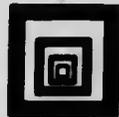


**CIHM  
Microfiche  
Series  
(Monographs)**

**ICMH  
Collection de  
microfiches  
(monographies)**



**Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques**

**© 1994**

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured covers/  
Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged/  
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated/  
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing/  
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps/  
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/  
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations/  
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material/  
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/  
Le reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/  
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

- Coloured pages/  
Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged/  
Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated/  
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/  
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached/  
Pages détachées
- Showthrough/  
Transparence
- Quality of print varies/  
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Continuous pagination/  
Pagination continue
- Includes index(es)/  
Comprend un (des) index

Title on header taken from:  
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

- Title page of issue/  
Page de titre de la livraison
- Caption of issue/  
Titre de départ de la livraison
- Masthead/  
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

- Additional comments:  
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

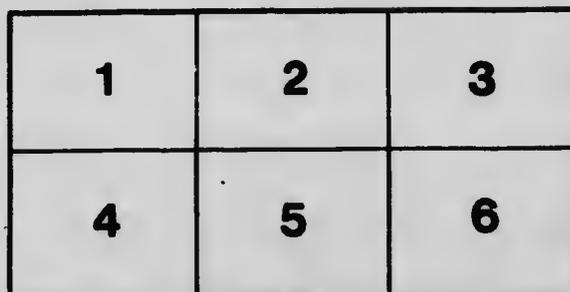
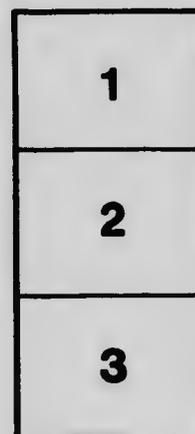
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol  $\rightarrow$  (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol  $\nabla$  (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole  $\rightarrow$  signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole  $\nabla$  signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



1.45

1.50

1.56

1.63

1.71

1.80

1.88

1.96

2.04

2.12

2.20

2.29

2.38

2.47

2.56

2.65

2.74

2.83

2.92

3.01

3.10

3.19

3.28

3.37

2.8

3.2

3.6

4.0

2.5

2.2

2.0

1.8



**APPLIED IMAGE Inc**

1853 East Main Street  
Rochester, New York 14609 USA  
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone  
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

*N. D. Patterson.*

---

---

# The Religion of Israel

By the REV. W. G. JORDAN

---

---

Car.  
H.  
J.

## THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL

BY THE REV. W. G. JORDAN

*Preliminary Statement.*—The aim of this article is to give in mere outline the history of Hebrew religion as a living movement, which reveals to us one of the great threads of the Divine purpose, and prepares the way for the Christian faith. The books and subjects mentioned will be dealt with in the commentaries and other discussions; hence the main object of this sketch will be to give, as far as the writer is able, a connected view of the whole development. The problem is historical in its character. Our concern is with the life of a particular nation, and with the action of its leaders at a given period of the world's history, and not with abstract theological theories as conceived by the scholasticism of later ages. At the basis of our discussion there is a definite view of Israelite history and of the literature which tells the story of that life, and gives a record of the various stages of thought. This view is both critical and conservative; it has been built up by generations of loving toil, given to the study of the documents; it seeks to preserve all the real history contained in the sacred books, and to interpret sympathetically all the noble struggles and lofty aspirations that these record. The present aim is not directly *apologetic*: the facts, so far as we can recover them, must be allowed to speak for themselves. But the writer may express his opinion that the true apologetic of the OT is the frank recognition of an actual development, a God-guided organic movement, a revelation shining more and more unto the perfect day. It is not necessary for a Christian teacher to disclaim "mere naturalism," whatever that may mean. The word "development" in this connexion suggests to us a movement which is not fully explained by the genius of a particular people or their surroundings, by the work of any one teacher or generation of leaders, the final explanation lies in the purpose of the living God, who uses all these persons and circumstances as His instruments. Such development, being a matter of real life, is exceedingly complex; its roots

are in the distant past, its ramifications run in all directions; there are side currents as well as the main stream; higher and lower movements live side by side; early types of thought reappear at later stages; alongside of the higher attainments of inspired thought there are survivals of primitive conceptions. We cannot hope—in fact, we do not desire—to reduce the rich complexity of life to an abstract simplicity.

“Periods,” then, are artificial and not real divisions, adopted for convenience in handling the subject. Some historical events, as the Coming into Palestine or the Exile, some stages in the religion, as the rise of the higher forms of preaching or the Deuteronomic Reform, may make a deep impression, but the thread of history is never absolutely broken; the current of life may seem to move more slowly at one time than another, but it never comes to a full stop. In Syria and Palestine to-day beliefs and customs may still be found similar to those of the pre-Mosaic times, while the OT message, in its manifold forms, has made for itself a place in the highest life of the world. Similarly, such labels as nomadic religion, agricultural religion, pre-prophetic religion, prophetism, legalism, need to be watched lest they become hard and mechanical. They remind us that the spirit of religion, the spirit that responds to God’s call and expresses man’s hunger and aspiration, is influenced in its *outward forms* by changing circumstances, economic conditions, intellectual culture, but they must not be too sharply separated, or treated as final explanations of the great reality. In the most primitive observances there were glimmerings of great truths expressed in symbolic forms by men of prophetic vision, and in the days of hardest legalism there was much personal piety and tender devotion.

*The Historical Setting.*—The Hebrew tribes came into Palestine in the thirteenth century B.C. The first period of two or three centuries, as reflected in the earliest parts of Jg., is one of restless struggle, partly of conquest and partly of assimilation. The foundation of the kingdom under David and Solomon is of great historical and religious importance. The disruption, some seventy years later, shows its lack of

political strength and religious stability. The destruction of the Northern Kingdom, in 722 B.C., turns the main current of political and religious history into the Davidic kingdom of Judah. The Assyrians had now begun to play an important part in the life of the Hebrews, and from that time onward this remarkable race has been in contact with the great powers of the world. The Exile in Babylon at the beginning of the sixth century destroyed, for the time being, the political existence of the nation and prepared the way for the birth of the Jewish Church. After the Exile, under the Persian control, the small community was left free to devote its energies to religious and ecclesiastical questions. The Greek period, after Alexander's victory, brings with it dangers to the political and religious life of Judaism. When these reach their height, in the fanatical persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Maccabean revolt shows that the old warlike spirit is not dead, and that the religion through centuries of strife has attained an independent and vigorous character. Out of external conflict and internal division there arose the religious and political parties as we find them in NT times.

Each of these periods had produced its memorials or left its deposits, which have to some extent been preserved in the varied literature that we call the OT, and these are our chief sources for the study of Hebrew religion. In early songs and stories, in short, simple codes of laws, this life and religion finds its first expression. Then come early attempts at regular national chronicles. The first written sermons show that there is real literary culture, if of a simple kind. Later the laws are set in a more elaborate codification, and history is written from a definite religious point of view. Finally the whole is placed in the framework of the world's history, and a sacred book comes into existence which has nourished simple piety and produced hard dogma of religion and science. In other articles the political history will be treated at length and "the Bible as literature" discussed; here it is sufficient to say that no real history of the religion could be written until literary criticism had solved many problems, showing, *e.g.*, that the Pentateuch consists of documents that can now be related to widely sepa-

rated periods of the nation's life, and that the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah represent many stages of ethical prophecy and apocalyptic thought. Our discussion must relate itself to this history and rest upon this basis of modern critical scholarship.

Early Hebrew Religion.—According to the view now dominant, as to the age of the documents, we have no contemporary narratives from the earliest time; but while even fragments of our sources may reach back beyond 1000 B.C., there is no doubt primitive material that has been modified and very early beliefs and usages which have left traces in the later laws and literature. We see now quite clearly that there is no such thing as reaching back, either by history or speculation, to the beginning of the world. The Hebrews are comparatively a modern people; behind their history is that of ancient Arabia, Egypt, and Babylonia, and farther back is the dim pre-historic period. The Hebrews belong to the Semitic family. It is not probable that Egypt exerted any direct or powerful influence on their religion. Their early affinities are closer to the Arab tribes, and Babylonian influence affected them at various stages through the relation of those great Oriental empires to Palestine. Many religious beliefs and customs found among the members of the Semitic group are common to other races. The investigation of that subject belongs to the sphere of comparative religion. Of "a primitive monotheism." here or elsewhere, there can be no proof. Monotheism in any real sense is the result of a long, painful struggle; it has come to the world through what has been aptly called "the Divine discipline of Israel." In this respect both Christianity and Mohammedanism are dependent on the OT. To us with our conception of one God, who rules the whole world through the working of laws and the action of forces whose qualities and effects have been studied and catalogued by long centuries of toil, it requires a strong effort of imagination, assisted by the observation of many facts, to recreate the ancient view with its appropriate atmosphere. Then religion pervaded the whole of life; *supernatural* beings were everywhere, if we may use such a phrase of a time when no clear line was drawn be-

between the natural and the supernatural. Gods that were real became symbols to a later time, and statements that to us are mere flashes of picturesque poetry referred originally to actual manifestations of divinities in definite time and place. In the early narratives the Hebrews have preserved the good tradition that their forefathers were nomads, and that at each place of temporary settlement they found or set up an altar to their God (Gen. 12/8, 13/18, 28/19, 33/20). The altar was set up where the presence of the Divinity had been revealed in some enlightening vision or gift of help (Ex. 20/24, 1 S. 7/12). There was a freedom and simplicity in this early stage which is prophetic of the fuller freedom of a more highly developed religion. The altar might be a rude natural stone, and the priest might be the head of the family or clan, officiating according to traditional usage, but not hampered by an elaborate ritualistic etiquette. Religion was the basis of family and clan life. The festivals were the times of natural gladness, the wedding, the weaning, the welcome of a visitor; the fasts were hours of sorrow that came to all, when pain or death broke in upon the common routine. The man was the head of the family, the owner of wives, children, and slaves; but even then religion had, no doubt, a binding and softening influence. We need not regard the Semites of 3000 years ago as "savages," because their views of God and the world differed so widely from the "scientific" conceptions of our own time. They had great fundamental ideas which we must retain in a higher form. Religion was everywhere; the family grew out of it, society was based upon it. Duties to ancestors, to the living tribes, and to posterity were recognized as the commands of the God, the essence of religion. The unity of life and the all-pervading presence of religion were in a sense realized, but only within a restricted sphere. The God might be limited to a particular clan or a special place. The passage from one tribe or one territory to another might involve a change of allegiance and ritual (1 S. 26/19). The polytheistic background of the ancient world must be borne clearly in mind if we are to understand primitive religion. For example, the original meaning of such conceptions as

“clean” and “unclean” only thus becomes intelligible. These words point to something religious and ritualistic, not sanitary. The “clean” or “unclean” thing may have a contagious influence and lead in many cases to isolation, and so there is something *analogous* to modern medical ideas. Ablutions may lead to cleanness in our sense, but that is incidental, the real root idea is that what belongs to the sphere of another god is “unclean.” The dead body at one time belonged to a different divinity, and to touch it made a man unclean in relation to his own God (Num. 5/2). The divisions of life, the tribe, the trade, the caste, the custom were all based upon and hedged about by religious rites. In much of this routine national narrowness, social pride, mechanical, magical religion were present. The same thing persists to-day, often in less lovely forms. There is a certain poetry and beauty in the primitive recognition of gods in the storm, in trees, and in living fountains. That some great boulder could be the home of a god, and that the anointing oil could be an acceptable gift to the Divinity may, at first sight, seem strange; but God must be recognized as in some place and places before men can be led to the faith that He is one and His life is manifested everywhere. To the simple travellers the oasis in a desert might well be a garden of God, and the great rock might become a symbol and name of the Highest, but first He must be believed to be really—*i.e.* locally—there. So in many places gods or spirits were found, but their relation to each other was vague and indistinct. Consequently the life and worship that results, while possessing a certain amount of order, must also be complicated and confused; for things that had their origin in chance and caprice grew into customs, customs crossed each other and became hard. While everything was in some sense alive, special events and startling appearances had even more a Divine character. Thus the facts of life receive a religious interpretation, but there is little orderly reason, because when once the presence of a god is recognized, that is regarded as a sufficient explanation. His action may be what we call “arbitrary,” but, of course, a god cannot be expected to conform to a standard of reason and right to which the noblest worship-

pers have not yet attained. This makes it natural that fear should play a large part in religion, that gifts should be made and sacrifices offered to propitiate the god who was angry, or to provide against an uncertain but possible outbreak of his anger. In later times, when a nobler religious life began to permeate these things, men discovered a just and noble cause for such anger (2 S. 21). With regard to the minor deities or subordinate spirits charms might be used, or amulets worn, or various means that we now call "superstitious" employed to avert misfortune or to bring "good luck." When one remembers the abundant testimony to this early "spiritualism" from other Semitic sources, we wonder that the OT deals so little directly with it; but the literature is the result of selection, and there are abundant evidences in narratives, allusions, and prohibitions. The prophetic movement grew up over against this varied background of "natural" religion.

It is not likely that genuine totemism existed among the Hebrews of historic times or their immediate ancestors; all we can admit is that certain tribal names and some of the food *taboos* may ultimately be traced to reminiscences of such primitive religion. Late superstitions may still retain in their monogrel worships remnants of rites belonging to remote times (Ezek. 8/9).

With regard to ancestor worship the case seems to be stronger. The family and the tribe were in ancient times rooted in religious beliefs and observances. In such nations as China, remarkable during a great part of their existence for intense conservatism, we see the influence of homage paid to the past in this form. In tribal forms of life among the early Semites it seems to have played a great part. The Hebrews were delivered from abject slavery to the past by their changing circumstances, their internal and external struggles, their independence of spirit, and above all the influence of prophetic men; but there are things in their life and literature which suggest that this form of religion exercised a real influence. The intense desire for offspring and the strong effort to perpetuate the family name probably mean more than the natural instinct of procreation; they have behind them powerful tradi-

tions and a high religious sanction (Gen. 38/24). The "ghost" of Samuel is referred to as *Elohim* (god). The sacrificial clan feast (1 S. 20/29) and the mourning customs are interpreted by many in the same direction. Ceremonies connected with such things linger on when their origin has been wholly or partly forgotten; but the legislators and the preachers of a purer faith, in their jealousy for the supremacy of Yahweh, felt a repugnance to customs that belonged to a sphere which in their day had become "heathenish" and "superstitious." With them it was not a mere matter of "archæology" (Kautzsch, HDB) but of actual religious life.

Circumcision is a rite with a long history. In later times it was performed when the male child, at the end of the first week of its life, was dedicated to the God of Israel, and it became a distinctive mark of Judaism; but it was a primitive rite among many nations, and not a discovery of Abraham or Moses or a monopoly of the Israelites. The various traditions in the OT as to its origin and intention represent different points of view (Gen. 17 \*; Ex. 4/26; Jos. 5/3 \*). This mutilation, in the early days, was no doubt a rite of initiation into full membership in the tribe, when the young man was considered qualified to assume the duties of husband and soldier. The strange story in Ex. 4 may be meant to explain the transfer to childhood of an act of blood-dedication which left on the person a permanent tribal mark. The original form of the passover sacrifice, before it became associated with the feast of unleavened bread and received an historical interpretation, no doubt goes back to the nomadic days. We cannot, in a brief review, attempt to trace all these details or to discuss controverted points (see article, "The Religious Institutions of Israel") but we need to bear in mind all the time that we are dealing with the complicated story of human life, and not with an abstract theology. The Mosaic period is not a blank space upon which a new revelation is written in a mechanical fashion; the Israelites do not come into an empty land free from history and destitute of customs. The new must relate itself to the old in the way of conflict or absorption. Different types of thought and different modes of wor-

ship meet and mingle, but the faith in Yahweh shows its originality and strength by its power to live and conquer. For example, suppose we ask the question, "Was human sacrifice ever a part of Hebrew religion?" The answer will depend upon our point of view. It certainly does not belong to the religion of Yahweh, and never receives the sanction of any prophet. Hebrew religion first modified and then banished this ancient widespread and barbarous custom. But we know from clear statements that child-sacrifice was practised down to a late time by superstitious or despairing Israelites (Jer. 7/31). Such polemics against this custom as we find in the beautiful story or noble sermon show that it had a real hold on the minds of many people (Gen. 22, Mi. 6/1-8). The case of Jephthah's daughter shows the possibility of such a sacrifice among early Israelites from a quite honourable motive; the vow is to Yahweh, and He chooses the sacrifice. But two things must be borne in mind, viz. the probability that such occurrences were much less frequent among the ancestors of the Hebrews, who led a stern, simple life, than among the Canaanites, and that such desperate religious remedies are apt to be used in times of great confusion and distress. Alongside of the highest prophetic teaching these tragic relapses may take place. Further, in the thought of that time, when all public activity was completely controlled by religious motives, people saw "sacrifice" where we do not see it. The destruction of Achan and his family (Jos. 7), Agag hewed in pieces by Samuel "before Yahweh" (1 S. 15/32), and the impaling of the seven sons of Saul "before Yahweh" (2 S. 21/9), may all be classed as judicial procedure, exercised according to the tribal ideas of that time, but to the ancients there is in them a sacrificial and propitiatory element. Ideas attached to lower gods and demons were transferred to Yahweh, and then the thoughts concerning His being and character received a fuller purification and enlargement. The higher stage does not completely displace the lower; but there is an increase in the complexity and richness of life all round, with brilliant lights and deep, dark shades. The same remarks may be made and the same principles applied to the question of "idol" or "image worship." It took

many centuries of struggle before a man of the highest intelligence could boldly declare that "an idol is nothing in the world" (1 Cor. 8/4), and even then such a man stood far above the popular view, and even he did not profess to dismiss in an easy fashion "the powers of darkness" (Eph. 6/12). Images were in use in the early days, when men did not distinguish as we do between symbol and reality (Gen. 31/35, 25/4, 1 S. 19/26). The image or sacred thing had something of Divine power or magic in it. Natural objects might be so regarded, and manufactured articles in a later period. Against the latter a religious conservatism might protest, as in this region there is a peculiar sensitiveness towards novelties and luxuries. The prohibition of "graven images" may not at first have included all symbols or objects of worship. The true religion does not come at first as an abstract creed, but works as a living principle from within, which only gradually discloses its full meaning and rejects that which is out of harmony with its essential nature.

*The Mosaic Period.*—With the modern view as to the date and composite character of the Pentateuch, we can no longer regard Abraham as the actual founder of Hebrew religion, though, as we have suggested, beliefs and customs of pre-historic times persisted, among the people, down to a late date. The narratives now grouped round the name of Moses belong to different periods and represent varied points of view. But the great body of OT scholars believe that the real history of the nation and its religion begins with the work of this great leader, who united several tribes and led them to the East Jordan region. If he was not the author of a complicated literature and elaborate legislation, he no doubt, according to the usage of those days, united in himself some of the simpler functions of priest and prophet as well as those of military ruler and guide. If we are prepared to treat the present tradition and the present text with any respect, this at least we must accept. It does not follow that he was conversant with Egyptian speculations and the complete development of Babylonian civic law. The earliest code that we can trace (Ex.

34/17ff.) is brief, simple, mainly ritualistic, and already shows the influence of agricultural life. What, then, can we regard as the Mosaic contribution? It is not possible in this sketch to enter into elaborate discussions as to the origin and meaning of the sacred name "Yahweh." In the OT there are different views as to the time when this name and the worship connected with it entered into the life of Israel and of the world (Gen. 4/26, Ex. 3/15, 6/3). The Scripture etymologies also, while revealing the thought of the day in which they arose, cannot be regarded as scientific or ultimate. The exact origin and original meaning of such words (*e.g.* the English "God") are lost in the obscurity of the remote past. Neither can we face the question of the relations of the early Hebrews to the Kenites, and their mutual influence in the region of politics and religion. Such relationship no doubt exerted an influence not only during the sojourn at the sanctuary at Kadesh, but also at a later time (Ex. 18; Jg. 1/16. 4/11, 17-22, 1 Ch. 2/55). Moses had gathered a number of tribes together, and was preparing them to press into the West Jordan region to find a permanent home. They had their separate family affiliations and their different clan customs. But success in their present undertaking demanded a large measure of unity and co-operation, and this could be created only by a powerful religious impulse. This impulse was given by belief in Yahweh as the God common to all the tribes, and faith in the power of His name as redeemer and leader. In God's good providence Moses was the man chosen as the instrument to kindle this faith and to give the highest expression that it could receive at that time. For, while we can now talk freely about *eternal* principles and the "timelessness" of Scripture, we cannot study the origin and growth of a great religion without seeing that every great truth has had to come in lowly, concrete form, limited and conditioned by the circumstances of a particular time and place. This, then, is the birth-hour of the Hebrew nation and religion, an event of immense importance for the religious life of the world. Though the idea of "a covenant" between Yahweh and Israel had been expanded and presented from different points of view by later prophetic and

literary activity, it is no doubt here in a simple form and has a real *ethical* character. Yahweh had chosen His people, and would give them support against their foes and provide a home for them. Here, though the situation is a narrow national one, it is at a higher plane than any mere "nature" worship or absolutely local deity. The God who goes forth to war with and for His people, whose presence is manifested in the storm or in great volcanic shocks, is a mighty God who is likely to be a conqueror in many senses. All the battles of Israel were fought in the spirit of a high religious faith, and even in early times it was felt that defeat might be due not to the weakness of their God, but to failure on the part of His servants to keep His laws. True, these laws might be regarded as largely a matter of ritual, for, as we shall see, the contribution of the great prophets did add something in this respect; but the idea of God is beginning to act as a bond of union between tribes that are similar and yet different, and is beginning to show a freedom of movement and capability of progress that has the promise of great things, however dimly apprehended at the time. Thus, though we are compelled to view him through the varied traditions that have gathered round his name in the course of several centuries, we may still regard Moses as, in a real sense, a man of prophetic spirit, the founder of the Hebrew faith. That his work was real, as far as it went, is proved by the fact that the religion was not completely destroyed by the fierce, chaotic struggles which followed immediately on the entrance into Palestine. In many cases conquerors have been absorbed by the peoples of the land they have entered. In this case the same effect followed to some extent, but the original religious impulse was never completely lost, and it gave to its possessors the power to absorb necessary elements of faith without losing their distinctive character. From Moses down to Philo men boldly claimed the best in this world as belonging to "Yahweh," and so as the property of His people. The Christian religion has, with more catholicity, inherited the same spirit, claiming that all things are to be brought into submission to Christ. In other countries the territory of the god increased with the growth of the city;

but here we are compelled to find something more real—a spiritual life, and not a mechanical matter of mere political accretion. While admitting the baffling nature of all origins, we believe that a new chapter in the history of religion begins here; that, though Moses was not a literary man or a systematic theologian, he had a real message from the eternal God, whose highest messenger always appears in the lowly form of a servant. Men rightly looked back to this as a great hour (Hos. 11/1). Prophets and priests idealized it, each from their own standpoint; and the belief that this was an hour of new revelation was never lost. Of course it was germinal; it would have been just as difficult for any human observer of that time to tell exactly what would come out of it, as it is for us now to disentangle its exact feature out of a mass of varied and in some respects contradictory material. A struggling mass of human beings, feeling that the great blessing they needed from their God was their daily bread and a place to live in peace—this was the unpromising material out of which sprang the greatest religious movement that this world has known. But in it, with its simple elemental facts and its complexity of motives, may be found a symbol and suggestion of many similar movements, when men have been thrown back upon the abiding mercy and supreme power of God.

*The Period of Struggle and Settlement.*—The picture given in the original parts of Jg. is what we might expect under the circumstances. Tradition rightly represents that time as one of confusion, struggle, assimilation. No real political unity had been attained. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jg. 21/25). The material has been set in a later form and interpreted by a simple formal religious philosophy, but the primitive records tell of only partial conquest, involving perpetual conflict. It is easy to see what kind of theology and religious ceremonies were likely to grow in such a time and place. There is little of purity or exclusiveness either in race or religion. The Song of Deborah shows that only part of the tribes gather for the great effort. In this noble battle-song

there is no "theology," and its praise of Jael is revolting to our moral sense. But it is still clear that, in so far as there is unity and strength to fight for *national* existence, it is inspired by the common faith of Yahweh. Samson marries outside his clan; the sons of Benjamin take wives by capture; Jephthah, the son of a strange woman, sacrifices his daughter; Gideon takes the spoils of war to make an image; Micah's mother uses the restored silver to make an image "unto Yahweh"; and the children of Dan think it a fine thing to steal the religious apparatus that other people have got carefully together (Jg. 18/17). This is not very edifying reading, either from the Jewish or the Christian point of view, but it is full of interest as a picture of life, political and religious, in those rude days. The noble effort of the great founder seems to have failed; it looks as if nothing great or permanent can come out of this disorder, this apparently disconnected and aimless struggle. But it is the turmoil of a new life, and not the convulsive struggles that betoken the last agony. Much in the previous civilization might be decadent, sensual; religious indulgence had weakened the life of the country, and its cities had no real bond of unity; but here were members of a new and virile race, fresh from the open country, their faces set towards the future, their faith alive in a real God, who showed His goings forth in the mightiest movements of nature and in the battles of their daily life. So even here there was a real movement towards a unity higher than that of the mere family or clan. From these stories we learn that religious ceremonies were connected with all the chief facts of life. The father of the family or head of the clan might officiate as the representative of the community, but there were also professional priests, men attached to a family or local sanctuary or wandering tribe. Men offered sacrifices and consulted the oracle on behalf of their patrons. But the elaborate system and finely regulated spiritual hierarchy of later times had not come into existence, though the ideas that it represented were in some cases struggling for expression. The prophet and the priest were not as clearly separated as in later days. Samuel acts in both capacities. One general difference there was, namely,

that the priest was more likely to inherit his office and to be fastened to a particular place. The priesthood of a particular sanctuary might remain in the possession of one family or clan. This made the priests the custodians and guardians of a special tradition and ritual, varying in different localities, but with many features common.

There were also "seers," "wise men," and "prophets" of various types at this stage. Their functions were not clearly defined; by their superior insight, ability, and acknowledged relation to God, they were able to render service to their fellow-men. The structure of society was simple, and the various professional services were not elaborately organized, but the needs of men were similar in all times. Religious guidance, social help, the pursuit of justice, and the interpretation of uncommon facts of life—these made room for real spiritual insight or for showy charlatanism or petty quackery, as in our day. But the prophets that we are most concerned with now are the bands of patriotic enthusiasts who arose in times of excitement or danger, and in a real if in a rude way kept alive the fiery energy of Yahweh religion. Some among their compatriots might regard them as "mad," and look with cooler criticism upon their wild performances, but generally abnormal sensational outbursts were attributed to "the spirit of Yahweh" (2 K. 9/11). Saul was caught in the contagion of this frenzied worship, to the surprise of those who knew him (1 S. 10/11). These bands stood for loyalty to Yahweh and opposition to Philistine oppression, and no doubt played a real part in the struggles which prepared the way for the kingdom. Here, at any rate, was the belief that God could use men as His instruments, sending His Spirit to trouble or to give them courage and strength. The same motive and the same power moved "the heroes" who fought against the surrounding peoples when they sought to divide and oppress the Israelites. The strong indignation and furious resentment which prompted men to determined resistance and fierce vengeance were regarded as the result of the oncoming of Yahweh's Spirit (Jg. 13/25, 14/6, 15/14, 1 S. 11/6). Saul, who did real work in the effort towards national unity, was a capable man, a true

Saul  
patriot; he sends round the "fiery cross" in the hour of need, he falls in with the effort to check sorcery and witchcraft, and yet in his moments of weakness he is troubled with "an evil spirit," which produces jealousy and melancholy, and in the crisis, before his final defeat, he has recourse to "a witch," who professes to raise the dead (1 S. 28).

Another element that has to be reckoned with is the conservatism or puritanism of those who looked back upon the ideal of the desert life as simpler and more religious. The culture of the vine and the use of its products appeared to them as disloyalty to Yahweh. These people were no doubt lacking in flexibility and progressiveness, but the real reason of their protest was religious—their objection to religious rites connected with the new culture, and the fact that much sensuality was associated with the Baal-worship of the land. A great movement is the resultant of many forces, and the protest against effeminate luxury and unbridled indulgence was not without its representatives in the earlier days.

The one thought that was about to be worked out clearly was that the Israelites were Yahweh's people, and their worship was due to Him alone as their benefactor in times of peace and their protector in days of war. The gods of other peoples might have their own place and territory (Jg. 11/24). There was as yet no world outlook or dream of missionary effort. A fugitive or stranger who came within the borders of Israel must, of course, join himself to some clan and place himself under the protection of Israel's God.

*The Work of David.*—The work that Saul had undertaken received a certain completion under his successor, David. Though the united kingdom lasted only some seventy years, his work was of permanent importance. He was a loyal worshipper and servant of Yahweh, with clear knowledge of the situation. He made Jerusalem the political and religious centre for the whole kingdom, and it has occupied a central position in the world's history or in the regard of mankind ever since. We cannot think of him as a theologian or hymn-writer; he was a soldier and statesman. A great

part of his life was spent in wandering or in war, and when he came to the possession of large power he had many troubles with his family and the rough soldiers upon whom he had been compelled to depend. We have a suggestive and reliable, if not a perfect or systematic, picture of his life and times. For him Yahweh was a great God, the supreme God of Israel, though His actual rule is limited to Israel's territory (1 S. 26/19). The striking story of 2 S. 21 shows that he, and the Church of his time, still stood on the old tribal level (cf. Dt. 24/16, Jer. 31/30, Ezek. 18/20). What a great step from this to the advanced theology of Ps. 139, attributed by later scribes to this great king! However, the union of the tribes and the choice of an important capital city was an event of religious importance for the life of Israel and the world. The local sanctuaries still had their place, and religious officials of various kinds were scattered throughout the land. But the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem and the desire for a permanent dwelling-place of Yahweh marked an advance.

At the king's court soldiers, councillors, priests, and prophets were assembled, and a new and more important centre of life was thus formed. The king was a man of his time, in many ways rough, impulsive, self-willed; but he leaves upon us the impression of rare strength, power of leadership, a certain frankness of nature, and magnanimity of spirit. He receives counsel from 'a wise woman,' accepts meekly the stern rebuke of Nathan, and seeks to restrain the fierce men of blood whom he has had to use as his instruments. Judged by the standards of his own time he is a true and noble embodiment of Israel's religion. He is loyal to Yahweh, and is not content with a mere formal worship. He comes into the main current of this great religious movement; he would give due honour to the God of his fathers, from whom his kingship came; and he prepared the way for "the city of God," of whose full glory and influence he never dreamed. Before there could be a national religion, in the full sense, the nation must be created; then, when the national religion came, it must take time to realize its true nature before the conscious-

ness could arise that here was something of more than national significance. This was, in the meantime, merely a new fixed point in the midst of a political life that was still restless and unstable. One needs to remember the difference between the small communities in Palestine and the large empires of Assyria or Babylonia. In great regions covered by one complex civil and military organization officialism reigned supreme; there were millions of human beings that were severely drilled to take their part as units in an immense machine. This made possible the network of canals, the great cities and lofty towers, magnificent products of human skill, that were a cause of astonishment and religious reflection to simpler peoples (Gen. 11/1-9). On the other hand, the tribes had not been subject to any such "steam-roller process" as tended to crush individuality and destroy local peculiarities. They were a "stiff-necked people" (Dt. 9/13). That appropriate phrase, spoken in blame, suggests to us something that is not altogether evil. Their great religious contribution to the world could never have come from a soft, pliable people, easily influenced and easily losing impressions. The separateness of family and clan, which lent itself to the easy formation of "faction," had its advantages from the point of view of religious progress. We see now, more clearly than ever, that it was not a smooth, easy movement; there was fighting at every point, against external foes and internal division. No new stage was gained without a fierce contest, and when a great truth was conquered it was fixed in forms that would easily die. Thus we can understand the reaction against the united kingdom which led to the disruption immediately after the death of Solomon. Religion, politics, and what we now call "economic" causes all played a part. There was an objection to rapid centralization, forced labour, and heavy taxes for the glory of the king and the enrichment of the capital city. There was always a democratic vein in prophecy, and the oriental deification of the actual king could not easily find a place in the religion of Yahweh. An interesting anticipation of the impression produced by the tyranny of the king and the extravagance of the court has been placed in the mouth of

Samuel (1 S. 8). This revolt against the authorities in Jerusalem, and the setting up of a prosperous kingdom in the north, which gained a strong and attractive capital at Samaria, was a source of political weakness. But the possible rivalry, when it did not degenerate into fratricidal strife, tended to produce a fuller, richer life. Complete centralization and uniformity at this stage would have had a cramping effect. Both kingdoms claimed Yahweh as their God, and had in many respects a common life and literature. There was now, as the communities became more settled, an increase in the spread of education. Court chronicles began to be kept, simple codes of laws arranged (Ex. 20-23), and collections of songs and stories to be made (Jos. 10/13, 2 S. 1/17). This material, existing before in written fragments or as oral tradition, began to be gathered in simple systematic forms, and so the earliest foundations were laid for our present OT.

The Work of Elijah.—The name of this great prophet has come to us in a blaze of glory; the stories that tell of his life and work have a high literary character and great spiritual power. To have produced such an impression and left such a record he must have been a man of wonderful energy and a prophet of great distinction. Here, as elsewhere, we have to remember that the idea which plays such an important part in our explanation of nature and history had not come to clear expression then, viz. that of *process*. There is a tendency in ancient literature, and particularly in Hebrew story, to gather under the name of one man achievements that represent the struggle of a generation or more of intelligent and heroic workers. This is true in the case of all such great names as Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and Elijah. Hence, at this point we need to review not so much the life of this particular prophet as the whole relation of Hebrew religion to the life of Canaan. Elijah is a prophet of the desert; he represents the old faith and the stern simplicity of nomad religion; he is at home in the wilderness, and flees for refuge to the ancient mountain sanctuary of Horeb. He has left no sermons; he was no theologian. He makes no claim for the centralization

of worship; he does not discuss details of ritual; he frankly recognizes the use of many altars (1 K. 19/14), but he declares that the people of Israel, under the influence of the court, are turning to the worship of the Tyrian Baal. Yahweh alone must be worshipped by Israelites. The question as to the use of images or symbols is not raised. The demand is for the exclusive worship of Yahweh by His own people. Without attempting a critical analysis and estimate of the documents here involved, it seems evident that in this period, both in Israel and Judah, there was a revolt against the Baal-worship introduced through the connexion of the royal families with the dynasty of Tyre. If such worship had been confined to small circles of foreigners it could scarcely have caused such a sensation, though there was an increasing apprehension of the fact that Yahweh was "a jealous God." Probably many Israelites were becoming lax and too tolerant, and so stimulated the zeal of the stricter devotees. The fact that Elijah resisted the tyranny and oppression of the rulers, as shown in the case of Naboth's vineyard, shows that he stands in the line of the true prophetic tradition that Israel's God is the defender of simple justice and the avenger of innocent blood (Gen. 4/10). That is a great thought of God, at a time when men generally accepted the king as a kind of god above the law, entitled to gratify, without scruple, his arbitrary will. The greatest battles for liberty in this world have been fought by men who appealed to a God of justice against the unjust claims of aesar. Turning again to the theological side of the situation, the point to be emphasized is that *the* Yahweh religion, having absorbed much nutriment from Canaanite culture and Baal-worship, now, in the person of its strict representatives, felt itself quite foreign and superior to the similar Phœnician worship that was threatening an invasion. Hebrew religion can tolerate no appearance of rivalry within its own territory; that must be made clear in a religion that is destined to still larger conquests. The characteristic of the true religion is that it is alive, which in the highest sense means not simply the power to fight for a bare name or abstract formula, but much more the power to enrich its own

idea of religion and of God by absorbing true elements from the culture with which it comes in contact. We have now passed the time when we regard any great system of faith and worship as completely and absolutely false; we know that in a world which belongs to God such a system would soon fall to pieces. Further, when two systems come into contact and conflict, while that which is higher may ultimately prevail, it can do so only on the condition of completing itself even from a hostile source. Through all these struggles with the Canaanites the Hebrews maintained the name of Yahweh their God, and their faith in Him was the bond of union and the inspiration of any heroic and successful action. As we have already suggested, tribal traditions and family usages remained in full force, and only gradually and by slow action and reaction were they eliminated or reinterpreted and transformed. The same process took place in regard to Canaanite customs. To some of these the real representatives of Hebrew religion were sternly and consistently opposed while the mass of the people were easily induced to follow the prevailing fashions. As they became more completely a settled people they must be more thoroughly influenced by the religious beliefs and ceremonies connected with the culture of the soil. The name Baal means lord or owner; it is not in itself the name of the god of a whole land or tribe, but of the patron god of a particular locality. The shade of meaning attached at any time to such a word must necessarily be vague and variable. To the popular mind there were many Baals, just as in Roman Catholic countries, among simple and unreflecting people, "Our Lady" of a particular city acquires special local qualities, and is differentiated from other manifestations of the One Virgin (Notre Dame de Paris, Notre Dame de Lourdes, &c.). The Baal meant the divinity that gave fruitfulness to a piece of soil. As such fruitfulness is similar in all cases, it might easily be generalized and a general significance be given to the name; but side by side the belief could remain in a number of particular Baals. The Israelite teachers maintained that Yahweh was one (Dt. 6/4). They were clear on that point. There might be many Baals—that would need investigation—but as to this

there could be no doubt, that it was one and the same Yahweh who manifested Himself to the believing Israelites wherever the conditions were favourable to His appearance. This is much more important than it appears on the surface: the search of the highest philosophy and deepest religious feeling is for *unity* behind all the varied appearances of nature and manifestations of life. The unity of Yahweh worship over against the divisions and distractions of Baal worship is a real revelation, a great advance in this movement. But a bare unity or a mere name cannot have the highest power; the claim must be made that Yahweh is the God of the pleasant, fruitful land as well as of the fierce storm and "the great and terrible wilderness." This means the transference of ancient sanctuaries and altars to Yahweh, and the adoption of Canaanite forms of worship, and there is always danger in such assimilation. But this inevitable movement carried with it the possibility of an enlargement and enrichment of thought of Yahweh as "the God of nature" in a fuller sense than before. Both these things are clearly implied in the later polemic of Hosea and Deuteronomy. The enervating, corrupting influence of Baal-worship was recognized, but the claim was clearly stated that the reason for such worship lay in the fact that men attributed to the local Baals powers and gifts which really belonged to the supreme Lord, Yahweh. We are now specially concerned to notice that, while during their early centuries of toilsome effort, spent in acquiring a sure settlement in the land, the life and religion of the people had been largely influenced by the new conditions, they themselves were not conscious of the extent of that influence, but maintained their full loyalty to Yahweh. They worshipped Yahweh at various sanctuaries, with pilgrimages and festivals, with ritual and sacrifice; they had departed from the simple desert standard, and entered fully into the life of their new home, but yet they had learned to cherish a certain healthy intolerance and exclusiveness. Elijah represents for us this revolt against any other god, and he calls upon the people to choose between Yahweh and Baal, as in the circumstances it

was not possible to serve two masters. This became a political issue, with conspiracies and massacres following in its train; it led to a change of dynasty in the north, and brought into the kingdom a spirit of faction that prepared the way for its final destruction. The strict followers of Yahweh no doubt represented a larger and purer faith; they were in the main stream, they had a permanent contribution to make to the life of humanity, but their temper was violent, their methods rude. The picture of the giant Elijah over against the peevish weakling Ahab may in its sharp contrast be powerful poetry rather than finely-balanced story; but in such a striking statement as that Ahab went up to eat and drink and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to learn the Divine purpose (1 K. 18/42) there is a true impression of the nature of the contending forces. Out of the conflict there came, both for Israel and Judah, a fuller and clearer recognition of the fact that Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, was the God of all true Israelites. There was also a fuller consciousness of what was meant by that statement. If Yahweh had not yet conquered the world or completely extended His rule into the dark underworld of Sheol, He had secured the lordship of Palestine and the acknowledgment that there no gods could be tolerated alongside of Him. It was universally admitted that to be a true Israelite meant to give exclusive worship to Yahweh; priests, prophets, leaders, and people had all come to this. All commerce with other gods or demons with heathenish sorcery and magic must be a shameful, secret thing.

*The Prophetic Movement.*—This brings us to what is called “the prophetic movement” in the strictest sense, although we must not forget the warning that in a living process we must not make our distinctions and differences too deep. Some of the early narratives show material that is handled in “a prophetic spirit,” and they reveal the sense of man’s “sinfulness,” which it was the work of the prophets to deepen and define (cf. Gen. 3, 6, 11). For example, Isaiah lays great stress on the feebleness and futility of human arrogance (Is. 2f.), and the same subject is treated in a different

form, but with some similarity of spirit, in the stories of Paradise and the Tower of Babel.

Our attention is now called to the work of those prophets who were the first to transmit to posterity actual notes of their sermons. These are the prophets of the Assyrian period—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. For the purpose of this brief sketch the books of Nah., Hab., and Zeph. may be neglected, since, in so far as they have any significant message, it is dependent on the great original preachers. The critical questions must be left untouched and results of recent research assumed. We seek to understand the message of these preachers, and how we can best state its relation to what has gone before. The careful composition of the sermons, brief and few as they are, shows that literary influences had been for some time at work. Their preservation proves that even in these troubled times there were students and disciples (Is. 8/16, 30/3). These four eighth-century prophets have their differences of circumstances, temperament, and style, but they join in the one protest against the social weakness and impure worship of their time, and, broadly speaking, present the same message and make the same demands. Amos, the stern messenger to Israel from outside; Hosea, emotional, tender, and showing intimacy and sympathy even in his denunciation; Isaiah, the man of the city, courtier, and statesman; Micah, the rude peasant of the Judæan lowlands—these men have much in common. They give us a striking proof that Yahweh, the living God, is one—one in His purpose through history, one in His demand for justice and call for service. They regarded themselves as conservatives, and in the best sense this was true. They might to a certain extent idealize the past, but two facts in this connexion we must recognize: (a) There is deterioration as well as progress in the life of a nation which, on the whole, is moving upward;; hence there is something to be learned from the simplicity and brotherliness of earlier days. (b) These prophets were not absolutely new in their life and original in their thought; they did rest upon a real historical basis and manifested a real continuity of life. Further, in any time of transition, in living creative periods,

the only way to conserve the revelation of the past is to reach the heart of it, bring out its real meaning, and show its application to the new age. Our ultimate explanation of such men may be that God called them, manifested to them His glory, and revealed to them His will. But this happens in particular circumstances and under certain conditions. Natural environment and economic causes can never be for us the full explanation of the movement of the Divine human spirit. We must not, however, ignore these, since the consideration of them helps us to realize that these prophets were men like ourselves face to face with definite social problems, in a time of unrest and transition, seeking the solution by a clearer recognition of God and a more intelligent application of religious principles. In fact, Israel could not have been God's greatest instrument for the preparation of a world-wide religion if her life had been perpetually fixed and fastened down to one form, semi-nomad or pastoral. Old truth can be enlarged and new principles brought to light only by the claims of new circumstances and the demand of new needs. By the growth of commerce, increase of wealth, enlargement of cities, old tribal arrangements and clan ties had broken down. It is the direct or implicit complaint of all these prophets that Israelites, in regard to each other, are "more than kin but less than kind." The arrangement by which every family could have its tract of land, every man his own house, and small communities live together in a brotherly spirit, with slight inequalities of social conditions—that state of things could no longer be maintained. Denunciation of the greedy land-grabbers, the careless or unjust rulers, and the arrogant rich oppressors, now appears as a regular part of the preacher's programme. It has come back at different periods, and has reached a larger form in our own day; but the moral basis and religious inspiration must always come from the great prophetic ideas. The period in which this prophetic movement takes its rise was evidently a time of prosperity, for many could indulge in vulgar display and luxurious living; but, as ever, social unrest, coming from the oppression of the poor and the perversion of justice, was the result of the unequal

distribution of wealth and the lack of unselfish leadership. A strongly-marked feature of the genuine oracles of Micah is their fierce denunciation of the wickedness and folly of the ruling classes.

Neglecting for the moment any special theological peculiarities of particular prophets, we may sum up their teaching as referring to this world and being social and moral in its character. They do not face the question of personal immortality, and it is doubtful whether they give any clear programme as to the future of the nation beyond the fact of an imminent severe judgment, which will partly destroy and partly purify the community. When we speak of their message as *social*, we mean that they are dealing with men not in their individual capacity as separate souls, but as members of the community, and that they set forth religion as the right discharge of social obligations. When we say that it is *moral*, we give prominence to the fact that they denounce the attempt to make ritual a substitute for social goodness. They are not denouncing Baal-worship or discussing the value of symbolism; their position is that this is not the kind of worship and service that Yahweh requires (Am. 4/4, 5/21-24, Hos. 6/6, Is. 1/10-17, Mi. 3/10). It has been settled that there is only one God for Israel; the question of the nature of the worship and service that He can require and will accept is now lifted to a higher plane. How far and in what way these men would have abolished or reformed the existing cultus we cannot say. We may conjecture that Isaiah loved the Temple, and found many sacred associations with it; that Micah hated the pretentious ritual used by the oppressors of the people; that Amos found God more easily in the silence of the desert than in the noisy religious festivals; and that Hosea would have shown more æsthetic feeling and poetic sentiment in handling such a subject than the stern prophets from the country were capable of displaying. This is legitimate speculation, guided by our actual knowledge of the men. But, after all, we have to say that they were engaged in a conflict against shallow, sensuous ritualism, and that in their polemic there is no discussion of fine distinctions, but a simple demand for honesty in private

and public service, for a just administration of civic affairs, and a sympathetic care for the poor. For the first time in the history of the world we find what we call "social morality" presented as the highest expression of the religious life, and this is done with remarkable clearness and boldness in the name of Israel's God. It is evident that such teaching is ethical in the noblest sense. But what do we mean when we say that because it is ethical it is *monotheistic*? The answer to this is that it is a kind of teaching that *implies the thought of one God for the world*. And on further reflection, if their central message is accepted, this implication must formulate itself in a sharper, more *dogmatic fashion*. Judgment is about to come upon the nation in both sections, not on account of the capricious anger of the deity at insufficient tribute in the form of sacrifices, but because of the people's failure to reach a certain standard of righteousness (Am. 3/2, Is. 5/1-7). Yahweh punishes His own people for their lack of goodness, this being regarded as morality and not mere religiosity. Further, the *same standard is applied to other tribes and nations*: they are to be judged not because they are non-Israelites, but *because of their greed, cruelty, and inhumanity* (Am. 1). We to-day may argue that because there is one God there should be one standard of morality for public and private life, and one law of justice and kindness among men of different creeds and nations. But the historical movement worked in the other direction. Men of true spiritual insight learned first that their God required real service and not coarse sacrifices or magical rites, and then they advanced to the belief that the kingdom of this God of righteousness was not bounded by geographical or tribal limitations. But every step of the way had to be fought, for old enemies of formalism and sectarianism constantly returned in new forms, and the Jews preserved for others what they did not fully realize for themselves. These great beliefs were rooted in the sacred past of their nation, and it took a long time to bring out their full significance; but now it stands in a clear light as a central contribution to religious thought, as one of the highest gifts of revelation. The nation might perish, but God and righteousness must rule.

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

the most closely to "a theologian"; he has a central thought of Yahweh from which radiates all his thought of religion, as applied to politics and civic life. To him we owe the doctrine of "the remnant," and the faith that Jerusalem would be delivered from the foreign foe. He spent a long time in public life; he had to meet the people in varied circumstances and in many moods. On the whole, while his ministry was one of denunciation, there must have been many hours of hope in the life of one who carried on such a long strife on behalf of a sane political policy and a pure worship of Yahweh (Is. 1/21-26). Even if he had no elaborate eschatology, he was the prophet of faith in a new and deeper sense (7/9, 30/15); he gave spirituality as well as splendour to his picture of Yahweh, the supreme King, whose glory fills the whole earth.

*The Deuteronomic Movement.*—It is difficult to trace precisely the immediate effect of Isaiah on the religious organization, and to learn how far any real effort was made by Hezekiah for the centralization and purification of worship. There seems to have been a fierce reaction, which placed the prophetic party in a perilous position, and the reign of Manasseh was a time of darkness for the disciples of a purer faith (2 K. 21). Through such times a great religious movement comes with a nobler faith and more heroic courage. The Book of Deuteronomy is now accepted as in the main the product of this century. It is a blending of prophetic teaching and purified priestly ritual. It has apparently three elements—the historical, the preaching, and the legal—but the whole book is pervaded by an earnest persuasive spirit. Its aim is to produce a community of "saints," a kingdom of God on earth, and so avert the threatened judgment. In a sense the book is dramatic; its history, sermons, and laws are all placed in the mouth of the ancient prophet Moses. The narratives of Exodus are turned into direct speeches, and the Book of the Covenant is amplified and modified. In the sermons the great lines of thought are the oneness of Yahweh the God of Israel, the view of history as a Divine discipline, and the danger of forgetting God in the hour of prosperity. Such a book clearly stands in the middle of this history and not as its beginning;

the history is reviewed and made matter for spiritual reflection, the earlier documents are freely used and readapted. The demand for one central sanctuary now becomes intelligible and possible. It can be shown by many detailed proofs that the teaching of the great prophets has left its mark on this wonderful book. With all the limitations involved and dangers incurred, it was inevitable that the prophetic teaching, if it was to leave any other effect than the testimony of the written page, must embody itself in reforms of Church and State. We have not yet solved the problem as to the parts that the two forces represented in Dt., preaching and legislation, must play in the creation of social goodness. There is no dogmatic solution, because circumstances and other factors involved are always changing in a living nation. While the relation of Jeremiah or any particular prophet to this movement is doubtful, it is clear that this epoch-making book did represent, on the part of many, an honest effort to purify the ritual and to bring a higher humanitarian sentiment into the Law, and that it helped to strengthen the loftier monotheistic tendencies of the faith. To us one God means that in any place we may worship in a spiritual fashion, and that no city or sanctuary can have a monopoly of His special presence (Jn. 4/23). Yet we can concede that the abolition of local sanctuaries and the concentration of the Jewish sacrificial worship in Jerusalem was a movement in the direction of universalism. It drew a clearer line between the sacred and secular and had to grant powers to the local elders that could not possibly be limited to Jerusalem. It gave *the book* a more prominent position in religion, and laid new emphasis on the need of right teaching; these elements, that then held a subordinate place, were later seen to have a wider influence than any mere local reforms. What could or might have happened if the nation had survived to give the Deuteronomic influence a fuller trial, in the then existing circumstances, it is idle to speculate. In a certain sense the book saved the religion, and if these were many of its adherents who believed fanatically in the efficacy of the new law and the inviolability of the Temple, to that extent it helped to destroy the nation.

*Jeremiah.*—The tragic death of the young king Josiah and the strife of parties produced an uncertainty of policy which could end only in national disaster. The prophet Jeremiah gave sober counsel and frequent warning as well as strong denunciation. He saw that the threatened judgment must come but his plan of recognizing stern facts and bowing before the great Babylonian power might have lessened the terrors of the situation and have avoided the final tragedy. But to do this required an act of faith—faith to see the hand of Yahweh in the real events of history, of which neither the kings nor the people were capable. Jeremiah gave his faithful testimony during many years, and after the destruction of Jerusalem was dragged away to Egypt, where his end is veiled in darkness. He was a worthy successor of the great prophets, and did much to give a deeper sense of individual life and a higher spirituality to religion. Though the book that bears his name is in a confused condition, and contains much material of various kinds that did not come from his hand, we can gain from it a vivid picture of the disorder of the times, of his outward conflicts and inward struggles. In his story we find more of personal “experience” in the sense in which we now use that word. He had the conviction that he was, as an individual, foreordained to a great task (Jer. 1/5), but that did not end the matter; he was often subject to inward misgivings and wrestlings regarding his call and work. He makes complaints to his God and bewails his hard lot. He is gentle and sensitive, but cannot attain to the height of Christian resignation and calmness. But it was a terrible life, to be always on the strain, denouncing false prophets, exposing popular delusions, declaring unceasingly that the policy of the leaders must lead to inevitable doom. The great prophetic message, that has already been discussed, he presented in his own way with bold imagery and gentle poetic beauty, which shows that he lived in communion with nature and in intimate sympathy with human life. His life, the story of it, and his poems, must have exerted a great influence, though at the time it all seemed to be such a tragic failure. When the reaction came, and men could see his utter truthfulness and loy-

alty, this "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" was seen to be one of the noblest of those saints to whom the true Israel owes so much. The part that he played in the growth of Israel's religion may be briefly summed up by saying that he deepened it, and made it more a matter of personal life and individual experience. He was a forerunner of the great poet who wrote the speeches of Job in that we see in him a man conscious of his own personality over against the personality of God. He comes to the very throne of God, not simply with humble cries for help, but also with demands for reason, justification, and defence. The fanatical dogma of the inviolability of the Temple he could not accept, but he could, we believe, look forward to a time when a new covenant would be written upon the hearts of believing men (31/31, Heb. 8/8). The fulfilment of his predictions and the spirituality of his teaching helped to save the religion when the nation was lost.

*The Significance of the Exile for Hebrew Religion.—*

When a number of Israelites were deported to Assyria almost one hundred and fifty years earlier, they were probably scattered over a wide area, and as they had not attained sufficient distinction of character they were very largely "lost," so far as any living relation to this great movement was concerned. But the case of the Jews was different; it was the better class of the people who were taken away. They had enjoyed during the past century the influence of many great teachers, and they seem to have been planted in colonies in Babylonia, where they could enjoy intercourse with each other and form some kind of religious organization (Jer, 24, 29). Thus, when these communities came to face the question, "How can we sing Yahweh's song in a foreign land?" (Ps. 137), they had some real equipment with which to solve the problem. Exile could not mean to them—that is, to those who in any degree preserved their faith—a decree to go and serve foreign gods. Some, no doubt, did yield to this temptation both at home and abroad, for any great crisis means loss to those whose faith is not deeply rooted. But the hour of bereavement and silence is for the men of faith the hour of thought; they reflect upon the

content of the old song, and it reveals its deeper meaning. Not only did circumcision and the Sabbath as ordinances of distinction from other peoples gain more prominence, but also within the hedge thus formed there was real intellectual life, bringing a consciousness that they possessed something which was of more than national significance, and their vision of the real sacrifice as the contrite heart and not the mere material offering. It was a time of heart-searching, and many were led to recognize that the verdict of history had confirmed the message of the earlier prophets (Zech. 1/6). The situation was complex and many-sided. Some may have even desired to build a temple in Babylonia, others may have thought that the religion could live without a temple. The leaders were thrown back upon the earlier literature, "the book" became more important, and in that there was the germ of later Rabbinism; the need for study and teaching was felt, and this was destined to create schools that would mean more to Judaism and the world than any temple. "The Law" came to be something more minute and comprehensive, but, as we may see from the later literature, it could not confine the fulness and variety of life or crush the universal tendencies inherent in the prophetic faith. Out of the ruins of a nation there came a Church, but that Jewish Church inherits the rich revelation and noble influence of the Hebrew religion. To speak of it as "a sect" is not fair; the life is too varied and catholic to be summed up in that reproachful word; it contained all the elements of the "high," "low," and "broad" sections. It is true that we sometimes find these elements at war with each other, but we have received the rich result of the whole movement.

Ezekiel works in the midst of the exiles; he declares that the destruction of Jerusalem must be completed, and when that prediction is fulfilled he sets himself to face the problems of the future. He is a striking figure, a prophet judging the history of his people by absolute standards, a visionary with strange ecstatic experiences, a poet with great descriptive power, a pastor realizing the dreadful responsibility of his office, a priest seeking to build up a holy nation. He has been called "the father of Judaism," and "the creator of eschato-

logy;" and if those terms are taken with the necessary qualifications they may stand, since he sketches a constitution for the restored community in Palestine, and makes a rich eschatological contribution. In this man of priestly family varied elements exist side by side without being fused into a consistent system. He has affinities with Jeremiah, but his type of mind and conception of the Church are different. He is a High Churchman, not lacking in evangelical qualities. Some truths, such as personal responsibility, he presents in a way that we are tempted to call mechanical—that is, in a hard, abstract manner, out of all living relation to the complementary truth of heredity. There was, after all, some truth in the statement that "the fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge." However, while his weight falls heavily on the side of the priestly view, he did important work as a preacher of judgment and a prophet of faith. He believed that, at the Divine command, the dead bones of a ruined nation could rise up as a mighty army before God, and that the heart of stone could, by a miracle of grace, be turned into a heart of flesh.

*The Theology of Deutero-Isaiah.*—At this stage it is necessary to recognize the significance of the great message contained in Is. 40-55. Though different in its spirit and style, it takes rank with the other great prophetic sections. We do not know the name of the author, and we cannot say with any certainty where he lived. On account of its historical background, theology, and language and style this book cannot be earlier than the time of the Babylonian Exile, and the attempts to place it later are not convincing. The writer is evidently not a public leader, pastor, or prophet in the same sense as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. He is not facing particular concrete situations in the same way; he is a poet brooding over the great national disaster, and seeking to impart to others the message of comfort and hope which heavenly voices have brought to his soul. Pre-exile prophecy had been mainly a word of warning and threatening; in Ezekiel promise follows denunciation. Deutero-Isaiah brings a message of

pure comfort, and to that extent strikes a new note in prophecy. What we have here (Is. 40-55) is a collection of poems whose origin may extend over a number of years, yet we are justified in speaking of it as "The Book of Consolation," seeing that there is sufficient unity of subject and spirit in these poems concerning Zion the Bride of Yahweh, and Israel the Servant of Yahweh, to bind the various elements together, if not to prove the genuineness of every passage. Even if we should have to admit the separate origin and the later date of the great Servant passages (42/1-4, 49/1-6, 51/4-9, 52/13—53/12), it is sufficient for this general review for us to note that the Servant idea, in its national sense, receives here a very high form of expression. The writer brings a great message of redemption, so that he has been rightly called "the evangelist of the OT." The tone is tender throughout; even his denunciations of enemies and his polemic against idol-worshippers are free from the coarse, bitter invective that is generated by actual strife; underlying all his utterances is a strong conviction that the word of Yahweh is absolutely reliable. Empires may fall and perish, but it remains; it is a great world-force, which like the powers of nature, must do its work (40, 55/10). To a nation whose members are scattered and whose sanctuary lies in ruins he addresses the word of consolation (40/27). But he does this not with some light, soothing song, but with a magnificent conception of God and a massive theology. The belief that Yahweh is the God of nature, history, and redemption receives here a fuller exposition and more brilliant expression. These are not dead forms or abstract categories, the whole presentation thrills with life. God's manifestation of His power is here not a finished work, but a present energy, fresh, plastic. An inspiring, hopeful word was sorely needed in this situation, hence the movement of the theology is from God to man. There is little of the pastoral hortatory (the genuineness of 55/7 is questioned!); the promises all rest on Yahweh's supreme power and sovereign grace. What could any man or organization of men do for a nation in such a condition? If its destinies are not cared for by Him who rules the universe there is no hope. The thought

of *election* naturally plays a great part, on account of the nature of the theme and the character of the theology. In the earlier days there was a choice of and a covenant with Israel by Yahweh, but it was not a *doctrine of election*, for then the God and the people completely corresponded to each other, and, except as enemies to be conquered, other gods and other peoples did not come into the calculation; but now election expresses the *special* relation which Israel holds to Yahweh, the supreme God before whom all nations and gods must bow. We cannot say that here there is no element of particularism or tinge of favouritism left—that would be an exaggeration; but we can maintain that election becomes in this great message, more than ever before, election to service and not merely to privilege. There is an eschatology here: the wonderful deliverance and the miraculous journey across the desert are to lead to a new and glorious kingdom in Jerusalem; but a Gentile king is to be Yahweh's instrument, a Messiah in the secular sphere; the ends of the earth are invited to look unto Yahweh for salvation; the Servant has a mission to the outside world, and there is no grim picture of the ruthless slaughter of the heathen. In fact, in this section the OT rises to its loftiest height. After the great prophets and the Deuteronomic reform there has arisen a poet who can see what is implied in the earlier teaching, and with clear intelligence and enthusiastic faith can sing a new song to Yahweh and declare His praise unto the ends of the earth (42/10). Particularly is this true of the idea of vicarious sacrifice presented in ch. 53; if this comes from Deutero-Isaiah, it refers to Israel's suffering as a preparation and qualification for world-service. That individual men should suffer with and for others was no new idea; it was held in connexion with the primitive conception of the solidarity of the tribe; but here it reaches a higher plane of religious faith. The writer confronts the popular view in regard to an afflicted man and a defeated nation and rejects it: "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" (*cf.* the great

conflict in the Book of Job). The strength of faith and the purity of thought here revealed are not affected by the question whether the speakers are the heathen recognizing the meaning of Israel's affliction, or the Jewish community giving a sacrificial and Messianic meaning to the life of one of its saints and martyrs. The endowment of "the spirit of Yahweh" resting on the true teacher, giving insight, calmness, and courage, is another feature that shows an advance upon the early conception, which tended to find the Divine most fully in the abnormal, fitful, or ecstatic condition (42/1-4).

*Post-Exilic Judaism.*—There are many historical problems connected with the origin and constitution of the later Jewish Church which we cannot discuss, but we must attempt merely a brief summary of the theological situation. It is clear that, if the historical continuity was not to be broken, many of the exiles must return and the Temple be rebuilt. The centre at Jerusalem was a rallying-point for the scattered Jews as well as for the perpetuation of Judaism itself. The Judæan community was small and of little political significance; it was under the guardianship and control of Persian rulers; this favoured the concentration of its energies on ecclesiastical and theological problems. The work of restoring the walls and building the Temple had to be carried on during many years with feeble resources and many external hindrances. Prophecy had to continue its work of comforting the people (Zech. 1/13, 17); the preachers found themselves compelled to take an interest in church-building and in ritual. In Haggai, Malachi, and Is. 56—66 we have no longer the sustained denunciations of the earlier prophets, nor the pure message of comfort of Deutero-Isaiah, but a form of preaching more like our own, when denunciation, warning, reasoning, exhortation, persuasion, and promise are all mingled in one appeal. In such a book as Malachi there is an approach to an "academic" style of teaching. We know also, from the accounts given of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah, that the Jewish community was not established on the basis of a stricter law and cleansed from what were regarded as impure elements without fierce

struggles. The regulations against mixed marriages and in favour of strict Sabbath observance met with strong opposition. The rejection of all communion with the Samaritans, and the contempt of some "sons of exile" for "the people of the land," were also causes of heart-burning and strife. When we seek to treat the situation sympathetically and in the true historical spirit, we recognize that a certain amount of "intolerance" was inevitable; but we rejoice that the view of post-exilic literature, which we are now compelled to take, does not allow us to regard Judaism as a company of ignorant fanatics and bloodthirsty zealots. Jerusalem could not be sealed from all external influences. Her children, now beginning to be scattered throughout the world, kept her in touch with the higher life of the world. While the national point of view must still dominate, certain sides of the religion began to assume a more universal character. Even the Temple sacrifices and the priestly ritual, a region in which there is most danger of formalism, came to express a deeper sense of sin, of penitence, and national obligation. Ecclesiastical reformations had gained something in the way of purity and dignity; the ritualism of the later Temple was in its best days free from the sensuality and disorder of the earlier festivals.

It is possible for us to indicate special features of the later period and different times of development, but again we must remember that these do not exist in abstract separation, but may be found in various combinations in the men of action and leaders of thought. It is a period of slow organization, patient, painful scholarship, and keen reflection. The codification of ritual laws, the increase of scribal activity with growing dominance of written authority, the deepening sense of religious peculiarity and isolation—all these influences tend to check personal initiative and prophetic enthusiasm. Of course, in a living community where intelligence has been so highly developed and concentrated on religious subjects, nothing can completely crush criticism, as may be seen from such books as Job and Ecclesiastes, which examine and partly reject orthodox beliefs, or the books of Jonah and Ruth, which must now be regarded as a protest against the militant forms

of exclusiveness. On the whole, while the period is full of varied life, and we are still distant from the wild, unrestrained extravagance of later apocalypse and the deadness of stagnant scholasticism, it is a time of reflection and reaction rather than of original creation. But the living movement had not ceased; the difficulties from without and controversies within, along with the varied efforts to appreciate and appropriate the great heritage from the past, prevented any real stagnation. That could come only when the written text had been finally fixed and the dogmas of the various schools clearly defined. In the meantime the living movement goes on, acquiring complexity and variety, without losing its central principle of faith in Yahweh as the source of all life and the giver of all blessings to *His own people*. This needs emphasis: the religion of Israel never really ceased to be national; while Yahweh came to be regarded as God of the world, and hence all nations were under His control and care, yet their destiny was fixed by their relation to Israel. Individuals might be converted and come into the true fold, nations might receive blessings on account of friendship to Israel, or be destroyed in the great day of Israel's victory. Thus the great blessings, if they were to come to the nations, must come through Israel. When this is stripped of all sectarian pride and party passion, it is astonishing how much truth there is in it; in other words, how much real missionary influence was exerted by a system that is supposed to be hard and exclusive. God flung the Jews out into the world, when they were fit to stand alone, to give and receive influence in the great centres of civilization. The contents of the Jewish literature and the meaning of Jewish life were larger and richer than the formal creed. The prophetic principles were felt to be a gift of God which could not be monopolized by one nation. The Servant carries these principles to the expectant nations (Is. 42/4); the nations flow towards Jerusalem, because there true teaching and righteous judgments are given (Is. 2/1—4); the great festival in the final days, when the burdens of a sorrowful world are to be removed, will be "in this mountain," but it will be a feast for "all nations" (Is. 25/6-8). The paradox can be understood

only when we remember that a stream of life is more than institutions and creeds that seek to give it outward expression, and that a great truth will, because of its greatness, show its broad human significance and its universal tendency.

Alongside of the Temple, which held a central place in the life of the people as a place of worship and a shrine for pilgrims (Ps. 122-4), there was private personal piety, in which prayers became more prominent as an expression of spiritual life and a means of communion with God (Ps. 4/4), and there was also a fuller development of scholastic and educational work (Pr. 1/8). The Book of Proverbs is a monument of Hebrew *wisdom* compiled and completed in this period, though it may contain brief oracles and popular sayings from earlier days. Naturally, on account of its subject, which deals with the need for discipline of thought and regulation of conduct, it is unsectarian, or, in other words, its contents are, on the whole, more ethical than theological. Its aim is to insist upon the need of knowledge and discipline, if a man is to avoid snares that are set on every hand and attain to real success in life. Reverence towards parents, obedience as the first lesson in life, the cultivation of self-control—these are in a general way the forms in which “the fear of Yahweh” or religion should express itself, and this is the beginning and foundation of wisdom. Except the longer passages, containing personifications of Wisdom and Folly, this book of practical philosophy consists mainly of short similes or terse antithetic proverbs, which express contempt for “the fool,” the man given to babbling, to greed, self-indulgence, or excess of any kind, and praise of “the wise man,” the man who has learned to take care of himself, to control his temper, rule his household, and manage his business. There may not appear to be much idealism, sentiment, or romance about this “philosophy,” but it rests upon a pretty solid basis of “common sense,” and claims the whole range of common life as a sphere for the manifestation of “the fear of Yahweh.” This is the hard, prosaic side of life, but it deals with matters that are common to mankind, and the inclusion of morals, manners, and eti-

quette in one comprehensive survey of life suggests the all-embracing character of the claims of religion.

For the rich variety of theological truth and religious sentiment which constituted the most precious possession of that age we must turn to the Psalter. It has been called the Hymn-book of the Second Temple, but it is more than that; it is also a prayer-book of confessions, meditations, and thanksgiving, which reflects the richest experience of the individual as well as the varied worship of the community. For our present purpose those portions that are strictly liturgical are of least importance, but even in them the large claim of the religion is manifest (117, 149, 150). The Book of Psalms may be called *secondary* literature in this sense, that it shows us how all the lines of thought worked out in earlier days are appropriated and turned into prayer and song. An important proof this, that the great messages of the prophets have not been merely the property of a few great thinkers or special scholars, they have entered into the life of the community. The expression of these truths in the Psalter popularized them still more, and we need only remember the frequent reference to it in the NT to find confirmation of the belief that here we have a real document reflecting the higher life of the post-exilic Jewish community. It has been said that in prophecy God speaks to man, while in the Psalms man speaks to God; or, as we may put it, the truths revealed in the past show that they have left the realm of speculation and have entered into the sphere of public worship and personal devotion. In reading these Psalms, apart from particular sharp expressions (137/9) which shock us, we naturally lift them into a Christian atmosphere, and ignore the local circumstances and party conflicts out of which they arose, and which, thanks to our ignorance and the mellowing influence of time, have now become so dim. Thus the book remains a prayerbook of humanity and one of Israel's greatest gifts to men. No complete analysis can be given, but it is important to recognize the fact that the great truths which we have seen growing in the past have become a possession to be used in public worship and private prayer. When we are engaged in a study of history,

however, it is well for us to remember that what we have here is not merely selected poems from a few choice spirits, but a precipitate from the feverish struggles of a time that has not wisely been called "four centuries of silence." True, God is also in the silence, but we have to find Him in the confusion of opinions and the fierce strife of parties.

In the Psalms Yahweh is Lord of the world, supreme ruler over all kings and gods (88/8-10); He is the creator and guide of His people (100); the worship of idols is an absurd thing, only fit subject for contemptuous ridicule (115; note 17 of this Psalm, that the triumphant faith is still confined to *this* world). The faith in Yahweh is thus firmly established in the realm of nature (8, 19, 29, 104, &c.), in history (78, 80, 135), in human conduct, regulated now by a written law (1, 19, 119). He is the ruler of the world, and though He is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, He will surely punish the wicked, whether they are heathen oppressors outside or arrogant apostates within the nation (97, 37). One of the noblest expressions of this later theology regarding the greatness and extent of Yahweh's power is 139, and even here we have a flaming hatred of "the enemies of Yahweh." The so-called "penitential Psalms," and others of similar tone (32, 51, &c.), show a deep sense of personal sinfulness, deepened by the burden of sickness or other afflictions. Here the theory of sorrow as the result of sin is working in a wholesome way of self-application begetting penitence. In other poems (73, &c.) this theory is faced as a problem from the point of view of its application to life, in the spirit of the struggles of Job. We may say, then, that all possible religious beliefs and moods of that time find expression here. They cannot be harmonized into one system; they express a many-sided life. Running through all there is the conviction that the Israelites are a peculiar people, who have inherited a noble tradition and who stand in a special relationship to the God of the world. This God is to be worshipped and honoured in the services of the Temple and by the diligent student of His Law. He is a righteous God, not only in the sense that He regards moral distinctions, but also that He will keep His covenant and de-

send His people, thus causing righteousness to be vindicated on the stage of the world's history. "Pious," "poor," "meek" are beginning, in some places, to mean almost the same thing, and the hope is cherished that the "meek shall inherit the earth" when the judgment comes which will overthrow the arrogant, faithless Jews as well as the proud heathen oppressors. The Messianic hope finds clear if not frequent expression, and probably many phrases that have for us lost their eschatological flavour originally possessed it. There is not much movement in the direction of the belief in personal immortality; we may find a suggestion of it in 73, but even this is not generally accepted. We must say that in the actual period of Hebrew religion the hopes concerning the future continued to have a national point of view which was not largely displaced by the more personal hope. The continuance in life or the resurrection of the individual was a belief held in connexion with the hopes of a final and complete redemption of the nation, under the reign of the Messianic King (72). Thus, beginning at a point about a thousand years earlier than the present period, we found a few tribes with loose organization and a simple faith in Yahweh as their God. We have seen the building up out of this material into two kingdoms, which after a brief fitful existence were destroyed, to be replaced by a Church community in Judæa with an elaborate ecclesiastical organization and a large body of theological beliefs. The thing that grew through all the political and civil changes of a millenium was the religious faith and theological thought. The earlier revelations were received in and through the actual political conflicts of the time; in later days theology became for a while the chief business of the nation.

*The Significance of the Maccabean Period.*—This small nation was called to fight for its existence and its faith in the early years of the second century B.C., and the result showed that a positive dogmatic faith had power to inspire heroic zeal and lead "the saints" to victory. In the preceding century the Jews in the Greek colony of Alexandria in Egypt had grown in

numbers and influence. The translation of the Law into Greek helped to keep the dispersed Israelites faithful to Judaism, while the commerce and communion of the scattered Jews with Jerusalem helped to keep alive the intellectual life of the homeland. Greek influence of a direct kind may not be proved in the case of the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes, but it is clear that the Jews have come to have something of the Greek spirit in their method and style of dealing with weighty problems. Their contribution is theology, not philosophy, as they seek to work always from the thought of God out to the details of thought and life. They do not analyse things and the mind in the same way as the Greeks, but in their own way they are seeking to link all things to a central principle, and they are becoming more critical in temper. The writer of Job attacks the common dogma of sin and retribution which pervaded all the theology of his time. The prophetic message had been taken so much to heart that the thought of "sin" had become the central thing in Jewish theology. The belief in a reasonable retribution, ethical in its character, was an advance on the idea of capricious, arbitrary action of gods or demons, but it became too systematic, or, in other words, too simple. Men in many ages have made large sacrifices to a narrow, severe logic and a vain craving for uniformity in religious thought and practice. Against this the great poet protests; more than any particular solution of the problem suggested by the various statements in the Book of Job is the spirit of the great speeches and the demand for full expression of the soul even in the presence of God. "Sin" is not everything, man is not the centre of the world; the mighty Creator is just, though His ways may perplex us. Man may come to silence in the presence of God's majesty, but he must not be crushed by a wooden, mechanical system in which men attempt to confine their thoughts of God. This is not scepticism, it is simply a more robust faith. The writer of Ecclesiastes goes much further in the direction of scepticism, and the ground tone of the book is pessimistic. He is a man who cannot find escape from perplexity and disappointment along either of the two avenues that have been opened; he deliberately rejects the thought of

personal immortality and pays no attention to the national hopes. Not in such a temper as this could the great battles have been fought. We are now simply concerned to show that in the period immediately preceding the Maccabean revolt there was much reflection on religious problems, and that in some cases faith was "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." When the nation passed from the rule of the Ptolemies to that of Syria, little dreaming of the terrible trouble to come from that quarter, Greek culture must have already exerted a powerful if subtle influence on its religious life. Some think that "the Greek peril" would have been still greater if it had been allowed to pursue its peaceful way. When Antiochus Epiphanes attempted brutally to crush Judaism and substitute his bastard Hellenism, two things were revealed—the extent to which Greek influence had already gone, and the terrible strength and tenacity of those who adhered to the Law. Men died rather than break the Sabbath or pollute themselves with unclean food; the nation might be cast into the lion's den or the fiery furnace, but it would not worship the idols that this mad king had set up (see the Book of Daniel). The standard of revolt was raised, and the first battles for religious freedom were fought. The story must be read elsewhere, but its religious significance must be noted here. The real strength and heroism was inspired by passionate love for the Scriptures and scrupulous respect for the Law. When the latent military strength had been revealed, and liberty of worship secured, the pious party, the Chasidim, forerunners of the later Pharisees, were ready to return to the peaceful pursuit of religion. They were willing to accept a high priest of the legitimate line, notwithstanding his alliance with the Greek party and the Syrian kingdom. Again they had to suffer for their blind literalism, but clung to their ideal of an unworldly kingdom of Yahweh. The movement inevitably enlarged itself into a struggle for complete political independence, and under the Maccabean family Judah enjoyed a brief period of military success and natural splendour. The political power and official influence thus passed into the hands of the priests and their adherents, who later were the Saddu-

cees of NT times. They were Jews, but were less scrupulous in their religious conduct, and had little zeal for the doctrine of the resurrection and the Messianic kingdom. The stricter believers, who gave their energy to the study of theology, to the elaboration and observance of the written Law and preparation for the coming Kingdom of God, were regarded by the people as the custodians of the best religious traditions, and had a powerful influence on the life of the State. Thus it may be seen that, when the noblest theology had been developed, touched with something of the prophetic spirit, making universal claims, and even offering something of its best life to other nations, there was manifested the fanatical, fierce hatred against the foreigner that may be seen in the books of Esther and Judith. The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach belongs to a different school, and shows the essential Jewish thought in a more sober, "moderate" mood. The Judaism, then, that we find in the two centuries immediately preceding the coming of our Lord was anything but a simple sect; it was, as the product of many ages and varied influences, exceedingly complex, and not completely dominated by any one shade of thought. Some were content with a Judaism that could be adapted to present conditions; others were waiting and yearning for "the consolation of Israel," believing that Yahweh would bring it in His own time; others were in a fever of discontent, prepared to fight for the new kingdom.

What we have been able to give in this short article is a slight sketch, a mere outline; it needs to be filled in by a study of the history in detail and the many-sided literature. But surely there is before us the fact of a living movement, an organic development. We have had to recognize a real relation between the religion and the soil on which it came to maturity. The luxuriant growth of the later apocalyptic literature also shows that, when the creative impulse ceased, there was much extravagant mechanical borrowing that produced a chaotic mass of undigested material. But the real religion, whose course we have been studying, appropriated facts and ideas from other sources in such a way as to subject them to its own central principles. Wonders credited by tra-

dition to Babylonian gods or Palestinian Baals it could claim for Yahweh, and thus work out a practical, and to a large extent a theoretical, monotheism, which, though never quite freed from national associations, prepared the way for the Christian doctrine of God, who is Spirit, and who in His Son manifests love to the whole world. The real antithesis between the OT and the NT is not that of Law in contrast to Gospel. The apostle Paul saw that Law, in the strict sense, came in as a preparation for a fuller manifestation of the faith that had inspired the lives of ancient saints (Gal. 3/18f.). It is that the NT, while preserving the idea of a Kingdom of God, was less national and brought a richer personal experience. But in all the important stages of OT theology there were real "evangelical" elements.

The healthy growth may be seen in all the great ideas of OT theology. In dealing with the idea of God it is no longer advisable merely to choose texts at random from the whole area of the literature. We must recognize that the presentation given in Deutero-Isaiah or Ps. 139 could not have appeared in that form in the earlier phases of the movement, and that the first chapter of Genesis, though based upon earlier material, offers a transcendent view of God that belongs nearer to the close than the beginning of the revelation. We know that, while the Hebrews must have possessed a certain amount of the speculative gift that was developed so highly in the Greeks, the real motive of the progress is to be sought in the personal spiritual life of their great teachers. The proof that their thought of God was living is in the fact that it could grow to meet new needs. We use the name "Yahweh" instead of the conventional name "Lord," because it is a more correct rendering of the original, and reminds us that we are dealing with the name of a personal national God. "Lord" has become colourless, so far as national associations are concerned; if it means anything to us, it must mean the Ruler of the whole universe, the source of all law and life. To use this title in OT passages may lead us to forget the centuries of toil, prayer, and thought by which the way was prepared for our lofty and somewhat abstract conception. In OT times

Yahweh ever remained the God of Israel, and men had to learn to recognize Him as the God of righteousness, of history, and of the particular manifestations and products of nature before they could claim for Him, in the fullest sense, the supreme position as God of the whole earth. Hence, while angels and spirits appear in the earlier literature, it is in an unsystematic fashion; Yahweh is not only supreme within His kingdom, but His action is direct, immediate (*cf.* the Yahweh-Elohim of Gen. 2f. with the Elohim of 1, also the two different statements regarding the same events in 2 S. 24/1 and 1 Ch. 21/1). We do not attempt to smooth all these differences that give individuality to the different accounts, but rather rejoice in the sense of historical perspective that they help us to acquire. The gods of other nations are at one time rival deities belonging to rival tribes; later they become "idols," and even the great heavenly bodies worshipped by the Babylonians are claimed as creatures of Yahweh (Is. 40/26). These finally become mere *lamps* for the service of man, and specially to regulate his religious festivals (Gen. 1). The idols then become simple images, things that man has made and to which it is foolish to attach any divine significance. The "gods" have passed away from them and become "angels" or "demons," to whom Yahweh allows a limited sphere of service. This is different from the hard monotheism of Mohammedanism, which is more suitable to the bareness of the desert than a rich, complex social life. We can never go back to Moses or back to Christ in any narrow, mechanical way, because from the OT as well as from the NT we have inherited a religion which claims the right to grow and to baptize new things, when they have proved their reality, with the old sacred name.

Such development can also be recognized in connexion with an idea that must be central in any living conception of true religion, that of sacrifice. Whether the original idea was that of a gift to the God to win His favour, or of communion through a common meal shared by the worshippers and the deity, we must not attempt to settle; it is possible that both thoughts might become blended in the one transaction. Traces of these views in their more primitive form may still be found

(Gen. 41/4, 8/21; Ex. 24/10). It is certain that the popular view in the eighth century was that sacrifice was a means of gaining Yahweh's favour and so making worshippers secure against their foes. The prophets set in opposition to this the demand for an intelligent obedience to Yahweh's righteous claims. He desires "mercy and not sacrifice." "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Yet the idea of sacrifice permeates all life; the captive in war and the criminal offender are slain in some sense as a sacrifice. The higher prophetic teaching turns away from the coarse ritual to the ordinary activities of life, which bring opportunities of real service. It was not directly concerned with theories as to which was the most effective form of material sacrifice. It was probably in the Exile, where men learned to keep alive a real religious life without material sacrifices, that they learned to think of penitence and obedience as the true sacrifice. There is a difference in the statement that obedience is *better* than sacrifice and that obedience *is* sacrifice (Ps. 40/6; cf. the use made of this passage by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (10/5), when he puts the words into the mouth of Christ and tells us that He abolishes the first and lower that He may establish the second and higher form of sacrifice, viz., that of the will). In the later ritual sacrifice was used for the expression of penitence and the taking away of sin, so it was not out of all relation to prophetic teaching. But even then the meaning depended upon the intelligence of the worshippers; some treated it as symbolic, and some were inclined to reject it. In any case confined to one central sanctuary, it left a large place to be filled by the more intellectual exercises of prayer, praise, and the reading of The Book.

The statement already made concerning the national character of Hebrew religion explains to some extent the fact that the doctrine of personal immortality does not gain a large place. The old view of the underworld was there as a background for popular beliefs and superstitions, and other Oriental religions made much of the influence of ghosts and spirits. But these things have not left a strong mark on OT teaching, which was concerned more with the pursuit of godliness here,

and the building up of a community that would embody in its life the demands of Israel's God. In later days, outside influences might help in this direction, especially when the sense of communion with God had become personal and spiritual to the extent that is expressed in Job and Ps. 73. Reasoning that the martyrs who had lost their lives for the faith could not, because of Yahweh's faithfulness, lose their share in the new kingdom, might suggest at least a partial resurrection (Dan. 12/2, Is. 26/19; the earlier passage, Ezek. 37, most probably refers to the restoration of the nation). In the OT, then, the doctrine of personal immortality is rather the glimmering of a new hope than a prominent and fixed element of faith.

We cannot regard the recent attempt to carry back the eschatological teaching to the early times as successful. The natural basis of such teaching lies, of course, in the hope that springs eternal in the human breast. As to its imagery, we must remember that we have no colours with which to paint the future except those drawn from the past. The golden age of the past reappears with new glory in the final redemption which ushers in the eternal kingdom and marks the completion of Yahweh's purpose for His people. This consummation seemed to be near at hand to those prophets who had a message of forgiveness and hope. These general considerations, true in themselves, do not lead to the conclusion that there was a fully-developed eschatology in the earliest times. The Israelites had to build up their own nation and learn to review their past history as a discipline of Yahweh; they had to come face to face with a large world and consider their relationship to it, before they could work out elaborate schemes of future development and definite programmes of the final days. These subjects were not in the centre of the early prophetic teaching, though they rest upon the prophetic doctrine of a severe judgment and the salvation of the faithful. The primary prophetic message is one of judgment on Israel; the essential feature of "eschatology" in the strict sense is judgment on the heathen and the exaltation of the Jews. There are various conceptions of the place of "the heathen" in this scheme of things. It is quite clear that this way of regarding the future

must have received a strong impulse from the ministry of Ezekiel. If the Jews were to be restored to their own land and hold permanently the central place in the world that his programme assigns to them, Yahweh must control the foreign nations, and either destroy them or cause them to acknowledge His supremacy and holiness. An important passage such as Is. 2/2-4, Mic. 4/1-4, belongs to a different, though as to time a parallel, strain of thought, and is related to the spirit of Deutero-Isaiah. The early post-exilic prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, look forward with pathetic longing to a speedy convulsion, to be followed by a reign of peace and prosperity for Jerusalem (Hag. 2, Zech. 2). In a loose fashion all passages are called "Messianic" that promise and describe this time of blessedness, when "the meek shall inherit the earth"; but in the strictest sense only such passages should bear that name which set forth the ideal King as a mediator between Yahweh and His people. The discussion of this branch of the subject is complicated by the difference of opinion among scholars as to the collective or individual interpretation of "the Servant passages" in Deutero-Isaiah and the phrase "Son of Man" in Daniel. It is difficult, with our views on the date of the documents, to prove that a definite belief in a personal Messiah existed before the Exile. In Ezekiel's priestly system a prince or new David is mentioned, but could not have a leading rôle. But when men of faith brooded over the sorrows and failures of the nation, they could not believe that the promises given to Judah and David had received their final fulfilment, and they looked forward to a more real fulfilment of Yahweh's ancient promises. Some might believe in a fixed time, which man's work could neither hasten nor hinder; others might regard patient study of the Law or militant enterprise as the real preparation. In one sense there was pessimism, despair of the present order of things; in another sense there was faith in an overruling Providence and the rich possibilities of the future. The present ruler might be invested with Messianic attributes, or there might be expectation of a supernatural being coming with the great catastrophe. He might be a mighty warrior wreaking vengeance on the heathen, or

appear as a prince of peace. The point for us now is that later Judaism, in spite of the variety of views and mingling of strange elements, stands at the close of our review in an attitude of expectation, and so remains true to the forward look which is the characteristic of genuine prophecy.

What, then, was the result of this strange national career? One quotation may be permitted from a carefully-written volume, recently published, which sums up in a few words the view that has substantially been adopted in this article.

"Briefly reviewing the ground that we have gone over, we may recall to mind that when the Israelites first came into the light of history they were a group of nomad clans with a religion like that of other dwellers in the desert. Their God, Yahweh, was apparently the local divinity of Kadesh, who was made party to a coalition of the social groups in that region. The success of the coalition led to the invasion of Canaan and the gradual settlement of that country by the immigrants. In Canaan the God took on the features of an agricultural divinity receiving the first fruits and tithes of the soil. The attempt of Ahab to introduce the worship of the Phœnician Baal led to a reaction under the powerful personality of Elijah. The prophetic party thus beginning its career was prompted by a desire for social justice as well as for religious simplicity. In some centuries of conflict this party clarified its aims and at last preached an ethical monotheism for Israel. This monotheism would not have triumphed (humanly speaking) had it not been for the Exile. In the Exile people found the bond which held them together to be that of religion. They therefore became a Church rather than a nation, conscious of possessing a unique treasure in the traditions of Moses and the prophets, carefully avoiding amalgamation with those of different faith" (*The Religion of Israel*, by Dr. H. P. Smith, p. 350).

There remained, then, (1) a nation or community that, because of this religious discipline, was able to maintain its separate existence when the Temple was destroyed and the land laid desolate. For some time the main interests of the most zealous adherents of the faith had been religious rather

than political, and when the fanatical resistance to foreign oppression was in vain the faith of the religious community survived. The Jews took their place in the world of commerce, and gave their attention to the transmission of the traditions and the observances of the written law, so far as that was possible without the Temple ceremonial. They expanded and arranged the traditions. The synagogue became a permanent institution. Scholastic theologians, sober scribes, mystical thinkers, fanatical visionaries all played their part. The strength and persistence of the Jewish Church, in spite of centuries of persecution and hatred, is one of the wonders of history; but its creative period closed and its great religious contribution was made before the beginning of the Christian era. (2) There remained also a book which the Jew has not been able to monopolize. It was translated into Greek about two centuries before the coming of our Lord, and now, mainly through the influence of the Christian Church, it speaks in practically all the languages of the world. Under the influence of theological scholasticism it was handled in a hard, dogmatic sense as mere "revelation"; but now "The Bible as Literature" is a fruitful theme, and the fuller appreciation of historical perspective and real development gives it a freshness and power as a revelation of God's education of the world. As we see the great movement pass from stage to stage, we are conscious of a "Power not of ourselves," and cry, "It is the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes." "It shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

---

*Bibliography.*—Students of this subject are indebted to the works, in German, of Stade, Smend, Duhm, Marti, Baethgen, Gunkel, Sellin, Bertholet, and others. The following is a brief list of books in English which are of comparatively recent date: A. S. Peake, *The Religion of Israel*; W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites, The Prophets of Israel*; Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures*; Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*; E. Day, *The Social Life of the Hebrews*; S. I. Curtiss, *Primitive*

*Semitic Religion To-day*; A. Duff, *The Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews*; A. S. Peake, *The Problem of Suffering in the OT*; R. L. Ottley, *The Religion of Israel*; J. Robertson, *The Early Religion of Israel*; T. K. Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*; W. E. Orchard, *The Evolution of OT Religion*; W. E. Addis, *Hebrew Religion to the Establishment of Judaism under Ezra*; K. Budde, *Religion of Israel to the Exile*; J. C. Todd, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*; L. B. Paton, *The Early Religion of Israel*; K. Marti, *The Religion of the OT*; A. Loisy, *The Religion of Israel*; W. H. Bennett, *The Religion of the Post-Exilic Prophets*; W. G. Jordan, *Prophetic Ideas and Ideals*; H. P. Smith, *The Religion of Israel*; E. Kautzsch, *The Religion of Israel* (HDB, vol. v.); H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the OT*; J. P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews*; A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*; W. G. Jordan, *Religion in Song*.

---

This article was written for *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, published by J. C. and E. C. Jack, Edinburgh and London, and is reprinted in this form for the use of Queen's Theological students and a very limited private circulation.

Sept. 22, 1919.

W. G. J.,  
Kingston, Ont.

