

## ARTICLE IV.

## THE MESSIANIC VIEWS OF CHRIST'S CONTEMPORARIES.

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THE marked attention which biblical studies, in the technical sense of the word, are receiving in the English-speaking theological world can certainly prove only profitable to the church of Christ. The more teachers and people are brought into active and living communion with the revealed word, and the more they learn to regard this word as the only and immediate source of Christian faith and life, the better it will be for the healthy development of the church. Even if this theological discipline has been abused, and has of late, especially in reference to the Pentateuchal problem, built upon the foundation of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, not gold and silver, but straw and stubble, this would not justify conservative and truth-loving people in putting these studies under the ban, or in stamping the Cain-mark of heresy on any attempt to unfold the truths of revelation in any other manner than that prescribed by traditional methods and ways. *Abusus non tollit usum* is true here as elsewhere. And the history of dogmas proves that the victory is not to the rash and reckless, but clings to the banner of truth. Not many decades back it was well-nigh regarded an axiom in critical circles that the fourth Gospel was unauthentic; now only the most liberal of the liberals dare whisper such a sentiment. *Magna est veritas et praevalabit.*

Not the least favored department in this sphere is that of biblical theology, especially the theology of the New Testament. While in reference to the Old Testament researches have been chiefly made in the direction of Isagogics or Introduction, and here again principally in regard to the authenticity of certain books, prominently the Pentateuch;

in the New Testament, the separate books, which were not so much *sub judice* as to origin, author, or age, have been examined more with reference to their positive contents and doctrinal teachings, and their investigation has assumed more of an exegetical character. As biblical theology, which is an historical branch in the family of theological sciences, seeks among other things to understand the various books in the light of the age in which they were written, it must everywhere endeavor to draw this historical background in as vivid and faithful colors as possible. And it is from this standpoint that the history of New Testament times (*Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*), which has for its object the delineation of the New Testament age in its religious, political, and social aspects, has proved such a thankful auxiliary to the study of the Gospels and the Epistles. While as yet we have no larger English work on this subject to compare with the magnificent German treatises of Schürer, Hausrath, and others, yet a good deal of the solid metal brought to the light by such investigators has been used with profit in the volumes of Dean Stanley, Farrar, Geikie, and others.<sup>1</sup> In these works has been collected from the history of Christ's time and of the centuries preceding it whatever could contribute to make clear the days in which Christ moved upon earth. History, profane and sacred—Josephus among the Jews; Polybius, Strabo, Plutarch, and Dio Cassius among the Greeks; Cicero, Livy, and Tacitus among the Latins; Philo and the Alexandrian school; Targum, Midrash, and Talmud; the Apocrypha and the apocalypses,—in short, all the literary connecting links between the Old and the New Testaments have been made to do good ancillary service to the theology of the New Testament; and in this way the three centuries between Malachi and Matthew, which former generations of theologians were apt to regard as barren and unproductive as far as biblical investigation was concerned, have offered a harvest well worth gathering; and the literary remains of

<sup>1</sup> A good example of what can be done in this line can be seen in Delitzsch's *Artisan Life*, recently translated by Dr. B. Pick.

that period, many of which were frequently regarded merely as literary curiosities, have secured a new dignity and worth.

As to many important points the New Testament history can find a satisfactory explanation only when regarded in the surroundings of time and circumstances, one of the most important of which is the doctrinal position of the Jews in Christ's day, especially the Messianic hopes entertained by his contemporaries. Pharisaism, which was really the orthodox Jewish theology of the times, was not the theology of Moses and the prophets. The views which we hear from the lips of those who conversed and disputed with Christ are not a normal and natural development from the basis of pre-Christian revelation. The spiritual leaders in Israel no longer speak the words and reflect the spirit of a Moses, a David, or an Isaiah; their doctrines are untheocratic and unbiblical. This thesis scarcely needs as proof a reference to the repeated declarations of Christ to this effect. Christ opposed the teachers of the Jews because they had departed from the revealed truth. And this departure from revelation did not consist merely or chiefly in theological odds and ends, or in exegetical eccentricities that practically would do no harm, but rather in fundamental principles and cardinal points, — the very life-blood of the Jewish church was poisoned. The central doctrine of the theocracy, namely the kingdom of God upon earth, had been emptied of the deep spiritual meaning assigned to it by the prophets of old, and in its place had been put the human figment and folly of a temporal and carnal kingdom, and a Messiah whose power would be in the strength of his arm. Not a kingdom of grace, but a kingdom of power and supremacy; not a Messiah to save from the wrath of God, but a Messiah to save from the sword and rule of the enemies, were the centre of Israel's hope in the days of Christ's earthly pilgrimage. And not feeling the need of a Saviour for their sins, they taught an anthropology that admitted the possibility of securing righteousness through one's own exertion. The apostle Paul, himself formerly an ardent Pharisee, knew well what he was doing when he maintained

that this theology taught an *ἰδία δικαιοσύνη*, to be secured by *ἔργα τοῦ νόμου* (Rom. iii. 27; x. 3, 5). And when John the Baptist, and still more Christ, began to preach of a *πιστεύειν* and a *μετανοεῖν* as a necessary condition of citizenship in the kingdom of God, and also emphasized, as did the prophets and psalmists of old, the anthropological and soteriological principles of human depravity and divine grace herein presupposed, the religion of the day could only feel disappointed and express its dissent. It had as little understanding for this as it had for such grand prophecies as that of the suffering servant of the Lord in Isaiah xl.—lxvi. And that a people who had so far departed from the landmarks of their fathers, and had become unfaithful to their high calling as the chosen people of God, should, when the Promised One really appeared as he had been predicted, reject him, is not surprising. They had learned to entertain false hopes of the Messianic future; and when the true Messiah came, they knew him not.

This is the state of affairs which we find when the star of Bethlehem arose; and New Testament theology must answer the question, How came this to be so? The genesis of the theology of the Jews in the New Testament is a real historical problem. That these radical deviations and departures from those books which professedly were, if not the sole source of religious beliefs, at least one source, and the regulative rule for the other tradition, were not spasmodic or the work of a night, will be evident to every student of human nature and of religious systems. They were manifestly the result of a historical development that covers decades and even centuries. And from the fact that not only the leaders of the people, but also the people themselves, rejected Christ, it is plain that these false Messianic views were not the result of wild speculation or mere theories of the schools, but were rather a part of the popular and settled faith of the people. A mere *stet pro ratione voluntas* will not explain this phenomenon; and upon its explanation depends for New Testament students the full appreciation of the standpoint taken

by the opposition to Christ, and negatively, at least, of his position over against his adversaries. It would not be a difficult matter to show that frequently the words and arguments of Christ, as was quite natural, received shape and form from the peculiar views of his opponents.

The existence of this deep chasm between Christ, the prophets, and revealed truth on the one hand, and the orthodox theology of the Jews on the other, is all the more remarkable when we remember that but a few centuries before the Jewish communion had been re-established by the zealous Ezra on the historical foundation of the theocracy, namely, the law. Among the remnant that returned in the second Exodus the supremacy of the law in the whole spiritual life of the people had been enforced with a vigor and a rigor never before dreamed of. Deutsch, in his *Literary Remains* (p. 12), says: "From a reckless, godless, lawless people, they returned transformed into a band of Puritans." With the written code of revelation at their command, with the sad fate of their disobedient fathers to warn and check, with the systematic study of the law and the prophets, with the regular reading of these books according to the *Parshioth* and the *Haphtaroth*, with the "hedge" which the fathers of the Mishna were building around the law, it would have seemed but natural that the religious development of the people should be a normal one, and that when the fulness of time had arrived they should have the lessons of the law and of history sufficiently well learned to receive and welcome him who was the realization of the dearest hopes of every true Israelite. The very opposite, however, of this took place. In the years that intervened between the cessation of prophecy and its revival in John the Baptist, a biblical and theocratic Israel had developed into a rabbinical and talmudical Israel, with its vain hopes and false expectations.

This being the case, it is very evident where we must look for the birth of these errors. Even if we did not possess any historical documents to cover the events of the Persian, Syrian, Maccabean, and Roman supremacy over Israel, it

could with good reasons be concluded, from what has been already stated, that the three centuries immediately preceding the birth of Christ must be the ground out of which this false theology sprung. There must have been agencies at work in the political and religious life of Israel that were sufficiently powerful to rob the people of their faith. The vicissitudes of the nation in this period must have been of such a character as to blind them to the true meaning of the word of God, and permit the hopes and fears of the hour to substitute therefor carnal wishes and selfish expectations. Here is where we must seek an answer to this historical problem as to the genesis of Jewish errors; and this examination will show that these do not, as it were, hang suspended on nothing, but have an historical background and admit of a rational explanation.

In order to learn what were the views entertained by pre-Christian Judaism, it will be necessary to look into the literature we still possess from those days. For we have no history of the Messianic ideas of the Jews written by one of their number, but must collect our information from every available source, and from the data thus secured judge as to the how and why. Naturally a beginning will be made with the best known class of literature from that period, namely, the Apocrypha of the Septuagint and of the Vulgate. But here we are doomed to disappointment. Instead of finding here a rich storehouse of information on this point, we learn but little in reference to the matter in question. The Messiah and the Messianic kingdom do not form the burden of apocryphal wisdom. While the elements of religious disintegration are already apparent, and the germs of many errors can be detected, which the contemporaries of Christ have developed in their fullest form,—as e.g. when the *opus operatum* idea finds advocates in Tobit<sup>1</sup> and elsewhere,—yet what would seem the cardinal feature of Jewish theology, the Messiah and his rule, is scarcely noticed. Beside the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bissell. The Apocrypha, p. 119. It is a significant fact that the LXX sometimes translates the word מָלְכִי by *δευμοσύνη*.

hope for a return of the scattered Israelites (Baruch iv. 36-37; v. 5-9; 2 Macc. ii. 18), of a conversion of the heathen (Tobit xiii. 11-18; xiv. 6-7), and of an everlasting duration of the Jewish nation (Sirach xxxvii. 25; xlv. 13), there is only a brief mention made of the everlasting kingdom of David (Sirach xlvii. 11; 1 Macc. ii. 57).<sup>1</sup> Just how to explain this silence is not an easy matter. The majority of critics are inclined to think that at the time these books were written the Jews had ceased to feel the need of a personal Messiah.<sup>2</sup> This is not improbable, especially when we remember, what will be clearer farther on, that in many of the books of those days the complexion of the author's time had a great influence upon the character and the contents of his work, especially in reference to the Messianic hopes; that the necessities and prayers of the hour had a determining influence on the character which these expectations assumed. Besides, the almost purely intellectual, literary, and historical character of the Apocrypha would exclude to some extent ideas that were more exclusively theological. The almost entire absence of such Messianic hopes in these books teaches at least the negative lesson that the grand prophecies of the evangelists of the Old Testament concerning a suffering and merciful Servant of God had been well nigh forgotten; while the few notices they do offer only go to show that the same spirit which exercises absolute sway over the Jews in Christ's day had already begun to rule.

Nor will an appeal to the legal literature in Targum, Talmud, and Midrash find many reliable results for the solution of our problem. Christian theologians in former times were very diligent in drawing from these sources whatever seemed to favor Christianity and Christian theology. The Horae of Lightfoot and Schöttchen are rich storehouses in

<sup>1</sup> The passage 1 Macc. xiv. 41, which the reformers and later commentators interpreted as referring to the Messiah, will not bear this explanation. The omission of the article before *προφήτην* is decisive on this point. Cf. on the whole matter, Drummond, *The Jewish Messiah*, p. 196 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bissell, l.c. p. 47 f.

this regard.<sup>1</sup> But the critical researches of later investigators have shown that the views as expressed in these works are but of little value for the determination of the *status controversiæ* in the day of Christ, and for the elucidation of the history of Jewish theology in that period. Not that these works contain no references to the Messiah and his kingdom (although this feature is by no means as prominent as might be expected); for that this is the case, and that the views are not without some harmony and system, is apparent from that most valuable work of the recently deceased Dr. Ferdinand Weber, published by Professor Delitzsch and Dr. Schnedermann, entitled *System der altsynagogalen Palästinischen Theologie aus Targum, Midrasch, und Talmud* (chap. xxii., xxiii., Leipzig, 1880). But the great difficulty lies in determining the age of these works. That their final codification is post-Christian is acknowledged by Jewish and Christian scholars, however much they may differ in deciding the exact date. What portion of them, however, can be regarded as pre-Christian at least in sentiment, if not in words, and what portion can thus be regarded as being the reflex of ante-Christian Judaism, or as having an influence on the beliefs of those days? Here is the debatable ground. Even in reference to the older Targums — that of Onkelos on the Pentateuch and that of Jonathan on the Prophets — the question as to pre-Christian roots and post-Christian aftergrowth is still, and probably will remain for many years, under discussion. And in regard to Midrash and Talmud the doubt is still more doubtful. Careful criticism will have to subscribe to what Drummond says (p. 159): "It is evident that even the earliest Targums can no longer be appealed to

<sup>1</sup> Of the latter work, Schürer, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*, p. 563, says that it is a work of eminent learning, but throughout inspired by the endeavor to turn the Rabbis into Christian theologians. Even the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* is proved from rabbinical works. An examination of Schöttchen shows that Schürer speaks the truth. Other and similar works, such as Eisenmenger's *Entdecktes Judenthum*, are still more open to this charge.



as direct witnesses to Jewish belief in the time of Christ," and apply this to Talmud and Midrash also.<sup>1</sup>

Entirely different, however, will be the results when we begin to examine the philosophical and apocalyptic literature of pre-Christian Judaism. Here we have solid ground, and can reach tangible results, especially when we approach the apocalypses. This is such a peculiar and interesting class of literary productions that it is almost a wonder that they have remained comparatively a *terra incognita* to the majority of American theologians. There seems to be a sting in the name, and the word "apocalyptic" in English has become almost synonymous with false, or at least with doubtful; and anything that bears the name of apocalyptic is thought inconsistent with words of sound faith, as these deal with fact, and not with fiction. Yet it is only ignorance or prejudice that can judge thus. Even though the Jewish apocalypses contain not one item that can be regarded as an historical fact, yet they are not on that account either to be neglected or despised. Homer contains little or nothing that is history; yet the Iliad and the Odyssey are of acknowledged importance for the appreciation of the Greek genius and nationality. Thus, too, with these apocalypses. They owe their existence to the spirit of post-exilic Judaism, and to the course of the history of the chosen people in the days when the voice of prophecy was hushed in the land. The spirit and contents of these works reflect with the fidelity of a mirror the hopes and fears, the longings and desires, the teachings and the doctrines—in short, the inner and spiritual life—of the people. It is generally regarded as reliable history that the principle of legalism which Ezra had so powerfully implanted in Israel was the

<sup>1</sup> The views entertained by some scholars decades ago that the Messianic longings had died out in Israel, and were mechanically revived by the agitation caused by Christ's ministration, need be mentioned only as a matter of history. The mere fact that in the Shemone Esre, or the eighteen thanksgivings which every Israelite was commanded to repeat three times every day, the very first Baracha contains a prayer for יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, a last or second (Moses being the first) deliverer, shows that these hopes belonged to the daily spiritual food of the pious Israelite. Cf. Weber, l.c. p. 333, and Schürer, p. 564 sq.

cynosure of all eyes and hearts in the land, and that in the period of *Heiligherrschaft*, as Ewald calls it, the ideal of the people's ambition and endeavors was to attain the holiness (righteousness) of outward observance of the official legal code. This is the truth, but not the whole truth, as is evident from the Judaism of the New Testament. The study of the law could satisfy the head, but not the heart, and, moreover, the problems of the present were such as no rabbi with his legal wisdom could solve. The terrors of the Persian, Syrian, and Roman rule, especially the demoniacal lunacy of Antiochus IV. (Epiphanes), when compared with the promises given of old, were but little adapted to make the Israelite zealous in his trust in God and in the law which was proclaimed as the sure road to future glory. The Jews knew that they were the chosen people of God, and that God had promised, in terms too plain to be misunderstood, that if this people would observe the law faithfully they should inherit all the glories of this world. But the reality seemed to smite this promise in the face. In Enoch ciii. 11, 12 the faithful complain, "We hoped to be the head, and became the tail; we labored exceedingly, and did not gain by our labors; we became food for the sinners, and the unrighteous have made their yoke heavy for us. Those who hated us and those who beat us became our rulers; and we bent our neck to our haters, and they did not pity us." The questions suggested by the difference between the ideal and the real, between the promise and the inheritance, had to be answered; and this the exclusive study of the law could not do. Hence we find, side by side with the legal literature and complementary to it, a rich stream of apocalyptic writings, which reveal to us a side of the people and an important element in the growth of the Judaism found in the New Testament, especially the Messianic hopes. The questions of the day suggested the character and contents of these apocalypses. They are apologetic and exhortative. They declare, even at times with an oath, that the arm of the Lord has not become weak; that his promises are not forgotten; but that, on the

contrary, he is preparing terrible punishment for those who depart from his commandments, who injure his people; and they exhort the faithful to hope, declaring that the golden age is very soon to be inaugurated, and that then the wicked will be punished and the faithful receive their reward. Such being the general features of these writings, their contents are naturally of an eschatological character. The pseudo-prophets, who can find no comfort in the bitter realities of the present, direct their readers to the hopes of the future. For them the *עולם הזה* — i.e., according to the technical definition of Jewish theology, the present world, the preparatory days of the theocracy — is about to draw to an end, and the *עולם הבא*, with its Messianic glories, is then to be commenced. The prediction of this speedy deliverance and the inauguration of the Messianic rule thus form the main substance of apocalyptic literature, everything else being directly or indirectly subservient to the chief aim, as, e.g. when Enoch discusses the laws of nature, their divine origin and government, and the apocalypse of Baruch and 4 Ezra the doctrine of original sin.

These productions are peculiar compositions. Their most striking feature is the enigmatical form of presentation. Everything is put in symbolical, figurative language; persons are represented as animals; their different attitudes towards God and his laws, by tameness and rapacity. Everything was avoided that could give a positive clew as to author, time, or events referred to, especially those just then occurring; so that only those who were initiated in the spirit of the authors and their co-religionists could understand the references and object of the work. The peculiar hiding of names and dates — possibly as much to be attributed to necessity as to choice, at least in the most important cases — is the cause of the difficulty in understanding and arranging these productions chronologically. The contents embrace a series of succinct revelations, and thus differ from the prophecies of the Old Testament, which are often unchronologically arranged. And to give authority to these *piae fraudes* they are put into the

mouths of old heroes of faith, and are usually sent out into the world as productions of these fathers. We thus have the Book of Enoch, the Assumptio Mosis, the Ascensio Isaiae, the Apocalypse of Baruch, and 4 Ezra.<sup>1</sup> Of course it would be in vain to seek in these productions a systematic and dogmatic discussion of theological topics. They are not compendiums of Jewish dogmatics. The writers have an eye only for the people's present wants, and their thoughts circle around the pivot of Israel's future greatness. Whatever bears on this subject is introduced and discussed, and the theology of the Old Testament is important only in so far as it subserves this purpose.

It is in these works that the hearts of the patient and suffering faithful pour out their innermost desires and hopes, and these seem, at least as much as any other, to have formed the spiritual meat and drink of those who were anxiously scanning the horizon for the first dawn of the day of peace and the first signs of the coming reign of happiness. It is not without significance that none of the so-called apocryphas have been quoted by the New Testament writers, or seem to have had any influence on what they say or how they say it; but that, on the other hand, there is at least one direct quotation of an apocryphal book, namely, in Jude 14, from Enoch i. 9. Not that thereby any inspiration was assigned to this or a similar production; but it simply shows how well-known their contents were. It is here principally, then, that we find those data which furnish the historical foothold for the unbiblical Messianic views entertained by Christ's contemporaries, and a glance at two or three of the most important of the literary remains of this period will prove profitable and instructive.

<sup>1</sup> This whole matter is treated in *extenso* in the writer's translation of the Book of Enoch (Andover, 1882), Special Introduction, p. 12 ff. The existence and authority among the Jews, and later among the early Christians, of such works is one of the strangest phenomena in the history of religion. It seems almost that the Jesuitic principle that the end justifies the means was not without advocates in those days. Whatever the psychological and moral explanation of the influence of these fabrications may be, certain it is this influence was great.

Pursuing the historical method, we shall undoubtedly have first to take into consideration the oldest portions of the Sibylline Books. For of the twelve books (written in Homeric hexameters, and occupying in Friedlieb's edition one hundred and fourteen pages of Greek text, each containing forty lines) that compose the present collection, only the third book, and not even all of that, can with anything like critical certainty be ascribed to a pre-Christian and Jewish source. When Judaism in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria learned of the Gentile pseudo-prophetesses, and of the authority and influence their utterances had gained for themselves in the course of time, it did not scruple to adopt the fabrication of sibyllistic vaticinations for its proselyting purposes. While Philo sought by allegorical interpretation to smooth the rough edges of the law, and make it palatable for his Grecian readers, others found in the Sibyl a welcome medium to give authoritative antiquity to the contents of their sacred writings.

Investigation with marked unanimity has pronounced Book III. 97-807 the oldest portion of the sibylline collection,<sup>1</sup> of which the natural subdivisions are 97-294; 295-488; 489-807. The Messianic kingdom, rather than the person of the Messiah, forms the burden of these predictions. The prophetess places herself at the head of historical times, looking back to the events of the heroic and mythological ages as things that are passed, blending with this narrative accounts from the biblical records, and gliding almost imperceptibly into a prophetic tone when pronouncing the burden of all apocalyptic prophecies, viz. the tribulations of the present and the glories of the future. By a strange inconsistency, but probably as a bait for Gentile readers, the fables about the quarrels of Jupiter and his brothers with the Titans are affixed to an account of the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. This remarkable mixture of

<sup>1</sup> The investigations and results of Bleek are generally regarded as satisfactory by scholars; at least no later examination has seriously modified his conclusions. The portion under consideration was written between 160 and 140 B.C.

heathen fable and divine truth prepares the way for the chief or prophetic portion of the book. Beginning with line 161 the future fate of Israel in the historical development of the Oriental nations is prophetically depicted. True to the Jewish spirit of the time, and also of the time of the New Testament, the author sees in the Israel of glory only the people as a body politic, outwardly organized and governed as the nations around them, bound together only by the ties of race and of nationality. The theocratic principle as such occupies no prominence and scarcely any position in the sibyllistic theological ideas. Their relation to God and their obedience to the law (246 and 285) are evidently regarded only as means by which the people hope to attain a high rank among the nations of the earth. After the fall of the Roman empire, which shall take place when "a seventh kingdom over which an Egyptian king of Hellenic descent shall rule" (192 f.; cf. 607) shall arise (this is of course Ptolemy VII. Physkon, 145-117 B.C.), then Israel's time shall have arrived. "Then the nation of the mighty God will again become powerful, who will be leaders to life for all mortals" (195 f.). Toward the close this Messianic age is described more fully, especially from line 652 to 794. The sibyl prophesies that God will then send a king from the East (*ἀπ' ἡελίου*) who will put an end to wars on the whole earth, who will destroy certain ones, but keep his promises to others. But this he will not do from his own will, but according to the command of the great God. The people of God will then be loaded with riches, with gold and silver: the earth and the sea will send forth their wealth. On seeing this the kings of the earth will assemble against him and his country, but only to their own destruction. They desire to destroy the house of the great God (i.e. the temple at Jerusalem) and the faithful; they offer sacrifices to false gods around the city. While thus engaged the mighty voice of God will speak to them, and all will be destroyed by the hand of the Everlasting. Fiery swords fall from heaven; burning torches appear; and the earth and the sea are dis-

turbed by the hand of the Almighty; and the Erebus, the dark, will appear. The crevices in the rocks will be filled with dead bodies; blood will flow from the rocks; and all the powerful enemies of the new kingdom will fall to the ground, because they have not acknowledged the law. God will judge them by fire and the sword and great waters. Brimstone will fall from heaven, and hail will descend, and death will destroy also all quadrupeds. Then first will the ungodly begin to know the everlasting God, and will lament exceedingly. They will then bathe themselves in blood, and the earth will drink in the blood of the slain. After the removal of the wicked by the judgment of the sword, the reign of peace for the children of God commences (line 702 ff.). They will all assemble around the temple of God in peace, thankful for their lot to the just Judge. There will then be no war, for the Everlasting is their aid. The islands of the ocean (i.e. the heathen nations) will then say: "Up, let us all fall down on the earth, and worship the Everlasting King, God the Most High and Great; let us send to the temple; let us all consider the law of the Most High God. For it is best for us all to fall down and worship. But we had departed from the ways of the Everlasting, and had honored the works of our hands."

After a brief interruption, the author continues (743) by saying that then the earth will yield abundantly of all kinds of fruit, and all species of animals will be plenty; fountains will flow with milk, and the cities will be filled with good things. Then, too, all the kings will be friends, and the Everlasting God will govern all mankind according to *one* law. He will then establish an everlasting kingdom (*βασιλῆϊον εἰς αἰῶνας*) for *all* men, and all men will become God-fearing, and will bring presents and frankincense to the house of God; it will be the only house in which worship will be held, and all mortals will call it the temple of God (*νηὸν θεοῦ*). The prophets will then put away the sword. God will dwell on Zion, and there will be universal peace.

Lines 86-92 of this book are a somewhat younger portion,

the contents pointing to the date of the joint tyranny of Anthony and Cleopatra over Egypt. The prophetess says (46-50): "And then when Rome shall govern Egypt also, and rule with it, then the greatest of kingdoms, that of the Everlasting King, will appear on the earth and a holy king (*ἅγιος ἄναξ*) will appear who will govern all the lands for all times, as the times pass." With the aid of older prophecies this latter one is easily understood. The Everlasting King is undoubtedly God himself, who will establish his kingdom, while the holy king who will govern it, is the Messiah, the deputy of God.

We have quoted at this length from the sibylline vaticinations, because this description of the Messianic era is thoroughly characteristic. Compared with the visions of an Isaiah, Micah, Hosea, Daniel and the other seers, how great has been the fall in Israel's soul! And is it surprising that a nation whose literary representatives can speak such words, and which has been thus trained and educated in such dreamy air-castles, should in the days of Christ prove such a stubborn and rebellious people when brought back eye to eye once more with prophetic truth and its fulfilment? For these Jewish oracles were not an isolated instance; and a comparison of one or two more will make the point very plain.

The history, divisions, date, etc. of the Book of Enoch need not be discussed here, since all these questions have been considered at great length in the new translation of Enoch already mentioned. It will suffice our purpose to mention summarily the leading Messianic views expressed in the different parts of the work. In its present shape the book is a conglomerate of at least three different elements, written by three different authors at different times. The oldest and largest, though theologically considered not the most important, is contained in chapters 1-37 and 72-105. Internal evidence points to the fact that it was written shortly before the death of Judas Maccabaeus, 160 B.C.; and since it owes its birth to the excitement of that ever memorable struggle of conservative and law-abiding Judaism for national, and espe-



cially religious freedom, it everywhere breathes the spirit of war and rumors of war. It is written from the standpoint of the Chasidim party, i.e. the pious party of patriots who fought under the banners of the sons of the Modin priest for their law and their God. Antiochus Epiphanes, unlike the later Roman conquerors, who permitted the individuality of the variegated complex of nationalities that obeyed their behest to remain undisturbed as long as the reality of Roman sway was not thereby endangered, attempted in his blind Oriental zeal to enforce a formal submission or effect an annihilation. Antiochus's command to commit to the flames all the existing copies of the sacred volumes was an index to his character. In the midst of this struggle the groundwork of Enoch appeared, as a manifesto to the band of zealots, urging them on to steadfastness, and promising them a speedy and grand deliverance. The writer, who can find but little comfort in the present, points to the hopes of the future, and these he portrays in the manner common to apocalyptic works. In terms of glowing rhetoric he depicts Israel's deliverance from her trouble, the subjugation of her enemies, and the undreamed-of glories of the Messianic sway. This is to come not by the natural development of events, but by a special and powerful interference of Jehovah. Just when the enemies imagine themselves most secure and most sure of God's little band, their destruction overtakes them. The Lord comes to the rescue of the persecuted faithful. The hosts of heaven and the powers of nature alike contribute to this great revolution. From Azazel, the chief of fallen angels, down to the meanest enemy of God's children, all the sinners shall endure terrible punishments. Then the sway of the righteous shall begin. The character of this sway is chiefly political — the kingdom is of this world — and only subordinately and subserentially religious. The establishment of a universal recognition of Jehovah, with Jerusalem as a central seat of worship, is a factor in this future rule, apparently only because thereby Israel's glory will become more glorious. The fundamental idea in this whole pseudo-prophecy is, then, the future tempo-

ral glory of Israel brought about by the intervention of their God. After the establishment of this new order of things, God, so to say, again returns to his retirement, and leaves the government in the hands of the Messiah, who only now appears on the stage, having taken no part in the organization of the new kingdom. He is one of the people (90, 37), not a messenger from on high, not of divine nature or power. He grows out from among the re-established faithful, and, characteristically, he is distinguished from his fellows only by superior strength and power. He is really only *primus inter pares*, and in his hand the rule of this kingdom, which is to abide forever, is placed. In chapter 105 the Messiah is called the Son of God, but evidently only in the sense in which the Israelites are called the children of God in the Old Testament. He is the child of God *κατ' ἐξοχήν*.

Deeper in contents and more systematic in presentation is the second part of the Book of Enoch, embracing chapters 37-71, and called by the writer himself The Book of Parables. It evidently at one time existed as a separate collection of prophecies, attributed to the seventh from Adam, and was later incorporated into the other work. Its character, tone, tendency, and object are almost radically different from those in the groundwork. It does not find the people threatened by sword and conflagration; the subtler weapons of religious indifference, or even of outspoken atheism, in the circles of the aristocratic leaders, threaten to leaven the whole mass of people and to be productive of dire results. The rulers of Israel are not theocratic in heart, but rely upon their own wisdom and power. Historically these and other features point to the fact that the political heads of the people are the representatives of the Hellenistic movement which threatened to destroy Israel's individuality. Herod and his family, those monsters from the alien house of Esau, were the recognized leaders of this movement, although the last of the Asmoneans had also been culpable in this respect. And against this direful school of thought, their theology and their morals, the Parables of Enoch are directed; they

expose the godless character of the heathenish innovations in the people's faith, and prophesy the speedy exaltation of the despised few, who walked in the paths their fathers trod. In no apocalyptic work do the people of God appear so distinctly as an exclusive and united band. They are again and again called "the congregation of the righteous." As the dangers that threaten Israel are almost exclusively of an intellectual, and hence doctrinal, and of a moral character, the deliverance of the true Israel shall correspond to these evils. The general, more transcendental, way of thinking displayed throughout these parables is shown expressly in this connection where God does not, as in the first part, come to the relief personally, but sends his messenger the Messiah. This idea, the deliverance of the people from their false wisdom through the Messiah, is the distinctive feature of this book, and thus has dictated the characteristics that mark the Messiah's person and work. He must be the wisest of the wise. This is secured by attributing to him an eternal pre-existence. In the forty-sixth chapter we find this plainly and distinctly taught, and only here in all apocalyptic literature is the Messiah pictured as superhuman or pre-existent. Here we find the highest idea of a Messiah that an uninspired mind ever produced. To enforce the wisdom he has to impart, he is endowed also with great power. Those who have abused their high positions to lead the people astray will have meted out to them the punishments their deeds have merited. For the Messiah, the wise leader of the faithful, is also the just judge of the unrighteous. After this latter function has been performed, he establishes the promised kingdom. Jerusalem again is the centre, and the people's glory shall be a temporal supremacy. This latter, however, is not so distinctively emphasized here as in other portions of Enoch. For the blessings of his kingdom are more of an ethical character, including even the blissful state of sinlessness. Naturally this latter is not to be taken in the deep sense of the New Testament, just as little as words like *δικαιοσύνη*, *ἐλπίς*, *πίστις*, and the like, when found in the

Apocrypha or other writings, express what Paul or Peter mean by them. But throughout, the author of the Parables remains a Jew, writing with the prejudices and carnal hopes of pharisaism.<sup>1</sup>

Entirely different in outward form, but in many respects similar in thought to the Parables of Enoch, are the so-called *ψαλμοὶ Σαλομῶντος*. The eighteen odes bearing this name are the only productions of a lyrical character from this period. Their entirely Jewish origin and character is already apparent from the mould into which they are cast. Like the Psalms of the Old Testament, these imitations are a poetry of thought, and not of form. No effort is made at a metrical system, but a successful *paralellismus membrorum* is carried out. Here, too, the contents point with sufficient clearness to the historical background; and this again goes far to explain the general character and tendency, as well as the eschatological and Messianic views of the composition. The sad fate that had befallen Israel and the many calamities of the people who had a right to expect the special protection of Jehovah's almighty hand, were again the inspiring motive that guided the heart and the pen of the poet. But in this case the misfortunes came not from the East, but from the West. The Psalms narrate that after Israel had been governed by unrighteous rulers (referring to the Syrian sovereigns) they had welcomed the conqueror of Syria with these words: "Thy path is longed for; come hither, enter in peace"; and the stranger entered, like a father into the house of his children (viii. 15, 20). This welcome is answered by outrageous conduct. He destroys the walls with a battering-ram (ii. 1; viii. 21); the city is full of heathen, who even ascend to the altar of the Lord without removing their shoes (ii. 2); the noblest men in Israel are destroyed, and the blood of the inhabitants of Jerusalem flows like the blood of uncleanness (viii. 23). The author then fully identifies the heathen conqueror (xii. 13-14) by

<sup>1</sup> For full particulars on all these points we must refer those interested to the Introduction and Notes of the Andover edition of Enoch.

stating that he took captive the young men, the old men, and the children, and took them to the West; but "the dragon" who took Jerusalem was slain near the mountains of Egypt, on the ocean, and "none was there who buried him" (ii. 29-31). These statements point directly to Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem and his treatment of the Jews 60 B.C., as described by Josephus and Tacitus. As Pompey's ignominious death is recorded, these Psalms cannot have been written before his death. They must, therefore, have been composed shortly after 48 B.C.

The spirit of these hymns throughout is the same that we discover in the religious representations of Christ's day. Pharisaically the doctrine is that both reward and punishment are *κατὰ τὰ ἔργα* (xvii. 9-12); they teach a *δικαιοσύνη προσταγμάτων* (xiv. 1). Men have the choice between good and evil (ix. 7); and the essence of their doctrine is probably best expressed in these words (ix. 9):

*ὁ ποιῶν δικαιοσύνην θησαυρίζει ζωὴν ἑαυτῷ παρὰ κυρίου,  
καὶ ὁ ποιῶν ἄδικα αὐτὸς αἴτιος τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν ἀπωλείᾳ.*

From this historical and dogmatical basis these apocalyptic prophecies flow naturally. Over against the godlike rule of the later Maccabean princes, and in view of the high-handed injustice of the Roman general, the pseudo-psalmist remembers the promises which have been attached to the seed of the house of David. He takes up this peculiar thread and spins it out. As deliverance in such a crisis can come only from a powerful source, the Messiah who is expected is above all a mighty potentate. Here more than elsewhere the royal character of the expected one is emphasized. So strongly is the advent of David's Son insisted upon (xviii. 5 sqq., 23 sqq.) that we almost imagine that we hear the voice of the New Testament Pharisees. The singer prays that this promised seed may come soon, and cleanse Jerusalem of the heathen walking in iniquity. The Messiah's mission will be of a double character. The sinners will experience the fire of his mouth, and the saints the wisdom of his instruction; so that neither will the

former again draw their swords against the children of righteousness, nor the latter be in danger of being again misled. After the removal of the unclean elements from Zion, the new rule shall be established, at the head of which is the Messiah, the Son of David, sent for this purpose by God. The nations that have disregarded the law will flee from before his face, or will be destroyed; and then the saints will be gathered, even from all the Diaspora, and unrighteousness will not be permitted to dwell in their midst. He will know them all as the children of God, and will divide the land among the different tribes. No stranger (*παροικὸς καὶ ἀλλογενὴς*, i. xvii-31) will be allowed in this sacred congregation. The heathens, fearing this mighty king, will come and serve under his yoke, and will bring as offerings to the Lord the weakened children of Israel, i.e. those in exile and in the Diaspora.

A glance suffices to show that these hopes are of a carnal, Jewish character. Everywhere Israel is the chosen people, and the special object of God's goodness. They are "the first and only begotten children of God" (xviii. 4), and Israel is the *παῖς* of God (xvii. 27); the Israelites will inherit a powerful kingdom of this world under a mighty Messiah, and the other nations shall be but "drawers of water and hewers of stone" for the favored few. In connection with the views entertained by the contemporaries of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, the Psalterium Salomonis is highly interesting, as it probably more than any other work contributed to nourish those earthly and unbiblical views. It certainly was a favorite book in those days, and continued to be such for centuries later. Just how many in the days of Christ entertained the views here laid down cannot, of course, be stated; but that these very views had sunken deep into many hearts is most sure from the sacred records themselves. The royal character of the future Messiah, as the mighty Lord to conduct the people of the theocracy to the hoped for political supremacy and moral perfection of obedience to the law, is the all-pervading idea that we find

throughout these Psalms; and just these ideas again and again fall from the lips of the Pharisees in the days of Christ's humility.

Of the Apocrypha called by the Greek Fathers *'Ανάλληψις Μωϋσέως*, which had been lost since the days of Origen and Clemens of Alexandria, a fragment of a Latin translation was found in 1861 in an Italian library. It claims to be the last exhortations and instructions of Moses, given to his successor just before departing from earth. Prophetically the future of the chosen people is portrayed in general outlines and on a theocratic principle. The history proceeds in the manner of apocryphal writings down to the Roman expedition under Varus in 4 B.C. against Jerusalem, and then suddenly turns into prophecies concerning the speedy coming of the Messiah — a sure sign that it was written about the time that Christ was born. This is corroborated by the fact that, after a description of the horrors of Herod's reign, the statement is made (chapters 6 and 7) that his sons will rule a shorter period (*breviora tempora*). As it is an historical fact that they ruled longer, the book must have been written before their death. The woes of Israel under Roman supremacy furnish the background for the author's picture of the Messianic period. Preceding its advent Satan will have an end; the Celestial One will arise from his seat of government, and come out of his holy place in indignation and ire on account of his children. Earth and heaven will exhibit the signs of the last times; the moon will be changed into blood (cf. Joel ii. 31), and the circuit of the stars will be destroyed. Then the nations of sin will be destroyed, and the happy days for Israel shall begin. God will exalt them and make them cling to the starry heavens (*haerere coelo stellarum*), and they will view the destruction of their adversaries. For this great blessing Israel will thank its God.

These are the chief features of the fragments of the *Assumptio* or *Ascensio Mosis*. The prominence given to the destruction of Israel's enemies was manifestly dictated by the words and wishes of the hour. Only a small portion of the work

has been preserved, and it breaks off in the middle of the preparatory state of the Messianic development. But it is thoroughly Jewish throughout. It expects Messianic glory, but only a carnal glory, for the Israel of the flesh.

The catalogue of apocalyptic writings is by no means exhausted by those mentioned. But the others are either of a very uncertain date (Book of Jubilees, Apocalypsis Baruchi); or their contents can scarcely be satisfactorily analyzed, consisting of Jewish and Christian elements (Ascensio Isaiae), or they originated after the second destruction of the temple (4 Ezra), which event greatly modified or even changed the expectations of Israel. But the contents of these and of other writings, as of Philo, are virtually the same as those just discussed, and, besides, those mentioned will suffice for the object of this article. That these works, which deal with what was nearest and dearest to the heart of every child of Abraham, had an important influence in moulding the doctrinal tenets of the people, and are of importance in explaining the religious atmosphere which Christ breathed, and make the history of his earthly career more plain, is an undeniable fact of history. As purely literary productions their value may be little or nothing; but as expressions of a school of thought in Israel, of the fears and hopes, false though they be, of the down-trodden people of God, and as the documentary testimonies of the spiritual forces that contributed to the production of that peculiar type of Judaism found in the days of Christ and his apostles, they have a value that calls for and fully repays searching investigation and careful study. New Testament theology, and especially the history of New Testament times, must ever accept with gratitude the assistance afforded by a careful investigation of all the literary connecting-links between the Old Testament and the New.