

the Israelitish nation respecting a future condition of exaltation lies in the idealism of the Old Testament religion itself. That is, to paraphrase his explanation, by divine revelation, there were planted in the minds of the people of Israel certain ideas, so lofty, so rich and so deep, that in the existing religious condition they could never see their perfect realization. With the development of their religious life and knowledge, these ideas gradually disclosed their remarkable depth and fulness. For this reason, the people were necessarily led to look to the future for their fulfilment. Three of these ideas demand particular attention, namely, the idea of the Covenant, the idea of the Kingdom, and the idea of the Theocracy. The nature of each of these ideas may be indicated by a single paragraph.

The idea of a divine covenant with man was contemporaneous with the Old Testament religion. After the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, the history of the call of Abraham resulted in the gradual separation of that nation from the other nations of antiquity. From the covenant of promise, made to Abraham by Jehovah, Messianic hope would naturally spring by contemplating its peculiar terms. The promise, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and will make thy name great," must have inspired expectancy in the hearts of Abraham's descendants in reference to the future glories of the Hebrew race. Prophecy, in the strictest sense of the term, is thought by some to have arisen from the covenant relation supposed to exist between Jehovah and his ancient people. Believing in a divine purpose concerning Israel, which is one of the fundamental ideas of the Old Testament, this ancient promise formed the starting-point, so to speak, of Messianic prophecy.

The idea of a divine kingdom on earth was implied in the idea running through the Old Testament that Jehovah was the sovereign ruler of his covenant people. Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, he is constantly described as both a righteous Deity and a righteous king. As the king of Israel, he was also in a special sense the judge of Israel, and was supposed to exercise judicial functions in harmony with his attribute of divine righteousness. In all his judgments with mankind, the