

fought for it, and as Professor Drummond expounds it, is in danger of disproof and discredit. In the geography of Palestine there are many places that have not yet been identified, and many identifications that will yet be disputed; but Professor

Smith has no fear, and we have none, that the lie of the land has been set down wrong, that the Jordan may be found after all to be flowing not towards the Dead Sea but towards the Sea of Galilee and the mountains of Lebanon.

The Eschatology of Isaiah.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. A. B. DAVIDSON, D.D., LL.D., EDINBURGH.

ALL the great prophets, and many of the smaller, have an eschatology or doctrine of the last things. This is a doctrine of the final condition of men and the world, but generally also of the movements which will issue in this condition. On the final condition itself the prophets naturally agree with one another; it is a perfect kingdom of God, and its characteristics are those that must exist where God reigns,—it is righteousness and joy and peace in a transfigured world,—the earth yields her increase, and God blesses men. On the movements that lead the world into this condition the prophets present various views, according to the age in which they live and the state of the nations in their day. There are three things characteristic of the prophets, which it is useful to keep in mind when interpreting them. First of all, they are men of their own day, and as moral and religious teachers it is the state of things in their own day, whether within Israel or among the nations without, from which they start, and which forms the ground of their prophecies. Secondly, they are, however, always prophets even in the sense of being predictors; they have an outlook into the final future. It has become now a commonplace on prophecy that the prophet is not a mere predictor, and this is true; he has a much wider sphere of action. But while prediction of mere contingent events occupies little place in prophecy, though instances of this are not wanting, prediction of the great issues of the kingdom of God, and of its final condition, is just the chief function of the prophet. It is in the exercise of this function, in directing men's eyes to the ideal future, and in striving to realise it, that the prophets pour out all their wealth of ethical and religious teaching. And thirdly, the connexion between the prophet's own present and the ideal future seems always to him immediate. The forces

which he perceives operating in his own day will run out into the perfect kingdom of the Lord. It is God that animates these forces, and they will issue in the realising of His final purpose. Hence to the prophets the ideal future, under whatever name it may be called, whether the coming of God, the day of the Lord, or the reign of the Messiah, seems always near. The nearness is not strictly temporal, it is organic and causal. The prophets operate with moral conceptions as universal as God and the world, and they animate the events taking place in the world around with them these conceptions. What they seem to themselves to perceive going on is not a conflict between good and evil, between the true and the false, between Jehovah and idolatry, but *the* conflict; it is a struggle of principles, of principles in their absoluteness, and the issue is necessarily final.

The idea of "the day of the Lord" is common in the prophets. It is an idea older than any of the prophets who have left writings, for we find it in Amos already a commonplace in the popular faith (ch. v. 18). And the instance is one that teaches us caution. Though the idea appears for the first time in Amos, it did not originate in his age, but in one long anterior to him. The idea is but the other side of the conception that the nature of Jehovah is ethical, and His rule of the world moral; and though all the applications of this principle may not be so old, the principle itself is certainly as old as Israel is.

This idea of the day of the Lord may be considered a little. To begin with, all Israel's spiritual blessings came from Jehovah, and even all Israel's blessings of whatever sort. He taught Israel's arms to fight, and made him tread on his high places. Salvation belonged unto the Lord. And in whatever form or degree salvation was attained,

it was through Him. All the strength of the nation arose from being strengthened by His Spirit. God Himself was Israel's highest blessing; He was the portion of her cup. His nearness brought salvation near; His presence in fulness was the end of all development in Israel and Israel's glorification. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 1). Then was the meaning and the purpose of the covenant realised,—Jehovah was Israel's God and Israel was His people.

That this union of Jehovah with Israel should yet be realised, all the prophets believe. No doubt ere that time come there shall be great sorrows, and Israel shall seem forsaken by God. Every prophet predicts the dissolution of Israel, but they look across the dark stream of death and behold a new life on the other side. They usually place the two, destruction and restoration, side by side in abrupt opposition to one another. Usually they do not bridge over the chasm between Israel's dissolution and her restoration. They move in the higher region of divine procedure: as God chastens Israel by dispersing her in His anger, so He gathers her together again in His returning mercy. But in the earlier prophets the internal processes within Israel which mediate this restoration are little touched. In some cases the chastisement brings home the sense of their sin to the people's mind, but even this may fail, and God restores the people for His name's sake. An approach towards a solution perhaps appears in Isaiah's idea of a remnant. The people of God may be reduced to a tenth, and even the tenth may be subjected to repeated diminutions, but it is not destroyed; the continuity is maintained, and the holy seed blossoms out into a new people (Isa. vi. 13). In later prophets, such as the second half of Isaiah, the internal process within Israel which mediates God's returning mercy and Israel's restoration is more fully understood—the sufferings of the servant of the Lord atone for the people's sin. But whether the prophets express or represent to themselves the means of Israel's restoration, except that God in His mercy shall accomplish it, they all believe in it. When they accompany to the grave, with bitter lamentations, the bier on which is laid the virgin daughter of Israel, they sorrow not as those that have no hope. She shall rise again. "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you

to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel" (Ezek. xxxvii. 12).

Now the source of all blessings to Israel being Jehovah, the fulness of Israel's life and the perfection of her attainment is often described as the *coming of the Lord*. What precise conceptions the prophets formed of this coming of God among men may not be easy to determine. But it was not merely a coming in wonders, or in the word of His prophets, or in a spiritual influence on His people's minds; it was something objective and personal. And when God came, He came in His fulness. He revealed and communicated all that He was. The age behind was wound up, and a new age commenced. The processes that had been long going on ran out, and new lines of movement began. His coming was to the world, and was not only the perfection of Israel, but the restitution of all things. It was a thing which not Israel and men but the inanimate world had longed for and rejoiced in: "The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereat" (Ps. xcvi.).

The broadest eschatological idea in Scripture is the idea of creation. The fact that Jehovah is Creator of the world guarantees that the world shall not remain in the confusion in which it now lies. "Thus saith Jehovah, Creator of the heavens (who is God), former of the earth and maker of it—He created it not a confusion, He made it to be dwelt in" (Isa. xlv. 18). The confusions that reign on the earth, the wars and desolations, the conflict of nation with nation and of men with men in thought and in interest, the obscuration of the true idea of God, out of which all this conflict arises,—all this is alien to creation, contradictory to the idea that "the earth is the Lord's"; and the Creator's thought in creation must yet work out its own validity, and cast such things off. The cosmogony in Gen. i. expresses similar ideas in another form. That cosmogony may not be science, though it is a singular approximation to science generalised into a moral teleology. It may not be an account of how creation actually came about, but it is a glimpse of singular insight into creation as it now exists—into the various groups into which created things may be classified, the teleological relation on the whole of these groups to one another, or of each group to the one in the scale above it, and the teleology of the whole. From whatever source the writer drew this cosmogony, he does not introduce

it for its own sake as an independent piece of physics. The meaning of the whole is expressed in ch. ii. 2, 3, "And God rested on the seventh day . . . and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Creation culminates in the fellowship of God with His creation, and this fellowship is the Rest of both. The passage belongs to the legislative part of the literature of Israel. Prophecy and legislation did not differ from one another in their ideals, but rather in this that the prophetic ideals were projected on the future, and hence their extraordinary purity; while the legislation sought to impose the ideal upon the present and the existing people, and to look at the present as realising it. The consequence was that the ideal by being broken into ordinances and observances was blurred and tarnished; and though the imposition of the name of the ideal on the present expressed an aspiration, the consequence of it was that the true ideal sometimes disappeared from sight.

The "coming of the Lord" is a more fruitful eschatological idea, and in one aspect becomes a Messianic idea in the strict sense. It may be doubted whether the Messianic hope was in early times in Israel an independent line of hope, as it became afterwards. At anyrate, it is always an element of the larger eschatological hope. The words quoted from Delitzsch in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for May (p. 390), to the effect that "the Redeemer of the world is Jehovah; the advent of Jehovah is the centre of gravity of Old Testament revelation," certainly express the truth. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord. This is the positive position laid down in the Old Testament—the Redeemer is God. It lays down a similar positive position in regard to the Spirit—the Spirit of God is God. But to add to this positive statement a negative one, and say, the Redeemer of the world is Jehovah, and not the Messiah, may be very thoughtless. Such an antithesis, or even a distinction between Jehovah and the Messiah, may suggest an idea of the Messiah which has no existence in the Old Testament; the very conception of the Messiah may be that of one with whom Jehovah is in union, in whom He is embodied, through whom He is manifested in the salvation and rule of His people. While it is the coming of the Lord among men, His personal manifestation that brings salvation, is it not possible that this straight line may, so to speak, receive a deflection; that His personal manifestation may take on a

mode or form; and that this mode of manifestation may be the Messiah? This is the question raised by the astonishing Messianic prophecies of Isaiah. Of course, even if the question should be answered in the affirmative, another would rise, namely, What approximation this manifestation of Jehovah in the Messiah makes to the Christian idea that God *became* man? There may be something in this positive idea not yet reached in the Old Testament.

It needs to be remembered that the idea of *to save* in Isaiah may not be the same as in a more developed theology. Salvation is *deliverance* from oppression of outside foes, and from evil of all kinds. This is an element in the idea of salvation even now; but when the people of God formed a state it was naturally very prominent. Further, into Isaiah's idea of salvation the conception of atonement does not enter. This conception belongs to a later time. God forgives the people's sin of His mercy. In a certain sense the disasters and sufferings of the people might be considered an atonement for their sins; they revealed something of the nature of God, the acknowledgment of which on the part of the people was of the nature of a satisfaction. The anger of God, like the anger of man, is an affection, a *pathos*, of which He is capable, and the capacity might perhaps be called an attribute; but His anger is not an attribute like His mercy and compassion. It is transient, and gives way before these other unchanging attributes. In other respects, Isaiah's idea of salvation differs little from our own. It embraces the forgiveness of sins and restitution of the people to the favour of God; it contains faith and penitence on their part; and as the Messiah is but the perfect type of the people whom He rules, and His virtues descend upon them and become theirs also, it contains "the spirit of the knowledge and the fear of the Lord" (Isa. xi. 2). It has been said that Isaiah's ideal is merely a well-ordered, justly governed state. But the fact that the immediate ruler of this state is God gives a complexion to every act done in it. The prophets do not degrade religion into politics, they elevate politics and civil morals into the sphere of religion.

In all ages Jehovah is the Saviour, and if He employs agents it is the *divine* in them that operates towards salvation. This is the fundamental idea, and is true of the Messiah as well as of others. In the pre-Mosaic age the bearers of the divine were the patriarchs, who were Jehovah's

prophets and had His revelation, and were the embodiment of salvation in the world: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." During the monarchy the Davidic king is the ideal figure and power. In the East the saying, *l'état c'est moi*, I am the state, may be used truly by the king. His personal character is revealed in his rule, and becomes the character of his people. Further, the king was the representative of Jehovah, the true King of Israel, and there was room for the loftiest idealising of himself and his rule, and for approximating him step by step to the Divine Ruler Himself till in some sense they were identified, and the king was named Immanuel, God with us, and El Gibbor, Mighty God. After the destruction of the monarchy the Davidic king drops out of sight, and another figure takes his place, the servant of the Lord. It is the divine that is still operative, but the divine is now the Word of God, the revelation of the true God, which is little different from God operative through His Word. This Word embodied in Israel, incarnated in Israel, is the servant of the Lord, who shall be the light of the nations. After the Restoration, as was to be expected, the Priest becomes more prominent; the people returned from Captivity with a profounder sense of sin, and henceforth the idea of atonement occupied men's thoughts more deeply.

The discussion of Isaiah (chs. vii.-ix., xi.) being reserved in the meantime, one or two things may be said of the ideas connected with Jehovah's coming and the day of the Lord.

1. As it was a day of the manifestation of Jehovah in His fulness, and therefore in a way to realise His purposes, which with Israel and even with the world were those of grace, it is fundamentally a day of joy to Israel and even to the world: "Say among the nations that the Lord is King; let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; let the fields be joyful, and all that is therein . . . before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to rule the earth; He shall rule the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth" (Ps. xcvi. 10). 'That Jehovah should reign, and that He should come to the earth, men beholding Him, must, in spite of all the terrors that might attend His coming; bring to the world a pervading gladness. For the falsehood and injustice that had cursed the earth so long would disappear, and the longing of men, who were ever in words or sighs

crying, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," would be satisfied. On that day men would cast their idols to the bats, and the oppressive empires of the world, which were but projections of idolatry with its inhumanity and licentiousness and pride, would be swept away. The terrors of that day, but in spite of the terror the joy, are finely expressed in the hymn of Habakkuk (ch. iii.).

2. To those in Israel who looked for Jehovah's coming, apart from the natural terrors of it, it was unmixed joy. And it would have been so to all Israel had true fidelity to Jehovah been universal. But there were many in Israel who belonged to Israel only in race. They were filled from the East, and soothsayers like the Philistines. They shared the idolatries and practised the sins of the nations. Hence the day of the Lord acquires a double-sided character. It is a day of salvation and judgment, a day of salvation through judgment. Sometimes one side is prominent and sometimes another. In the prophets before the Exile the aspect of judgment is most prominent. During the Exile it still has the aspect of judgment, but mainly upon the nations, while it is the redemption and restoration of Israel, for her judgment seemed already past. But after the Restoration, when the condition of the people again became corrupt, the notion of a judgment upon Israel again acquired prominence, as Malachi (ch. iii. 2) says: "Who shall abide the day of His coming? for He is like a refiner's fire . . . and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

3. There is not such a thing as a day of the Lord, as if the name could be given to a temporary visitation or calamity; it is always *the* day of the Lord, the manifestation to all flesh of the Lord. The prophets do not identify anything that they see occurring with this day, though great catastrophes or revolutions often appear to them the preludes and heralds of the day. They are in the dark as to the time of it, but they are in no ignorance of the principles which will issue in it. And the feeling that these principles, retarded by many obstacles in their operation now, counteracted by the opposing wills of men, may at any moment overcome the obstacles and throw off the hindrances, and run out into perfect realisation, was ever present with them. Hence when they observed a quickening of the currents of Providence in any direction, whether of judgment or salvation, the presentiment filled their minds that it was the

beginning of the day of the Lord. Their hearts were full of certain issues, and they were constantly looking for them; and, when the sound of Jehovah's goings was more distinctly heard than usual, they deemed He was approaching to reveal Himself to the world.

4. On that day the glory of the Lord is revealed, and all flesh see it together. The earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Israel has peace, and the peace descends upon the lower creation; they no more hurt nor destroy in all God's holy

mountain. The external condition of the world is conceived variously. Sometimes the perfect realising of righteousness and truth seems brought down upon a condition of the world which was that of the prophet's day. The kingdoms of the nations remain. But they are no more hostile: "The nations shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising." Usually the kingdoms of the nations disappear. And external nature is transfigured; there arises a new heaven and a new earth.

Andrew Martin Fairbairn, D.D., LL.D.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. WALTER F. ADENEY, M.A., LONDON.

IN complying with the invitation of the Editor of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES to contribute a paper on Dr. Fairbairn as a theological writer, I must disclaim at the outset any pretence to that mental detachment which is sometimes desiderated as a guarantee for absolute impartiality. My high personal regard for the Principal of Mansfield College, and my admiring interest in his aims and labours, will necessarily condition what I have to say, which therefore should be read as an individual appreciation, not as a pure judgment. But while I make this frank avowal, I venture to add on the very same grounds that if, as is often asserted, the truest criticism springs from the insight of sympathy, the chance of acquiring some such insight may be pleaded as a set-off against the disadvantages of a suspected bias.

Whatever may be the opinion of various persons as to the weight and worth of Dr. Fairbairn's teachings,—and these will be sure to vary with the theological standpoint of the observer,—it is conceded on all sides that as a scholar and a thinker he can justly demand the most serious attention for the views he sets forth and the vigorous arguments with which he supports them. It is the less difficult to respond to this demand inasmuch as the reader is likely to be attracted by the literary charm of the books in which the most subtle themes are discussed with lucidity and colour. It cannot be denied that Dr. Fairbairn is that *rara avis*, the theologian who writes readable English. I have sometimes thought that the vigour and point of his style remind us of Bishop

Pearson, the author of the classic work on the Creed. Let any one set a page of the one writer by the side of a page of the other, and he will scarcely fail to be struck with the resemblance. More technical phraseology has crept into the language of the nineteenth century theologian in the shape of scientific and metaphysical terms which threaten to make turbid the "well of English," alas, no longer "undefiled." This was perhaps unavoidable, and to my own mind the delightful thing is that in spite of the literary misfortune it involves, Dr. Fairbairn has demonstrated the possibility of still reproducing so much of the force and clearness of the older English divines. Critics have remarked that he resorts to the use of antitheses with a frequency that savours of artifice rather than of art. It is fair to consider, on the other hand, that Dr. Fairbairn has more excuse for this device in dealing with abstract subjects than Lord Macaulay had when he stereotyped the same method in his style, although he had before him concrete facts that could be much more easily grasped. The further we advance towards ultimate principles the more antithetic all our thinking tends to become, because the expression of unmixed thought is necessarily in pronounced antagonism to its contradiction. The attractiveness of Dr. Fairbairn's style, however, is not confined to the glitter of antithesis. There is in it a singular combination of qualities not often found together. It is both picturesque and philosophic, both graphic and profound, both terse and large, both pointed and comprehensive. Laconic in detail, it is voluminous in the mass. While the