

the title as a divinely chosen and a divinely consecrated individual. From that time onward, the idea of royalty became associated with the word.

It should be pointed out in this connection, that at first, and for a long time, the original word in Hebrew, like the corresponding word in Greek, was used exclusively as an appellation, not as a proper name. With the exception of Daniel ix. 25, 26, where it is disputed whether the term should be translated as a name or as a title, the word is never employed in the Hebrew Scriptures in any other than a titular sense. It never had that special sense which people are accustomed to associate with it, when they speak of *the Messiah* or *the Christ*, until after the canon of the Old Testament was closed. As Prof. W. Robertson Smith says, "*The Messiah* (with the article and no other word in apposition) is not an Old Testament phrase at all, and the word Messiah, or 'anointed one,' in the connection 'Jehovah's anointed one,' is no theological term, but an ordinary title of the human king whom Jehovah has set over Israel."* So long as the Hebrew kingdom lasted every rightly constituted king was called "Jehovah's anointed;" and, as Prof. Smith continues, "it was only after the Jews lost their independence that the future restoration could be spoken of in contrast to the present as the days of the Messiah."

Although, from the time of Saul, the term Messiah generally had a royal application, the notion of the person to whom it was applied, or of whom it was conceived, appears in different forms and under different representations. Without stopping to discuss these representations, it is sufficient for the present purpose to observe that the idea commonly attached to the Messiah by the Hebrew prophets, as well as by the Jews themselves, was that of an expected ruler or of a coming king. It is manifest from various trustworthy sources that the main idea which occupied the Jewish imagination, both before and at the birth of Jesus Christ, was that of one who should rule over the people of Israel and bring to them prosperity and peace. For many ages this had been the burden of the Israelitish nation's hope.

* "The Prophets of Israel," p. 302.