

What sublime faith is this! How far it soars above all small ritualism and narrow patriotism!

As a matter of fact the northern kingdom was lost, and it was left to the small community in Judæa to keep alive the sacred tradition and preserve in its purer form the worship of Yahweh. Even in those days spiritual problems could not really be settled by brute force. The internal factions within the kingdom of Israel, partly political, partly religious, weakened the government and prepared the way for the external foe. After the conquest of the kingdom and the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., many of the inhabitants were taken away and other settlers brought in to take their place; thus there was produced a mixed race and a mongrel religion (2 K. 17/6, 24-41). Elijah, but more probably Jehu, might delight in this grim business of slaughtering priests of Baal, but not thus does religion gain its real victories. The "ten tribes" were "lost" in the sense that those of them who were taken away had not sufficient individuality and strength of character to retain their separateness. Those that remained in Palestine did maintain an inferior type of Hebrew religion, but the efforts to reunite the two branches after the Exile failed, and the Samaritan religion continued its own stunted, barren existence (Jn. 4/9, 22).

It is not our task to attempt a detailed analysis of the books, to investigate the nature of prophecy and prediction, or to give a systematic account of the theology of the prophets; but at this point a brief statement must be made for the purpose of bringing out the connexion of their work with the next phase of the movement. It cannot be proved, with any approach to certainty, that any of these four men had a definite "eschatology" or a clearly-defined programme of the destiny of the nation after the approaching judgment. Passages found in these books regarding a personal Messiah probably belong to a later date. According to the view we have formed of these documents, Amos and Micah did not speculate as to the future course of history. Hosea, with his principle of a bond of love between Yahweh and His people, no doubt cherished the hope of repentance and return. Isaiah approaches