

From the foregoing considerations, one may say that the Messianic prophecy originated, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, from the germinal ideas connected with the Covenant, the Kingdom, and the Theocracy. The first idea inspired a lofty hope; the second idea suggested a universal kingdom; the third idea foreshadowed a glorious "Prince of Peace." Among all the germs of Messianic prophecy found in Old Testament institutions, the most important, in Riehm's opinion, is that which involves the idea of the Theocracy or the theocratic kingdom. From this idea, Messianic prophecy in the narrower sense of the term arose. In this restricted sense, it must not be forgotten, the term is used in this investigation.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

Every divine idea, whether in matter or in mind, has its process of development. It may be checked or hindered in its progress for a time, but it never quite becomes extinct. Sooner or later it is destined to be developed. Hence an inherent idea in human nature; such as the idea of prosperity or improvement (a fundamental idea of Messianic prophecy), will naturally and constantly unfold, by a gradual expanding process, from one degree of energy and efficiency to another, until it reaches its complete development.

Progress is a universal law of God. It operates as well in Scripture as in nature. For this reason, the divine mind has been disclosed to the human mind not by a mighty revelation given once for all, but by a progressive series of revelations given gradually from age to age. By this statement it is not intended to imply that God withheld from one age what he gave to another age, but that he gave as full a knowledge of himself and of his truth to each, and every age as was consistent with the divine method of revelation.

It is sometimes said that God adapted his revelation to each different age. It would be more correct to say that each different age adapted its conception of truth to its particular need. God did not teach one standard of morality to one generation, and another standard to another generation. There always was but one standard of morality in the mind of God; but each