawn from the alliance and had no part in this war and only paid tribute with the others mentioned in order to avoid becoming embroiled in future wars. In Shalmanezzer's last recorded campaign against Damascus (839) this city successfully withstood the siege. Had he been victorious, we may be sure that he would have given a full and glowing account of his accomplishments. His silence is eloquent and positive testimony of his failure. The Tyrians, the Sidonians, and the Byblians, on the other hand, are said to have paid tribute.

About the middle of his reign Shalmanezzer III ceased to interfere in the affairs of the peoples of the Mediterranean seaboard. The disappearance of this common foe from the political horizon afforded an opportunity for the bursting forth into open hostilities of the bitter animosity, of long standing, between Syria and Israel. The net result of the conflict was that Israel was reduced to the status of a petty Syrian province with a humiliatingly small army—a mere police force.

Evidently the conditions at home and in the East had improved, for the Assyrians again, after a period of about half a century of non-interference, appeared on the horizon of the peoples of the West. In the days of Shalmanezzer's grandson and successor, Adad-nirari III (812-782), Assyrian prowess and aggressiveness revived and all but subjected the western world. Even Damascus, the key position to the conquest of the coastland, which had withstood the mighty onslaughts of Shalmanezzer, went down under the sledge hammer blows of Adad-nirari. In fact, his famous campaigns of 804 and 797 practically decided the fate of all western Asia. With the fall of Damascus, the result of these campaigns, an unobstructed road into Palestine and thence to the valley of the Nile with all of its accumulated wealth was opened to Assyria. The immediate result of the capitulation of Damascus was the relief given to the kingdom of Israel. From the fragmentary evidence of the inscriptions it is uncertain whether or not Assyria exacted tribute from these peoples of the West until the death of Adad-nirari (782).



Since the Assyrian king did not take advantage of his conquests and march against Egypt, the spoils of which he undoubtedly coveted, it is certain that he was engaged with affairs nearer home.

From the death of Adad-nirari to the accession, or perhaps the usurpation, of Tiglath-pileser III (745), the three Assyrian kings doubtless employed their mediocre abilities and strength with home affairs. During this period of Assyria's non-interference, it seemed as if the sun of her glory and conquest was about to set. The respite from military activity and the ravages of war gave an opportunity of recuperation and expansion to Judah and Israel. Hence Judah under Uzziah and Israel under Jeroboam II enjoyed a period of national prosperity such as they had not experienced since the days of David and Solomon. Material prosperity, almost invariably, is accompanied by a decline of religion and spiritual life and by a corresponding growth of sin, immorality, and lawlessness—the powerful germs of national death.

In Isaiah's day (the latter half of the eighth century B.C.) the entire Semitic world was again thrown into a state of unrest and nervousness by the revival of Assyrian power. In fact, the international situation became alarmingly acute. The Prophet, possessed of a mind naturally endowed with analytical powers and a comprehensive grasp of complicated situations and rendered infallible by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, took his stand like a lone sentry and viewed the international situation. The three great powers\* that lay on the political horizon he described in the following symbolic language: "In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword will punish leviathan the swift serpent, and leviathan the crooked serpent; and he will slay the monster that is in the sea" (Isa. 27:1). A careful study of Isaiah 51:9; 30:7; Psalms 74:13,14; and 104:26; Job 41:1 and their contexts together with Isaiah 27:1, 12, 13 leads one to conclude that "leviathan the swift serpent" referred to Assyria, which was located on the rapid turbulent Tigris,

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\* These kingdoms foreshadow those of the end-time.

a fit symbol of her energetic and prompt action; that "leviathan the crooked serpent" indicated the then-rising Babylonian power whose policy was always dubious and questionable; and that "the monster that is in the sea" unmistakably signified Egypt which, in times of inundation, resembles an inland sea. Besides these more powerful peoples there were the kingdoms of Ararat to the north of Assyria and of Elam on the East. Frequently the outcome of conflicts with these lesser known but none the less formidable powers was a matter of great concern and anxiety to the mighty Assyrian kings. The tremendous pressure at times brought to bear upon the seemingly indestructible fortress of Assyrian prowess coupled with the ever-present elements of weakness in all despotic empires—fickleness of human nature and the readiness of the masses to join in a revolution—finally sapped the life of that great nation and rendered it impotent before the onslaughts of the more virile forces of the Medes and Persians with their allies.

Near the beginning of Isaiah's ministry Assyria was given a new lease on life, after a quarter of a century of decadence, by the accession, or perhaps the usurpation, of Tiglath-pileser III, one of the greatest empire-builders of antiquity. He came to the throne in 745 and was succeeded by his son Shalmanezar IV in 727 B.C. These monarchs and their successors turned their eyes westward with great imperialistic dreams. Being entranced with the great possibilities of the western Asiatic territory, these sovereigns, to the eventual overthrow of the nation, took little notice of the gathering war-clouds in the East and of the internal conditions which were gnawing at the heart of the nation. Upon the monuments are recorded the ruthless conquests of these ambitious war-lords, as they, in a most merciless manner, subjected the smaller nations to the condition of practical serfdom and bondage. The waves of this ambitious aggressiveness all but inundated western Asia—even Palestine itself.

In addition to the threatenings of the Assyrian nation there was another danger looming up in the immediate foreground in the earlier part of Isaiah's ministry. The facts gathered from the monuments, together with the data given in the Scriptures

and inferences therefrom, justify the conclusion that in 734 B.C. Syria and Israel attempted to draw Ahaz, king of Judah, into an alliance against Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria. Failing in this matter these kings plotted to dethrone Ahaz and to place in his stead an unknown person called the son of Tebeel. Pursuant with this plan the allied kings seem to have marched southward. When all of the facts presented in II Kings 16 and II Chronicles 28 are considered in the light of Isaiah 7:1f, it is quite likely that the Syrian army marched against the seaport town of Elath while Pekah led the Israelite forces against Jerusalem. Rezin conquered Elath and Pekah won a victory over Ahaz. Rezin then joined forces with Pekah and warred against Jerusalem but the allied armies were unable to capture it. Why the failure? Ahaz called in the help of Tiglath-pileser, who, in all probability, responded immediately. This unexpected turn of affairs demanded Rezin's withdrawal from the siege in order to hasten to the defense of his capital. (See II Kings 16:7-9.)

Four years previously Tiglath-pileser had conquered much of the territory in Syria and adjoining countries. On this former campaign he exacted tribute of Menahem, king of Israel. Finally in 734 he made his last drive against the west country. On this expedition he conquered the coast territory, cut off the most northern tribes of Israel, and conquered Damascus. Thither Ahaz, king of Judah, went and paid tribute to him. This campaign was ended in 732.\* The way again was opened to invade Egypt, but uprisings in southern Babylonia demanded his hasty return to the East. During the last four years of his reign he devoted his time to the strengthening of his position at home.

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\* Although I have used the dates which are generally received, I must say that I do not accept them as correct. This system of chronology is based upon Ptolemy's method of time-reckoning. An investigation of the historical facts out of which this heathen astronomer built his system of dates shows that the evidence which he had for the duration of the Persian period of universal history was very inconclusive. One line of testimony indicated that it continued for 205 years, whereas other facts favored the assignment of only 52 years. Arbitrarily he chose the longer chronology. In a forthcoming work, *The Seventy Weeks of Daniel*, I hope to show the incorrectness of this position and to prove conclusively that Daniel's inspired statement relative to the existence of a period of 483 years intervening from the time of the return of the exiles from Babylon to the execution of Messiah is absolutely accurate.

### *B. A Pious Dodge*

The year 734 B.C.\* proved to be one of crisis for Judah. When the news reached Jerusalem that the armies of Ephraim and Syria were on the march against her, the entire population was thrown into consternation. King Ahaz likewise became frantic. The Biblical statement is that the king's "heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest tremble with the wind" (Isa. 7:1). The facts justify the inference that Ahaz knew of Tiglath-pileser's leading his invincible legions westward at that very time for the conquest of the entire country. He was likewise aware of the fact that the allies intended to dethrone him, to place the son of Tebeel in his stead, and to conscript the forces of Judah for a united attack against the common foe. Inasmuch as he had refused to join the allies against Assyria there remained three courses from which he could make a choice: first, to abdicate his throne in favor of the son of Tebeel and thus forsake his people in time of national peril; secondly, to enter into secret negotiations with Assyria for help against the allies but while waiting for her aid to offer such resistance as the nation could muster; and thirdly, to look to God alone for deliverance from all enemies. Which course does wisdom indicate would have been the proper one? Which do the nations follow today? According to II Kings 16:7-9, he chose the way of seeming least resistance, leaning upon the arm of flesh by entering into alliance with Assyria, the stronger power, upon humiliating terms which amounted to virtual vassalage.

Entirely different were the attitude and conduct of good old King Jehoshaphat (II Chron. 20). A situation similar to this one but probably more serious confronted him.

A coalition of nations sent their armies into Judah which advanced dangerously near Jerusalem. When their presence was reported to the king, he immediately betook himself to the house of God, humbled himself before the Lord, and proclaimed a national fast and a season of repentance and crying to God for

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\* Probably the beginnings of this war date back to 738 B.C. (Isa. 7:1f).

deliverance. The populace instantly responded to the royal appeal and gathered in a mighty throng at the house of God. In humility and faith the king stood in the midst of the great assembly and prayed as a little child.

"And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court; and he said, O Lord, the God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and art not thou ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? and in thy hand is power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee. Didst not thou, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and give it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, If evil come upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house, and before thee (for thy name is in this house), and cry unto thee in our affliction, and thou wilt hear and save. And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned aside from them, and destroyed them not; behold, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children" (II Chron. 20:5-13).

In response to this childlike prayer of faith\* the Spirit of God came upon

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\* To have faith in God like that of a little child is not, as some have supposed, evidence of a weak or untutored mind but is positive proof of an unbiased and unprejudiced heart, of a soul open to truth, and of a noble spirit with courage equal to its conviction. Abraham, the great progenitor of the Hebrew race and father of the faithful, while living in the midst of a civilization the fiber of which was the most degraded polytheistic belief with all its attendant evils, looked out upon the material universe, meditated upon its phenomena and their behavior, and came to the inevitable conclusion that there is a personal God who is the Creator, Possessor, and Controller of the heavens and the earth. Hence at the Almighty's call he left the paternal home for the land which He promised to show him. This episode, instead of being evidence of a primitive and superstitious mind, is positive proof of an intelligent faith, a faith that expresses itself in obedience and takes hold of the blessings and promises of the Almighty. During the past centuries and at the present time the world's greatest scholars, scientists, leaders, and benefactors have been and are believers in a personal God who holds the destinies of the world in His hands. Disbelief in a personal God is evidence of a mind that refuses to take all the testimony into consideration, in short, of an unscientific mind.

Jahaziel who assured the king and the nation that they would not have to fight but only to trust God for the victory. When they marched against the enemy, they simply praised and thanked God for the victory which He had promised. To them, because of the bare, naked Word of God, their triumph was as real as if the enemy had already been routed. The Lord would not disappoint such absolute and unswerving trust based upon His Word. The results of the campaign justified their faith. Truly could the Psalmist declare:

"There is no king saved by the multitude of a host:  
 A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.  
 A horse is a vain thing for safety;  
 Neither doth he deliver any by his great power.  
 Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him,  
 Upon them that hope in his lovingkindness;  
 To deliver their soul from death,  
 And to keep them alive in famine" (Ps. 33:16-19).

Without doubt King Ahaz knew of this great deliverance and of the many promises found in the law of God; but being faithless and preferring to go the deceptive way of the flesh, which outwardly appears the easier but in reality is the more difficult road, he cast aside the promise of God in a most hypocritical manner and either began communicating with Tiglath-pileser or continued his secret negotiations already begun. The Assyrian gladly responded to his S.O.S. call and hastened westward. The adoption of the policy of entering into entangling alliances proved disastrous to Judah.

Israel, as no other nation, must depend upon God alone for protection and safety. She alone of all nations was called by Him to fill a unique position in the world. The divine promise is that if she will be obedient and serve Him, He will fight her battles and deliver her from all foes. Unfortunately she has never realized this fact but throughout her entire history has faithlessly leaned upon other nations for the very thing that God promises on the simple condition of faith and obedience. Until the Zionists and all other leaders of Israel cease to look to some nation or to the League of Nations for the protection and safety promised by the

Lord and turn to Him with an unswerving faith, the nation's sorrows will continue in unabated fury and she will be persecuted by her enemies. Truly in God alone is Israel's salvation.

Eventually Israel will learn that in the Lord God alone is her true hope. Only a few of her kings in the past realized that all-important truth. Nevertheless she is destined to learn it—only, however, by bitter experience. According to the prophetic Word the nations of the world will form an alliance against her and will invade Palestine with the express purpose of blotting out the name of Israel from earth. In Psalm 83 appears a prediction to that effect. The psalmist in his petition cries out to God, "They (the nations) take crafty counsel against thy people, And consult together against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; That the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (vss. 3, 4). In comparison with the formidable array of power which the nations will muster against her, the forces of Israel will be as nothing. Truly her extremity will be God's opportunity. Then shall the entire nation cry out to the Lord as is foretold by the psalmist in the following forecast:

"Unto thee do I lift up mine eyes,  
 O thou that sittest in the heavens.  
 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look*  
 unto the hand of their master,  
 As the eyes of a maid unto the hand of her mistress;  
 So our eyes *look* unto the Lord our God,  
 Until he have mercy upon us.  
 Have mercy upon us, O Lord,  
 have mercy upon us;  
 For we are exceedingly filled with contempt" (Ps.123:1-3).

In response to this heart cry Zion's deliverer in the person of King Messiah will come and save her. Then she will sing as David foretold in the following prediction:

"If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,  
 Let Israel now say,  
 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,

When men rose up against us;  
Then they had swallowed us up alive,  
When their wrath was kindled against us:  
Then the waters had overwhelmed us,  
The stream had gone over our soul;  
Then the proud waters had gone over our soul" (Ps. 124:1-5).

O that all the nations, as well as Israel, might learn that in God alone are help and deliverance! Though Israel in a peculiar way is dependent upon God, all nations are helpless without Him. Isaiah stated this fact in chapter forty of his prophecies. The peoples of the earth are as the small dust of the balances before Him. During the darkest days of the civil war in America (1861-1865) Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, realized that God is the one who rules the destinies of the world. Believing that the cause of the Union was righteous, he issued a proclamation calling upon the country to observe a day of prayer and confession of sins to the end that God would grant deliverance to the right. The outcome of the bloody conflict proves that the Lord in a most marvelous manner heard and answered the prayers of faith. During the darkest days of the World War when the Germans were lunging ahead (spring of 1918), and were making their titanic strokes to reach the Channel ports, President Wilson issued a call to prayer and supplication together with confession of both individual and national sins. On the appointed day the churches throughout the land were open all day and the pious and godly came together and implored the Lord for deliverance. Immediately after that day of prayer and confession the tide of battle changed and the Germans began their retreat towards their own territory. Finally that most bloody conflict was ended by the armistice of Nov. 11th, 1918. What I consider the most serious mistake made by President Wilson was his failure to appoint a day of praise and thanksgiving to God for the successful termination of the war. When the mists of all earthly affairs shall have cleared away, we shall see that the post-war history, at least in America, would have been entirely different had she acknowledged with praise the divine intervention.



Another notable instance of the efficacy of prayer is the stopping of the grasshopper plague, raging during the years 1873 to 1877, which threatened the total destruction of vegetation in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri. The God-fearing chief executive of Minnesota, according to a circular which I have, issued the following proclamation:

"STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
Executive Department,  
St. Paul, April 9th, 1877.

"A general desire having been expressed by various religious bodies in this State for an official designation of a *Day of Fasting, Humiliation, and Prayer*, in view of the threatened continuation of the grasshopper scourge, I do hereby, in recognition of our dependence upon the power and wisdom of Almighty God, appoint Thursday, the twenty-sixth day of April instant, to be observed for such purpose throughout the State; and I invite the people, on the day thus set apart, to withdraw from their ordinary pursuits, and in their homes and places of public worship, with contrite hearts, to beseech the mercy of God for the sins of the past, and His blessing upon the worthier aims of the future.

"In the shadow of the locust plague, whose impending renewal threatens desolation of the land, let us humbly invoke, for the efforts we make in our defence, the guidance of the Hand which alone is adequate to stay 'the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday.' Let us pray for deliverance from an affliction which robs the earth of her bounties, and in behalf of the sufferers therefrom let us plead for comfort to the sorrowful, healing for the sick, succor for the perishing, and larger faith and love for all who are heavily laden.

"Let us, moreover, endeavor to deserve a new prosperity by a new realization of the opportunity vouchsafed to us, and a new consecration to those things which make for the well-being of men and the Glory of God.(Signed) "J. S. PILLSBURY, GOVERNOR."

"THE AMAZING RESULTS BEGAN ON THE DAY AFTER PRAYER WAS MADE. On April 27th, 1877, the sun shone out hot and clear over Minnesota. The summer-like-warmth penetrated the moist earth down to the larvae of the myriads of grasshoppers. The young locusts crawled forth in countless swarms, sufficient to bring destruction to half a dozen states. Then, a couple of nights later, it turned cold. The moist earth was frozen over, bringing utter destruction to the pests in that one night. (Read Isa. 37:36 with context.) And Governor Pillsbury stated years afterwards, 'We have never seen any grasshoppers since.'"

The pages of Israel's history are full of such miraculous interventions in behalf of the nation when she humbled herself before the Lord. God, it seems, relieves national distress when the people as a whole acknowledge His authority and power—even though they do not know Him. The Ninevites are an excellent example.

The easiest, best, and quickest way out of any dilemma is to leave the matter in the hands of the Lord who is a very present help in time of need. This lesson the nations will eventually learn. Ahaz refused to heed. The majority of people follow his example and realize their mistake only when it is too late.

King Ahaz was young, inexperienced, and probably beset by doubts. The Lord knowing his weaknesses offered to strengthen and to confirm his tottering faith in order that He might show Himself strong in behalf of the nation at the time of that great crisis. Hence He sent the prophet Isaiah to the king with an offer to perform a miracle either in the depth below or in the height above, according as Ahaz should desire. Not willing to abandon his own plans and to adopt the divine counsel and will, he tried to justify his lack of faith by alluding to a passage of Scripture in the Torah which he both misinterpreted and misapplied (Deut. 6:16). There is frequently a vast difference between the letter and the spirit of the law. The king simply took the letter of the command and tried to hide behind it. Such a pious dodge by no means excused him in the sight of God. Men must be honest with themselves and the Lord. One may be able to hide certain things from man whose vision is only partial and incomplete but never can he hide anything from the all-seeing eye of the ever-present God. On this point carefully study Psalm 139. His naturally keen insight into human nature, clarified and heightened by the divine Spirit of God, enabled the prophet to fathom the depths of the king's hypocrisy. Then he exclaimed, "Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also?" The poet was correct in saying that "truth crushed to earth will rise again." A man's sins will sooner or later find him out. Though one should be successful in concealing a matter from human eyes and thus avoid punishment, he

will have to answer to God for every word and deed. Honor and candor are indeed the best policies.

### *C. Prophecy Concerning Immanuel*

God makes even the wickedness of men to praise Him. He likewise frequently uses their mistakes and failures as occasions for giving further revelations of His eternal plans. When Ahaz would not accept the divine offer for the confirmation of his faith, the Lord used this opportunity to make known to the world the birth of a child whose name would be Immanuel. This passage has been construed by many as messianic. Others, however, have questioned this interpretation and have insisted that it referred to a child who was born in Isaiah's day and who served as a sign to the nation that the kingdoms of Syria and Ephraim would soon be destroyed. In view of these different explanations, it becomes necessary that we examine the text and its context microscopically and accept the facts as we find them regardless of every other consideration.

#### 1. ANALYSIS OF ISAIAH 7:1-17

The first step to be taken in the investigation is to analyze verses 1-17 as to the speaker and the ones addressed. A casual glance at verses 1, 2 shows that this paragraph is a resume of the political situation which existed between Syria, Ephraim, and Judah in the days of Ahaz, king of Judah. From the data found on the monuments scholars who accept Ussher's system of chronology locate this crisis in 734-732 B.C. and identify it as the counterpart of that which appears on the monuments for this same period. The facts seem to justify this conclusion. Verse three contains the Lord's instruction to Isaiah to go with his little son, Shear-jashub, to meet Ahaz, who probably, like Hezekiah later, was inspecting the system of the water supply of the city in the highway of the fuller's field.

Verses 4-9 record the Word of God which Isaiah was to deliver to the king. The heart of this message was that the plans of the enemies of Judah would not stand;

hence no one should fear. The prophet concluded his speech with a warning to the king that if he did not believe he would not be established.

In verse 10 the statement is made that the Lord spoke again to Ahaz. Commentators agree that the Lord made a second revelation to Ahaz but differ as to time and place. Some hold that the second message was delivered at the time of the first one in the fuller's field; others think that it was spoken later—after the king returned to the palace and when he was with the royal family. If it was delivered at the first meeting, as seems most likely, when the king was on an inspection tour of the city's water system, the expression "house of David" signifies, not the royal family at that time, since it was not present, but future generations of the Davidic dynasty. On the other hand, if it was proclaimed to the king and his court, it pertained to conditions then present, for this interpretation would be the normal meaning in such a setting. A proper understanding of this seemingly trivial detail will assist greatly in a correct analysis and exegesis of this most important prediction.

As we have already seen, verse 3 informs us that the prophet went to the conduit of the upper pool and there met the king and delivered his message. Nothing is said concerning his leaving there and of meeting the king again when he was in the midst of the royal family within the palace. Verse 10 simply states that the Lord gave a second message to the king but says nothing as to place or time. In the absence of such information the logical inference is that the second message was delivered in the same place and at the same time as the first. Such is the impression that the chapter makes upon one who is reading it simply to get the details of the story. Inasmuch as there is no positive evidence indicating otherwise, we must allow the natural inference to govern our interpretation. Hence I believe that the oracle recorded in vss. 10f was given when the prophet met the king by the upper pool. I therefore conclude that Isaiah delivered his second message to Ahaz immediately after the first and in the same place. The sequence of thought favors this position.

An examination of verse 11 shows most clearly that it was spoken to Ahaz directly. The proof is found in the expression **שאל־לך** *ask thee* (literally, *ask for thyself*), which words (both verb and pronoun) are in the singular number and can refer to none other than the king. His response to this divine offer of favor is found in the following words, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord" (vs. 12). As seen in the preceding section, this reply was simply a pious, hypocritical dodge. Such a base reaction to the Word of God precipitated, humanly speaking, a sudden change in the attitude of the prophet who immediately ceased speaking to the faithless king and, looking toward the future, addressed the house of David, the future generations as if present. That he was no longer talking to Ahaz when he used the expression *house of David* is evident from the sudden change of the use of the singular number to that of the plural.\*

In verse 13 the verbs *hear* and *will weary* are in the plural and have *the house of David* as their subject. Furthermore the pronoun combined in vs. 13 with the preposition **לְ** and translated *for you* and in vs. 14 united with the preposition **וְ** and rendered *you* is in the plural number. These facts show most clearly that these two verses were not spoken to King Ahaz but to a group of people whom the prophet calls *the house of David*. Since, as has been shown, the king was on his inspection tour and the royal family was not present, it is certain that by the Spirit of God Isaiah looked into the future, foresaw the birth of the child whose name should be Immanuel and made the announcement to the coming generations.

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\*One may call attention to the fact that the plural form was once used by the prophet in his conversation with Ahaz: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (v. 9). True. One may be absolutely certain that the king was accompanied by officials of the government as he inspected the water supply of the city in contemplation of the threatening siege. They shared the same fear as did the king. Hence in this instance the use of the plural pronoun was proper. But immediately after speaking to the entire company, Isaiah directed his remarks to the king personally and used the singular pronoun. When he, the controlling spirit of the party, refused the divine offer, the prophet immediately turned and looking into the future addressed the *House of David* and used the plural form of the pronoun. Hence the seeming objection vanishes.

In verses 16 and 17 the prophet again begins to use the singular of the personal pronoun you. In verse 16 the nominative form **אתה** occurs and in 17 the accusative in combination with the preposition, the resultant form of which is **עָלַיךָ**, appears. This reversion to the use of the singular indicates that the prophet was no longer looking out into the future and talking to the coming generations of the Davidic house but was directing his remarks to Ahaz specifically. The conjunction *for* which introduces vs. 16 connects it indissolubly with the preceding one. Hence verses 15-17 were spoken directly to King Ahaz.

With these facts before us we can be morally certain that Isaiah, a past master in dramatic oratory, looked directly at Ahaz when he offered, as is found in vs. 11, to perform a miracle for the confirmation of the King's faith. When, however, the latter spurned the divine suggestion, the prophet, turning from him, looked in a different direction and spoke to the future generations, as if they were present, and uttered the glorious promise found in verses 13 and 14. This oracle was too sacred to fall upon such deceitful ears as those of Ahaz. Having made the divine disclosure for the benefit of later generations, he instantly turned to the unworthy sovereign and made a less sacred prediction, one concerning the downfall of the enemies of Judah.

## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF **אוֹת**

The verbal form from which **אוֹת** is derived occurs in Numbers 34:10 and is rendered *mark out*. This example indicates clearly the root idea which underlies its meanings: "*sign, mark, describe with a mark.*" Of course, the noun derived from this root carries the inherent idea of the parent form. It may refer to a natural event, an ordinary object, or to a miraculous occurrence. The context alone is to decide its meaning in each case. In Genesis 1:14 the heavenly bodies are said to be for *signs, seasons* etc. The word under discussion is rendered *signs*. In this instance the context indicates that the heavenly bodies have been placed in their respective positions, not only to control the seasons, days, and years, but also to serve as signs

to men, that is, their arrangement into constellations was designed to convey a certain meaning to the children of men.\*

*Sign אִיּוֹת* has another shade of meaning in Exodus 3:12. "And he said, certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." Here its meaning is practically that of *proof* and its use is akin to that of fulfilled prophecy. The thought is that Moses was to go to Egypt and to deliver the children of Israel from their oppressive bondage. At this appearance of the Angel of the Lord there was left a wide margin for the exercise of Moses' faith. To be sure, the proof that a divine manifestation had been granted him was sufficiently clear and strong to convince him; yet at the same time the vision did not coerce his will. Had he chosen to discount the miraculous element of the appearance and preferred to follow his own will, there was sufficient margin left for the exercise of unbelief. God always leaves every case open in order that each person may have the opportunity of choosing whom he will serve. Guided by the rule that if he should make a mistake he wished to make it on the right side and knowing that Satan always tries to create doubt, Moses was willing to step out upon the positive evidence and to obey the divine call. In order to vouchsafe to His servant final, perfect, and positive assurance after he had given Him the advantage of every doubt, the Lord foretold the fact that he would lead Israel out of Egypt and that she should serve Him in the mountain where he was at that time—humanly speaking,

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\* For men in the early days of the human race the constellations had their meaning. Later, their minds became engrossed with carnal things and they lost the significance attached to these heavenly bodies by the Almighty. Out of their distorted knowledge developed the system of monthly prognostications and astrology, which things were condemned by the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 47:13-15). Fortunately the divine significance of the rainbow has never been perverted and men continue to retain its original interpretation. The bow (Gen. 9) is said to be a sign to all flesh.

an impossible task. Thus the fulfillment of this prediction was to serve as the crowning bit of evidence that he was not mistaken in his interpretation of the divine call. **אִי**, therefore, is used here to express the idea of positive proof.

On the other hand, this same word has a miraculous meaning in many instances, one of which is found in Exodus 4:8. In the preceding verses appears the record of Moses' rod's becoming a serpent and his hand leprous. In this verse God gave him instructions how he should act when he presented himself to his brethren as their deliverer. "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign." Hence the context must be examined to ascertain its significance in any given case.

What is the evidence borne by the context of Isaiah 7:14? As seen above, the king's faith was wavering. God wished to strengthen him but could not do so as long as he entertained doubts and looked to men. Therefore God proposed to give him a sign. *Sign* in this instance could not refer to a natural object whether in the heavens above or on the earth beneath, because the giving of some special significance to it could not stay the King's faith in God and prepare him for the emergency which was confronting the nation at that time. Hence the Lord's proposal to give a sign must be considered as His offer to perform a miracle. In order to make it the more manifest that the sign was to be absolute proof of divine presence and special activity the Lord insisted that the king should designate the sphere in which He would graciously perform the miracle. That this interpretation is correct is clear from the parallel case of Hezekiah found in Isaiah 38:1-8. To confirm His promise of extending the king's life fifteen years the Lord said, "And this shall be the sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken: Behold, I will cause the shadow on the steps which is gone down on the dial of Ahaz with the sun, to return backward ten steps. So the sun returned ten steps on the dial whereon it was gone down" (Isa. 38:7-8). There was perfect congruity between the promise and the miracle proposed to confirm it. The sun of Hezekiah's life was about to set. To convince him that the course of nature in his case would be reversed and that his life would be prolonged, the Lord offered to



reverse nature as it were, by causing the declining shadow falling upon the dial or steps of Ahaz to return ten steps. Accordingly the miracle\* was performed and the King's faith strengthened.

### 3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF הִנֵּה

הִנֵּה is a demonstrative particle which directs special attention to a person or an object. Sometimes it refers to the past or present but always emphasizes a truth

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\* In our modern world the proposition that the universe is a closed system and that everything is unchangeably and unalterably under the reign of blind law which will not permit of the least variation from the regular order is considered as axiomatic. This philosophical deduction, for it is not a scientific one, overlooks many phenomena which absolutely cannot be classified under any natural law, but must be explained in terms of personal actions and relations. As an illustration, note the instantaneous and complete transformation of many men who have turned to God and have been delivered from sinful lives of the darkest hues. No laws in the natural world, not even in the psychic, can explain these genuine and thorough clean-ups, both morally and spiritually, upon the basis of law and apart from divine interposition. To attempt to do so is to ignore many facts. All of the data, however, can be satisfactorily explained only upon the hypothesis of the existence, interposition, and assistance of a personal God. All other theories fail adequately to account for the various elements entering into such a transformation and reformation.

Further proof that there is a personal God who does interpose in behalf of His people may be seen from the evidence found in the material world. The basic principle of matter, light, sound, snow flakes, etc., is "the law of the octave." The revelation made by the telescope, spectroscope, microscope and other instruments in the laboratory is that every particle of the universe is an exemplification of order, system, and design. To show that "blind nature" could not by chance bring into existence such order, symmetry, beauty, etc., as we see everywhere, one may note a simple little illustration. There are twenty-six letters in our alphabet all of which are made by the typewriter that I am using in writing this book. Besides the letters, both small and capital, there are other symbols, figures, and punctuation marks which are necessary for modern composition. There likewise appear quotations from the Hebrew which are written with the twenty-two letters of its alphabet. According to the law of chance, as set forth in works on mathematics, the possibility that the writing of this book is the result of blind chance and so-called evolutionary processes is so infinitesimally small that no rational person would for a second affirm such an absurd proposition. Again, one might as well believe that Bryant's *Thanatopsis* or Grey's *Elegy in a Country Church Yard* is the result of accidental spilling of trays of printers type, as to assume that the world with its multitudinous forms evolved from some primeval star-dust by resident forces inhering in matter. Design and order that are stamped indelibly upon all creation prove positively that there is a personal God who is the creator and sustainer of the Universe.

newly declared or lately recognized, as in Gen. 1:29: "Behold, I have given you every herb," etc. It likewise has a future signification. On this point I wish to quote from Brown, Driver and Brigg's Hebrew Lexicon: "Here it serves to introduce a solemn or important declaration, Ex. 32:34; 34:10; Isa. 7:14 and is used especially with the perfect participle (the *fut. Instans*)" etc. It is to be noted that this lexicon cites Isa. 7:14 as an illustration of the future significance of this particle. On its significance the late Dr. Delitzsch comments: "The question as to whether the clause is to be translated: Behold, the Virgin is with child, or shall be with child, ought not to have been raised. **הִנֵּה** with the following participle (here participial adjective: cf. 2 Sam. 11:5) is always presentative, and the thing presented is always either a real thing, as in Gen. 16:11 and Judg. 13:5; or it is an ideally present thing, as it is to be taken here; for except in Chap. 48:7, **הִנֵּה** always indicates something future in Isaiah." From these scholarly quotations it is absolutely certain that behold in our passage has a future significance. Hence, the first word of the prediction directs our minds toward a time future to Isaiah's day. This fact established, we are better prepared to enter into the quest for the truth set forth in the prophet's message.

#### 4. SIGNIFICANCE OF **עַלְמָה**, **נַעֲרָה**, AND **בְּתוּלָה**

There are two words that call for special attention in connection with the investigation of the meaning of **עַלְמָה**. The first is **נַעֲרָה**. It is usually rendered *damsel* in the ordinary English translations. Its root form is **נָעַר** from which **נָעַר** *boy, lad, youth* is derived. It is simply the feminine form which is built up from the masculine by the addition of the feminine ending. Hence it of necessity has the same fundamental meaning of youth and vigor. The idea of purity and chastity do not necessarily inhere in the root form, though one naturally associates the idea of purity with youth. In II Kings 5:2 the little maiden taken captive by the Syrians from the land of Israel is called a **נַעֲרָה** *little maiden*. In Deuteronomy 22:23,24 appears this statement: "If there be a damsel that is a virgin betrothed unto a

husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them to death with stones; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor's wife: so thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee." The words **נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה מְאַרְשָׁה לְאִישׁ** are rendered *a damsel that is a virgin betrothed*. In this instance the context favors the translation given above; but the words inherently do not demand such a rigid significance. In I Kings 1:2 **בְּתוּלָה נַעֲרָה** occur in combination. They refer to Abishag the Shunamite. The context likewise favors interpreting these words as signifying a virgin. The same is true with reference to Esther 2:2,3. This word, however, has a different shade of meaning in Ruth 2:6. Here it refers to Ruth the widow of Mahlon and daughter-in-law to Naomi. From the facts given above and many others that could be presented the only conclusion which may be drawn is that **נַעֲרָה** primarily means a little girl or young lady without any reference to her chastity or virginity but that it sometimes does refer to a young widow.

The second word for consideration is **בְּתוּלָה**. This word primarily means *virgin* and is usually so rendered. An excellent passage which sets forth this meaning is Deuteronomy 22:13-21. Even in figurative expressions referring to cities and nations that have not been conquered the inherent idea is clearly seen. But from Joel 1:8 it is clear that it was also used in referring to a young widow: **אֲלֵי כְּבִתּוּלָה תִּגְרֹת-שָׂק עַל-בְּעַל נְעוּרֶיהָ:** "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth." This passage calls upon the children of Israel to weep because of the judgment just described as a young widow **בְּתוּלָה** laments the death of her husband. This passage shows that, though its primary meaning is that of a virgin, it was used to refer to a widow. Originally and usually it does refer to a virgin but in time it, as Joel 1:8 shows, took on a broader meaning and included widows. In view of this enlarged meaning both Moses and the writer of the book of Judges felt that it was necessary to add a restrictive clause in order to make their meaning clear beyond a doubt. The record of the selection of a wife for Isaac is

given in Genesis 24. Moses in writing the story said that Rebekah, "the damsel **וְהַנְּעִרָה** was very fair to look upon, a virgin **בְּתוּלָה** neither had any man known her," etc. (vs. 16). He first called her a **נְעִרָה**, then **בְּתוּלָה**; but to his mind these words were not sufficiently definite to affirm her virginity; hence he added: "neither had any man known her." If either or both of these terms had unquestionably indicated her purity and chastity, there would have been no necessity of stating that she had not known man. This fact proves that Moses felt it necessary to show that he was using the latter word in its original and limited sense of *virgin* and not in the later and broader meaning which might in a given context include widows. The inspired writer of Judges likewise understood that a larger and less definite meaning had attached itself to **בְּתוּלָה** *virgin* and felt that it was necessary also for him to use the explanatory clause, "who had not known man by lying with him," in order to indicate exactly what he meant by the use of (21:12) **בְּתוּלָה**. God never uses unnecessary or superfluous words but states clearly and concisely what he means. These facts demonstrate plainly that God recognized the necessity of qualifying **בְּתוּלָה** at times to make it mean a virgin.

In the preceding paragraphs we have seen that **נְעִרָה** primarily means a young female without any intimation as to her purity and in some instances refers to a married woman; that originally **בְּתוּלָה** meant a true virgin but was sometimes used in referring to a widow; and that two of the inspired writers felt it necessary to use a limiting clause to define what they meant by it. It is now proper to investigate the meaning of **עֲלָמָה**, which occurs in the passage under consideration and upon the meaning of which the import of the prediction depends. It occurs seven times in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is also found in I Chronicles 15:20; Psalms 9:1; 46:1; 48:15 as a musical notation indicating that the poem to which it is attached is to be sung by soprano or falsetto voices. Hence these notations can throw no light upon the use of the term. Our investigation must be confined to the seven other occurrences of the word.

As seen above, Moses described Rebekah as **נַעֲרָה** and **בְּתוּלָה** which terms he immediately defined as a young lady who had not known man (Gen. 24:16). In verses 42, 43 of this chapter he gave us the gist of a prayer which Eleazar uttered when he came to the fountain of water where he met her and in which he cried out to God. "Behold, I am standing by the fountain of water; and let it come to pass, that **עַלְמָה** the maiden that cometh forth to draw water ... let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my master's son." It is certain that Eleazar prayed very definitely that he might be led to find a true virgin for Isaac: hence in his petition he chose the word that conveyed that definite meaning. These facts show clearly that this occurrence of our word means a true virgin.

The second appearance of this word is in Exodus 2:8. In this chapter appears the record of Moses' being rescued from the river's brink by Pharaoh's daughter and her attendants. The writer of the article *Miriam* in the Jewish Encyclopedia says: "When Moses was left at the river Miriam watched from a distance until Pharaoh's daughter took him up, whereupon she proposed to the princess to find a Hebrew nurse; the princess assenting to this, Miriam returned with her mother (Ex. 2:4-11)." She was a young girl at the time referred to; hence was not married. The indications of all the data available point to the conclusion that she never did marry. From the fact that she was honored and used of the Lord at the time of Israel's coming out of Egypt one may be absolutely certain that she had lived a clean and pure life. **עַלְמָה** was the only proper word about which there could be no doubt as to its meaning a virgin. Hence Moses correctly designated her as such.

The next occurrence of this word in the singular is in Proverbs 30:18,19.

"There are three things which are too wonderful for me, Yea, four which I know not: the way of an eagle in the air; The way of a serpent upon a rock; The way of a ship in the midst of the sea; And the way of a man with a maiden."

The wise man enumerates four things which are too wonderful for him. In the verse quoted above he affirms that he is unable to foretell the course of the eagle in the air, the serpent on the rock, the ship in the sea, and a man with a maiden. **דָּרַךְ** literally means *way*. It is clear from the context that the writer is not speaking of

the principles of physics involved in the eagle's flight but rather of the direction he will take, since he is in the air and may select his own course. In other words, the eagle has the power of choice and being unhindered may decide to go in any direction. Hence the observer on the ground, being unable to read the mind of the eagle, cannot foretell in what direction he may fly or when he may change his course. In the same way, the serpent on the rock being unhindered can turn and go in any direction. In this case man looking on cannot read the reptile's mind and know in what direction he will go. The same truth holds good with reference to the ship in the midst of the sea. There being no obstacles in any direction the pilot can change the course of his ship at will. The onlooker not knowing the mind of the pilot cannot foretell the direction in which the latter will steer his vessel. Thus it is with a man and **עַלְמָה** a *maiden*. The parallel structure of the four statements indicates that the same principle holds in each. In the first three the power of the will to choose the course to be taken is the only point in common. Since, therefore, the four statements are parallel in structure, the fourth case is an illustration of the same principle. This parallelism demands that we think of the man and the maiden as being alone and free from all restraining forces—the presence of others and every moral and religious influence. The presence of another certainly would serve as a check upon them and prevent their pursuing an immoral course which they might otherwise choose. It is clear from the following verse, up to which the statement concerning the man and maiden leads, that the writer is discussing immoral, sinful relations between man and woman. Such being the case, it is certain that **עַלְמָה** the *maiden* and the man of this verse are not man and wife. Can we think of her as being another man's wife? It is impossible, for the married woman who would associate with a man other than her own husband in the way presented in this passage is loose in her moral life and we know what she would probably do. This point becomes the more apparent when we remember the extreme seclusion of woman from social life in the ancient orient. Can we then think of this woman as a harlot? No. Every one knows how she would act. There

remains after this logical process of elimination, only one other possible meaning of **עַלְמָה**, namely: a *virgin*.

Why did the wise man state that he could not foretell the conduct of a young man and a virgin when they are free from all restraining influences? He knew the weaknesses of the flesh. Likewise he understood the emotions and feelings that might be aroused under such conditions and surge like billows through the very beings of young people full of vigor and life. He was also aware that many young couples had, under similar conditions, fallen and blighted their entire lives. The experience of the race proves that no one can foretell whether a young virgin will withstand the temptation of such a situation and maintain her purity. Though she might draw upon all her moral and spiritual strength to withstand, it is quite possible that she would be overpowered by the stronger personality of the young man. The statement emphasizes the uncertainty as to what the young man will do to her in this case. The facts therefore show conclusively that **עַלְמָה** in this instance can mean only a virgin.

The next occurrence of **עַלְמָה** to which I wish to direct attention is in the plural number and is found in Psalm 68:25. "The singers went before, the minstrels followed after, in the midst of the damsels playing with timbrels." The words, singers and minstrels, are in the masculine gender and doubtless refer to the men performing those parts. But **עַלְמוֹת** *damsels* is in the feminine plural number. Since those damsels are in the procession of Messiah when he enters the sanctuary, as the context indicates, it is certain that they are not harlots but are chaste servants of God. The only question that remains to be decided is whether or not they are married or single women. The context furnishes no data whereby one can absolutely settle this question. Hence this psalm is neutral in its testimony as to the exact import of this word. Fortunately, ancient customs in the Semitic world throw a bright light upon its probable meaning in this connection. In bridal processions and on festive occasions single women generally participated. Hence on the occasion set forth in Psalm 68 one logically concludes that the women who participate are, according to custom, virgins. In the light of these facts one would

say that, while the testimony of this passage is not absolute, it very decidedly favors the meaning of *virgin*.

The fifth appearance of our word is found in the Song of Solomon (1:3). A careful study of this book shows that it is a poem which celebrates the divine love and relation existing between God and Israel. These truths are symbolically set forth in the form of a dialogue between lovers. In the first section (1:2-4) the maiden speaks to her lover and declares that because of his graciousness and personality **עַלְמוֹת**, the virgins, love him. The speech would lose its force if these virgins are considered other than pure attractive girls. Furthermore in a dramatic poem that glorifies divine love we may be certain that the inspired writer introduces into his caste of actors only those whose characters and lives accord with the holiness of the Almighty. Therefore, these **עַלְמוֹת** evidently are pure, chaste virgins as that word is understood today.

The sixth time this word occurs in the Scriptures is Song of Solomon 6:8. "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, And virgins without number." This quotation presents three classes of females, the first two of which are clearly understood. The **עַלְמוֹת** are distinguished from them. Since it is unthinkable to consider them as harlots, the only conclusion to be drawn is that this word here has the same meaning which it has in the other instances already examined, namely, virgins in the true sense.

The remaining instance is the one under consideration, namely, Isaiah 7:14. What does the context indicate is the meaning in this passage? In section 2 we saw that **אֹת** *sign* in verse 11 signifies a miracle in the proper sense of that term. As seen above, when Ahaz refused to designate the sphere in which the Lord should perform a miracle for the confirmation of his faith, the prophet turned from him and addressed the house of David of the future and promised to give it a sign. Since in verse 11 *sign* indicates a genuine miracle, we must understand that it has the same meaning in verse 14. To accept this conclusion is a logical necessity since there is nothing in the context to indicate that he put a different meaning into this word the second time he used it. Therefore the context demands that we understand



verse 14 to be the promise of the performance of a miracle. But what is this proffered miracle? The following words answer: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." A paraphrase of this verse most accurately represents the original thought: "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign, **אֹת** namely: Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The flow of thought demands this interpretation. Since **עַלְמָה** never indicates a married woman but always positively connotes a virgin (even in Ps. 68:25 when read in the light of the times), and since the facts of this context show that **אֹת** means a genuine miracle, the inevitable conclusion demanded by all of the facts is that this prediction foretells the miraculous conception and virgin birth of the child here promised. To attempt to make **עַלְמָה** in this verse, contrary to its universal usage, mean a young married woman is to ignore the miraculous element stamped indelibly upon *sign* by the facts of this context. The thought of natural generation and ordinary birth is foreign to this context; in fact, such an idea clashes with all the data of the passage. One is irresistibly led to the conclusion that in this passage, as in all other instances, **עַלְמָה** means a young, pure virgin. Further strength is added to the conclusion given above by the fact that the Hebrew scholars who translated the Tenach (O.T.) in the third century before the common era rendered **עַלְמָה** in this passage by the Greek word *παρθένος* the meaning of which, without dispute, is *virgin*. It is to be remembered that this translation was made before the rise of the controversy concerning its meaning. Therefore those making this translation were free from the bias which always results from controversy. All things being equal, there must be positive, overwhelming proof to the contrary before we can logically discard their rendering. Since, as seen above, their translation is in harmony with the facts which the Hebrew text in all instances affords, we are logically bound to accept their interpretation. Even the Targum translates this word in Isaiah 7:14 by the Aramaic *bethula*, virgin.

## 5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF הַנְּהָה הַעֲלָמָה הָרָה וְיִלְדֵת בֶּן.

Having studied and ascertained the meaning of the pivotal word and associated terms in the first part of this prophecy, we must now turn our attention to the phrase הַנְּהָה הַעֲלָמָה הָרָה וְיִלְדֵת בֶּן "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." In the footnote of the American Revised Version *the* instead of *a* is given and *is with child, and beareth* is offered as an alternative reading of *shall conceive, and bear*. Rabbi Isaac Leeser renders the statement, "Behold this young woman shall conceive and bear a son."

What justification is there for translating *the virgin* instead of *a virgin*? According to the critical text of Kittel, the manuscripts prove that the original text had the definite article. Also the Greek translation of the LXX has the definite article, which fact shows that *the* was in the text from which that translation was made. Leeser renders the passage *this young woman* as if the demonstrative pronoun הַזֹּאת *this* were in the text. There is no manuscript authority for changing the definite article *the* to the demonstrative pronoun *this*. Hence this rendering must be rejected.

What authority have we for offering *is with child and beareth* as an alternative rendering of *shall conceive and bear* etc.? The clue to the answer is to be found in the fact that the Hebrew verb, unlike the Greek and Latin, does not have the time element but only gives the state and kind of action. The context alone furnishes the data as to time. For instance, in Genesis 16:11 appears the statement: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה הִנֵּן הָרָה וְיִלְדֵת בֶּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמָעֵאל כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל־עֲנָנָהּ "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son; and thou shalt call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction." According to verse 4 Hagar, to whom the Lord spoke, was already pregnant. Hence in her case this statement had a backward look so far as pregnancy was concerned. The same thing was true in Bath-sheba's case. According to II Samuel 11:5, when she realized that she was pregnant, she sent word to David saying, הָרָה אֲנִי *I am with child*. On the other hand, words identical with those to

Hagar were spoken to the wife of Manoah concerning her promised son Samson who at that time, according to the context, had not been conceived. "But he (the angel of the Lord) said unto me, **הִנֵּנִי הַרְהֵי וְיִלְדָה בֵּן** Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son" (Judges 13:7). From verses 2 and 3 of this chapter it is evident that the woman at that time was barren. In the Genesis passage **הַרְהֵי** is correctly translated into English as a past tense—"thou art with child." The facts in the context demand this rendering; but in the Judges passage the same word is accurately translated by the future tense, *shall conceive*. These three examples show that the same words in different settings yield dissimilar renderings, especially in the matter of the time element. The same idiom appears in the prediction under discussion. The only difference between this prediction and Hagar's case is that the former is in the third person, whereas the latter is in the second. In our passage Isaiah spoke to the house of David concerning the virgin that would conceive and bear a son; in the other two instances the angel of the Lord spoke directly to those who were to become mothers. Barring the difference of person, therefore, we see that the idioms are identical.

The context alone will have to decide whether the prophet was speaking of some woman then alive or of one in the future. A quotation from Professor Delitzsch, already given, will answer this question. "**הַרְהֵי** with the following participle (here participial adjective: cf. II Sam. 11:5) is always presentative, and the thing presented is always either a real thing, as in Genesis 16:11 and Judges 13:5; or it is an ideally present thing, as is to be taken here; for except in Chap. 48:7 **הַרְהֵי** always indicates something future in Isaiah." Since the prophet Isaiah with one exception used **הַרְהֵי** with a future signification, we must understand that it has the same import here unless there is something in the passage that indicates otherwise. But there is nothing of that sort. Hence from this consideration we are led to believe that the woman, the subject of the prediction, did not live in the prophet's time but that he saw her in the future. Another consideration strengthens this view. It has already been seen that the prediction affirms that a true virgin shall conceive miraculously and bear a son. Had there been such a stupendous miracle at

that time, it would have been recorded. Some one would have known it and declared it to the world. Such a manifestation of divine power could not be concealed. Since there is no record of its having taken place in the prophet's day, we logically conclude that the prediction did not pertain to that day but to a later time.

The prediction, therefore, looks out into the future (from the prophet's time) and foretells the miraculous conception and virgin birth of a child whom his mother calls Immanuel.

#### 6. SIGNIFICANCE OF עִמָּנוּאֵל

The next question for consideration is, *What is the meaning of Immanuel?* Among the Hebrews names were especially significant. Children were usually given names to commemorate some providential working of the Almighty, to express a hope reaching out into the future, or to give a warning. For instance, Isaiah means *the Lord hath saved*; Jeremiah, *the Lord doth establish*; Zephaniah, *the Lord hath hidden*; Zechariah, *the Lord hath remembered*; Ezekiel, *God is strong*; Daniel, *God is my judge*; Joel, *the Lord is God*; and Immanuel, *God with us*. It is presupposed that the persons bearing these names will exemplify, in a limited degree at least, the characteristics set forth in their names. No one thinks that, because Daniel's name means *God is my judge*, the prophet was God who judges. Likewise no one concludes that Joel whose name means *the Lord is God* was divine in any way more than other men. Is not then the giving of the name Immanuel to a child, one asks, simply an expression, on the part of the one suggesting the name, that God is with His people and will aid and protect them? If this child were an ordinary person to whom his parents give a name expressive of their faith in God, the answer would be in the affirmative. But we have already learned in the foregoing discussion that he is not conceived by natural generation but miraculously and is born of a virgin. It is the Lord who foretells what his name shall be. God names things and persons according to their true character and not according to what He desires that they be. Therefore when we recognize the fact

that his birth involves a stupendous miracle, that it is God who foretells what His name shall be, and that the Lord always correctly names things and persons, we are forced to the conclusion that this child is what his name declares, namely, *God with us*.

The conclusion reached in the last paragraph is strengthened by other references found in this Book of Immanuel. For instance, in 8:5-8 appears the prediction that the great Assyrian army would invade the land of Palestine. This overrunning of the country by alien forces is compared to the overflowing of the Euphrates River and of the waters' covering the country of Palestine which is called Immanuel's land (8:8). This language has practically no meaning if it refers to someone who was born in the time of the prophet. The land of Israel in a peculiar way is called Immanuel's. In the prediction of 9:6 the statement is made that the child to whom the series of divine names will be given is in a very special sense born to the Jewish nation. Such language goes far beyond the relation sustained by any one in Israel who was born during the reign of the kings of Judah and Israel. Hence it looks to the future.

All of these facts read in the light of many parallel statements found in other portions of the Scriptures prove that the child whose birth is foretold in this passage is just what His name indicates, namely, God come to earth in the form of a little child.

#### 7. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DOUBLE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

In the foregoing sections we have seen that the data found in 7:1-14 unquestionably show that the child whose birth is foretold in this last verse is God in human form. If the prediction stopped there, all would be plain to those who believe that the Tenach is the very Word of God. A seeming difficulty, however, is

encountered when we read the following verses: "Butter and honey shall he eat, when he knoweth to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken. The Lord will bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—even the king of Assyria." This quotation undoubtedly refers to a time immediately before the prophet's eyes.

A casual glance at the context of this passage and contemporary history reveals the fact that verses 15-17 foretell the invasion of the countries of Syria and Ephraim by the great king of Assyria and the desolations resulting therefrom, which predictions were literally fulfilled in the campaigns of Tiglath-pileser in 734-732. That there was a child whose birth and infant life served that generation as a sign of the impending calamity is certain from the plain statements of these verses. Had there been in the prophet's time the miraculous conception and birth of such a one as is described in verse 14, it is only reasonable to believe that some record of such a stupendous manifestation of divine power would have been preserved to us until this day. In the absence of testimony it is logical to believe that such a miracle did not then occur. These verses, therefore, must be considered as the prediction of a child born by natural generation who served as a sign of the desolation of the lands ruled by the hostile kings.

The facts just noted seem to shroud the entire prediction in mystery inasmuch as the birth of the child described in verses 13 and 14 is undoubtedly supernatural, whereas that of the one pictured in verses 15-17 is by natural generation. Those who hold fast to the rationalistic interpretation of history, especially of the Biblical narrative, and rigidly to the historico-grammatical system of exegesis see the birth of only one child in the entire prediction of verses 10-17. To support their position they call attention to the following facts: first, a rule common to all languages insists that a noun immediately preceding a pronoun and agreeing with it in gender and number is to be recognized as its antecedent; and secondly, the fact that in this case the noun and pronoun meeting these conditions are *Immanuel* of verse 14 and

*he* of verse 15. This rule and its unquestioned application in this instance, they point out, are proof that in these verses there are not separate predictions of two different boys but a single prophecy concerning the birth of a child who would be a sign to the prophet's contemporaries. Every scholar must admit the seeming soundness of this reasoning and its strict adherence to the historico-grammatical method of interpretation. In this connection I wish to emphasize that an exegesis of any passage of literature, either sacred or profane, which is not in rigid conformity with the syntax of the language and which is presented apart from the light of the historical circumstances connected with the statements is utterly unreliable.

On the other hand, one must not conclude that mere logic and the application of the rules of grammar will invariably lead to the correct conclusion in every instance. Especially is this statement true in regard to the sacred Tenach, which deals with the spiritual aspect of life. Thought cannot be measured with the yardstick nor weighed on the druggist's scales. Solids and liquids are not amenable to the law of gases. One cannot express psychological data and phenomena in terms of chemical or algebraic formulae. No man can ascertain spiritual truth simply by the aid of history, philology, and the correct application of rules of grammar and rhetoric. Though these branches of learning are indispensable in our quest for the truth, they can account for only a part of the data which appear in the spiritual realm. The truth is that every substance and all phenomena must be judged by the laws of the sphere to which they belong. Therefore let it be recognized that the spiritual realm and the phenomena connected therewith are governed by laws peculiar to them.

In order to ascertain the law that is especially applicable to the passage under consideration, it is necessary for me to restate briefly the findings up to the present stage of this investigation. As seen above, the first section of the prophecy (vss. 10-14) is located upon the high plane of the supernatural; on the other hand, the latter half of the prediction is unquestionably placed on the lower plane of the natural. Since, according to our previous findings, the two parts of this oracle seem to be bound indissolubly together by the bond uniting *he* of verse 15 to its seeming

antecedent, *Immanuel* of verse 14, shall we in our explanation expunge the supernatural element from the first half and allow it to fall of its own weight to the lower plane of the natural along with the latter part? Or shall we permit the first part to remain upon the higher level of the supernatural and then, by forced reasoning, elevate the latter part to the level of the first half? If we cannot logically and conscientiously adopt either of the methods of solving the difficulty suggested in these two questions, there yet remains one other course of procedure, namely, to seek to discover a fundamental law governing the prophetic Word that will throw light upon our problem.

Shall we extract the supernatural element from the first part by taking a specialized meaning of **אֵי**, by forcing upon **עֲלֵמָה** a meaning which it never has in any other context, and by ignoring the crisis which called forth this prediction and which it was given to meet? To do so is folly. The reaction of such a procedure upon one's own self would be disastrous in that it would dull the sense of spiritual perception and soon render one incapable of handling facts and truth conscientiously. No mechanic who knows his trade will attempt, after he has made all proper adjustments, to use undue force in order to make a certain part fit a given place in a machine. To do so would be to injure the entire mechanism and to impair its usefulness. The same is true with reference to forcing a strained meaning upon the words of this or any passage. Genuine scholarship and love for the truth will not allow one to attempt to extract the original meaning from these words and to inject into them an import foreign to the thought of the prophet. In view of the unmistakably miraculous elements in the first part of this passage, one cannot try to lower it to the level of the natural.

Shall we then raise the second half of the prediction from the plane of the natural to the high elevation of the supernatural in order to effect a possible harmony? In other words, can we by any possible method inject a miraculous element into this latter half and interpret it as a reference to the same child whose miraculous birth is foretold in the first half of the oracle? Since verses 15-17 cannot by any mental gymnastics be made to apply to a time other than that of the



prophet and, possibly, the succeeding generation, and since the silence of history concerning a supernatural birth in that day speaks out most eloquently and emphatically in the negative, we must content ourselves with the plain meaning of this part of the prediction and believe that a child was born shortly after the prediction who, like Shear-Jashub, served as unimpeachable testimony to that generation. Hence we cannot logically lift this part of the passage to the level of the super-natural.

The first two methods being impossible, it is now for us to try to discover some principle which obtains in the prophetic message and which will aid us in solving the problem. There are three facts peculiar to the genius of the Hebrew language, people, and religion which may offer clues to this problem: first, the peculiarity of the verb; secondly, the occasion of new prophetic messages; and thirdly, the large place filled by types and shadows in Israel's ritual.

The Hebrew verbs, unlike those of the Indo-European languages, do not express the time element, which in all instances must be gathered from the context. This peculiarity of their speech largely deprived the Hebrews of the proper perspective, except by special circumlocution. The principle idea expressed by the verb is that of completed or incompleting action. This characteristic obtains in all seven conjugations. It was inevitable, therefore, that the prophets, hampered by this limitation of their language, blended in their descriptions of future events, the near with the more remote, so that in some instances it is almost impossible to separate them in point of time. The distinction between the ability of the ancient Hebrew with its limitations and that of modern languages with their highly developed tenses to delineate the future may be illustrated by the difference between the old flat-surface stereoscopic views and the new binocular ones. The former give the appearance of flat surfaces without any perspective, whereas the latter with their "third dimension" present things accurately as they are in reality.

The second fact contributing to the blending of present events with those of the distant future lay rather in the field of psychology. Especially during times of calamity, when people's hearts were in a highly receptive mood to give heed to

spiritual things, the Lord explained the causes of their present judgment and encouraged the hearts of His people by giving them promises of complete deliverance from all their sorrows in the future. The length of time before this final deliverance was withheld in order to keep the people upon the tiptoes of expectation. This hopeful attitude always had a most salutary effect upon their lives. Hence the oft-repeated refrain of "How long, O Lord?" reverberates throughout the Tenach.

The third fact is discovered in the realm of Israel's ritual and the evident typical character of her history. Sacrifices, especially of animals, bulked largely in the ritual. To every thinking person it was evident that such oblations could not really remove the guilt of sin. The character of such sacrifices showed clearly that they could not reach the cause of evil, effect a cure, and allay the lashings of a guilty conscience. The recurrence of the sacrifices on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) also demonstrated that those sacrifices could not make complete satisfaction for sin. To the correctness of this conclusion the innermost conscience of the individual bore silent testimony. Hence the nation looked forward to a perfect sacrifice that would make complete and perfect satisfaction for all sins. The prophet Isaiah, therefore, foretold such an offering which would be made for the nation (Isa. 53). In the same way Moses pointed forward to a lawgiver greater than himself (Deut. 18:15-18); Jeremiah, to a greater deliverance than that from Egypt (Jer. 23:7, 8); and Ezekiel, to a temple far more magnificent than Solomon's (Ezek. 40-48). Thus Israel's entire history had a typical significance.

There is, then, no wonder that the Hebrews, living in such an atmosphere which linked the present with the future, did blend the near with the remote. These facts unquestionably gave rise to what is known among Biblical students as the law of the double or manifold fulfillment of prophecy. The statement of this law is that there may be several partial, limited, or incomplete fulfillments of a given prediction, but there will finally be a perfect and complete fulfillment which will correspond exactly to the original forecast in every detail. Thus the nearer and limited fulfillment always blends with the more remote and complete. This

principle has been beautifully illustrated by the stereopticon which presents the dissolving effect. One picture is thrown upon the screen and presently begins to fade. At the same time there appear the dim outlines of another. By the time the first has completely faded the second is in full view. A second illustration sets forth a slightly different phase of this marvelous principle. From certain places near my home I can see ranges of mountains. The more distant ones mount above these nearer and appear as if they were located immediately behind these in the foreground. Upon reaching the top of the nearer ones, I can clearly see that, instead of their being close together, these mountains are separated by great valleys. The valley from my point of view is invisible. In the same way the interval of time separating near and remote events was not, as a rule, seen and explained by the prophets. An exception to this rule, however, is found in Psalm 110, an exposition of which appears in my book, *Messiah: His Redemptive Career*.

In order to demonstrate the principle of the double fulfillment of prophecy and the blending of widely separated events, I wish to call attention to three different examples. In Leviticus 26 appears the forecast of Israel's checkered history. Verses 3-13 set forth the countless blessings which she was to enjoy if she remained faithful and obedient to the Lord. In verses 14-39 threats of four different judgments, in case of continued disobedience, are solemnly pronounced. In the event the first three failed, the Lord warned Israel that, as a last resort, He would bring the following judgment:

"And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you in wrath; and I also will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your sun-images, and cast your dead bodies upon the bodies of your idols; and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities a waste, and will bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And you will I scatter among the nations, and I will draw out the sword after you: and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. Then shall the land enjoy its sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye are in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy its sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall have rest, even the rest which it had not in your

sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. And as for them that are left of you, I will send a faintness into their heart in the lands of their enemies: and the sound of a driven leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as one fleeth from the sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall stumble one upon another, as it were before the sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them" (Lev. 26:27-39).

Verses 27-33 undoubtedly foretell the national overthrow and world-wide dispersion of Israel. A graphic description of the desolation of the land of Israel and of her sufferings in the countries of her enemies is given in verses 34-39. If there were no parallel passage one would conclude that this quotation foretells a single overthrow and dispersion of the nation. When, however, the parallel account (Deut. 28) is read, it becomes apparent at once that the fall of Jerusalem under the Babylonians and the national overthrow seven hundred years later by the Romans are here blended into one descriptive prediction. The downfall of the Jewish kingdom by the Babylonians was caused largely by the idolatry that had crept into the nation. This fact is seen by a study of the predictions of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (see especially chapter 8). Verses 29 and 30 were fulfilled at the capitulation of Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to it. "And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your sun-images, and cast your dead bodies upon the bodies of your idols; and my soul shall abhor you." This passage was literally fulfilled when the Babylonians took Jerusalem. After that calamity idolatry disappeared from Israel. These verses unquestionably refer to the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This passage is immediately followed by those which foretell a world-wide dispersion of the nation. Thus verse 33 affirms, "And you will I scatter among the nations, and I will draw out the sword after you: and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. The historical facts prove that Israel was cleansed of gross idolatry by the Babylonian overthrow and that she was never scattered among the nations until the Romans conquered Jerusalem and dispersed

those surviving that calamity throughout the world some seven hundred years later. Nevertheless, these two widely separated calamities are blended in this single prediction. They are, however, clearly separated in Moses' account found in Deuteronomy 28. In verses 36-46 of this chapter appears the description of the fall of Jerusalem (606-585 B.C.) and the Babylonian exile. Verses 47-68 describe the Roman occupation of Palestine (70 A.D.) and the national dispersion. These widely separated events, blended in the first passage and separated in the latter, illustrate the law of double fulfillment of prophecy.

Another excellent illustration of the principle is found in Jeremiah 29:10-14.

"For thus saith the Lord, After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."

It is clear from verse 10 that the restoration from Babylon after the seventy years of captivity is the subject which gave rise to the entire prophecy. This part of the prediction was fulfilled in 536 before the common era when Zerubbabel led the captives back to the homeland. But in verse 11 the prophet swings out into the distant future to Israel's "latter end." Here he mentions the restoration from Babylon as being prerequisite to the Lords carrying out His plan to give Israel hope in the latter end. It was necessary, therefore, to bring the captives back at the expiration of the seventy years in order to carry out the divine plan of giving her this hope. In other words, Israel must be in the land\* at the time of the end in order that God may bring to complete fruition the promises of blessing vouchsafed to Abraham and the fathers.

If the prediction had ended with this verse, the Jews of the captivity could have logically concluded, apart from all other statements, that the "latter end" would follow the seventy years of captivity and that they themselves would enter into the enjoyment of all the promised blessings. But the following verses, especially 14, presuppose a world-wide dispersion: "I will gather you from all the nations." It is clear, therefore, from all of these facts, when they are fully understood, that there would be a world-wide dispersion of Israel after the post-exilic restoration. Nevertheless the promise of restoration after the captivity blends imperceptibly with the prediction of a partially restored Israel in the homeland at the latter end—the time of Jacob's trouble. We may not be able to see why it is necessary that there should be such a remnant of the Chosen People in the land at that time in order to the carrying forward of the divine program but, inasmuch as the Scriptures affirm it, we believe that it will be exactly as it is written.

By a close study of this prediction and by comparing it with other statements of Scripture, it has become clear that descriptions of similar situations separated by centuries blend into a single picture. This passage is, therefore, an example of the double fulfillment of prophecy.

A third illustration of this principle may be seen in Ezekiel 26:7-14. In verses 7-11 is found the prediction of the siege of Tyre under Nebuchadnezzar in the latter part of the seventh century B.C. In these verses the singular pronoun *he* frequently

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\* It is not necessary that all of the Jews should be restored to the homeland in the time of the end in order to the fulfilling of the promise. This prediction, however, does contemplate the reorganization and reestablishment of Israel nationally in Palestine. The granting of an autonomous government to the present Zionistic movement by the League of Nations will satisfy the demands of this prediction. The correctness of this statement is seen in the light of the fact that only about 50,000 returned from Babylon after the captivity. This partial restoration of Israel nationally met the requirements of the prediction which foretold the return after the seventy years. Thus such a movement as Zionism may easily satisfy the conditions of the prophecy of the future partial restoration at the end-time. In fact, other utterances concerning Israel's great national rebirth at Messiah's glorious appearance presuppose a partial restoration with the majority of the people still dispersed throughout the world. For example see Isa. 66:18-21 and parallel passages.

occurs and refers to Nebuchadnezzar, but with verse 12 the plural pronoun *they* is suddenly injected into the narrative. What noun is the antecedent of this plural pronoun? Grammatically it could refer either to the horses or horsemen mentioned in the preceding verses. But when we study the entire prediction in the light of history, we see clearly that such cannot be the case. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre on the mainland and reduced it to such dire extremities that the people, profiting by their experience, did not want to pass through another similar trial. Hence they abandoned this site and built their city on an island about a half-mile from shore. This new position was so strongly fortified that the city was well-nigh impregnable. The first enemy to attack insular Tyre was Alexander, whose conquests began approximately three hundred years after Nebuchadnezzar.

It is evident that the Babylonians did not fulfill the prediction of verse 12, "And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters." Nebuchadnezzar did not completely vanquish the Tyrians but reduced them to the point of submitting to humiliating conditions of peace and laid upon them a heavy tribute. Obviously he did not fulfill the prediction of this verse. According to the Greek historian, it was Alexander who literally fulfilled the prophecy. In order to reach insular Tyre, he used all of the material of the deserted city and even scraped the earth from the rocks in constructing a causeway from the mainland through the sea to the island. Over this road he sent his engines of war and took the city. The walls, pleasant houses, stones, and timbers of the city which Nebuchadnezzar had attacked were literally cast into the sea by Alexander. Thus all her mirth and songs, according to vss. 13, 14, ceased. Neither has she been built again.

The facts presented above show conclusively that the predictions concerning the two different sieges separated by approximately three hundred years blend as if they constituted a single event. These facts also show that the nouns immediately preceding and agreeing with *they* of verse 12, which according to the rules of grammar are its antecedents, in reality cannot be. In ordinary narration one is

logically bound to apply this rule of grammar, but these examples and many others which might be given show positively that in certain prophetic utterances there is this higher principle of the double fulfillment of prophecy which has the precedence over even the fundamental rules of grammar and which holds them in abeyance. The context, however, is the guide as to whether or not this superior law controls in a given case. One must scrutinize all of the facts of a given passage and know positively that they favor the application of this law before he is justified in concluding that it governs the case in hand and supersedes all other principles.

What do the facts of the context of Isaiah 7:14 indicate? In the preceding discussion it has been seen that verses 10-14 are surcharged with the miraculous element and look into the future from the prophet's time and that verses 15-17 are on the natural plane and found their fulfillment in Isaiah's day. Also it was learned that both boys prove to be signs—each one, however, in a different way. The miraculous conception and virgin birth of Immanuel constitute the manner in which He serves as a sign to the house of David. Quite different is the case of the boy of Isaiah's time whose infant life served as a sign to his contemporaries in a way similar to that of Shear-jashub. Hence there was no miraculous element in his case. In ordinary narrative the pronoun *he* of verse 15 should have the noun *Immanuel* as its antecedent. But it is clear that this pronoun refers to a boy whose birth is by natural generation and who lived at that time. Evidently, in view of the facts mentioned above, this higher law of the double fulfillment of prophecy comes into operation also in this case.

Therefore the prediction concerning the miraculous birth of Immanuel in the distant future blends imperceptibly with the forecast of the boy who served as a sign to that generation. In the thought of the illustration given above, we would say that the picture of Immanuel is first thrown upon the screen. It begins to fade and at the same time the dim outlines of the boy of the immediate future appear. By the time the first has entirely faded the second is in full view. Upon no other principle can the prediction be explained. Since this interpretation fully accounts for all of



the facts and data of the context without warping a single one, we must conclude that it is correct.

#### 8. THE MIRACULOUS ATMOSPHERE OF THE CONTEXT

In the foregoing discussion it has been shown that the first part of the prediction is elevated to the plane of the supernatural but that suddenly the prophecy descends to the level of the natural. Under the existing circumstances such a change was to be expected. After the king had shown his unworthiness to receive such a solemn and holy announcement, the prophet, turning to the future, gave to the house of David the infallible sign of the Lord's coming to earth. To the king he gave a less sacred oracle which pertained to his own day and generation.

Since the word *sign* in its first occurrence in this passage connotes the supernatural, as demanded by the context, its second mention must likewise indicate the same thing. For a true virgin, as **עַלְמָה** undoubtedly means, to conceive a child is nothing short of a miracle. For God to name the child Immanuel under the conditions stated in the passage is an affirmation that the boy is indeed what the name implies, namely, God in human form and in association with men.

Some have objected to the doctrine of the incarnation upon the ground that it is not in harmony with the dignity of divine holiness for God to enter the world in any such manner as set forth in this passage. In explanation of this objection it is stated that, according to the law of Moses, childbirth rendered a woman unclean and that she had to cleanse herself ceremonially before she was pronounced clean. This statement is true. Let it not be forgotten that the God who created man and ordained the method of the propagation of the human race is the author of the ceremonial of cleansing referred to and also the one who foretold that He would thus enter the world.

Another factor must be taken into account when we consider this objection. Sin is a reality and must be reckoned with. Whatever uncleanness attaches to childbirth is the result of the entrance of sin into the world. Such was not the original state of man. In dealing with the sin problem God has to take things and persons as they

are and not as they ought to be. Hence the objection, in the light of these facts, loses its force.

But why the incarnation? Could not God have dealt with sin and saved man without His coming into the world by virgin birth? In answering this objection it may be stated that if the sin question were simply a matter of omnipotence the problem would be an easy one. But other facts must be taken into consideration. God's holiness is a check on His righteousness. Likewise His righteousness is a check on His love.

Another fact must be considered in connection with this objection. Man is his own free moral agent. God never forces his will. To do so is to thwart His divine purposes. Speaking in human terms, I would say that the problem which faced the Almighty was to reveal Himself to man in such a way as not to overpower his will but to allow him to exercise his own freedom of choice. When all of the facts are taken into consideration, it will be seen that the incarnation by virgin birth is the only way that would meet the problem completely and satisfactorily. Hence every objection launched against the miraculous element of this prediction falls of its own weight.

There are those who cannot accept the miraculous intervention of the Almighty into human affairs since, as they believe, the world is a closed system. Scientific investigation has led them to believe that the entire universe is under the rigid control of unchangeable laws. What is sometimes called *scientific* is misnamed. Science is classified knowledge. Any investigation which overlooks the personal element is pseudo-scientific. As stated above, there are certain laws and principles for each of the different realms of nature. Likewise there are certain laws that obtain only in the psychic or spiritual realm. That system of science or philosophy which interprets the universe in terms of the material world and never rises to the personal plane is without doubt unscientific. An axiomatic classification of the universe is that of mind and matter. All experience affirms that the former has supremacy over the latter. The fingerprints of the great I AM are in evidence on all creation. It is His handiwork. Nevertheless **הַשָּׂטָן** *the Satan*, the adversary, has

marred it. God is still interested in it and will redeem it from its present wrecked condition. Hence we are not surprised when He tells us that He is going to enter the world by virgin birth to make atonement for all who will accept Him and His plan of redemption.

#### 9. NATURALISTIC INTERPRETATIONS EXAMINED

In the preceding discussion we have seen the only possible and logical interpretation of the language. The investigation would not be complete, however, if we did not examine conscientiously the rival interpretations which are honestly advocated by able expositors.

The usual rabbinic explanation of Isaiah 7:14 is that it was fulfilled in the birth of Hezekiah. This position is of special interest inasmuch as it correctly identifies this child as coming of the Davidic line. A careful reading of chapters 7 to 12 shows that the child whose birth is foretold in 7:14 is the divine-human king of Isaiah 9:6 who sits upon the throne of David and the stem of Jesse whose benign reign is pictured in chapters 11 and 12. Furthermore, in Isaiah 8:8 Palestine is said to be the land of Immanuel, which statement, in its connection, assumes His Davidic origin and regal power. Since He, according to this interpretation, is of the regal line and sits upon the throne of David, is it possible to see in Hezekiah the fulfillment of the prediction? According to II Kings 16:2 and II Chronicles 28:1, Ahaz reigned sixteen years and was succeeded by his son Hezekiah who was twenty-five years old at his accession (II Kings 18:2; II Chron. 29:1). Therefore Hezekiah was nine years old when his father began to reign and still older when the prophecy was made. Hence this interpretation is impossible.

Other commentators identify Immanuel with Isaiah's second son, Maher-shalal-hash-baz. The reason advanced for this position is that Maher-shalal-hash-baz' birth is recorded in the following chapter and that the prediction concerning the child in 7:15-17 is very similar to the account concerning the prophet's son (8:4). It has already been shown that the child of 7:15-17 was born in the prophet's time, whereas Immanuel is to be born in the distant future from that point of view.

Therefore it is impossible to identify Immanuel as Maher-shalal-hash-baz. It is quite possible to see the fulfillment of 7:15-17 in the birth of the prophet's son because of the great similarity of the language to that concerning Isaiah's son. Yet such an identification is not absolutely certain.

A thorough study of chapters 7 to 12 shows that Immanuel of the seventh chapter is the child who mounts the throne of David (9:6) and who is the stem of Jesse of chapter eleven. Since Isaiah was not of the regal family and since Immanuel is presented as being of the seed royal, it is absolutely impossible to see in the birth of Isaiah's second son the fulfillment of the Immanuel portion of the prediction.

Another fact weighs heavily against this interpretation. It is highly improbable that the prophet would speak of his wife, the mother of Shear-jashub, as **עַלְמָה** *a virgin* in the first statement and then later call her *the prophetess* as he does in 8:3.

A third interpretation is sometimes advanced which sees in the Immanuel passage a reference to a woman in the prophet's audience who was already pregnant. This explanation claims that Isaiah, noticing this expectant mother, called attention to her condition and declared that before her child would be able to distinguish between good and evil the threatening danger would be past and the countries whose kings Ahaz abhorred would be laid waste. This explanation is quite plausible for the latter part of the prediction (7:15-17) but it cannot satisfy the first half (vs. 14). "The most common usage of the article in Hebrew is to designate a person or thing which has been mentioned or is well known." Since there is nothing in the context that indicates a specialized meaning of the article, we must take it at its usual significance. Prior to this time Isaiah had not mentioned any woman. Suddenly turning from Ahaz to the house of David of the future, he spoke of **הָעַלְמָה** *the virgin*. His use of the definite article shows that he assumed on the part of the audience a knowledge of this woman. Was there any woman who constituted the subject of former predictions? Yes. In Genesis 3:15 Moses spoke of "the seed of the woman." Such an expression evidently created in the mind of every Hebrew a profound and unique impression inasmuch as posterity, in pure

Hebraic style, is never reckoned after the female but always after the male. In this instance, however, the case is different. Here is a clear prediction of an unusual birth of an extraordinary person. Undoubtedly this forecast had formed the subject of many discussions from the time it was given to Isaiah's day. Again, in Psalm 22:9,10 the writer mentions the mother of the sufferer but says nothing of a father. Isaiah (49:1) also mentions Messiah's mother but says nothing of a father. These facts indicate that there was a common expectation in Israel of the appearance of a child who in an unusual and unique sense would be "the seed of the woman." The doctrine of the miraculous conception and virgin birth is a corollary to this hope. Therefore the use of the article with *virgin* was immediately understood as a reference to the virgin-mother of the child of this common national expectation. In the light of these facts the interpretation which makes the prophecy of Immanuel's birth a reference to an expectant mother of Isaiah's day is impossible.

Another interpretation, a shade different from the last one under review, is that the prediction relates to any Jewish woman, then an expectant mother, who might express her faith in the providential protection of the nation by naming her child Immanuel. Viewed from this angle the oracle would mean that the woman whose faith in God leads her to name her son Immanuel will, together with her child, constitute a sign of God's protection of the nation during the crisis. Parallels to this use of the article may be found. But this interpretation violently tears the oracle away from the prediction of 9:6 and 11:1f, which undoubtedly refer to the same person. This fact alone nullifies the explanation.

A fifth hypothesis, advanced by certain modern scholars, is that Zion or the house of David is personified in this passage. As proof, attention is called to Amos 5:2; Jeremiah 18:13; and 31:4,21 where the phrase, "virgin of Israel," occurs and refers to the nation. In answer to this theory I wish again to call attention to the fundamental rule of interpretation of all languages, namely, that every word is to be taken at its primary, ordinary, literal meaning if the context permits. In case it demands a figurative significance we must use that definition which accords with all of the data. The context of these references shows clearly that Zion is in view.

The context of Isaiah 7:14, instead of indicating such a view, points to the personal, primary meaning of every word. Another fact likewise is fatal to this interpretation. In the "virgin of Israel" passages **בְּתוּלָה** is used; but in Isaiah **עַלְמָה** occurs. Finally, this interpretation illogically wrenches this passage from 9:6 and 11:1f with which it is inextricably connected. For these reasons it must be rejected.

In concluding the investigation of rival interpretations, we must now examine the prevailing one which is advocated by Gressman, Jeremias, and other advanced scholars. According to these men, this passage is in truth a prophecy of the virgin birth of Messiah and is similar to those found in ancient mythology. This incorrect interpretation is not an unmitigated evil. The Lord makes even the mistakes of men to praise Him. These students with fine, analytical minds recognize the supernatural character of the prophecy. Their integrity and scholarship will not allow them to attempt a forced and strained explanation of the words. At the same time, their rationalistic, philosophical interpretation of history and nature blinds their eyes to the positive evidence of the supernatural intervention of the Almighty at various times. Hence they must seek an explanation that will allow the oracle to give its original meaning but that will accord with their philosophical preconceptions. They are scientific in allowing the passage to mean exactly what it says but wholly unscientific in their attempt to interpret both nature and history below the plane of the personal and in denying the miraculous.

Attention is called to the Babylonian myth concerning Sargon of Agade and his being considered the son of the goddess Ishtar. At first glance there appears to be a parallel between this myth and the prediction of Immanuel's birth, but a second look causes this seeming analogy to vanish. In the Babylonian pantheon there was no male deity who was the consort of this goddess. It is inferred from this myth that Sargon was born of a virgin. Since Ishtar was a goddess and not a woman, this birth cannot be literal but figurative. On this score the supposed analogy breaks down. Parallels with other heathen myths are eagerly sought, but upon investigation it is seen in every case that the similarity vanishes. It is true that there

are some few points common to both cases but the dissimilarities are so very great that the connection is exceedingly faint and remote.

But how account for these seeming parallels with the Isaianic prediction? For the sake of investigation, let us assume temporarily that there is a real kinship between the heathen myths and Isaiah's oracle. On this hypothesis the connection must be accounted for upon the basis of one of three possibilities: first, that the heathen borrowed from Isaiah; second, that Isaiah borrowed his thought from heathen sources; and third, that both Isaiah's prediction and these myths point backward to a primitive and original source. Let us follow the process of elimination.

Did the Babylonians and other ancient peoples borrow from Isaiah? No. Many of their accounts antedate the time of this prophet by centuries. Thus we can easily and forever dismiss this theory. Did Isaiah borrow from them? To answer this question properly we must remember that the great contribution of the Hebrew people to the world was the sublime doctrine of monotheism—the existence of one true and living God beside whom there is no other. None of the prophets emphasized this doctrine more than Isaiah. Throughout his ministry he preached the doctrine of the nation's complete separation from all heathen teachings, customs, and practices. In times of great national crises he insistently urged the policy of avoiding all foreign alliances. In all of his deliverances he emphasized the holiness of God and stressed its correlative idea, namely, the purity of His people. With boldness he hurled challenge after challenge to those in Israel who were inclined toward idolatry.\* Many statements throughout his entire work are conclusive on this point.

The remaining possibility, namely, that there was a common source from which both the heathen myths and Isaiah's prediction were derived, must now be considered. It has already been shown that the hope expressed in Genesis 3:15 concerning "the seed of the woman" is a promise of an unusual child whose birth is so very unique that Moses had to use a phrase which was foreign to Hebrew thought. This fact shows that in some special way this promised child is the seed of

the woman. A human father being eliminated by the promise, the ancient reader could easily infer that the passage foretold the birth of a child supernaturally conceived. A second inference would be that since this one is to crush the serpent, which promise goes far beyond the physical act of slaying a mere reptile, he must be in a special sense a divinely appointed deliverer. This fact leads to the further assumption that the mother of such a one must be pure and holy. Hence she must of necessity be a chaste virgin.

In this original promise, therefore, lay the germinal thought of the virgin birth of a world redeemer. The inspired Hebrew prophets in the process of time were led to explain this marvelous prediction. In their writings occur various allusions to the uniqueness of His birth and life. Thus in Israel the promise was handed down without corruptions or additions. On the other hand, in the dark heathen world this original promise was distorted and many gross, foreign elements became mixed with it. The fact that there appear in all the mythologies of ancient nations stories of unusual and supernatural births of heroes is proof that these were handed down

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\*The unity of Isaiah has been called in question by many advanced critics. The considerations leading to such a position are purely *a priori*: a predisposition against predictive prophecy and miracles. The exile and restoration are clearly reflected in the latter half of the book. The name of Cyrus appears as the one who would grant freedom to the captives and order the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple (Isa. 44:24-45:13). Isaiah lived and engaged in his ministry during the latter half of the eighth century before the present era. The beginning of the captivity was in 606 and ended in 536 B.C. From the rationalistic point of view it was impossible for Isaiah to foretell the exile and restoration approximately one hundred and fifty years in advance. Obviously these objections are grounded purely and exclusively upon a predilection against the supernatural. When one assumes that there is no such thing as predictive prophecy, it is natural for him to deny the Isaianic authorship of the latter half of that book. The next step is to affirm that it was written by one or more persons who lived either at the beginning of the exile or during it. The next link in the chain of reasoning is to find some evidence that supports a diversity of authorship and late date of composition. There is absolutely no positive evidence to support the theory. Guesses and suppositions are the only support that can be advanced for repudiating the positive evidence of the Isaianic authorship. One does well to take the facts and accept the statements of the prophets of God at their face value. Hundreds of predictions by the prophets of Israel have been literally fulfilled in the past and are at the present day coming to pass exactly as written centuries ago by the Hebrew prophets. Therefore we may have absolute confidence in everything that they have said.



from earliest times. Evidently the human family possessed such a hope before the progenitors of the various tribes were scattered over the face of the earth. Each nation in its own environment and peculiar circumstances distorted the tradition to suit her own notions.

In view of the facts we may be sure that the theory affirming that Isaiah borrowed his idea of the virgin birth of the Redeemer from the heathen is absolutely groundless. These facts, on the contrary, point to a common origin of this expectation which is found throughout the ancient world. The Hebrews preserved the promise intact and gave it to the world, whereas the heathen nations distorted this original and glorious hope.

## 10. THE CONCLUSION

The facts which we have learned in this investigation may be summarized briefly as follows: the word **אֵימָת** *sign* in Isaiah 7:14 has a miraculous connotation; **עַלְמָה** indicates a virgin and with the article is a definite reference to the mother of the promised world Redeemer; **עִמָּנוּאֵל** means *God with us* and in this connection can signify nothing less than that this child shall be God in human form; verses 15 to 17 refer to a child born by natural generation who, like Shear-jashub, served as a sign to his generation; the law of double fulfillment blends the picture of the promised Redeemer with that of the child of the prophet's day; all rival theories which force upon the oracle a strained meaning must be rejected; and finally this passage is but an expansion of the original promise of the world's Redeemer (Gen. 3:15). How greatly the mention of this hope must have stirred the prophet's audience! How it moves our hearts today!

### *D. Prophecy of the Prince of Peace*

#### 1. EXAMINATION OF THE CONTEXT

As stated before, chapters 7 to 12 of Isaiah have been properly called the Book of Immanuel. The future Messiah occupies the central position in this section of Scripture. Professor Delitzsch in his comment on Isaiah 7:14 has correctly said that

"It is the Messiah whom the prophet here beholds as about to be born, then in chapter 9 as born, and in chapter 11 as reigning—three stages of a triad which are not to be wrenched asunder, a threefold constellation of consoling forms, illuminating the three stadia into which the future history of his people divides itself in the view of the prophet."

In order to appreciate the force of the prediction concerning the Prince who is to mount the throne of David, we must study the circumstances out of which it grew. In 8:5-8 appears the warning concerning the invasion of Palestine by the great king of Assyria. This calamity is explained as the judgment of God upon the nation because of its having rejoiced in Rezin and Remaliah's son and having refused to trust in the Lord and remain loyal to the house of David. This fact is set forth in the following quotation:

"Forasmuch as this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory... and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."

This prediction was completely and literally fulfilled in the invasion of the land by Sennacherib, one of the most powerful kings of Assyria.

The couplet, "'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore, And coming events cast their shadows before," finds frequently a perfect illustration in the messages of the prophets. This invasion with all of its attendant evils and sorrows suggested to the prophet's mind the final crisis through which the nation would have to pass when the armies of the peoples of earth enter the land of Israel like a roaring torrent. This final invasion is described in verses 9f. Thus two widely separated events melt into a single picture.

In verses 16-18 the prophet spoke of the symbolic significance of himself and his family. The last paragraph of chapter 8 describes the prevalence of spiritism during the time of crisis which lay in the immediate future. This picture also blends with that of the final distress of the nation.

## 2. "THE FORMER TIME" AND "THE LATTER TIME"

Beginning with chapter 9 the conditions of "the former time" are contrasted with those of the "latter time." "In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations." What is meant by "the former time" and "the latter time"? The context will have to determine the answer. As noted above, the last paragraph of chapter 8 speaks of spiritism and consequent darkness in connection with a time of great sorrow and distress. This spiritual night is spoken of as settling down upon the northern portions of Palestine and also upon the region beyond the Jordan. Jerusalem was the center of the worship of the true God. The people living in close proximity to it, of course, enjoyed greater blessings and had superior opportunities of knowing the truth. The darkness increased in proportion to the distance from this center of light. The aggression of heathenism made its influence felt more and more in these distant regions. Especially did the darkness begin to settle down over the tribes which formed the northern kingdom upon their breaking away from the house of David. The political situation was continually changing. One war after another devastated this northern region. The war clouds of the impending invasion and certain deportation to a heathen land were in Isaiah's day increasing the darkness. We can, therefore, be certain that the former time began with the disruption of the kingdom and continued throughout the period of Israel's national life (982 to 722 B.C.).

But when did the "latter time" begin,—if indeed it has begun? The expression, "the latter days," was considered by the ancient rabbis as a reference to the era of Messiah. At that time, according to this prophecy, a great light shines upon the people who formerly sat in gross darkness. What is the significance of this prophecy? The meaning of *light* probably may be the thread that will unravel the prediction. What is its significance in this connection? Is it to be taken literally as in the case of 13:10 where it refers to the light of the heavenly bodies? In this passage the context shows that the usual meaning is intended. But in other

connections the literal significance is forbidden by the context; hence a figurative or symbolic import must be understood. For instance, in Isaiah 60:1 the drift of thought shows clearly that the literal meaning is impossible. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The parallel structure of these lines shows that *light* in the first statement corresponds to the *glory of the Lord* in the second. The second and third verses, which are explanatory of the first, make the prediction still more lucid: "For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." The light in the first verse, which is the glory of the Lord, is seen in the second to be, not the Shekinah of Glory, which during the period of the first temple hovered over the mercy seat, but the Lord Himself who comes personally to Zion. The use of the expression, "thy light," in this prediction shows that it is used as a proper name. A comparison of its significance with that found in Isaiah 10:17 confirms this conclusion.

My interpretation of Isaiah 60:1-3 is strengthened by the preceding passage (59:15-21). A glance at these verses shows that the prophet, in vision, saw the Lord coming as a warrior to Zion in order to liberate her. (Cf. Deut. 32:40-43.) In view of His appearing on the scene as deliverer and redeemer, the prophet, comparing Zion to a woman sitting stricken with grief and distress, exhorts her to arise and to welcome Him. Taking the entire scope of the passage into consideration, some of the ancient rabbis in their Midrashic literature correctly interpreted light here as a messianic reference.

Messiah shall come in fulfillment of this definite prediction when the nation of Israel is wholly given over to sin and unbelief. (See Isa. 59:1-14.) From other passages, parallel to this one, it is clearly seen that at this same time Israel shall be in the direst distress imaginable. For instance compare Jer. 30:4-7; Zeph. 1:14-18; Zech. 14:1-8. Foreseeing her predicament and graphically picturing her sorrow, Isaiah represented Zion as a forsaken woman sitting or lying prostrate upon the ground, whom he encourages to arise and to welcome this long-expected deliverer.

The verses preceding the vision of this all-conquering Messiah (Isa. 59:15-21) and the prophet's encouraging exhortation to Zion to welcome Him (60:1-3) speak of the regathering of Israel (vss. 4-9), of the metropolitan character and position of Zion under Messiah's reign (vss. 10-14), and of the restoration of Edenic conditions to Jerusalem (vss. 15-22).

From this and many other passages it seems that Messiah is scheduled to come to Zion first and, having established Himself as her King, to extend His benign reign until it encircles the globe. But according to Isaiah 9:1,2, it would appear that He comes to the peoples in the northern part of the land of Palestine—"the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali." Furthermore, "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

The statements, "The people ... have seen a great light: ... upon them hath the light shined," seem to refer to a spiritual work which the Messiah will perform for those who live in the regions that "in the former time" were eclipsed by spiritual darkness and devastated by the aggressions of the Assyrian armies. That the task of the Messiah in these benighted regions is spiritual seems evident from the fact that He is represented as light shining in a dark place, being compared to the sun that sends forth its invigorating rays which in a silent yet effective manner make life and health possible. His work, therefore, is spiritual rather than that of exerting force in subduing His enemies as elsewhere pictured. Furthermore, the usual representation of the conquests of Messiah locates His triumphs in the vicinity of Jerusalem. On the contrary, the work of Isaiah 9:1,2 is placed in the northern regions of the Holy Land. These differences of locality and character of achievements differentiate the task set forth in Isaiah 9:1,2 from the general representations of His final conquests.

When we read verses 3-7 of this chapter we find the usual representation of Messiah's triumphs over His enemies and His mounting the throne of David at Jerusalem. If we take the entire prediction, vss. 1-7, as foretelling a single event, we must believe that He comes first to the northern regions and delivers its

inhabitants and then later goes to Jerusalem to subject to Himself His foes there and to mount the throne of David. Inasmuch as verses 1 and 2 indicate a spiritual and moral work, and not material conquests, it seems better to interpret these verses as referring to a spiritual ministry prior to the conquest of His enemies.

In Isaiah 10:17 the Messiah is also presented under the symbolism of a light and a fire which consumes His enemies. As has been seen in the discussion of Isaiah 60:1 He appears to prostrate Zion as her liberator and is recognized as her light. In this passage He comes as light to the faithful and as fire to his foes. He destroys the yoke of bondage from the neck of Israel: "Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian" (Isa. 9:3,4). Therefore in verses 3-7 appears a description of the same coming and conquests that are found in 60:1. Verses 1 and 2 of chapter 9 describe one type of Messiah's labor, whereas vss. 3-7 set forth another phase of His accomplishments. Why do these essentially different lines of prediction converge in this passage as if only one event were in view? Does the benign and blessed work of Messiah, symbolized by the rising sun with its invigorating rays which dispel the darkness and the gloom of past centuries and bring spiritual light and life to a down trodden folk (vss. 1,2) suddenly change its character and develop into His triumphant conquest of all foes (vss. 3-7)? That great principle learned in our study of Isaiah 7:14 and known as the double fulfillment of prophecy may offer a clue to the solution of this problem. In the investigation we saw that a prediction of an event which lay immediately before the prophet frequently blends imperceptibly with another in the more distant future. According to this principle verses 1, 2 present a forecast of the time when Messiah comes and devotes the major part of His efforts to the less fortunate people living in the northern regions. On the other hand, verses 3-7 present a clear picture of His conquests when He comes to Zion in great power to subdue His foes and to mount the throne of David. The time intervening between these two events does not appear in this prediction, just as the valley

separating two mountain ranges is invisible to the observer who sees the higher peaks of the more distant range towering above the lower and nearer one.

We shall see in the third volume of this series *Messiah: His Redemptive Career* that Psalm 110 clearly outlines the career of Messiah. According to it He comes to Zion in humiliation and is rejected by the nation. After this most unfortunate event, at the invitation of the Almighty He ascends to heaven and takes His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high. When the people of Zion see their mistake and are brought to the point that they will accept Him, He will return in glory and power. Then He will take up His reign in Zion and become the King of the world. Such is the plain outline of the career of Israel's Messiah as presented in this prophetic Psalm. With this outline of Messiah's career in mind, one can see that verses 1 and 2 of Isaiah 9 are a clear prediction of His coming in humiliation to the nation when He will be rejected by it; on the other hand, verses 3-7 foretell His triumphs when He returns to conquer His foes.

The blending of Messiah's two appearances—first in humiliation to perform a spiritual work and finally in power to execute vengeance upon His foes—without any reference to the period intervening, during which He is seated at the right hand of God, is seen very clearly in Isaiah 61:1-3. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening *of the prison* to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified." The work described in this prediction up to and including the phrase, "To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," unquestionably is the moral and spiritual ministry described in Isaiah 9:1,2; but the remainder of the prediction, which begins with the phrase, "and the day of vengeance of our God," can refer to nothing except the time when He comes, executes the vengeance of God upon all foes, and establishes

His reign of righteousness in Zion. A graphic picture of His coming in this capacity appears in the following passage:

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth" (Isa. 63:1-6).

The fading of the first picture and its blending into the second—scenes of events entirely different in character and greatly separated in point of time—can be easily accounted for upon the basis of similarity of symbolism used at various times in portraying both events. In the first picture Messiah is compared to the sun as it sends forth its life-giving rays; and, inasmuch as His coming to take vengeance is at times pictured as a light and a devouring fire (cf. 10:17), the prophet's thought naturally drifted in that direction; but instead of continuing the use of the present figure he painted Israel's King in this second picture as a conquering warrior who after His triumphs increases the nation and her joy.

### 3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD UPON THE EARTH

"Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian. For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with



justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:3-7).

The prophetic information given in verses 3-5 may be tabulated as follows: the unusual growth of the nation; the increase of its joy; the breaking of the foreigner's yoke from the neck of Israel; and the destruction of the enemy's war materials. The fulfillment of the first two predictions is contingent upon the accomplishment of the two latter ones. Undoubtedly Israel's sufferings during her dispersion among the nations have been unspeakably terrible and heart-rending. They will never cease so long as the peoples of earth can exploit her and make her "the football of the nations" as she has been for the past nineteen hundred years. According to the prophets, these cruelties and horrors will continue until the Almighty Himself shall intervene and suppress all wars (see Ps. 46). In his forecast Isaiah sees this final overthrow of Israel's last foe and compares it to the destruction of the forces of Midian by divine judgment. This victory accomplished, the joy in Israel is compared to that in the time of great harvest and at the dividing of the spoils. After this signal defeat of the last enemy the nation shall increase marvelously. It shall, according to other prophetic utterances, take root downward and grow upward. That time will be the Golden Age foreseen by the inspired prophets, dreamed of by poets, and glibly spoken of by politicians.

#### 4. THE BIRTH OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

The oft-repeated statement that there can be no permanent peace upon earth until the Prince of Peace comes is undoubtedly true. This thought is in harmony with the prediction forming our present study. Verses 3-6 of Isaiah 9 are a flight of three logical steps from the low level of the present brutal age of injustice and warfare to the lofty and the elevated plane of universal peace, good will, and blessing, for which the entire world gaspingly longs. In verse 3 we stand on this high level of the future Golden Era and behold this earth, formerly the scene of perpetual sanguinary conflicts and of man's inhumanity to man, transformed into a heavenly paradise and bathed in the sunlight of divine love. If we desire, in our study, to descend to the low level of this present wicked world and to examine

each step, we shall see that the top of this flight is the complete destruction of the engines and equipment of war; that the next step below it is that of the complete overthrow of the last world government by divine judgment; and that the first one is the birth of the Prince of Peace to the Jewish nation. This logical sequence of ideas is indicated by the use of the conjunction *for* in verses 4, 5, and 6. Changing the figure, I will say that world peace and good will among men rests, not upon the crumbling and insecure rock of peace pacts and disarmament of the nations (commendable as these efforts are), but upon the solid and unshakable rock of the birth of the Prince of Peace to the Jewish nation as here foretold.

a. *The Significance of יָלַד*

כִּי־יֵלֵד יֶלֶד־לָנוּ בֶן נִתֵּן־לָנוּ וְתָהִי הַמְּשָׁרָה עַל־שָׂכְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ אֵל גָּבוֹר  
 אָבִי־עַד שָׂרֵי־שְׁלוֹם: לְמַרְבֵּה הַמְּשָׁרָה וּלְשֵׁלוֹם אֵין־קֵץ עַל־פְּסָא דָּוִד וְעַל־מַמְלַכְתּוֹ  
 לְהַכִּין אֹתָהּ וּלְסַעְדָּהּ בְּמִשְׁפָּט וּבַצְדִּיקָה מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם קִנְיָת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת  
 תַּעֲשֶׂה־זֹאת:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6,7).

The word יָלַד is translated in English by the present perfect tense *is born*. The reader's attention has been called to the fact that the time element does not appear in the Hebrew verb as in ancient Greek, modern English, German, and other languages. The so-called perfect tense of the Hebrew verb simply expresses completed action, which, according to the drift of the thought, may be translated as past perfect, present perfect, or future perfect. The context in each case is to determine the choice of the proper tense in English to convey the exact meaning of the verb in its original setting.

From the context it is clear that Isaiah in vision sees the time when Israel's last enemy has been conquered. Being thus borne along by the Spirit of God into the future and seeing what shall inevitably come to pass, he sees the vision as an accomplished fact and exclaims, "Thou hast multiplied the nation." The perfect form **הִרְבִּיתָ** is thus correctly rendered in English as a present perfect—"hast multiplied." Since, according to the logical sequence of ideas found in verses 3-6, the expansion of the nation and the increase of its joy are the work, in the final analysis, of the one whose birth is foretold in verse 6, it is evident that He accomplishes the overthrow of the world government. Hence His birth is prior to that event. Since **הִרְבִּיתָ** is translated as a present perfect, *hast multiplied*, and since the birth of the child antedates that event, it is better to render it *has been born* instead of *is born*. The context, however, gives no idea of the length of time between the child's birth and His great triumph. That information must be gleaned from other predictions. (For full discussion of the time of Messiah's birth according to the prophets, see *Messiah: His First Coming Scheduled*, the fourth book of this series.)

#### b. *The Unique Relation of this Child to the Jewish Nation*

The statement, "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," implies that this child sustains a unique position in relation to the entire nation. Otherwise construed, the prediction on this point is meaningless. Only the king, the high priest, and some of the prophets in Israel bore such relation to the nation as that expressed in these words. Of the king and the high priest especially did it express this national relationship. The sequence of thought confirms this interpretation. It is He who liberates the nation in a miraculous manner from its last foes. Hence the connection proclaims Him as the national Hero.

Of Immanuel, whose birth we have already discussed, we read the following statement: "And the stretching out of its (the Assyrian army's) wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel" (Isa. 8:8). As has been seen, the prediction of Immanuel's birth foretells the coming of the Eternal God to earth, who enters the

world by virgin birth. Palestine, which is in the prophet's view, is in a peculiar sense the land of Immanuel. Professor Delitzsch has long ago called our attention to the single theme of Isaiah 7-12 and to the unique character of the child, who, in 7:14, is about to be born, in 9:6 is born, and in chapter 11 is reigning. The identification of Immanuel with the child of 9:6 shows that the land of Palestine in a special sense is called Immanuel's land. In our further study we shall see additional reasons for the prophet's claiming Him for the nation.

*c. The Government of Judah upon His Shoulder*

What is meant by the statement, "and the government shall be upon His shoulder"? According to ancient oriental custom, the conferring of authority to rule a community was symbolized by the ceremony of laying the keys of its principal city upon the shoulder of its future king. By this ceremony the king was inducted into office. A reference to this ancient custom is found in Isaiah 22:22 where the Lord in speaking of Eliakim declared that "the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."

What government is referred to in Isaiah 9:6? Inasmuch as the subject of the prediction is the Jewish nation, there is but one answer, namely, the government of the Hebrew people. A further study of the following verse adds much information to this interesting subject.

*d. Examination of the Child's Name*

The sentence **וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ אֵל גְּבוּר אָבִי-עֵד שְׂרֵי-שְׁלוֹם** has been the subject of much discussion; hence it should be examined honestly and thoroughly in order to ascertain its meaning. The controversy has not been centered in the meaning of the separate words so much as in their combined function, in the sentence. The first step in the investigation is a thorough examination of the idiom **וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ**. The second is to ascertain the relationship of this series of names to the verb. In approaching this study we must accept the axiomatic truth that this idiom must be interpreted in accordance with its general usage unless its context prevents

or unless such a construction conflicts with other known and thoroughly established teachings of the Scriptures. The conclusions reached must be tested by a comparison with the general teaching of the Word of God.

The verb translated *shall be called* is **וַיִּקְרָא** and is in the Kal stem (active voice). Why then translate it as if it were in the passive (Niphal stem)? This verb followed by **שְׁמוֹ** *its (or his) name* forms a very familiar idiom which is commonly translated as if the verb were passive. A parallel to it is found in the modern German *man sagt*, which means *one says*, or *they say*. This construction hides the identity of the speaker and emphasizes the impersonal element. This particular idiom may be found in many passages among which are the following: Gen.11:9; 16:14; 19:22; 25:30; 27:36; Josh. 7:26. The impersonal element of *one* easily passes into the plural idea. The significance of **וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ** *one calls his name*, naturally, on account of its impersonal element, yields to the passive rendering. Hence, as a rule, this idiom is rendered, *and his name shall be called*.

Our second step is to ascertain the relation existing between this peculiar idiom, which we have just studied, and the series of unusual names that follows it. Much difficulty has been experienced by interpreters because this child apparently is called by this series of divine names. In certain circles Hezekiah has been thought to be the fulfillment of the prediction. Those taking this position and "despairing of being able, with any appearance of truth, to apply the following attributes to Hezekiah, insist that, with the exception of the last, they denote Him who calls, not Him who is called: the Wonderful, &c., called him Prince of Peace. Altogether apart from the consideration that this is in opposition to the accents, the mentioning of so many names of the Lord is here quite unsuitable; and, in all other passages, the noun put after **וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ** designates always him who is called." I wish to reëmphasize the statement concerning the name which follows this idiom. With the aid of a Hebrew concordance, I have gone through the Hebrew Bible, investigated this special idiom, and verified the statement quoted above. The facts being as just stated, one should never disregard this rule which is found to be universal. Philosophical and theological speculation should not enter into a consideration of

this case. Only absolute and positive evidence should be allowed to raise a voice of protest against the regular syntactical interpretation of this idiom.

In the absence of contrary evidence we shall accept the usual translation, and, may I add, the only natural, normal, and unstrained rendering. Thus we translate: "and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Therefore if this translation does not clash with other well-established teachings of the sacred Torah, we are logically bound to accept it. Furthermore, if it is found to harmonize with the teaching of Tenach, we are morally bound to believe and teach it. In Jeremiah 23:5,6 occurs this oracle:

הַגֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְהִקְמַתִּי לְדָוִד צְדִיק וּמֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ וְהִשְׁפִּיל וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט  
וַיִּצְדָּק בְּאֶרֶץ: בְּיָמָיו תִּנְשַׁע יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכֹּן לְבֵטחַ וְזֶה־שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָאוּ יְהוָה |  
צְדִיקְנוּ:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 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 Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: the Lord our righteousness."

A casual examination of the text shows that the prophet foresaw a descendant of David who would mount his throne and rule in justice and righteousness, and who would be called **יְהוָה צְדִיקְנוּ** "the Lord our righteousness." According to the prediction, the people will discern His nature and call Him *the Lord our righteousness*. On account of the limitations and weaknesses of the flesh, no mere man can reign in absolute righteousness and justice. Various messengers of God declare that there is not a righteous one,—no, not one. Israel's great king, David, of whom it was said that he was a man after God's own heart and who would do His will, did not carry out so righteous a regime. On the contrary, he failed signally. But this future king will reign in absolute righteousness. The justice and equity of His administration will be universally recognized, and He will be spoken of as *the Lord, our righteousness*. It is not possible to think that the nation of Israel will give so sacred a name to this king unless He is what the words indicate. Therefore He is

what this name affirms: the Lord our righteousness.\* The context favors this rendering. In verse 5 this future king is said to be צִמְחַ צְדִיק "a righteous Branch" of the house of David who "shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." Since no man has ever ruled in so righteous a manner as here described, it is certain that, though this king is a man, He is also the Lord our righteousness.

Having seen that this translation harmonizes with the teaching of Jeremiah, the inspired prophet, I accept it as true without any reservations. Now I shall investigate the meaning of this series<sup>1</sup> of names by which Messiah shall be called. These words are grouped logically in pairs—two in number. The first two words combine to form the initial title פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ "That these two words must be *connected* with one another (*Theodor.* θαυμαστος βουλευων) appears from the analogy of the other names, especially of אֵל גְּבוּרַת with whom פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ forms one pair; and then from the circumstance that יוֹעֵץ alone would, in this connection, be too indefinite" (Hengstenberg). יוֹעֵץ designates an attribute of Messiah, whereas פְּלֵא shows the supernatural degree in which He possesses this characteristic. Hence this combined title indicates that Messiah will be a fountain of divine wisdom from which will flow rivers of counsel, comfort, and consolation to earth's

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\* Some scholars render the original, "the Lord is our righteousness." This translation is grammatically correct but is not necessarily the one demanded by the context. To render it "the Lord our righteousness" simply places *righteousness* in apposition with *the Lord*. In the final analysis both renderings yield the same meaning.

<sup>1</sup> One should not be surprised to see this series of eight marvelous titles combined into a single name for Messiah, inasmuch as it takes all of them to convey to the human mind His real character,—especially so, since we see how the Spirit led David to pile one metaphor upon another in order to tell what God meant to him. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; My God, my rock, in whom I will take refuge; My shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower" (Ps. 18:2).

abounding millions. As Counsellor He will be wonderful, for **פְּלֵא** indicates "wonder in the strictest sense." Of God it is said: "I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done **פְּלֵא** wonderful things, *even* counsels of old, in faithfulness *and* truth" (Isa. 25:1). Again, it is written: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing **פְּלֵא** wonders?" (Ex.15:11). In the light of these quotations it is certain that this one is divine since only such a one could be wonderful in his counsel. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that **פְּלֵא** in the first title is parallel to **אֵל** in the second. This fact positively proves the assertion that He who gives this wonderful counsel is none other than the mighty God. This conclusion is further confirmed by the facts set forth in Judges 13:18. In this passage the Angel of the Lord, who as we have already seen is the Lord Himself, remonstrates with Manoah: "Wherefore asketh thou after my name, seeing it is wonderful?" The Lord in this passage declares that His name is Wonderful. If additional proof is desired, it may be found in a statement which is parallel to this one: "This also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, **הַפְּלִיא עֲצָה** who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom" (Isa. 28:29).

The second title is **אֵל גְּבוּר**. A ruler must be able not only to give good counsel but also to enforce his decrees by the exertion of power, if necessary. Hence of the Hebrew Messiah Isaiah declared, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and **גְּבוּרָה** might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. 11:2). **אֵל גְּבוּר** can signify God-Hero only, a Hero who is infinitely exalted above all human heroes by the circumstance that He is *God*." This position is confirmed by Isaiah 10:21 which, with the preceding and following verses, I quote:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, *even* the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them



shall return: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, God of Hosts, make in the midst of all the earth" (Isa. 10:20-23).

In this passage the God of Jacob, to whom the remnant shall return, is called **אֵל גִּבּוֹר** *the mighty God*. This title is here evidently an echo of the words of the passage under consideration. Since it is interpreted in 10:21 as the title of the God of Jacob, it is certain that it has the same significance in this series of names.

The term **גִּבּוֹר** has the same connotation in Psalm 24:8. To the question, **מִי זֶה** **יְהוָה עֶזְרוֹ וְגִבּוֹר** **מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד** "Who is the King of glory?", the inspired writer replied **יְהוָה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה** "The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle." In this last statement the phrase **יְהוָה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה** "the Lord a hero of war" is equivalent to **אֵל גִּבּוֹר** "God-Hero" in our series of names. From the various passages cited it is evident that this title is correctly rendered *Mighty God*.

Notwithstanding the clear and positive proof that has been adduced, many rationalists attempt to break the force of the evidence by toning down the expression and rendering it "strong hero." Replying to this cavil Hitzig in a terse statement of the facts satisfactorily answers: "Commonly, in opposition to all the *usus loquendi*, the word is translated by: *strong hero*. But **אֵל** is always, even in passages such as Gen. xxxi. 29, 'God,' and in all those passages which are adduced to prove that it means '*princeps*,' '*potens*,' the forms are to be derived not from **אֵל**, but from **אֵיל**, which properly means 'ram,' then 'leader,' 'prince.'" By the statement of Hitzig the effort to prove the rationalistic position from Ezekiel 32:21 is completely and satisfactorily refuted. In this verse the expression **אֵלֵי גִבּוֹרִים** appears and is rendered in the Revised Version *the strong among the mighty*. Hengstenberg calls attention to the fact that the literal rendering is *rams of heroes*. By these words the spirits of certain ancient warriors are compared to strong rams. Hence in this passage there is no evidence which requires us to modify the meaning of **אֵל גִּבּוֹר** and to render it otherwise than by its normal and literal meaning, *God-Hero*. **גִּבּוֹר** as an adjective always means *hero*. Since it is so used in

our passage, it should be literally rendered, *God-Hero. Mighty God*, the rendering of the Revised Version, is a smooth translation and approximates the original, but the outstanding idea of גִּבּוֹר, *a hero of war*, is lost.

Certain critics, being unable to extract the inherent meaning from this title, admit its correct significance but claim that the expression is simply "an oriental exaggeration." By such explanation one can break the force of innumerable passages both in the sacred Scriptures and in the writings of men. This method is a very convenient device with which one can soften any doctrine not according to his liking and thus modify its meaning. But is it ethical to modify the statements of those who have passed on and who cannot now speak for themselves and tell the world exactly what they meant? If one is at liberty to change the meaning of this title in Isaiah 9:6 by claiming that it is "an oriental exaggeration" when there is no positive evidence pointing in that direction, may he not with equal propriety characterize 10:21 similarly? But the context of this latter verse shows that the God of Israel is the subject of discussion. If the reader is not to tone down the expression in the one instance, he certainly is not justified in doing so in the other. Therefore let us not break the force of any passage by unwarranted assumptions. On the contrary, let us seek to learn the exact meaning which the Spirit of God intended to convey to us.

Some rationalists have tried to read this title in the light of such passages as Exodus 21:6: "then his master shall bring him unto אֱלֹהִים God, and shall bring him to the door, or unto the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever." The marginal rendering of the Revised Version is *judges*. The translators of this version understood that אֱלֹהִים referred to the judges in Israel. Such an interpretation is possible but not at all necessary. God dwelt in the tabernacle in the form of the Shekinah of Glory. Hence when the servant was brought by his master to the sanctuary, one could correctly say that he was brought unto God. On the other hand, since the judges who officiated at the tabernacle were God's representatives, they could, in this accommodated sense, be called אֱלֹהִים *God*. This *usus loquendi*, is current among

us today. For instance, when a prisoner is turned over by the officers of one state to those of another, he is said to have been delivered to the latter state.

Others attempt to extract the divine meaning from our title by reading it in the light of Psalm 82:1,6: "God standeth in the congregation of God; He judgeth among the gods. ... I said, Ye are gods, And all of you sons of the Most High." In this context **אֱלֹהִים** does not have its regular connotation but is applied to the children of Israel to whom the Word of God was delivered. This fact is abundantly evident from the context. For example, the first statement, "God standeth in the congregation of God; He judgeth among the gods," is followed by this question, "How long will ye judge unjustly, And respect the persons of the wicked?" Since God is righteous and holy, it is evident that **אֱלֹהִים** is used in an accommodated sense. The following exhortation, "Judge the poor and fatherless," shows that men are meant. Again, after the statement, "I said, Ye are gods, And all of you sons of the Most High," the Lord immediately added, "Nevertheless ye shall die like men. And fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth." Thus the context demonstrates the fact that *gods* in this particular case is used in a secondary sense. But inasmuch as we are to take every word at its primary, literal, and usual significance unless the context indicates otherwise, we shall be doing violence to Isaiah 9:6 if we attach a secondary meaning to the words **אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר**, since the facts of the context do not indicate a departure from the usual, literal connotation.

A fitting conclusion to the discussion of this expression may be found in a quotation from Delitzsch, which I now give.

"But all these and similar renderings break down in connection with chap. x. 21, where he to whom the remnant of Israel again penitently turns is called **אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר**. Moreover, we can not take **אֱלֹהֵי** (which in the sense of 'might' only occurs in the plural, with the exception of Ezek. xxxi. 11, where the Orientals write **אֵיל**) in this name of the Messiah otherwise than in **עֲמִנוּאֵל**. And, in addition to this, **אֱלֹהֵי** in Isaiah is always a name of God, and he is strongly conscious of the contrast between **אֱלֹהֵי** and **אָדָם** as is shown by chap. xxxi. 3 (cf. Hos. xi. 9). Finally, **אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר** is everywhere else a designation of God, as in Deut. x. 17; Jer. xxxii. 18; Neh. ix. 32; and the noun **גִּבּוֹר** is used in the designation adjectively, like **אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי** in **אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי**. The Messiah is therefore here called 'Strong God' (and so the designation is understood by Knobel and others,) but he is thus named as a hero

equipped with divine powers; or according to Kuenen, who compares Zech. xii. 8, as a mighty God surpassing the children of men, and not as a supernatural ruler. We compare יהוה צדקני in Jer. xxiii.6—a Messiah name which even the synagogue cannot call in question (see Midrash Mishe 57a, where it is cited as one of the eight names of the Messiah), and whose significance for the conscious faith of the Old Testament was that the Messiah would be the image of God as no other man (cf. אל, Ps. lxxxii. 1) and would have God dwelling in him (cf. Jer. xxxiii. 16). Who shall lead Israel to victory over the hostile world but God the Strong? The Messiah is the bodily presence of this Strong God; for He is with him, He is in him. He is in him with Israel."

The next element in this title is אָבִי־עַד. What do these words signify? Two explanations are given. First, "according to the opinion of others, Father of eternity is *he who will ever be a Father, and affectionate provider*, comp. chap. xxii. 21, where Eliakim is called 'Father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.'" Undoubtedly this thought is contained in the expression but it by no means exhausts the significance of the term. Secondly, This title is to be construed according to the Arabic idiom, which usage also occurs in the Hebrew. For instance, the expression "father of goodness" means "the good one"; "father of mercy," "the merciful one." In keeping with this idiom, then, *the father of eternity* means *the eternal father*. This thought harmonizes with the context perfectly. In the preceding title this one is called *God-hero*. Being God the Hero, He is naturally thought of as existing throughout eternity. That Isaiah used the term עַד to indicate eternal existence is clear from his statement concerning God in chapter lvii. 15 כִּי כֹה אָמַר רָם וְנֹשָׂא שִׁכְנֵי עַד וְקָדוֹשׁ שָׁמוֹ מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ אֲשַׁכֵּן "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place." From the context we learn that the speaker in this passage is the Eternal God who says that He inhabits eternity. When, therefore, this child is called אָבִי־עַד *Father of Eternity*, the Spirit of God indicates that He has an eternal existence. Since He is the Eternal Father as well as the God-hero, He is thought of as the loving one who meets man's need. This consoling thought prepares the way for the declaration concerning the last element of this title and blends most beautifully with it.

The last expression in this great title of King Messiah is *Prince of Peace*. About the significance of this phrase, considered etymologically, there is no question.

Hence the only matter calling for attention is the nature of the peace here promised. The context decides this question most clearly. In the verses immediately preceding this divine title, we saw the overthrow of Israel's last enemy and the complete destruction of all armaments. Hence the peace here promised is a cessation of all war. The logical sequence of ideas in verses three to six shows that the one standing before us in this verse is He who conquers Israel's last foe and destroys the armaments of her oppressors.

In order for this one to accomplish the work of subjecting Israel's foes, He must be what these words imply, namely, the God-Hero, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. As has been seen, the idiom occurring in this passage can be translated only in one way, which is the one adopted in the Authorized and Revised Versions. Therefore the rendering, "one shall call His name Wonderful, Counsellor, God-Hero, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace," is an exact representation of the original.

*e. The Government of King Messiah*

"Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:7).

When the Messiah mounts the throne of David, He establishes peace and sets up a firm government. By His almighty wisdom and strength He will extend His borders until His government encircles the globe. Then will be fulfilled the predictions that Israel's king shall reign from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. Of this glorious reign all the prophets spoke. As an illustration, note our prophet's language in chapter 2:1-4.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords

into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

As we have already seen, the throne of David was called the Throne of God and his kingdom, the kingdom of God. In view of all the facts, it is evident that they were thus named by way of anticipation. The Davidic kings simply were occupying the time "until He comes whose right it is," namely, King Messiah. When He mounts the throne of David, Jerusalem will be called the throne of God, because King Messiah is God in human form. Proof of this position is seen in Jeremiah 3:16, 17.

"And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart."

#### *E. Earth's Golden Era*

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall 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. 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 fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting place shall be glorious" (Isa. 11:1-10).

In verse one the prophet declares that **הַטֵּי** *a shoot* shall go forth out of the stock of Jesse. This figure can be understood only by an examination of the context. In

the preceding chapter, vss. 15f, appears the figure of a forest, to which the Assyrian army is compared. Later in the chapter this figure is extended to the nation. In vss. 28-32, however, the rapid march of a portion of the Assyrian army toward Jerusalem and its sudden appearance upon an eminence overlooking the city are depicted. In this commanding position it, with bristling weapons, again suggested to the prophet's mind the thought of a forest—even the cedars of Lebanon. Immediately in the verses following Isaiah compared the Lord to a mighty woodsman who would hew down this great forest: "Behold, the Lord, God of hosts, will lop the boughs with terror: and the high of stature shall be hewn down, and the lofty shall be brought low. And he will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one." This prediction was fulfilled in the slaughter of 185,000 of his army by the death angel (chap. 37:36).

With the same comparison in mind the prophet conceived of the royal family of Jesse as if it were a tree which also had been hewn down, the stump of which remained in the ground. Unlike the stock of the cedar from which no shoot will spring forth, the root of Jesse will send forth a branch which will bear fruit. From this figure it is evident that Isaiah saw the time when the dynasty of David, like the hewn tree, would be cut down, that is, would be deposed and cease to function. But as a sprig grows out of the stump of a certain tree and bears fruit, thus shall arise later one of the Davidic dynasty who shall possess the fullness of the **רוח** *Spirit* and shall, in the absolute sense of those terms, execute justice and righteousness throughout the earth.

From vss. 3-5 it is evident that this scion of the Davidic house will become the Judge of the entire earth. Unlike other jurists, He will not have to depend upon oral testimony or concrete evidence. This fact shows that though he is a man, being a descendant of Jesse, he possesses superhuman knowledge which enables Him to discern the secret thoughts and the hidden motives of men's hearts.

According to these same verses He by supernatural power (He speaks and His commands are executed by a stroke of divine judgment) slays the wicked and

establishes righteousness in the earth—an accomplishment never before known.

Verses 6-9 foretell the restoration of the animal kingdom to its primitive condition. Such a transformation should be expected when by divine fiat and power all the wicked of earth are slain and righteousness and peace are firmly established. Isaiah repeated this prediction in describing the blessedness of the earth when it is renewed (see chap. 65:17-25). Hosea foretold this same restoration (chap. 2:18). This picture of perfection is most beautifully and graphically set forth in Ezekiel 34:25-31.

"And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of those that made bondmen of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. And they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."

At the time this prediction is fulfilled, Jerusalem will be the capital of the earth and the manifestation of the divine glory will be seen abiding there. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious" (vs.10). The word translated *glorious* is כְּבוֹד, a substantive. The use of a noun in the predicate position instead of an adjective is an idiom which brings out the meaning in the strongest manner possible. For example, in Psalm 109:4 we have this statement: "For my love they are my adversaries: But I *give myself unto* prayer." The words, *give myself unto*, are not in the original. By supplying these words the translators have weakened the meaning. The force of the statement can be seen by omitting them. "For my love they are my adversaries: But I am prayer."



In violent contrast with the malignant attitude of his enemies, David consumed his entire time in prayer, evidently for his protection and for their good. Prayer therefore was the consuming passion of his soul. Such is the force of the use of **פְּבוֹד** in Isaiah's statement. Everything in Jerusalem at that time will be a reflection of the divine glory or in keeping with His presence. In other words, Jerusalem will be transformed and become, as it were, heaven transferred to earth.

A glance at Isaiah 4:5,6 shows that our verse assumes what the former has clearly stated. "And the Lord will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the **פְּבוֹד** glory *shall be spread* a covering. And there shall be a pavilion for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain." The keyword that unlocks these verses is **בָּרָא** *create*. Only the Lord can perform the act of creation, which means *to bring into being that which had not formerly existed*. Hence in the original text this verb always has the Lord as its subject. According to this promise He will create a great canopy over Jerusalem. In reading this promise one is reminded of the symbolic evidence of God's presence in the form of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night which attended Israel in the wilderness.

The same promise is seen in Isaiah 60:1: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." This exhortation is addressed to Jerusalem. *Light* in the first line answers to *glory of the Lord* in the second. As has already been seen, this verse was interpreted by the ancient synagogue as referring to Messiah. Thus the glory of God radiates from His person. In keeping with the ancient oriental custom, with which Isaiah was familiar, the abiding place of King Messiah, the royal city of His Excellency, will be overspread by a canopy created by a special decree of the Almighty and supernaturally sustained—the insignia of the divine presence. Isaiah described the same scene in chapter 65:17,18: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Jeremiah

foresaw the same vision of glorified Jerusalem. "And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:16,17).

From the quotations given above it is evident that the transformed condition of Jerusalem bespeaks the presence not of man but of God Himself. One of the social laws of our being is that one's surroundings should reflect his dignity and position in life. Throughout the Scriptures is abundant proof that God has adapted His revelation to man's understanding and condition. Therefore upon these principles we would naturally expect God to be present in such a transformed heavenly place as Jerusalem is destined to be. This inference is lifted from the category of the theoretical to the positiveness of definite prediction in the concluding verse of the Book of Immanuel: "Cry aloud and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 12:6). The drift of the prediction in chapters 11 and 12 shows that this one who is of the seed of David is the Holy one of Israel.

In the investigation of "The Book of Immanuel" we have seen that the supernatural conception and the virgin birth of Messiah were foretold in chapter 7, that His divine nature and His conquests were portrayed in chapter 9, and that His peaceful reign over the earth\*, when the curse is lifted, was simply yet graphically outlined in chapter 11. From the testimony of this section of Scripture it is evident that Messiah is God in human form who enters the world by virgin birth.

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\* According to the evolutionary hypothesis as it is applied to the social sciences, the idea of a world ruler and a universal kingdom was the product of Isaiah's age. The contention of those holding this theory is that it was psychologically impossible for the Hebrews to entertain an idea of a universal kingdom prior to the rise of the mighty Assyrian empire. In reply to this position, it will be necessary only to call attention to the messianic predictions which we have already studied and which are embedded in the Torah of Moses. In his day there was no universal empire as in Isaiah's time; nevertheless he spoke by the Spirit of the universal reign of Messiah.

## II. THE RULER FROM BETHLEHEM

### A. *The Setting of the Prediction*

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, lived in the latter half of the eighth century before the common era. He was fully aware of the deplorable conditions which obtained among his countrymen. Especially sensitive was he in regard to the corruption among the leaders of the nation, both political and spiritual. By the Spirit of God he condemned the political heads in chapter 3:1-4 of his prophecy and the religious leaders in vss. 5-8. In vss. 9-12 he pronounced the judgment that would come upon the nation, especially Jerusalem, for their moral delinquencies and spiritual lapses. In contrast with the devastation which would come in the comparatively near future, the prophet foretold (4:1-8) the sublime glories of the distant future when Jerusalem should no longer be in a state of waste and ruin but under the blessing of God would be the metropolis of the earth. According to the prophecy, thither shall the nations yet go to appear before the God of Jacob who will teach them the law of the new order and the Word of the Lord. At that time He will be the righteous Ruler who will cause wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. Hence every man will dwell under his own vine and fig-tree. At that day the former dominion of the daughter of Zion, on a greater and more glorious scale, however, will be restored to her.

In 4:9,10 the prophet returns to a description of the impending calamity, the Babylonian siege and captivity, and compares it, as other prophets have done, (cf. Isa. 66:7-9) to the ordeal of childbirth. In the verses following he blends with this description the final siege and fall of Jerusalem when all nations shall be gathered against it to battle. Thus the account of both catastrophes imperceptibly blend. In vss. 12,13, the prophecy of the last calamity, Jerusalem and her environs are compared to a threshing-floor and the nations, to sheaves of grain which are to be threshed. In this case Judah, strengthened and protected by the omnipotence of the Almighty, is the ox doing the treading. In 5:1 the threshing-floor representation is dropped and Zion is addressed as the "daughter of troops" against whom the

nations have sent their armies. Before the deliverance is granted, the forces of the enemy will press her sorely and smite her judge upon the cheek.

The writer carries the story to a thrilling climax, the smiting of her judge; then he dramatically ceases the prediction. In an abrupt manner turning from Jerusalem he addresses the little town of Bethlehem from which the future ruler of the nation is to come forth. This dramatic action and address in the light of the context proves to be both a parable and a prophecy. When the nation is in dire need of deliverance from the titanic blows and terrific pressure of the enemy, it, in fulfillment of the prophetic action on this occasion, will turn for help to the Ruler who comes from little Bethlehem. At that time God will make the nation like the ox whose hoofs are of brass and whose horn is of iron. Then shall the sheaves, the nations, be threshed. The final victory will be won and Israel's dream of peace will be realized.

### B. *The Eternal Nature of this Ruler*

וְאַתָּה בֵּית-לְחֶם אֶפְרַתָּה צָעִיר לְהִיּוֹת בְּאַלְפֵי יְהוּדָה מִמֶּנּוּ לִי יֵצֵא לְהִיּוֹת מוֹשֵׁל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל  
וּמוֹצְאָתוֹ מִקֶּדֶם מִיָּמֵי עוֹלָם:

"But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

#### 1. MESSIAH THE SUBJECT OF THIS ORACLE

The first question to be settled in this investigation is: Who is the subject of this prediction? Some scholars have claimed that very anciently certain Jewish commentators referred it to Zerubbabel. But this interpretation has been called in question. Hence we pass by it without further comment.

Hengstenberg claims: "All the Jewish interpreters adhere to the Messianic interpretation, and in this they are headed by the Chaldee, who paraphrases the words **מִמֶּנּוּ לִי יֵצֵא** in this way: **מִמֶּנּוּ קִדְמִי יִפְקֵ מְשִׁיחָא** *i.e.*, From thee Messiah shall go out before me." I know of no scholars who doubt the messianic character

of this passage. Hence we shall accept without further consideration the prophecy as referring to Messiah.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE ORACLE

The prediction is put in the form of an address to Bethlehem from which insignificant village the ruler over Israel is to come forth. The correct understanding of this verse depends upon the answers given to the following questions: first, why is emphasis laid upon the unimportance and smallness of Bethlehem? second, what do the words **לִי יֵצֵא** *come-forth to me* signify? third, what is meant by **מוֹצְאָתָיו** *goings forth*? and fourth, what is the significance of **מִקְדָּם מִיָּמֵי עוֹלָם** *from of old, from everlasting*? To the investigation of these queries we will now turn.

### a. *Why is emphasis laid upon the insignificance of Bethlehem?*

Bethlehem was the city of David, a hamlet about six miles to the southeast of Jerusalem. From the standpoint of size and significance it was too small to be considered with the more important cities of Judah. Notwithstanding its unimportance, the prophet sees that out of it shall arise the one who is to be the ruler over Israel. According to the covenant which the Lord made with David (II Sam. 7, cf. II Samuel 23:1-7), the Messiah, the great Ruler of the future, was to come of his house. But since Jerusalem was the capital of the nation and since the Davidic kings had reigned in that city for approximately 350 years, the natural thought was that Messiah would be born in Jerusalem, at the proper time would mount the throne, and from there would extend his authority over the nations until He subjected the world to His control. On the contrary, this oracle foretells His coming forth out of Bethlehem, the ancestral home of David. The assumption underlying this prediction is that the reigning house will cease to function in Jerusalem but will continue its existence in Bethlehem and that the long-expected Ruler will emerge from the ancestral home town. This presupposition is based upon the definite prediction made to the corrupt officials concerning the judgment

that would fall upon Jerusalem on account of their wickedness: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest" (Mic. 3:12). This stroke of judgment was, comparatively speaking, in the immediate future and was fulfilled by the fall of Jerusalem in 606-585 before the common era. The verse following this warning, on the other hand, looks forward to the distant future—the time of "the birth-pains of the days of Messiah" at the conclusion of which Zion shall be glorified and the former dominion (on a sublimer scale) shall be restored to her. At that time the nation will be pure and free from all corruption, and the Lord God Himself will reign *personally* in the city.

"Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel, that abhor justice, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No evil shall come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all the peoples walk every one in the name of his god; and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.

In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem" (Micah 3:9-4:8).

Micah's testimony finds corroboration in the oracle delivered by his predecessor, the prophet Amos. In his prediction Amos (9:7-10) uses the names *Israel* and *Jacob* in referring to the whole nation of Israel which he declares God will sift among all peoples but will preserve the faithful. Finally, He will purge the nation of all sinners. When it has been thus purified the Lord will again raise up the house of David which has long been in a state of decay. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11).

From the considerations discussed above we learn that the prophets foresaw the time when the kings of Judah would cease to reign over the nation. In the imagery of Amos, we would say that the Davidic house would fall into decay and ruin. Though it would cease to function in its official capacity, it would not be blotted out but would continue in obscurity at the ancient ancestral home of its illustrious founder.

Micah's reference to Bethlehem's insignificance furnishes a suitable background for the prediction concerning Messiah. Men think in terms of comparisons; they appreciate values largely by comparison and contrast. Therefore with the background of Bethlehem's insignificance and from the ruins of the Davidic house, arises the sublime figure of Israel's future ruler. His greatness is shown by the marked contrast between His native environment and His sublime personality. Therefore the representation of His rising from the wrecked house of David in the obscure hamlet of Bethlehem is both a prophecy of His coming into the world and at the same time a parabolic presentation of His towering above the wreckage of centuries and of His mastery of the world situation.

b. *What do the words **לִי יֵצֵא**, come forth to me, signify?*

The expression **לִי יֵצֵא** here does not indicate descent, as it does in Genesis 17:6, for example, although some scholars have contended for such an interpretation. The context in Genesis demands this shade of meaning. On the contrary its significance here may be illustrated by Jeremiah 30:21: "and their ruler **מוֹשֵׁל** shall proceed from the midst of them." The parallel structure is conclusive on this point. The thought is that the ruler proceeds out of their midst in the sense of his being of the same nationality and stock. This idiom also occurs in Zechariah 10:4.

In speaking for God the prophet declares that this ruler shall come forth **לִי** *to me*. This statement probably is an echo of the Lord's language to Samuel (I Sam. 16:1): "I have provided me a king among his sons." His use of this phrase doubtless reflects the typical character of David's reign in foreshadowing that of Messiah. It also indicates that Messiah performs a special and vital part in the development of God's plan.

c. *What is meant by **מוֹצֵאתִי**, goings forth?*

The noun **מוֹצֵאתָה**, the feminine of **מוֹצֵא**, may, according to its context, denote "the place, the time, the mode, or the act of going forth." The first three meanings do not accord with the facts of this context, whereas the last one, which is fully attested by Hosea 6:3; I Kings 10:28; Ezekiel 12:4; and II Samuel 3:25, blends perfectly with the flow of thought. This context demands simply the plain meaning of the term, the act of going forth. Therefore I accept its primary and ordinary significance in this connection.

d. *What is the significance of **מִיָּמֵי עוֹלָם**?*

The expressions **עוֹלָם** and **קֶדֶם** are used to indicate ancient times, as may be seen in 7:14, 20 of this same book. Frequently they have this significance. Both terms occur in Isaiah 51:9 for the sake of emphasis. Again, we note the fact that



they appear together in Proverbs 8:22,23, a passage which undoubtedly refers to eternity before the creation. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, Before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning. Before the earth was **מִקְדָּם** indicating the eternity of God, occurs in Habakkuk 1:12. Moses (Ps. 90:2) affirmed the eternity of God, past and future, in the following words **וּמִעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל**. "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." A noted thinker declared, "man, who lives in time, and is bound to time in his mode of thought, can only picture eternity to himself as time without end." Since these expressions have the two distinct meanings, it becomes necessary to examine the context in a given case to determine their significance. What is the meaning in the passage under consideration?

Irrespective of the choice of definition in this oracle, the statement, "whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting," assumes the preëxistence of this ruler before his appearance in Bethlehem. The heathen doctrine of reincarnation finds no support in the utterances of Moses and the prophets. In fact, their teaching refutes such pagan ideas. Therefore, since this promised Ruler has made previous appearances (the context indicates that the coming here foretold is in the same category as the former ones—the ancient theophanies—without affirming the method of approach), since the prophet assumed on the part of his audience a knowledge of these historic facts, and since the only superhuman appearances in the Biblical record are those of the Angel of the Lord, who, as we saw in chapter two, is the Lord Himself, the only conclusion to be drawn from all the facts is that this oracle foretells the Lord's appearance upon this earth to rule Israel. **עוֹלָם** and **מִקְדָּם**, therefore, in this connection connote eternity. The facts of the context point to the one conclusion, namely, that this ruler is to be the Lord who makes His appearance upon earth at the obscure hamlet of Bethlehem. In striking contrast with the insignificance of His ancestral village is His own greatness.

### 3. THE CONCLUSION CONFIRMED

In the last section we saw that the prophecy foretold the appearance of God upon earth as Israel's Ruler, Messiah. This conclusion is confirmed by the following statement: "And he shall stand, and shall feed *his flock* in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God" (vs. 4). The king of Israel performing his regal functions is frequently spoken of as a shepherd (cf. II Sam. 5:2). The strength with which the Messiah executes His royal decrees is not simply divine authority similar to that with which earthly rulers are empowered, "but **גְּאוּרָה** *i.e.*, the exaltation or majesty of the name of Jehovah, the majesty in which Jehovah manifests His deity on earth."

This prediction is seen to be in perfect harmony with the former oracles which have already been studied. The one item which it adds to the information gleaned from the prophecies already examined is the place at which Messiah will make his advent into the world. Isaiah had already told of His virgin birth. It was left for Micah to name the place of this epochal event. The date of His birth was reserved for a later time, as we shall see in the fourth book of this series.

### III. MISCELLANEOUS MESSIANIC PREDICTIONS

In this chapter I have discussed the two principal messianic predictions coming from the period under review—the Book of Immanuel (Isa. 7-12), and the oracle concerning the Ruler from Bethlehem (Mic. 3-5). In these prophecies Messiah stands before us in His glorious divinity and His perfect humanity. There is little left to add to the portrait which the inspired artists have painted for us. The reader, however, will welcome a few finishing touches from the brushes of other divinely chosen men of God. On account of the limited space a brief discussion of each passage to be reviewed must suffice.

## A. Messianic Psalms

### 1. PSALM TWO

In Psalm two occurs a definite prediction of political and religious conditions which have developed only in our day and time—widespread atheism and international political relations. According to verse two there will be held an international, atheistic, religio-political convention which will meet for the express purpose of suppressing the religion of the one true God, who revealed Himself to Moses as יהוה *the Lord*, and of His Messiah. (For the implications of this verse, see *Messiah: His First Coming Scheduled* which is the fourth book of this series.) In this great future convention a motion will be put before the house and passed to outlaw allegiance to God and His Messiah (vs. 3). According to vss. 4-6, God will, notwithstanding the action of this conference, set His King upon the holy mountain of Zion. The Messiah is God's King, as we have often seen during this discussion, against whom this atheistic conference takes action but whom God installs as King of the world. The entire historical background and the drift of this passage demand the identification of the Messiah as the King who is to be installed as the world Ruler.

In vss. 7-9 the psalmist impersonates the Messiah. In his dramatization he represents the Messiah as quoting a promise made to Him by the Almighty:

"I will tell of the decree:  
The Lord said unto me, Thou art my son;  
This day have I begotten thee.  
Ask of me, and I will give *thee* the nations for thine inheritance,  
And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.  
Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;  
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

In this passage God addresses Messiah thus: בְּנִי אֲתָה "thou art my son" and upon that basis states that the nations of the earth are to be His inheritance. As God's Son He is the natural heir to His father's estate, the world and its kingdoms. Since there can be only one who can inherit a given possession, Messiah evidently is the Son of God in a unique sense. The faithful people of God are in an

accommodated sense often called children or sons of God but never in the sense of this passage.

From the last section of the psalm it is evident that the Son is put on an equality with God in the appeals for the rulers to serve the Lord and to kiss the Son. The latter exhortation, being addressed to heathen kings and rulers, is expressed in terms readily understandable by them. (Compare Hosea's statement: "Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves" 13:2.) The expression, "kiss the son," has by some been rendered "do homage in purity." This translation has been made possible only by wrenching it from its context and by forcing upon it an unnatural meaning. In the beginning of the poem the prediction is made concerning the shocking action that this international convention of atheists will take against both God and His Messiah, who is, according to the psalm, God's Son. In the concluding exhortation the inspired writer pleads with these foolish kings and rulers not to take the contemplated action but rather to serve God with reverence and to worship His Son. The development of the prophecy identifies the Lord and His Messiah, mentioned in the beginning of the poem, with God and His Son, spoken of in the latter part. Therefore the Messiah is in a special sense the Son of God. This conclusion is confirmed by the precious promise in the last line, "Blessed are all they that take refuge in Him." The antecedent of *him* is *Son* in the first line of the verse. A curse is pronounced by Jeremiah upon all who put their trust in man; but a blessing is here offered to all who trust in this man. Hence the Son, who is a man, is more than a man; He is the God-man, the Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world.

## 2. PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

By inspiration of the Divine Spirit David was given a glimpse into the future and saw one whom he addressed as Lord. In most of his psalms David blended the accounts of his own personal experiences with those of the Messiah whom he typified. In Psalm 110, however, he clearly distinguished between the Great Messiah and himself.

Speaking dramatically, one would say that, when the curtain rises in this poem, the scene is laid in Jerusalem. Messiah is seen in the midst of enemies who are bitterly opposed to Him. The Lord in glory speaks to Him, inviting Him to leave Zion with its opposition, to ascend to His right hand, and to take His seat there until His enemies are put under His feet. When they are thus conquered, Messiah will return and be welcomed by the Hebrew race. Then He will exert His great power and rule over the nations.

The one point bearing on our question is that which concerns the nature of King Messiah. The Bible is an oriental book in which the customs and ideals of the ancient East are reflected. In David's day a king invited only a person of equal rank to take a seat at his right hand. The language of the prediction in the light of this ancient custom constitutes an affirmation to the effect that the Lord God Almighty recognizes Messiah as His equal. This fact shows that David recognized the divine nature of King Messiah. (For a full discussion of Psalm 110 see the third book in this series.)

### B. Predictions in Isaiah

#### 1. THE BRANCH OF THE LORD

**בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה צֶמַח יְהוָה לְצַבִּי וְלְכְבוֹד וּפְרִי הָאָרֶץ לְגֵאוֹן וְלִתְפָאֳרַת לְפִלִּיטַת יִשְׂרָאֵל:**

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel" (Isa. 4:2). The germinal thought from which this and the other "branch" passages are developed is II Samuel 23:5 **כִּי־לֹא יִצְמִיחַ** "Although he maketh it not to grow." As was noted in the discussion of David's swan song it is fashioned after the model of Balaam's predictions, especially the last one (Num. 24:15f). Our study of those passages revealed the fact that the subject of discussion was the Ruler who comes out of Jacob and from the house of David. Isaiah's use of the noun shows clearly that it is but the development of the embryonic idea expressed in the verb **צֶמַח** used by David. Balaam's original oracle foretold the coming of the star out of

Jacob, this king of kings, in the remote future. The Davidic passage reiterates this thought but expresses it under the figure of a sprouting seed or plant. Hence, in order to indicate the fact that the rise of this king was in the distant future, he declared that the Lord was not then causing this plant to shoot forth. In vision, however, he did see Him come forth, for he said that all of his salvation and delight were in this coming one.

In the light of David's statement it is evident that Isaiah's oracle is an expansion of the former's utterance concerning the coming of this righteous world Ruler. Therefore Isaiah's prediction is a Hebrew parallelism. A recognition of this fact gives us the proper clue to the correct interpretation. The phrase, **צֶמַח יְהוָה** *the Branch of the Lord*, therefore, refers to the divine nature of this coming ruler, whereas the parallel expression **פְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ** *fruit of the land* calls attention to His human nature. The prediction, therefore, foretells the time when the remnant of Israel which survives the purging judgments given in chapter two shall unanimously and enthusiastically accept its divine-human Ruler, Messiah.

## 2. THE LORD—ISRAEL'S JUDGE, LAWGIVER AND KING

מֶלֶךְ בְּיָפִיּוֹ תִחְזֶינָה עֵינֶיךָ תִרְאִינָה אֶרֶץ מְרֻחָקִים ..... כִּי אִם־שָׁם אֲדִיר יְהוָה לָנוּ  
מְקוֹם־נְהַרִים יְאֲרִים רַחְבֵי יָדַיִם בְּל־תֵּלֶךְ בּוֹ אֲנִי־שֵׁיט וְצִי אֲדִיר לֹא יַעֲבֹרְנוּ: כִּי יְהוָה  
שֹׁפֵטֵנוּ יְהוָה מִחֻקֵּנוּ יְהוָה מִלְּפָנָיו הוּא יוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold a land that reacheth afar . . . But there the Lord will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For יהוה is our judge יהוה lawgiver, יהוה is our king; he will save us" (Isa. 33:17,21,22).

In vss.1-16 of this chapter the prophet describes the time of Jacob's trouble (cf. Jer. 30:7). The first verse quoted above is a prediction concerning the appearance of Zion's King in her midst. Special attention is called to the fact that he shall be in his beauty. At that time the land will not be in its present condition but shall undergo changes, for "they shall behold a land that reacheth afar."

According to vs. 20 Jerusalem at that time will be a quiet habitation. The reason assigned is that the Lord Himself will be there. He it is who will be the judge, the lawgiver, and the king. The fact that this prediction was made when the Shekinah of Glory was still resting over the mercy-seat in the temple shows that this oracle foretells God's coming and dwelling in Jerusalem in a new way. The facts of the context indicate a personal residence. Hence we naturally interpret the prophecy as a definite forecast of the visible presence of God in Israel as her judge, lawgiver, and king.

### 3. ISRAEL'S SHEPHERD KING

עַל הַר גְּבוּהָ עֲלִי-לָךְ מִבְּשָׂרָת צִיּוֹן הָרִימִי בַפֶּתַח קוֹלְךָ מִבְּשָׂרָת יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִימִי אֶל-תִּירְאֵי  
 אֲמַרִי לְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה הִגֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: הִגֵּה אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה בְּחֹזֶק יְבוּא וּזְרָעוֹ מִשְׁלָה לּוֹ הִגֵּה  
 שְׂכָרוֹ אֲתוֹ וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ לְפָנָיו: כְּרַעַה עֲדָרוֹ יִרְעֶה בְּזָרְעוֹ יִקְבֹץ טְלָאִים וּבְחִיקוֹ יִשָּׂא עֲלוֹת  
 יִנְהַל:

"O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! Behold, the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young" (Isa. 40:9-11).

The significance of this quotation can be understood only by noting the development of the thought beginning with vs.1 of this chapter. In the first two verses the prophet looks forward to the time when Israel's warfare will be nearing accomplishment. He sees certain ones who have a message of comfort for the people. Hence he urges them to give consolation to the nation. Then he sees a herald arise who announces the appearance of the glory of God upon earth which will be seen by all nations at the same time. In the next paragraph (vss. 6-8) the prophet turns his gaze toward a discouraged messenger to whom the call has come to preach to Israel and who replies, in substance, that there is no need since man is like the withering grass and the fading flowers. The divine answer is for him to give forth his message because the Word of God abides forever. In the following

paragraph (vss. 9-11) Isaiah urges the herald who has good news for Zion to deliver it with strength and power. Then will be no time for uttering a message with indefiniteness and in a half-hearted manner.

The substance of the oracle that is to bring comfort and good cheer to suffering Israel is contained in the verses at the beginning of this section. "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." Since God at the time of this oracle was dwelling in the midst of Israel in the form of the Shekinah, it is evident that the prediction speaks of the coming of God to Israel in a new way—His coming personally as a mighty warrior to take vengeance upon the nation's enemies and to reward his faithful servants. At that time He will shepherd the chosen people.

This God whose coming the heralds are to announce to Zion is He who by his great wisdom and mighty power created the heavens and the earth and who can and will deal with the nations the enemies of Israel, as easily as one can remove the small dust from the balances (vss. 12-17). He is the one who sits above the circle of the earth (vs. 22) and in whose sight the nations are as grasshoppers. Therefore no one can fashion an image to represent Him. The coming of this mighty God to Jerusalem is the message of comfort that the heralds are urged to speak to the chosen people. It is He who stops all wars (Ps. 46:8-11) and restores the nation to its native land and to fellowship with God.

### *C. The Prediction of Zephaniah*

הַסִּיר יְהוָה מִשְׁפָּטָיִךְ פְּנֵה אִיבֶיךָ מִלְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל | יְהוָה בְּקִרְבְּךָ לֹא־תִירָאֵי רַע עוֹד: בַּיּוֹם  
 הַהוּא יֵאמַר לִירוּשָׁלַם אֶל־תִּירָאֵי צִיּוֹן אֶל־יִרְפוּ יְדֵיךָ: יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּקִרְבְּךָ גְבוּר  
 יוֹשִׁיעַ יִשְׂיֵשׁ עָלֶיךָ בְּשִׁמְחָה יַחְרִישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ יְגִיל עָלֶיךָ בְּרִנָּה:

"The Lord hath taken away they judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God is in the midst



of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:15-17).

When one follows the rule of taking every word at its primary, ordinary, literal meaning if the context permits, he has no difficulty in understanding the message of these verses. Since there is nothing in the connection to indicate a figurative or symbolic interpretation, I shall follow this safe rule and understand that this passage foretells the coming of God to dwell personally in Jerusalem. When He comes in fulfillment of this prediction Israel's sorrows will be turned into gladness. In order that the reader may see the force of the oracle in these verses, I will quote the passage in full.

"Therefore wait ye for me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nation, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be put to shame for all thy dongs, wherein thou has transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy proudly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of thee; to whom the burden upon her was a reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict thee; and I will save that which is lame, and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame hath been in all the earth. At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord" (Zeph. 3:8-20).

## *D. Predictions of Jeremiah*

### 1. JERUSALEM THE THRONE OF GOD

**בַּעַת הַהִיא יִקְרְאוּ לִירוּשָׁלַם כְּסֵא יְהוָה וְנִקְווּ אֵלֶיהָ כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם לְשֵׁם יְהוָה לִירוּשָׁלַם  
וְלֹא-יֵלְכוּ עוֹד אַחֲרֵי שְׂרָרוֹת לְבָב הָרָע:**

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:17).

In the 14th verse of this passage the Lord extends an invitation to backsliding Israel to return; in the next verse He promises to give her true shepherds who will feed her with knowledge; and in the following statement He informs the remnant that, when it returns and He fulfills the promises, the ark of the covenant shall never again be mentioned. The reason for its passing out of existence and of its being no longer remembered is that Jerusalem will become the throne of the Lord. The expression, "name of the Lord," according to the familiar idiom occurring frequently, is used personally to indicate the visible presence of the Lord in Jerusalem. The Holy City will be the center of world-interest. The peoples of earth will flow there continually to appear before the Lord, and to be taught of Him personally.

### 2. THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID

**הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נֹאמַר יְהוָה וְהָקַמְתִּי לְדָוִד צֶמַח צְדִיק וּמִלֶּךְ מֶלֶךְ וְהִשְׁפִּיל וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט  
וַיְצַדֵּק בְּאֶרֶץ: בְּיָמָיו תִּוָּשַׁע יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכֹּן לְבֵטַח וְזֶה-שְּׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָאוּ יְהוָה  
צְדִקְנוּ:**

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 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 Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. 23:5,6).

The future Ruler of Israel and Judah, according to this prediction, is called "a righteous Branch" of the house of David. He is to mount the throne and reign in

righteousness and justice. The secret of His just and impartial reign is that He is "the Lord our righteousness." Against this position it is sometimes urged that Jerusalem is to be called by the same name (Jer. 33:16). Therefore, since the inhabitants of the city will be men in the flesh, the name, "the Lord our righteousness," when applied to the coming ruler, does not indicate that He is divine. This argument has a semblance of plausibility, when the context is ignored. On the other hand, when one observes the rule of taking each word at its ordinary, literal meaning if possible, the truth immediately becomes apparent. In the preceding verse the promise concerning this righteous ruler is a repetition of the verses under consideration. It is impossible for one to reign in the absolute sense of the term unless He is what His name indicates, namely, the Lord in human form. That He will come and assume human form and reign over Israel has been abundantly proved from the predictions already studied. Hence in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we are forced to accept the ordinary meaning when the name is applied to the Messiah of Israel.

But why will the city be called by the name of its Ruler? For the same reason the capital of the United States of America was given its present name—in honor of its first president. Jerusalem at that time shall be given the name of the great King who shall reign there in person. Therefore the objection loses its force.

### 3. ISRAEL'S PRIEST KING

וְהָיָה אֲדִירוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ וּמִשְׁלוֹ מִקְרָבוֹ יֵצֵא וְהִקְרַבְתִּיּוּ וְנִגַּשׁ אֵלַי כִּי מִי הוּא יָזֶה עָרַב אֶת־לְבוֹ  
לְגִשַׁת אֵלַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

"And their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is he that hath had boldness to approach unto me? saith the Lord" (Jer. 30:21).

This passage states that Israel's future ruler is to be of themselves yet He will do what no mortal has ever done—draw near unto God. If He were simply a man, He could not come into God's presence. After saying that this one will approach Him,

God adds, by way of emphasis, "who hath had boldness (surety of his heart) to approach unto me? saith the Lord." No man in his present sinful condition can approach God. But this one will approach Him. Therefore He is more than a man—He is the God-man.

This passage reiterates the promise found in Psalm 110, namely, that Messiah shall be both a King and a Priest. According to this forecast, He will not be a priest after the order of Aaron but after the order of Melchizedek. Hence Jeremiah's statement is an echo of David's in Psalm 110.

In this chapter I have examined the principal messianic predictions of the period under review that relate to the nature and person of Messiah. We have seen that the prophets of this noonday period of messianic splendor did not change the general features of the messianic portrait which they inherited from the preceding centuries but simply brought out the features in a clearer and bolder manner. Our knowledge concerning Him may be summed up as follows: He is to be born of a virgin in the city of Bethlehem. He will mount the throne of David and be recognized as the "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace." He will be a King-priest after the order of Melchizedek. Jerusalem will be called the throne of God, because He is God who sits there and reigns over the nations. When He mounts the throne, He lifts the curse and restores the primitive order. Glorious will be His reign.

## CHAPTER SIX

## THE EVENING GLOW OF MESSIANIC GLORY

The messianic portrait was completed by the prophets of the great Assyrian and pre-exilic periods. The messengers of the restoration era added little to it. They simply held up for our gaze the picture which had already been painted, adding, however, a stroke here and there. Hence in this chapter it will be necessary only to demonstrate this one point. With the passing of Malachi the prophetic voice ceased.

While the beautiful lights and shadows of the evening glow of predictive prophecy fall upon the sublime portrait of King Messiah, we take our stand before His majestic presence and, being overcome with holy emotions, kneel before Him and pay divine reverence and homage. Likewise all nations will in the kingdom age make pilgrimages to Jerusalem and worship this great King. Let us now view this priceless portrait.

## I. PREDICTIONS OF ZECHARIAH

כי כה אמר יהוה צבאות אחר כבוד שלחני אל־הגוים השללים אתכם כי הנגע בכם נגע בקבת עינו: כי הנני מניף את־ידי עליהם והיו שלל לעבדיהם וידעתם פי־יהוה צבאות שלחני: רני ושמחי בת־ציון כי הנני־בא וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכָךְ גַּאֲמִי־יְהוָה: וְנָלוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכָךְ וַיְדַעַת פִּי־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ: וְנָחַל יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוּדָה חֶלְקוֹ עַל אֲדָמַת הַקֶּדֶשׁ וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם.

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts: After glory hath he sent me unto the nations which plundered you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them; and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that

the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (Zech. 2:8-12).

In the second year of Darius Hystaspes, Zechariah with his older contemporary, Haggai, stimulated the discouraged people, who had returned from Babylon, to resume work on the temple. Upon their arrival the exiles had begun the rebuilding of the temple but had been hindered by their enemies. Fired by the enthusiasm of these servants of God, the restored community began anew the neglected work. The visions and the discourses of Zechariah especially stimulated the nation to complete the building of the temple in four years.

#### *A. Zion's Glorious Future*

In the prediction quoted above we have one of the most glorious and comprehensive oracles concerning Messiah's reign found in the Tenach. It will be necessary in this connection to notice only the salient points of the prediction.

#### 1. THE LORD **יְהוָה** REIGNS IN ZION

In verse eight of the quotation the Lord of hosts declares: "After glory hath he sent me unto the nations which plundered you." This statement does not tell who does the sending. It only informs us that the Lord of hosts is commissioned by another to go to the nations persecuting the Jews. Who has the authority to send the Lord of hosts **יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת**? To whom will He, the Lord of creation, submit and become a servant? Certainly not to a man. Neither can one think that any angel has the authority to dispatch the Lord of hosts on an errand. The desired information is found in the last clause of verse nine: "and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me." It is to be remembered that this statement is found in the oracle introduced by the usual formula, "For thus saith the Lord of hosts." In view of this fact, it is evident that the Lord of hosts is the one sending the Lord of hosts. How can the Lord send the Lord? The answer to this most important question is to be found in an understanding of the doctrine concerning the plurality of personalities

who subsist in the one Divine Being. In the first book of this series we saw that Moses gave Israel the solemn exhortation **שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד** "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our Gods is the Lord a Unity." This passage, as we have already seen, is intelligible only in the light of other messages found both in the Torah and the Prophets concerning the triune nature of the God of Israel.

In vs. 10 the prophet quotes the Lord of hosts as saying to Zion: "for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee"; and in vs. 11 again, "and I will dwell in the midst of thee (Zion), and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee."

When we allow these divinely inspired statements to give their messages without addition or subtraction, it is evident that the prophet foretold the time when one of the divine personalities will, in compliance with the wish of the others, come and dwell in Zion as her King and Redeemer.

## 2. THE LORD VINDICATES AND DISPLAYS THE GLORY OF THE DIVINE BEING

The statement, "After glory **אַחַר כְּבוֹד** hath he sent me," has been the occasion of much controversy. The developing thought of the oracle leads one to conclude that this expression refers to the vindication and the display of God's glory; first, by executing wrath upon His and Israel's enemies; and, secondly, by exhibiting His grace in delivering the nation from its sorrows and by restoring it to fellowship with Himself. On this verse I wish to quote the explanations given by two profound Hebrew scholars.

The passage "means to *vindicate and to display* the glory of God, first in the Judgments which He is to inflict on the nations who have oppressed Israel, and then in the exhibition of His grace in the deliverance and salvation of His own people, and also in the blessing which is to come to the Gentile nations after Israel is restored, and Mount Zion becomes not only the seat of Messiah's governmental rule over the nations, but the center of the true worship of God on earth" (David Baron). After mentioning several difficulties concerning the passage, Keil and Delitzsch in their commentary on Zechanah give us the following illuminating explanation: "All these difficulties vanish if the Lord's words commence with **אַחַר כְּבוֹד** (after glory), in which case **שְׁלַחְנִי**

(He hath sent me) may be very simply explained from the fact that the address is introduced, not in a direct form but indirectly: the Lord says, He has sent me after glory. The sender is the Lord, and the person sent is not the prophet, but the angel of the Lord. **אַחַר כְּבוֹד**: behind glory, after glory; not however after the glory of success' (Hitzig, Ewald, etc.), still less 'with a glorious commission,' but to get glory upon the heathen through the judgment by which their power is broken, and the heathen world is made to serve the people of God."

### 3. HE CONQUERS THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL

He who blesses Israel shall be blessed and he who curses her shall be cursed. No weapon fashioned against the Jew shall prosper for, declared the Lord to Israel, "he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Hence when the Lord of hosts comes he will shake his hand over those who plundered Israel and will make them the servants of the delivered nation. Therefore, according to this prediction, those nations that are animated by anti-Semitism will be punished and will become servants to Israel when she accepts her Lord and deliverer.

### 4. JUDAH AND JERUSALEM BECOME THE LORD'S INHERITANCE

The prediction concludes with the promise that the Lord will accept Judah and Jerusalem as His inheritance in the holy land. This oracle simply means that the Jewish nation will at that time sustain a special relation to God. The same thought, only in the reverse order, was made by the Lord to Abraham in the following statement: "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1).

In this prophecy Zechariah simply stated the facts that have already been given. From a study of the passage it is evident that the Lord of hosts is sent to Zion by the Lord of hosts. Hence the One who is sent is equal to Him who does the sending. When He comes He will restore Israel to her proper relation both to her God and to the nations. At that time she shall be the head of the nations instead of the tail (Deut. 28:13), as at the present day.

#### *B. Zion's Shepherd Rejected*

"So I fed the flock of slaughter, verily the poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. And I cut off the three shepherds in one month; for my soul was weary of them, and their soul also loathed me. Then



said I, I will not feed you: that which dieth, let it die; and that which is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let them that are left eat every one the flesh of another. And I took my staff Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. And it was broken in that day; and thus the poor of the flock that gave heed unto me knew that it was the word of the Lord. And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my hire thirty *pieces* of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them unto the potter, in the house of the Lord. Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel" (Zech. 11:7-14).

In the verses preceding this quotation (4-6) the prophet informs us that he received a commission to feed the flock of slaughter whose possessors slay them and whose shepherds have no pity upon the defenseless sheep. In the light of the context and the historical situation as it later developed, one may be certain that the possessors referred to were the Romans and that the shepherds were the spiritual and political leaders of Israel who, caring little for the welfare of the nation, were seeking their own interests.

In obedience to his commission the prophet enacted the role of a shepherd. Unlike Isaiah in his impersonation (Isa. 48:1-16), which is graphically presented in the present tense in order to show beforehand the nation's indifferent attitude toward Messiah, Zechariah first went to the temple and in the presence of the officials dramatically played the part of Israel's true shepherd, whose coming the earlier prophets had foretold.

Ezekiel delivered a scathing message from the Lord against the hireling shepherds of the nation, who fail to perform their duty toward their flock (34:1-10). The context indicates that the flock is the house of Israel and that the leaders are the shepherds. Since in his day they had utterly failed to minister to the needs of the flock, the Lord foretold that the time would come when He Himself would appear in person and become *the* shepherd of Israel. "For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I myself, even I, **הַנְּנִי־אֲנִי** will search for my sheep, and will seek them out! As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that

are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day" (Ezek. 34:11,12). The psalmist previously had foreseen the Lord's coming as the shepherd of His flock and prayed: **רְעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהֶאֱזִינָה נֹהֵג כְּצֹאֵן יוֹסֵף** "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that sittest *above* the cherubim shine forth" (Ps. 80:1). The leaders of Israel in the days of Zechariah doubtless were well-acquainted with these promises. Also the Jewish apocalyptic writings from the earliest period of this type of literature reflect this hope.

When he finished the impersonation, Zechariah related, for our learning, what he had said and done and how the officials of the nation had reacted to his message. His words and actions show unmistakably that he was playing the role of the Lord when He appears in His glory as King Messiah. This fact is evident from the following quotations which foretell deeds that God only can perform: first, "I cut off the three shepherds in one month; for my soul was weary of them, and their soul also loathed me"; secondly, "And I took my staff Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples"; and thirdly, "And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prized at by them." No human being ever did perform the action foretold in the first quotation; no person could possibly make a covenant with all nations in the sense of this second statement. The third passage in the light of the preceding verse shows that the sentiment of the authorities toward the prophet was not simply their personal dislike for him but rather their indifferent, stoical attitude toward the future Messiah whom he was impersonating.

The revelation in vss. 4-14 was made progressively during the action. At first the prophet was simply told to feed the flock of slaughter. In compliance with the divine instructions he procured two staves (possibly the shepherd's staff and crook). Having done so, he appeared before the temple authorities as shepherd of God's flock, which they were supposed to feed. This action immediately aroused their jealousy and indignation. The poor of the flock, that is, those of the common

people present, being familiar with the former predictions, instantly recognized the dramatic and prophetic character of the action and message. Having completed his impersonation, Zechariah turned to the temple officials, saying, "If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear." Being insulted by his boldness, and understanding that the dramatized oracle was a condemnation of themselves, these leaders displayed their indignation by weighing for him thirty pieces of silver, the price of a gored slave (Ex. 21:32). In the excitement of their rage they flung this insult at Him whom the prophet was impersonating, the Lord Himself. This fact is beyond dispute. Had the authorities not understood that the prophet was impersonating Messiah, they never would have weighed the thirty pieces of silver for him. He could not demand any money from them for delivering his message. Their actions show that they took the message to heart and were indignant concerning the matter. Hence the facts establish the thesis that the authorities understood the symbolic, prophetic, and messianic import of his action. This position is confirmed by the revelation which the Lord made to the prophet after they gave him the price of a slave: "And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prized at by them." Thus the Lord said that the officials valued Him at the thirty pieces of silver which they weighed to the prophet.

Will the leaders of Israel actually reject King Messiah and treat Him with such contempt as is indicated in this oracle? Is such a situation conceivable? In reply I wish to state again that the interpretation given above is the plain teaching of this prediction. All of the prophecies which have related to things in the past have been literally fulfilled—to the very letter. This fact should lead us to the conclusion that this prediction likewise was to be fulfilled with the same exactness. We may not see how thinking men can reject the divine-human Messiah as here foretold, but, when we realize that the will, the affections, and the personal interests frequently warp the judgment, close the eyes to evidence, and lead even good men to do irrational and inconceivable deeds, we may not be surprised at the content of this prediction. Since the prophet impersonated Messiah, on this occasion, it is certain

that the leaders of Israel, in fulfillment of this oracle upon His appearance in their midst, reject Him and treat Him with the same contempt as is indicated in the prediction.

*C. The Lord's Fellow עַמִּיתִי Smitten*

קָרַב עוֹרֵי עַל-רַעִי וְעַל-גֹּבֵר עַמִּיתִי גְאֹם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הֲדָ אֶת-הָרֶעֱהָ  
וְתַפּוּצִינָה הַצֹּאֵן וְהַשְׁבַּתִּי יָדַי עַל-הַצְעָרִים

"Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones" (Zech 13:7)

1. SUMMONS TO THE SWORD

In a graphic manner the prophet foretold the death of Messiah in the form of a command to the sword. Foreseeing that the civil powers would execute Him, Zechariah, like other prophets, expressed his prediction in a unique manner in order to grip the reader's attention. For instance, the psalmist put his oracle concerning the vain ragings of the nations (Ps. 2:1) in the form of a question. He knew why they would tumultuously assemble (see marginal reading A.R.V.) against God and His Messiah but put his prediction in the form of rhetorical questions for the sake of emphasis. Another example of this method of gaining attention is found in Isaiah 6:10. Here the prophet is commanded to make the hearts of Israel fat and their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes, lest the people might see the truth and turn. The exhortation to deliver the message of God is expressed in terms of the results of the preaching when it is not received into good and honest hearts. Many examples of this gripping method of expression could be adduced but these will suffice.

## 2. THE LORD'S SHEPHERD

Isaiah looking into the future exhorted the heralds of good news to tell Zion and the cities of Judah that their God would come to them. According to this forecast, when He comes He will not only recompense punishment to His enemies but will play the role of a shepherd to His downtrodden people, Israel. Ezekiel sounded the same note. Having foretold in 34:11 that the Lord in person would become the Shepherd of Israel, he declared in vss. 23, 24 that the Lord would set up one shepherd over His flock. "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken it." All of the facts presented in the passage must be allowed their full weight. In the first quoted verse the Lord foretells the time when He will assume the form of man and become the shepherd of Israel. In the second the Lord God is speaking of the Lord who becomes the personal shepherd of the flock. These facts are easily understood in the light of the triune nature of the Eternal God as we have already learned in the first book of this series. This teaching evidently was well-known to Zechariah.

We have seen in the discussion of chapter 11 that Zechariah impersonated Messiah when he comes to feed the flock of slaughter. The leaders of Israel reject him, considering him no more than a gored slave. The passage now under consideration presupposes the information given in this former message. Hence the only additional information to be given pertains to the carrying out of the decision of rejecting Him. This dramatic apostrophe calling upon the sword to execute this divine-human Shepherd is a realistic method of foretelling that the civil powers would perform this most heinous of all crimes.

## 3. THE HUMAN NATURE OF MESSIAH

The Lord in calling upon the sword to execute His Shepherd speaks of Him as **אִישׁ** *a man*. We have already seen in previous discussions that the Messiah, who is

the Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, is to be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; 9:6) and to sustain a unique relation to the nation. These and many other predictions found in Tenach show that though Messiah is a man, the seed of David, He is also God.

His human nature is presupposed in the prediction found in chapter 14 of this book. In the day of the Lord when all nations will gather against Jerusalem and the city will be destroyed, "then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives" (Zech. 14:3,4).

#### 4. THE DIVINE NATURE OF MESSIAH

Though this Shepherd of the Lord is a man **גִּבּוֹר** He is at the same time **עֲמִיתִי** the Lord's *fellow*, His equal. On this point I will quote from my book, *The Eternal God Revealing Himself to Suffering Israel and to Lost Humanity*.

"He is **עֲמִיתִי** 'my fellow', says God. This latter word occurs ten times in the Hebrew Scriptures—in this passage and nine times in the book of Leviticus. In the nine occurrences in Leviticus it is used as a synonym for **אָח** 'brother' which refers either to a blood relative or to one who is living nearest to another. Since a man's brother is of the same nature and essence as himself, the man whom God thus speaks of as **עֲמִיתִי** 'my fellow' is of the same divine nature and essence as God Himself. That this interpretation is correct is seen from the fact that Jewish commentators have also attached the same significance to it."

The testimony of Zechariah concerning the Messiah is in perfect harmony with that of all the prophets, namely, that He is both divine and human.

#### II. PREDICTION OF MALACHI

**הִנְנִי שֵׁלַח מַלְאָכִי וּפְנֵה-דֶרֶךְ לְפָנָי וּפְתַחֵם בָּבוֹא אֶל-הַיְכָלֹ הָאֵדוֹן | אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם מְבַקְשִׁים  
וּמִלְאָךְ הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם תִּפְצְצִים הִנֵּה-בָא אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת**

"Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mat. 3:1).

The passage given above is the only definite prediction of Messiah's coming found in the last prophetic message. We shall see in the third book of this series that there are two comings of the one Messiah: first, to suffer; second, to purge the nation of all sin and to reign in glory. A casual perusal of this passage shows that Malachi is speaking of the time when Messiah comes in His glory to purge the nation and to restore it to fellowship with God.

The oracle begins with a prediction that the Lord will send a messenger before His face to prepare His way. Isaiah had already spoken of this event (40:3-5). From the last two verses of Malachi we learn that this messenger is Elijah the prophet. The purpose of his coming is to restore the family relation. This latter prediction presupposes the destruction of the home and natural ties. The family life must be restored or it will be necessary for the Lord to smite the earth with a curse. But in order to avoid this calamity, the Lord will send Elijah the prophet.

When the way has thus been prepared for His coming, the Lord, who speaks of Himself as the Angel of the Covenant, will suddenly come to His temple. This passage presupposes the reconstruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. When He appears in fulfillment of this oracle, He will purge the nation of all sin.

In this investigation we have learned that the one who is called מְלָאֲכֵי יְהוָה *the angel of the Lord* is the Lord Himself and that in ancient times He appeared to His servants for the purpose of making a revelation which met the existing situations. These occasional visits demonstrated the possibility of His making a more prolonged stay if the welfare of His people and His eternal plans demand it. Likewise we have seen from the rapid survey of the most important messianic predictions that the future King of Israel is none other than this Angel of the Lord, the Lord Himself, who enters the world by virgin birth. Hence Isaiah foretold the birth of this divine-human Hero and Saviour.

In the third book of this series we shall see the redemptive career of Messiah as outlined by the prophets of Israel; in the fourth, the political conditions that obtain at His first coming and the exact time of this appearance; and in the fifth, the historic fulfillment of this hope that has always sustained Israel.

In conclusion, may I suggest, by way of anticipating the message of the fifth volume, that this ancient hope of Messiah's appearance has been fulfilled in the historic birth and life of Jesus the Hebrew Messiah? The infallible records of His life are contained in the volume which is commonly known as *The New Testament*. May I again suggest, dear truth-seeker, that you procure a copy of this Book after having studied carefully the contents of the present volume; that you ask the Eternal God to enable you to see His truth; and that He will give you moral courage to take your stand upon it regardless of consequences?

According to Isaiah's prediction Messiah is to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. 49:6). By faith one accepts Him, for it is written, "but the righteous shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4). The one who accepts Him may take his stand upon the promise, "Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*; because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). In times of danger he need not fear, for "he that believeth shall not be in haste" (Isa. 28:16).

Now may the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bless and guide each of us into a clearer understanding of His Word and into a fuller enjoyment of fellowship with Himself is the writer's prayer.