

*THE CONSUMMATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
IN JESUS CHRIST.*

THE question of the relation of the Old Testament to the New is many centuries old. In every age of the Christian era it has been raised afresh, and it has often occasioned vehement discussion. Our thoughts turn at once to Marcion in the second century and to Agricola in the Reformation age. But we may safely say that this question has never been agitated more frequently than during the past decade. For an explanation of this fact we may look partly to Harnack's Lectures, "What is Christianity?" (1900), and partly to Delitzsch's Lectures on "Babel and Bible" (1902 ff.). Both speakers criticised from various points of view the significance of the Old Testament in the sphere of religion and morals, and especially the position of Judaism. As a result of these criticisms we have witnessed since 1901 an unwontedly keen literary activity on the part of Jewish scholars, who have sought to defend the lofty place assigned to the Jewish religion in the spiritual history of mankind.¹

Readers will remember that at the congress on the science of religions held at Berlin in 1910, the importance of the Jewish religion was prominently brought forward. It may be further noted that a certain section of Protestant theologians and many recent writers in the general field of literature, interpret the New Testament on such de-

¹ Leo Bäck, *Harnack's Vorlesungen über das Wesen des Christentums* (1901); M. Güdemann, *Das Judentum* (1902); Leo Bäck, *Das Wesen des Judentums* (1905); Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum* (1907), etc.

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structive lines that it is emptied of its content and deprived of its dignity. It seems to follow then, as a matter of course, that we must seek a different point of view for the treatment of the Old Testament from that of earlier centuries.

With these brief prefatory remarks, I pass at once from the historical aspects of the question. Interesting as it may be to chronicle such records, it is of more importance to answer the question itself. I have offered my contribution because I believe I have found a clear path towards the solution of the problem. The point of departure and the first stages of the way lead us into an inquiry as to whether the Old Testament points to a consummation of itself in later times. It would be unnatural, if not actually impossible, to talk of a consummation in the future of any historical institution which presents itself to our view as finished and perfected. The second part of the road I have indicated will include an examination of the question whether the work of Jesus assigns to itself as its definite goal the culmination of a movement lying behind it in past history. I ask our readers to accept me as their guide in traversing both sections of this way.

I.

Indications given in the Old Testament as to its own culmination in the future.

Many characteristics of Old Testament religion may be cited in order to prove that in its fundamental ideas and main principles it occupied a unique position in the religious history of mankind. The first of these facts is the exceptional consciousness of the true prophets of the Old Testament, for, as my investigations have shown, it will always be futile to attempt to explain that consciousness as derived from psychological sources, or as resting on self-deception.

I may recall the words of Isaiah v. 20 f. ; Jeremiah xxxiii. 26 ; Ezekiel xiii. 3.¹

The second noteworthy fact is the peculiarity of the teaching of the Old Testament with regard to God's relation to the world. For, according to the Old Testament, in contrast to the Babylonian Creation-Epos, or Hesiod's *θεογονία*, God did not emerge from the cosmogonic process. According to the Old Testament there is no sexual differentiation in God,² and there also the Godhead is raised far above the possibility of being displayed or illustrated in a visible object.³ A third proof of the lofty character of the Old Testament lies in the circumstance that there, as in no other literature of antiquity, the harmony of man with God is closely associated with the cancelling of human guilt.⁴ But I need not say more as to the characteristics by which Old Testament religion, in its fundamental and permanent features, is distinguished from the other religions of the ancient world. For even if I were to set out every one of these points, as I have attempted to do in my *Geschichte* (pp. 36-41), I should have failed to exhaust all the statements made in the Old Testament as to its own position in the history of human salvation. There would still remain to be mentioned all those parts of the religious content of the Old Testament, in which it suggests a completion of itself. These indications form a larger total than is usually supposed. We must divide them into two main groups.

1. In the department of the *Law* and in relation to the Law we discover traces which suggest its mutability, inadequacy, and destination to future development.

¹ Compare my *Geschichte der alttestamentlichen Religion kritisch dargestellt* (1912), pp. 106-118.

² The Old Testament possesses no word for "goddess."

³ Exod. xx. 22 ; Deut. iv. 12, etc. ; (my *Geschichte*, p. 204 ff.).

⁴ Even the Babylonian literature possesses no parallels to Gen. iii. Cf. Micah vii. 19 ; Jer. xxxi. 34, etc.

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(a) In the Law itself, we see (1) that many changes of earlier regulations are notified; and (2) the limited field within which the appointed sin-offerings were efficacious must suggest to us that there would one day be a wholly exceptional offering for sin, and in consequence an abolition of the Old Testament method of salvation.

Let us note to begin with the following instances of a progressive development of the Law: in the Elohist decalogue of Exodus xx. 2-17, the commandment on the Sabbath is introduced with the word "Remember!" and finds its motive power in religion and metaphysics (in the memory of the Creator's Sabbath rest); but the decalogue of Deuteronomy (v. 6-18) begins the Sabbath-commandment with the word, "Keep!" and is rooted in the social and historic life of the people (in the remembrance of the servitude of Israel in Egypt). In the ninth commandment the words "lying witness" (Exod. xx. 16) receive a wider application in the "false witness" of Deuteronomy v. 17, so that equivocating excuses may be prevented, etc.

According to Exodus xxi. 2 the Hebrew servant is to be set free in the seventh year. In Deuteronomy xv. 12 the same rule is extended to the Hebrew maid. By the regulation of Exodus xxi. 16 the kidnapping of a human being is to be punished with death, but in Deuteronomy xxiv. 7 the command is so far limited that the person thus stolen away must be an Israelite. Leviticus xvii. 3 orders that an animal of the class destined for sacrifice must be slaughtered only beside the tabernacle, but Deuteronomy xii. 15 allows slaughtering for household necessity to be done "in all thy gates." We may note further among the laws for worship that the ancient regulation that an altar might be built of earth or of unhewn stone in all places where the Eternal had recorded His name (Exod. xx. 24-26),

was changed by the institution of the brazen altar for burnt-offerings (xxvii. 1 f.), and by the requirement that the people should sacrifice in one place (Deut. xii. 1 ff.). To mention only one further point, we see from Deuteronomy xviii. 6-8 that all members of the tribe of Levi possess the same right of exercising the priestly functions, but according to Numbers iii. 32, etc., the sons of Aaron are the overseers of the "Levites."¹

We observe also that the sin-offerings appointed under the Law are intended only (1) for cases in which the sin has been committed through error or oversight (Lev. iv. 2, etc.; Num. xv. 24, etc.), and (2) for minor omissions connected with the so-called Levitical uncleanness (Lev. v. 1-6, etc., in my *Geschichte*, 1912, p. 517 f.). These sin-offerings have no efficacy if the sin has been committed in conscious rebellion against the Divine ordinance (Num. xv. 30); and they are insufficient to gain pardon for infringements of the religious and moral codes. In these two cases there is rather the threat that the evil-doer should be rooted out. The punishment of stoning is attached, for instance, to the crime of the false prophets (Deut. xiii. 6-11), or of soothsayers or wizards (Lev. xx. 27), who imitate the functions of the true prophets; to the crime of trespassing on the place where Jahve reveals Himself (Exod. xix. 12 f.), or of blaspheming Jahve's Name (Lev. xxiv. 16), or desecrating His day (Num. xv. 32-35). Stoning is further threatened in cases where the moral code has been infringed in a very serious way, as for example for the sin of cursing parents, or unfaithfulness to the marriage bond (Lev. xx. 9 f.), etc. It is obvious that individual sinners who had called down upon themselves God's wrath by deliberate rebellion against Him, might be got rid of by the punishment of death; but this was not possible or intended,

¹ Cf. Driver, *An Introduction*, etc., 8th edition (1909), p. 82 f., 137-140.

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when the community as a whole or the majority of the people were guilty of rebellion against the Almighty.¹

In this way the *Law* itself, by its regulations on the sin-offering, pointed indirectly to a future exceptional intervention of the Divine Grace.²

(b) But, further, *in relation* to the Law we find many passages in the Old Testament which imply a further development. For it was not only the duty of the prophets to guard the Law and condemn those who despised it, but they had the further task of completing and spiritualising the Law. This may be proved from the following facts.

First of all, the prophets in many places defended the duties of religion and morality, showing their supreme importance in relation to divine worship (Amos v. 21-25, etc., in my *Geschichte*, p. 230 f.), and there are passages in the Old Testament which, like gleams of morning sunshine, throw their radiance on the coming time in which the sacrificing of beasts would have lost its value (Ps. xl. 7-10 ; l. 8-15).³ And secondly let us note the following group of Old Testament passages. In Deuteronomy xxiii. 2 the command is given that eunuchs shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord. But in Isaiah lvi. 3-5 this command is abolished. For thus says the Eternal to the eunuchs who keep His Sabbaths and choose the things that please Him : " Even unto them will I give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and of daughters," than the Children of Israel themselves ! Again, as regards the law of fasting, defined in

¹ This is confirmed by historical facts, for instead of annihilation, exile alone was threatened to the people of Jahve, when a majority of them were guilty of disobedience.

² On the other hand the judgment of Heb. x. 1-4, and v. 11 on the inadequacy of the Old Testament sin-offerings, was not expressed in the sense of the Law itself.

³ Therefore in Hebrews x. 6-10 there is rightly a reference to this Psalm.

Leviticus xvi. 29, we read in Isaiah lviii. 6 ff. : "Is not this the fast that I have chosen (i.e. preferred) to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens?" etc. A similar spiritualisation of the old legal regulations is also indicated in the words of Jeremiah iv. 4, "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord" (i.e., to His pleasure) and take away the foreskins of your heart." A passage on the same lines is to be found in Joel ii. 13, where, in allusion to the well-known custom of rending the garments as a symbolical expression of mourning, the prophet says : "Rend your hearts and not your garments." And finally, let us observe that while the law, as we have noted above, ordains that the sinner who has deliberately disobeyed the commandments of God shall be stoned to death, Ezekiel proclaims that "God willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should return from his ways and live" (Ezek. xviii. 23).

2. In the field of prophecy it is yet more apparent that the religion of the Old Testament, as far as its future was concerned, had its gaze directed towards mountain peaks. Evidence for this fact may be found in the following distinct tendencies.

(a) It is unveiled in the utterances on the relationship of the Kingdom of God to earthly conditions. In the dawn of the history of God's peculiar Kingdom, Abraham was guided to a particular land. But in the wider narratives about him and the other patriarchs it is an interesting point that the first and permanent piece of property they obtained in Canaan was a burying-ground, as we are told five times over in Genesis (Gen. xxiii. 17 ; xxv. 19 ; xxxv. 27 ; xlix. 30 ; l. 13). What a significant hint as to the true relationship which exists between the distinctive Kingdom of God and the earth ! During their lifetime the patriarchs were merely strangers and pilgrims in Canaan

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(xlvi. 9), and it was only after their death that they found rest in the land of promise. This at least is certain, that the peculiar Kingdom of God, in which the true religion was to be settled, is raised even from its beginning *above* the earth, belongs to a higher realm and is subjected to a heavenly King, as we read in the triumph-song of Israel, "The Lord shall reign." The special character of that Kingdom is made clear to us from the foundation-words (Exod. xix. 5 f.), "Now therefore if ye will obey My voice," etc., "ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests," etc. Why else should Gideon, although in other respects ambitious for the glory of his native town Ophrah,¹ have refused to accept the rulership which was offered to him? He was maintaining an ancient ideal when he said: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges viii. 23).

It is true that in later days the divine patience did permit the establishment of a human kingship in Israel (1 Sam. viii. 7-9), and when it had once been accepted among the institutions of the Kingdom of God, the divine faithfulness upheld the kings in the subjugation of the enemies of Israel. But from its very inception this Kingdom was not allowed to pursue a policy of conquest. As soon as David, in arranging for a national census, showed signs that he wished by this numbering of the people to create for himself a standing army, and with its aid to proceed to external conquests, he began to feel pangs of conscience with regard to his new procedure (2 Sam. xxiv. 10); and the prophet Gad was obliged to undertake the task of pointing out to David the limits within which the earthly representative of the heavenly King of Israel must act (v. 11 f.). The prophets were compelled to remind Israel of these limits during that period, especially, in which the Assyrian world-

¹ Judges viii. 27; cf. on this passage my *Geschichte*, pp. 211-214.

power extended its conquests to Palestine (*circa* 740 B.C.). For there was a real danger at that time lest the kings of Israel should be seized with the ambition to put themselves on the same plane as the world-power, by a display of their own military strength, and by forming alliances with their neighbours. But even in those days it was clearly revealed to the prophet Isaiah that the Kingdom of God must guard itself against the ambitions and efforts we have mentioned. From his lips, accordingly, sounded forth that sublime utterance, "In quietness and in confidence shall be *your* strength" (xxx. 15) [German rendering: "eure Heldenhaftigkeit"]; and at the same time, along with another contemporary prophet,¹ he laid the strongest emphasis (v. 16) on the fact that the people of the eternal God must not compete with human kingdoms in the accumulation of the materials of earthly power. The task allotted to God's Kingdom is rather that of being a source of light and salvation to mankind (Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6). How distinct an indication as to the *non*-political nature of the Israelitish commonwealth appears also in the fact that the throne of David was cast down in the Babylonian captivity, and was not re-erected when the penal age was ended! We see, then, from indisputable evidence that the peculiar Kingdom chosen for Himself by God on earth was meant, alike in its fundamental principles and in its ultimate goal, to possess a supernatural character.

(b) Let us next consider how the line of prophetic evolution unrolls itself with respect to the future Saviour or Mediator. From the beginning the eyes of the patriarchs and of Israel were naturally directed towards such an one. For the hope of salvation in manifold forms had been established in close association with that special relationship to God in which consisted the peculiar religion of Abraham

¹ Zech. ix. 10. Cf. my *Einleitung ins A. T.*, pp. 368-372.

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and Israel. The greatness of the race, the celebrity of its name, a blessing for other nations through the posterity of Abraham, were elements in the future salvation which were indicated as early as Genesis xii. 2 f. (Jahvist). And was not the victorious position of this people of the divinely-revealed religion included as a natural consequence in its covenant with the true God of the world? But in its concrete position, this people was from the first a commonwealth existing within narrow limits, and it was often sorely pressed by powerful enemies. Therefore the idea of a *helper* must from an early date have linked itself with the hopes of victory cherished by the covenanted people of God. In what detailed form do we find specific allusions to this mediator of salvation?

As regards his *office*, we observe first that he is designated in the beginning in a general way as a victor or hero. It is thus that he appears in the promise of "Shiloh" (Gen. xlix. 10), in which word we have a reference to pacification,¹ and at the same time to a bringer-in of peace. The same general character of the Saviour lies in the words, "There shall come a Star out of Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 1). For with the Romans and other nations² the word "star" is a symbolic expression for a victorious hero or ruler, and the succeeding words of the passage in Numbers interpret the expression in this sense. After the monarchy had been accepted among the institutions of the special Kingdom of God, the future Saviour appears adorned with the royal dignity. In Nathan's prophecy (2 Sam. vii. 11-16) there is, along with the reference to David's son there spoken of, who is a man subjected to sin, at least an indirect allusion to a greater son of David who should one day come. In Psalm ii. 7-9 the future Saviour is imagined as a victorious

¹ See my *Hebräisches Wörterbuch zum A. T.* (1910), p. 496.

² See my *Stilistik, Rhetorik, Poetik* (1900), p. 98.

King, and he is often announced as a ruler, as e.g. in the words, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. ix. 6); or in the exhortation, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; thy King cometh unto thee" (Zech. ix. 9); or in the verse, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper," etc. (Jer. xxiii. 5). Even the tender twig, which according to Ezekiel xvii. 22-24 is to shoot forth from the family of David, is imagined as a King, as we see from ch. xliii. 7. But with the regal office of the perfect descendant of David the *priestly* office was also combined. This is made clear to us in Psalm cx. which in my opinion was actually composed by David after the anointing of Solomon, and with special reference to him. For the king is there ranked as on the same plane with Melchisedek, the king and priest. We find another example of this association of royal and priestly dignity in Zechariah vi. 13. For the Hebrew words of this passage mean: "And he shall sit down and rule upon his throne" (established by the everlasting God),¹ "and shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace" (i.e. a harmonious unity of effort) "shall be between them both" (between the descendant of David and the everlasting God who has already been mentioned several times in the chapter.)²

At the same time the eye of prophecy was opened ever more clearly to perceive the equipment and the Divinely appointed destiny of the future Saviour. For in contrast to 2 Samuel vii. 14 (see above), it is announced of the Son

¹ Cf. Ps. xlv. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii. 5; xxix. 23, "Solomon sat on the throne of Jahve."

² The interpretation at present in favour takes the priest to be a second person; but in that case the reference to his throne is very striking, and the possessive pronoun "his" would on this assumption be quite superfluous.

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whose birth is foretold in Isaiah ix. 5 f., that because of his mighty deeds as ruler he is to be named " a marvel of counsel " (i.e. " Counsellor "), an actual God and hero, etc. ; i.e. in the realm of intellect and will-power he shall far excel the ordinary rulers of earth. The reason is that this descendant of David, as we learn from Isaiah xi. 2, will be perpetually endowed with the spirit of Jahve. That spirit will reveal itself as a source of the highest intelligence and the strongest will, in a lofty degree of religious knowledge and of piety. And in Malachi iii. 1 all this is summed up in the declaration that the coming one whose appearance is to take place in the decisive epoch of the history of redemption, is none other than God Himself. A mysterious veil hangs over the nature of the coming Redeemer—but our gaze is directed upwards.

We note, further, the disclosure of an ever fuller knowledge as to the redemptive *acts* of the future Saviour. In the earlier literature his achievements had consisted in successful political contests (Gen. xlix. 10 f. ; Num. xxiv. 17, etc.), in wise government and the impartial administration of justice (Isa. ix. 5 f. ; xi. 3-5 ; Zech. ix. 9, etc.), but later on it is the *suffering* of the Saviour which occupies the foreground as the rock on which salvation is founded. We observe to begin with that the Immanuel who is proclaimed as the symbol of the relationship which existed between God and the prophet Isaiah and his community, had himself a share in the privations of the calamity which fell on Ahaz and the godless majority of Israel (Isa. vii. 15). We note also that the perfect descendant of David whose advent is foretold, was not to come forth from the summit, but from the roots of the tree which represents the family of David (xi. 1), and was not to be born in the capital city of Jerusalem, but in the humble town where David's line originated (Micah v. 2). He was therefore to have His

share in the suffering which was decreed for the royal house. This suffering was recognised, more distinctly in later writings, as of such a nature that it was borne by an innocent victim for others as an atonement for their sins. For of the Servant of Jahve (Isa. lii. 13–liii. 12) who represents Israel no doubt, more directly, but who also indirectly typifies the mediator, we read these heart-stirring words :—

“ Surely he hath borne *our* griefs and carried *our* sorrows ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with *his* stripes *we* are healed.” The thought of *vicarious suffering*, as we see from other passages of the Old Testament, was grasped ever more clearly in Israel (Lev. xxvi. 39 ; Jer. xvi. 11, etc. ; my *Geschichte*, p. 576).

(c) Further, we remark that the nature of the salvation and the means of attaining it advance in the course of prophetic history ever further into the realm of moral and spiritual life.

Taking a hasty survey of the literature, we find that the promised salvation consists at first in the greatness of the people, the celebrity of its name and other earthly values (Gen. xii. 2 f.), or in rest as the outcome of political contests (xlix. 10, etc.), or in a splendid dynastic sovereignty (2 Sam. vii. 11–16 ; Amos ix. 12 ff.). It is true, indeed, that the spiritual aspects of the promised salvation were never entirely ignored, for these are clearly indicated in the words—repeated five times over in the first book of the Bible—“ In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,¹ or in the sigh of prayer breathed by Jacob as he drew near to death, “ I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord ” (xlix. 18). The religious and moral side of Israel’s prerogatives was emphasised even in the foundational words of Exodus xix. 5 f. In later days, on the other hand, the material side was never wholly lacking from the total sum of blessings

¹ Gen. xii. 3, J. ; xviii. 18, J. ; xxii. 18 ; xxvi. 4 ; xxviii. 14, J.

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promised along with the future salvation, for even Malachi promises to those who observe the law of their God that He will open the windows of heaven and pour out an abundance of blessing (iii. 10 f.). But none the less we may observe that in later times the inward aspect of salvation is kept more distinctly in the forefront. For redemption from moral guilt is mentioned as a leading element of the coming salvation.¹ In the later period, also, much stress is often laid on the bestowal of the divine spirit as the source of power for new moral endeavour (Isa. xxxii. 15 ; Joel ii. 28 ; Zech. xii. 10 ; Isa. xlv. 3 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 26 ; xxxix. 29).

Side by side with this we observe the fact that an ever stronger emphasis is laid on the necessity for a change of heart as the means of obtaining salvation. It is true that in the early ages of Israel a deep consciousness of sin was already in existence.² We remember, for instance, Nathan's summons to repentance and David's deep penitential sorrow (2 Sam. xii. 1-4 ; 13 ff. ; Ps. li.). But on the other hand it is a fact that in the later Old Testament writings a change of heart as the fundamental means of obtaining salvation is much more frequently mentioned. We find it so, for instance, in the exhortation : " Seek good and not evil, that ye may live " (Amos v. 14). From the time of Isaiah onwards the idea of the " remnant that should return " (vii. 3, etc. ; my *Geschichte*, p. 339 f., 341), became a fundamental idea. The later writers dwell in language of heart-stirring earnestness on the necessity for conversion ; cf. for instance, " Return ye now every one from his evil way " (Jer. xviii. 11 ; xxv. 5 ; xxxv. 15), or, " If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed,"

¹ Micah vii. 19, " He will subdue our iniquities and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea ; Jer. xxxi. 34 b ; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, etc.

² The modern dogma, which maintains the contrary, is elucidated and refuted in my *Geschichte*, p. 252 f.

etc., "he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezek. xviii. 21), and the books of the prophetic writers of the Old Testament close with the assertion that the Elijah who was to come again should turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, i.e. he should turn the later generations to apply the principles of their ancestors.¹

(d) This further fact is unmistakably evident, that the extent of the circle of those who should be partakers of salvation is ever more fully unfolded. I do not mean to suggest, as has been widely maintained of late, that in the earlier ages of Israel's history there was a wholly particularistic teaching about the circle of the saved. Such teaching does not actually exist in Old Testament literature, nor does it correspond to the nature of Old Testament religion. We do not find it, I say, in the literature, for the promise to Abraham (already mentioned several times), "In thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed," is found even in that source of the Pentateuch which many scholars consider the oldest, and which in my judgment is at least the second oldest source. Strangers also are treated in the ancient book of the covenant in a spirit of goodwill (Exod. xxii. 21) in which the Old Testament far outshines the other literatures of antiquity.

Elijah, too, honoured a widow of the Phœnician town of Zarephath not only with his presence as a guest, but also with his miracles (1 Kings xvii. 9 ff.), and the Syrian Naaman also was healed by Elisha, and was thus made a worshipper of the true God (2 Kings v. 15, 17). In the second place it was in full accordance with the nature of the true religion of Israel that the whole human race did from the first belong in principle to the circle of its confessors. For the true God of the world could strive for no lesser purpose than that

¹ The reasons for this interpretation of Mal. iii. 24 (English version, iv. 6), may be found in my *Geschichte*, p. 414 f.

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all the children of men should be enclosed within the commonwealth of His grace. In the fundamental monotheism of Old Testament religion there was enclosed as in an actively germinating seed the universality of its impulse towards development. But the progressive evolution we have already observed in reference to many points within the history of Old Testament religion, shows itself also in the truths unveiled about the extent of the circle of the citizens of the divine Kingdom. For if we study the writings of the prophets according to their chronological succession, we hear, sounding ever more frequently and more clearly, the tidings that this circle is to be extended far beyond the boundaries of Israel. The words of Amos ix. 12¹ certainly do not refer merely to the political subjugation of the peoples there referred to. But the expression, "the Gōjīm, which are called by my name," indicates, according to the general connexion of the passage, only a group of neighbouring tribes of Israel. How much louder and fuller is the music of the great prophecy which declares that all peoples shall go up to the temple-mountain, that they may receive from the eternal God guidance as to their conduct and may derive from His righteous judgments the fundamental principle of an all-embracing realm of peace (Isa. ii. 2-4; Micah iv. 1-3). Moreover, the eternal God, who has already proclaimed to all peoples the glory of the Lord from the firmament (Ps. xix. 1), will in later times convey to them a perfectly distinct message (Zeph. iii. 9); and according to Zechariah viii. 23 it should come to pass in the latter days that ten men belonging to all nations should "take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew," that they might receive from him instruction on the true religion. Finally, what can surpass in definiteness the words which Malachi (i. 11) spoke in the name of his

¹ The genuineness of this passage is discussed in my *Geschichte*, p. 302 f.

God, "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name is¹ great among the Gentiles" ?

We have seen, then, that prophecy moved by many paths towards a higher goal. And as we watch the course of the history of Old Testament religion, have we not clear evidence for the fact suggested above, that its gaze also was directed towards mountain-peaks ? Surely it is so, and yet we have not so far considered the fact that the promises of the Old Testament speak of a new covenant. Do we not at once recall the marvellous words of Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34 ? The essential points of this passage are as follows : "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers," etc. ; "but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After these days I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people ; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying, know the Lord ; for they shall all know me, for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." As we examine this passage we scarcely know what is its most important characteristic. Is it the *fact*, that a new covenant is proclaimed, or the *mode* of its conclusion and the content of the new provisions of the covenant, along with the conditions upon which in the future each individual in Israel is to enter into communion with his God ? Each of these characteristics is undoubtedly of equal importance, and if there is one on which peculiar stress should be laid, it is the promise at the end of the passage that the knowledge of God, which includes love to God, shall flow forth like a spring of living water from the

¹ *Is*—the historic present. A full interpretation of Mal. i. 11 is found in my *Geschichte*, p. 338 note.

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hearts of all covenanted members of the human race, *just because* all hearts are to be set free from the crippling pressure of moral guilt. The treading down of sin's consequences is to prepare the ground on which the pillars of the new arch of peace between God and men shall one day rest. Nor can we turn our thoughts from this passage without dwelling for a moment in reverent admiration on the divine love with its constant renewals of mercy. There was a time, indeed, when God proposed to the human race that they should fulfil a law laid down with outward sanctions, and that a lesser benefit, such as the delivery of Israel from Egypt, should suffice to keep them faithful to the covenant. *It was man's fault* that this earlier plan failed. Then God offered a greater benefit, the bringing back from the Babylonian captivity of the Israel which had deserved punishment, that He might stir up their hearts to repentance and gratitude. What a new and sublime advance of divine grace on the pathway of the human race !

We find, then, very many tracks in the history of Old Testament religion which guide us towards the idea of a perfecting of its principles, and even of a new beginning. We can scarcely believe it possible that there have been and still are, people who maintain that the ancient principles of the Mosaic Law are unchangeable ! This is the view, for instance, of Moses Maimonides, who died in 1204, and was a leading authority in Rabbinical Judaism ; and in later times of B. Fischer in his *Hebräischen Unterrichtsbriefen*, p. 211. But this view is in such startling contradiction to the history of the development of Old Testament religion as set forth in this article, that we can scarcely be surprised to find that Rabbinical Judaism itself is divided on the subject. For among its most learned scribes we note, for example, that the famous Rabbi Hillel brought about the

actual abolition of the law of the so-called release from debt¹ in the Sabbatic year (Deut. xv. 1-11). He established the rule that the creditor should be permitted to state before the court: "Every debt which is owing to me by others, may be recovered by me at any time when I choose to claim it."² There are other illustrations of the fact that regulations of the Mosaic law were abolished by the Scribes, and moreover these learned men assigned a higher place to their own statutes than to the written law. A Talmudic sentence reads, "The words of the elders are more beloved, or dearer, than the words of the law."³ Rabbi Isaak Albo, for instance, was therefore quite right in opposing the assertion of Moses Maimonides.

The Law itself, in its actual content, as described above, and many prophetic utterances about the law and the future characteristics of the Kingdom of God prove beyond all doubt that the Mosaic and prophetic plan of salvation aimed at extension and at a higher spiritual development. Rightly, therefore, did Lessing accept this theory in his *Education of the Human Race*, and a later author has said with perfect truth, "The Old Testament religion is the religion of hope."⁴

But did the future development, towards which so many traces guide us in the history of Old Testament religion, ever actually occur, and if so, where and how did this happen? In the second half of this paper I propose to answer these questions.

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(To be concluded.)

¹ The text probably means the right to leave or prolong a debt outstanding.

² Mischna. Treatise, *Schebi'ith* 10 § 3 f.

³ Jerus. Talmud, *Berakhôth*, fol. 3a. For other proofs see my *Geschichte*, pp. 455, 577.

⁴ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, 2nd edition (1905), p. 5.